



UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY Policies and Procedures

POLICY TITLE	Administration of Scholarships and Other Payments to Students	Policy Number	512
Section	Student Affairs	Approval Date	January 30, 2025
Subsection	Admissions, Enrollment, Tuition, and Commencement	Effective Date	January 30, 2025
Responsible Office	Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs	Last Review	January 30, 2025

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The University leverages university and privately funded financial aid awards to increase student recruitment, retention, and completion, which are key components to the success of the University’s mission and strategic goals. Public confidence in the University’s stewardship of these resources is achieved when internal controls operate effectively and when the highest ethical standards of impartiality and fairness are maintained throughout all stages of award administration.

1.2 This policy establishes standards and authority that will enhance the overall administrative process for scholarships and other payments to students between individual academic colleges and departments, service departments, and any other personnel involved.

2.0 REFERENCES

- 2.1** *Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C § 1002 (1965)*
- 2.2** *Tuition Waiver and Scholarships, Utah Code Ann. § 53B-8-101 (2018)*
- 2.3** *Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R513 Tuition Waivers and Reductions*
- 2.4** *UVU Policy 114 Individual Conflicts of Interest and Commitment*
- 2.5** *UVU Policy 165 Discrimination, Harassment, and Affirmative Action*
- 2.6** *UVU Policy 204 Appropriateness of Expenditures*
- 2.7** *UVU Policy 231 Fundraising Authority, Responsibility, and Coordination*
- 2.8** *UVU Policy 251 Traveling on University Business*
- 2.9** *UVU Policy 325 FLSA Compliance: Exempt/Nonexempt Classifications, Wages, and Work Hours*



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3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Aid: For the purposes of this policy, financial aid includes all funds disbursed to a student by the University from external funding sources and/or with authorized university funds.

3.2 Assistantship: A non-exempt (see UVU Policy 325 *FLSA Compliance: Exempt/Nonexempt Classifications, Wages, and Work Hours*), compensated position paid by the University to a student for services rendered, including the following: (1) research for a faculty member, whether or not equivalent research is a requirement of all candidates for the degree in the student's particular program (e.g., graduate research assistant, graduate research fellow, undergraduate research, and scholarly activity); (2) teaching student classes under the direction of a faculty member (e.g., graduate teaching assistant); (3) federally sponsored designated for work experience in research; and (4) any other service provided by the student to the University or to a third party (e.g., graduate assistant).

3.3 Award criteria: The minimum standards or requirements a student must meet to be considered for an award ("initial award criteria") or to qualify to retain the award for subsequent terms ("continuing eligibility criteria").

3.4 Compensation: For the purposes of this policy, includes any form of payment made to a student, as an employee, which is intended as reimbursement for the student's services to the University. Transactions to a student made on the basis of the student's employment status are not considered scholarships.

3.5 Cost of attendance (COA): The aggregate cost to a student to enroll in a degree program, including tuition, books, fees, and other related educational expenses, as well as the cost of off-campus room and board. These components are determined by the *Higher Education Act of 1965*, section 472, and are designed to cover the education-related expenses of a student.

3.6 Prize: An item or monetary award given to an individual in recognition of success in an organized competition, contest, or drawing that is open to the public. Prizes provided from an open competition are not treated as a scholarship. Awards provided to students from a closed competition (i.e., UVU students only) are treated as a scholarship (see 3.7 below).

3.7 Scholarship: Any form of award, payment, reimbursement, or other transaction to a student (regardless of funding source) that is made because of the student's post-secondary enrollment or for the purpose of the student's study, training, or research (including but not limited to payments toward tuition, fees, books, living expenses, travel expenses, etc.). Scholarships are not a loan nor compensation for services rendered; there is no expectation of repayment, and no past, present, or future services can be required as a condition of receiving such amount. An item or monetary amount awarded to a student for their performance in a closed competition or contest (participation or entry limited to only UVU students) is treated as a scholarship. Other specific types of scholarships include but are not limited to the following:



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3.7.1 Privately funded scholarship: A form of scholarship funded by donations to the UVU Foundation that are administered by the University in accordance with criteria established by the donor and this policy.

