

**R609-1. Purpose:** The Regents' Scholarship encourages Utah high school students to prepare for college academically and financially by taking a core course of study in grades 9-12 and saving for college. This statewide scholarship is aligned with the Utah Scholars Core Course of Study which is based on national recommendations as outlined by the State Scholars Initiative. The courses required by the scholarship are proven to help students become college and career ready. In addition this scholarship encourages high school students to complete meaningful course work through their senior year.

## R609-2. References

- 2.1. Utah Code Ann. §53B-8-108 et seq., Regents' Scholarship Program.
- 2.2. Utah Admin. Code §R277-700-6, High School Requirements (Effective for Graduating Students Beginning with the 2010-2011 School Year).
- 2.3. Policy and Procedures R604, New Century Scholarship.

## R609-3. Definitions

- 3.1. **"Applicant":** is a student who is in their last term in high school and on track to complete the high school graduation requirements of a public school established by the Utah State Board of Education and the student's school district or charter school or a private high school in the state that is accredited by a regional accrediting body approved by the Utah State Board of Regents.
- 3.2. **"Base award":** a one-time scholarship to be awarded to applicants who complete the eligibility requirements of section 4.1 of this policy.
- 3.3. **"Board":** the Utah State Board of Regents.
- 3.4. **"Core Course of Study":** the Utah Scholars Core Course of Study taken during grades 9-12, includes:
  - 3.4.1. 4.0 credits of English;
  - 3.4.2. 4.0 credits of mathematics taken in a progressive manner (at minimum Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and a class beyond Algebra II or Math 3);
  - 3.4.3. 3.5 credits of social studies;
  - 3.4.4. 3.0 credits of lab-based natural science (one each of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics); and
  - 3.4.5. 2.0 credits of the same world or classical language, other than English, taken in a progressive manner.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by the Board of Regents May 30, 2008. Amended and approved by the Board of Regents on May 29, October 16, 2009, April 1, 2010, March 25, 2011, and March 29, 2013.

- 3.5. **“Exemplary Academic Achievement award”**: a renewable scholarship to be awarded to applicants who complete the eligibility requirements of section 4.2 of this policy.
- 3.6. **“High school”**: A public school established by the Utah State Board of Education or private high school within the boundaries of the State of Utah. If a private high school, it shall be accredited by a regional accrediting body approved by the Board.
- 3.7. **“Home-schooled”**: refers to a student who has not graduated from a Utah high school and received letter grades for the Core Course of Study in grades 9-12.
- 3.8. **“Recipient”**: An applicant who receives an award under the requirements set forth in this policy.
- 3.9. **“Regents’ Diploma Endorsement”**: a certificate or transcript notation that may be awarded to students who qualify for the Exemplary Academic Achievement award of the Regents’ Scholarship.
- 3.10. **“Reasonable progress”**: enroll in and successfully complete at least fifteen credit hours during Fall and Spring semesters and earning a 3.3 GPA or higher each semester.
- 3.11. **“Renewal Documents”**: a college transcript demonstrating that the recipient has met the required semester GPA and a detailed schedule providing proof of enrollment in fifteen credit hours for the semester which the recipient is seeking award payment.
- 3.12. **“Scholarship Review Committee”**: the committee approved to review Regents’ Scholarship applications and make final decisions regarding awards.
- 3.14. **“UESP”**: the Utah Educational Savings Plan.
- 3.15. **“USHE”**: the Utah System of Higher Education, which includes the University of Utah, Utah State University, Weber State University, Southern Utah University, Snow College, Dixie State University, Utah Valley University, and Salt Lake Community College.
- 3.16. **“Eligible Institutions”**: USHE, or at any private, nonprofit institution of higher education in Utah accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

#### R609-4 Conditions of the Regents’ Scholarship Program and Program Terms

- 4.1. **Base award**: To qualify for the Regents’ Scholarship Base award, the applicant shall satisfy the following criteria:
- 4.1.1. **Complete the Core Course of Study** as defined in section 3.4 of this policy.
- 4.1.2. **GPA**: The applicant shall demonstrate completion of the Core Course of Study with a cumulative high school GPA of at least 3.0.
- 4.1.3. **Minimum Grade requirement**: the applicant shall have no individual core course grade lower than a “C” on a transcript. Certain courses may receive a weighted grade as outlined under subsection 9.5 of this policy.
- 4.1.4. **ACT Score**: The applicant shall submit at least one verified ACT score.

