

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (ADE)
INNOVATIVE AND EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS DIVISION

ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS (ABOR)
HIGH HONORS TUITION SCHOLARSHIP a.k.a. "AIMS SCHOLARSHIP"

Updated: February 2011

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1. Who governs the High Honors Tuition Scholarship?

The High Honors Tuition Scholarship is a **UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP!** The High Honors Tuition Scholarship is governed by the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR). The Arizona Department of Education is **only** authorized to administer the program for the Arizona Board of Regents and to recommend to the universities students who qualify for the High Honors Scholarship. **All issues regarding the applicability, renewability, and transferability are at the sole discretion of each university independently.**

2. Where can the scholarship be utilized?

The High Honors Tuition Scholarship is a university scholarship. The funds for the scholarship are derived from each university. **The scholarship can only be used at Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona.**

3. When will the High Honors Scholarship awards be determined?

High Schools should submit a preliminary list to ADE by October 30th of the students' senior year. This is just a preliminary list of student who could possibility qualify for the scholarship. Final list of qualified students are due to ADE by June 30th, and July 30th. The submission of Home School students will be the responsibility of the teacher of record and should follow the above deadline dates.

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4. What is the process for applying for this scholarship?

There is not an "application" associated with this scholarship opportunity. **Each high school is responsible for compiling a list of their students who meet the High Honors scholarship.** High schools will first provide a list to the Arizona Department of Education by October 30th, of each year. Students will be notified by the Arizona Department of Education of their **conditional** qualification of the tuition scholarship. **Official** certifications will be made by each high school by June 30th, and July 30th.

5. What changes did ABOR make to the scholarship in September 2010?

The ABOR voted to make changes to the scholarship award and criteria beginning with the high school graduating class of 2013. In addition to the current criteria, student's who graduate in 2013 and beyond will have to obtain an ACT score of at least a 28 or a SAT1 (critical reading & math, excluding essay) of 1300. The scholarship was also reduced to 25% of fulltime resident base tuition.

6. Do students have to demonstrate financial need to qualify? Can they accept this scholarship in addition to other university scholarship offers?

No. This is a **university** academic merit-based scholarship; therefore, students do not need to demonstrate financial need in order to qualify. However, **all** students are encouraged to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) regardless of their financial situation. Students who are offered other merit scholarships from the university may not receive this AIMS scholarship. Students automatically receive the higher merit scholarship offered from the university, but not both.

7. What is the value of the award?

Value of the award is based on the cost of full time resident tuition the student's first year. The scholarship is renewable at the same **fixed value** for an additional 3 years (6 consecutive semesters) or until enough credits are awarded for a bachelors degree. **Beginning with the class of 2013, the scholarship will be worth 25% of base full time resident tuition.**

8. When can eligible students begin utilizing the award? Can the use of the scholarship be deferred?

The award is first available to qualified students beginning the first fall semester after a student graduates from high school or upon successful completion of high school course work, and can be used no later than that first spring semester. Please contact the university scholarship office for any additional deadlines. Deferments beyond the first spring semester are awarded at the discretion of each universities financial aid office. Deferment policies vary for each university, please contact the universities financial aid office for additional information.

9. Once the list is submitted to the universities, how are the awards handled?

The universities will cross-reference the list with students admitted and subsequently registered for fall classes. Student accounts are adjusted accordingly. Tuition already paid by a student is credited back to the student's account. **Students do not need to provide independent verification of the award. Additional questions should be directed to the appropriate university financial aid office.**

10. How will students be notified that they have qualified for the scholarship?

The Arizona Department of Education encourages each high school to notify students of their inclusion on the list sent to the Department of Education. The Arizona Department of Education will send out notification letters on behalf of the Superintendent to the homes of qualified students. The universities will also notify the awardees once the tuition scholarship has been applied to the student's account.

11. Once I am awarded the scholarship, whom do I contact for questions?

Once you are awarded the scholarship, all questions regarding renewal, transferability, disbursement, and deferrals must to be address **directly** to the financial aid office at the university in which you are transferring to or attending.

12. How many times can a student retake the AIMS HS to “EXCEED” standards for the High Honors Tuition Scholarship?

Students participate in AIMS HS testing for the first time in the spring of their sophomore year and can retest in the fall and spring of their junior. **In order to qualify for the High Honors Tuition Scholarship students must exceed on at least two sections of the AIMS HS test by the end of their junior year, and have at least 2 AP exams with a score of 3 or better or 2 IB exams with a score of 4 or better by the end of their senior year.**

13. How can students in private schools or those being home schooled access this scholarship opportunity?

Private and Home school students who would like to take the AIMS HS test may do so by contacting their local district or charter school. If a private school would like to administer the AIMS test to its students they must contact the Assessment and Testing office at 602-542-5031 or testing@azed.gov.

14. How can small and rural school students qualify for the tuition scholarship when their schools do not offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses or the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program?

Advanced Placement tests are available for students through the College Board (www.collegeboard.com). Students may take an AP course as an Independent Study through the College Board. If a student chooses to pursue the AP course of study, they are advised to work with their high school counselors and administration.

15. How is the core GPA in Part 2 calculated?

The Core GPA calculation must be calculated using the 16 core competency courses **exclusively**. ABOR has agreed to accept a student “testing out” of a core course if credit was given, or if the student was subsequently enrolled in higher level core courses. However, if the grade is not reflected on the students' high school transcript, the qualifying core GPA is calculated on less than 16 core classes.

16. How do we determine whether to use a weighted or unweighted GPA to qualify for this scholarship?

It is at the discretion of the high school and/or student as to whether a weighted or unweighted GPA is used to qualify a student. A student does not need to meet the qualifications of both. A GPA calculation worksheet can be found on the ADE website www.azed.gov/asd/tuitionwaiver under resources.

17. If a student receives a C in one or more core classes, can he/she still qualify for the scholarship?

Yes. If a student receives below a C in one or more core areas he/she has three options to remain eligible for Part I of the criteria: 1) Retake the course or courses and receive a B or better; 2) Take an additional core course in the deficient area(s) and receive a B or better; or 3) Take an AP or IB exam in the deficient core area and receive the acceptable score ([see Table 1](#)).

18. Can a student test out of or receive a “P” for credit in a core?

Yes, ABOR has agreed to accept a student “testing out” of a core course if credit was given or if the student was subsequently enrolled in higher level core courses. However, if the grade is not reflected on the students’ high school transcript, the core GPA is calculated on less than 16 core classes.

19. Does a student have to obtain a grade of B or better in each semester and/or quarter of a core course?

Yes, a student must obtain a B or better in the unit in which **credit** is issued by the high school (i.e. quarter, semester). Grades are not averaged for Part I of the criteria. The only exceptions are those classes taken while in middle school.

Students may take an AP or IB exam to prove core competency and fulfill the requirement for Part I of the scholarship criteria.

20. Does a B or better have to be earned in American/US History?

Although American/US History is a core requirement for Arizona University Admissions and high school graduation, **ANY** two social science credits with a B or better can be used to qualify students for the High Honors Tuition Scholarship.

21. Do the qualifying Foreign Language credits have to be in the same language?

Yes, the two credits of foreign language must be in the same foreign language.

22. Who should I contact at the ADE for additional clarifications to my questions?

Students and parents should contact their high school counselor regarding questions of eligibility. If you have general questions regarding the tuition scholarship, feel free to contact:

Arizona Department of Education
Shannon Tucker, Project Program Specialist
Phone: (602) 542-4391 or (602) 542-4130
Email: Shannon.Tucker@azed.gov

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