The American University of Kurdistan

Policy of Scholarship

Policy Number: AS027
Effective Date: May 28, 2023

1. **Policy:** This policy defines the standards, eligibility criteria, and administrative requirements governing the awarding, renewal, and management of scholarships at the American University of Kurdistan (AUK). Through this policy, the University advances its mission by expanding access to higher education, promoting academic excellence, fostering equity and opportunity, and supporting student persistence and success. AUK is committed to recognizing academic merit and achievement and to providing structured scholarship programs that enable qualified students to pursue and complete their educational goals, supporting the preparation of the next generation of leaders in the Kurdistan Region, regardless of their financial means. All regulations pertaining to scholarships shall be developed, reviewed, approved, and implemented in accordance with this policy. The policy shall be communicated openly to the University community, published on the AUK website, and reviewed periodically to ensure continued relevance, financial sustainability, and alignment with AUK's mission, institutional priorities, and student success objectives. All members of the AUK community are required to comply fully with policies approved by the AUK Board of Trustees (BoT).
   a. **Purpose:** This policy governs all phases of scholarship administration, from initial awarding to continued student eligibility.
   b. **Scope:** This policy applies to all students who are newly enrolling at, or currently enrolled in, the AUK, Admissions and Registration Department (ARD), Office of Finance, Office of Vice-President for Administration and Finance (VPAF) and the Office of Provost.

2. **Definition of Terms:**
   Credit Hour: A unit of measurement equating to 750 minutes of faculty-led instruction per semester, the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction and a minimum of 2 hours of out-of-class per week over the entire semester.
   Cumulative GPA (cGPA): The overall grade point average across all credit-bearing courses taken at an institution.
   Donor-Funded Scholarships: Scholarships that are financially supported through contributions from external donors, such as individuals, foundations, corporations, or organizations, and are awarded to students according to the terms, criteria, or purposes specified by the donor and approved by the institution.
   English Language Program (ELP): A non-degree English language instruction program, reported separately from degree-seeking students in institutional records and official enrollment data
   Grade Point Average (GPA): The average of grade points earned in a given semester and cumulatively over a student's academic career at the institution, calculated by dividing total grade points by credit hours attempted. Grades such as W, I, P, and IP are excluded from the calculation.
   Non-Instructional Staff Members: Non-instructional staff employees are those hired on a full-time or part-time basis to support the institution's operations through administrative, operational, or service roles, without any involvement in teaching.

Scholarship: Tuition assistance based on merit or financial need.

Scholarship Committee: The Ad Hoc Scholarship Committee is a temporary committee appointed each semester to align with the scholarship application cycle. The Committee is composed of voting members, including the Provost, who serves as Chair, two faculty members, one administrative employee from Academic Affairs, and one designated non-instructional staff member responsible for administering scholarship-related procedures. In alignment with the University's Policy on Conflict of Interest and Commitment, members of the scholarship selection committee must disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest related to scholarship applicants. Committee members shall recuse themselves from the review, discussion, and decision-making processes in cases where a personal or familial relationship with an applicant exists.

Student Records: Pertains to the content and the confidentiality of academic records, access to academic records, academic transcripts, other academic records, non-academic student records, and the Student Information System (SIS).

Transcript: Serves as the student's official academic record and the University's official record of credit and degrees awarded, including the courses taken by a student and the grades received in each course.

Undergraduate Full-time student: A student enrolled for 12 or more credit hours per semester.

3. **Responsibilities:**
   a. **Issuing Unit:** The ARD holds primary responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy, ensuring compliance with established procedures, maintaining relevant records, and taking necessary actions in cases of noncompliance.
   b. **Other Stakeholders:** Office of Provost, Office of VPAF, and Office of Finance.

4. **Procedures**

a. Scholarship Eligibility and Application
- The University, in consultation with donors supporting donor-funded scholarships, shall determine an annual quota for the number of awards available under each scholarship program. The number of awards shall impact the competitiveness of the selection process.
- Detailed instructions for scholarship applications, including required documentation, shall be provided on the AUK website (See Section 6: Related Documents) and/or through official announcements, institutional marketing channels to ensure accessibility.
- Applicants must follow instructions specific to each scholarship, as requirements may vary.
- It is the responsibility of each applicant to adhere to the application instructions and submit all required documentation by the stated deadline. Incomplete or late submissions shall not be eligible and considered.

All provisions governing the application and eligibility of scholarships shall be aligned with the following requirements:
- Merit scholarships are available to students who have graduated from public high schools, private schools, international high schools, two-year and five-year technical institutes, and vocational schools within the Kurdistan Region (KRI) or Iraq.
- Applicants who have graduated from an international high school must submit an official certificate of equivalency from the Ministry of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Such documentation is required for consideration both for admission to AUK and for scholarship eligibility.
- Scholarships are awarded solely to the recipient and are non-transferable. Tuition and fees not covered by the scholarship are the responsibility of the student.
- Students must notify AUK's Office of Finance if they qualify for additional external funding.

