



## **Scholarship Workflow Manual**

**January 13, 2017**

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# Introduction

Few processes touch more persons in the university community than the scholarship workflow of Georgia State University. Students who have been awarded scholarships and fellowships are among the primary beneficiaries of a well-functioning workflow. An effective and efficient workflow, however, also has implications for student recruitment and retention, donor relations and gift and fund stewardship.

The scholarship workflow requires coordination among the colleges, academic departments, Athletics, the Library, the Division of Student Affairs, Undergraduate Studies, Honors College, Office of Admissions, Office of Student Financial Aid, Office of Student Retention, several units in the Division of Development, the GSU Foundation, the university Office of Disbursements, and Student Accounts.

This manual is the fruit of efforts of a task force convened in 2008 and 2009. It is our goal now to improve the process based on new information gathered since the first year of implementation, ensure that we continue to maintain open communication with departmental contacts, utilize technology to streamline the process, and ensure that students have a positive experience when seeking scholarship aid.

The task force determined that the key players in the workflow included:

- Students
- College and department faculty and staff
- Deans, VP's and other administrators
- Undergraduate Studies staff
- Office of Student Financial Aid staff
- Foundation finance and accounting staff
- Development Division staff

The task force found that the scholarship workflow was characterized by:

- Staff from various units across campus – loosely linked, uneven coordination
- Roles and responsibilities of staff and units not well defined
- Workflow not geared to problem resolution
- Financial aid validation late in process
- Confused and frustrated students
- Poorly understood limits imposed by the federal government on student financial aid which impacts private scholarships and fellowships
- Scholarships that are under awarded or go unawarded
- Donors often perceive that scholarships receive poor stewardship

To address these concerns and conditions, the task force set the following objectives for improving the workflow:

- Develop scholarship program integrated with and supportive of university, college and foundation goals
- Make process less confusing to students – improve relationships with future alumni
- Identify staff involved
- Define roles and responsibilities for staff and units involved
- Develop channels of communication across units
- Lay groundwork for a web-based application system and workflow
- Through better stewardship, enhance the case for scholarships endowed by private donors

# Scholarship Workflow Roles and Responsibilities

## Deans, Athletics Director and Vice Presidents

- Designate college scholarship coordinators

## College Scholarship Coordinator\*

- Appointed by the dean (or vice president of a non-academic area)
- Responsible for general management of the scholarship award process within the unit (college, VP area, athletics, etc.)
- Ensures that each awarding authority within the unit has an identified department contact person, if appropriate
- May be authorized to sign foundation scholarship disbursement request forms on behalf of the unit administrator (dean, VP, etc.)
- Works with department contact persons, foundation scholarship coordinator and financial aid representatives to resolve issues
- Has access to Financial Edge and BANNER Student/GoSolar at the appropriate security level
- Receives periodic status reports from foundation scholarship coordinator
- Attends periodic coordinator meetings
- Suggested assignment areas for college scholarship coordinators

J. Mack Robinson College of Business  
College of Arts and Sciences  
College of the Arts  
BF Lewis School of Nursing & Health  
Professions  
College of Education & Human  
Development  
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

Athletics  
Vice President for Student Affairs  
Honors College  
University Level  
Library  
School of Public Health  
Perimeter College

## Department Contact person\*

- A faculty or staff person managing the scholarship award process in a unit authorized to award one or more scholarships, typically an academic department
- Works with college/VP area scholarship coordinator, foundation scholarship coordinator and financial aid representatives to resolve issues
- Has access to Financial Edge and BANNER Student/GoSolar at the appropriate security level
- Receives periodic status reports from foundation scholarship coordinator
- Attends orientation meetings

*\*For some areas, the department contact person and the college scholarship coordinator may be the same person. Examples: College of Law and VP areas.*

## Foundation Disbursement Manager

- Approves scholarships in Financial Edge (posted)
- Initiates payment to university for scholarships
- Coordinates with foundation scholarship coordinator to reconcile foundation scholarship payments to the university

## **Director of Financial Aid or designee**

- Verifies financial aid capacity
- Works with department contact persons, college coordinators, and foundation scholarship coordinator to resolve issues
- When awards are final, enters award into students' BANNER Student/GoSolar financial aid record

