

## **Texas FFA Scholarship Program FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- Q. What is the Texas FFA scholarship application deadline?
- A. The deadline to submit application varies in each area. Potential applicants should consult their local agricultural science instructor to learn due dates for their respective area.
- Q. Can I apply for a specific scholarship?
- A. No. Applicants apply for a Texas FFA scholarship. Applicants are scored and ranked through a process of scholarship checks. Scholarships are allocated based on rank in the field of finalists and donor criteria.
- Q. Are all applications considered?
- A. Yes. All applicants who meet the minimum qualifications are considered. Applications are first evaluated and scored at the area level using the same scoring criteria applied in the state selection process. Each area is allowed a specified number of state qualifiers. If your application is a state qualifier, it goes in to a pool of about 250 applications at the state level. From this pool, about 135 state finalists are selected.
- Q. If I graduate at midterm, can I still apply?
- A. Yes. However, if you attend college in the spring, the scholarship cannot retroactively cover expenses incurred during that semester. The scholarship will start the fall semester.
- Q. If I am a state qualifier, am I guaranteed a scholarship?
- A. No. About 250 state qualifiers are forwarded by the areas. From this, 135 finalists will be selected. If you are selected as a finalist, your odds of receiving a scholarship are very high, but this is not a guarantee. You must still meet donor criteria.
- Q. If my parents file an IRS tax return extension, can I still file financial data in the FAFSA process?
- A. Yes. FAFSA allows the use of financial documentation other than a tax return.
- Q. Which year do I use for financial data in the FAFSA process?
- A. Texas FFA will accept a report from the current application year or the previous year. The application automatically changes as of January 1. For example, if you are applying for a 2013 scholarship and file with FAFSA in December, 2012, the application will use 2011 data. As of January 1, the system will require 2012 data. Texas FFA will accept either year, but you will need to update it using the most current data for the financial aid or scholarship process for your respective college or university.
- Q. How does the interview process work?
- A. Candidates are scored, ranked and placed into interview pools. An approved list of interview questions is available on the Texas FFA website. Candidates will provide a 90 second introduction and then randomly draw a pre-determined number of questions to answer for the committee.
- Q. If I am not named as a finalist, is it still possible for me to receive a scholarship?
- A. Yes, depending on where you finish in the application assessment rankings. If a finalist withdraws, the next candidate on the list will be moved into the interview pool. If a candidate does not meet donor criteria for the scholarship for which they qualify based on score, alternates will be moved into the pool.
- Q. What if I cannot attend the state FFA convention?
- A. Attending state convention is a condition for receiving a Texas FFA scholarship. If there are extenuating circumstances which prevent you from attending, these must be explained in writing to the State FFA Executive Director prior to the convention. All circumstances will be reviewed and verified and a decision shall be rendered in writing. Exceptions to the attendance rule are extremely rare. Failing to attend is considered a breach of the scholarship agreement and is grounds for revoking a scholarship.
- Q. Following scoring at the state level, are the application scores posted?
- A. No. Only the applicants rank is posted. However, teachers may request their students' score. Texas FFA will also provide the teachers with scoring averages for the overall candidate pool.

