

## Notes on Job Market recommendation letters

Keep in mind that I am not able to monitor application deadlines. Job candidates need to stay on top of that and will have to pursue faculty for recommendation letters themselves. It takes me very little time to process requests to upload or send letters. It takes A LOT of time to write letters. Plan accordingly.

Recommenders should send pdfs of their letters--on official letterhead and signed—to [gradinfo@econs.umass.edu](mailto:gradinfo@econs.umass.edu). I will keep them confidential. Even if recommenders prefer to send their letters themselves, it is useful for me to have copies for those instances where job applications require all letters to be sent at the same time.

AEA/JOE (<https://www.aeaweb.org/joe/>) is the most sophisticated of the dossier services we'll be using. Bear in mind that the system is designed so that, as a proxy, I'm providing a service to the recommender, NOT the job candidate. Recommenders have, or create, an account in AEA/JOE. Logged in to their account, faculty are able to assign me (Mark Landeryou at [gradinfo@econs.umass.edu](mailto:gradinfo@econs.umass.edu)) as their surrogate. AEA/JOE sends me a notice that I've been appointed a surrogate by such-and-such a recommender, and, if all goes well, I'm able to confirm the arrangement. That done, the next step is for the recommender (or me, their surrogate) to identify individual job candidates for whom we are furnishing letters. This will work only after the job candidates have set up AEA accounts of their own. (AEA conference sign-in ids are not necessarily membership accounts.) Note that candidates may need to adjust their profile settings to 'public'. (This is the error message a letter writer or proxy can get from a candidate search with a unique email address: *"No search results found. If the candidate you are looking for does not have a public profile they will need to be the one who adds you as their letter writer."* This problem goes away when the candidate adjusts their profile setting, but it also suggests that candidates can choose letter writers from their accounts.) Once job candidates have been matched to recommenders, letters can be uploaded, assigned expiration dates, and marked for automatic delivery.

When a job candidate applies to an AEA/JOE-listed job, they are asked to identify their recommender through a search screen using the recommender's name and/or professional e-mail address (NOT [gradinfo@econs.umass.edu](mailto:gradinfo@econs.umass.edu)). If the recommender has already uploaded a letter and marked it for automatic mailing, then the letter is sent immediately, and both the job candidate and their recommender (and the proxy) will be able to see (and confirm) where it was sent and when.

For EconJobMarket (<https://www.econjobmarket.org/>), like AEA/JOE, candidates identify recommenders by their name and e-mail address: e.g., Michael Ash [mash@econs.umass.edu](mailto:mash@econs.umass.edu). There's a search screen. See <http://econjobmarketblog.blogspot.com/> for a pretty good set of instructions for both recommenders and candidates (don't neglect to go all the way to the bottom of that page to see Notes for Junior Candidates (2)). Recommenders, if they don't want to upload letters themselves, need to assign me (Mark Landeryou at [gradinfo@econs.umass.edu](mailto:gradinfo@econs.umass.edu)) as proxy. Once that's done, I (as proxy) or the recommender (if they are not using a proxy) need to wait for the candidate to initiate their first job application through EJM in which they identify the recommender (Michael Ash at [mash@econs.umass.edu](mailto:mash@econs.umass.edu), NOT Mark Landeryou at [gradinfo@econs.umass.edu](mailto:gradinfo@econs.umass.edu), NOT Michael Ash at [gradinfo@econs.umass.edu](mailto:gradinfo@econs.umass.edu)). EJM actually vets recommenders, so it's important they get real email addresses. With that first application, EJM will associate the job candidate's name with the recommender's account, and the recommender (or I, as their proxy) will be able to upload a recommendation letter for automatic delivery. For future job applications through EJM, when candidates specify recommenders they have used before, their letters will be sent automatically until the expiration limit turns off automatic delivery. (The default expiration limit is 90 days. I recommend setting this, instead, to one year.) As with AEA/JOE, both candidates and recommenders can see a history of where and when letters were sent. Keep in mind that EJM is VERY sparing of their email notifications. When a job candidate applies for their first job they need to contact me or their recommenders to remind them to upload letters. EJM won't do that automatically.