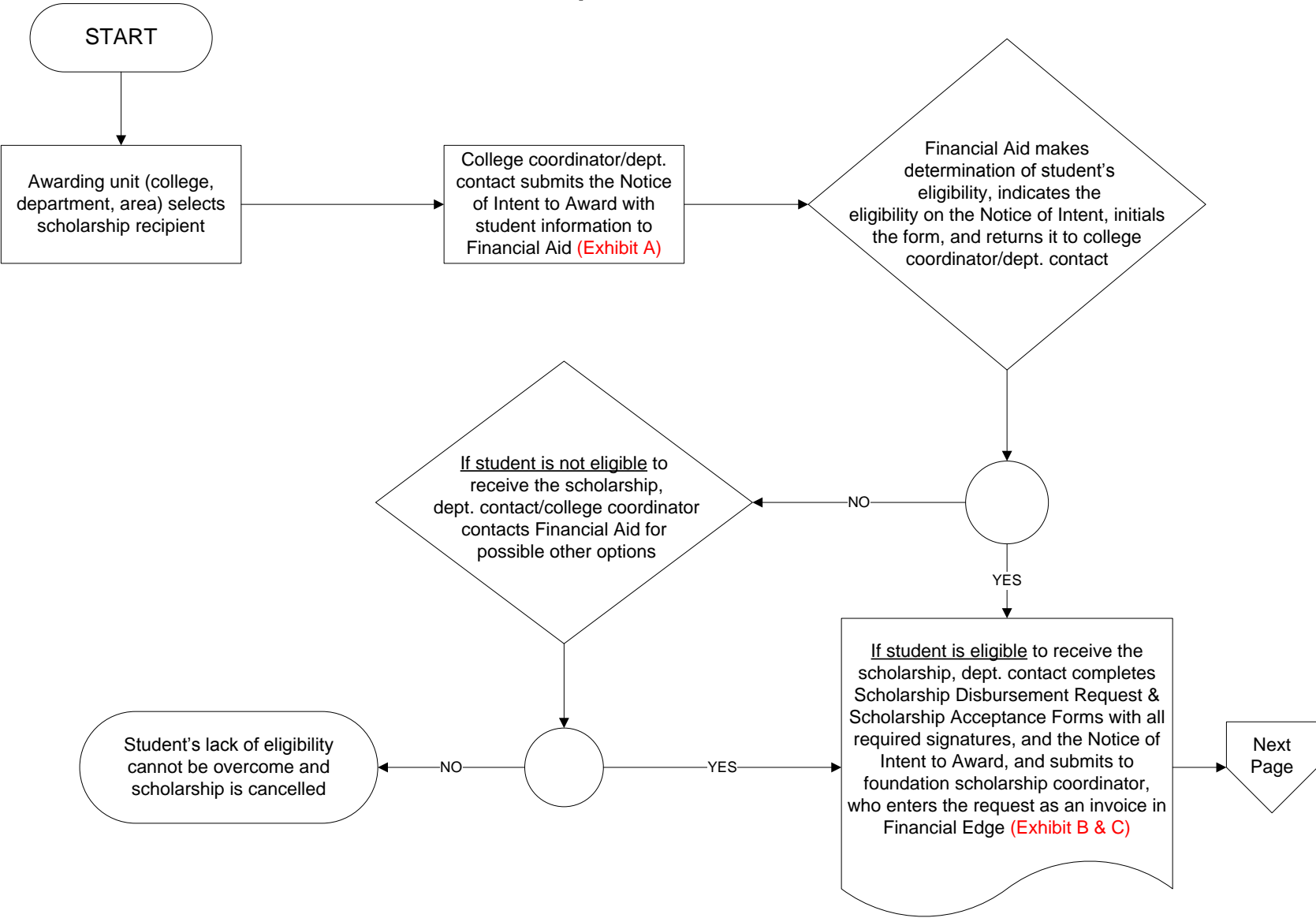
## **Coordinator of Scholarship Outreach (Candace Henry)**

- Serves as scholarship coordinator for general scholarships (university-wide)
- Monitors student emails submitted to the university scholarship website
- Sends final award letters (university-wide scholarships only)
- Advises students in the Scholarship Resource Center, guiding them through the scholarship search and application process

