

**RULES GOVERNING THE STUDENT UNDERGRADUATE  
RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

---

In compliance with Act 413 and 870 of 2023, the rules for the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship are presented to the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) for initial approval.

The following resolution is offered for the Board's consideration:

**RESOLVED**, That the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board reviews the rules presented in this agenda item for the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship to be administered by the Arkansas Division of Higher Education.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Commissioner of the Arkansas Division of Higher Education or his designee is authorized to make technical changes and corrections, when necessary, in the program rules for the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship rules be approved for public comment release.

# ~~STUDENT UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP~~

---

## ~~RULE 1 – ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE~~

---

- ~~I. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) shall administer the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) within the policies set by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board. All formal communications shall be addressed to or signed by the Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education or his/her designee. The Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Selection Panel shall select recipients for awards.~~
- ~~II. The Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Selection Panel shall consist of:
  - ~~A. Faculty or administrators at an Arkansas public or private institution of higher education who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline to be reviewed.~~
  - ~~B. Other panel members will be considered who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline to be reviewed and who have an affiliation with an Arkansas public or private institution of higher education or an education-related entity.~~
  - ~~C. The Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education or his/her designee shall serve as presiding officer of the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Selection Panel and shall ensure that staff services for the Panel are provided.~~~~
- ~~III. The focus of the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship is the continued development of undergraduate academic research efforts at Arkansas's public and private institutions of higher education and to provide funding to encourage students to conduct in-depth research projects in specific fields of study under the tutelage of tenured or full-time faculty member. The program is designed to assist all students throughout the state.~~
- ~~IV. The Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education has the final responsibility for selecting fellowship recipients pursuant to the provisions of Act 2124 of 2005 and subsequent legislation, and program rules and regulations.~~
- ~~V. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall follow the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act when functioning under Act 2124 of 2005 and subsequent legislation.~~

~~RULE 2 – FELLOWSHIP ELIGIBILITY  
CRITERIA~~

---

~~I. Eligibility Criteria~~

~~An applicant must meet the following requirements to be eligible to receive the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship:~~

- ~~A. The applicant must be a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien.~~
- ~~B. The applicant shall be enrolled in an approved Arkansas institution of higher education as a full-time student, as defined by the Department of Higher Education.~~
- ~~C. The applicant must be enrolled in a program of study that leads to or is creditable towards a baccalaureate degree. These programs include baccalaureate and associate degree programs.~~
- ~~D. The applicant must have completed at least 30 semester credit hours before funds are awarded.~~
- ~~E. The applicant must have a minimum cumulative 3.25 grade point average.~~
- ~~F. The applicant must have a tenured or full-time faculty member to serve as his/her mentor.~~

~~II. Continued Eligibility~~

~~A student may compete for additional years, but cannot receive more than three years of funding.~~

---

~~RULE 3 – APPLICATION PROCESS~~

---

~~I. Solicitation of Applicants~~

~~The Arkansas Department of Higher Education will disseminate the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship announcement through workshops, meetings, press releases, ADHE newsletter, ADHE website and other means deemed appropriate.~~

~~Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship announcements will be emailed to:~~

A. ~~Presidents and Chancellors~~

B. ~~Chief Academic Officers~~

~~C. Directors of Research and Sponsored Programs~~

~~D. Previous SURF panel members and mentors~~

~~E. Faculty, administrators, and other interested persons~~

## ~~II. Application~~

~~Students must submit an application for the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education will provide an application on the Department's website. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education will also provide application forms to any individual upon request. The applicant must complete the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship application to be considered for the fellowship.~~

## ~~III. Submission of Application and Application Deadline~~

~~Any interested student who has met the eligibility criteria listed in Rule 2 may apply.~~

~~The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall establish the deadline for receipt of applications each year. The deadline date shall be clearly printed on the application and website.~~

~~All applications and supporting documentation must be postmarked by the established deadline date in order to be considered. It is the responsibility of the individual applicant to ensure that the application is postmarked by the deadline date.~~

~~\*If any deadline date occurs on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will be extended to the following business day.~~

