HCEC ORIENTATION
CORNELL ALUMNI
2013-2014 HCEC CYCLE
FOR MATRICULATION IN 2015
This Orientation is for Cornell alumni applying for medical school matriculation in fall 2015.
Overview

This presentation addresses:
• The HCEC- Who we are and what we do
• What you will need to do and when
• Timeline and Deadlines
Although it is not mandatory for alumni registrants to follow undergraduate timelines, timeliness is very important for all registrants throughout the medical school application process.
What exactly is the HCEC?
Health Careers Evaluation Committee

The HCEC staff consists of the:
Committee Chair
HCEC Manager
Records Coordinator
Summer Editors
and...
Health Careers Evaluation Committee

~100 faculty and administrative staff volunteers who serve as interviewers for one or more undergraduate registrants.
Primary goal of the HCEC:

To prepare a **Letter of Evaluation** for Cornell juniors, seniors, and alumni who are applying to post-graduate, doctoral-level, degree granting programs in the human health professions.
Planning to apply to a school of...

The HCEC is here for you.

*Allopathic Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, Optometry, Dentistry, Podiatry
Why have a Health Careers Evaluation Committee?
To help medical school admissions offices more efficiently review the large number of applications they receive.
The Letter of Evaluation (the HCEC Letter) is often the most heavily weighted qualitative element in the decision to offer an applicant a personal interview.
What is the HCEC Letter?
The HCEC Letter Includes:

- Letter of Evaluation (Prepared by the HCEC)
- 2 – 3 Letters of Recommendation
- Cornell Profile Sheet
The Letter of Evaluation (LoE) is a concise, individualized presentation of a candidate’s attributes.

LoE ≠ LoR

The LoE is NOT a letter of recommendation.
The HCEC Letter is positive in tone. We provide an overall evaluation of each individual so all letters are not equally positive.

It is holistic, and honest.
Evaluation, Not Recommendation

The LoE interprets your undergraduate experience, and what you have done since graduation, in terms of:

- Academic record
- Service, clinical, and other activities (including research)
- Personal background and experiences
Academic achievement is the BASE!

High achievement in other endeavors complements but does not trade off or replace the academic record.
Note that the highest likelihood of acceptance into medical school is on the 1st time that you apply. You will need to decide when you are going to be the most ready.
Health Careers Advisor

Speak with an advisor about when is the best time to apply.
Do I have to use the HCEC?
No, and once 3 or 4 years have passed since graduation, the undergraduate school’s committee letter loses its relevance.

But…
For those alumni who graduated more recently, admissions officers prefer applicants to use their school’s committee if the school has one.
When schools note that a recent Cornell graduate does not have a committee letter, they may call us to inquire.

They may call you for an explanation.

This can delay the review process.
Services For Non-registrants

- Participation in HCEC is optional.
- You may request, a “non-registrant letter” which we will provide to you explaining that you simply chose not to use the HCEC.
Cornell’s HCEC

Other undergraduate school evaluation committees reporting higher acceptance rates than Cornell’s, in almost all cases, have selective criteria for providing their service.

Cornell’s HCEC, however, will write a letter for any eligible applicant. Use of our service is optional.
Eligibility

All Cornell students and alumni who have completed at least 30 graded, undergraduate credit hours at Cornell are eligible to register.
If you are unsure about your readiness for success, speak to an advisor.
Health Careers Advising
We are NOT Advisors

But we do advise you to consult advisors liberally!