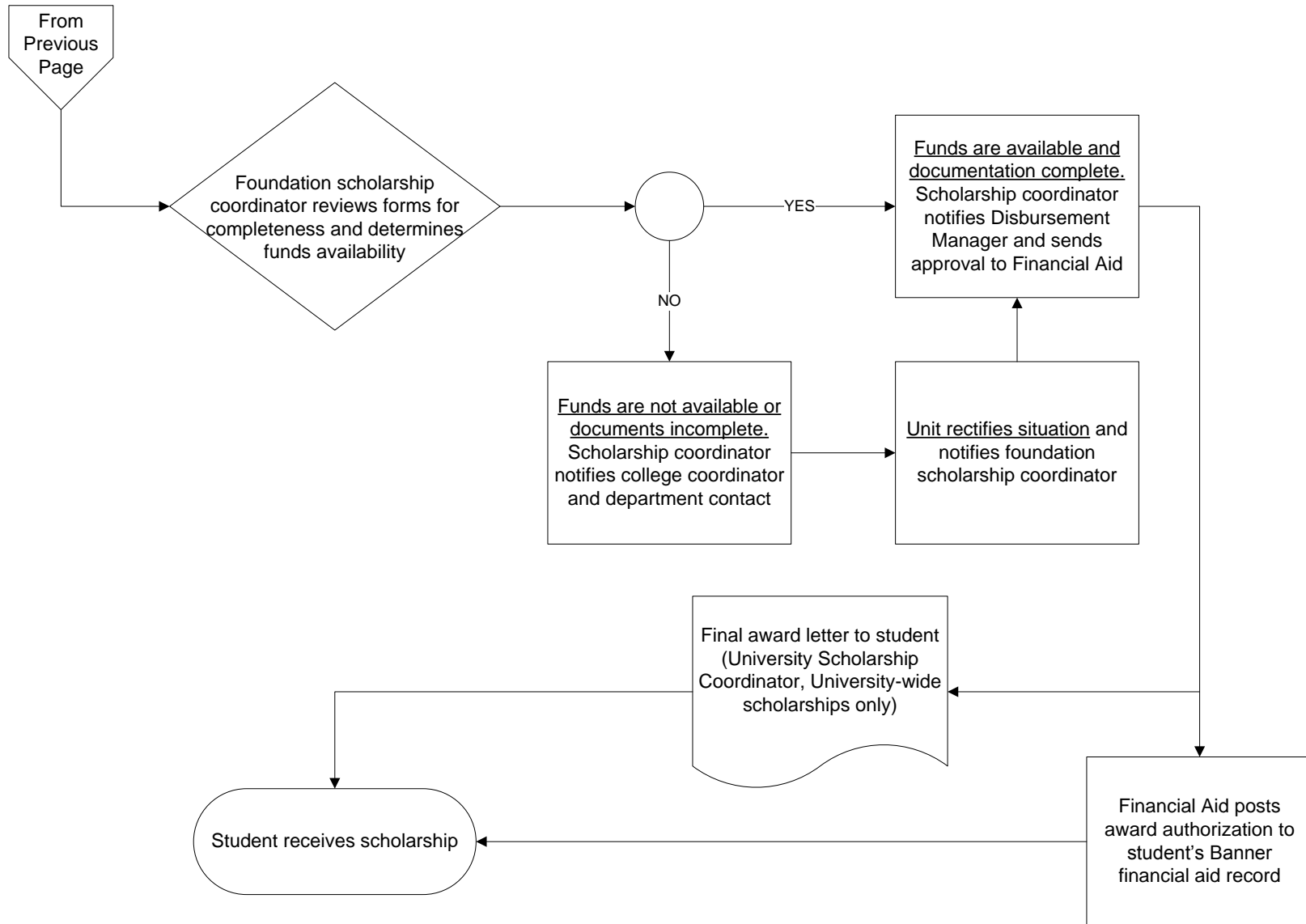
## **Foundation Scholarship Coordinator (Michele Miller)**

- Reports to Controller, GSU Foundation
- Serves as the administrative contact for all information regarding Foundation Scholarships
- Troubleshoots problems and works with department contact persons, scholarship coordinators, and foundation disbursements and financial aid representatives to resolve issues
- Verifies information on scholarship disbursements requests and enters requests into FE
- Determines availability of funds
- Submits scholarship requests to foundation disbursement manager for approval in Financial Edge
- Sends foundation scholarship approval to financial aid
- Forwards foundation scholarship payment documentation to revenues and receivables
- Coordinates with disbursement manager and revenue and receivables to reconcile foundation scholarship payments to the university
- Prepares templates for available scholarship reports in Financial Edge
- Develops new scholarship reports, as required
- Updates and revises foundation scholarship forms, as necessary
- Adds new scholarships to the university scholarship website
- Works with colleges/departments and creates online scholarship applications when requested
- Revises all scholarship information and updates scholarship custom information for online application processing when activation requested by colleges/departments
- Monitors award activity and prompts department contact persons and coordinators as appropriate.
- Reviews and updates scholarship purpose, attributes, and other information, in Financial Edge
- Provides training and orientation to coordinators and department contact persons for financial edge, online scholarship application processing and scholarship website
- Maintains roster of coordinators and department contact persons

# Scholarship Workflow Chart



# Scholarship Workflow Chart



# Scholarship Award Schedule

The following is a recommended schedule for awards that begin with the Fall semester. Foundation scholarships are processed on a rolling basis. The Office of Student Financial Aid recommends the preferred schedule as most student-centric as it provides students early notice of their total financial aid award, giving optimum amount of time to plan their finances.