## ~~IV. Application Review Process~~

~~A. The SURF Panel will read and score applications.~~

~~B. SURF Panel members meet at ADHE or another centrally located location to make recommendations for SURF awards based upon the selection criteria listed in Rule 4. The SURF Panel is divided into two groups (STEM and non-STEM). Based upon appropriations, the STEM SURF Panel will award 60% of the funds to STEM applicants; the non-STEM SURF Panel will award 40% of the funds to non-STEM applicants. Should there not be enough qualified applicants in the STEM or Non-STEM group to make recommendations for awards, funds can be shifted from one group to another until all funds are exhausted.~~

V. ~~Amount of Fellowship~~

~~The amount of the fellowship awarded to each recipient shall be as follows:~~

~~\$1,250 maximum award Student Stipend\*~~

~~\$ 750 maximum award Student Travel~~

~~\$ 750 maximum award Mentor Award~~

~~\$1,250 maximum award Institution Match~~

~~**\$4,000** Maximum SURF Award~~

~~\*Student stipend Spring only \$ 625 maximum award~~

~~Spring & Summer \$1,250 maximum award~~

~~Spring & Fall \$1,250 maximum award~~

~~Spring, Summer & Fall \$1,250 maximum award~~

VI. ~~Award Notification~~

~~The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall notify each eligible applicant of his/her award. The award notice includes the student's name, address, faculty mentor's name, institution, and the actual amount the student is eligible to receive. The award notice also explains the Arkansas Department of Higher Education's disbursement procedures and conditions, as detailed in Rule 5.~~

~~ADHE shall notify the Presidents/Chancellors, Chief Academic Officers, Offices of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the SURF Panel of SURF awardees.~~

VII. ~~Ineligible Notification~~

~~The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall notify applicants who are determined to be ineligible and provide the reason for ineligibility.~~

VIII. ~~No Funds Left Notification~~

~~Once all applicants have accepted his/her SURF award and all funds are exhausted, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall notify the remaining eligible applicants that all funds have been awarded via a "no award" notice.~~

## RULE 4 – FELLOWSHIP SELECTION CRITERIA

---

I. ~~All proposals will be reviewed by the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Panel that is selected by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. The SURF Panel will use the following selection criteria for judging proposals.~~

<b>Grading Criteria</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>
<del>Student's performance and accomplishments (G.P.A., activities, community service, etc.).</del>	<b>10</b>	
<del>Appropriateness of courses completed for proposed research.</del>	<b>10</b>	
<del>Mentor's letter of support.</del>	<b>10</b>	
<del>Two letters of reference.</del>	<b>10</b>	
<del>Mentor has prior experience supervising students in the discipline. (New faculty should be considered, as well as faculty recently beginning involvement in research.)</del>	<b>10</b>	
<del>Appropriateness of proposed mentor's previous experience for the proposed project.</del>	<b>10</b>	
<del>Research/scholarly activity/productivity by the mentor.</del>	<b>10</b>	
<del>The proposed research project. *</del>	<b>30</b>	
<b>TOTAL POINTS AWARDED</b>	<b>100</b>	

\*Criteria for the awarding of points vary with the area of the endeavor. Criteria may include:

- ~~✓ Feasibility of the project, i.e., is the project reasonable for the proposed student with the available facilities?~~
- ~~✓ Is the proposed research/scholarly activity of value to the field of study?~~
- ~~✓ Is the project of sufficient difficulty to challenge the student?~~
- ~~✓ Will the project teach the student skills that are transferable to other research endeavors/ scholarly activities?~~
- ~~✓ Other criteria deemed appropriate by SURF Panel.~~
- ~~✓ Is there some justifiable reason to give this proposal consideration because the candidate is from a group under-represented in the area of endeavor such as women and minorities in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM)?~~

~~The SURF Panel shall meet and make recommendation of students to be awarded a SURF fellowship based upon the above selection criteria. Recommendation of awards shall be made until all funds are exhausted. The SURF Panel shall also select alternates to be awarded in the event a student does not accept his/her SURF award.~~

~~The Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education has the final responsibility for selecting fellowship recipients.~~