Anything shared with an advisor is private, confidential, and not shared with the HCEC.
Health Careers Advisor

Speak with an advisor about when is the best time to apply.
Remember that the highest likelihood of acceptance into medical school is on the 1st time that you apply. An advisor can help you develop a successful application strategy.
Please direct advising questions to a Health Careers Advisor:

A&S   Ana Adinolfi, anaadinolfi@cornell.edu

CALS  Cate Thompson, ct30@cornell.edu

ENG   Beth Howland, bah18@cornell.edu

HE    Paula Jacobs, pj24@cornell.edu
      Cha-Sook You, cy12@cornell.edu

http://www.career.cornell.edu/paths/health/advisors.cfm
Please direct advising questions to a
Health Careers Advisor:

Cornell Career Services, Barnes Hall
TBA, (607) 255-5296

Office of Undergraduate Biology

Bonnie Comella, bec3@cornell.edu
Wendy Aquadro, gsa8@cornell.edu
Jeff McCaffrey, jm298@cornell.edu
Colleen Kearns, cmk4@cornell.edu

http://www.career.cornell.edu/paths/health/advisors.cfm
Be sure to update your CCNet profile to ensure that you are receiving announcements of upcoming programs and other Health Career-related information and opportunities.

https://cornell-students.experience.com/experience/login
Health Careers Advising

Recorded Sessions

- Interviewing at Health Career Schools
- Interviewing with the HCEC and the Interviewer’s Perspective
- How to Choose Medical/Dental Schools – Student Panel
- Summer Opportunities for Health Career Students
- Career Paths for Health and Medicine Alumni Panel

http://www.career.cornell.edu/resources/media/health.cfm
How does the HCEC Evaluation Process Work?
An HCEC staff writer drafts a letter evaluating your readiness for training towards a medical profession, based on your:

- academic record
- service activities
- clinical exposure
- research experience
- extracurricular activities
It then undergoes a final review, to be sure that it is in the most comprehensive form and that it represents you accurately.
How does the HCEC Evaluate Candidates?
The strength of the HCEC Letter correlates with the extent of your Cornell experience and what you have done since graduation. We evaluate through the date that you submit your online registration. Events taking place after you register are not included in the HCEC Letter.
Qualitative, non-academic factors are an important part of the HCEC evaluation.
We interpret your qualities as a candidate based on the information about your experiences provided in your:

- Online registration documents,
- Background Information Form
- Personal Statement
- Letters of Recommendation
Alumni registrants are not interviewed as part of the HCEC process and HCEC interviews are not available to alumni registrants.
To prepare for potential medical school interviews, use the CCS Interview Prep Tool within Optimal Resume.

Alumni may use Optimal Resume for 3 months free of charge.

Includes sample medical school and dental school admissions interviews created by CCS.

https://cornell.optimalresume.com/
Alumni letters are written based on the registration documents such as the BIF, PS, transcripts, and letters of recommendation.

As such, the registration documents are important for alumni letters, and so the BIF and PS should be completed in a careful and thorough manner.
Through your registration documents, explain how your involvement in activities enhances your candidacy.
The HCEC Does **NOT** Evaluate:

- Activities expected to occur during or after you submit the online registration,
- Performance on standardized tests,
- Undergraduate activities or coursework that took place on another campus* (although we may refer to these in the HCEC Letter).

*With the exception of off-campus, Cornell-sponsored programs, such as the Urban Semester
While we primarily write about undergraduate experiences, we will include post-graduate activities and events for alumni in the HCEC Letter.
In rare situations, the HCEC may estimate that a registrant is not sufficiently prepared to apply during the current cycle.

If so, the HCEC will contact the registrant to discuss this view and present possible options.
At the applicant’s request, the HCEC will still submit the HCEC Letter.

Alternatively, the applicant may choose to put their file “on hold” and register in a subsequent year.
The highest likelihood of acceptance into medical school is on the 1st time that you apply. You need to decide when you are the most ready.
What do Medical Schools want the HCEC to address?
Interpersonal Competencies
Service Orientation

Demonstrates a desire to help others and sensitivity to others’ needs and feelings; demonstrates a desire to alleviate others’ distress; recognizes and acts on his/her responsibilities to society; locally, nationally, and globally.

aamc.org/initiatives/admissionsinitiative/competencies/
Social Skills

Demonstrates an awareness of others’ needs, goals, feelings, and the ways that social and behavioral cues affect peoples’ interactions and behaviors; adjusts behaviors appropriately in response to these cues; treats others with respect.
Cultural Competence

