

Comprehensive Scholarship Administration

Original Implementation: November 2, 2015

Last Revision: July 26, 2022

The university has designed these guidelines to ensure fair treatment for all eligible students who apply for scholarship assistance, as well as the effective and compliant administration of scholarships. This policy does not apply to unaffiliated organizations who control the funding and selection of scholarship applicants.

Definitions:

1. Student means a person who is currently enrolled at the university, or who is accepted for admission or readmission to the university, or who has been enrolled at the university in a prior semester and is eligible to continue enrollment.
2. Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships is the administrative area, which manages scholarships on behalf of the university.
3. Financial Assistance and Scholarship committee consists of representation from each of the academic colleges, and various other staff positions across campus selected by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. The provost and executive vice president of academic affairs appoints academic college representatives.
4. Endowed Scholarships have been created using donor funds and have a scholarship agreement between said donor and the university and/or SFASU Foundation that designates the terms and qualifications to award that scholarship.
5. Entity is any university unit or affiliated organization that establishes a scholarship for students.
6. FOP is the abbreviation for university Fund, Organization and Program numbers.

Scholarships are provided through two primary sources: the university and the SFASU Foundation. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships is responsible for the oversight of the university's comprehensive scholarship program and acts as a liaison between academic departments, the SFASU Foundation, and Admissions. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships will set deadlines, ensure departments adhere to scholarship guidelines, and verify funds are spent accordingly. This will ensure compliance with scholarship agreements and that institutional, state and federal regulations are met.

Scholarship Database System

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships 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, available scholarship disbursement amounts, and reports. Endowed scholarships will be entered into the database. Scholarships that are not endowed may be entered into the database at the discretion of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

Scholarship Establishment

Each entity coordinates with the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to ensure correct scholarship management. The entity is required to submit the following: the FOP number, scholarship agreement, the intent of the scholarship and the eligibility date of scholarship disbursement. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships develops and maintains procedures to monitor scholarships.

Scholarship Processing

Any student wishing to receive an endowed scholarship must complete the official SFA scholarship application. If there are no qualified applicants, the committee may select an otherwise eligible candidate.

All students offered scholarships are required to complete a Conflict of Interest and Disclosure form.

Distribution of Scholarship Funds

To maximize scholarship funding and aid in the recruiting and retention of students, a pre-distribution form must be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, by the responsible committee/department. This will constitute recommendation and authorization of scholarship disbursement

A post disbursement report is generated and sent to the appropriate academic area as notification of the scholarship disbursement. The account manager of the scholarship FOP will 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 and Scholarships 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 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); Gifts, Loans, Endowments, and Bequests (3.17); Tex. Educ. Code § 51.969

Responsible for Implementation: Executive Director of Enrollment Management

Contact For Revision: Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships

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

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Revision History: July 23, 2019