

## **ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP – FACT SHEET**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Academic Challenge Program provides educational assistance to Arkansas residents in pursuit of a higher education. Additional funding made possible by the Arkansas Scholarship Lottery, has allowed the expansion of the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship to provide higher education opportunities to previously underserved Arkansans (both traditional & nontraditional students). The goal of the scholarship is to provide significant financial aid to those who qualify.

Eligibility requirements for the Academic Challenge Scholarship are based on three student categories: Traditional (Incoming Freshman), Current Achievers and Nontraditional Students.

### **Basic Eligibility Criteria:**

An applicant must:

- Be an Arkansas resident (at least 12 months prior to enrollment) and US citizen/lawful permanent resident
- Accepted for admission at an approved institution of higher education in a program of study that leads to a baccalaureate degree, associate degree, qualified certificate or a nursing school diploma
- Not have earned a baccalaureate degree
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (although there will be no maximum income cap) at **www.fafsa.gov**
- Not owe a refund on a federal or state student financial aid grant for higher education
- Not be in default on a federal or state student financial aid loan for higher education
- Not borrowed in excess of annual federal loan limits
- Not be incarcerated at the time of application for or during the time the applicant receives the scholarship
- Complied with the United States Selective Service System requirements for registration
- Certify to be drug free
- Complete the Arkansas YOUiversal Scholarship Application at **www.adhe.edu**

### **Additional Eligibility Criteria for the Traditional Student:**

- Graduate from high school after December 31, 2009 (begins with the 2010 high school graduating class)
- Enroll full-time each semester (Fall and Spring) - 12 hours the first Fall semester following high school graduation and 15 hours each semester thereafter
- Meet one of the following criteria:
  1. Graduate from an Arkansas public high school and successfully complete the Smart Core curriculum established by the Arkansas Department of Education; and either
    - i. Achieve at least a 2.5 high school GPA; or
    - ii. Achieve a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent.
  2. Graduate from an Arkansas public high school before the 2013-2014 school year, but did not complete the Smart Core curriculum, shall achieve at least a 2.5 high school GPA; and either
    - i. Achieve a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or
    - ii. Score proficient or higher on all state-mandated end-of-course assessments, including without limitation, end-of-course assessments on:
      - a. Algebra I;
      - b. Geometry; and
      - c. Biology
  3. Beginning after December 31, 2010, Applicant who qualifies under #1 or #2, but graduates from an Arkansas public high school that is annually identified in the report by the Arkansas Department of

Education as a school in which twenty percent (20%) or more of the students received a letter grade of "B" or higher but did not score proficiency or higher on the end-of-course assessment on the first attempt and achieve at least a 2.5 high school GPA; and either

- i. Achieve a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or
  - ii. Score proficient or higher on all state-mandated end-of-course assessments, including without limitation, end-of-course assessments on:
    - a. Algebra I;
    - b. Geometry;
    - c. Biology; and
    - d. Literacy, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
4. Applicant who has a disability identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it existed on July 1, 2009 and graduates from an Arkansas public high school but did not complete the Smart Core curriculum because the applicant's individualized education program under § 6-41-217 did not require it, shall achieve at least a 2.5 high school GPA; and either;
- i. Achieve a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or
  - ii. Score proficient or higher on all state-mandated end-of-course assessments, including without limitation, end-of-course assessments on:
    - a. Algebra I;
    - b. Geometry;
    - c. Biology; and
    - d. Literacy, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.
5. Graduate from a private or out-of-state or home school high school and achieve a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent

#### **Continuing Eligibility Criteria**

1. Maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA
  2. Complete 27 semester hours the first academic year and 30 semester hours each year thereafter
  3. Complete all remedial courses during the first 30 hours taken after receipt of the scholarship
  4. Be continuously enrolled unless student request for scholarship to be placed on hold (Maximum hold = 2 semesters)
  5. Shall enroll in courses that lead toward a baccalaureate degree program after attempting the lesser of:
    - (A.) Sixty-six (66) semester hours; or
    - (B.) The completion of an associate degree program, unless the number of hours required to complete the associate degree program exceeds sixty-six (66) semester hours, in which case, the higher number of hours for completion shall be used.
  6. Will be renewed until recipient first:
    - a. Earns a Baccalaureate degree
    - b. Attempts a total of 130 semester hours in 8 semesters
- NOTE: If the recipient's undergraduate degree requires additional hours, ADHE in conjunction with the student's institution, shall determine the maximum period of time for renewal.

#### **Award Amounts**

4-year University: \$5,000 per year  
2-year College: \$2,500 per year

#### **Application Deadline**

Application deadline is June 1 of student's senior year in high school.