Demonstrates knowledge of socio-cultural factors that affect interactions and behaviors; shows an appreciation and respect for multiple dimensions of diversity; recognizes and acts on the obligation to inform one’s own judgment; engages diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, citizenship, and work; recognizes and appropriately addresses bias in themselves and others; interacts effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.
Teamwork

Works collaboratively with others to achieve shared goals; shares information and knowledge with others and provides feedback; puts team goals ahead of individual goals.
Oral Communication

Effectively conveys information to others using spoken words and sentences; listens effectively; recognizes potential communication barriers and adjusts approach or clarifies information as needed.
Intrapersonal Competencies
Behaves in an honest and ethical manner; cultivates personal and academic integrity; adheres to ethical principles and follows rules and procedures; resists peer pressure to engage in unethical behavior and encourages others to behave in honest and ethical ways; develops and demonstrates ethical and moral reasoning.
Consistently fulfills obligations in a timely and satisfactory manner; takes responsibility for personal actions and performance.
Resilience and Adaptability

Demonstrates tolerance of stressful or changing environments or situations and adapts effectively to them; is persistent, even under difficult situations; recovers from setbacks.
Sets goals for continuous improvement and for learning new concepts and skills; engages in reflective practice for improvement; solicits and responds appropriately to feedback.
Thinking and Reasoning Competencies
Critical Thinking

Uses logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.
Quantitative Reasoning

Applies quantitative reasoning and appropriate mathematics to describe or explain phenomena in the natural world.
Scientific Inquiry

Applies knowledge of the scientific process to integrate and synthesize information, solve problems and formulate research questions and hypotheses; is facile in the language of the sciences and uses it to participate in the discourse of science and explain how scientific knowledge is discovered and validated.
Written Communication

Effectively conveys information to others using written words and sentences.
Science Competencies
Living Systems

Applies knowledge and skill in the natural sciences to solve problems related to molecular and macro systems including biomolecules, molecules, cells, and organs.
Human Behavior

Applies knowledge of the self, others, and social systems to solve problems related to the psychological, socio-cultural, and biological factors that influence health and well-being.
What Does the HCEC Need from Me?
The HCEC File

✓ Registration Parts 1-3 (questionnaires, forms, and fees)
✓ Transcripts
✓ Letters of Recommendation
✓ HCEC Checklist (including sending a PDF of your submitted primary medical school application)
Use your Checklist to complete your HCEC File.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Checklist</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Click the red checkbox after you have performed the required task. You will not be allowed to “uncheck” a box after marking a task complete. Black checkboxes will be marked automatically by the system.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Expand/minimize all</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Readiness Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>05/15/2013 □ I have carefully considered the opportunities available to me and decided that I am ready to apply in Summer 2013 to schools of human medicine for matriculation in Fall 2014. <a href="#">Link to advising</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Note: If at any time before HCEC releases your Letter you decide not to apply this cycle, please notify the HCEC by email.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Readings and Forms</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>05/15/2013 □ I am aware that I am responsible for reading and understanding materials posted in the Process Overview and Readings pages, and staying up-to-date with newly published Required Readings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>05/15/2013 □ I am aware that I may ‘like’ the HCEC Facebook page, for HCEC notifications, e.g. Required Readings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>05/15/2013 □ I am aware that I may elect to receive emails about health careers opportunities and events (e.g. scholarships, Internships, workshops) through my CCNet profile settings, by selecting ‘Health Careers Notices’ in the ‘Career Services Desired’ section. <a href="#">Link to CCNet</a></td>
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<td>05/15/2013 □ I am aware that the AAMC Fee Assistance Program (FAP) will begin accepting applications on 1/3/13. <a href="#">Link to FAP website</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec-Jan</td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ You are registered as a(n) Undergraduate Registrant.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Non-Cornell Transcripts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>05/15/2013 □ I have finished entering names of ALL non-Cornell colleges I attended after high school. <a href="#">Link to form</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>05/15/2013 □ I have arranged for all non-Cornell transcripts to be delivered to the HCEC by the deadline. Note: HCEC will obtain your Cornell transcript.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>05/15/2013 □ HCEC has received all of my non-Cornell transcripts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Letters of Recommendation (LoRs)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Based on your status as a(n) Undergraduate Registrant you will not have an interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Delivery Authorization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Application to Human Health Professional Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>not complete</td>
<td>▶ File Complete and HCEC Letter Release Queue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>not complete</td>
<td>▶ Letter Release</td>
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Accessing the Online File and Checklist

