

**RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS – 2009**  
**LETTERS OF APPRAISAL FOR THE UNITED STATES RHODES SCHOLARSHIPS**  
**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS OCTOBER 13, 2009**

The Committee of Selection will be grateful if those providing letters of appraisal will provide a candid statement regarding this applicant's qualifications for a Rhodes Scholarship.

The Committee will have available for study a copy of the applicant's academic transcript, a statement of the applicant's academic and other interests and reasons for wishing to study at Oxford, and a statement of extracurricular activities and interests. Detailed information which can enrich the Committee's understanding of these records will be especially welcomed.

Proven intellectual and academic quality of a high standard is the first quality required of applicants. The intellectual standard sought is very high. It is unlikely that a candidate will be successful unless he or she is sufficiently able academically to be admitted to one of America's most selective graduate schools.

Beyond academic distinction, however, candidates will also be required to show integrity of character, interest in and respect for their fellow beings, the ability to lead, and the energy to use their talents to the full. Mr. Rhodes believed that the last of these qualities was best tested through participation and success in sports. Participation in organized sports is not essential if applicants are able to demonstrate in other ways the physical vigor which will enable Rhodes Scholars to make an effective contribution to the world around them. Mr. Rhodes clearly expected such a contribution when he expressed the hope that Rhodes Scholars would come to "esteem the performance of public duties as [their] highest aim." From this statement one may infer that he expected his Scholars to play an influential part in the betterment of society, wherever their careers might take them. It does not necessarily presuppose a career in the public sector. Mr. Rhodes desired that his Scholars be intellectually, morally, and physically capable of leadership in any field.

Much of the distinctiveness of the Rhodes Scholarship arises from this comprehensive set of criteria. Intellectual excellence is obviously required, but not in isolation from other qualities. Mr. Rhodes sought Scholars who were more than "mere bookworms;" he wanted their intellectual talents to be combined with concern for others. Thus the Committees of Selection assign the highest importance to this blend of character with intellect.

**NOTES OF GUIDANCE FOR LETTERS OF APPRAISAL**

Referees should note that letters of appraisal submitted on behalf of a successful applicant will be used by Oxford colleges for determining the Rhodes Scholar-elect's suitability for admission. In the case of proposed graduate study, these letters will also be evaluated to ascertain the Rhodes Scholar-elect's qualifications for such advanced work. Consequently, detailed assessments of the applicant's academic qualifications will be particularly helpful.

It is not expected that referees will be able to speak from first-hand knowledge of the applicant's qualifications under all criteria. If acquainted with the applicant through a teacher/pupil relationship, it is expected that the appraisal will concentrate on academic quality and potential (bearing in mind that the appraisal will be used for admissions procedures at Oxford University), although assessment of the other qualities sought in a Rhodes Scholar will be very welcome to the Committee. If, on the other hand, acquaintance with the applicant is through non-academic interests, it is expected the appraisal will concentrate on assessment of character in the knowledge that the Committee is looking for persons who show promise of outstanding achievement in later life. Please do not hesitate to speak of the applicant's limitations as well as strong points. Committees tend naturally to be dubious of appraisals that imply a given individual has no limitations whatever.

The Committee deeply appreciates the time and help referees devote to the appraisal process on behalf of applicants.

For those unable to make use of the online process, mailing addresses for Rhodes District Secretaries may be found on page M-4 of the United States Memorandum of Regulations. See [www.rhodes scholar.org](http://www.rhodes scholar.org).