

# Financial Aid and Athletic Scholarship Policies

The goals of the athletic scholarship program at the University of Science & Arts of Oklahoma are to provide financial assistance to deserving student-athletes. Athletic scholarships are awarded to individuals who show exceptional athletic promise and aptitude to meet academic standards and maintain academic progress.

## **I. Definition and Maximum Value**

1. Institutional financial aid includes scholarships, grants and loans.
2. Institutional athletic financial aid may not exceed the value of tuition and mandatory block fees, room and food.
3. The tuition waiver portion of an athletic scholarship waives the full or partial amount of block and mandatory fees for a course load of 12 to 18 credit hours. Student athletes are financially responsible for courses registered beyond 18 credit hours.

## **II. Eligibility**

To be eligible for an athletic scholarship, a student-athlete must be eligible for intercollegiate competition by being in compliance each academic term with the minimum NAIA grade point average, satisfactory progress requirements and full-time student status.

## **III. Terms and Duration**

1. An Athletic Scholarship Contract defines the terms and duration of an athletic scholarship and the mutual responsibilities of USAO and the student-athlete. A student athlete assumes responsibility to USAO and to the particular sport for which the aid is granted when he/she signs an Athletic Scholarship Contract.
2. The athletic scholarship will be awarded on an annual basis, with one-half being disbursed each academic term, provided the student-athlete meets all NAIA, conference and College requirements governing athletic financial aid. All scholarships are limited to one year in duration.
3. Except for the athletic non-resident tuition waivers, athletic financial aid is not available during summer terms.

## **IV. Student Athlete Bills**

1. Any portion of a student's bill not covered by a scholarship, grant, or loan will be the responsibility of the student athlete.
2. Payment arrangements must be made with the Bursar's Office for any balance owed by end of the add/drop period each term.
3. Until bills are posted by the Bursar's Office any financial information given to student athletes are considered estimates and are subject to change.

## **V. Athletic Aid Termination**

Institutional aid may not be reduced or cancelled during the period of its award for any of the following reasons:

1. On the basis of Student Athlete's (SA) ability or contribution to the team's success.
2. Because of an injury that prevents the recipient from participating in athletics; or
3. After the add/drop period has closed for the term.
4. For any other athletic reason.

Institutional aid may be reduced or cancelled during the period of its award if the recipient:

1. Renders him/herself ineligible for intercollegiate competition.
2. Fraudulently misrepresents information on an application, or other documents.
3. Engages in serious misconduct warranting substantial disciplinary action.
4. Voluntarily withdraws from a sport before the add/drop period has closed for a term.

## **VI. Policy on Reduction or Non-Renewal of Athletic Aid**

Athletic Aid is made for a specific time period not to exceed one academic year. No Athletic Aid is required to be renewed for an ensuing period, and no coach can promise a SA at the signing that his/her initial grant will be renewed, reduced or canceled for no more than one academic year. Reasons for consideration of reduction or non-renewal can range from attitude, discipline problems, unsatisfactory athletic performance, academic ineligibility or voluntary withdrawal.

1. **DECISION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF COACH**: The primary responsibility for the evaluation of the SA and the decisions concerning the continuation of the SA on the team (as well as recommendation for reduction or non-renewal of athletics aid) rests with the head coach of each sport. The determination of the methodology for such evaluations and judgments are clearly within the realm of professional competencies and responsibilities of the coach.
2. **INSTITUTIONAL CONCERNS**: The primary concern of the institution in these matters is that the SA is not treated in an arbitrary manner. This concern is addressed through a coach demonstrating open lines of communication concerning the decision for reduction or non-renewal with both the SA and the Athletic Director.

All decisions should be made in a timely manner, as the situation permits, to allow all parties alternative athletic or academic opportunity.

An AWARD DISCUSSION FORM will be provided by the coach that will require both the Student Athlete and coach to sign acknowledging their communication.

3. **HEARING OPPORTUNITY**: A SA, whose scholarship has been recommended for reduction or non-renewal, shall be afforded the opportunity for a hearing.

## **VII. Financial Aid Appeals Hearing Procedure**

A student may request a hearing after receiving notification of an athletic aid reduction or cancellation. An **ATHLETIC AID APPEAL FORM** can be obtained at the Office of Financial

Aid. The student must submit a request, in writing, along with the appeal form to the Financial Aid Director. The request for appeal must be received within 14 calendar days from the initial notification of the reduction or non- renewal. A student failing to request a hearing within this time frame waives the right to appeal.

1. **HEARING SCHEDULE** : The Director of Financial Aid or his/her designate will promptly schedule an appeals hearing after receiving the request. Within fifteen business days after receiving the written notice of appeal, notification to all parties will be made including the date, time and location of the hearing. Notifications will be sent to Student Athlete, Athletic Director, and all Financial Aid Athletic Review Committee members.
2. **HEARING PANEL** : The Financial Aid Athletic Review Committee, comprised of the Director of Financial Aid, the Dean of Students, a member of the athletic department coaching staff, and chaired by the Senior Woman Leader (SWL). The Director of Athletics will be a nonvoting participant.
3. **CLOSED HEARING** : The hearing will be closed to all but the participants.
4. **HEARING PARTICIPANTS** : Hearing participants shall include the student who requested the hearing, Athletics Department presenters and any witnesses requested by either party.
5. **HEARING PROCEDURES** : Each side will have the opportunity to present its case before the hearing panel, including testimony, evidence, etc. from any supporting witnesses. The names of the witnesses and their relevance must be given to the chair of the committee at least one day prior to the hearing. The number of witnesses the student athlete may have will be limited to two.
  1. Presentation Order: The Athletics Department will present its case first, followed by the appellant. Each party will present its case without the other party in the room.
  2. Panel Inquiries: The appeals panel shall be allowed to question all participants.
  3. The Athletic Director shall be available to answer questions from either side.
  4. Panel of Witnesses: The Hearing Panel may call additional witnesses it feels necessary to render a judgment.
  5. The Chair of the Committee shall have the right to exclude evidence if determined to be irrelevant to the issue at hand.
6. **PANEL DECISION** : The Hearing Panel will make its decision in executive session and inform in writing, the Student Athlete, the Head Coach, the Athletic Director and the Financial Aid office within 5 business days of the close of the hearing. Included in the notice will be how the funding may be affected. The panel decision shall be final.