---

---

## ~~RULE 5 – FELLOWSHIP PAYMENT POLICIES~~

---

---

### ~~I. Limits of Payment~~

#### ~~A. Disbursement of Fellowships~~

~~The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall disburse fellowship funds to the institution designated on the student's application. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall send funds to the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) or Financial Aid Office via electronic funds transfer or state warrant. Additionally, the ORSP or Financial Aid will be sent an Award Roster and Receipt Confirmation. The Award Roster lists the students to be awarded and the disbursement amounts. The Receipt Confirmation should be signed by the disbursement officer and returned to ADHE. The institution will disburse the grant funds to the student according to the institution's disbursement procedures.~~

#### ~~B. Cancellation of the Fellowship~~

##### ~~1. The award will be terminated for any of the following reasons:~~

- ~~a. Failure to maintain at least a 3.25 cumulative grade point average on a 4.00 scale.~~
- ~~b. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the institution.~~
- ~~c. Failure to conduct the research for which the SURF fellowship was awarded.~~

##### ~~2. The recipient is responsible for notifying, in writing, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education of any change in status (i.e. change of address, email, transfer of research to another mentor, etc.). Failure to provide written notification may result in the cancellation of the fellowship for that term.~~

#### ~~C. Military Service~~



~~Recipients who are members of the Arkansas National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve units who are called to active duty for reasons other than regular unit training and are unable to complete the current term will be allowed to repeat the missed term. In addition, they will be placed in deferred status until six months after release from active duty, at which time they must be re-enrolled and continue research with the same mentor.~~

#### ~~D. Refunds~~

~~The Arkansas Department of Higher Education is entitled to a refund of the fellowship amount, for that semester, if the recipient of a fellowship withdraws, drops out, is expelled, falls below the minimum standards detailed in Rule 2, or does not conduct the research for which the SURF award was made.~~

---

### ~~RULE 6 – INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES~~

---

#### ~~I. College/University Responsibilities~~

##### ~~A. Administrative Agreement~~

~~The chief executive officer of the eligible institution is responsible for designating one institutional representative to act as administrator of the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship and to receive all communications, forms, etc. This representative is responsible for verification, data and compliance with all program rules and regulations. The institution must comply with all rules and regulations in order to maintain continued eligibility status.~~

~~The Authorizing Institutional Official ensures that by signing the SURF application that the applicant has met all conditions of the Fellowship Eligibility Criteria in Rule 2.~~

##### ~~B. Disbursement Records~~

~~The institution shall maintain information on the student indicating disbursement of fellowship funds.~~

##### ~~C. Institutional Verification~~

~~The institution shall provide certification of full-time enrollment, as of the close of business on the eleventh day of classes. The institution must comply with OMB Circular A21 (Cost Principles for Educational Institutions) and OMB Circular A110 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non-Profit Organizations) when~~

~~managing SURF funds. Each institution shall establish a separate account for each student awarded a SURF fellowship.~~

~~Each Department\Division\Dean\Chair is responsible for ensuring that the student and mentor are conducting research as set forth in the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship proposal submitted to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.~~

#### ~~D. Deadlines for Disbursement of Funds & Refunds~~

~~Funds shall be disbursed to students and mentors in accordance with the institution's disbursement procedures according to OMB Circular A21 and OMB Circular A110. Any outstanding funds not disbursed by the end of the semester must be returned to ADHE within 15 days of the semester's end.~~

~~The Arkansas Department of Higher Education is entitled to a refund of the fellowship amount, for that semester, if the recipient of a fellowship withdraws, drops out, is expelled or does not conduct the research for which the SURF award was made. The Institutional Representative is responsible for issuing a refund to ADHE within 15 days of the semester's end.~~

#### ~~E. Due Diligence~~

~~The institution will exercise due diligence in providing complete, accurate, and timely information as requested by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education on any Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship recipient or former recipient. In addition, the institution will exercise due diligence in complying with all the rules and regulations of the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education shall periodically review the SURF program.~~