HEALTH CAREERS EVALUATION COMMITTEE (HCEC)

The HCEC serves Cornellians who apply to health professional schools and who request a university letter of evaluation. The letter of evaluation—which is not a letter of recommendation—is a comprehensive written review of the applicant’s candidacy for the health career of his or her choice. The HCEC prepares the letter of evaluation and appends the applicant’s letters of recommendation to it. The HCEC serves applicants to schools of allopathic and osteopathic medicine, dentistry, optometry, and podiatry.

THE COMPLETE HCEC LETTER INCLUDES:

- The Letter of Evaluation composed by the HCEC
- 2-3 Letters of Recommendation
- A profile sheet describing the Cornell academic experience

Medical school applicants who elect not to use HCEC’s service may request a “non-registrant letter” from the HCEC.
HCEC registration is an annual service. You must re-register with the HCEC for each application cycle in which you intend to use the HCEC’s services. Registration for the 2013-2014 HCEC cycle, for matriculation in 2015, will open in December, 2013, for all registrants.

HCEC registration requires a NetID. If you do not have a NetID, please see the CIT website to learn how to get one, whether or not you are currently on campus.

**CURRENT HCEC REGISTRATION AND ONLINE FILE**

**HISTORICAL HCEC ONLINE FILE FOR PREVIOUS REGISTRANTS**
Accessing your HCEC Checklist

HCEC Online File

Register/Login to complete your HCEC registration and file.

Your HCEC checklist must be completed through the "file completed" in order for your HCEC letter to be written and released. This is the way we communicate: HCEC and registrant will both enter information on the HCEC checklist.

Enter your HCEC Registration and Checklist
Required Readings

- Read the Required Readings provided in your Online File.
- Check regularly for new Readings.
HCEC Process
Three-Part Registration: Part 1

- Registration Intent Questionnaire (RIQ)
- 20 Questions (20Q) (answer in narrative form)

This 20Q form is not sent to the HCEC.

The 20Q is a private, personal working document for self-assessment of readiness to apply. Some responses can be pasted directly into the HCEC Background Information Form (BIF).

The 20Q will become very useful when completing medical school secondary applications.
The 20Q*  

The 20Q is a questionnaire designed to provide you with a comprehensive self-assessment of:

- your preparation,
- your readiness for application, and
- the strength of your background as a candidate for any health career.

To discuss your 20Q, contact your Health Careers Advisor
Registration Part 2

- Background Information Form (BIF)
- Personal Statement (PS)
- Photograph
  (of you, alone, in a professional or neutral setting, file size under 1 MB, named Last_FirstPHO.jpg)

Submit Online
Categorizes your activities, (e.g. service, clinical, etc.)
Describes your activities,
Demonstrates your time commitment, and dedication to the activity,
Explains how your participation in activities allowed you to develop your core competencies.
PS
(Personal Statement)

- Demonstrates your ability to reflect on your life with perspective and to communicate well in a written format.

- Illuminates your distinctive background, experience, motivation, and preparation for a medical field.

*For information about or help with composing a PS, contact your Health Careers Advisor*
Registration Part 3

- Registration Agreement Form (RAF)
  Original signed paper copy required.

- Fee payment
  Non-refundable registration fee is $190.
  Fee waivers are not available to alumni.

