

To: Freedom Scholarship Board
From: Elli Haerter, Coordinator
RE: Grade Point Average (GPA) Policy and Exceptions
Date: October 19, 2023

Objectives:

1. Approve a policy for the GPA requirement. This is the culmination of board declarations and what is current practice.
2. Approve a policy for granting exceptions to the GPA requirement.

Freedom Scholarship related statute:

13-55A-16. Scholarship--Eligible students.

- (5) Maintains a GPA of at least 2.0 while enrolled at an eligible institution; and

Background: Maintenance of Cumulative GPA

The Freedom Scholarship Board could continue as it has with the current policy or further define what it means to "maintain 2.0 GPA". The board could further define when/how often grade checks are conducted and whether students are allowed time to bring their GPA back up and still receive the scholarship.

Current Policy for Freedom Scholarship GPA

If a student is currently below a 2.0 cumulative GPA, as reviewed by the end of the spring semester they are not eligible for the Freedom Scholarship for the next cycle be it summer or fall semester. If/when the student returns to 2.0 cumulative GPA, they are once again eligible. All student funding, regardless of whether they were a previous recipient, is contingent on whether or not it is available and is not guaranteed.

The university is still responsible for tracking a Freedom Scholarship recipient through graduation whether or not they received additional scholarships. These students will count towards a university's Freedom Scholarship graduates regardless of whether they received one scholarship over five years or five scholarships. Freedom

Scholarship needs to know whether this student continues as a student and is making progress. If the student is no longer a student, Freedom Scholarship reverts to a debt.

Communication between the university and the student about the student's status under the Freedom Scholarship GPA requirement when the student has less than a 2.0 is required.

If the student's GPA has returned to 2.0, the university can grant the scholarship again, without intervention by the Freedom Scholarship Board so long as the other requirements are met.

Freedom Scholarship Board does not require grade checks after the first semester of the first year of school however, the institutions could choose to do so.

Policy proposal: Exceptions to the GPA requirement

The Freedom Scholarship Board will consider exceptions to the Freedom Scholarship 2.0 GPA requirement for students who have completed less than 45 credits with a term or cumulative GPA between 1.8 and 2.0 after the spring semester.

If a student has completed less than 45 credits and has a term or cumulative GPA of less than 1.8, their scholarship shall be suspended until such time the term GPA or cumulative GPA returns to greater than or equal to 1.8 After completing 45 credits, the requirement is 2.0 cumulative GPA through bachelor's degree completion.

Administrative Steps for consideration for the exception of the GPA policy

The Freedom Scholarship Board convenes quarterly. The Board will make time at each of its quarterly meetings in CY 2024 to hear student exceptions. It is expected that the university would help facilitate necessary documentation for any students they want to be considered at least 10 calendar days prior to the Freedom Scholarship Board meeting. Each student will be assigned a case number so as not to be publicly identified in the official board minutes. The board will vote on these exceptions. Their decision is final. Freedom Scholarship staff will alert universities of the decision on each student.