---

### ~~RULE 7 — FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES~~

---

- ~~I. It is the recipient's responsibility to notify the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, in writing, of any change in status (i.e. change of address, email, transfer of research to another mentor, etc.). Failure to provide written notification may result in the cancellation of the fellowship for that term.~~

~~Change in the research project is not allowed for the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship.~~

- ~~II. Fellowship recipient is required to submit a one page abstract on the findings of his/her research upon completion of the project to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education as follows:~~

~~May 1 — Spring term project completion~~  
~~August 1 — Summer term project completion~~  
~~December 1 — Fall term project completion~~

~~III. Fellowship recipients are required to present the findings of his/her research at a state or national conference in his/her discipline or attend a meeting of experts in his/her discipline as directed by his/her mentor.~~

~~Failure by a fellowship recipient to comply with any of the above may result in forfeiture of his/her SURF fellowship funds.~~

## RULE 8 – PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

---

The following definitions are used in the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program:

**APPROVED INSTITUTION** — a public-supported or private, non-profit postsecondary institution with its primary headquarters located in Arkansas that is eligible to receive Title IV Federal student aid funds.

**CITIZEN** — a person who is a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident alien. If the recipient is not a U.S. citizen, but a permanent resident alien, the recipient must attach a copy of the permanent resident alien card to the application.

**ELIGIBLE APPLICANT** — any applicant who meets the eligibility criteria established in Rule 2.

**FELLOWSHIP** — an amount of money given to a student for a specified period of time that allows them to study and research a subject.

**FULL-TIME STUDENT** — 12 semester credit hours or its equivalent per semester.

**INSTITUTIONAL MATCH** — amount of funds the institution must match the student's stipend.

**OMB Circular A110** — sets forth the uniform administrative requirements for grants and agreements with institutions of higher education, hospitals, and other non-profit organizations.

**OMB Circular A21** — sets forth the rules governing the eligibility and calculation of costs in support of sponsored research, development, training and other works produced in agreement with the United States Federal Government, but does not attempt to identify or dictate agency or institutional participation in those works.

**MENTOR** — tenured or full-time faculty member.

**MENTOR COST** — salary, fringe benefits, materials, supplies and travel costs awarded to the mentor associated with mentoring the student.

- SEMESTER** \_\_\_\_\_ Spring, Summer or Fall terms.
- STUDENT STIPEND** \_\_\_\_\_ an amount of money awarded to the student to conduct his/her research.
- STUDENT TRAVEL** \_\_\_\_\_ cost incurred by student to present the results of his/her research at a state or national conference or to attend a meeting of experts in his/her discipline.
- SURF PANEL** \_\_\_\_\_ shall consist of faculty or administrators of Arkansas public or private institution of higher education who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline to be reviewed. Other reviewers will be considered who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline to be reviewed and who have an affiliation with an Arkansas public or private institution of higher education or an education-related entity.

**DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING THE STUDENT UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP**

**Effective date: [insert date here]**

**1.00 PURPOSE**

- 1.01 The purpose of the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) Program is to support the continued development of undergraduate academic research efforts at state-supported colleges and universities.

**2.00 DEFINITIONS**

- 2.01 “Approved institution” means a public-supported or private, non-profit postsecondary institution with its primary headquarters located in Arkansas that is eligible to receive Title IV Federal student aid funds.
- 2.02 “Citizen” means a person who is a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident alien.
- 2.02.1 If the recipient is not a U.S. citizen, but a permanent resident alien, the recipient must attach a copy of the permanent resident alien card to the application.
- 2.03 “Eligible applicant” means any applicant who meets the eligibility criteria established in Section 4.00.
- 2.04 “Fellowship” means an amount of money given to a student for a specified period that allows them to study and research a subject.
- 2.05 “Full-time student” means a student enrolled in 12 semester credit hours or its

equivalent per semester.

2.06 “Institutional match” means the amount of funds institution must match for a student’s stipend.

2.07 “Mentor” means a tenured or full-time faculty member.

2.08 “Mentor cost” means any salary, fringe benefits, materials, supplies and travel costs awarded to the mentor associated with mentoring the student.

