

Bates College

Scholarship and Fellowship Guide

2006 – 2007

The Graduate Fellowships and Watson Fellowship Committees support applications by Bates students and alumni for top competitive fellowships that fund graduate study and sometimes travel. The committees are comprised of faculty and staff who offer guidance to current students and alumni interested in applying for the major awards listed below. For more information, please see the Graduate Fellowships & Scholarships Homepage at www.bates.edu/career/fellowship/ or contact Mariah Bumps or Sagaree Sengupta.

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About Grants and Grantsmanship:

“Grant” is a generic term, meaning “the bestowing of property upon another.” For our purposes, a grant is the money awarded to an individual or institution for a specific academic or research purpose. It is often used interchangeably with the words *award*, *fellowship* and *scholarship*.

“Grantsmanship,” or “the art of obtaining grants,” is developed through applying for various forms of educational and project funding. Even though only a small percentage of applicants succeed in their pursuit of any given award, those with good grantsmanship skills tend to do well in competitions. You may be asking yourself, “If only a small percentage achieve their goal, why do so many apply?” And more specifically, “What’s in this for me?”

Benefits of the grant application process are many, regardless of outcome, and often subtle. Aside from the tangible benefit, one reward is the opportunity you gain to formulate and narrate your life goals for an audience. Learning grantsmanship is a cumulative process— future applications will be easier once you know more about what to expect; and if you’ve been successful once, you will carry a proven track record forward. Grantsmanship is an asset for graduate studies, and for your future professional life.

Selection committees often review hundreds, if not thousands of applications each year. While they do their best to make careful choices, subjective considerations can come into play. Understand that decisions are unpredictable, and that there are many qualified candidates in the pool.

If you are not successful the first time around, be sure to investigate the possibility of **reapplying** for an award at a later date. The Graduate Fellowships Committee is available to help recent Bates alumni with the application process, too. Check individual competition guidelines for age limits and whether or not funding opportunities are available to those already in graduate programs.

Bates-Supported Scholarships and Fellowships

This guide contains information on select major scholarships and fellowships available to juniors, seniors, **and alumni** considering post-baccalaureate education. Contingent on the sponsoring body's mission, they may be used for graduate or professional education, independent research projects, teaching assistantships, and/or travel.

For **deadlines** and campus application schedules for the fellowships below, please see <http://www.bates.edu/graduate-program-calendar.xml> Below is a list of the major fellowships supported by the Graduate Fellowships and Watson Committees and their staffs.

For Seniors:

Winston Churchill Scholarship

<http://www.winstonchurchillfoundation.org/Scholarships.html>

Jacob K. Javits Fellowship

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits/index.html>

Rhodes Scholarship

www.rhodesscholar.org

British Marshall Scholarship

www.marshallscholarship.org

George J. Mitchell Scholarship

<http://www.us-irelandalliance.org/scholarships.html>

Fulbright Fellowship

<http://us.fulbrightonline.org/home.html>

Fanny & John Hertz Fellowship

<http://www.hertzfndn.org/>

Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship

<http://www.pdsoros.org/>

Thomas J. Watson Fellowship *

<http://www.watsonfellowship.org/site/index.html>

<http://www.bates.edu/Prebuilt/2006watsoninstructions.pdf>

- *All inquiries regarding this fellowship should be directed to the campus liaison officer: **Nancy Kleckner**, Biology Department, 312 Carnegie Science Hall; Telephone: 207-786-8201; Email: nkleckne@bates.edu*

National Science Foundation Fellowship

<http://www.distinguishedscholarships.unc.edu/scholarships/science.html>

<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/>

(deadlines vary by discipline, please check websites)

Ford Foundation Fellowship

<http://www.fordfound.org/news/more/11272000ifp/index.cfm>

Gates Cambridge Scholarship

<http://www.gates.scholarships.cam.ac.uk/>

(deadlines vary by discipline, check the website)

James Madison Memorial Fellowship

<http://www.jamesmadison.com/>

Jack Kent Cooke Fellowship

http://www.jackkentcooke.org/jkcf_web/content.aspx?page=Grad

For Juniors:

Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship

<http://www.act.org/goldwater/>

Harry S. Truman Scholarship

<http://www.truman.gov/candidates/candidates.htm>

Beinecke Brothers Memorial Scholarship

<http://www.beineckescholarship.org/>

Bates Resources for Grant Applicants

Many other funding opportunities are available apart from the fellowships list above. Grants such as Phillips, Barlow, and Otis support research and

travel for students during their undergraduate careers at Bates. Some grants are administered by the Dean of Students' Office, others by the Dean of Faculty's Office. For a complete listing and contact information, please refer to the **Student Research and Service Learning Support** webpage at <http://www.bates.edu/Research-grants.xml>.

