

Rhodes and Marshall Scholarships

Tips for Preparing an Application

□ **Start Early**

Talk to your advisor, professors and someone at the UAA Office about your plans. Take advantage of co-curricular and extra-curricular [learning opportunities at UW-Madison](#) and in the community. Find your intellectual passion and decide how you want to make a difference in the world. Start working on your application in earnest the summer before it is due.

- #### □ **Research your choice of universities (Marshall), and academic programs (Rhodes and Marshall).** The presentation of a compelling reason why you want to study in the U.K. is essential for a successful application. Talk with professors in your field to get their input on programs, or referrals to professors who can better assist you. See the [Researching British Universities](#) resource sheet for links to helpful online resources.

□ **Choose your recommenders carefully and help them write strong letters for you.**

Choose professors or individuals who know you and your work, and can write favorable, detailed letters for you (for example, a professor who supervised your research or senior thesis). Recommenders should be able to write statements that apply only to you and that cannot be gleaned from your résumé.

- Schedule a meeting to talk with each recommender; tell them how the Rhodes or Marshall fits your long-term educational and career goals.
- Provide recommenders with a copy of your application materials such as the (draft) personal statement, transcript(s), activities list/résumé, and a copy of “Characteristics of Effective Recommendation Letters for Rhodes and Marshall Candidates” (available for download from the UAA website).
- Give recommenders sufficient time to write the letter (at least six weeks), and send them respectful reminders as the due date approaches.

□ **Spend significant time on your personal statement, get feedback and revise, revise, revise.**

The personal statement is a vital component of the Rhodes and Marshall applications. Many scholars work through over dozen drafts of their personal essay.

- Sign up for an individual session at the [Writing Center](#). Many UW scholars attribute their success in part to the feedback they received from the professionals who work there.
- Read copies of successful essays. You can pick up samples from UW scholars at the UAA Office (271 Bascom Hall, awards@provost.wisc.edu).
- Get advice from the experts at scholarship foundations:
[The Definition of a Personal Statement](#)
[The Rhodes Scholarship: Tips for Truman Scholars and other College Students](#)
(See the section on “Writing an Effective Personal Statement”)

□ **Keep up with current events.**

Be prepared to discuss current events at the campus and regional interview. Expect questions about controversial issues, and how current events may relate to your field of study or classes you’ve taken. Also be prepared to discuss books you’ve read recently, art you find interesting, your mentors and the historical figure(s) you admire. Regularly read a respected newspaper—such as *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*.

- #### □ **Useful links** put together by Professor Johann Sommerville, Chair of the UW-Madison Rhodes and Marshall Scholarship Selection Committee

<http://history.wisc.edu/sommerville/rhodesmarshall.htm>