

Comprehensive Scholarship Administration

Original Implementation: November 2, 2015

Last Revision: None

Scholarships are one form of financial aid. SFA scholarships are provided through four primary sources: Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA), SFA Alumni Association, SFA Alumni Foundation, and the SFASU Foundation. The scholarship team, within the Office of Financial Aid, is responsible for the oversight of the university's comprehensive scholarship program and acts as a liaison between academic departments, the SFA Alumni Association, the SFA Alumni Foundation, the SFASU Foundation, the Office of Financial Aid and the Office of Enrollment Management. The scholarship team will set deadlines, ensure departments adhere to scholarship guidelines, and verify funds are spent accordingly. This will ensure compliance with the funding sources agreements and that institutional, state and federal regulations are met.

An outside entity not affiliated with the university who controls the funding and selection of applicants is not subject to this policy. Any funds received in this manner will be processed according to donor requirements and treated as an outside scholarship.

Scholarship Database System

The Office of Financial Aid is the primary owner and is responsible for the management and maintenance of the scholarship database. The database provides a consolidated source for scholarship criteria, electronic scholarship applications, committee assignments, and reports. For any scholarship award that is provided to an SFA student, it must be documented in the scholarship software database. This includes, but not limited to, endowed, pass-through and departmental scholarships.

Scholarship Establishment

It is the responsibility of the entity to coordinate with the scholarship team and to ensure that both the donor and the university objectives are met. The entity is responsible for sending all required documentation to the Office of Financial Aid when a scholarship is created or modified. The scholarship team is responsible for maintaining procedures to monitor scholarship funds.

Distribution of Scholarship Funds

To maximize scholarship funding and aid in the recruiting of top students, all university scholarship awards must be distributed (fully-awarded) to the best of the ability of the responsible department. For Alumni Association scholarships, refer to policy 3.11. In order for a scholarship award to be made all documentation must be provided to the Office of Financial Aid and a disbursement form completed.

Scholarship Processing

Any student wishing to receive scholarship awards must complete the official SFA scholarship application. All students awarded scholarship funds will be required to complete a Conflict of Interest and Disclosure form. This information is recorded in the scholarship database and is accessible to the committees in order for them to make the candidate selection. It is the responsibility of the Office of Financial Aid to coordinate all access and provide the procedures to the scholarship committee.

A post disbursement report is generated and sent to the appropriate parties. This report will contain each recipient, the scholarship fund name, award amount, amount disbursed, and enrollment hours. This report is used as notification that the scholarship has been disbursed to the student.

The account manager of the scholarship program shall determine whether funds should be repaid if the student withdraws from the university or no longer meets the eligibility criteria. In such situations, the account manager must notify the Office of Financial Aid whether to charge back the funds and issue a bill to the student.

Employee Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

A conflict of interest can occur when personal interests affect the performance of a professional obligation to the university. All SFA employees must report anything that may have a potential to be a conflict of interest. All SFA employees who are part of a scholarship committee or have access to the scholarship software will be required to annually disclose potential conflicts of interest.

Cross Reference: Ethics (2.6); Distribution of SFA Alumni Foundation Scholarships (3.11); Gifts, Loans, Endowments, and Bequests (3.17); Memorandum of Agreement between Stephen F. Austin State University and Stephen F. Austin State University Alumni Foundation, Inc. dated August 16, 2013; Tex. Educ. Code § 51.969

Responsible for Implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice-President for University Advancement

Contact For Revision: Director of Financial Aid

Forms: SFA Scholarship application; Scholarship Authorization and Disclosure form; Employee Disclosure; Disbursement Form

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs Committee