South Carolina State Aid Policy & Procedures

Tuition Grant Program ($4,800 maximum)

This is a need-based program for SC residents who attend an eligible in-state college on a full-time (minimum 12 credits per semester) basis. This formula is used to calculate need:

Cost of Attendance – Parent SAI – Student SAI = Remaining Eligibility

Application:
- The application to determine eligibility is the FAFSA,
- Students must complete this online by August 1 each year.

Eligibility:
- Meet eligibility requirements for Title IV financial aid programs.
- Demonstrate need as determined by the FAFSA.
- Obtain a high school diploma or equivalent (GED or Adult Education Diploma).
- Be fully admitted as a degree-seeking student.
- Complete the SC Residency form (one-time).
- Complete the SC State Certification Form.
- Student and parent(s) of dependent student must be domiciled in SC for not less than 12 months prior to the start of the Fall Semester.

Continuation:
- Satisfy AU Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements.
- Earn at least 24 credit hours during the previous academic year.
- Complete the FAFSA by the August 1st deadline.
- Complete the SC State Certification Form.

Renewal:
- The award is renewed with a message that completed hours will be reviewed after Spring semester grades are submitted.
- If the student does not earn at least 24 hours in the previous year, the award is removed and the student is notified via email with a revised award notice.

Awarding:
- Applicant reports are received weekly from the SCTG Commission.
- Students are awarded based on these reports and our student system.

Updates:
- If eligibility changes based on an update to the student's FAFSA, the updated information is sent to the SCTG Commission for approval.
- If a student is not a traditional student, updates are sent to the SCTG Commission to put the student on the non-traditional list for awarding.

- If a student is listed as a non-traditional student on the applicant report but should be a traditional student, the SCTG Commission is notified.
- If a student changes their reported housing status, the SCTG Commission is notified.

Reporting:
- Each semester (Fall & Spring), we receive an enrollment report from the SCTG Commission.
- The report includes each population of students (Traditional, Adult Studies, FLEX).
- We have 25 business days to return the report to the SCTG Commission to receive funding.

Posting:
- After funds are received, we receive a roster with amounts.
- We share the roster & amounts with the Accounting Office.
- The Accounting Office posts funds to student accounts.
- The grant is typically split evenly between the Fall & Spring semesters.

Reconciliation:
- The Financial Aid Office and Accounting Office reconcile SCTG funds quarterly.
- The Financial Aid Office, Accounting Office, and SCTG Commission reconcile SCTG annually.

Palmetto Fellows Scholarship ($6,700 Freshmen | $7,500 Sophomore/Junior/Senior)

This merit-based scholarship is awarded to academically outstanding SC residents who attend an in-state college on a full-time (minimum 12 credits per semester) basis.

Application:
- Applications are available through the high school guidance office.
- Students must meet the academic criteria of the program and apply by the deadlines – usually April 15 & June 15 of the student's senior year.

Eligibility:
- Must be an entering first-time freshmen or transfer.
- Complete the SC Residency form (one-time).
- Complete the SC State Certification Form.
- Student and parent(s) of dependent student must be domiciled in SC for not less than 12 months prior to the start of the Fall Semester.
- Must satisfy academic requirements –
  - For underlined early awards:
    - A minimum score of 1200 on the SAT (25 on the ACT) by the March national test, minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA on the SC UGP at the end of the junior year, and rank in the top 6% of the class at the end of the sophomore or junior year.
           OR
    - A minimum score of 1400 on the SAT (31 on the ACT) by the March national test and earn a minimum 4.0 cumulative GPA on the SC UGP at the end of the junior year.
  - For underlined late awards:
    - Minimum score of 1200 on the SAT (25 on the ACT) by the June national test of the senior year, minimum 3.5 cumulative GPA on the SC UGP at the end of the senior year, and rank in the top 6% of the class at the end of the sophomore, junior, or senior year.
           OR
    - A minimum score of 1400 on the SAT (31 on the ACT) by the June national test of the senior year and a minimum 4.0 cumulative GPA on the SC UGP at the end of the senior year.

Continuation:
- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and earn 30 credit hours each academic year – credits earned before high school graduation, hours exempted, CLEP, IB, and AP do not meet this requirement.
- Complete the SC State Certification Form.
- The scholarship is typically split evenly between the Fall & Spring semesters.

Renewal:
- The award is renewed with a message that completed hours will be reviewed after Spring semester grades are submitted.
- If the student does not earn at least 30 credit hours in the previous year, the award is removed, and the student is notified via email with a revised award notice.
- Renewable for no more than 8 consecutive semesters.

