

Meeting of the
OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
December 5, 2013

AGENDA ITEM #xx:

Policy

SUBJECT: Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship Program Proposed Rule Revisions.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the State Regents approve and adopt the proposed permanent rule revisions for the Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship Program.

BACKGROUND:

The Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship was created by the State Regents in 1994 to provide support for academically promising students to enroll in baccalaureate degree programs at the public regional universities. The program provides a \$3,000 annual award for up to four years and institutions also provide the recipient a tuition waiver. Historically, each of the eleven participating institutions has been allotted fifteen freshmen scholarship “slots” each year.

To qualify for the award students must:

- Be an Oklahoma resident;
- Score at least a 30 on the ACT or achieve the designation of National Merit Semifinalist or Commended Student by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation;
- Maintain a cumulative 3.25 grade point average in college; and
- Maintain full-time enrollment in college.

POLICY ISSUES:

In addition to providing an opportunity for high-achieving Oklahoma students, the program is also intended to enhance the academic quality of Oklahoma’s public regional universities.

ANALYSIS:

The proposed rule changes address the following issues:

Summer Awards: The proposed revisions clarify that students may receive a summer award for part-time or full-time enrollment. The summer award will count toward the student’s overall scholarship limit of eight full-time semester awards, so no additional fiscal impact to the program is expected. The proposed change will accommodate those students capable of completing their undergraduate degree in less than four calendar years. The proposed change also recognizes alternate semester structures such as the trimester system at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma (USAO) which provides three equal trimesters each academic year allowing students to earn 36 credit hours or more per year.

Disability Accommodation: The proposed revisions provide for the accommodation of students with disabilities for eligibility and retention requirements. The disability provisions are based on similar existing rules for the Academic Scholars Program.

Updates of Citations to State Regents' Policy: The proposed revisions also provide clerical updates to references to State Regents' policy.

The proposed rule revisions were posted at the State Regents meeting on September 5, 2013.

Title 610 - State Regents for Higher Education

Chapter 25 - Student Financial Aid and Scholarships

Subchapter 33 - Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship Program

Section 610:25-33-1 Purpose [no change]

Section 610:25-33-2 Definitions

The following words or terms, when used in this Subchapter, shall have the following meaning, unless the concept clearly indicates otherwise:

"Public Regional ~~Institution~~University" as defined by the State Regents' policy in Section 3.2.4 II-2-24 under Regional and Special Purpose universities.

Section 610:25-33-3 General Provisions

(a) Each regional university will receive an annual allocation to support scholarships to be awarded to students who meet the eligibility criteria in 610:25-33-4, and continuing students who meet the criteria in 610:25-33-5. The university may establish additional eligibility criteria. The scholarship award may be used only at the university making the award; it is not portable.

(b) Funding for the awards shall be made in a special allocation of state appropriated monies to the regional universities. The regional universities shall make tuition waiver scholarships available to each student, ~~as provided in State Regents' policy (IV.A.2.g).~~ The allocation, tuition waiver, and any other state or federal financial aid for which the student qualifies shall comprise a scholarship amount not to exceed the costs of tuition and fees, room and board, and books and supplies required for courses.

(c) Disability Provision. Provisions contained in this section are consistent with 70 O.S. 1991, Section 2403, as amended, and federal legislation affecting disabled persons. If a person identifies himself or herself as a student with a disability and requests consideration for a scholarship under the Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship Program by means other than standard testing procedures, the State Regents shall permit the student to be examined under the special testing arrangements provided by either ACT or The College Board provided that he or she meets the qualifications specified by ACT and The College Board, respectively, to be examined. Performance requirements for participation in the Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship Program remain the same as for other students. Students taking such tests and receiving Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship awards will be expected to meet the same retention standards as other students. Special provisions may be considered in determining full-time enrollment for students in this category.

Section 610:25-33-4 Eligibility Requirements [no change]

Section 610:25-33-5 Criteria for Continued Eligibility

a) Participants awarded a scholarship must maintain a cumulative 3.25 grade-point-average. A program year is defined as beginning in the fall semester and continuing through the summer term. The cumulative grade-point-average will be determined at the end of the program year, i.e., between the summer and fall terms.

(b) Scholarship recipients must maintain full-time enrollment each semester. Full-time enrollment shall mean a minimum of 12 hours per semester and 24 hours in the two regular semesters. Students who, due to extraordinary circumstances during the semester, drop below the minimum of 12 hours of initial enrollment, must earn 24 credit hours for the two regular semesters to retain eligibility for the next program year. Students will be eligible for summer awards if they have earned 24 semester credit hours in the preceding two regular semesters. Students who receive part-time awards for summer must enroll in at least 6 credit hours and must complete a total of at least 30 credit hours during the full academic year (fall, spring, summer). Students who receive full-time awards for summer must enroll in at least 12 credit

hours and must complete a total of at least 36 credit hours during the full academic year (fall, spring, summer). Hours of enrollment required for summer awards may consist of a combination of summer and intersession enrollment. Part-time awards, for enrollment of 6 to 11 credit hours, made for the summer term will count as one-half of a semester used in the program and will be in the amount of one-half of a semester award. Full time awards, for enrollment of 12 or more credit hours, made for the summer term will count as a full semester used in the program and will be in the amount of one semester award.

(c) A student who fails to meet the continued eligibility requirements will be removed from the program without academic scholarship assistance the following semester. Any semester during which the student does not receive an award due to failure to meet the continuing eligibility requirements is counted as a semester used in the program and is deducted from the eight semesters allotted for the program. A student may be reinstated to the program:

(1) If the student achieves a 3.25 cumulative grade-point average at the end of the following fall or spring semester or summer term;

(2) If the student in the following fall or spring semester remedies the credit-hour deficiency by earning twelve credit hours in addition to the number of hours by which the student is deficient; or if the student earns the deficient credits in the following summer term.

(d) In summary, a student may be reinstated only one time and has one year to remedy the grade-point average or credit-hour deficiency. Maintaining eligibility and familiarity with State Regents' and institutional policy is the responsibility of the student.

(e) Participants may take a leave of absence from the program by petition to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Leaves of absence may not be used to remedy grade-point average or credit-hour deficiency.

Section 610:25-33-6 Fiscal Policies [no change]