2.09 “Semester” means a spring, summer or fall term.

2.10 “Student stipend” means an amount of money awarded to the student to conduct his or her research.

2.11 “Student travel” means costs incurred by a student to present the results of his or her research at a state or national conference or to attend a meeting of experts in his or her discipline.

2.12 “SURF Selection Panel” means a panel of faculty or administrators of Arkansas public or private institution of higher education who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline being reviewed.

2.12.1 Other reviewers will be considered who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline to be reviewed and who have an affiliation with an Arkansas public or private institution of higher education or an education-related entity.

### **3.00 ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

3.01 The Division of Higher Education shall administer the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) within the policies set by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

3.01.1 All formal communications shall be addressed to or signed by the Commissioner of Higher Education or his or her designee.

3.01.2 The SURF Selection Panel shall select recipients for awards.

3.02 The SURF Selection Panel shall consist of:

3.02.1 Faculty or administrators at an Arkansas public or private institution of higher education who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline to be reviewed.

3.02.2 Other panel members will be considered who have earned a Ph.D. or terminal degree in the discipline to be reviewed and who have an affiliation with an Arkansas public or private institution of higher

education or an education- related entity.

3.02.3 The commissioner or his/her designee shall serve as presiding officer of the SURF Selection Panel.

3.03 The focus of the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship is the continued development of undergraduate academic research efforts at Arkansas's public and private institutions of higher education and to provide funding to encourage students to conduct in-depth research projects in specific fields of study under the tutelage of tenured or full-time faculty member. The program is designed to assist all students throughout the state.

3.04 The commissioner has the final responsibility for selecting fellowship recipients subject to the provisions of Arkansas Code 6-61-236 these rules.

#### **4.00 FELLOWSHIP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

4.01 An applicant must meet the following requirements to be eligible to receive the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship:

4.01.1 The applicant must be a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien.

4.01.2 The applicant shall be enrolled in an approved Arkansas institution of higher education as a full-time student, as defined by the Department of Higher Education ADHE.

4.01.3 The applicant must be enrolled in a program of study that leads to or is creditable towards a baccalaureate degree.

4.01.3.1 These programs include baccalaureate and associate degree programs.

4.01.4 The applicant must have completed at least 30 semester credit hours before funds are awarded.

4.01.5 The applicant must have a minimum cumulative 3.25 grade point average.

4.01.6 The applicant must have a tenured or full-time faculty member to serve as his or her mentor.

4.02 A student may compete for additional years, but cannot receive more than three academic years of funding.

#### **5.00 APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 5.01 The Division of Higher Education will disseminate the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship announcement through workshops, meetings, press releases, division newsletters, the division's website and by other appropriate methods.
- 5.02 Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship announcements will be emailed to:
- 5.02.1 Presidents and chancellors of institutions of higher education.
  - 5.02.2 Chief Academic Officers
  - 5.02.3 Directors of Research and Sponsored Programs
  - 5.02.4 Previous SURF panel members and mentors
  - 5.02.5 Faculty, administrators, and other interested persons
- 5.03 Students must submit an application for the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship to the division.
- 5.03.1 The division shall provide an application form on its website and to any individual upon request.
  - 5.03.2 The applicant must complete and submit the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship application to be considered for the fellowship.
- 5.04 Any interested student who meets the eligibility criteria in Section 4.00 may apply.
- 5.05 The division shall establish the deadline for receipt of applications each year.
- 5.05.1 The deadline date shall be clearly printed on the application and website.
  - 5.05.2 All applications and supporting documentation must be postmarked by the established deadline date in order to be considered.
    - 5.05.2.1 It is the responsibility of the individual applicant to ensure that the application is postmarked by the deadline date.
  - 5.05.3 If any deadline date occurs on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will be extended to the following business day.
- 5.06 The SURF Selection Panel shall read and score applications.
- 5.07 SURF Selection Panel members shall meet with the division to make recommendations for SURF awards based upon the selection criteria listed in Section 6.00.



