



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Operating Policy and Procedure

**OP 30.02: Centralized Scholarship Office**

**DATE:** February 12, 2024

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to establish policies and procedures for the Texas Tech University Centralized Scholarship Office; to identify the responsibilities of scholarship-providing colleges, divisions, and departments awarding scholarships; and to support university recruitment and retention through efficient scholarship administration.

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed in September of each year by the Assistant Vice President for Student Financial Aid and Scholarships, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, and the Vice Provost for Student Life.

**POLICY/PROCEDURE**

The Texas Tech University Scholarship Office maintains the common online scholarship application system used by all university scholarship and fellowship grant providers. Scholarship and fellowship grants are defined in [OP 62.17, Payment of Scholarships, Fellowship Grants, and Awards](#), as funds disbursed for the benefit of undergraduate or graduate students to support their study and research.

**1. Scholarship Types and Administration**

- a. University scholarship providers (divisions, colleges, and academic and administrative departments) administer three categories of scholarships: university scholarships, college or division scholarships, and academic or administrative department scholarships. Account managers represent these providers by administering each scholarship account.
- b. The TTU Scholarship Office manages four categories of university-level scholarships listed below, aiming to align all scholarship awards with the university's strategic objective to assist as many students as possible. Attaining this objective will optimize recruitment, retention, and the effective utilization of scholarships.

- (1) First-year recruitment scholarships are competitive and based on entering first-year students' high school academic performance.

Gifts and endowments to support university first-year recruitment scholarships will be managed by the TTU Scholarship Office to ensure that university recruitment goals are met.

- (2) Undergraduate transfer recruitment scholarships are competitive awards based on transferring students' academic performance.

Gifts and endowments to support university transfer recruitment scholarships will be managed by the TTU Scholarship Office to ensure that university recruitment goals are met.

- (3) Need-based scholarships are awarded based on applicants' federal student financial aid data (FAFSA or TAFSA) and other academic requirements. "Need" is determined by the Financial Aid Office.
  - (4) University-wide opportunity scholarships are special endowments disbursed according to criteria other than academic merit or need.
- c. Scholarships managed by units within colleges or divisions are limited to the specific endowment(s) with criteria to support students enrolled in disciplines in the college or programs in the division. All scholarships managed by colleges or divisions must be awarded by the university deadlines listed below. Athletic scholarships and other units such as Housing, Study Abroad, Campus Life, etc. are classified as division scholarships. In cases where awards are not awarded by the deadline, the TTU Scholarship office will identify eligible students and oversee the award process.
  - d. Academic or administrative departments oversee scholarships created to support students enrolled in departmental programs or disciplines, adhering to university deadlines. If awards are not allocated within the specified timeframe, the scholarship office will identify eligible students and oversee the award process.
  - e. Students can receive scholarships from various campus sources as long as awards satisfy university goals and federal and state regulations and do not exceed the cost of education.

## **2. Developing Common Applications**

- a. The Scholarship Office maintains central scholarship application files for undergraduate scholarship applicants. Entering students submit their applications online via [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org) or the CommonApp via <https://www.commonapp.org/>, and current students submit their applications through <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/scholarships/>.
- b. The Scholarship Office applications are stored via the university's imaging system to allow for university-wide access and includes any additional required documents from applicants, including résumés, essays, and recommendation letters.
- c. The Scholarship Office records application submissions and makes submission data available to university scholarship committees.
- d. Each September, the Scholarship Office compares the previous years' scholarship applicants to current awardees and submits its findings to the Vice President for Enrollment Management.

## **3. Common Application Deadlines**

- a. The scholarship application cycle begins each July for the following academic year. Based on this cycle, the Division of Enrollment Management has set the following priority dates based on available funding for students to apply for university scholarships:

- Entering first-year students – December 1 for fall terms
  - Current students – February 1 for fall terms
  - Undergraduate transfer students – March 1 for fall terms
  - Undergraduate transfer students – November 15 for spring terms
- b. Scholarship account managers requesting scholarship application revisions should submit their requests to the Scholarship Office by June 15. Newly approved requests will become effective at the start of the next application cycle. Academic or administrative departments are prohibited from developing their own scholarship applications; instead, they are mandated to utilize the university's scholarship application system.

#### 4. Processing Scholarships

- a. All university scholarship account managers are authorized to access the Scholarship Tracking System (STS) once required training has been completed and documented. If necessary, account managers can designate secondary users. All STS users must be FERPA compliant.
- b. To allow for timely scholarship processing, the TTU Scholarship Office has set the following priority dates for departmental account managers to enter first-round scholarship offers into the STS. The TTU Scholarship Office will review any scholarships that remain unawarded by the deadline, identifying eligible students and facilitating the award process.

(1) Entering first-year students

- University recruitment merit scholarship – Awarding occurs September 1 to May 1
- University need-based scholarships – On or before February 1
- College or division scholarships – On or before February 1
- Departmental scholarships – On or before February 1

(2) Entering undergraduate transfer students

For fall:

- University merit and need-based scholarships – Awarding occurs February 1 through June 30
- College or division scholarships – On or before April 15
- Departmental scholarships – On or before April 30

For spring:

- University merit and need-based scholarships – Awarding occurs September 15 to December 1
- College or division scholarships – On or before November 15
- Departmental scholarships – On or before November 30

(3) Returning undergraduates

- Renewing university merit scholarships – On or before March 31
- College, division, and departmental scholarships – On or before April 15

(4) Graduate students

All scholarships – On or before May 31

- c. Scholarship committees making awards after priority dates listed above will be designated late in the Scholarship Office's summer progress reports. Access to the Scholarship Tracking System will be restricted following documented deadlines. After the initial deadline has elapsed, colleges and departments will have an additional opportunity to grant additional awards within a specified timeframe.

**5. Scholarship Office Responsibilities**

- a. The Scholarship Office maintains the STS, annually trains users to use the system, and offers an STS technical help desk.
- b. The Scholarship Office assists colleges and academic departments with their recruitment, retention, and completion scholarship awards by identifying top-recruited students and notifying departments.

**6. Account Manager Responsibilities**

- a. Account managers in departments generate scholarship notifications and award letters within one month of scholarship committee decisions or by the stated university deadline, whichever occurs first. Approval by the TTU Scholarship Office is required for scholarship notifications and award letters to ensure consistent language usage.
- b. After scholarships have been extended to students, account managers must input the offered scholarships into STS as awarded.
- c. Account managers are responsible for gathering thank-you letters from awardees and forwarding them to TTU Office of Advancement for distribution. The release of funds is contingent upon the receipt of the thank-you letter.
- d. Account managers report on current scholarship recipients and scholarship accounts to TTU Office of Advancement by October each year. Their reports include information about scholarship recipients for donors, recipients' contact information for receptions and event planning, and reasons why scholarship accounts were not awarded, if applicable. The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) rules govern the disclosure of students' information.
- e. Account managers collaborate with the TTU Office of Advancement, the Scholarship Office, and their dedicated development professional to host donors if separate events are not possible and ensure that recipients comply with donor and university-established eligibility criteria.