

Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation

Scholarship Guide:

The Truman Scholarship is a prestigious award for college Juniors who will pursue careers in public service. Any major can apply.

This guide will cover everything you need to know about the scholarship, eligibility requirements, and how to apply.

What is the Truman Scholarship?

The Truman Scholarship is the premier graduate scholarship for students interested in public service. The scholarship provides \$30,000 for the graduate school of the Scholar's choice, extensive programming and mentorship opportunities, a direct hiring authority with the federal government and the ability to apply for additional matching funds with our graduate school partners.

The Foundation reviews over 800 applications for our 55 to 65 Scholarships awarded annually. These applications do not include students who compete on their own campus for one of a school's four nominations.

Although the award is competitive, we believe that the application process can be valuable regardless of outcome. The process of applying includes exploring and refining your past experiences and future goals. You will be asked to consider various paths in service and encouraged to be ambitious. Along the way, you can expect to strengthen your writing, your relationships with mentors and your knowledge of your chosen field. These skills do not vanish when your Truman journey ends. Applying for a competitive award, like Truman or many others, helps you to prepare more competitive graduate school applications and be more comfortable in stressful interview formats. You may also meet friends, mentors and future collaborators along the way.

Who is Eligible?

Candidates are:

- US Citizens, US National residents of American Samoa, or expecting their citizenship by the date of the award;
- Currently enrolled at a US-based accredited institution;
- In their penultimate year of school (for candidates graduating in four years or more) or in their final year of school (for candidates graduating in three years or fewer);
- Nominated by either their current institution of study or their former institution of study for transfer or community college applicants. Schools are limited to four nominees plus three additional transfer nominations; and,
- Planning to attend graduate school in pursuit of a career in public service. The Foundation encourages time between undergraduate and graduate school, so candidates need not commit to going immediately.
- pursuing any major likely to lead to a public service career;
- any age;
- Minimum GPA: 3.7
- interested in any graduate degree other than the MBA; and,
- considering either domestic or international programs for their graduate education.

How Can I Apply? (Follow these steps:)

1. Read about the program and application on the [Truman website](#). Also check out [UMBC's previous winners](#).
2. Confirm your eligibility
3. Declare your intention to apply with Dr. Householder
4. Upload your completed application to BOX for review by the UMBC committee
5. If you are selected to move forward, ask for three letters of recommendation. Complete the application and revisions by the Truman submission deadline and upload your application to the online portal.

The application consists of the following:

- A letter of nomination from your institution;
- A completed application including short essays on leadership, service and your future path in public service;
- A policy proposal on a subject that interests you;
- Three letters of recommendation; one each on:
 - Leadership Abilities;
 - Commitment to a Career in Public Service; and,
 - Likelihood of Academic Success.
- A transcript.

Competitive applications should have:

1. An extensive record of campus and community service;
2. Steadfast commitment to a career in government or elsewhere in public service;
3. A well-articulated vision of how to create change in their area of interest; and,
4. An academic record likely to lead to acceptance in the graduate program of the candidate's choice.

Important dates:

- **Internal campus deadline:** Late November
- Truman Application Deadline: February 6, 2024
 - *Submit materials by 11:59 pm, your time zone*
- Foundation Confirms Receipt of Materials by: February 12, 2024
- Finalists Notified: February 18, 2024
- Finalist Confirmation Due: February 22, 2024
 - *Must be received by 9:00 am ET*
- Finalist Posting: February 23, 2024
- Regional Review Panels: March 2024 through early April 2024
- Scholar Posting: April 19, 2024
- Truman Scholars Leadership Week: May 21-26, 2024

Approximately ten days after the deadline, the Foundation will convene their Finalist Selection Committee (FSC) to review applications and select Finalists for each region.

FSC readers are a mix of graduate school admission professionals from programs preferred by Truman Scholars, distinguished Truman Scholars, representatives of other competitive scholarship programs, and at least one Truman Advisor. The Executive Secretary and Deputy Executive Secretary also serve on the reading committee.

Interviews are conducted by Regional Review Panels (RRP) at various locations across the country (UMBC usually goes to DC). UMBC helps prepare finalists by conducting mock interviews. RRP panelists are usually Truman Scholars who come from a variety of public service backgrounds. Panel may also include members of our Board of Trustees or other distinguished public servants.

Finalists convene as a group and spend the day together. Each Finalist will have a 20-minute interview with the panel at some point during the day. The interview can be very challenging. Questions begin as soon as the Finalist enters the room and the time goes by very quickly.

After all the interviews for a state are complete, the panel begins to deliberate. By the end of the day, they are expected to have one Scholar selected from each state. Some panels will make additional recommendations from the region if they believe them to be strong enough. In rare cases, no one from a state meets the criteria for selection.

For more information see: Truman.gov

Questions? Email aprilh@umbc.edu