## Recruitment & Retention Scholarships

Step	Recruitment	Retention
<b>Foundation accounting posts spending allocations to FE.</b>	Last Day of February	Last Day of February
<u>College coordinators/dept. contact persons</u> submit scholarship candidates' information to <u>Financial Aid</u> to verify aid eligibility.	eScholarship will award automatically each week from mid December – April. Financial Aid will run reports to check for overawards	April 1
Financial Aid completes eligibility review and advises <u>college coordinators/dept. contact persons</u> .	Ongoing checks as FAFSA information & external scholarships are received throughout spring & summer	April 15
Deadline for submitting <u>scholarship/award/fellowship forms to foundation scholarship coordinator</u> .	Fall fee payment deadline date	Processed on a rolling basis (Preferred June 1)
<u>Foundation scholarship coordinator</u> enters scholarship awards into FE, verifies availability of funding and advises <u>Financial Aid</u> .	Funding verification December for MOE funded scholarships, March 1 for Scholarship Day awards, Award Entry September 1	Within 4 business days of receiving complete Scholarship Request Package
<u>Financial Aid</u> posts award authorizations to Banner financial aid record.	eScholarship will post automatically every week along with requirement holds that will release with online submission of Foundation forms	Within 5 business days of receiving foundation approval
<u>Final Award letter to student</u> by department.	Final award letters sent after Scholarship Day	After Financial Aid Verification
<u>Scholarship posted to student accounts</u>	The last day of the drop/add period	The last day of the drop/add period



## Private Scholarships and Federal Financial Aid

Federal financial aid regulations require institutions to take into account all known or anticipated resources available to students when making federal financial aid determinations. Resources include private scholarships such as those awarded by Georgia State University Foundation. [This also includes what is generally referred to as “prizes”, or any recognition based on competition or other criteria. These should be processed like any other scholarship or award.] Students who receive federal financial aid are limited in total financial aid to an amount usually equal to the “estimated cost of attendance.” While scholarships do not change a student’s Pell Grant eligibility, they may impact the other types of federal financial aid. When total aid causes a student to exceed his or her federal limit, the student may be charged with an “overaward.”

Institutions are responsible for preventing federal financial aid overawards. An overaward must be resolved before a student can receive federal financial aid in the future. Submitting scholarship information to the Office of Student Financial Aid after financial aid is disbursed may cause overpayments for the students and may make financial aid adjustments necessary. To avoid overawards, the best practice is to inform the Office of Student Financial Aid before the student accepts the award and aid is disbursed.

## Other Payments to Students

The procedure for awarding scholarships to students who have graduated or will have graduated prior to the completion of the scholarship request process remains the same as long as the student was eligible and enrolled during the semester for which the request is made, going back no more than one year from the current term. The Office of Student Financial Aid will confirm eligibility and notify Student Accounts to credit the student’s account if an unpaid balance remains or mail the student a check for any refund.

If an award from an external source is received for a student, the same procedure as above will apply. If a check is made payable to both Georgia State University and the student, the Cashier’s Office will notify the student and make arrangements for the student to endorse the check. The student’s account will be credited with any unpaid balance, and if applicable, a refund check will be mailed to the student.

## Emergency Loans

Emergency loans are interest-free, short-term loans available to currently enrolled full-time students, and are subject to availability of funds. The purpose of the loan is to finance emergency expenses for which resources are temporarily unavailable. These include expenses such as food, rent, and childcare. Emergency loans cannot be approved to pay tuition, since this is a planned expense. Students must complete a Foundation Application for Student Emergency Loan and sign a Promissory Note. All GSU departments must submit the Application, Promissory Note and Disbursement Request to the Foundation for payment as well as monitor the repayment of the loan as set forth in the Emergency Loan Information Sheet. Departments must also award emergency loans in accordance with the specific guidelines for each Project ID as set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding on file, if one exists. Generally, your department fund allows for emergency loan use. (see Exhibit G for Emergency Loan Workflow and Forms). Loans unpaid six months from issue will post as an expense to the project used to create the loan receivable.

