

OU Foundation Scholarship Payments to Bursar Policy and Procedures Manual

Beginning the Fall 2012 semester, scholarships awarded through OU Foundation funds will be paid directly into the students' bursar accounts. This comprehensive policy change was made to:

- 1) Ensure the OU scholarship dollars pay students' education expenses before any other expenses;
- 2) Identify students whose student loans/financial aid package must be adjusted based on these additional scholarships awards;
- 3) Ensure scholarships are correctly reported to the IRS and students on the 1098T tax forms; and
- 4) Make the entire process more efficient.

To ensure that your internal processes adapt to this change, please refer to the policies and procedures outlined below. For questions regarding this document, please contact Alison Baker, Scholarship Office: amainers@ou.edu, 325-4864.

Three Stages of a Scholarship

Through the new process, OU Foundation scholarships go through three different stages. Be aware of these stages when reading the policies below.

1. **Requested** – Scholarship awards that have been requested by departments, but not yet approved by the OU Foundation or added to student's Financial Aid Account.
2. **Approved** – Scholarship awards that have been approved by the OU Foundation for payment and added to a student's Financial Aid Account, but not yet paid into their Bursar account. Funding has been transferred from the Foundation to the Office of the Bursar to cover award amount.
3. **Disbursed** – Scholarship awards that have been paid into a student's Bursar account and either attributed to unpaid educational costs, or cut as a refund check to the student by the Bursar.

How to Request a Scholarship through the OU Foundation

Scholarship for International Students

- Departments complete a paper International Scholarship Disbursement Request form, available on www.oufoundation.org. Form may be sent to the OU Foundation through campus mail or fax.
- As in previous years, the OU Foundation will continue to pay scholarships for international students through bursar accounts.

Scholarship for US Citizens or Permanent Residents

- Departments complete an Online Scholarship Disbursement Request (OSDR) form, available on www.oufoundation.org. This is the same form as was used in 2011-2012.
- The OU Foundation reviews the request and clears any warnings identified by the system prior to approving. After receipt of the OSDR form, the OU Foundation ensures adequate funding is available for the scholarship request(s). When approved, the OU Foundation sends notification of award to Financial Aid Services.

How a Foundation Scholarship is Paid to a Student

Scholarship for International Students

- After the OU Foundation approves the scholarship request for an international student, notification is sent electronically to Financial Aid Services to award the student. The entire award amount requested will be withdrawn from the corresponding Foundation fund at this time.
- OU Financial Aid Services adds the scholarship amount minus any tax withheld to the student's Financial Aid Account. At this time, a student may see their award in their OU-FAN, viewable through their oZONE account.
- If in the aid year/term designated by the request, and if the student is currently enrolled, the appropriate amount will disburse into the student's Bursar account. If a student has any unpaid educational costs, the scholarship will be attributed to them. If the student has no Bursar balance, a refund will be made available by the Bursar.
- Note - Departments will no longer see international tax amounts withheld in Foundation fund statements. Financial Aid Services will withhold appropriate international taxes on the student's behalf through their processes.

Scholarship for US Citizens or Permanent Residents

- After the OU Foundation approves the scholarship request for a student, notification is sent electronically to Financial Aid Services to award the student. The entire award amount requested will be withdrawn from the corresponding Foundation fund at this time.
- The electronic scholarship file is automatically uploaded into Banner each weekday morning. The scholarship amounts are added into students' Financial Aid Accounts. At this time, a student may see their award in their OU-FAN, viewable through their oZONE account.
- If in the aid year/term designated by the request, and if the student is enrolled at OU, the appropriate amount will disburse into the student's Bursar account. If a student has

any unpaid educational costs, the scholarship will be attributed to them. If the student has no Bursar balance, a refund will be made available by the Bursar.

How to Adjust or Void Scholarship Payment

With this new process, departments can easily increase scholarship amounts to students. Scholarships that were approved but not disbursed can also easily be voided.

