SAP Statement

This procedure outlines the oversight responsibilities of Scholarships & Financial Aid (SFA) and the University Scholarship Committee (USC), and standards that should be followed related to scholarship administration including selection/awarding processes across Texas A&M University.

Official Procedure/ Responsibilities/ Process

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 Scholarships & Financial Aid (SFA) is responsible for the centralized coordination and administration of scholarships for the purpose of general oversight and monitoring of any university scholarship awarding unit in relation to general scholarship administration to include policies and procedures, selection and awarding, and competitive scholarship waivers.

Scholarships & Financial Aid will coordinate the overall scholarship administration for the University on behalf of the USC, including coordinating with designated financial aid offices at other locations. SFA will work closely and cooperatively with their counterparts and others at branch campuses, in the academic colleges and schools, major units and related entities. SFA will prepare and distribute scholarship information and provide strategic direction and counsel to all scholarship awarding units on campus. SFA will provide staff to monitor general requirements and best practices for scholarship administration within scholarship awarding units on campus. One to two members of the USC may serve as reviewers of scholarship administration to assist SFA with reviews of scholarship procedures in awarding units on campus.

The Executive Director of SFA will provide guidance on University, System, State and Federal guidelines and compliance issues to all scholarship awarding units at
Texas A&M University, including branch campuses, colleges and schools, and major units.

1.2 University Scholarship Committees

1.2.1 The University Scholarship Committee (USC) is designated as the executive agency of the University through the Faculty Senate in matters related to scholarships and awards. The Faculty Senate will select University Scholarship Committee members bi-annually. The committee functions to encourage, develop, and evaluate all scholarship programs. Scholarships & Financial Aid’s Executive Director is designated as the secretary of the USC.

The USC may initiate and perform reviews of university rules, SAPs and all other procedures dealing with scholarships. The membership structure of the Committee including designated representatives from each college and key university administrators are determined by the Faculty Senate. All Committee members are designated as voting members. The Committee, through its chair, communicates policy and procedural matters associated with the review of scholarship applications. SFA brings forward general scholarship recommendations, best practices and seeks approval for changes in policies and procedures for scholarship administration for campus units to this committee.

USC hears appeals of students whose athletic grants in aid are not renewed. In addition, the committee grants student Non-Resident Tuition Waivers for scholarship recipients only.

1.2.2 The USC recognizes the Galveston Scholarship and Awards Committee as the designated executive agency of the Galveston campus in matters related to scholarships and awards.

1.2.3 The USC recognizes the Health Science Center (HSC) Scholarship Committee as the designated executive agency in matters related to scholarships and awards at HSC colleges and schools.

1.3 Scholarship Awarding Units provide scholarships, fellowships, grants or awards to TAMU students.

1.3.1 Responsibilities include:

- Centralized departmental record keeping is required in scholarship awarding units. A central location to store all the documentation is an asset for referencing, in addition to supporting decisions in the event of a dispute. The following is required: The Departments’ annual records must include:
  1. Documented procedures for awarding scholarships
  2. Documentation on how scholarships recipients were selected
3. Clear communication of scholarship committees’ composition and purpose/charge, if applicable

4. Certification for competitive scholarship awards
   - Compliance for records retention according to State of Texas records retention schedule.
     - applications of students that were not selected for an award have to be maintained for the scholarship cycle plus one year.
     - applications and support for awarded students must be maintained for AC + 1, which translates to one year after the completion of the total duration of the scholarship for awardees per the Texas A&M University System Record Retention Schedule.
   - Periodic review of security settings and protocols when handling student information.
   - Avoidance of conflict of interest or potential bias of committee members prior to selecting recipients through formal discussions or other methods with member’s scholarship committees. Committee members should excuse themselves in the event a situation presents itself.
   - Up holding Texas Administrative Code Chapter 22, subchapter R Rule 22.404 Prohibited Scholarships: A person is not eligible to receive a scholarship originating from and administered by an institution of higher education or university system if the person is related to a current member of the governing board of the institution or system. Exceptions - the scholarship is awarded exclusively on the basis of prior academic merit, the scholarship is an athletic scholarship or the relationship of the board member is not within the third degree by consanguinity or the second degree by affinity. Scholarship applications must include a question regarding governing board relations to comply with this requirement.
   - On an annual basis, review contact information listed on Scholarships & Financial Aid website for accuracy and send updates to Scholarships and Financial Aid.
     https://sfaid.tamu.edu/ScholarshipsContact/WebPages/ScholarshipsContact/ViewContactInfo.aspx
   - Reconcile each scholarship account monthly.
   - Preferred use of ApplyTexas applications for freshmen and Transfer students as well as the university’s Continuing Student Scholarship application, all which are online applications.
   - Timely award notification and award posting to student accounts to maximize recruitment value of scholarship dollars as well as reduce need to adjust financial aid packages.
   - Review eligibility for scholarship renewal each semester.
   - Appeals process must be available to students in writing.
1.3.2 Awarding process

Scholarship awards must be provided (by entry into the designated online system, by a paper request for payment, or through secure file transfer) to the designated financial aid office at least one month prior to the start of the semester in which the scholarship is paid in order to ensure student eligibility and timely adjustment to a student’s aid package if warranted.

Scholarship awards are subject to review and approval by the designated financial aid office. In the event that a student’s total scholarship/fellowship and/or financial aid exceeds the cost of attendance (as defined by Scholarships & Financial Aid) for a particular academic year, the financial aid package may be adjusted in order to remain in compliance with institutional, state, and federal guidelines.

Scholarship awarding units (refer to section 1 of this SAP) will notify each recipient at appropriate times in order to assist in recruiting and retention.

1.4 Awarding Units include:

- Scholarships & Financial Aid, including the Galveston Financial Aid Office and the HSC Financial Aid Office;
- Office of Graduate Studies;
- Office of the Commandant-Corps of Cadets;
- Athletic Office (grant-in-aid);
- Colleges and Schools;
- Academic Departments

Other awarding units may be approved by the USC.

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Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Supplements System Policy 13.03

Scholarship Administrator’s Resource Guide
https://scholarships.tamu.edu/Staff-Resources

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Contact Office

OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

Scholarships & Financial Aid
979-845-3982

TAMUG Financial Aid
409-740-4500