Statement of Policy
The University of Cincinnati provides undergraduate scholarships and grants to students consistent with the specifications of our generous benefactors on the basis of financial need and/or merit. Unless otherwise specified by a gift or by agreed upon enrollment goals of the academic units to be eligible, students must be enrolled full-time in degree-granting programs. All funds provided by private and corporate donors, alumni, and university general funds, held by the University of Cincinnati and its constituent colleges, the University of Cincinnati Foundation, and the University of Cincinnati Alumni Association are deemed to be institutional awards. Unless expressly approved as an exception, the total amount awarded to any UC undergraduate from institutional award funds may not exceed the direct costs of attendance plus the UC-budgeted book allowance.

The Department of Enrollment Management and collaborating academic units, consistent with enrollment goals set by the appropriate governance bodies, will be provided flexibility to accomplish annual enrollment targets through the coordination of scholarship and grant awards. Centralized coordination of scholarship fund awards will be conducted through the Student Financial Aid Office and applied directly to student accounts.

Enrollment targets and associated scholarship strategies will be reviewed annually in accordance with integrated enrollment planning targets set jointly by the academic units and central administration. Institutional scholarship/grant limits and priorities will be approved annually by the SEM Policy Council after appropriate vetting through other governance structures.

Policy Rationale
Student recruitment and retention are key components of the university’s academic strategic plan. University scholarships and grants are leveraged to insure maximum utilization of funds to meet the university’s and colleges’ enrollment goals to attract and retain academically talented students, contribute to the diversity of the university community, and remove financial barriers to attendance in order to maintain access for all qualified students.

In order to accomplish these goals, a high level of coordination in awarding of scholarships is required. The University of Cincinnati is a complex institution serving a broad range of student constituents. Enrollment goals for individual colleges place different levels of emphasis on growth, quality, diversity and retention/degree completion. University procedures require clarification to enhance overall coordination of scholarships and grants with the individual colleges, departments and personnel involved in the scholarship awarding process. Additionally, centralized coordination of institutional awards will allow for enhanced compliance with and leveraging of federal and state grants.

Award and Financial Aid Definitions
Scholarship – Financial support based on academic achievement or other specified meritorious criteria. The donor (or designator of institutional funds) sets the criteria for recipient selection (i.e., financial need, field of study). Scholarships may be awarded on a one-time or renewable basis. Renewable scholarships must have defined criteria for retention (usually defined in terms of GPA requirements, earned hours and/or service expectations) and specified limits as to maximum number of terms or credit hours to be covered.

Grant – Financial support based on defined criteria that usually includes financial need. A grant recipient is selected based on these specified criteria set by federal or state governments or the institution. Grants are usually awarded for a specified enrollment window. They may be re-awarded for continuing enrollment windows after assessment as to whether the specified criteria are still in place.
Prize – Recognition based on a competition or other selection criteria. While prizes are generally awarded as culminating events, they act as scholarships for policy purposes.

Institutional Aid – Funds awarded at the discretion of UC decision makers from resources held by the University of Cincinnati and its constituent colleges, the University of Cincinnati Foundation, and the University of Cincinnati Alumni Association. Institutional aid encompasses both donor provided and general funds aid. Examples include but are not limited to Cincinnatus awards, University Need Grant, college, department, or unit scholarships such as Lindner Honors PLUS, Rowe Scholarship, Darwin T. Turner, and Demakes Alumni Legacy Scholarships. Not considered to be institutional aid, awards and eligibility decisions made by sources external to UC include Federal Pell Grants, Ohio College Opportunity Grant, Cincinnati Scholarship Foundation awards, Wal-Mart Scholarships, etc.

- Specialized Categories of Institutional Aid
  - Athletics Grants-in-Aid are awarded at the discretion of the Department of Athletics. Student eligibility for these awards and additional institutional and external awards must be applied consistent with NCAA regulations.
  - Tuition Remission for UC Employees and Dependents is an institutionally-provided and defined benefit for UC faculty, staff and retirees. Tuition remission will be applied in coordination with other forms of institutional aid as defined under the Limits and Eligibility section of this policy document.
  - Resident Advisor Scholarships – Awarded as part of a quasi-employment program and because assigned placement determines room charge, room awards are made in the exact amount of the room charge. Room and board funding is processed as a scholarship while monthly stipend for service provided is processed through payroll procedures. Resident Advisor Scholarships will be applied in coordination with other forms of institutional aid as defined under the Limits and Eligibility section of this policy document.

Direct Costs – The student's direct costs, for scholarship purposes, are defined as the billed instructional, general and ITIE fees and room and board (or the associated, defined allowances).

Indirect Costs – Costs associated with enrollment but not payable directly to UC. Indirect costs include books, travel, and personal expenses. These costs vary widely from student to student, but the Student Financial Aid Office is required to set a budgeted amount for these costs for the purpose of awarding federal aid.

Costs of Attendance – Total of direct costs plus indirect costs as set by the Student Financial Aid Office.

Limits and Eligibility for Institutional Awards

Student Eligibility – Unless otherwise specified in the specific scholarship agreement, stated through agreed upon enrollment goals, or in their graduating term, minimally, students must be enrolled full-time in a degree granting program and in good standing academically. Students awarded scholarships and grants with further academic, programmatic, demographic and participation qualifiers as defined by the donor or the university must meet those qualifiers to attain and retain eligibility.

Tuition and Fees Awards – May not exceed the amount billed (and not otherwise remitted in the form of reciprocity or tuition benefits) to the student as instructional fees, general fees, ITIE fees, and, when applicable, college program fees. Funds limited to individual components must use the titles specifically. Funds awarded for part-time or co-op enrollment are limited to part-time tuition and professional practice fee.