- 5.07.1 The SURF Selection Panel is divided into two groups to represent STEM disciplines and non-STEM disciplines.
- 5.07.2 Each group will make recommendations for applicants from the respective disciplines.
- 5.07.1.1 Subject to appropriations, the SURF Selection Panel will award 60% of the funds to STEM applicants and 40% of the funds to non-STEM applicants.
- 5.07.1.2 Should there not be enough qualified applicants in the STEM or Non-STEM group to make recommendations for awards, funds can be shifted from one group to another until all funds are exhausted.
- 5.08 The amount of the fellowship awarded to each recipient shall be as follows:
- 5.08.1 Up to \$1,250.00 for a student stipend;
- 5.08.1.1 If a student is awarded a fellowship for only a spring or fall semester, the student stipend shall not exceed \$625.00.
- 5.08.2 Up to \$750.00 for student travel;
- 5.08.3 Up to \$750.00 for a mentor award; and
- 5.08.4 Up to \$1,250.00 for the institution match.
- 5.09 The maximum award shall not exceed \$4,000.
- 5.10 The division shall notify each eligible applicant of his or her award.
- 5.10.1 The award notice shall include the student's name, address, faculty mentor's name, institution, and the actual amount the student is eligible to receive.
- 5.10.2 The award notice shall explain the division's disbursement procedures and conditions, as detailed in Section 7.00.
- 5.11 The division shall notify the appropriate faculty and administration at each institution, and the SURF Panel of SURF awardees.
- 5.12 The division shall notify applicants who are determined to be ineligible and provide the reason for ineligibility.
- 5.13 Once each applicant have accepted his or her SURF award and all funds are exhausted, the division shall notify all remaining eligible applicants that all funds have been awarded via a "no award" notice.

## **6.00 FELLOWSHIP SELECTION CRITERIA**

- 6.01 All proposals will be reviewed by the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship Selection Panel that is selected by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education ADHE.
- 6.02 The SURF Selection Panel will use the following scale to grade the selection criteria found in the table at Appendix A (the selection criteria), 1 being the best score and 9 being the worst score:
- 1 – Superior: Extraordinary and needs little to no revision, improvement, or both.
  - 2 – Excellent: Easily addressable issues and needs little revision, improvement, or both.
  - 3 – Above Average: Has strong quality and would benefit from revision, improvement, or both.
  - 4 – Good: Has slightly above average quality and needs some revision, improvement, or both.
  - 5 – Average: Has average quality and needs revision, improvement, or both.
  - 6 – Fair: Has slightly below average quality and needs revision, improvement, or both.
  - 7 – Below Average: Has weak quality and requires revision, improvement, or both.
  - 8 – Minimal: Multiple issues and severely requires revision, improvement, or both.
  - 9 – Poor: Not recommended for funding or consideration.
- 6.03 The SURF Selection Panel shall meet and make recommendation for students to be awarded a fellowship based upon the selection criteria.
- 6.03.1 Recommendation of awards shall be made until all funds are exhausted.
  - 6.03.2 The SURF Panel shall also select alternates to be awarded in the event a student does not accept his or her SURF award.
- 6.04 The Commissioner of Higher Education has the final responsibility for selecting fellowship recipients.

## **7.00 FELLOWSHIP PAYMENT PROCEDURES**

- 7.01 The Division of Higher Education shall disburse fellowship funds to the institution designated on the student's application.
- 7.01.1 The division shall send funds to the appropriate administrative staff at the institution via electronic funds transfer or state warrant.
- 7.01.2 The division will also send an award roster and receipt confirmation to the appropriate institution.
- 7.01.2.1 The award roster lists the students to be awarded and the disbursement amounts.
- 7.01.2.2 The Receipt Confirmation should be signed by the disbursement officer and returned to the division.
- 7.01.3 The institution will disburse the grant funds to the student according to the institution's disbursement procedures.
- 7.02 Fellowships shall be terminated for a recipient's:
- 7.02.1 Failure to maintain at least a 3.25 cumulative grade point average on a 4.00 scale.
- 7.02.2 Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the institution.
- 7.02.3 Failure to conduct the research for which the fellowship was awarded.
- 7.03 The recipient is responsible for notifying the division, in writing, of any change in status (i.e. change of address, email, transfer of research to another mentor, etc.).
- 7.03.1 A recipient's failure to provide written notification may result in the cancellation of the fellowship for that term.
- 7.04 Recipients who are members of the Arkansas National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve units who are called to active duty for reasons other than regular unit training and are unable to complete the current term will be allowed to repeat the missed term.
- 7.04.1 Those recipients shall be placed in deferred status until six months after release from active duty, at which time they must be re-enrolled and continue research with the same mentor.
- 7.05 If the recipient of a fellowship withdraws, drops out, is expelled, falls below the minimum standards in Section 4.00, or does not conduct the research for which the fellowship award was received, the fellowship award for that semester shall