The **Office of Career Services** is another essential resource for information on both **undergraduate** and **postgraduate education** and **funding**. Their staff has print and online resources to aid students in identifying a variety of awards. If you are interested in learning more about competitions other than the ones described here, please contact:

Mariah Bumps, Assistant Director & GFC Liaison
Bates College Office of Career Services
31 Frye Street
Telephone: (207) 786-6232
Fax: 786-6126
Email: mbumps@bates.edu

If you decide you would like to apply for an award from the list designated by the **Graduate Fellowships Committee**, please contact the **Graduate Fellowships Advisor**, who will help you revise your essays in league with the.

Sagaree Sengupta, Graduate Fellowships Advisor
22a Coram Library
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The Writing Workshop is another campus resource that can help you with the prose sections of your application. Tutors there can help you develop and revise your proposals and personal essays. The **Writing Workshop** is located at **53 Campus Avenue**, across from Chase Hall. They may be contacted by phone at **(207) 786-6159**. Check their Website at <http://www.bates.edu/ww.xml> for hours and other helpful information.

Before you apply:

- **Consider your goals** — Are you positive you wish to do academic research or attend graduate school right away? If so, to what end? Selection committees wish to see a significant degree of thought reflected in your writing. Figuring out **what** you want to do, and **why**, will help you shape ideas that demonstrate a project's viability and feasibility.
- **Evaluate your suitability** — Gather as much information as you can about each award's requirements. Determine whether you truly meet the **selection criteria**.
- **Define your priorities** — Identify opportunities that best address your experience and aspirations. Focus your energy on a few appropriate choices.

Questions to ask about specific scholarships:

- Do you have to be formally nominated by your undergraduate institution?
- May only a limited number of students apply from any given institution?
- Are only specific fields of study supported?
- Is the award given only for study at certain institutions?
- Are there citizenship, residence or ethnic origin requirements?
- Do you have to show proof of admission to a graduate education program?
- Must you have an affiliation with an organization or institution in a foreign country?
- Do you have to take the GREs or other standardized tests and submit the scores?
- Must you demonstrate financial need?
- Is there a mandatory service requirement associated with the award?

When studying selection criteria for these fellowships, keep in mind that these are national (and sometimes international) competitions. The candidate pool will be formidable. Anyone interested in these major awards should have demonstrated most if not all of the following traits:

- superior standards of intellectual ability
- scholastic achievement (typically a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or better)
- leadership ability
- commitment to service

- artistic and/or athletic prowess

After you've done your homework, if you still question your suitability for a specific scholarship or fellowship, want to talk about fellowship possibilities, or are ready to start your application, please consult Mariah Bumps, Assistant Director of the Office of Career Services, or Sagaree Sengupta, Graduate Fellowships Advisor. They see a number of candidates over a period of years and generally have a good idea whether any given individual will be competitive.

Managing the Application Process

- **Adhere to a timetable** — Applying for a scholarship or fellowship requires you to accept **firm deadlines**. Applicants must follow the timetable set by Bates College Graduate Fellowship Committee at the behest of the granting agency.
- **Research scholarships thoroughly** — Quickly scanning a foundation website is not enough—study a number of fellowships carefully. Gather as much information as you can about the requirements and assess your compatibility with them. Pay particular attention to written instructions, question-and-answer sections, and information on previous recipients. This takes time, so start your research months or even years ahead.
- **Take stock from time to time** — Beginning your application well ahead of time allows you to periodically step back and look at your application as another might. Try different approaches in your writing, and be objective; don't be afraid to ask for feedback from people who may be knowledgeable in a specific area.
- **Budget your time** — The last few semesters of college and the first few post-graduate years are especially hectic, as you may be applying to graduate schools, involved in extracurricular activities, evaluating job prospects and writing a thesis. Make sure to set aside the time applying for a major award requires. If possible, start your research well before your senior year.
- **Craft superior essays/proposals** — Make the effort to write strong drafts, and be willing to revise according to the advice of the GFA and GFC. Be sure to consult your academic advisors and mentors several times along the way. Be ready to revise and rewrite your application essay(s) many times. A well-constructed application is far more likely to be successful.
- **Assemble all appropriate supporting documents** — It is often said that 'the devil is in the details.' Understand that lacking even one critical item

like a passport photo, official transcript, portfolio, curriculum vitae or letter of recommendation may be enough to throw you out of the running. When assembling materials, check the whole package carefully several times.