## Texas FFA College Scholarship Eligibility and Requirements

1. To be eligible to apply for a Texas FFA College Scholarship, an applicant must:
  - a. be an active member of the Texas FFA Association for the current year **and** at least two of the three previous years, be listed on the state FFA roster, and be in good standing with the Texas FFA Association and all Texas FFA college scholarship sponsors. (Reference membership eligibility policy, Section 1.3(a)(b) Texas FFA Association Policy Handbook.)
  - b. be a U.S. citizen. If the applicant's transcript reflects a place of birth other than the United States, proof of naturalization must be shown to a high school records official (principal, counselor, registrar, etc.) or the agricultural science teacher, who will then verify it as part of the application.
  - c. not apply for FFA, 4-H, AND Texas FCCLA scholarships.
  - d. declare intent to attend a Texas college or university in the fall semester of the application year.
  - e. be a current year graduating senior.
  - f. upon graduation, have completed at least three (3) academic calendar years and at least five (5) different semesters of instruction in agriculture, food and natural resources during grades 9 through 12. (Eighth grade students receiving high school credit for a AFNR course are considered ninth graders for the purpose of this policy). Course credits received through Credit By Examination shall not count towards satisfying the five (5) different semesters of instruction. All agriscience and agribusiness courses taken in one semester shall be counted as one semester of instruction.
  - g. score at least one thousand three hundred and fifty (1350) on the SAT or at least nineteen (19) on the ACT.
  - h. be in the upper one-half of his/her class, based on scholastic rank, for the first three and one-half (3.5) years of high school for all scholarships, except the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and Wallrath Educational Organization Scholarships, which require that the student be in the upper one-fourth.
  - i. be present in Official FFA Dress (according to the *Official FFA Manual*) at all scholarship interviews (district, area, and state).
  - j. submit the most current Texas FFA Scholarship Application.
  - k. not receive more than \$75,000 total from financial aid or any other scholarships if selected to receive any Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Scholarship and remain eligible to receive the HLSR Show scholarship. Applicants must list all financial aid and scholarships for which they have applied and the status of those awards as part of the application. If selected as a finalist for a HLSR scholarship, the applicant will be notified and must verify all other financial aid and scholarships received. Other financial aid or scholarships received will be verified by submission of award letters from individual donors and financial aid offices of the college/university the recipient will attend. Funds will not be disbursed without such verification.
  - l. Pursuant to HLSR policy, a student who has already received a \$18,000 HLSR scholarship from ANY HLSR scholarship program will not be eligible for the HLSR four year scholarship through the Texas FFA scholarship selection process
2. The Texas FFA College Scholarship Application must:
  - a. have all applicable pages completed
  - b. contain no supplemental pages that are not requested.
  - c. be accompanied by the student's official transcript for the first three and one-half (3.5) years, which is signed by a school records official (principal, counselor, registrar, etc.) and certified with a school seal. If a transcript reflects weighted grades, the unweighted grade must be recorded on school letterhead by the counselor or records manager and certified by the school with an official seal. Weighted grades CANNOT be used in the scholarship selection process. The academic achievement record must include a photocopy of the college entrance exam's Official Report of Scores Label indicating the student's SAT and/or ACT scores. If more than one page is submitted, each page of the academic achievement record must display a school seal.
  - d. be accompanied by the student's official Student Aid Report generated by FAFSA
  - e. be submitted in an Official FFA Award Folder.
3. All scholarship recipients **MUST BE PRESENT** in Official FFA Dress (according to the *Official FFA Manual*) at the State FFA Convention scholarship sponsors' dinner and the awards ceremony in order to receive an FFA scholarship. **Any exceptions must be approved by the Texas FFA Association. Petitions for exceptions resulting from extenuating circumstances must be filed with the Texas FFA Executive Director no later than July 1. Texas FFA reserves the right to verify identity of interviewees and recipients.**

## Texas FFA College Scholarship Process Information

The purpose of the Texas FFA College Scholarship Program is to provide financial assistance to the most capable and deserving FFA members from each area of our state wishing to pursue a bachelor's degree from a Texas college or university in preparation for a successful career. The scholarship applicants should pursue a degree plan that meets the criteria of their scholarship award. Exceptions will be considered on an individual basis contingent upon the approval from the donor of a specific scholarship and/or the availability of a recognized agricultural or life science transfer program from the applicant's chosen institution.

The Texas FFA College Scholarships are funded by several organizations, persons, and/or firms that share a strong commitment to agriculture and life sciences and a strong belief in the members of the Texas FFA. They want to see their scholarship recipients succeed in earning a college degree. Therefore, the selection of candidates is done on a competitive basis. Criteria used in selecting scholarship recipients will include: (1) scholarship or academic achievement, (2) SAT or ACT scores, (3) agriculture, food and natural resources instruction, (4) FFA achievement, including the supervised agricultural experience program, (5) financial need, (6) performance during interviews in regards to academics, FFA achievement, and financial need, and (7) donor restrictions.