Reporting:
- October 31 for Fall, March 31 for Spring, and July 31 for Summer (and Fall & Spring "clean-up").

Invoicing:
- Invoices are set at the same time as the reports for each term.

LIFE Scholarship ($5,000)

This merit-based scholarship is available to SC residents who attend an in-state college on a full-time (minimum 12 credits per semester) basis.

Application:
- There is no application for this scholarship.
- Students must meet all general and academic requirements.

Eligibility:
- Complete the SC Residency form (one-time).
- Complete the SC State Certification Form.
- Student and parent(s) of dependent student must be domiciled in SC for not less than 12 months prior to the start of the Fall Semester.
- First-time freshmen must meet 2 of these criteria:
  o Earn a 3.0 cumulative GPA based on the SC UGP upon high school graduation.
  o Score an 1100 on the SAT or 22 on the ACT.
  o Rank in the top 30% of the graduating class.

Continuation:
- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 and earn an average of 30 credit hours per year – credits earned before high school graduation, hours exempted, CLEP, IB, and AP meet this requirement.
- The scholarship is split evenly between the Fall & Spring semesters.

Renewal:
- The award is renewed with a message that completed hours will be reviewed after Spring semester grades are submitted.
- If the student does not earn at least 30 credit hours in the previous year, the award is removed, and the student is notified via email with a revised award notice.
- Renewable for no more than 8 consecutive semesters.

Reporting:
- October 31 for Fall, March 31 for Spring, and July 31 for Summer (and Fall & Spring "clean-up").

Invoicing:
- Invoices are set at the same time as the reports for each term.
- The Accounting Office posts funds to student accounts.
- The grant is typically split evenly between the Fall & Spring semesters.

<h2 style="text-align:center; color:red;">HOPE Scholarship ($2,800)</h2>

This merit-based scholarship is available to SC residents who attend an in-state college on a full-time (minimum 12 credits per semester) basis.

Application:
- There is no application for this scholarship.
- The student must meet general and academic requirements.

Eligibility:
- Complete the SC Residency form (one-time).
- Complete the SC State Certification Form.
- Student and parent(s) of dependent student must be domiciled in SC for not less than 12 months prior to the start of the Fall Semester.
- Must have a minimum 3.0 GPA on the SC UGP.
- Available to SC freshman who do not meet LIFE or Palmetto Fellowship Scholarship criteria.

Continuation:
- This scholarship is for freshmen only.
- A student who earns at least 30 credit hours with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at AU can become eligible for the LIFE Scholarship in subsequent years.
- The scholarship is typically split evenly between the Fall & Spring semesters.

Reporting:
- October 31 for Fall, March 31 for Spring, and July 31 for Summer (and Fall & Spring "clean-up").

Invoicing:
- Invoices are set at the same time as the reports for each term.

<h2 style="text-align:center; color:red;">Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Enhancement & LIFE Scholarship Enhancement ($2,500)</h2>

The Enhancement is for Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship recipients (Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors) who major in Education, STEM, or Accounting.

Application:
- There is no application for either Enhancement.

Eligibility:
- Students must meet all the eligibility requirements for the **base** scholarships to receive the Enhancement.
- Students must be enrolled in an approved major:
  - STEM majors are approved & listed in the AU Undergraduate Catalog.

- o Education majors are approved – the Enhancement acceptance process is being finalized – updates will be made to the AU Undergraduate Catalog.
  - o Accounting major expected to be approved by SCCHE no later than November 2025 – after approval, updates will be made to the AU Undergraduate Catalog.
- Students must earn a minimum of 14 credit hours in courses with approved STEM prefixes before their sophomore year – credits earned before high school graduation, hours exempted, CLEP, IB, and AP meet this requirement.
- Academic Advisors recommend courses that meet Enhancement requirements.

Continuation:
- Students must remain in an approved major and meet all requirements for the **base** scholarship.

Renewal:
- The award is renewed with a message that completed hours will be reviewed after Spring semester grades are submitted.
- If the student does not satisfy requirements, the award is removed and the student is notified via email with a revised award notice.
- AU monitors the Enhancement with custom data fields for SC Merit Years and SC Clock Start date.

Reporting:
- October 31 for Fall, March 31 for Spring, and July 31 for Summer (and Fall & Spring "clean-up").

Invoicing:
- Invoices are set at the same time as the reports for each term.