## Information Available on the **GSU Foundation Website**

<http://giving.gsu.edu> > About Us > Foundation Forms > Scholarship Documents or Student  
Emergency Loan Documents

### Scholarship Documents Library

- Scholarship Workflow Manual
- Notice of intent to award scholarship/award/fellowship form (Exhibit A)
- Scholarship/award/fellowship disbursement request form (Exhibit B)
- Scholarship/award/fellowship acceptance form (Exhibit C)
- Sample preliminary award letter (Exhibit D)
- Sample final award letter (Exhibit E)
- Generic GSU Foundation scholarship application (Exhibit F)

### Emergency Loan Documents Library

- Emergency Loan Process and Workflow
- Emergency Loan Application Instructions
- Application for Emergency Loan
- Emergency Loan Promissory Note – GSU Departments
- Emergency Loan Promissory Note – H. Reid Hunter (Financial Aid)

## Information Available on the **GSU Scholarship Website**

<http://sfs.gsu.edu/scholarships-grants/>

- Scholarship Eligibility
- Application Process
- Award Process
- Georgia State University Scholarships
- Other Scholarship Opportunities
- Contact Information

### Links

- Office of Student Financial Aid  
<http://sfs.gsu.edu/the-financial-aid-process/>
- Tax Analysis for Foreign Nationals  
<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfas/FinancialOperation/ForeignNationalTaxAnalysisandPayments.pdf>

## Financial Edge Tools

### Scholarship spending status report

(SCHOLARSHIP REPORT - Spending SR...)

This report gives you the current spending balance for each scholarship (see 01 Balance under Spendable Funds). It also shows inflows and outflows for the fiscal year for each scholarship's spending account (fund 01) and principal account (fund 02) as well as the prior year spending allocation.

The report includes both endowed and unendowed scholarship funds. Only endowed scholarship funds will have activity in the principal account. Inactive projects are not included. The report is legal size and takes about six minutes to generate. The reports are located in FE at Reports > Financial Statements > Custom Management Report. Note: some scholarships carry large spending balances from year to year and departments should review and develop a plan for spending down the balances.

To check the accuracy of the report, go to Records > Projects > Enter a project number > click on Activity > check FY at the top > go to bottom of the screen and double click assets > assets for 01 and 02 should match your report. If totals do not match, please call Michele Miller for assistance.

Sample: Scholarship Spending Status Report: See Exhibit H

### Scholarship purposes and attributes queries

(SCHOLARSHIPS – Purposes and attributes...)

These queries give non-financial information on scholarships such as purpose statements, whether endowed or unendowed and department name. Only active projects are listed. These are project queries. The queries are located in FE at Query > General. The queries can be exported to spreadsheets and formatted as you please. Some projects will be listed twice because their record contains more than one "Note."

The Foundation is working to improve the quality of the information in FE and requests that departments review this information and send updated information to Michele Miller if errors or omissions exist.

## Information for Foreign Nationals

To avoid delay in processing scholarship payments, foreign nationals should provide tax analysis information to the tax accountant in the Office of Disbursements/University Financial Operations prior to the awarding of a scholarship.

Departments are required to acknowledge that they have confirmed a student's residence status by checking Screen SPAIDEN in the Banner System before submitting the foundation scholarship/ award/ fellowship request to the GSU Foundation.

Tax analysis information can be submitted online using the Glacier tax navigation system. To request access to Glacier and for other questions, please contact:

Ivan Ivanov  
Tax Accountant  
Office of Disbursements  
University Financial Operations  
Room 400A Sparks Hall  
(404) 413-3056  
[iivanov1@gsu.edu](mailto:iivanov1@gsu.edu)

You can also access  
The Foreign National Tax Analysis and Payments booklet  
At  
<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfas/FinancialOperation/ForeignNationalTaxAnalysisandPayments.pdf>

## **Guidelines for Scholarship Funds Review by College/Area**

Each college scholarship coordinator or department contact should review their respective scholarship information on the university scholarship website and in Financial Edge. Items to be addressed are:

1. Does the scholarship have an accurate purpose description listed in the web site database?
2. Does the scholarship have an accurate purpose description listed in Financial Edge?
3. Are the purpose descriptions on the web site and in Financial Edge substantially the same?
4. Are the following attributes correct?
  - a. Active/Inactive
  - b. College description
  - c. Department description
  - d. Is there a current, signed MOU, endowment agreement/description or similar document?
5. Other issues as may be identified.