Room Awards – May not exceed the multiple occupancy rate for the traditional-style halls (Dabney, Daniels, Calhoun, and Siddall) unless required as part of a living/learning community. Students choosing alternate campus or university-affiliated options will be responsible for the difference in costs. Students who receive room awards and who live off campus (should the award permit) will receive the multiple occupancy rate in the form of a credit to their bill unless they live with parents at which point the credit may not exceed the Student Financial Aid-defined commuter rate.
Board Awards – May not exceed the basic residential meal plan. Students choosing a more expensive plan will be responsible for the difference. Students who receive board awards who do not opt for board plans (should the award permit) will receive the basic residential meal plan rate in the form of a credit to their bill.

Book Allowance Awards – May not exceed the Student Financial Aid Office-established book allowance.

Maximum Total of Institutional Awards – Unless expressly approved as an exception, the total amount awarded to any UC undergraduate from institutional award funds may not exceed the direct costs plus the book allowance. Total institutional awards when combined with external gift assistance (federal and state grants and outside scholarships) cannot exceed the Student Financial Aid Office-determined cost of attendance.

Tuition Remission – Tuition remission is institutional funding and will be packaged with other institutional funds to maximize previously stated UC enrollment goals. Students eligible for tuition remission should expect to see some adjustments to other forms of institutional aid.

Reduced Tuition Programs – Students eligible to apply for reciprocity or Metro rates are limited in scholarship awards to the appropriate tuition figures unless they apply and are determined not to be eligible to receive reduced tuition.

Statements of Organizational Responsibility

Academic and Other Awarding Units – When student recipients are determined outside of the centrally managed scholarship programs, it is the responsibility of the awarding unit to select students per donor stipulations; enter E-160’s and communicate with Student Financial Aid Office in a timely manner; notify students in writing as to their award status and next steps so that official awards can be completed; and coordinate with other units where multiple award eligibility is a possibility.

Development Officers – As development officers are key to university stewardship efforts, they will take the lead in communicating scholarship needs to donors. They will also follow up with donors regarding the successful selection of students and the achievement of enrollment objectives.

Student Financial Aid – The Student Financial Aid Office has responsibility to maintain compliance with federal, state and university policies as related to the awarding of grants, scholarships and prizes, to maintain associated systems and procedures required to facilitate same, and to provide access to relevant and necessary information to assist in the collaborative awarding of scholarships.

Enrollment Management – The Department of Enrollment Management is responsible for communicating university enrollment strategies and goals to those persons who are part of the awarding process and, with Student Financial Aid, communicate instances and/or scenarios where multiple award eligibility is a possibility.

Procedures and Processing
The following procedures have been developed to implement scholarship policies.

1. Determination of student financial need: The Student Financial Aid Office is the university authority for determining financial need. As such, Student Financial Aid will coordinate, determine eligibility and make the selection of recipients for all centrally awarded need-based scholarships and grants and merit scholarships that have a need-based component. The Student Financial Aid Office will serve as a resource to other awarding units of need-based funds to assure compliance with regulatory obligations.

2. Interpretation of endowment agreements and donor language
   a. Existing agreements: When the donor (or funding source) is silent on programmatic, financial need and merit requirements, the application of scholarship funds will be consistent with all university enrollment goals. Development officers, in coordination with Student Financial Aid, will be the coordinating officers for questions regarding the interpretation of scholarship language in existing donor agreements with respect to scholarship awarding requirements. The
Student Financial Aid Office will manage the overall award process and respond to outcomes of award decisions to students. The goal is to provide proper stewardship of funds based on donor wishes while maximizing flexibility to meet enrollment strategic goals.

b. New scholarship agreements: In full recognition that donors give in accordance with their passions, flexibility in awarding funds is critical to meeting enrollment goals. In order to meet the strategic goals of the university, development offices shall directly consult with the following units when scholarship agreements do not fit pre-approved college/university enrollment targets: Academic Dean and UC Foundation leadership.

3. Approval of general funds-based awards: SEM Policy Council, in collaboration with other governance groups and the President’s Budget Advisory Committee, will approve the enrollment targets and available resources for scholarships and grants awarded from general funds. Proposals for general funds scholarship funding should be directed through Enrollment Management to SEM for consideration.

4. Centralized disbursement of scholarships and grants: University of Cincinnati Policy, in compliance with federal student aid regulations, requires that all scholarships and grants to UC students be made through the Student Financial Aid Office. Organizational units making awards to targeted students should do so in collaboration with Student Financial Aid prior to communicating to students to assure maximization of resources and to avoid over-award situations resulting in post-notification adjustments. This requirement is in place to foster communications and enhance effectiveness of our resources. It is not designed to challenge decisions around unit-based awards. The Student Financial Aid Office will maintain a shared database of centrally awarded and unit awarded aid to facilitate this enhanced communication.

5. Timely awarding of scholarship/grant funds: In order to have maximum impact on enrollment, March 15th of the previous academic year is set as the target date for awards to incoming freshmen students with the understanding incoming student awards may continue as part of the academic unit’s scholarship use as leverage for enrollment. Awards for continuing students and new transfer students should be completed by May 31st for the next academic year. Mid-year awards are possible but should be coordinated in advance as they often replace other aid sources and require unanticipated adjustments.

6. Fund processing: Per UC Administrative Memorandum 133, all scholarship and grant funds must be processed via the E160 process in UniverSIS. Credit of the award is then reflected on the student bill, is charged to the appropriate account, and finalized with Student Financial Aid. Institutional aid awards offset the student’s budgeted cost of education. Award adjustments based on UC policy and federal regulations as determined by the Student Financial Aid Office are final unless preapproved.

7. Resolution process: In order to minimize misinterpretations and/or conflicts of implementation and operations, the Academic Dean (and/or designee(s)) and Enrollment Management staff will make final decision or interpretation.