Each area conducts an elimination process. Each area is allowed to submit a number of applications for an interview at the State Advanced Degree, Award, and Scholarship Committee Meetings, as specified by the Texas FFA Board of Directors. Interviews will be conducted by the State FFA Scholarship Selection Committee, which consists of an equal number of agricultural science teachers from each area and up to five (5) representatives of the agricultural industry. Individuals who have a vested interest as a teacher or parent in the outcome of an area or state selection process may not serve on area or state scoring committees. Upon evaluating the applicants, the committee members will score the applicants. Scores will be compiled dropping the high and low scores which constitutes 20% of the scores. Rankings will be determined by the highest total scores. The value of the scholarship received will be determined by the final ranking, with the highest ranking applicant(s) receiving the highest dollar value scholarship(s), and remaining applicants receiving scholarships of descending value based on descending rank and donor criteria. The committee shall not discriminate against candidates declaring non-agricultural majors but such candidates may be eliminated by donor criteria should they not qualify for a non-major specific scholarship. Applicants not invited from each area will be considered alternates but will not be interviewed. Scholarship candidates who do not qualify for a scholarship by virtue of declared major shall be replaced by the highest ranking eligible alternate. Interview times are assigned randomly and each applicant will be notified of his/her time prior to the State Advanced Degree, Award, and Scholarship Committee Meetings. It is possible that all applicants selected for an interview will not receive a scholarship.

Funds will be sent to the financial aid officer of the recipient's chosen college or university at the rate specified. The funds are to reimburse the college or university for the student's tuition and/or fees in the amount not to exceed the total specified sum. The unexpended balance of the scholarship may be used to defray other legitimate expenses incidental to college attendance.

It is mandatory that the scholarship recipient attend college the fall semester immediately following selection. Only with special permission from the donor and the State FFA Executive Director, may the use of the scholarship be deferred one year. The scholarship recipient must attend the scholarship sponsors' dinner and the awards ceremony at the next state FFA convention.

## **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

### **APPROVED MAJOR FIELDS OF STUDY FOR AGRICULTURAL OR LIFE SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIPS (NOT APPLICABLE TO HLSR, SALE, WALLRATH OR STFR SCHOLARSHIPS)**

#### Plant and Soil Sciences

Agronomy  
Botany  
Clothing and Textiles  
Crop Science  
Floriculture  
Horticulture  
Plant Science  
Soil Science

#### Core/Basic Sciences

Biochemistry  
Biology  
Biomedical Science  
Cell and Molecular Biology  
Biotechnology  
Genetics  
Microbiology  
Pharmacology/Pharmacy  
Chemistry  
Ecology

#### Natural and Environmental Sciences

Aquaculture  
Atmospheric Science/Meteorology  
Bioenvironmental Science  
Ecological Restoration  
Entomology/Integrated Pest Management  
Environmental Conservation/Natural Resources  
Mgmt  
Fisheries  
Forestry  
Integrated Pest Management  
Mariculture  
Marine Biology  
Range Science  
Renewable Natural Resources  
Soil and Water Conservation  
Wildlife Science

#### Human and Animal Science

Animal Science  
Dairy Science  
Equine Science  
Food and Nutrition  
Food Science/Technology  
Food Engineering  
Nutrition/Scientific Nutrition  
Poultry Science  
Preveterinary Medicine  
Veterinary Science  
Zoology

#### Support Curricula to Agricultural/Life Sciences

Agricultural Development/Interdisciplinary  
Agriculture  
Agricultural Economics/Agricultural Business  
Agricultural Education  
Agricultural Leadership and Development  
Agricultural Engineering/Mechanized Agriculture  
Agricultural Journalism/Communications  
Agricultural Research  
Agricultural Science  
Agricultural Services and Development  
Agricultural Systems Management  
Agriculture and Applied Economics  
Bioengineering

Biomedical Engineering  
Chemical Engineering  
General Agriculture  
Interdisciplinary Agriculture  
International Agriculture Commerce  
Land Use and Planning  
Landscape Architecture  
Production Agriculture  
Rangeland Ecology and Management  
Recreation and Parks