**4.1.5. Utah High School Graduation:** The applicant shall have graduated from a Utah high school.

**4.1.6. Citizenship Requirement:** A recipient shall certify under penalty of law they are a citizen of the United States or a noncitizen who is eligible to receive federal student aid.

**4.1.7. No Criminal Record Requirement:** A recipient shall not have a criminal record; with the exception of a misdemeanor traffic citation.

**4.1.8. Mandatory Fall Term Enrollment:** A recipient shall enroll in fifteen credit hours at an eligible institution by Fall semester immediately following the student's high school graduation date or receive an approved deferral from the Board under subsection 7.2.

**4.1.9. New Century Scholarship:** A recipient shall not receive a Regents' Scholarship and the New Century Scholarship established in Utah Code §53B-8-105 and administered in R604

**4.2. Exemplary Academic Achievement award:** To qualify for the Regents' Scholarship Exemplary Academic Achievement award, the applicant shall satisfy all requirements for the Base award, and additionally meet all of the following requirements:

**4.2.1. Required GPA:** The applicant shall have a cumulative high school GPA of at least 3.5.

**4.2.2. Minimum Grade requirement:** the applicant earns a course grade on a transcript of "B" or above in each individual course listed in Utah Code §53B-8-109(1)(d)(i). Certain courses may receive a weighted grade as outlined under subsection 9.5 of this policy.

**4.2.3. Required ACT Score:** The applicant shall submit a verified composite ACT score of at least 26.

**4.2.4. Duty of Student to Report Reasonable Progress Toward Degree Completion:** In order to renew the Exemplary Academic Achievement award, the recipient shall submit renewal documents, providing evidence of reasonable progress toward degree completion.

**4.2.4.1.** If the recipient fails to maintain a 3.3 GPA in a single semester the recipient is placed on probation and shall earn a 3.3 GPA or better the following semester to maintain eligibility. If the recipient again at any time earns less than a 3.3 GPA or fails to enroll and complete fifteen credit hours, except as outlined in section 7.2 of this policy, the scholarship may be revoked.

**4.2.4.2.** Each semester, the recipient shall submit renewal documents to the Scholarship Review Committee providing evidence of making reasonable progress, by the deadlines listed below:

**4.2.4.2.1.** For Fall semester renewal documents shall be submitted by September 30.

**4.2.4.2.2.** For Spring/Winter semester renewal documents shall be submitted by February 15.

**4.2.4.2.3.** For Summer semester renewal documents shall be submitted by June 30.

4.2.4.2.4. If the recipient is attending Brigham Young University during Spring term renewal documents shall be submitted by May 30.

4.2.5. A recipient will not be required to enroll in fifteen credit hours if the student can complete his/her degree program with fewer credits.

4.3. **Replacing Low Grades by Retaking a Course:** An applicant may retake a course to replace a low grade received. When retaking courses to replace a grade the following subsections apply:

4.3.1. **The Entire Course:** The applicant shall either (1) retake the entire original course, or (2) complete an approved course equal to or greater in credit value in the same subject-area. The math and foreign language requirement of progression shall be shown. This is true even if the applicant only received a lower grade in a single semester, term, trimester, or quarter.

4.3.2. **The Higher of Two Grades:** The higher of two grades in the same or an approved course will count towards meeting the scholarship requirements.

4.3.3. **Approved Courses and Progression Determined by the Regents' Scholarship Review Committee:** The Regents' Scholarship Review Committee reserves the right to determine if the repeated course qualifies as an approved course in the same subject-area and if progression is required and demonstrated.

