

**JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Manual of Policies and Procedures**

**POLICY NUMBER: III:04**

**DATE: 2018**

**REVISION DATES: Nov 2018, Feb 2019, Jun 2020, May 2021, Jun 2022, Sep 2024**

**SUBJECT: Institutional Aid**

**APPROVED:**

**PURPOSE**

This policy establishes criteria for awarding of institutional aid at Jacksonville State University (JSU). Institutional aid is an amount of money or discount awarded to a student by JSU to aid in the pursuit of financing the student's education.

**POLICY**

**Institutional Aid Eligibility:**

To be eligible to receive institutional aid, all students must:

- Be fully admitted to JSU in an undergraduate or graduate program.

**Need-Based Aid:**

- Have completed a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- Have completed all requirements to receive federal aid (verification process, etc.).

**Merit Scholarships:**

- Be fully admitted to JSU with all required test scores and transcripts
- Enroll full-time each semester (12 credit hours)

**Leadership and Honors Scholarships:**

- Fully admitted to JSU with all required test scores and transcripts
- Submit Leadership or Honors Scholarship application and other required documents

- Enroll full-time each semester:
  - Undergraduate: 12 credit hours
  - Graduate: 9 hours

#### Departmental Scholarships

- Complete the JAXAPP
- Meet criteria as defined for each scholarship

#### Graduate Assistantships

- Refer to [Policy No: III:12 - Graduate Assistantship Program](#)

Any false or inaccurate information submitted for scholarship eligibility can result in the student being disqualified for the scholarship and the scholarship being retracted and removed from the student's account.

#### **Institutional Aid Continuation Criteria:**

- Maintain full-time status each semester, unless noted otherwise in the award letter and/or contract
- Maintain academic good standing based on undergraduate or graduate requirements, unless otherwise stated in the award letter and/or contract
- Meet any additional criteria that may be included in the award letter and/or contract.

#### **Institutional Aid Coverage and Limitations:**

- Institutional aid may be applied to the following:
  - JSU tuition
  - JSU fees (types of fees can vary depending on specification)
  - JSU housing, meals, and/or books (in some cases)
    - Institutional aid designated for housing/meals/books cannot be used for other expenses

- Merit scholarships can only be used for tuition, with the exception of tuition assistance and Birmingham Promise scholarships.
- Scholarships listed as “unrestricted” may be applied to the following charges:
  - Tuition
  - Fees
  - On-campus housing
  - Meal plans
    - The maximum amount of Flex Dollars that can be added to an existing meal plan is \$500 per semester. The maximum amount of Flex Dollars that can be added without an existing meal plan is \$1,000 per semester.
- Financial aid will be applied to a student’s account in the following order:
  - Institutional aid
  - Private scholarships
  - Federal grants
  - Federal loans
- Under no circumstance will institutional aid result in a cash payment to the student. Students receiving institutional aid whose overall financial aid packages exceed the direct cost of education (defined as tuition, fees, and, in some cases, housing/meals/books) will not receive a credit or a refund. In these cases, the amount of the institutional aid will be adjusted to preclude a credit or refund.
- Unless otherwise noted in the award letter and/or contract or required by a specific major, institutional aid is for one academic year. One half of the total amount will be awarded in the fall semester and the other half will be awarded in the spring semester.
- Unused funds will not be carried forward to any other semesters.

- Upon graduation from an undergraduate program, any remaining semesters of merit scholarship aid may be used for graduate tuition within one year of the student's graduation date. Students must notify the Financial Aid Office of their intent to use their scholarship funds for a graduate program. All merit scholarship eligibility criteria will still apply (full-time status, GPA, etc.).
- Students who are approved to take graduate coursework in the final year of their undergraduate degree may utilize their merit scholarship for graduate tuition. Students must notify the Financial Aid Office each semester to have their merit scholarship apply to graduate tuition. All merit scholarship eligibility criteria will still apply (full-time status, GPA, etc.).
- Institutional aid may not be used for the summer term; unless specified in the award letter and/or contract or required by a specific major.
- Merit scholarships are awarded at the in-state tuition rate.
- Student-athletes who participate in a head-count sport (Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Volleyball, Women's Tennis) for JSU receive athletic aid that covers 100% of their JSU cost of attendance (defined as tuition, institutional fees, room, board, and books). These student-athletes are not eligible to receive an institutional scholarship. No modification will be made to an athletic scholarship without consultation and approval from the JSU Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance.

Institutional aid may have additional award criteria and/or restrictions noted in the award letter and/or contract.

## **Conflict of Interest**

JSU's conflict of interest policy requires members of the University community to avoid all conflicts of interest or even the appearance of a conflict of interest. In accordance with the institution's conflict of interest policy, individuals involved in the selection or awarding of institutional aid (e.g., employees, volunteers, donors, scholarship or grant committee members) must disclose to their manager or supervisor any actual or potential conflicts that they may have in connection with the review, evaluation, award, and/or distribution of scholarships, grants, or other institutional aid. The conflict will be addressed under the applicable conflict of interest policy, which can be found in [I.05.04 - Code of Conduct and Ethics](#).

No award committee or individual involved in the selection process may make a grant or award or distribute a scholarship or institutional aid to an immediate or extended family member, dependent, or other relative of anyone serving on an institutional aid selection committee or otherwise involved in the decision-making process.

## **Awarding Institutional Aid**

Unless otherwise stated in separate policy or standard operational procedure (SOP), institutional aid is awarded as follows:

### Merit Scholarships:

- The Financial Aid Office awards first time freshmen academic merit scholarships upon admission to the university.

### Need-Based Aid:

- Students will be awarded need-based aid automatically, using algorithmic packaging based on their official EFC, ACT, or SAT composite score, and/or high school GPA.

