Important Dates and Deadlines

High Schools:
October 1- Deadline to complete the online designation process

Scholars:
May 1- Submit an application for admission to any UA campus through http://uaonline.alaska.edu or contact a campus admissions office:
  • Anchorage: (907) 786-1480
  • Fairbanks: (907) 474-7500
  • Southeast: (907) 796-6100

See Obligations of the Scholar for further requirements

This May 2012 version of the UA Scholars Program Information Booklet replaces all previous versions.
INTRODUCTION

The UA Scholars Program is a unique scholarship program sponsored by the University of Alaska. To encourage Alaska students to attend college in their home state, the University of Alaska offers an $11,000 scholarship to the top 10 percent of graduates from qualified Alaska high schools. To be eligible for the Award, students must be ranked academically in the top 10 percent of their class at the end of their junior year and designated by their high school.

The UA Scholars Program will verify the number of eligible designees from each qualified high school. Once accepted, the UA Scholars Program will officially notify the students of their Award.

To use the Award, a Scholar must meet all the Obligations of the Scholar listed in this booklet, including:

1) Submit an application for admission to a University of Alaska certificate or degree program online or postmarked on or before May 1; 

2) Be admitted into a degree or certificate program; and

3) Enroll in at least 12 credits for the first fall semester following his or her designated class’s high school graduation (unless utilizing the Leave of Absence provision discussed in Article VIII).

If a Scholar successfully completes all of these steps, he or she will receive $1,375 per semester for eight semesters provided the Scholar is enrolled full-time and remains in good standing at the University of Alaska.
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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

I. Purpose

The purpose of the University of Alaska Scholars Program (also referred to as the “UA Scholars Award,” “Award,” or “Program”) is 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 UA Scholars Award is intended to provide an extra incentive for Alaska’s best students, including those who are considering other options, to seriously consider the educational opportunities that the University of Alaska has to offer.

II. Award Amount and Deadline for Use

The University of Alaska’s Board of Regents (“Board”) sets the amount of the Award. The Board, at its discretion, may adjust the amount of the Award from time to time. The UA Scholars Award is currently an $11,000 scholarship distributed to Scholars in the amount of $1,375 per semester for a total of eight semesters within five years of the Scholar’s class’s graduation from high school. A Scholar will forfeit any portion of the Award not used within this five-year period and any portion remaining after a Scholar fails to use the Award after three or more semesters during the same period.

III. Definition of a Qualified High School

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

- Be a public high school listed in the current Alaska Department of Education directory; or
- Be accredited by the Northwest Accreditation Commission; or
- Be a private school properly registered with the Alaska Department of Education.
IV. Obligations of the Alaska High School

A. Establish Eligibility Criteria
Each qualified high school must academically rank its students to determine which students are in the top 10 percent of their graduating class at the end of the junior year. The high school must base its rankings on the student’s standing at the school he or she is attending at that time.

Cumulative Grade Point Average is the most common criteria used to rank students; however, 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.

High schools 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. High school officials may not alter the ranking to reflect anticipated changes in enrollment. High school officials may not require students to apply for the scholarship or use other methods that would exclude students who otherwise qualify.

High schools must submit their criteria used for ranking students along with their designations electronically to the Program Administrator by October 1st. The high school also 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 UA Scholars Program.

Schools must designate all students who qualify academically for the UA Scholars Award regardless of their intention to enroll or not to enroll at the University of Alaska.

B. Determine the Number of Designees
The number of eligible students is strictly 10 percent of the total number of students in the junior class at the end of the spring semester. Fractions shall be rounded to the nearest whole number. Schools with a junior class of 14 or fewer students are eligible for one Award.

The high school must resolve tied ranking among the top 10 percent of the class before submitting the list of designees to the Program Administrator. In no event shall the UA Scholars Program allow tied rankings to cause the number of Awards to exceed 10 percent of the class size.
C. Designation Process and October 1 Deadline
Every spring, the UA Scholars Program will mail a new password for the secure, web-based designation process to the principals of qualified schools. The principal must select one individual to serve as the UA Scholars authority responsible for completing the online designation process.

Qualified high schools must submit their lists of potential Scholars to the Program Administrator by October 1 of each year. Each qualified high school also must provide sufficient information to allow the Program Administrator to identify Scholar designees. This directory information must include the names, dates of birth, phone numbers and addresses of the designees. Once the Program Administrator accepts a school’s designee list, the school cannot alter it. Students not designated on the approved list will not be eligible to receive an Award.

The Program Administrator may accept lists submitted after the deadline when rejecting the late submission would be unfair to the student.

D. Errors in the High School’s List of Scholars
High schools must verify their lists for accuracy before submitting designation information to the Program Administrator. Students who are not designated will not be eligible to receive the scholarship. The high school is responsible for all errors in the designation process.

