

RHODES VISION

Rhodes College aspires to graduate students with a life-long passion for learning, a compassion for others, and the ability to translate academic study and personal concern into effective leadership and action in their communities and the world. We will achieve our aspiration through four strategic imperatives:

1. Student Access

To attract and retain a talented, diverse student body and engage these students in a challenging, inclusive and culturally-broadening college experience.

2. Student Learning

To ensure our faculty and staff have the talent, the time and the resources to inspire and involve our students in meaningful study, research and service.

3. Student Engagement

To enhance student opportunities for learning in Memphis.

4. Student Inspiration

To provide a residential place of learning that inspires integrity and high achievement through its beauty, its emphasis on values, its Presbyterian history, and its heritage as a leader in the liberal arts and sciences.

RHODES COLLEGE'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

A diverse learning community is a necessary element of a residential liberal arts education. We, the members of the Rhodes College community, are committed to creating a community where diversity is valued and welcomed. To that end, Rhodes College does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and national or ethnic origin and will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on those bases.

We are committed to providing an open learning environment. Freedom of thought, a healthy exchange of ideas, and an appreciation of diverse perspectives are fundamental characteristics of a community of scholars. To promote such an academic and social environment we expect integrity and honesty in our relationships with each other and openness to learning about and experiencing cultural diversity. We believe that these qualities are crucial to fostering social and intellectual maturity.

Intellectual maturity also requires individual struggle with unfamiliar ideas. We recognize that our views and convictions will be challenged, and we expect this challenge to take place in a climate of tolerance and mutual respect.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Rhodes had its origin in the Clarksville Academy, founded in 1837. The Academy conveyed its property in 1848 to the Masonic Grand Lodge of Tennessee and was merged into the new Masonic University of Tennessee, a degree-granting institution of higher education located in Clarksville, Tennessee. This institution became Montgomery Masonic College in 1850, and in 1855 its name was again changed, to Stewart College, in honor of its president, William M. Stewart. Under President Stewart's leadership the operation of the College passed from the Masonic Lodge to the Presbyterian Synod of Nashville.

Under the Plan of Union of 1873, the Presbyterian Church reorganized Stewart College after the Reconstruction Era to operate it as the single Presbyterian college

for the entire area which was at that time considered to be the Southwest.

In 1875 Stewart College became Southwestern Presbyterian University, developing alongside the undergraduate curriculum a School of Theology, under the leadership of Dr. Joseph Wilson, father of Woodrow Wilson. The School of Theology remained in operation until 1917.

Under the leadership of President Charles E. Diehl, the College moved to Memphis in 1925 and adopted as its name Southwestern, denoting a liberal arts college. In 1945, the official college name became Southwestern At Memphis.

On July 1, 1984, the name of the College was changed to Rhodes College in honor of Peyton Nalle Rhodes, president from 1949 to 1965, who joined the faculty in 1926 and served the institution until his death in 1984. John David Alexander served as president from 1965 to 1969; William Lukens Bowden, from 1969 to 1973; and James Harold Daughdrill, Jr., from 1973 to 1999. William Earl Troutt became the nineteenth president of the College on July 1, 1999.

RHODES PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY AND LIBERAL ARTS HERITAGE

Rhodes' relation to the Presbyterian Church has remained close and unbroken since 1855. The most recent expression of the College's relationship to the Church may be found in a covenant statement between Rhodes and the Church, summarized as follows:

Rhodes is a liberal arts college associated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The College has a covenant relationship with the Synod of Living Waters (Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Kentucky). Rhodes, as a church-related college whose primary mission is to educate, guarantees freedom of inquiry for faculty and students. The College, without pressing for acceptance, maintains a climate in which the Christian faith is nurtured. The curriculum includes a variety of courses in Bible and religion that explore the Judeo-Christian heritage and its implications for the whole of life. Students are required to study the Bible and its relationship with history and culture as a part of their college work. As an academic community founded on Christian ideals, Rhodes expresses personal concern for students, provides opportunities for corporate worship, and maintains a commitment to social justice and human mercy.

More specifically, the educational purpose of the College is expressed in its maintenance of an environment for the pursuit of truth in which it is ensured that the Christian faith is clearly articulated, that its formative role in Western civilization is carefully considered, and that honest intellectual and moral questions are articulated and responded to intelligently and sensitively.

This commitment is made clear in a resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees of the College: It is the intention of the Board that the College substantially comply with requiring two years of sound and comprehensive study of the Bible for the granting of a degree. In keeping with this resolution and with the mission of the College, the basic requirement in Humanities is structured so that there are two ways available to students to complete this part of the degree program. Students may choose the course *The Search for Values in the Light of Western History and Religion*, or students may choose the *Life: Then and Now Program*.