Submit by postal mail
Registration Agreement Form (RAF)

Requires signed statements:

- Integrity in the application process
- File retention
- Purpose of the HCEC packet
- Deadline adherence
- Option to waive FERPA right to access

Submit by postal mail
RAF Download

career.cornell.edu.paths/health/medschool/hcec/index.cfm
Transcripts

- You must arrange for official transcripts to be sent to HCEC for all non-Cornell undergraduate study completed after high school.

- HCEC will retrieve your Cornell transcript.
Study Abroad
Transcripts

Check student center to verify that your **grades** and **course titles** appear on your Cornell transcript. If they do not, you must arrange for transcripts to be sent to HCEC.
Required: 2-3 LoRs, including at least one from a Cornell-affiliated writer.

Enter names as soon as recommenders agree to write your LoR. You may change a name until (but not after) we receive that LoR.

Work with your recommenders to ensure letters are received by the HCEC in a timely manner.
LoRs
(Letters of Recommendation)

*For help selecting and communicating with recommenders, contact Health Careers Advising
File Status and Contact Information

- Review your Checklist periodically to make sure that your information is accurate.

- Keep your phone number, postal mail, and email address up-to-date. We may need to reach you during the letter review process.
After submitting your application (AMCAS, AADSAS, AACOMAS, etc.) email the HCEC a PDF of your dated, submitted application as proof of your submission.
HCEC Letter Release Queue

- Only after completion of the checklist through “file complete” will a letter be placed in the HCEC Letter Release queue.

- The HCEC releases letters primarily in chronological order based on the date of application submission and file completion.

- Watch for a Required Readings with a more detailed explanation of the 2014 Queue protocol.
HCEC Letter Release Timing

- As you wait, check Facebook and your Online File for updates.

  Updates on progress through the Queue, weekly

  See your letter release date, posted immediately after upload

- Do not contact the HCEC to ask when your letter will be released. This only delays the process.
Once your letter is ready, the HCEC office releases it, along with your 2 – 3 LoRs and a Cornell profile sheet, to Interfolio (and/or AADSAS).

A third party document storage and delivery service
You must then go to Interfolio.com and schedule delivery of your letter to the appropriate receiver (i.e. AMCAS, TMDSAS, etc.).

This does not happen automatically.

*Not applicable to AADSAS uploads.*
Interfolio Account
After you pay your HCEC Registration Fee, you receive a complimentary Interfolio account, accessible using a code provided in your Checklist.
New Account – Dossier & Portfolio

Select a Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Year</th>
<th>3 Years</th>
<th>5 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>$19.00</td>
<td>$39.90</td>
<td>$57.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have a special offer code?

Submitting a recommendation? Create a Letter Writer account »

Account Information
Your Interfolio account must be HCEC-coded, or we will be unable to access it and therefore unable to release your HCEC Letter.

If you open an account without the HCEC code, call Interfolio to have them manually connect your account with the HCEC.
You can use this account to upload other credentials, such as LoRs, and distribute them to any legitimate destination.
In your Interfolio account, after your HCEC Letter is released, you must **Schedule Delivery** of your HCEC Letter

**From:**

Interfolio

**To:**

Medical School Application Services and Admissions Committees (i.e. AMCAS, ACOMAS, TMDSAS, etc.)
The letter is then delivered to AMCAS where you must decide to which schools you wish to have it sent. Be sure to review the instructions on the AMCAS website, and discuss with an advisor your application strategy.

More information on this will be provided at the HCEC Spring Briefings in late April 2014.
Deadlines
HCEC Registration Timing

The timing of submission of your HCEC registration materials will influence the timing of your HCEC Letter release.
HCEC Registration Timing

MD/PhD Applicants

Due to the competitiveness for admission to MD/PhD programs, it is important that applicants submit all materials to HCEC, and submit the AMCAS application, as early as possible.
Medical School Deadlines

- Be aware of your medical school deadlines.
  See: www.aamc.org/students/applying/amcas/deadlines/

- HCEC Letter release usually takes many weeks, and may take up to 12 weeks after your checklist is complete.
Alumni registrants are not required to adhere to undergraduate deadlines.

