Drafting a Letter of Recommendation

One of the benefits of doing research is that you will get to know your mentor well, and they will be able to write a detailed letter of recommendation on your behalf when you move on to the next step of your academic or professional career. As you begin the research experience, reflect on the expectations and goals you establish with your mentor. Consider what you would like them to be able to say about you at the end of the research experience and complete this draft letter of recommendation.

[*Date*]

Dear Selection Committee,

I am writing this letter in support of [*your name*], who is applying to [*your dream job*]. I believe [*your name*] is an excellent candidate for this position because

1)

2)

3)

Over the past summer, [*your name*] has worked in my research group in the Department of Astronomy at UT-Austin as part of the TAURUS research program. [*your name*] is very skilled in the following areas

1)

2)

3)

In short, I believe that [*your name*] would be a wonderful asset to your department/program/unit. I strongly recommend [*your name*].

Sincerely,

[*your mentor*]

Do the things outlined in this letter align with the goals and expectations you established with your mentor? If not, how can you adjust your goals and expectations so that you will have the opportunity to engage in activities that allow your mentor to comment on these things?

While this exercise is meant to help you get the most out of your summer research experience, it can also be a useful tool for your actual letter of recommendation. Consider filling out this form at the end of the summer and giving it to your mentor.