UA Scholars
University of Alaska Scholars Program

YOU GOT THIS

Future World Leader

Program Information Booklet
IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

High Schools:
   Oct. 1: Deadline to complete the online designation process.

Scholars:
   May 1: Deadline to submit an application for admission to any University of Alaska campus.

Apply online at http://uaonline.alaska.edu or contact a campus admissions office for a paper application and admissions related questions:
   - Anchorage: (907) 786-1480
   - Fairbanks: (907) 474-7500
   - Southeast: (907) 796-6100

This booklet contains important details for UA Scholars and high school administrators. Read it thoroughly to understand the expectations of the Program and requirements of the Award.

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1. Introduction

The UA Scholars Program is a unique merit scholarship sponsored by the University of Alaska. In 1999, the University of Alaska began offering scholarships to those students ranked academically in the top 10 percent of their high school class at the end of their junior year. The goal of the program is to encourage Alaska students to attend and graduate from college in their home state. Each qualified high school in Alaska has the opportunity to designate its top students annually. Designated Scholars may then use their Award at any of the University of Alaska’s 15 campuses.

A. Purpose

The University of Alaska designed the Scholars Program to provide an incentive for Alaska’s middle and high school students to achieve academic excellence, to nourish efforts of schools to provide high quality education, and to encourage high school graduates from every community in Alaska to attend the University of Alaska. The Scholars Award provides an extra incentive for Alaska’s top students from every community to seriously consider the educational opportunities that the University of Alaska has to offer.

B. How it Works

The Scholars Program verifies the number of eligible Scholars from each qualified high school. Once the Program verifies the number of eligible Scholars, the university will notify them of their Award.

To use the Award, a Scholar must meet all of the requirements listed in this booklet Section (2)(A).

C. Award Amount, Distribution and Deadline for Use

1.) Current Award amount: $12,000. The University of Alaska Board of Regents, at its discretion, may adjust the amount of the Award.

2.) How it’s paid: The university will provide eligible Scholars $1,500 per semester for eight semesters.

3.) Deadline for Use: The Award will expire after a total of eight semesters or within five years of the Scholar’s class graduation from high school.

A Scholar will forfeit any portion of the Award not used within this five-year period and any portion remaining if a Scholar fails to use the Award for more than two semesters during the same period.

2. Information for UA Scholars

A. Scholar Requirements

Read this section thoroughly to understand the requirements of the Scholars Award.

1. Apply for Admission at a University of Alaska campus by May 1

Scholars must submit an admission application to a certificate or degree program at any University of Alaska campus online or postmarked on or before May 1 of their senior year. Any Scholar who misses the May 1 deadline will not be eligible to use the Award (except as discussed in Section (3)(D), Eligibility Reconsideration, Senior Year).

2. Meet the requirements of the Award

To redeem the Award, the Scholar must:

a.) Be a U.S. citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States;

b.) Have successfully earned a high school diploma from a qualified Alaska high school;

c.) Be admitted into a certificate or undergraduate degree program at a University of Alaska campus;

d.) Participate in any mandatory orientation or program required by the campus;

e.) Enroll full time in 12 or more credits beginning the first fall semester following his or her designated class high school graduation unless utilizing the Leave of Absence provision discussed in Section (2)(B).

f.) Complete 24 credits during the first academic year*; and

g.) Complete 30 credits annually thereafter until the Award has concluded.*

3. Remain Eligible for the Award

a.) To remain eligible for the Scholars Award, a Scholar must:

(1) Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements are subject to changes in federal or state law and institutional policy. UA Scholars should

*Applies to Scholars in the invited class of 2015 and beyond.
contact their financial aid office with any questions regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy.

(2) **Enroll in at least 12 credits** each fall and spring semester except when taking a qualified Leave of Absence as described in Section (2)(B).

