

**Student Financial Aid Committee  
February 22, 2024**

**Members Present**

Melissa Creek  
Allen Driggers  
Chance Hale  
Nicole Henniger  
Jennifer Mabry for Stacie Rothfus  
Diane Pulte  
Judy Riggsbee  
Lindsey Taylor  
Dennis Tennant  
Frank Tittle

**Members Absent**

Kumar Yelmarthi

**Guests**

Cassandra Gronendyke  
Karen Lykins  
Mary McCaskey  
Jerri Winningham

**Approval of Agenda**

Dr. Driggers presented the agenda to the committee members. Mr. Hale made the motion to approve. Dr. Henniger second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of September 14, 2023 Minutes**

Dr. Driggers presented the last meeting minutes to the committee members. Mr. Hale made the motion to approve. Dr. Morin second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**Scholarship Program**

Dr. Driggers turned the meeting over to Ms. Lykins. She shared an update with the members on the Presidential Scholars Program which awarding begin Fall 2022. Currently, we have 2,223 students on the program. She reminded everyone that students are not required to submit a scholarship application for this program. Students are awarded based on their high school GPA and ACT scores. The original levels were \$3,000, \$4,000 and \$5,000. The first year we awarded 2,483 scholarships and about 41% of the applicants enrolled in the University. Last year we made an adjustment to add two additional levels of \$8,000 for an ACT score of 35 and \$10,000 for an ACT score of 36. These levels were added to make national merit semifinalist and other high achieving students include us in their consideration of an institution to attend. Last fall, we awarded 2,856 scholarships which attracted 39 students with an ACT

score of 35 for the \$8,000 scholarship and eleven of those enrolled. For the applicants with a perfect ACT score of 36, we awarded 11 and we had five to attend. For the Fall 2024 class we have awarded 2,926. Of those awarded we have 57 with an ACT score of 35 and 17 with an ACT of 36.

Last year after the scholarship deadline date, we took exceptions from students to review for consideration of awarding. The exceptions were for the full amount. This year a different approach is taking place. With the spring showcase event this weekend, a secondary deadline of August 1 will be announced where students may be awarded a reduced scholarship amount. Ms. Lykins ask if there were any questions on the information provided. Dr. Driggers questioned about high school GPAs not being weighted when students took AP classes. He had met with a prospective student who was in that situation, and the student thought it was impacting his scholarship awards. Discussion was held by the committee members. The Financial Aid staff suggest that Dr. Driggers refer students to their office.

Ms. Lykins recognized a group of 25 employees who met over the last year to review the efficient use of our scholarship dollars. It was led by the University Advancement Office staff and included staff from the Business Office and the Scholarship Office. The members took a deep dive into unspent funds by donors. The group was able to find over \$700,000 and infused this money into the scholarship program.

Ms. Lykins ask if there were any additional questions. Dr. Morin questioned what the GPA criteria was for the scholarship amounts since the information was not in the table from the September minutes. Ms. Gronendyke responded that for the Presidential Scholars the GPA was a 3.4 or higher for the \$3,000 and \$4,000. For the \$5,000 tier an up, the GPA requirement was a 3.75.

### **Policy 1204 Institutional Scholarships**

Ms. Lykins presented several editorial changes for the policy that had been reviewed by a subcommittee. The first change was adding "if required" to the end of the statement for V.E.3.b. It would state "Recipients of a donor-funded scholarship must submit a thank you letter if required." The second item was changing Financial Aid to Scholarship for V.G.1. It would state "A student wishing to appeal a decision related to her/his scholarship must complete the Request for Exception Form available on the Office of the Scholarship's site and submit it to the Office of Scholarships. Mr. Hale made the motion to approve and Dr. Henniger second the motion. The committee members approved the motion.

### **Election of Chair**

Dr. Driggers recognized Dr. Henniger who served on the subcommittee along with Ms. Creek and Dr. Tittle. She presented Dr. Driggers as the nominee and he had agreed to serve another year if elected. Mr. Hale made the motion to approve Dr. Driggers to serve as chair for the 2024-2045 academic year. Dr. Tittle second the motion. The committee members elected Dr. Driggers unanimously.

### **Such Other Matters**

With no other matters brought before the committee, Mr. Hale made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Dr. Henniger second the motion.