3.7.2 Tuition waiver: An institutional scholarship award authorized by statute and Utah Board of Higher Education policy that allows for a portion of a student's tuition not to be paid (represents a reduction of revenue to the University). The student is responsible for payment of the remaining tuition not covered by the tuition waiver.

3.7.3 Upfront or reimbursable expense award: Funds provided to a student to defray the cost of travel to or participation in an academic conference or other related activity. Funds provided to or on behalf of students attending a conference or other related activity for the benefit of the student will be considered a scholarship. Funds provided to or on behalf of students who are presenting as an authorized representative of the University are not considered scholarships (see UVU Policy 251 *Traveling on University Business*).

3.8 Scholarship academic term: Term in which the award funds are received (e.g., a payment received during the Fall term will be applied to Fall expenses).

3.9 Student: An individual at the undergraduate, graduate, or professional level who is enrolled in classes and/or is registered for research or thesis requirements at the University.

3.10 University Scholarship Committee (USC): Entity that provides guidance to the University departments, colleges/schools, and President's Council regarding administration, compliance, and governance of awards/scholarships for UVU students. The University Scholarship Committee is chaired by the Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships, with representatives from Academic Affairs, UVUSA, Budget Office, Student Affairs, Bursar, Institutional Advancement, and Financial Aid and Scholarships.

4.0 POLICY

4.1 Scope of this Policy

4.1.1 Utah Valley University complies with federal and state laws and regulations governing the awarding, disbursing, and reporting of scholarships and other student financial aid awards and payments.

4.1.2 Utah Valley University affirmatively endeavors to maintain an educational environment free from prohibited discrimination, in accordance with federal and state law, in the administration and disbursement of scholarships and other student financial aid awards and payments (see UVU Policy 165 *Discrimination, Harassment, and Affirmative Action*).



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4.1.3 Funding provided by federal and state governments for student financial aid purposes (grants, loans, and work study) is disbursed by UVU in accordance with eligibility criteria and requirements established by Title IV of *the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)* and other applicable law.

4.1.4 The University may provide degree-seeking graduate and undergraduate students awards funded to the UVU Foundation by private donors, the federal and state government, and the University. This policy applies to the administration and disbursement of university and private funds awarded to students in the form of scholarships, assistantships, prizes, and other payments to students.

4.1.5 This policy applies to all offices and personnel of the University involved in the solicitation, management, and awarding of payments to students, including University trustees, officers, administrators, faculty, staff, other employees, and students. In addition, all schools and colleges, through their administrators, staff, and faculty, are responsible for complying with this policy.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 Approval and Administration of Scholarships

5.1.1 President's Council reviews and approves new requests for scholarship programs funded with authorized university funds. UVU Foundation approves awards funded by private donors.

5.1.2 The University Scholarship Committee (USC) provides guidance to the University departments, colleges/schools, and President's Council regarding administration, compliance, and governance of awards/scholarships for UVU students.

5.1.3 The Financial Aid Office is responsible for administering scholarships and establishing award procedures. Departments and programs authorized to select award recipients must follow these published procedures.

5.2 Establishing Initial Award and Continuing Eligibility Criteria

5.2.1 Initial award and continuing eligibility criteria for university-funded awards (excluding awards from private donors) are established and approved according to the following procedures.

5.2.1.1 Initial award and continuing eligibility criteria recommended by the USC for undergraduate students (new freshman and new transfer) are approved by President's Council. Award criteria shall be published in printed material and on the University's website by the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.

5.2.1.2 President's Council approves initial award and continuing criteria for graduate students (new entering student). Award criteria shall be published by each graduate academic program.



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5.2.1.3 Changes to undergraduate and graduate award criteria must be recommended by the USC and approved by President's Council.