(3) **Complete the minimum number of required annual credits:**

- 24 credits in academic year one (paid semesters 1, 2)
- 30 credits in academic year two (paid semesters 3, 4)
- 30 credits in academic year three (paid semesters 5, 6)
- 30 credits in academic year four (paid semesters 7, 8)

(4) **Be in good standing** in accordance with the UA Student Code of Conduct (Board of Regents policy 09.02.020 and University Regulation 09.02.020); and

(5) **Maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5.**

Notes:
1. One academic year will be defined as two paid semesters.
2. Credits earned through dual enrollment or transfer credits (AP, CLEP, IB, etc.) may count cumulatively toward annual credit requirements.
3. Credits earned outside of the regular semesters (e.g., summer, winter, May terms) will count toward annual credit requirements.
4. Compliance on the cumulative credit completion will be checked before the 3rd, 5th, and 7th semester as described in Table A.

### Table A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMESTER PAID</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative credits needed to receive Award</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits needed to graduate…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in four years with a bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in two years with an associate degree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b.) The Award will be suspended if a Scholar fails to meet any of the eligibility factors listed in Section (2)(A)(3).

c.) A Scholar may submit a written request for reconsideration of suspension to the director of their campus financial aid office.

In order to graduate from the university in four years with a bachelor’s degree or in two years with an associate degree a student needs to complete at least 30 credits per academic year.

**B. Leave of Absence**

1. **Leave of Absence**

The Leave of Absence is defined as any fall or spring semester for which a Scholar does not receive an Award payment.

Leave of Absence Terms:

a.) The Leave maximum is two consecutive or nonconsecutive fall or spring semesters after high school graduation.

b.) The Leave does not extend the Scholar Deadline for Use as specified in Section (1)(C).

c.) A Scholar who intends to take a Leave of Absence in the fall semester immediately following high school graduation must notify their campus Office of Admissions that he or she intends to defer enrollment.

d.) Scholars are not required to inform the Program when using the Leave after the first semester enrolled.

A Scholar whose high school graduation is delayed for any reason is subject to the same Requirements as his or her designated peers listed in Section (2)(A). Any fall or spring semester following normal high school graduation that Scholars do not use their Award will count toward a Leave of Absence. If the Scholar does not use the Award within three semesters, the Award will permanently expire.

2. **Extended Leave of Absence**

Students may request an extension of the Leave of Absence for qualified circumstances.

a.) To request a Leave Extension, the Scholar must submit a written request before the period that the extension is to begin and provide supporting documentation detailing:

(1) Exactly how the request fits within one of the qualified extension circumstances listed in Section (2)(B)(2)(b);

(2) The expected length of absence;
(3) Anticipated date the Scholar will return to school; and
(4) In case of a medical or mental health emergency that makes it impractical to make the request before the extended leave starts, the Scholar must submit a request to the Program as soon as the Scholar is medically or mentally able to do so, but in no event more than 120 calendar days after the beginning of treatment under Section (2)(B)(2)(b)(2).

b.) A Leave Extension may be granted:

(1) To participate in limited periods of service designed to benefit the public good or wellbeing of the community such as the state or federal military, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, community work programs sponsored by a governmental, charitable, or religious entity or other similar activities.

(2) When suffering a serious medical or mental health condition requiring immediate, non-elective treatment that is essential to his or her health. Such treatment must make attendance at the University impractical.

(3) To provide care giving to a terminally ill member of the Scholar’s immediate family (spouse, parents or children).

(4) When waitlisted after admission into a UA degree program (e.g., Nursing). Complete a Scholar Deferment form and submit it to the UA Scholar Program Administrator prior to the Award expiration to qualify.

c.) Extended Leave Terms:

(1) A Scholar may not exceed more than a six semester (three year) Extended Leave. This includes the original two-semester Leave benefit and any additionally approved extensions.

(2) A Leave Extension may extend the Deadline for Use from five years to a maximum of seven years.

(3) If the Scholar does not use the Award within the extended term, he or she will forfeit the remaining balance.

d.) Notification of Extension:

The Administrator will inform the student of the Leave Extension request outcome in writing. All determinations are final.

C. Using the Award to participate in Exchange Programs

A Scholar may use the Award for attendance at other institutions in conjunction with approved National Student Exchange (NSE), Study Abroad and International Exchange programs through the University of Alaska. Contact your campus with questions about using the Award on Exchange.

