2017-18
Guidelines for Administering
University Graduate Laurels Block Grants

Departmental Access to Block Grant Resources
Distribution of University Graduate Laurels Block Grants (UGLBG) is made through assignment of a unique alphanumeric fund detail code for each block grant award. A budget is assigned to each fund detail code. No actual budget change or transfer of resources takes place. Fund detail codes are assigned in a one-to-one relationship (one fund detail code per block grant award) and each code is valid for only one fiscal year. Those receiving two-year block grants receive one fund detail code for use during FY17 and a second fund detail code for FY18. Fund detail codes are assigned in February each year.

The fund detail code is utilized in several Banner modules, including Banner Student, Banner Finance, and Banner Financial Aid. Block grant recipients will use the fund detail code to disburse and monitor their scholarships through the OSU Scholarship Management System (SMS). Once disbursed through SMS, the data are available in the Banner modules. Fund detail codes also may be used to monitor scholarship disbursements in the data warehouse.

Block grant recipients must identify a staff person to be authorized to enter and monitor their Laurels Scholarship disbursements through SMS. The staff person's name and OSU ID are required to complete the authorization process.

All block grant funds must be fully disbursed during the grant award period. Funds may not be carried forward or reserved for use in a subsequent year. Two-year block grant awards are to be treated as two sequential one-year awards, with no funds carried forward from one year to the next.

Block grant recipients are required to submit a preliminary utilization report to the Graduate School by October 31, 2017. In addition, an annual year-end assessment report must be submitted by August 31, 2018. [See *Reporting Requirements* below.]

Student Access to Laurels Support and Eligibility Criteria
Graduate programs/departments will develop their own internal process for announcing, awarding, distributing, and monitoring their block grants. This will include a clear and transparent application and selection procedure under which graduate students may be considered for University Graduate Laurels Scholarships within the program/department.

Graduate programs/departments must ensure scholarships are awarded on the basis of at least one of the two strategic goals of the University Graduate Laurels Block Grant Program: a) academic merit; and/or b) diversity. Academic merit and diversity may be established as follows:

1. **Academic Merit** -- Both international and domestic students may be eligible for consideration within this category and will be:
   a.) Regularly, conditionally, or provisionally admitted to a graduate degree program; and
   b.) Making satisfactory progress as a graduate degree-seeking student in the specified degree program; and
   c.) Able to demonstrate a high potential for success in the specified graduate degree program by:
      o meeting minimum institutional and programmatic GPA of 3.00 or greater and GRE (or other test score) as required for graduate admission;
      o submitting a clear statement of purpose;
      o having strong letters of recommendation received on their behalf;
      o maintaining graduate standards for satisfactory academic progress toward the specified degree program;
      o exhibiting a record of scholarship in his/her academic field and/or profession (e.g., publications, presentations, research grants, honors and awards, etc.); and/or
      o exhibiting a record of leadership through extensive community and civic engagement.

2. **Diversity** –Only *domestic* graduate degree-seeking students may be eligible for consideration under the diversity category. The following criteria will be used as the basis for evaluating recipient diversity:
    a.) The individual is from cultural, linguistic, and/or socioeconomic background that is underrepresented in their graduate program as demonstrated by:
       o previous participation in a TRIO Program (i.e., Educational Opportunity Center, Talent Search, Student Support Services, Upward Bound, McNair post-baccalaureate Achievement Program);
       o previous participation in a College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
       o previous attendance at an Historically Black College or University (HBCU);
       o previous attendance at an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI);
       o previous attendance at a Tribal College;
       o primary language used at home is other than English;
       o documented financial need (based on FAFSA application – domestic students only) with consideration of low income status;
       o first generation to attend a college or university;
       o previous participation in a summer research experience for underserved undergraduates.
    b.) Exhibits a record of positive engagement with communities that are underrepresented in higher education; and/or
    c.) Has interest in using the diversity of human experience as an education resource in teaching and research.

All University Graduate Laurels Scholarship recipients must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credits each term of their scholarship award period. Audit registrations, course withdrawals, and enrollment in INTO-OSU courses may not be used to satisfy these enrollment requirements. In addition, tuition charges associated with INTO-OSU course enrollment may not be paid by a Laurels Scholarship.

Until further notice, the university allows E-Campus courses to satisfy the 12-credit enrollment requirement. Only the tuition portion will be remitted through the tuition remission process. You will continue to be responsible for payment of fees, including the Distance Education fee and other applicable fees.

