

# **Policies for the Office of Student Financial Aid**

## **Subject Institutional Scholarships and Exemptions (R-1)**

*Office of Student Financial Aid/Scholarships*

January 2023

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The purpose of this policy is to ensure the Institutional Scholarship Program of Northwestern State University is effectively used to recruit and/or retain qualified students who will contribute to the university community. This policy has the further purpose of formalizing those procedures utilized by the University in accepting scholarship applications, awarding scholarships, disbursing scholarship funds, and processing appeals of scholarship cancellations. The Scholarship Program shall be administered through the Office of Student Financial aid with the concurrence of the University Scholarship Committee.

The Scholarship committee will be composed of 4 members: Coordinator of Scholarships (non-voting) who will serve as the Committee Coordinator; and 3 representatives from other areas of the University.

### **CATEGORIES**

Scholarships are financial awards given to students who intend to enroll in the University or are currently enrolled in the University. There are two major categories of Institutional Scholarships. Financial awards funded by Federal Grants, State Grants, or Third Party are not covered in this Policy.

#### **Group A. Admissions Scholarships**

##### **ACADEMIC:**

Awards are based primarily on academic performance and achievement, as measured by grades and/or specified test scores. With the exception of designated programs.

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### **LEADERSHIP:**

Awards are based primarily on leadership potential or demonstrated leadership. PLP scholarships will be awarded through the First Year Experience & Leadership Development Office.

### **Group B. Other Scholarships**

### **PERFORMANCE:**

Awards based primarily on service participation of the recipient and individual evaluation performed by the department. These awards are awarded through the Department of Creative and Performing Arts, Department of Military Science and Department of Language and Communications. Determinations of awards are done by respective departments.

### **ATHLETIC:**

Awards based primarily on individual evaluation performed by the Athletic Department in compliance with current NCAA regulations.

### **Group C. Exemptions**

Exemptions are awarded based on Louisiana Law, Board Rules, or Institutional request.

## **BUDGETARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Departments and offices responsible for both Group A (Admissions Scholarships) and Group B (Other Scholarships) shall submit to the Scholarship Office the following information for the upcoming Fall and Spring semester.

1. The name and Campus Wide ID of each scholarship recipient to be awarded.
2. The amount and type of each scholarship.
3. The semester(s) the scholarship shall be awarded for the upcoming award year.

Additional information may be requested.

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### **APPLICATION /SELECTION PROCESS**

#### **Group A. Admissions Scholarships**

Persons wishing to apply for Group A - academic and leadership scholarships must complete the admissions requirements set by NSU Admissions office: a "University Application for Admission," a six-semester high school transcript- out of state students and other students not reported by electronic means (for students in the state of Louisiana information will be provided electronically to the school by the state) and Official ACT and/or SAT scores. - High School transcript and ACT/SAT scores can be obtained through the Banner System.

PLP scholarships will be awarded through the First Year Experience & Leadership Development Office.

Additional information may be requested.

#### **Priority dates:**

Priority dates for submission of applications for academic and leadership scholarships are set each year between the Financial Aid office and Office of Recruiting.

#### **Selection Process:**

- ◆ Scholarship recipients are identified through reports identifying student who have applied for admissions
- ◆ Selected scholarship recipients shall be issued an award letter by the Coordinator of Scholarships once awards have been determined by the Scholarship Committee.
- ◆ Offer letters for scholarships are prepared and sent to each student who has been awarded university scholarship. Each letter states the type of scholarship offered, amount of the offer, total amount awarded, total number of years awarded, and terms of the scholarship. Students must accept or decline the scholarship offer by indicating their decision on the scholarship award letter. The student is instructed to sign the award letter and return it to the scholarship office.

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- ◆ An offer for the approved scholarship(s) are placed on each student's account in the Banner System. This ensures that the Financial Aid Office has notice of all NSU offered scholarships for federal aid packaging. Upon receipt of the signed scholarship award letters the Office of Scholarships will accept or decline the awards, as determined by the letter.

Scholarships shall be disbursed through the RPEDISB process.

### **Group B. Other Scholarships**

#### **PERFORMANCE:**

Application and selection process for performance scholarships are conducted in the respective department. Once the recipients have been selected, a contract or list of students will be forwarded to the Scholarship Office. No performance scholarship may be disbursed without a signed contract/award letter being on file in the Office of Scholarships.

#### **ATHLETIC:**

Application and selection process for athletic scholarships are conducted in the athletic department. Once the recipients have been selected, a list or copy of the award agreement will be forwarded to the Scholarship Office for disbursement. The athletic department shall be responsible for all documentation on the scholarship recipient.

### **CONTINUANCE OF SCHOLARSHIPS**

#### **Group A. Admissions Scholarship**

Recipients of academic and leadership scholarships must maintain the required GPA and be enrolled as a full-time student at NSU for the semester.