V. Notification of Award
After reviewing the submitted designation lists, the Program Administrator will send each Scholar an Award letter. Official notification of the Award must come from the UA Scholars Program Administrator. Students, parents and high school officials must not rely on any other source of information about the issuance of an Award.

VI. Eligibility Reconsideration: Senior Year
Students who were not designated at the end of their junior year, or who graduate early (e.g. after three years of high school) and were never considered for designation but are in the top 10 percent of the graduating class after all grades are posted at the end of the senior year, may submit a written request for Eligibility Reconsideration to the UA Scholars Program Administrator. The request must be made by the student and must include: 1) a letter requesting an Eligibility Reconsideration signed by the student (or parent/guardian if the student is a minor),
2) certification from the high school’s authorized representative that as of the end of the student’s senior year the student meets the high school’s original designation criteria, and 3) an official transcript indicating the student’s final class ranking among the graduating class.

Any student requesting an Eligibility Reconsideration must submit all documentation to the Program Administrator no later than six months after graduation. The Program Administrator will inform the student of the outcome in writing. All determinations by the Program Administrator are final. Scholars granted Awards under this provision also must comply with the Obligations of the Scholar, except they may apply for admission later than May 1, but no later than 30 days from the date of the written Award notice.

VII. Obligations of the Scholar

A. Apply for Admission by May 1
Scholars must submit an application for admission to a certificate or degree program at any University of Alaska campus online or postmarked on or before May 1 of their senior year. Except as discussed in “Article VI, Eligibility Reconsideration: Senior Year,” any Scholar who misses the May 1 deadline will not be eligible to use the Award.

B. Using the Award
To redeem the Award, the Scholar must:

• Be a U.S. citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States;
• Have successfully earned a high school diploma from a qualified Alaska high school;
• Be admitted into a certificate or undergraduate degree program;
• Participate in any mandatory orientation or program required by the campus; and
• Enroll as a full-time, undergraduate student for the first fall semester following the graduation date of the class with which he or she was designated unless utilizing the Leave of Absence as described in Article VIII.

Audited and year-long distance education courses do not count toward full-time enrollment and they do not indicate satisfactory completion of courses for financial aid purposes.

UA Scholars must graduate from their high school with the class in which they were designated. For example, a Scholar designated as
part of the class of 2013 is required to graduate in the spring of 2013. A Scholar whose graduation is delayed for any reason will be subject to the same Obligations of the Scholar listed in this booklet as his or her designated peers. Any fall or spring semester following normal high school graduation that UA Scholars do not use their Award will count toward their Leave of Absence discussed in Article VIII. If they do not begin using their Award within two semesters, the Award will permanently expire.

C. Summer Enrollment
A Scholar may use his or her Award during a summer term if, during the preceding spring semester, the Scholar received a Scholars Award disbursement. In addition, the Scholar must enroll full-time for the summer term and be otherwise eligible to use the Award. Scholars planning to use their Award during a summer term must notify their Financial Aid Office.

D. Maintain Good Standing
Once enrolled, to maintain eligibility for the Award, a Scholar must:

- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5;
- Maintain full-time enrollment status;
- Be in good financial and student code of conduct standing in accordance with University standards; and
- Uphold the University’s Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy toward completion of a certificate or degree program.

Contact a Financial Aid Office for additional information on the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.

VIII. Leave of Absence
A two-semester Leave of Absence is a benefit given to all Scholars. A Leave of Absence is defined as any fall or spring semester for which a Scholar does not receive a Scholar Award distribution. A Scholar may take a Leave of Absence from the University of Alaska for up to two consecutive or nonconsecutive fall or spring semesters after high school graduation. The Leave of Absence does not extend the requirement that a Scholar use the Award within five years of his or her high school graduation date. UA Scholars are not required to inform the Program Administrator when using this Leave of Absence benefit; however, a Scholar who does not intend to enroll in courses at the University the fall semester immediately following high school graduation must notify their campus office of admissions that he or she intends to defer enrollment to a later semester.
IX. Extension to the Leave of Absence

The Program Administrator may allow a Scholar to extend the Leave of Absence for limited periods of federal or state military service or volunteer service to the community. A Scholar may request an Extension to the Leave of Absence beyond the two semesters described in Article VIII when participating in a service program designed to benefit the public good or well being of the community such as the military, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, community work programs sponsored by a governmental, charitable, or religious entity or other similar activities.

A Scholar may also request an Extension to the Leave of Absence if he or she suffers 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.

Finally, a Scholar may request an Extension to the Leave of Absence to provide care giving to a terminally ill member of the Scholar’s immediate family (spouse, parents or children).