- **Interview preparedness** — You will be expected to present yourself appropriately in terms of dress and bearing during application interviews. You should have thorough knowledge of your subject, be able to answer questions clearly and confidently, and perhaps even think ‘outside the box.’ Bring paper and pencil along when you meet with Mariah Bumps in the Office of Career Services, so you can take notes; she will also arrange practice interviews for you. Fellowship websites, the GFC, GFA and OCS can help you be informed about the kind of interview to expect for a particular award. There is no formula that guarantees success. However, finding your own voice and telling the committee honestly what your hopes and ambitions are is always better than delivering an overly rehearsed piece.

Components of the Actual Application

Despite their differences, competitions generally have a core set of common components:

- Application form
- Essays and/or proposals
- Letters of recommendation
- Official undergraduate transcripts

Additionally, certain competitions may require some or all of the following:

- Curriculum vitae (Résumé)
- Photographs
- Passport
- Birth certificates
- Creative portfolio
- Foreign language reports
- Standardized test scores
- Physical exam
- Proof of sponsorship
- Letter of acceptance from a graduate institution
- Sponsorship affiliation from an organization/institution

The Application Form

Most applications are now available for completion online, either through the sponsoring foundation's website, or through contracted service from Embark.com. Still others are downloadable as Adobe Acrobat or Microsoft Word files.

The application form (required by all competitions listed herein) solicits basic biographical information, and is generally the first piece of information reviewed by a selection committee. Therefore, it is important to answer each question thoroughly and succinctly, paying close attention to grammar and spelling. Read it aloud to hear your cadence, tone and style. After you complete a draft of the application, print copies and distribute them to several people whom you know well and who will feel comfortable proofreading the information.

Application materials should always be typed neatly. Some competitions even require the use of specific fonts, font sizes, and numbers of words or characters, so pay close attention to the fine print in instructions.

Many competitions require you to submit an original set of materials, as well as photocopies. Collate and fasten materials securely as specified (for example, the instructions may indicate paperclips rather than staples). Check the photocopies to make sure all pages have been included, and are clean and legible. Sloppiness can and may be held against you by a selection committee.

Transcripts

Transcripts provide a record of your college academic career and current academic and disciplinary standing. As such, they are a vital part of the application package.

All the competitions listed herein require that you submit an **official** college transcript, i.e., one issued by the Registrar's office and sealed inside an envelope with the stamp over the flap. A transcript stamped "issued to student" and provided without such an envelope is **not** considered official.

If you studied elsewhere during your Bates undergraduate career (including Junior Year Abroad), obtain official copies of transcripts from the pertinent institution(s). While credits may show on your Bates transcript, letter grades received elsewhere may not.

Although a few days is usually enough for a transcript request at Bates, registrar's offices at other institutions may require **ample time** for this service: 4-6 weeks might be adequate, but 6-12 weeks is even better, especially in the case of foreign institutions where mail delivery may be slower. Once you have made the request,

be sure to check back every two weeks to make sure nothing has been lost or misplaced.

Many institutions now allow students and alumni to order transcripts online. Others require written requests.

Proposals and Essays

It cannot be stressed enough— **your writing is the most important part of your application**. It is also the only aspect a candidate controls entirely.

It probably goes without saying that this component of the application is the one that applicants find the most intimidating and difficult. Interestingly, you might discover that at the end of the process it was the most rewarding.

Proposals

To craft an inspired proposal, an extensive background or high level of expertise is not always necessary. Even so, preparation, experience, and research are essential. Don't just pull an idea out of a hat! Think it through carefully, and discuss it with mentors to see if it sounds **feasible** and **well-grounded**. Then make sure those who read your application can tell how well-considered and important it is.

There are basically two types of proposals for the awards mentioned here:

- **Study/research proposals** are perhaps the easiest for most candidates to write. They should be objective, methodical and clearly answer questions like “What do you plan to investigate?” “What preparations have you made?” “Why should the chosen institution invest in your inquiry, and what unique advantages does a relationship with you offer? and “What will be the measurable benefit of this work?”
- **Travel proposals** should clearly show your awareness of the potential benefits and difficulties of living/working/studying abroad. Do your homework regarding the area's customs, conditions and regional uncertainties. Mention connections already forged and contingency plans if your intended destination is at all volatile. Showing your adaptability and resourcefulness will strengthen your case. Finally, write convincingly about why and how your proposal will accomplish your important goals.

Essays

Essays are essentially an extension of you—your past experiences, current skills, ongoing interests and future ambitions.

Each granting agency has its own rules regarding the essay. Many foundation websites have examples of past essays posted. Take the time to read them to get a sense of what was successful. Also, the Graduate Fellowships Committee may know of faculty members on campus who have experience with a particular award, and can arrange for you to contact that individual.