- Only students meeting the minimum academic requirement for each scholarship are eligible (e.g., a high school score of 80 or higher for merit scholarships). Fractions of less than one percentage point in overall scores shall not be rounded up, and additional points added by the KRG Ministry of Education shall not be considered.
- Students who withdraw, cancel, become inactive, or are suspended/dismissed from the University shall forfeit scholarship eligibility.
- Students may request deferment of their scholarship due to medical reasons or other documentable circumstances.
- Students who are absent from the University for one academic year or more and subsequently apply for readmission shall forfeit any previously awarded institutional scholarships. Eligibility for scholarships upon readmission is not guaranteed and will be subject to the scholarship policies and availability at the time of readmission.

b. Scholarship Selection and Requirements for Scholarship Maintenance
- Interviews may be conducted when required by the specific terms or criteria of the scholarship. The Scholarship Committee (See Section 2: Definition of Terms) shall evaluate and rank all eligible applicants using the established evaluation rubric (see Section 6: Related Documents).
- Applicants shall be formally notified of the Committee's decision and shall be granted five (5) calendar days from the date of notification to submit written acceptance of the award.
- Failure to accept the scholarship within the specified timeframe shall be deemed a forfeiture of the award. In such cases, the scholarship shall be offered to the next highest-ranked eligible applicant, in accordance with the Committee's official ranking.
- GPA monitoring will be conducted by the ARD each semester. Students falling below the required GPA will receive an official notification and instructions for reinstatement.
- Students seeking coverage for English Language Program (ELP) or residence fees must follow the application instructions as specified in the scholarship description.
- Scholarship recipients who need to repeat courses should consult the Admission and Registration Department to understand the impact on scholarship continuation.
- Each scholarship shall specify the maximum duration or number of academic years for which funding may be awarded. In cases where students require additional time beyond the approved scholarship period to complete their program of study, any costs incurred during the extended period may be the responsibility of the students, unless otherwise approved by the University or stipulated by the terms of the scholarship.

All provisions governing the maintenance of scholarships shall comply with the following requirements:
- Scholarship recipients must maintain full-time enrollment, defined as registration for a minimum of 12 credit hours each fall and spring semester as in accordance with Policy of Undergraduate Student Course Load. (See Section 6: Related Documents).
- If a student registers for 12 credits and then withdraws from or fails a course, the student should still be considered to have maintained the scholarship because the student initially registered for 12 credits. However, to retain the scholarship, two points must be taken into consideration: (1) the student's cGPA must not fall below the required cGPA for maintaining the scholarship, and (2) the student is responsible for covering the fees for any failed, repeated, or withdrawn course, as well as any course taken beyond the student's study plan credit requirements. In addition, students who are unable to register for 12 credits due to special circumstances should still be considered to have met the full-time registration requirement. Examples include cases where 12 credits are not available in a given semester or when the student is in the graduation semester and the remaining required courses total fewer than 12 credits.
- Scholarship eligibility may be revoked if a student loses full-time status due to low class attendance,

as in accordance with the Policy of Student Class Attendance. (See Section 6: Related Documents), unless under special circumstances such as the previously mentioned case where a student withdraws from or fails a course but initially registered with full-time status.

- Students must maintain good academic standing to retain their scholarship. A warning notice will be emailed by the ARD to students whose GPA falls below the scholarship-specific minimum at the end of the semester. Failure to meet the minimum GPA will result in suspension of the scholarship for the following semester, and the student must pay full tuition until the cumulative GPA meets the required threshold. Specific GPA requirements for scholarship maintenance are published on the Scholarship page under Admissions on the AUK website. (See Section 6: Related Documents)

5. Timeline and Communication/Implementation Plan

Activity	Responsibility Party	Timeline	Communication Channels	Details
Policy Revision Announcement	ARD	March, 2026	University website, email	Announce the revision of the policy, assessment metrics, and objectives.
Feedback Collection	ARD	March, 2027	Surveys, suggestion boxes, email	Gather feedback from the University community on the policy's effectiveness, challenges, and areas for improvement.
Periodic Reviews and Updates	OIEP, University Leadership	March 2029	Website, email, staff meetings	Review the policy and its enforcement mechanisms and procedures annually or as necessary to ensure continued relevance and compliance.

6. Related Documents
AUK Webpage- Scholarships
Policy of Undergraduate Student Course Load
Policy of Student Class Attendance
Policy of Conflict of Interest and Commitment
Policy of Probation and Dismissal
Scholarship Evaluation Rubric

7. Ways to Measure Success
Scholarship Recipient Persistence Rate
Percentage of scholarship recipients who persist from initial enrollment to graduation; Evaluates the alignment of scholarship awards with student retention and completion outcomes.

8. Policy History
    a) **Approved by:** Board of Trustees
    b) **Adopted:** May 28, 2023
    c) **Revised:** February 25, 2026