## Additional Eligibility Criteria for the Current Achiever Students:

- Entered postsecondary education before the 2010-2011 academic year as a full-time first-time freshman within 12 months after graduating high school
- Has been continuously enrolled as a full-time student  
NOTE: Continuously enrolled means that the student, before receiving the scholarship, has completed at least 12 semester hours of courses in consecutive semesters (not including summer terms)
- Has completed at least 12 semester hours of courses granting 3 or more hours of credit per course at an *approved* institution of higher education  
NOTE: A course granting less than 3 hours of credit can be counted toward the 12 hours if it is related to a credit course required for a degree
- Enroll full-time each semester (Fall and Spring) - 15 hours each semester
- Obtained a 2.5 cumulative postsecondary GPA

### **Continuing Eligibility Criteria**

1. Maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA (will be evaluated at the end of each Spring term)
2. Complete 15 hours each consecutive semester (excluding summer terms)
3. Be continuously enrolled unless student request for scholarship to be placed on hold (Maximum hold = 2 semesters)
4. Shall enroll in courses that lead toward a baccalaureate degree program after attempting the lesser of:
  - (C.) Sixty-six (66) semester hours; or
  - (D.) The completion of an associate degree program, unless the number of hours required to complete the associate degree program exceeds sixty-six (66) semester hours, in which case, the higher number of hours for completion shall be used.
5. Will be renewed until recipient first:
  - a. Earns a Baccalaureate degree
  - b. Attempts a total of 130 semester hours in 8 semestersNOTE: If the recipient's undergraduate degree requires additional hours, ADHE in conjunction with the student's institution, shall determine the maximum period of time for renewal.

### **Award Amounts**

4-year University: \$5,000 per year

2-year College: \$2,500 per year

### **Application Deadline**

Application deadline is June 1 for the Fall term and November 1 for the Spring term

TOTAL FUNDING FOR 2010-11: \$41.5 million

## Additional Eligibility Criteria for the Nontraditional Student:

- Enroll full-time or part-time each semester (Fall and Spring) - Full-time = 15 hours, Part-time = at least 6 hours
- Meet one of the following criteria:
  1. Graduated from an Arkansas high public school and achieved a 2.5 high school grade point average or had a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or
  2. Graduated from a private, out-of-state, or home school high school or obtained a GED and achieve a minimum composite score of nineteen (19) on the ACT or the equivalent score on an ACT equivalent; or

3. Has completed at least twelve (12) semester hours of courses granting three (3) or more hours of credit at an approved institution of higher education and earned a postsecondary grade point average of at least 2.5.

NOTE: A course granting less than 3 hours of credit can be counted toward the 12 hours if it is related to a credit course required for a degree

**Continuing Eligibility Criteria**

1. Maintain a 2.50 cumulative GPA (will be evaluated at the end of each Spring term)
2. Complete 15 hours each consecutive semester for full-time and complete at least 6 semester hours for part-time (excluding summer terms)
3. Be continuously enrolled unless student request for scholarship to be placed on hold (Maximum hold = 2 semesters)
4. Shall enroll in courses that lead toward a baccalaureate degree program after attempting the lesser of:
  - (E.) Sixty-six (66) semester hours; or
  - (F.) The completion of an associate degree program, unless the number of hours required to complete the associate degree program exceeds sixty-six (66) semester hours, in which case, the higher number of hours for completion shall be used.
5. Will be renewed until recipient first:
  - a. Earns a Baccalaureate degree
  - b. Attempts a total of 130 semester hours in 8 semesters (full time) or up to 16 semesters (part-time)

NOTE: If the recipient’s undergraduate degree requires additional hours, ADHE in conjunction with the student’s institution, shall determine the maximum period of time for renewal.

**Award Amounts**

4-year University: \$5,000 per year for full-time student

2-year College (includes nursing schools): \$2,500 per year for full-time student

NOTE: Will be prorated for part-time enrollment –

½ - 6-8 hours

¾ - 9-14 hours

**Application Deadline**

Application deadline is June 1 for the Fall term and November 1 for the Spring term

TOTAL FUNDING FOR 2010-11: \$12 million

ACT Equivalency Chart:

SAT (combined verbal and math)	900
Asset (average of all subscores)	40
Compass (average of all subscores)	56

**\*To access the YOUiversal Scholarship application and for complete program details please visit [www.adhe.edu](http://www.adhe.edu) or contact the Arkansas Department of Higher Education’s Financial Aid department at the following:**

**Arkansas Department of Higher Education  
114 East Capitol Avenue  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
Phone: 1-800-54-STUDY or (501) 371-2050  
Website: [www.adhe.edu](http://www.adhe.edu)  
Email: [finaid@adhe.edu](mailto:finaid@adhe.edu)**