Your writing is your opportunity to reach the selection committee, and should create the best impression. An essay should add dimension to the information already contained in a résumé or transcript, instead of merely repeating it. Personal statements should reflect your background, experiences, values and point of view. Focus on your growth and development. Don't be timid about allowing the reader to get a glimpse of your passions and concerns. Ask yourself often, "Is my voice coming through clearly?" Use concrete examples to drive your points home.

Ask faculty members in your department, advisor and peers for feedback--not just in the initial stages, but throughout the redrafting process. Listen, respond and do not become defensive when presented with criticism. Material presented to the GFC should feel like a well-honed final draft — yet, be prepared to revise it again based on committee suggestions.

Most essays and proposals have a finite word or character limit. **You must adhere to them.** Don't force a committee to toss your application out of the running because you didn't follow instructions.

Recommendations

Letters of recommendation are required for each of the major fellowships and scholarships, although the number varies depending on the particular foundation. They are essential as they **authenticate** and **support** claims you make in your application.

Select recommenders carefully. Some awards mandate that all letters be from an academic source: faculty members, deans, administrative personnel, tutors, coaches or supervisors at your institution. Others ask for personal as well as academic references. The latter may come from employers, civic or governmental leaders, professional or volunteer affiliates. If the focus of a grant is academic, recommenders should be able to discuss your intellectual ability, achievements and future promise. Personal references may address your scholastic record, but generally focus more on your activities and character.

It is important to choose trusted individuals with whom you've had prolonged or consistent contact. For those writing academic letters, it is preferable that the contact took place in multiple classroom situations or in an advising capacity, rather than in a single course you took with seventy-nine other students the first semester of your first year.

Roommates, friends, and family are not good sources of recommendations. Likewise, letters from high school contacts should be avoided.

All references should address your personal suitability for the particular competition. That means they need to know about the foundation itself, as well as the details of your proposal or project. When approaching someone to pen a letter on your behalf, make sure you provide them with a comprehensive packet of hard copy materials printed from the website, along with a copy of your application, your curriculum vitae and draft essays/proposals.

Be straightforward and courteous when requesting a letter of recommendation. Talk to potential writers early in the application process. After they agree to your request, follow up with a written note or email that thanks them for their service in advance and once again mention the deadline. Make sure no additional information is needed by the letter writer.

Be sure recommenders know to whom they should address their letters, in what format they are expected (email, electronic submission via a website, print), and where to send them. It is also a courtesy to include stamped, addressed envelopes for their use if print is required.

If you find yourself applying for multiple awards and asking the same people to write more than one letter, ask them to **tailor** each one for the specific goal. Thank them for the extra effort.

The Privacy Act of 1974 allows you to access and control certain materials in your college files in the United States, including recommendations. You have the right to read them unless it is waived via your signature. Many competitions include a waiver on the forms provided to recommenders, so check to see if you need to sign anywhere before relinquishing the document to them.

While we cannot advise you to either waive or not waive your right to recommendations, we can share this:

- Many individuals will not agree to write a recommendation unless it is kept confidential.
- A recommender who agrees to write a letter s/he knows the candidate may read may feel constrained to dilute both the contents and tone.
- It is always best to discuss the waiver with your recommender and to reach a mutually acceptable decision.

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Campus Interviews

The Bates Graduate Fellowships Committee assesses all applications on campus and then decides which are to be forwarded to the appropriate foundations. Help sessions with the Graduate Fellowships Committee are scheduled through Nancy Lepage (nlepage@bates.edu, 786-6480) for campus finalists who must undergo and interview as part of the application process.

Each candidate is required to submit all application materials to Nancy LePage, 7 Lane Hall (Academic Services) by the deadline noted in the Graduate Fellowships Calendar. See <http://www.bates.edu/graduate-program-calendar.xml>. Academic Services will make copies of your application and submit them to committee members for their comments and suggestions.

GFC help sessions are informal and last approximately 30 minutes. Candidates who are off-campus may arrange for teleconference interviews. During an interview, the committee will ask questions, challenge your position, provide feedback and generally assist you in improving your application. There is no way to anticipate every question, so be well-prepared, but be yourself.

Candidates who are approved by the committee for national competition are expected to submit a **revised, final draft** of their essays/proposals to a designated

committee member for final approval. This deadline, like others mentioned in the guide, is ABSOLUTE. As a final step in the campus portion of the process, Nancy LePage of Academic Services submits your entire application to the foundation or granting agency.

Revised August, 2006.