### Follow up:

College scholarship coordinators or department contacts should request any updates or changes to the website or financial edge by contacting the Foundation Scholarship Coordinator. The Foundation Scholarship Coordinator will add all new scholarships to the scholarship website, Financial Edge, and will meet with college scholarship coordinators and department contacts annually to discuss outstanding issues.

# The 411 on GSU Foundation Endowments

## How large is the foundation's endowment?

On June 30, 2016, the value of the total endowment pool was about \$135 million. The foundation's endowment consists of approximately 300 individual funds established for a variety of purposes including both donor-restricted endowment funds and funds designated by the board of trustees to function as endowments.

## How are endowment funds accounted for?

Each endowment fund is a **project** in Financial Edge, the software application that the foundation uses for financial accounting and reporting. The value of the project is split between two funds: the operating fund (fund 01) and the principal fund (fund 02). The principal fund is invested in the endowment investment pool and receives market allocations monthly (see below). Market allocations are not posted to individual operating fund accounts.

## How can I gain access to Financial Edge?

Access to Financial Edge is granted to appropriate staff that has been authorized by an administrator such as a dean. Contact Tracy Van Voris, training coordinator, Development Information Services, at 3-3444 or [tvanvori@gsu.edu](mailto:tvanvori@gsu.edu).

## What information is available on Financial Edge?

Information includes:

- Financial data from the current and prior fiscal years
- A copy of the endowment agreement and other documentation
- Purpose statements
- Coding (active/inactive, college, department, fund/investment type, status)
- Custom and off-the-shelf reports
- The capability of building your own queries and reports.

## Whom do I contact if I have a question about information in Financial Edge?

General & Scholarship Questions – Michele Miller, scholarship coordinator, GSU Foundation, 3-3431, [mmiller64@gsu.edu](mailto:mmiller64@gsu.edu)

Access – Tracy Van Voris, training coordinator, GSU Foundation, 3-3444, [tvanvori@gsu.edu](mailto:tvanvori@gsu.edu)

## What is a market adjustment?

The foundation takes a total return approach to allocating income and profit/loss from endowment investments to individual endowment funds. The total return of the endowment investment pool including appreciation/inflation, depreciation/deflation, income, expenses and fees is allocated to each endowment based on the ratio of that endowment's investment balance to the total endowment pool and included as part of the individual endowment's principal account. Market adjustments are posted monthly to Financial Edge.

## How are spending allocations determined?

Spending allocations are made annually based on the spending rule in the foundation's investment policy. The spending allocation is a transfer from an endowment's principal account to its operating account. The spending rule is applied to the principal balance on December 31 and posted to Financial Edge on the last day of February annually. The total endowment spending allocation distributed for fiscal year 2016 was \$5,403,260.

To achieve both reasonable stability in budgeting and a reasonable balance between near-term and distant programmatic priorities, the board of trustees has adopted the following spending rule:

The allocation for spending in any given fiscal year equals:

- 70% of spending for the prior year, adjusted for cumulative changes in inflation (as measured by CPI), *plus*
- 30% of foundation's long-term spending rate (currently 4.5%) applied to the endowment's market value at the beginning of the year.

The spending allocation rate for fiscal year 2016 was 4.19 percent.

### **What happens to an endowment's unspent operating fund balance?**

The unspent balance remains available for future spending. An unspent operating balance does not, however, receive earnings. The administrative authority responsible for spending the operating balance – a dean, for example – can request that unspent operating funds be transferred back to the principal account. This is usually done to increase the principal account and generate more earnings for the endowment.

## **Scholarship Workflow Task Force 2008-2009**

**Joyce Barnhill**, disbursements accountant, GSU Foundation

**David Brown**, associate vice president for development,  
Development Resources

**Marion Campbell**, director, Office of Gifts and Records Management

**Arlene Charles**, controller, GSU Foundation

**Greg Chisholm**, administrative coordinator, senior, Honors Program

**Darrell Daniels**, director, Development Information Systems

**La-Tonya Harrell**, operations manager, Office of Student Financial Aid

**Felicia Kornegay**, assistant director, Office of Donor Relations

**Crystal Moore**, financial aid counselor, Office of Student Financial Aid

**Tracye Moore**, scholarship coordinator,  
Office of Donor Relations/Office of Student Retention

**Molly Shepherd**, development coordinator, Development Resources