5.2.1.4 Continuing eligibility criteria shall be communicated to the recipient upon award and annually thereafter.

5.2.2 The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office will be responsible for the determination of eligibility for all need-based scholarships and merit scholarships that have a need-based requirement.

5.2.3 When established by President's Council, emergency scholarship funds shall have published eligibility and award criteria and shall be open to all students who meet such criteria. A committee of at least two individuals must select the candidates for the potential award.

5.2.4 Donors of privately funded awards disbursed through the University may participate in developing the criteria for the award; however, no donor shall participate directly in the selection of any award recipient or in the determination of a recipient's continuing eligibility.

5.3 Establishing Application Procedures and Deadlines

5.3.1 The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office publishes deadlines for scholarship applications and associated processes. Deadlines for scholarship applications and processes must be followed to ensure equitable treatment for students.

5.3.2 Deadlines for scholarship applications are recommended by the USC and approved by President's Council.

5.3.3 Departments may establish priority deadlines, but must have a regular/final deadline. If a department sets a priority deadline that occurs before the standard scholarship deadline, they must continue to consider applicants from the priority deadline when reviewing applicants from the later pool. Candidates who applied at the standard deadline cannot receive awards over equally qualified candidates who applied by the priority deadline.

5.3.4 Awards shall be made in accordance with award eligibility criteria, regardless of the application deadline by which candidates apply.

5.4 Selection of Award Recipients

5.4.1 Only students who are admitted to the University may be considered for a scholarship. Additionally, only students admitted in the appropriate program may be considered for certain program-specific awards.



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5.4.2 Departments shall use the university scholarship software system to collect applications and select candidates for scholarship offers. The Financial Aid and Scholarship Office and the USC must provide prior approval for any exception.

5.4.3 Departments may make the selections of the awards that are in their stewardship. However, the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office shall process and communicate scholarship offers and acceptances through the university software system. Athletic awards, in accordance with NCAA regulations, are an exception to this process. The USC must approve any other exceptions to this process.

5.5 All scholarship selection committees must have at least two members to review and to select potential award recipients. These committees shall comply with university policies to avoid nepotism and conflict of interest issues (see Policy 114 *Individual Conflicts of Interest and Commitment*). If the potential award recipients are chosen through the direct award process by the scholarship software system, this process will replace the committee review. A donor, a relative of a donor, or an employee of a donor may not be involved in the selection of award recipients for privately funded scholarships.

5.5.1 All documentation of eligibility for all award recipients must be retained for the required number of years following the fiscal year in which the award is made. Where compliance with eligibility is already on file in the central university database, such as GPA, the electronic record is sufficient.

5.6 Processing and Disbursement of Awards

5.6.1 To remain compliant with *HEA* Financial Aid regulations, the University has coordinated a standardized process for the disbursement of all scholarships, grants, awards, and prize payments through the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.

5.6.2 The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office shall review all scholarships over which the University has discretion in advance, before they are awarded, to ensure that they comply with applicable federal student aid regulations.

5.6.3 A student's total aid package should not exceed the student's cost of attendance (COA), and, in the case of need-based scholarships, cannot exceed the proposed recipient's unmet need.

5.6.4 Award funds may only be applied to the designated academic term. No funds may be awarded retroactively to a student without the prior written approval of the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.

5.6.5 National Research Service Awards (e.g., NRSA fellows) paid to students will be processed through Human Resources and Payroll. NRSA scholarships to registered students will be processed through the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.



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5.6.6 All private awards established through Institutional Advancement shall be awarded according to the terms established by the gift agreement.

5.6.7 Athletic financial aid and scholarship awards are processed separately by Athletics in collaboration with the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office in accordance with NCAA regulations.

5.6.8 Because funds are disbursed centrally, ceremonial presentations of checks are not possible. If needed, colleges and departments are encouraged to identify other appropriate means of conveying the award during banquets and other ceremonies.

