

Office of Financial Aid

2024-2025

Scholarship Administration Guide



UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH FLORIDA

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

[Contact Us](#) | 813-974-4700 | www.usf.edu/financial-aid/

Introduction

The scholarship deadlines listed below are intended to leverage scholarships for recruiting new students and retaining current students with the added goal of lowering student loan debt. Throughout this administrative guide, you will be shown how the Office of Financial Aid (OFA) provides tools and services that can aid you in complying with these deadlines and optimizing the use of USF resources.

Student Type	Application Deadline	OFA Payment Request Deadline
New Freshman	March 1	March 15
New Transfer and Graduate Students	March 17	March 29
Continuing Students & Renewals	May 17	June 7

Cost of Attendance (COA)

The [cost of attendance](#) at the University of South Florida is established annually to cover tuition and fees, housing, board, books, supplies, transportation and miscellaneous expenses incurred by students attending USF. The cost of attendance varies based on the following criteria:

- Campus
- Grade Level (undergraduate/graduate/professional)
- Florida Resident status for tuition purposes (In-State/Out of State)
- Housing arrangements (i.e. on campus, off campus, w/parents)

For purposes of awarding scholarships and providing USF students financial aid packages, a student's need is calculated by subtracting the Student Aid Index (SAI) from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) minus the assigned cost of attendance (COA).

Stacking Policy

A financial aid package includes all aid awarded to a student (e.g. grants, scholarships, loans, work study, waivers, etc.).

The OFA policy restricts the amount of scholarships and grants (equity funds or gift aid) to a maximum of 89% of the student's cost of attendance for students living on and off campus and 68% for students living at home.

OFA administered financial aid may be replaced if a scholarship is awarded after a student is packaged and the student's total gift aid exceeds the equity cap based on the on the student's COA. If, after the removal of all the OFA administered aid, the student still exceeds the equity cap, they will be allowed to keep the award scholarship(s) up to the cost of attendance. In some cases, a student may not receive any additional aid if they have reached the equity cap.

If a USF scholarship is awarded after the student has been packaged, and the package does not include need-based aid or otherwise restricted aid, the award will be approved up to an amount that meets the student's COA (excluding private scholarships/resources). In some cases, a student may not receive any additional aid if they have already reached their cost of attendance. If aid must be reduced due to the COA, the priority order for removing University-based merit aid is as follows:

1. Funds from the five-year plan
2. College/departmental E&G funds
3. USF Foundation funds

USF units should create a list of alternate students eligible for scholarship(s) in case the original recipient's award must be revised.

If a non-USF scholarship/resource is awarded after the student has been packaged, and the student is not receiving any need-based aid or otherwise restricted aid, the student's cost of attendance may be exceeded by the amount of non-USF scholarships/resources.

List of Scholarship Services OFA Provides

The following services are available to assist you in managing your scholarships:

- Financial Aid fund code set up includes.
 - Creating new and updating existing fund codes/scholarship expense chart fields.
 - Setting up disbursement requirements for each fund (e.g., full or part time enrollment).
 - Set up scholarship terms and conditions, "Thank you" letter requirements, and fund comments in OASIS.
- Banner Enhanced Access: My USF -> Business Systems -> OASIS (Staff)
 - Access requires completed Banner, BDM, and Degree Works Access Request and FERPA training must be completed in GEMS.
 - Access to additional Banner Financial Aid pages.
 - Access to export spreadsheets from Banner Financial Aid pages to assist with awarding and payment reconciliation by aid year, fund, term.
 - Thank you letter tracking.
 - Permission to input new scholarship awards directly into Banner Financial Aid pages.
- Scholarship Power BI Workspace Access: My USF->Email & Teams-> USF Office 365->Apps->Power BI->Workspaces
 - Fund Monitoring – All funds, scholarship name, fund code, disbursement requirements.
 - Fund Reconciliation – All students awards; paid vs. unpaid, enrollment status, Terms and Conditions (T&C)/Thank You Letter (TYL) requirements.
 - Scheduled daily updates are Monday – Friday.
- More information can be found at [Scholarship Administration](#) > Reports.
- AwardSpring training for awarding units regarding setting up scholarships to meet the fund purpose, establishing and maintaining scholarship committees to review, score, and select student applications for various scholarships.

Role of Awarding Units (College, Department, etc.)

The awarding unit is responsible for contacting the Office of Financial Aid to:

- Establish new scholarships or grants.
- Manage existing scholarships/grants (updating T&C text, expense chart fields, etc.).
- Requests staff to access OASIS > Banner, enhanced Banner functionality (if applicable), and access to college Power BI workspace for the purpose of scholarship administration. More information regarding how to obtain access to any OFA reporting tools can be found at [Scholarship Administration Reports](#).
- Submit payment requests in accordance with the OFA scholarship processing deadlines and complete fund reconciliation by any provided deadline.

Establishing a New Scholarship or Research Grant

To ensure compliance with all federal and state regulations, all scholarship awards must be disbursed through the student's University account. Therefore, scholarship or grant funds will not disburse directly to students or to a 3rd party on behalf of a student.

Step 1: Determination of Scholarship/Grant Management

The college/department determines how the scholarship or grant will be awarded. This process will be managed by the awarding unit or submitted to OFA via a spending plan (fund cannot require a thank you letter). If the scholarship should be awarded and managed by OFA, an approved spending plan for each scholarship will be required. Contact a member of the [Scholarship Team](#) for more information regarding spending plans.