A Scholar wishing to request an Extension to the Leave of Absence for any of the reasons mentioned above must submit a written request to the Program Administrator before the period of extended leave is to begin. The Scholar must provide supporting documentation to establish that the request fits within one of the eligible circumstances and to establish how long the Scholar will be away and the date the Scholar will return. 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 apply to the Program Administrator as soon as the Scholar is medically or mentally able to do so, but in no event more than 120 days after the beginning of treatment.

An Extension to the Leave of Absence may increase the number of semesters a Scholar may take leave to a maximum of six semesters. In no event may a Scholar take more than a six semester (three year) Leave of Absence. Additionally, an Extension to the Leave of Absence may extend the time to utilize the award from five years to a maximum of seven years. If the Scholar does not use the Award within the extended term, he or she will forfeit the remaining balance. The Program Administrator’s decision with respect to a request for an Extension to the Leave of Absence is the final decision by the University.
X. Campus Designation
A Scholar may choose to attend any campus of the University of Alaska and may transfer (if academically eligible) to any other campus of the University of Alaska without affecting eligibility for the UA Scholars Award.

XI. Other Financial Assistance
If a Scholar’s financial obligations to the University have been paid, any credit balance of the UA Scholars Award may be issued to the Scholar for payment of Eligible Expenses in accordance with procedures established by the UA Scholars Program Administrator and the campus the Scholar is attending.

In certain circumstances, receipt of a UA Scholars Award may reduce the availability of financial assistance from other sources, including other University of Alaska scholarship programs. The Scholar should talk to a Financial Aid Office about this possibility.

XII. Eligible Expenses
The Scholar may use the Award to pay eligible expenses such as undergraduate tuition, fees, room, board, books, supplies and other educational costs incurred for attendance at the University of Alaska.

XIII. UA Scholars Award and Other University Scholarships and Tuition Waiver Programs
Except for the Foster Youth Tuition Waiver Program, a student who accepts a UA Scholars Award may not redeem or receive benefits from the Great Achiever Award Program or Presidential Tuition Waiver Scholarships.

XIV. Exchange Programs
UA Scholars may use their Awards for attendance at other institutions in conjunction with approved National Student Exchange, Study Abroad and International Exchange programs.

XV. Award Expiration
A Scholar forfeits all or the remainder of a UA Scholars Award when:
- The Scholar fails to meet the Obligations of the Scholar;
- The Scholar fails to redeem the Award for more than two
semesters unless the Scholar has taken an Extention to the Leave of Absence as described in Article IX of this booklet;

• The sum of the redemptions equals the total amount of the Award;
• Five years have passed from the graduation date of the class with which the UA Scholar was designated or, seven years has passed from the graduation date of the Scholar’s class if the Program Administrator has granted the Scholar an Extention to the Leave of Absence under Article IX; or
• When the Scholar is suspended or expelled from the University of Alaska or otherwise violates the UA Student Code of Conduct.

XVI. Program Administrator

The University President has appointed a Program Administrator to administer the UA Scholars Program. The Program Administrator shall have all powers necessary and appropriate to carry out his or her duties.

XVII. Notices to the Program

All communications concerning the UA Scholars Program shall be addressed to the UA Scholars Program Administrator, University of Alaska, P.O. Box 755120, Fairbanks, Alaska, 99775-5120.

XVIII. Other Provisions

A. Governing Law and Venue

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

B. Transferability

UA Scholars Awards or eligibility for the Awards are not transferable to other individuals or recipients.

C. Income Tax Treatment

Benefit payments made under the Program may be subject to income tax reporting or withholding requirements. The UA Scholars Program, its Program 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 Scholars 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 under the UA Scholars Program is subject to the University’s Board of Regents’ decisions, and payment is subject to the availability of funds.

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 UA Scholars 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, or suspend this Program or to merge or consolidate this Program with other programs. This Program may be amended by authority of the University’s President at any time, except that any reduction in benefits awarded to recipients shall be approved by the Board of Regents.

XIX. Dispute Procedure
All disputes shall be submitted to the Program Administrator in writing. The Program Administrator’s decisions authorized in this booklet and by the UA Scholars Program are final University decisions. Review of the Program Administrator’s decisions may be obtained by filing an appeal with the Superior Court of Alaska within 30 days of the final decision in accordance with Alaska Appellate Rule 602(a)(2).
XX. Program Contact Information

**Mailing Address:**
UA Scholars Program
University of Alaska
P.O. Box 755120
Fairbanks, AK 99775-5120

**Phone Numbers:**
Toll-Free:  1.877.257.2465
Fairbanks:  907.474.5105
Fax:  907.450.8023

**Email:** scholars@alaska.edu
**Web:** www.alaska.edu/scholars

Linda J. English, Program Administrator
Content and program managed by the UA Scholars Program
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