D. Award Disbursement

1. Eligible Expenses

The Award will be applied as a payment on the student account and may be used for expenses such as undergraduate tuition, fees, room, board, books, supplies and other education costs incurred for attendance at the University of Alaska.

2. Refunds

A refund may be issued if the student account has a positive balance. The Scholar should contact the campus with questions about the refund process.

3. Impact on Financial Aid and Scholarships

A Scholars Award may reduce certain financial assistance including loans and the Alaska Performance Scholarship. In addition, a Scholars Award may eliminate a student’s ability to receive or use a Presidential Scholarship.

E. Award Expiration

A Scholar forfeits all or the remainder of a Scholars Award when:

1.) The Scholar fails to meet the Requirements under Section (2)(A) (2);

2.) The Scholar fails to use the Award for more than two semesters unless the Scholar has taken an approved Extended Leave as described in Section (2)(B)(2);

3.) The Scholar has received the full $12,000 scholarship or eight distributions from the Award;

4.) Five years have passed from the graduation date of the class with which the Scholar was designated or, seven years has passed from the graduation date of the Scholar’s class if the Administrator has granted the Scholar an Extended Leave under Section (2)(B)(2); or
5.) The Scholar is suspended or expelled from the University of Alaska or violates the UA Student Code of Conduct (Board of Regents policy 09.02.020 and University Regulation 09.02.020).

F. Award Appeals

1. Program Administrator

The University President has appointed a Program Administrator to administer the Scholars Program. The Administrator is the final authority on all requests for reconsideration, requests for Extended Leave or any other determinations required by the Scholars Program. The Administrator will inform the student of the outcome of any dispute in writing. All formal determinations are final University decisions.

2. Dispute Procedure

All disputes will be submitted to the Program Administrator in writing. The Administrator’s decisions under this Program are final University decisions. Review of decisions may be obtained by filing an appeal with the Superior Court of Alaska within 30 calendar days of the Administrator’s Final Decision in accordance with Alaska Appellate Rule 602(a)(2).

3. Notices to the Program

Address all communications concerning the Scholars Program to the Scholars Program Administrator.

For information regarding eligibility reconsideration for the UA Scholars Award, please see Section (3)(D) Eligibility Reconsideration, Senior Year.

3. INFORMATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

A. Definition of a Qualified High School

To participate in the Scholars Program, a high school must issue a diploma recognized by the Alaska Department of Education; and

1.) Be a public high school listed in the current Alaska Department of Education directory; or
2.) Be accredited by the Northwest Accreditation Commission; or
3.) Be a private school properly registered with the Alaska Department of Education.

B. Obligations of the High School Administration

1. Establish Eligibility Criteria

Each high school is responsible for academically ranking its students to determine which students are in the top 10 percent of their graduating class at the end of their junior year. Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) is the most common criteria used to rank students. The high school may consider other appropriate academic factors as long as the high school applies and communicates those factors uniformly and fairly to its students. In establishing eligibility criteria, the high school:

a.) Must base its rankings on the student’s academic standing at the school he or she is attending at the end of the junior year.

b.) Must designate all students who qualify academically for the Award and may not base designations on continued enrollment at the current high school, financial need, or intention to enroll or not to enroll at the University of Alaska.

c.) May not alter the ranking to reflect anticipated changes in enrollment.

d.) May not require students to apply for the scholarship or use methods that would exclude students who otherwise qualify.

e.) Must submit the criteria used for ranking students along with the designations electronically to the Program Administrator by October 1st.

f.) Must certify that it applied the criteria uniformly and fairly to all students in the junior class.
The Program Administrator reserves the right to reject eligibility criteria that are inconsistent with the intent of the Scholars Program.

2. Assign High School Scholars Program Coordinator
The principal of the high school must identify one high school staff member to serve as the Scholars Coordinator responsible for completing the online designation process detailed in Section (3)(B)(5) and communicating with the Scholar Program staff.