be refunded to the division.

## **8.00 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

8.01 The chief executive officer of the eligible institution is responsible for designating one institutional representative to act as administrator of the Student Undergraduate Research Fellowship and to receive all communications, forms, and the like for that institution.

8.01.1 This representative is responsible for verification, data and compliance with all law and Division of Higher Education rules related to the program.

8.01.2 The institution must comply with all law and rules in order to maintain continued eligibility status.

8.02 Each authorizing institutional official certifies, by signing the program application, that the applicant has met all conditions of the fellowship eligibility criteria in Section 4.00.

8.03 The institution shall maintain information on the student indicating disbursement of fellowship funds.

8.04 The institution shall provide certification of full-time enrollment, as of the close of business on the eleventh day of classes.

8.05 The institution must comply with OMB Circular A21 (Cost Principles for Educational Institutions) and OMB Circular A110 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Non- Profit Organizations) when managing fellowship funds.

8.06 Each institution shall establish a separate account for each student awarded a SURF fellowship.

8.07 The appropriate faculty head of the academic discipline for which a recipient is conducting research under the fellowship is responsible for ensuring that the student and mentor are conducting research as set forth in the fellowship application submitted to the division.

8.08 Funds shall be disbursed to students and mentors in accordance with the institution's disbursement procedures according to OMB Circular A21 and OMB Circular A110.

8.08.1 Any outstanding funds not disbursed by the end of the semester must be returned to the division within 15 days of the semester's end.

8.08.2 The Institutional Representative is responsible for issuing a refund under

7.05 to the division within 15 days of the semester's end.

8.09 Each institution shall exercise due diligence in providing complete, accurate, and timely information as requested by the division on any fellowship recipient or former recipient.

8.10 The Arkansas Department of Higher Education ADHE shall periodically review the program.

## **9.00 FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

9.01 It is the recipient's responsibility to notify the Division of Higher Education, in writing, of any change in status (i.e. change of address, email, transfer of research to another mentor, etc.).

9.01.1 Failure to provide written notification may result in the cancellation of the fellowship for that term.

9.02 A fellowship recipient shall not change the purpose for his or her research project.

9.03 Each fellowship recipient shall submit a one page abstract on the findings of his or her research upon completion of the project to the division as follows:

9.03.1 By May 1 for a spring term project completion;

9.03.2 By August 1 for a summer term project completion;

9.03.3 By December 1 for a fall term project completion

9.04 Fellowship recipients are required to present the findings of his or her research at a state or national conference in his/her discipline or attend a meeting of experts in his or her discipline as directed by his/her mentor.

9.04.1 Failure by a fellowship recipient to comply with any of the above may result in forfeiture of his/her SURF fellowship funds.