Payments to individuals may be processed via OFA, Purchasing/Accounts Payable, Travel, or Payroll. Processing will depend on the nature of the payment and the relationship between USF and the recipient. Additional information regarding specific payment categories is provided via the link below. Please refer to the following site for additional information: [Online Business Processes](#)

Step 2: Setting Up a New Financial Aid Fund Code

Complete the **New Fund Code Form** to create a financial aid fund code used to disburse any scholarship/grant to students through OASIS/Banner Student Production (PROD). The scholarship forms can be found here: [Scholarship Administration > Scholarship Forms](#).

To complete the form, be sure to do the following:

- 1) Identify Accountable Officer
- 2) Establish the name of the award.
- 3) Identify/establish FAST accounting entries and chart fields (non-USF Foundation scholarships/grants only).
- 4) Identify awarding and disbursement rules, if any, per the donor agreement. Disbursement rules can be created for anything that can be monitored in Banner PROD (e.g., academic major, department, GPA, etc.).

As indicated on the form, USF Foundation scholarships/grants need to be sent to a USF Foundation administrator to be signed and the USF Foundation sends the form to OFA. For non-USF Foundation programs, the form is sent directly to OFA.

OFA will coordinate with the University Controller's Office in creating a financial aid fund code once the form(s) is received. This process typically takes (5-7) business days. The college/department contacts listed on the form will be notified via email when the fund code is ready for use. Please use the contact information listed on the form if you have any questions.

Step 3: Setting Up Scholarship Terms & Conditions and Fund Messages

OFA has developed a method for scholarship terms and conditions (T&C) to be displayed and tracked via Banner PROD/OASIS. Scholarship T&Cs are electronically displayed and accepted on students' OASIS accounts. The T&C is an unsatisfied requirement in OASIS and will prevent disbursement until accepted.

Terms and conditions must be set up or updated prior to the submission of the initial payment request for that fund. If T&Cs are submitted after awards have been made from a fund, OFA will not be able to create/update the T&C until the following awarding cycle.

For non-renewable scholarships, posting fund messages in OASIS is an option that allows students to read any requirements/disbursement rules, such as minimum enrollment. This is an option for unique funds that disburse before requirement(s) can be satisfied, such as attending a donor luncheon.

Step 4: Setting Up Requirements for "Thank You" Letters to the Donor

Many scholarships require that students write a "Thank You" letter (TYL) for the donor before they can receive their scholarship disbursement. The TYL requirement will be posted in OASIS, and students will be directed to send their letters to an physical or email address listed in the T&C text. If the letter is directed to the Office of Financial Aid, then the letter will be scanned into our scanning database- BDMS, and the original is mailed to the appropriate awarding unit.

If a unit requests that the letter be sent to their USF office or email address, then the college/department/unit will be required to submit an Excel spreadsheet with the students' name, UID, aid year, scholarship name, and financial aid fund code to the Office of Financial Aid scholarship thank you letter email inbox (SCHTYL@usf.edu) for processing. This information must be submitted to OFA so that Banner can be updated and prevent any delays in funding for the student.

Thank you letter requirements must be set up or updated prior to the submission of the initial payment request for that fund. If thank you letter requirement requests are submitted after awards have been made from a fund, OFA will not be able to create/update the requirement until the following awarding cycle.

Step 5: Scholarship/Grant Uncashed Refund Check Policy

When the payment from a scholarship/grant fund results in the student receiving a refund check, and the check is not cashed by the student then:

- The OFA default policy is to return the uncashed check amount to the scholarship fund.
 - Colleges/Departments will have to submit a payment request to have the returned amount reissued to the student.
- The other option is to remit any uncashed funds to the State of Florida as abandoned property. The student will have up to up to (5) years to reclaim these funds from the State [Fla Stat. § 717.105 \(2014\)](#).

Managing Existing Scholarships/Grants

Complete the Update Fund Code Form to update an existing financial aid fund code. The Update Fund Code Form can be found here: [Scholarship Administration > Scholarship Forms](#). This form allows you to edit/update any information about a fund as listed on the form.

Payment Request Process via OFA

If your college/department has decided to award your funds, please follow the instructions below.

- 1) Select students to receive funds. You can use the OFA reports to assist with the selection process. Please note that eligible students must be actively enrolled at the time of disbursement.
- 2) Complete the Scholarship Payment Request Form, and scan and follow all directions listed on the form for proper submission. Awards are normally posted within (10) business days of receipt of the completed form. Please adhere to all [scholarship processing deadlines](#).
- 3) Please use the Special Instructions section on the form to let OFA know of any enrollment exceptions, study abroad program information, or disbursement date specifications.
- 4) Colleges/Departments should monitor awards and payments from the Power BI report associated with their awarding units.

Please contact a member of the [OFA Scholarship Team](#), with any payment questions.

Cancellation/Reduction Requests

The Scholarship Cancellation/Reduction form is available for units who need to cancel and/or make corrections to scholarship amounts that have been paid in Banner PROD. Please note: The awarding unit is responsible for notifying the student of these types of changes.

*NOTE: If an awarding unit is using the cancellation/reduction form to move funds from one fund to another, a payment request form is required to pay the student(s) from the correct fund. The two forms should be submitted at the same time. Incorrect submissions may result in a student being paid twice or being billed with no award to replace it.

Confidentiality

According to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools may disclose, without consent, “directory” information such as a student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. Additional information, such as GPA, earned hours, scholarships, etc., cannot be disclosed unless the student agrees and signs to allow third parties to view their information, such as the donor. A student release may be authorized via a scholarship application or Terms and Conditions.

Visit <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> for more information about FERPA.