3. Identify the Number of and Names of Scholars
The high school will identify the qualified Scholars as follows:
   a.) 10 percent of the total number of students in the junior class at the end of the spring term (May or June) will be eligible for the Award.
   b.) Fractions will be rounded to the nearest whole number by our automated system.
   c.) Schools with a junior class of 14 or fewer students are eligible for one Award.
   d.) In no event will tied rankings cause the number of Awards to exceed 10 percent of the class size. The high school must resolve all tied rankings before submitting the list of Scholars to the Scholars Program.
   e.) In cases where a student is dual enrolled, the student’s primary school (school where they are registered in the most credits) would include them in their designation pool.

4. Verify the List of Scholars for Accuracy
The high school must verify its Scholar list for accuracy before submitting it to the Program. Students who are not on the list will not be eligible to receive the scholarship. The high school is responsible for all errors in the designation process.

5. Complete the Designation Process by October 1
   a.) The Program will mail each high school principal a new designation code for access to the secure online Scholar designation website each spring.
   b.) Qualified high schools must submit their Scholars designation list to the Program by October 1 of each year. Each qualified high school also must provide sufficient information to allow the Program to identify Scholar designees. This directory information must include the following:
      (1) full legal name (first, middle, last)
      (2) date of birth
      (3) phone number
      (4) mailing address
   c.) Once the Program accepts a school’s designee list, the school cannot alter it. The Program may accept lists submitted after the deadline if the school can show reasonable cause for the delay.

C. Notification of Award
Official notification of the Award must come from the Scholars Program Administrator. Students, parents and high school officials cannot rely on any other source of information about the notification of an Award.

D. Eligibility Reconsideration, Senior Year
If a student is not in the top 10 percent of his or her high school class at the end of the junior year but is in the top 10 percent at the end of his or her senior year, or if the student graduated early, that student may request reconsideration of his or her eligibility for an Award in May.

To request Eligibility Reconsideration:
   1.) The student and the student’s parent/guardian (if the student is a minor) must submit a signed letter requesting an Eligibility Reconsideration. The letter should be addressed to the Program Administrator and must be postmarked no later than six months after the student’s official high school graduation date as posted on the high school transcript. The letter should explain in detail the basis for the request for reconsideration;
   2.) The student must submit an official transcript indicating the final class ranking among the graduating class.

The Administrator will inform the student of the outcome of the reconsideration in writing. All determinations are final. Scholars granted Awards under this provision must apply for admission no later than 30 days from the date of the written Award notice. With the exception of the May 1 admissions deadline, students granted an Award after reconsideration must comply with all of the Scholar Requirements in Section (2)(A) as stated in this booklet.
4. OTHER PROVISIONS

A. Governing Law and Venue
The laws of the state of Alaska govern the Scholars Program. Any dispute that arises concerning the Program shall be filed in the state courts located in Anchorage or Fairbanks, Alaska.

B. Transferability
The Scholars Award and eligibility for the Award is not transferable to other individuals or recipients.

C. Income Tax Treatment
Award payments made under the Program may be subject to income tax reporting or withholding requirements. The Program, its Administrator or the employees of the University of Alaska make no representations, expressed or implied, about the taxability of benefits received under this Program. The Scholar is responsible for paying any applicable tax and should seek advice from his or her tax advisor.

D. Correction of Errors
In the event a Scholar receives an erroneous payment, the Program may recover the amount or may adjust any remaining amount due under the Award to correct the error.

E. Availability of Funds
Payment of all Awards is subject to the availability of funds as may be determined by the Board of Regents.

F. No Additional Rights
Neither the establishment of this Program, the granting of an Award, nor any action of the University related to the Program shall be held or construed to confer upon any person any right to be or continue to be a student at the University. Nothing in the Program shall be construed to expand a student’s rights beyond those provided in University policies and regulations.

G. Amendment or Termination
The University’s Board of Regents reserves the right to terminate, discontinue, suspend, merge or consolidate this Program with other initiatives. This Program may be amended by authority of the University’s President at any time, except that any reduction in benefits already awarded to recipients shall be approved by the Board of Regents.

Program Administration:

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Content and program managed by the UA Scholars Program, May 2015
The scholarships and this publication are funded by the University of Alaska Land Grant Trust Fund. Publication design by the University of Alaska Statewide Office of Public Affairs. Photos by Monique Musick. The University of Alaska is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer and educational institution.

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