While the sequence of events varies slightly, the Alumni Timeline allows for an earlier or later submission of HCEC registration materials.
Registration materials should be submitted when they are complete.

Applying earlier in the application cycle is recommended, provided that materials are ready and complete.
The HCEC begins writing an alumni registrant’s letter after all materials are submitted.

Note that the registrant’s letter will not be placed in the letter release queue until the checklist is complete and the HCEC has received a .pdf of the AMCAS (or other) application submission.
All registrants should complete the HCEC checklist at least 4 weeks, and preferably 6 weeks, before submitting the AMCAS application, and at least 12 weeks prior to their earliest medical school primary application deadline.
# Alumni HCEC Deadlines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HCEC Step</th>
<th>Recommended Completion</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Registration, including Online File Checklist (through the Delivery Authorization section)</td>
<td>4-6 weeks before you submit your medical school application (i.e. AMCAS), and at least 12 weeks before your earliest medical school deadline</td>
<td>August 31, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDF of medical school primary application</td>
<td>4-6 weeks before you submit your medical school application (i.e. AMCAS), and at least 12 weeks before your earliest medical school deadline</td>
<td>No deadline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you wish to register after the deadline:

- You must write to the HCEC Chair for a waiver to register late (which may be granted or denied).
- We cannot guarantee that we will release your letter at the same time as registrants who have adhered to our deadlines.
- Your timeliness with us directly reflects on the timing of your letter release.
Re-registering with the HCEC

Resume, Reactivate, or Update
Putting your file “On Hold”

- Email the HCEC stating your decision.

- Your registration and supporting documents will be retained for 5 years (per retention agreement signed in the RAF).
You may “Resume” before or after graduating, provided your letter was not released (i.e. to Interfolio).

- Complete a new registration (BIF, PS).
- Your LoRs and transcripts remain on file.
- You may replace each old LoR with an updated letter by the same writer.
- If you had three LoRs on file, you may add one by an additional writer, for a total of four.
- Fee: $0 if paid previously, otherwise $190
Sometimes HCEC Registrants do not gain admission on their first application attempt and wish to reapply in a subsequent cycle using HCEC services. In these situations, the HCEC registrant chooses to:

**Reactivate or Update**

For more information, please see the Process Overview page of the HCEC website.

http://www.career.cornell.edu/pathways/health/medschool/hcec/process.cfm
An Update HCEC Letter contains both the original HCEC Letter and a supplemental new HCEC Letter. The updated element is an additional LoE that evaluates how you spent your time since the last HCEC Letter was prepared.

The fee for Updating registrants is $75.
Reactivate

A Reactivating registrant’s original HCEC Letter is released again for use in a new application cycle. No changes are permitted to the HCEC Letter.

Reactivating registrants need only register online through the HCEC Online File, mail the Registration Agreement Form and fee, and renew their Interfolio account.

The fee for Reactivating registrants is $50.
Who’s Who in 210 Barnes Hall
HCEC Chair

Dr. F.A. Kallfelz

- Reviews file.
- Edits/prepares/approves final draft.
HCEC Manager

Douglas Lockwood

- Recruits faculty to serve as HCEC interviewers.
- Matches you with your interviewer.
- Edits/prepares/reviews final draft.
- Represents HCEC at on campus and community events.
- Supervises Editors and Records Coordinator.
Records Coordinator

Lisa Strauss

- Compiles your electronic and paper credentials folder.
- Maintains your HCEC Online File.
- Releases the HCEC Letter to Interfolio.
- Responds best to email: HCEC@cornell.edu and to questions not answered elsewhere.
Summer Editors

- Edits/prepares HCEC letter draft.
Throughout this Process

If you are feeling confused or unsure...
Consult your Readings.
Seek guidance.
Ask for help.

We want you to succeed!