5.7 Upfront or Reimbursable Expense Award

5.7.1 Upfront or reimbursable expense awards are treated as scholarships for *HEA* purposes, and as such, shall be awarded based on an academic experience for the student and not for the benefit of the University. Students traveling as an employee and/or authorized representative of the University for the benefit of the University shall be governed under the requirements and procedures outlined in Policy 231 *Traveling on University Business*.

5.7.2 If paying for qualifying expenses upfront, the department shall follow applicable university policy for the purchase of such (e.g., paying fees through the appropriate mechanism to issue a check to the vendor, or booking travel).

5.7.3 To qualify as an upfront or reimbursable expense award, the student recipient must give receipts for all qualifying expenses to the department providing the funds. Such expenses must equal or exceed the amount of the award.

5.7.4 If the expenses are payable to a vendor/outside the University, the department shall make payment via a check request according to procedures established by UVU Accounts Payable. The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office shall review the check request to ensure an over-award of federal financial aid does not occur.

5.7.5 If the expenses are paid to UVU, the funds shall be sent through the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office.

5.7.6 If the award exceeds the student's COA, the student may have to submit an appeal to the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office, which shall handle the appeal in accordance with *HEA* and federal financial aid guidelines and university policy.

5.8 Assistantships

5.8.1 Programs may request funding for paid graduate assistantships through the PBA process.



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5.8.2 Graduate assistants are employees of UVU and will receive payment for services based on an hourly rate established by the graduate program in consultation with Human Resources.

5.8.3 A graduate assistant would be expected to work between the first week of classes through finals week during the duration of the award, including summer semester. The number of hours worked by a graduate assistant would be determined by the graduate program department and be tracked, reported, and compliant with UVU HR policies including UVU Policy 325 *FLSA Compliance: Exempt/Nonexempt Classifications, Wages, and Work Hours*.

5.8.4 Graduate assistantships shall be awarded only to applicants who are lawfully present and eligible to work in the United States.

5.9 Refunds and Reductions in Aid

5.9.1 If a student's total aid package, applied in accordance with the rules governing the award of financial aid, institutional policy, and the terms of the particular awards, exceeds the student's billed tuition charges (including applicable fees), a student may be entitled to a refund.

5.9.1.1 The amount available to be refunded to the student will be determined by the sources of the total aid package. Loan funds are always refundable. Scholarships may be refundable depending upon the terms of the scholarship. The University will not issue refunds for tuition waivers.

5.9.1.2 The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office, in accordance with *HEA* and federal financial aid guidelines, is responsible for determining whether a particular award is refundable and, if so, the amount of any refund. The decision of the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office about refunds shall be final.

5.9.2 If a student receives additional aid after the calculation of the total aid package, certain forms of need-based aid (e.g., grants and loans) may be subject to reduction. Loans will be reduced before any other aid sources, except if the terms of a particular award require that it be reduced before aid from any other source is reduced.

5.10 Tax Liability

5.10.1 Potential tax liability for transactions is determined by United States and Utah State taxing authority requirements and guidelines. The University shall withhold any applicable taxes in accordance with these guidelines.

5.10.2 If an award meets the definition of a prize, the University shall conduct appropriate reporting of the payment in compliance with taxing authority guidelines.



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5.10.3 Payments made to a student as compensation for services rendered to the University are taxable. Prizes, assistantships, and other forms of payments to students that do not meet the criteria for scholarships (under applicable taxing authority guidelines) are taxable.

5.10.4 All aid awarded or refunded to a student (including scholarships) that exceeds the cost of the student's qualified expenses is taxable and the responsibility of the student recipient.

POLICY HISTORY		
Date of Last Formal Review: January 30, 2025		
Due Date of Next Review: January 30, 2030		
Date of Last Action	Action Taken	Authorizing Entity
June 18, 2019	Approved, new policy.	UVU Board of Trustees
January 30, 2025	Revised policy approved.	UVU Board of Trustees