

## **Guidelines for Graduate Incentive Scholarship Program**

Description —The Graduate Incentive Scholarship (GIS) Program will provide forgivable loans to “historically underrepresented” students in master’s, first professional, and doctoral programs at public higher education institutions where such programs are offered. The GIS program is implemented annually at the following institutions: Clemson University, University of South Carolina, University of South Carolina School of Medicine, Medical University of South Carolina, The Citadel, Winthrop University, S. C. State University, and Francis Marion University.

### Objectives

The Graduate Incentive Scholarship Program has five major objectives:

1. to increase the number of “historically underrepresented” students in graduate and professional programs of study at public postsecondary institutions in the state;
2. to reduce any disparity that exists between the proportion of “historically underrepresented” state residents and white state residents completing graduate and professional programs at South Carolina’s public postsecondary institutions;
3. to increase the pool from which “historically underrepresented” faculty and administrative staff members are chosen by South Carolina public postsecondary institutions;
4. to increase, at South Carolina public institutions, the number of “historically underrepresented” students studying at the graduate and first professional level.
5. to increase the number of outstanding “historically underrepresented” students, remaining in the state following completion of their graduate/professional studies.

<sup>1</sup> “Historically Underrepresented” students are students that have been historically underrepresented at traditionally white institutions and traditionally black institutions in South Carolina.

## **Student Eligibility Criteria**

### **Doctoral Level**

1. United States citizen;
2. Accepted for admission to or enrolled in a doctoral program, or terminal degree program in the fine or applied arts, at a South Carolina public postsecondary institution;
3. Member of “historically underrepresented” at institution to be attended;
4. Outstanding student;<sup>1</sup>
5. For annual renewal, satisfactory academic standing and continued enrollment in an eligible program.

NOTE: In instances where there are equally qualified applicants who are South Carolina residents and nonresidents, preference will be given to applicants who are South Carolina residents. Priority will be given to applications of full-time students when making awards. Remaining available funds may be awarded to part-time students.

### **Master’s and First Professional Level**

At the master’s level, priority will be given to full-time students with strong academic records whose ultimate intent is to pursue a terminal degree program which would qualify them for a college teaching position.

1. United States citizen;
2. Accepted for admission to, or enrolled as, a full-time student in an eligible master’s or first professional program at a South Carolina public postsecondary institution;
3. be a South Carolina resident; who satisfies the requirements of residing in accordance with state statues for tuition and fees, statue 59-112-10 and all related guidelines and regulations promulgated by the Commission on Higher Education;
4. Member of “historically underrepresented” at institution to be attended;
5. Outstanding student;
6. For annual renewal, satisfactory academic standing, and continued enrollment in an eligible program.

<sup>1</sup> Outstanding student as defined by the participating institution on the basis of previous academic record and scores on any tests required by the institution.

<sup>2</sup> Satisfactory academic standing as defined by the institution.

### **Limitation of Awards**

The annual amount of a Graduate Incentive Scholarship will be up to \$15,000 for a full-time student at the Doctoral level and certain first professional levels; up to \$7,500 for full-time students at the Masters level. The amount authorized for part-time students will be pro-rated, based on full-time equivalency at that level.

### **Administrative Responsibilities**

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education is the state agency responsible for implementing the statewide policy. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education will have overall administrative responsibility, to include:

1. requesting Access and Equity Program funding through the Budget and Control Board;
2. Notifying eligible institutions in timely fashion concerning steps required on their part in the application, awarding and reporting procedures;
3. Receiving and processing requests from institutions for funding;
4. Gathering and analyzing pertinent information from institutions regarding fellowship recipients;
5. Making final decisions on forgiveness of loans to recipients.

### **Eligible public postsecondary institutions will have the following responsibilities:**

1. College and university administrators oversee campus budgets, set policies such as admissions standards, coordinate degree programs, and facilitate credit transfer and articulation between the state's public colleges and universities, therefore guidelines (in addition to the minimum statewide scholarship guidelines) may be imposed by the institution;
2. Submitting to the Commission on Higher Education a report which (verifies) that the institution did not supplant any institutional funds with Graduate Incentive Scholarship funds;

3. Submit to the Commission on Higher Education an annual report of the current students in the GIS program;
4. Receiving and screening scholarship applications, and selecting recipients with priority being given to returning students currently enrolled in the program;
5. Utilizing other available fellowships and assistantships in conjunction with GIS funds allocated to the institutions to recruit and assist as many “historically underrepresented” students as possible;
6. Submitting to the Commission on Higher Education any information concerning recipients needed and requested by the Commission for reporting and accounting purposes. Such information shall include:
  - a. Certification that copies of completed "Agreements" are on file for all students receiving GIS and, for masters and first professional students, that all residency requirements have been met;
  - b. A report indicating the status of students who have received GIS in past years. Once a former recipient has fulfilled his/her obligation and that has been reported, no further reporting on that student is required.

Each recipient is required to sign a legal obligation to maintain normal progress toward degree attainment in their educational program and is encouraged to maintain employment in the State of South Carolina as a deferment to the scholarship funds received.

### **Forgiveness of Scholarship in Return for Professional Work in South Carolina**

A Graduate Incentive Scholarship is given with an expectation that the student will maintain employment status within the state of South Carolina for the same duration of time the scholarship was received.