1. To *increase* a scholarship disbursed to a student, departments need to fill out an additional OSD R form through the OU Foundation. On the form, indicate the amount to increase the scholarship.
2. To *decrease* a scholarship amount or *void* an approved scholarship that did not disburse, departments need to fill out and submit a **Scholarship Fix Form** (available on www.oufoundation.org after July 1, 2012).
3. Disbursed scholarships may be decreased/voided as well. If a scholarship amount was erroneously requested by the department and disbursed to a student, departments need to fill out and submit a **Scholarship Fix Form** (available on www.oufoundation.org after July 1, 2012). The scholarship will be decreased or voided through the student's Financial Aid Account. The student will then show the amount to be owed back to the Bursar. Departments will show the refunded money in the corresponding Foundation account at month end. The department is responsible for notifying the student of the change in their award amount.
 - a. Disbursed scholarships cannot be decreased or voided for students who have completely withdrawn from the University. If a scholarship was disbursed to a student and then the student completely withdrew from OU, the Foundation will not be able to lower or void the amount awarded to them.
 - b. Departments may only decrease/void a scholarship that was disbursed to a student within the same semester. Scholarships that have disbursed in previous semesters or aid years through the error of the department cannot be recouped from the student.

How to Hold Payment of a Scholarship to a Student

Departments can hold approved scholarships through Financial Aid Services until students fulfill department requirements (thank you notes, GPA check, attendance at a specific event, full-time enrollment, etc.). To set up scholarship hold classifications, complete the following steps:

1. Fill out and submit a **Hold Classification Form** (attached) for each scholarship fund. Holds must be established on the fund-level. Departments can choose from the following options:
 - a. Hold Fall scholarship payment. Automatically disburse Spring.
 - b. Automatically disburse Fall scholarship payment. Hold Spring.
 - c. Hold Fall and Spring scholarship payments.
2. Any scholarship approved in a fund with a Hold Classification will be added onto a student's Financial Aid Account, but will not disburse automatically into their Bursar Account until released manually by the department.

3. Departments only need to fill out the Hold Classification Form for a scholarship fund once. Hold Classifications can be changed in future academic years by submitting the form again.
4. If a department does not fill out a Hold Classification Form, no holds will be applied for scholarships awarded. All scholarships for students who are enrolled will disburse automatically the week before classes start each term.

How to Disburse a Held Scholarship to a Student

1. Held scholarships can be disbursed to students on an individual level. To disburse a scholarship that has been held for a specific student, departments must complete and submit a **Scholarship Release Form** (attached).
2. It is the department's responsibility to ensure all held scholarships are disbursed to their students or voided. Students will not be able to force the Bursar or Financial Aid Services to disburse scholarships held by departments.

Important to Note

Scholarship Disbursements by Term – Departments can select when a scholarship is disbursed through the OSDR form: Fall, Spring, Summer or Annual (split Fall/Spring). *Departments are encouraged to award annual scholarships as annual scholarships*, instead of completing a fall only disbursement request in the fall and a spring only disbursement request in the spring. Financial Aid Services will be able to more efficiently process other aid, including loans and grants, if full award amounts are known at the beginning of the academic year. If you wish to hold a spring scholarship, complete a Hold Classification Form instead.

OU Foundation Statements – Annual scholarship amounts will be awarded to students with half of the award disbursed in the Fall and the other half disbursed in the Spring. However, Foundation fund statements will reflect the full annual amount debited from their account at the time of approval. If the approved scholarship is not disbursed to the student, credit(s) will show in the account when the department requests the scholarship be voided, or at the end of the academic year.

Did the student receive the scholarship? – Just because you see the student's name and amount approved in your Foundation fund statement does not confirm that your student received their scholarship. Departments can check if scholarships have disbursed through Banner screen RPIFAWD. For information on how to gain access to this screen, contact Caryn Pacheco at 325-5505 or cpacheco@ou.edu.

I requested a scholarship that never disbursed to the intended student. Now what? – Approved scholarships will not disburse to a student if (a) the student is not enrolled, or (b) a department-requested hold was forgotten. To release the hold, complete a **Scholarship Release Form**. To void the scholarship, complete a **Scholarship Fix Form**. The Fix Form will zero out the approved award on the student's Financial Aid Account and will deposit the funding back into your Foundation account.