

TEACHER CREDENTIAL FILES

Types of credential files

There are college-managed and self-managed credential files. When a file is college-managed it means that the academic institution keeps the original forms and letters on-site and sends copies out to the school district to which the student is applying. A file that is self-managed means that the student keeps the file with them in order to send copies of the forms and letters to any school district to which they apply.

College-managed credentials can also be confidential or non-confidential.

Confidential files are: *(Closed)*

- The student cannot see letters of recommendation.
- Some people think references may be written more honestly.
- Many writers of references give the student a copy.

Non-confidential files are: *(Open)*

- The student can see the letters of recommendation.
- Many people think you the student then read letters and learn from the comments.

Who should have a credential file?

Educational employers are the primary users of credential files. Candidates applying for positions in schools, colleges and universities will want to consider establishing a credential file. Files are most frequently established for: elementary and secondary school teachers, special education teachers, school administrators, college and university professors, school guidance counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, speech pathologists and other school specialty areas.

Teacher and school candidates are not required to establish a credential file with Career Resources. You may choose to self-manage your credential materials. Candidates applying for jobs in business, private industry or government typically do not establish credential files with Career Resources. These individuals usually choose to self-manage their job application materials.

When requesting credentials:

Please allow one (1) week for processing.

• **Credential Requests - must be in writing:** To ensure your credential won't be delayed or returned to our office, it is important that you fill out the form available at <http://www.sl.edu/career/default.htm>

or

On a regular "8 ½ X 11" sheet of paper provide the following CLEARLY and COMPLETELY which includes:

- 1) date of request
 - 2) deadline for credentials
 - 3) (your) name /graduate
 - 4) name of person and title you are sending to long with the school district, complete mailing address, including city, state and zip code
 - 6) include any application(s) and/or cover letter(s), etc. that are submitted with credential requests. Reminder: don't forget to sign your cover letters and applications
 - 7) your signature at the bottom of the sheet to authorizing sending your credentials.
- **Also, please remember to include a check in the amount of \$5.00 for EACH**

What should be in a credential file?

- ◆ Education Background Form
- ◆ List of Courses by Area(s) of Certification
- ◆ Letters of Reference/ Recommendations (updated every 4 to 5 years)
- ◆ Student Copy of Transcripts (optional) *
- ◆ Copy of Teaching License from WI DPI (optional)

** Official transcripts can be obtained from the Registrar's Office via a request form and submission of a fee. See the website at <http://www.sl.edu/career/default.htm> to obtain the request form. The Career Resources Office will forward the transcript request form to the Registrar's Office if it is included with the credential request form. The student can write one check to Silver Lake College for both fees (credentials and transcripts) and the Career Resources Office will handle the rest.*

How is the credential file used?

Credential files are used by schools, colleges and universities to help determine which candidates are best qualified for positions. Credentials are prepared by making photocopies of the materials in the file, placing the copies in a Career Resources folder and mailing the packet to the potential employer.

A credential file is sent after a candidate has applied for a position, at the candidate's request. Credentials should not be sent before a letter of application. Often, an employer's application form will tell you to have your credential file sent as part of the application materials required. All requests need to be submitted in writing. There is a credential request form available for print at the website:

<http://www.sl.edu/career/default.htm>. The request form, credential fee and transcript fee (if desired to be sent with the credentials) will have to be mailed to: Career Resources, Silver Lake College, 2406 South Alverno Road, Manitowoc, WI 54220.

What are Letters of recommendation?

Letters of recommendation should be written on your behalf by principals/ administrators, cooperating teachers/student-teaching supervisors, professors, or former employers who are able to comment accurately and fully on your scholarship, personal and professional qualifications, present success or promise for future success.

Note:

Employers prefer reviewing four to six reference letters. Most employers will not consider references that are over five years old. We will keep up to a maximum of 10 letters of recommendation active in your file.

Files must be established with our office before we will accept letters of recommendation. Candidates should wait until they have established their file before contacting reference writers.

Recommendation letters should be typed on the letter of recommendation forms provided by Career Resources (Highly recommended, however, not required) or their organization's letterhead. The forms can be found at <http://www.sl.edu/career/default.htm> or may be obtained from our office.

What happens to a file that has not been used in a long time?

Career Resources will keep your credential file for ten years after the last time it was used. **If a file has not been used in a ten-year period of time, it will be destroyed.** Candidates are encouraged to keep their resume and letters of recommendation current and up to date. Out of date materials will not be an asset in a job search. The time to update letters of recommendation is before you need them. A good rule is to update them every 3 to 4 years. Updating records constitutes use and the file will be kept active.

REMEMBER – FILES THAT ARE NOT USED OR ACCESSED FOR 10 YEARS WILL BE DESTROYED!