

Policy on Financial Aid

Policy Number	ACA-037
Effective Date	When Signed
Responsible Office/Person	Provost/COO; Executive Vice Chancellor
Related Policies	See below
Additional History	
Additional References	

University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Division of Academic Affairs
Policy on Financial Aid

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to enhance the overall coordination of Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits and related forms of financial aid for students, as between individual academic colleges and departments, service departments, and all personnel involved in the student financial aid awarding process. Public confidence in University stewardship of these resources is achieved when the highest ethical standards of impartiality and fairness are maintained through all stages of processing awards and when internal controls operate effectively.

Scope

The policy applies to all Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits given to any student enrolled at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth (“University”).

If a student is applying for Title IV Federal Aid, all sources of aid will be considered when awarding Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits. If a student is awarded aid in excess of their cost of attendance, aid from all sources will need to be reviewed and possibly adjusted to bring the student within the cost of attendance for the academic year.

Covered Members of the University Community

This policy applies to all offices and personnel of the University involved in the solicitation, management and awarding of student financial aid funds, including University officials, administrators, faculty, staff, other employees and students.

All academic colleges or equivalent units through their administrators, faculty, and staff must comply with this policy. Failure to do so may result in incorrect recording or application of Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits and may result in the University’s non-compliance with federal or state laws and regulations. Misappropriation of University funds for student financial aid may result in financial liability for the responsible unit.

Definitions

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For the limited purposes of this Policy and any associated Regulations, these words and phrases have the following meaning:

a) *Financial Aid*

Financial Aid is any grant, scholarship, loan or paid employment offered to assist a student in meeting their University expenses. Aid is usually provided by various sources such as the federal government, state agencies, the University, foundations, and donors. Financial Aid amounts are determined by federal, state, institutional, and foundation guidelines.

b) *Title IV*

Title IV aid offered by the federal government is primarily administered by the U.S. Department of Education (“ED”) under the Higher Education Act of 1965, Title IV, in the form of grants, loans and work study. ED provides the University funds through two methods: a funds draw down from the G5 financial system accessed through Common Origination and Disbursements (COD) and Campus Based (CB) Funding. CB provides the University a set amount of funds that must be awarded equitably amongst eligible students. CB funds include Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) and Federal Work Study (FWS).

c) *Scholarship*

A scholarship is financial aid awarded to a student, typically based on merit, need or talent criteria. The criteria for scholarship is determined by the awarding entities which could include the University Admission Office, donors, foundations, corporations, and non-profit agencies that provide funds.

d) *Grant*

A grant is entitlement financial aid awarded to a student, typically based on demonstrated financial need. Grants are gift aid that usually do not need to be repaid. Federal, state, and foundations grants are awarded through criteria established by the awarding agency. Institutional grants are awarded based on criteria established with the Financial Aid Services Policy “*Student Application and Eligibility*” and “*Awarding and Packaging*”.

e) *Fellowship*

A financial award to a graduate student, or a post-graduate fellow, to aid in the pursuit of study or research. Such amount is not a loan and there is no expectation of repayment. A Fellowship is not a payment for teaching, performing research, or other services. A Fellowship recipient is selected based on specific criteria, which is typically set by the federal or state governments or the institution. University graduate fellowships are awarded by the Office of Graduate Studies and may be accompanied by a tuition credit.

f) *Tuition Credit*

Tuition Credits are awards provided to a student that reduce their tuition. The student is responsible for payment of the remaining tuition not covered by the Tuition Credits. Tuition Credits are normally awarded on a semester basis. Students may utilize their Tuition Credits for any semester (fall or spring) during which they are enrolled full-time (a minimum of 12 credit hours for undergraduate students and 9 credit hours for graduate and post graduate students). A graduate student may be considered full-time for tuition credit purposes if he/she

is enrolled in the last coursework or dissertation/thesis credits or in zero credit continuation. Students cannot receive Tuition Credits for more than eight semesters. Incompletes, repeat hours, withdrawals, correspondence courses and audited courses are not acceptable to be counted towards the full-time enrollment requirement for renewal of tuition credits. A student may only receive one Tuition Credits at a time. Multiple Tuition Credits cannot be used in a single semester.

g) *Direct Costs*

Direct Costs are any charges billed directly to a student's account. This includes tuition, fees (both mandatory and waivable), on campus room and/or board charges. Direct Costs are set by vote of the University Board of Trustees ("BOT").

Policy

A. General Principles for Financial Aid to Students

The University may award Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits to matriculated undergraduate, graduate, post-graduate, and certificate students, using funds provided by alumni and other private donors, federal and state government, and the University, based on need, merit, or a combination of both need and merit.

Student enrollment initiatives are key components to the success of the University's mission and strategic goals. The University strives to use awards of Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits to attract and retain students with exceptional academic ability, and students who will contribute to the diversity of the University community, and to enable qualified students who need financial assistance to be able to attend and graduate. Enrollment targets and related scholarship aid funding are reviewed annually in accordance with university-wide goals.

B. Organizational Responsibility of University Units Participating in Financial Aid

1. Enrollment Management

Enrollment Management is responsible for communicating University enrollment strategies and goals to those persons who are part of the financial aid planning and awarding process.

2. Financial Aid Services

The Financial Aid Services must comply with all applicable federal, state and University policies when it awards Scholarship, Grant, Tuition Credits or any other form of financial aid assistance; determine student financial need; maintain associated systems and procedures required to facilitate the same; provide access to relevant and necessary information to assist in the collaborative awarding of Scholarship, Grant, Tuition Credits or other forms of aid; and provide to the appropriate development officers information required for reports made to donors. Financial Aid Services has primary responsibility for awarding aid to students. All related policies, procedures, terms and conditions will be readily accessible online to aid recipients.