4.4. **Student Transfer:** A scholarship may be transferred to a different eligible institution upon request of the student.

4.5. **"P" and "I" Grades not Accepted:** Pass/fail or incomplete grades do not meet the minimum grade requirement, nor do they qualify towards the scholarship renewal requirements.

## R609-5 Application Procedures

5.1. **Application Deadline:** Applicants shall submit a scholarship application to the Scholarship Review Committee no later than February 1 of the year that they graduate from high school. A priority deadline may be established each year. Applicants who meet the priority deadline may be given first priority or consideration for the scholarship.

5.2. **Required Documentation:** Scholarship awards may be denied if all documentation is not complete and submitted by the specified deadlines. And if any documentation demonstrates that the applicant did not satisfactorily fulfill all course work and GPA requirements, or if any information, including the attestation of criminal record or citizenship status, proves to be falsified. Required documents that shall be submitted with a scholarship application include:

5.2.1. the official online application;

5.2.2. an official high school paper or electronic transcript, official college transcript(s) when applicable, and any other miscellaneous transcripts demonstrating all completed courses and GPA. A final transcript showing the last semester of coursework will be requested if the student is found conditionally approved, meaning that the student appears to be on track to receive the scholarship;

5.2.3. verified ACT score(s); and

5.2.4. a class schedule form, provided by the Board, demonstrating the courses and credits that the student will complete during grade twelve. Simply submitting a high school transcript does not satisfy this requirement.

5.3. **Incomplete Documentation:** Applications or other submissions that have missing information or missing documents are considered incomplete, and will not be reviewed.

## R609-6 Amount of Awards and Distribution of Award Funds

6.1. **Funding Constraints of Awards:** The Board may limit or reduce the Base award and/or the Exemplary Academic Achievement award, as well as supplemental awards granted, depending on the annual legislative appropriations and the number of qualified applicants.

### 6.2. Amount of Awards

6.2.1. **Base Award:** The Base award of up to \$1,000 may be adjusted annually by the Board in an amount up to the average percentage tuition increase approved by the Board for USHE institutions.

6.2.2. **Exemplary Academic Achievement Award:** The Exemplary Academic Achievement award is up to the amount provided by law and as determined each Spring by the Board based on legislative funding and the number of applicants. The Exemplary Academic Achievement award may be renewed for the shortest of the following:

6.2.2.1. Four semesters of enrollment in fifteen credit hours);

6.2.2.2. Sixty-five credit hours; or

6.2.2.3. Until the student meets the requirements for a Baccalaureate degree.

### 6.3. Distribution of Award Funds

6.3.1. **Enrollment Documentation:** The award recipient shall submit to the Scholarship Review Committee a copy of the college class schedule verifying that the recipient is enrolled in fifteen credit hours or more at an eligible institution. Documentation shall include: the recipient's name, the semester the recipient will attend, the name of the institution they are attending and the number of credits in which the recipient is enrolled.

6.3.2. **Award Payable to Institution:** The award will be made payable to the institution. The institution may pay over to the recipient any excess award funds not required for tuition payments. Award funds shall be used for any qualifying higher education expense including: tuition, fees, books, supplies, equipment required for course instruction, or housing.

6.3.3. **Credit Hours Dropped After Award Payment:** If a recipient drops credit hours after having received the award which results in enrollment below fifteen credit hours, the scholarship will be revoked.

6.4. **UESP Supplemental Award to Encourage College Savings:** Subject to available funding, an applicant who qualifies for the Base award is eligible to receive up to an additional \$400 in state funds to be added to the total scholarship award.

6.4.1. For each year the applicant is 14, 15, 16, or 17 years of age and had an active UESP account, the Board may contribute, subject to available funding, \$100 (i.e., up to \$400 total for all four years) to the recipient's award if at least \$100 was deposited into the account for which the applicant is named the beneficiary.