Interfolio (see <http://support.interfolio.com/>) is a bit different. Interfolio doesn't use proxies or surrogates. To get recommendation letters through this service, we start with my setting up an Interfolio account for [gradinfo@econs.umass.edu](mailto:gradinfo@econs.umass.edu). (That's done.) When a job candidate wants a recommendation letter from someone who is willing to work through me, they log in to their Interfolio account, hit the 'Letters' button on their dashboard, and, under "My Letters of Recommendation", click 'request form'. Candidates fill out this form one of two ways, depending

on who is going to upload the recommendation letter. If the recommender is going to do it himself, then you would use his real name and email address. If I am to upload letters, then the candidate completes a separate request form for each recommender using *their* name and *MY* email address: e.g., Michael Ash at gradinfo@econs.umass.edu, Carol Heim at gradinfo@econs.umass.edu, etc. In either case, the form automatically generates an email which guides the recipient (the recommender or me) through the upload process. *[In 2018 Interfolio began rejecting multiple recommenders using the same email address. If this remains the case, you may use my other two email addresses: mlanderyou@econs.umass.edu and mlanderyou@umass.edu. It's not a good solution, but it's what we have.]* Once the letters are uploaded the job candidate can re-use them for other job applications. Unlike AEA/JOE and EconJobMarket, I won't know what applications have been filed after that first letter request, though job candidates should be able to see a history of their requests. Note: letters are uploaded with default titles that the candidate will want to change for subsequent job applications. Candidates can do this easily from their account. (On the first screen after you log in, click on 'Materials'.) I can't do it from mine.

One other site is worth knowing about: Academic Jobs Online (<https://academicjobsonline.org/ajo>). If I am to upload letters to AJO, you should use my email (gradinfo@econs.umass.edu) as your reference writer on your coversheet and check the box "*must check here if the person above will upload letters on behalf of multiple writers*". AJO's FAQs are helpful, though a little confusing to navigate.

For most of these services I have collected sample screens that I'm happy to share with you.

For job applications through in-house services, you'll have to use your best judgment in following their instructions. So far, these have followed the Interfolio model, with the exception that they're typically one-off arrangements: They send emails to whatever email addresses you specify; those emails guide the letter upload process; once the upload is done the letter uploader's role is over.

Candidates: One final, important, note about non-UMass letters... AEA/JOE and EJM permit their recommenders to assign only one proxy at a time. That means that if a UMass job candidate seeks a letter from a non-UMass recommender, if that non-UMass recommender makes me her proxy, she will have to take full responsibility for all the other non-UMass job candidates she's writing letters for. In other words, if she has other non-UMass students she is writing for she will need to sign into AEA/JOE or EJM herself to upload or maintain those letters. She will also need to understand that I will be able to see all those letters. You should assume that your non-UMass recommenders have their own non-UMass proxies who can upload letters to AEA/JOE and EJM. You'll still be able to see that the letters are available and see where they've been sent. I will not be able to see this. Be sure, though, to have your non-UMass recommenders send me copies of your letter so that I will have them on file to satisfy requests made outside of AEA/JOE or EJM.

Faculty: the flip side of this is that if you have non-UMass students for whom you are writing letters, you should work closely with your recommendees to be sure they understand the process. Specifically, you should upload their letters yourself to AEA/JOE and EJM, or have me, as your proxy, do it. Then you and your recommendee should probably decide how best to fill their other job application requests. If they belong, or have belonged, to a university, there's a good chance they have their own departmental person collecting letters and filling requests. In that case you (or I) should email a copy of your letter to the appropriate person in their home department. If they don't have a home department, then I'm willing to help as a service to you.

Mark Landeryou  
Graduate Program Manager  
Economics  
Crotty Hall 102  
(413)545-2082