3. Development Officers

Development officers are expected to communicate the University's scholarship funding priorities to potential donors and must ensure that reports are provided to actual donors

regarding the successful selection of students and the achievement of enrollment objectives using information provided by academic departments and the Financial Aid Services. All effective awarding criteria is subject to approval by Financial Aid Services.

4. Academic and Other Awarding Units

A University unit that contemplates providing Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits not administered by the Financial Aid Services must select the student recipients consistent with the terms of any donative agreements (if applicable); enter the student award in the Department Award module in the Scholarship Administration software; notify the student in writing as to their award status and next steps so that official awards can be completed; and coordinate with other units where multiple award eligibility is possible. Deans, or equivalent officers of academic units must annually certify compliance with donor agreements for any such awarded grants. All unit administered awards must be registered with Financial Aid Services and adhere to procedures in Section C below. Use of General Operating Funds for financial aid is disallowed; use of other discretionary funds requires approval by the division head.

5. Bursar's Office

The Bursar's Office bears the responsibility for the disbursement of financial aid to students. Financial Aid Services and the Bursar's Office will maintain a separation of duties as required by the Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 2-Chapter 3 (FSA Administrative Related Requirements). The office is also responsible for administration of the Federal Perkins Program.

6. Administration and Finance

Administration & Finance ("A&F") is responsible for overall budget management.

C. Procedures for Setting Eligibility Criteria, Awarding and Monitoring of Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits

1. Award procedures must be approved by proper authorities and documentation should be submitted to Financial Aid Services prior to the student being awarded the funds.
2. Eligibility criteria will be established for initial and continuing eligibility. These criteria should be clearly defined in published program materials.
 - a) Initial eligibility criteria are criteria that each recipient must meet to initially qualify for an award.
 - b) Continuing eligibility criteria are criteria each recipient must meet to retain the award for subsequent semesters.
 - c) While donors may participate in developing the criteria for an award – no donor shall participate directly in the selection of any award recipient or in the determination of a recipient's continuing eligibility.
 - d) Documentation of financial need must be completed by the University's office with responsibility for determining need, Financial Aid Services.
 - e) All documentation of eligibility must be retained for all award recipients for the required number of years following the fiscal year in which the award is made. Where

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compliance with eligibility is already on file in the central University database, such as a student's grade point average, the electronic record is sufficient.

3. The academic term for which any Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits is to be treated as received (e.g. for evaluating a student's financial resources), is the term in which the payment is received.
4. Financial Aid Services will be the University authority on determining student financial need, as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and through federal methodology as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. The Office will be responsible for coordination, and determination of financial eligibility for all need-based Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits and for the financial eligibility component of all merit-based Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits that have a need-based component.
5. To remain compliant with Federal Student Aid requirements, there must be a standardized coordinated disbursement of all Scholarship, Grant and Tuition Credits and any other awards through the Financial Aid Services.
6. For awards which are administered through the University's centrally managed scholarship programs, ceremonial presentations of actual awards including cash or checks to students are prohibited. Colleges and departments are encouraged to identify other appropriate means of symbolizing presentation of the award during banquets and other ceremonies.
7. The University complies with federal and state laws and regulations governing the awarding, disbursing, and reporting of all forms of financial aid, including Scholarship, Grant, Fellowship and Tuition Credits.
8. When an institutional award made by the University is coordinated with federal or state financial aid provided to a student, the student's total assistance from the University and the federal or state sources cannot exceed the student's cost of attendance, as determined by Financial Aid Services, consistent with federal and state regulations. In resolving over award, Financial Aid Services follows a reduction of aid that is in coordination with federal Return of Title IV requirements, which can be found within the FSA handbook. <https://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/1718FSAHbkActiveIndex.html>
9. All aid awarded to a student will be applied to institutional charges. Any excess aid after all institutional charges have been paid will be refunded to the student.
10. No tuition or fee payments can be made on behalf of the student unless there is an award under this policy.

D. Reporting

The Chancellor shall submit a report to the Board of Trustees that will include the amount and proportion of institutional student aid funds awarded in the various programs. A copy of the

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currently applicable institutional policy guidelines will accompany the report. Financial Aid Services maintains documentation of awards made.

Policy Changes

The Division of Academic Affairs will review this policy every five years or sooner.

Related Policies

UMass Policies

BoT	T98-050	Undergraduate Financial Aid Policy
BoT	T07-113	University of Massachusetts Tuition and Fee Credits Policy
BoT	T08-039	University of Massachusetts Graduate Tuition Credits for Veterans
BoT	T08-059	Policy on the Welcome Home Credits Program
BoT	T96-129	University of Massachusetts Policy on Tuition Credits
	ACA-038	Policy on Federal Work Study Program

UMass Dartmouth links

Financial Aid Services

<https://www.umassd.edu/financialaid/>

Financial Aid Awards Terms & Conditions

<https://www.umassd.edu/financialaid/maintainingaid/termsandconditions/>

Maintaining Financial Aid

<https://www.umassd.edu/financialaid/maintainingaid/>


Approvals:



Mohammad A. Karim
Provost; Executive Vice Chancellor for
Academic Affairs; Chief Operating Officer



Michael J. Barone
Interim Vice Chancellor for Administration &
Finance; Chief Financial Officer



Robert E. Johnson
Chancellor

1/29/19
Date