Academic and leadership scholarships may not be extended beyond the term specified in the award letter without approval of the Scholarship Appeals committee.

Academic and leadership scholarships shall not be awarded for the summer session, except for in the case of nursing clinical rotation students who graduate early but are required to attend summer clinical rotation. These students will use their 7<sup>th</sup> semester eligibility the summer prior to graduation. College of Nursing will supply a list of students that may be in this category. AMT Students will also be allowed to use summer scholarships due to enrollment for two summer terms.

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**Group B. Other Scholarships**

**Performance:**

Recipient of the performance scholarship must maintain the required GPA, be enrolled as a full-time student for the semester and be enrolled in the required performance classes.

Performance scholarships shall not be awarded for the summer session with the exception of the in state performance classification per letter from CAPA

**CANCELLATION/APPEAL POLICY**

**Group A. Admissions Scholarships**

All academic and leadership scholarships are monitored on a semester basis. Students are notified via their student email address at the end of the semester that they have lost their eligibility. Students who have scholarships cancelled due to failure to meet specified criteria for continuing to receive the award may appeal to the scholarship appeal committee for an exception, by completing a scholarship appeal form. The Scholarship Appeals Committee will be composed of three committee members. A majority of appointed sub-committee members will be required.

Following a fall semester cancellation the appeals deadline shall be February 15.

Following a spring semester cancellation the appeals deadline shall be August 15.

A request for an exception to this limitation must be submitted in writing (with justification and documentation), and is subject to the approval of the Director of Student Financial Aid. There is no automatic probation period for any student on scholarships. Students will be notified about the decision on their appeals. If the appeal is approved the student will receive the scholarship for the subsequent semester.

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An appeal to suspend scholarships for one semester in order to participate in an internship, other off-campus activities, or not enroll due to extenuating circumstances should be submitted prior to the semester of non-attendance. Documentation could include a recommendation from the student's Department Head, proof of the internship/off campus activity, or documentation of the extenuating circumstance.

Nursing students who are enrolled less than full time due to clinicals must provide a letter from their advisor to avoid the loss of scholarships.

Extensions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and ONLY granted in situations where the degree program extends beyond a four-year period of matriculation. Examples of such degree programs include Nursing and Music Education.

The appellant completes SECTION 1 of the Appeal Form. The completed Appeal Form with documentation should be returned to the Scholarships Office by the stated deadline. Upon acceptance of the Appeal Form, a staff member in the scholarship office will complete SECTION 2 of the Appeal Form.

Appeal committee members will review the Appeal Form and documentation, render an independent judgment to approve, or deny the scholarship(s), and sign and date a Committee Action Report.

SECTION 3 of the Appeal Form is completed using the results shown on the Committee Action Report. A Copy of the Appeal form will be distributed to the student informing of committee decision; a copy is placed in the student's file along with the documentation; and one copy is placed in a general Appeal File for the appropriate semester/year, along with the Committee Action Report.

The committee decision is final. An appeal of a committee's decision will be considered by the Director of Financial Aid only if submitted in writing within 10 calendar days of the committee's decision. The Director of Financial Aid reserves the right to ask the committee to reconsider an appeal only when the appellant provides new or additional information of cause or extenuating circumstances, or additional documentation since the original appeal was considered by the committee

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### **Group B. Other Scholarships**

**PERFORMANCE** Students receiving performance scholarships shall follow the same guidelines as those in group A pertaining to the cancellation/appeal process.

**ATHLETIC:** Students receiving athletic scholarships shall follow NCAA regulations pertaining to cancellation/appeal process. The Scholarship Appeal Committee will serve as the Hearing Committee. The student has the right to appeal the cancellation/reduction, or the non-renewal of an athletic scholarship as it relates to bylaw 15.3.4 and 15.3.5 of the NCAA Manual. The right to request a hearing is limited to 10 business days following the student's notification by the Scholarship office of the discontinuance of the scholarship. A request for a hearing must be submitted in writing by completing an appeal form. A request for an exception to this limitation must be submitted in writing (with full justification and documentation). A hearing will be scheduled, each party to the hearing will be responsible for providing copies of documentation to support his/her stance.

The Committee Chair will be the Coordinator of Scholarships. The chair will convene the 3 members of the appeal committee and the Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance (to be present to explain any NCAA rules).

Each committee member will render an independent judgment to approve or deny the scholarship(s), and sign and date the Hearing Committee Action Report.

The committee decision is final. An appeal of the committee's decision will be considered by the Director of Student Financial Aid only if submitted in writing within 10 calendar days of the committee's decision. The Director of Student Financial Aid reserves the right to ask the committee to reconsider an appeal only when the appellant provides new or additional information of cause or extenuating circumstances, or additional documentation since the original appeal was considered by the committee.