### Departmental Scholarships:

- The Associate Director of Scholarships, the Department Scholarship Committee (including Leadership and Honors), or General Scholarship committee select recipients.

### Transfer Merit Scholarships:

- The Associate Director of Scholarships awards transfer merit scholarships.

### Graduate Assistantships:

- The Graduate School determines and awards graduate assistantships.

The Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and the President may also award any institutional aid at their discretion.

### **Documentation:**

Documentation must be maintained and retained per the [Public Universities of Alabama Records Disposition Authority](#) for each student for each of the following actions related to institutional scholarships:

- Award letters
- Changes to institutional scholarship awards
- Students placed on Institutional Scholarship Probation
- Appeals and results of appeals
- Suspension of institutional scholarships

### **Merit Aid Suspension and Appeals:**

A student who fails to meet scholarship renewal requirements for a merit-based scholarship may appeal to have their scholarship reinstated. A student may submit an appeal only in cases of extenuating circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances for which a student may file a Scholarship Appeal may include a student's injury or illness, serious illness or death of an immediate family member, or other special circumstances. Each Scholarship Appeal will be reviewed individually, and decisions are made on a case-by-case basis as outlined in the procedures below.

The Scholarship Appeal process requires submission through the online scholarship appeal form. Students may access this form through the link that is included in the non-renewal email. This email is sent at the end of the Spring semester to any student that did not meet scholarship renewal requirements. The link to the form can be found [here](#).

In the online appeal form, students must include a written statement by the student. This statement should outline the extenuating circumstances which led the student not to meet their scholarship renewal requirements. The statement should include how the student's circumstances have changed and should state the student's plan for meeting scholarship renewal requirements in the future. The appeal must be accompanied by supporting documentation that supports the claims made in the letter or statement of appeal. Students must upload at least one file of supporting documentation within the online form.

If any documentation is provided by a professional (business, medial, counselor, clergy, etc.), the documentation must include that institution's professional letterhead, the professional's credentials, and the professional's signature. If a letter of support is provided by a personal reference (teacher, family friend, etc.), the documentation must be signed by that reference.

Students that wish to submit a scholarship appeal must do so within one year after no longer being enrolled at Jacksonville State University. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from filing an appeal within one year, exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Financial Aid.

Scholarship Appeals will be reviewed anonymously by a committee that consists of JSU staff. A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Scholarship Appeal Committee may submit a request for a second review. The student will need to submit another scholarship appeal through the online appeal form. Additional supporting documentation must be submitted with a second appeal request.

If a student's scholarship appeal is granted by the Scholarship Appeal Committee, the student will have their merit scholarship reinstated to the student's account. The student will be required to meet renewal requirements of their merit scholarship once their scholarship is reinstated.

If a student's appeal is denied by the Scholarship Appeal Committee, the student will not be eligible to receive a merit scholarship for the student's remaining time at JSU.

### SCHOLARSHIP DEFERRAL:

#### SCHOLARSHIP DEFERRAL DUE TO INTERNSHIP

JSU will defer a student's Merit-based Scholarship(s) based on the student's acceptance and completion of the qualified internship. The student's career development coordinator and the academic advisor will determine if the internship is qualified. The Financial Aid Office must receive verification of acceptance into the program before the Merit-based Scholarship(s) are removed from the student's account for the applicable semester.

Once the internship is completed, the student must provide verification of completion before the Merit-based Scholarship(s) will be applied back to the student's account. Notification to the Financial Aid Office is the responsibility of the student. A student will only be allowed to defer a scholarship due to an internship for a maximum of 2 times.

#### SCHOLARSHIP DEFERRAL DUE TO MILITARY

JSU will defer a student's Merit-based Scholarship(s) based on the student's enlistment into the United States Military. A student is required to email [scholarships@jsu.edu](mailto:scholarships@jsu.edu) to provide notice of the student's upcoming enlistment, the dates of any training or deployment, the semester of deferring the scholarship, and the semester of intended return to JSU. The Financial Aid Office must also receive verification of the student's military dates before the Merit-based Scholarship(s) are removed from the student's account for the applicable semester(s).



Once the training or deployment assignment has been completed, the student must contact the Financial Aid Office prior to the semester of intended return to JSU. Once the student contacts the Financial Aid Office and submits documentation of training or deployment, the scholarship will be applied back to the student's account. Notification to the Financial Aid Office is the responsibility of the student.

#### SCHOLARSHIP DEFERRAL DUE TO MEDICAL REASONS

A student may request a deferral of a Merit-based Scholarship(s) based on a medical emergency or medical situation. The student will be required to email [scholarships@jsu.edu](mailto:scholarships@jsu.edu) to request a medical deferral of a Merit-based Scholarship(s). A student must provide a description of their medical situation along with the appropriate documentation. The student will also need to state in this email the semester for which a deferral is requested and the intended semester for return to JSU.

Once this information has been received by the Financial Aid Office and approved, the Merit-based Scholarship(s) will be removed from the student's account for the applicable semester(s). It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Financial Aid Office prior to the semester of intended return to JSU.

Once the student contacts the Financial Aid Office and the documentation is reviewed and approved, the scholarship will be applied back to the student's account. Notification to the Financial Aid Office is the responsibility of the student.

#### APPEALS FOR DEFERRALS

If the student is unable to provide proof of completion of the qualified internship, then the student will have the right to appeal. The Scholarship Appeal Committee will make the determination if an exception should be made. The decision of the Scholarship Appeal Committee is final.

## EXCEPTIONS

*Exceptions to the Institutional Aid and Refund policy must be approved by the President.*

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

This policy is the responsibility of the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

## **EVALUATION**

The Institutional Scholarship policy will be reviewed every five (5) years.