James Graham Brown Scholars Program
Information/Application for High School Seniors

High school seniors of exceptional academic ability are welcome to apply for admission to the James Graham Brown Scholars Program. Students accepted into the Brown Scholars Program participate in a special program of seminars, community experiences, and the opportunity for advanced research in their majors under the direction of JGBS professors (a Fellowship). This small program enhances the educational experience of academically superior students, offers them an opportunity for a full-tuition scholarship, and provides admitted Scholars with exceptional university credentials for future experiences and/or graduate school opportunities.

James Graham Brown
SCHOLARS PROGRAM
at THOMAS MORE UNIVERSITY

Eligibility

Minimum qualifications to be considered for the JGBS Program are:

- Acceptance into Thomas More University
- High school cumulative weighted GPA of 4.0* **OR** a high school cumulative weighted GPA of 3.6 with a test score equal to a 29 ACT/1330 SAT/90 CLT
- Completed application submission. Once you submit the JGBS application form online, you will receive an email prompting you to upload your materials through an application portal. Your three letters of recommendation are the only materials that must be sent separately from the portal. They must be emailed directly from your recommenders to JGBS@thomasmore.edu. If you list your recommenders on the application form, they will receive a message prompting them to email your letter.
    - Components of a completed application:
        - JGBS application form (online at www.thomasmore.edu/JGBS)
        - three letters of recommendation (attesting to academic merit and character);
        - blind application essay
        - two-minute audio or video self-interview (details below);
        - chart listing significant community service (fill in chart included in this packet)

The JGBS Committee selects applicants who show the highest scholastic ability based on the above, as well as outstanding character and personal qualities that enhance the Brown Scholars Program. For all finalists, an interview will be conducted on Friday 22 January 2027; finalists should expect their interview invitation by 15 January.

To fulfill the James Graham Brown Scholars Program commitment, students must register for at least 15 credits each semester including the Seminar or Community Service or Internship or Fellowship project.

Brown Scholars must maintain a high quality of performance in written and verbal expression, and critical judgment in all areas of the Program. They must also maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better (rounding up is not permitted). Students who do not maintain quality performance or exhibit major deficiencies of character will be removed from the program, subject to the appeal procedures of the University.

*If you are relying on your GPA for admittance into JGBS and your final grades are not available prior to the deadlines, you may apply using mid-term grades. If you earn an interview, you will need to submit your cumulative GPA including final fall semester grades before interviewing. Applicants are expected to maintain the minimum GPA throughout the application process.

Questions? Please contact Dr. Catherine Sherron, Director of James Graham Brown Scholars Program
phone 859-344-3387 / e-mail sherroc@thomasmore.edu

THE JAMES GRAHAM BROWN SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Brown Scholars

Students are initially appointed as Brown Scholars. During this period of the program, students must complete the minimum requirements of two Seminars and one full year (90 hours) of Community Service. Every student must fulfill a Program commitment every semester (Seminar or Service or Internship as detailed below).

Community Service Experience is a social service program based within the University's service learning mission. Many Brown Scholars participate in the nearby primary school tutoring programs but other Community Service options are available through other Departments. Community Service is possible concurrently with the Seminar or Internship.

JGBS Program students will be expected to participate in all Program activities such as a welcome luncheon, weekend retreats, leadership workshops, lectures, and cultural events.

Brown Scholars must complete at least two seminars and an approved Community Service experience (3 credits) and have finished the junior year as minimum requirements for advancement to the optional Fellowship level of the program.

JGBS Fellows

During the second semester of the junior year, Brown Scholars who have completed the minimum requirements of the Scholar's level (two seminars and one Community Experience) have the option to apply for appointment during their senior year as a JGBS Fellow. JGBS Fellows do not take Seminars or Community Experience, but instead undertake special research in their majors. This senior research must consist of a two-semester, three-credit project approved both by the JGBS Faculty Committee and by the Fellow's department. The research is supervised by a departmental professor.

HONORS GRADUATES

JGBS Fellows wear special graduation cords and receive a special Diploma noting the Fellowship.

All James Graham Brown Scholars and Fellows, and all JGBS professors, become life-members of the James Graham Brown Scholars Society, which meets several times per year to reunite the graduates of the Program in social activities and service projects.

Updated 05 September 2026

JAMES GRAHAM BROWN SCHOLARS PROGRAM APPLICATION PROCESS
INCOMING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY (16Aug24 update)

PLEASE SUBMIT ONLINE

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Please ensure all components of this application are completed no later than 5:00 P.M. Monday 14 December 2026. Note: the application form (#1) is completed solely on the website.

1. Application form submission at www.thomasmore.edu/JGBS .

2. Academic transcript(s) submitted to the Office of Enrollment.

Upload through application portal:

3. A completed chart (below) detailing your service.

4. A two-minute video recording responding to one of the prompts below. (You will upload your video by clicking a link in your application portal).

    - something you're proud of (leadership, creativity, service, or other significant accomplishment) OR
    - something either you had to give up to achieve academically or something desirable you were not able to have due to other significant commitments (family, academics, sports).

5. A typewritten essay not to exceed two pages on the topic outlined on the next page. No names should be placed on the essay. They will be coded and evaluated anonymously. Please see next page.

Email:

6. Please request letters from three persons, preferably your teachers, supporting your candidacy. Letters should attest to your academic abilities and/or your character. **These letters must be emailed directly from the recommenders to JGBS@thomasmore.edu.**

Please note that all finalists will be asked to participate in an on-campus interview Friday 22 January 2027; finalists should expect to receive their interview invitations by 15 January.

James Graham Brown Scholars Program
Scholarship Essay

The essay is evaluated anonymously and should not have your name on it. Upload your essay response as a "JGBS Program Essay" through your application portal.

Essay Prompt

The theme "Curiosity: The Spirit of Honors Inquiry," comes from the writings of French philosophy Michel Foucault.

Foucault suggests that... "it [curiosity] evokes 'concern;' it evokes the care one takes for what exists and could exist; a readiness to find strange and singular what surrounds us... a fervor to grasp what is happening and what passes..."(Foucault, 1980). In a 750 -1000 word essay please reflect on the significance of curiosity. Provide multiple examples of ideas, phenomena, or events that pique your curiosity, and explain their relevance to your future participation in the JGB Scholars Program at TMU.

There is no right or wrong answer – we are genuinely interested in your honest response. Your well-crafted and polished essay should reflect your own original thinking with no or minimal references to outside sources; your audience consists of college professors.

The JGBS faculty asks all applicants to certify that "all written passages, such as the personal statement, required essays, and descriptions of work/activities, are my own and have not been written, in part or in whole, by another author and are not the product of artificial intelligence, any large-language model artificial intelligence (AI) system(s), including but not limited to OpenAI's ChatGPT or Google's Bard." Subsequent evidence of the use of AI to create application materials will constitute grounds for dismissal from the application process and/or the Program, including the rescinding of any related scholarship funds as well as referral to the Academic Violation process.

Service Chart

Fill out the chart below listing your top service experiences completed during high school. Give priority to significant service which includes a long-term commitment with one organization or a concentrated effort (such as a full-weekend service retreat).

Organization	Lifetime total # of Hours Completed	Recurring? (Yes or No)	If Recurring, Frequency of session (e.g., weekly, monthly, etc	Hours/session
Local food bank	*72*	*Y*	*Monthly for 18 months*	*4 hours/month*