6.4.2. If no contributions are made to an applicant's account during a given year, the matching amount will likewise be \$0.

6.4.3. If contributions total more than \$100 in a given year, the matching amount will cap at \$100 for that year.

6.4.4. Matching funds apply only to contributions, not to transfers, earnings, or interest.

### R609-7 Time Constraints and Continuing Eligibility

7.1. **Time Limitation:** A Regents' Scholarship recipient shall use the award in its entirety within five years after his/her high school graduation date.

7.2. **Deferral or Leave of Absence:** A recipient shall apply for a deferral or leave of absence if they do not continuously enroll in fifteen credit hours.

7.2.1. Deferrals or leaves of absence may be granted, at the discretion of the Scholarship Review Committee, for military service, humanitarian/religious service, documented medical reasons, and other exigent reasons.

7.2.2. An approved deferral or leave of absence will not extend the time limits of the scholarship. The scholarship may only be used for academic terms which begin within five years after the recipient's high school graduation date.

7.3. **No Guarantee of Degree Completion:** Neither a Base award nor an Exemplary Academic Achievement award guarantees that the recipient will complete his or her Associate or Baccalaureate program within the recipient's scholarship eligibility period.

### R609-8 Scholarship Determinations and Appeals

8.1. **Scholarship Determinations:** Submission of a scholarship application does not guarantee a scholarship award. Individual scholarship applications will be reviewed, and award decisions are made at the discretion of a Scholarship Review Committee. Awards are based on available funding, applicant pool, and applicant's completion of scholarship criteria. Each applicant will receive a letter informing the applicant of the decision on his/her application.

8.2. **Appeals:** Applicants and Recipients have the right to appeal an adverse decision.

8.2.1. Appeals shall be (postmarked) within 30 days of date of notification by submitting a completed Appeal Application found on the program's website.

8.2.2. An appeal filed before the applicant/recipient receives official notification from the Scholarship Review Committee regarding their application, will not be considered.

8.2.3. The appeal shall provide evidence that an adverse decision was made in error, such as that in fact, the applicant/recipient met all scholarship requirements and submitted all requested documentation by the deadline.

8.2.4. Appeals are not accepted for late document submission.

8.2.5. A submission of an appeal does not guarantee a reversal of the original decision.

8.2.6. It is the applicant/recipient's responsibility to file the appeal, including all supplementary documentation. All documents shall be mailed to the Regents' Scholarship address.

8.2.7. Appeals will be reviewed and decided by an appeals committee appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education.

### R609-9 Rules for Completing Course Work

9.1. Although a course may meet state and individual district high school graduation requirements, the course may not meet the scholarship requirements. If the required course(s) are not taught at the school the applicant attends they can elect to enroll in the Utah Electronic High School, distance education concurrent enrollment, or a course offered at another accredited Utah high school or college. Course work found at additional online sources shall be from an accredited institution approved by the Board.

9.2. Applicants are required to complete the entire curriculum for a course. For example if a course is designed to be taken as a full year or for one full credit, the student shall complete the entire course in order to have it count toward the completion of a requirement for the scholarship.

9.3. Course work that is "tested out" of is not accepted for the Regents' Scholarship.

9.4. In each content area, the courses completed shall be unique.

9.4.1. Students cannot take a standard course, and then enroll in the honors version of the same class and count both toward meeting the credit requirement and, in cases, the requirement of progression.

9.4.2. Repeated course work does not count toward the credit fulfillment.

9.5. **Weighted Grade:** The grade earned in any course designated on the student's high school transcript as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or a college course concurrent enrollment shall be weighted (only if a college transcript is provided) according to the Scholarship Review Committee's standard procedures.

9.6. **College Course Work:** The Scholarship Review Committee reserves the right to apply a 3:1 ratio in relation to college course work. If an applicant enrolls in and completes a college course worth three or more college credits, this may be counted as one full credit toward the scholarship requirements. However; the student then is evaluated on the college grade earned with the weight added to the college grade earned.