**APPENDIX A: STUDENT UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP  
SELECTION CRITERIA**

<p><b><u>Student's Academic Success:</u></b> GPA, Extracurricular Activities, Leadership, etc.</p>
<p><b><u>Qualifications of the Mentor and Research Team (if applicable):</u></b> Clear plan for support, research history, experience in the field of proposal, contributions to undergraduate research.</p>
<p><b><u>Innovation/Originality:</u></b> Generates new ideas and/or applies existing ideas in a new context.</p>
<p><b><u>Significance of the Study:</u></b> Outcomes are clearly proposed and Impact is anticipated. <b>STEM</b> – Addresses an area of importance to the discipline and shows potential to advance the science. <b>Non-STEM</b> - Expands knowledge of best/creative practices in the field, increases creative output.</p>
<p><b><u>Appropriateness of the methodology:</u></b> <b>STEM</b> - Research design, Sampling approach, Data collection protocol/plan, Data analysis procedure/plan, Protection of human subjects and/or plan for seeking IRB approval. <b>Non-STEM</b> – Preliminary Research showing selection and citation of primary and secondary sources, Hermeneutic framework, analytical approach is well defined or creative process and products are well planned/described.</p>
<p><b><u>Merit:</u></b> <b>STEM</b> - Utilizes established scientific principles, Demonstrates how scientific knowledge will be gained, Problem/topic being investigated is of value to the larger scientific community. <b>Non-STEM</b> – Uses best practices and innovative approaches in the field, betters the understanding of the human experience, benefits and engages the fields community.</p>
<p><b><u>Other Criteria:</u></b> Reference Letters, plan for dissemination, appropriate budget, feasibility of completing the project in projected timeframe, cohesiveness and coherency, clarity of writing</p>

1 State of Arkansas  
2 94th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2023  
4

As Engrossed: H2/14/23

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1412

5 By: Representative J. Mayberry  
6 By: Senator J. English  
7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT CONCERNING RULES PROMULGATED BY THE DIVISION  
10 OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION OF  
11 HIGHER EDUCATION TO PROMULGATE CERTAIN RULES  
12 CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS FUNDED  
13 WITH STATE FUNDS AND LOTTERY PROCEEDS; TO DECLARE AN  
14 EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
15

## Subtitle

16  
17  
18 TO REQUIRE THE DIVISION OF HIGHER  
19 EDUCATION TO PROMULGATE CERTAIN RULES  
20 CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATION OF  
21 SCHOLARSHIPS FUNDED WITH STATE FUNDS AND  
22 LOTTERY PROCEEDS; AND TO DECLARE AN  
23 EMERGENCY.  
24

25  
26 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
27

28 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 80, Subchapter 1, is amended  
29 to add an additional section to read as follows:

30 6-80-109. Division of Higher Education – Rules.

31 (a) The Division of Higher Education shall promulgate or update  
32 existing division rules to allow a student who is a recipient of a  
33 scholarship to utilize scholarship funds to enroll in and attend courses  
34 offered during a summer term at the postsecondary institution in which the  
35 student is enrolled.

36 (b) Rules promulgated under this section shall include without



1 limitation requirements concerning:

2 (1) Student eligibility; and

3 (2) The disbursement and administration of scholarship funds  
4 utilized by a student to enroll in and attend courses offered during a summer  
5 term.

6 (c) As used in this section, "scholarship" shall include a scholarship  
7 program that is:

8 (1) Funded with state funds or lottery proceeds; and

9 (2) Administered by the division.

10  
11 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-85-204(14), concerning the definition of  
12 "semester" under the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program, is  
13 amended to read as follows:

14 (14)(A) "Semester" means one-half (½) of a traditional academic  
15 year at an institution of higher education, or an equivalent approved by the  
16 division, in which a student enrolls for not less than:

17 ~~(A)(i)~~ Fifteen (15) credit hours as a full-time student,  
18 except that in the first semester as a first-time full-time freshman, a  
19 traditional student shall enroll in not less than twelve (12) credit hours;  
20 or

21 ~~(B)(ii)~~ Six (6) credit hours as a part-time student.

22 (B) For purposes of summer courses at an institution of  
23 higher education, a "semester" shall mean the same as is defined by the  
24 division, as required by § 6-80-109;

25  
26 SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the  
27 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the Division of Higher  
28 Education must make certain arrangements to facilitate the use of Arkansas  
29 Academic Challenge Scholarship funds for upcoming summer courses; and that  
30 many of these arrangements must occur in time for the 2023-2024 school year.  
31 Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being necessary  
32 for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become  
33 effective on July 1, 2023.

34  
35 /s/J. Mayberry

36 **APPROVED: 3/30/23**