University Graduate Laurels Scholarships do not transfer from one graduate degree program to another, except in the case of master's students continuing for the doctoral degree within the same graduate major. If scholarship recipients transfer out of the graduate program under which the scholarship was initially awarded, the scholarship must be terminated.

Students appointed as graduate teaching or research assistants and/or those receiving graduate tuition remission through other means (both internal and external to OSU) are not eligible for support under the University Graduate Laurels Scholarship Program.

Scholarship Award Levels
Graduate programs/departments may make awards to eligible students in any amount less than or equal to the recipient's actual graduate tuition charges based on enrollments of a minimum of 12 credits and a maximum of 16 credits. A student's residency status, program of enrollment, and enrollment level determine the tuition rate to be charged. Please check the Business Affairs web for the 2017-18 graduate tuition rate schedule. University Graduate Laurels Scholarships may not be applied to tuition charges associated with enrollment in INTO-OSU or OSU Summer Session courses.

University Graduate Laurels Scholarships are non-cash awards (i.e., they are tuition-based only) and may be made for one academic year only (fall, winter and spring) or for only one or two terms within the academic year, as desired. Laurels Scholarships may not be disbursed and/or applied toward summer session tuition charges. Multi-year scholarships may not be offered or implied regardless of the duration of the department/program's University Graduate Laurels Block Grant.

Scholarship Award Notification

Graduate programs/departments will issue University Graduate Laurels Scholarship award letters to each of their scholarship recipients. A model letter is included with these guidelines and provides a template for this purpose [see Appendix A]. The model letter may be modified as needed.

Scholarship Disbursement

Upon acceptance of the scholarship, the individual authorized by the graduate program/department will enter scholarship payments for the Laurels recipient(s) in the Scholarship Management System (SMS). Disbursements may be scheduled for each academic term (fall, winter, spring) or for only one or two terms of support, as desired.

Scholarships may be entered in SMS as follows:
1. log in at: https://bfpsystems.oregonstate.edu/switchboard2/Switchboard.aspx
2. enter the fund detail code that has been assigned to the block grant (see your grant award letter for the detail code) and select SEARCH;
3. when search results are returned, select CREATE a payment plan for 2017 or REVISE a payment plan to add or modify the existing plan; then
4. review the plan for accuracy and submit the plan.

Timely SMS data entry is important and it serves two very distinct purposes:

1. It provides timely reporting to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (FAS) concerning the level of financial support that is scheduled for disbursement to the student under a block grant. Laurels support has an impact on a student's cost of attendance and FAS uses Laurels Scholarship information when calculating the student's other aid disbursements, including federal aid. Late SMS data entry can have unintended negative consequences for scholarship recipients if, based on a late award, FAS determines the need to reduce other aid that was previously released to the student. To ensure timely reporting to Financial Aid and Scholarships, **block grant recipients are encouraged to submit their 2017-18 scholarship payment plans in SMS by April 1, 2017.** If the need arises and you wish to cancel or revise those plans *before* disbursement occurs for fall term, please submit revisions or cancellations by September 1. After that time, it is recommended that payment plans be submitted at least 3 weeks prior to the start of winter and spring term.

2. The second purpose in submitting scholarship payment plans in SMS is to begin the work flow process of disbursing funds to the student's Business Office account. All plans submitted through SMS will first move electronically to the Graduate School for approval, then to Financial Aid, and then ultimately to the student's account through multiple batch processes.

Scholarship payments will be posted to each recipient's Business Office account at the beginning of the term(s) for which the award is made pending the recipient's 12-credit enrollment. Audit registration, INTO OSU course work may not be utilized to satisfy this 12-credit enrollment minimum.

All recipients are expected to maintain both a cumulative and term GPA of 3.00 or greater. Exceptions to the GPA requirement should be discussed on a case-by-case basis with the Graduate School.

At least 50% of the graduate program/department's block grant resources must be offered to recipients during the nationally-recognized graduate student recruiting cycle on or before April 15. In keeping with the Council of Graduate School's Resolution Regarding Graduate Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants (of which OSU is a signatory) scholarship recipients cannot be required to accept or decline their award offers prior to April 15.

Block Grant Monitoring
Graduate programs/departments will ensure that University Graduate Laurels Block Grant resources are managed within their block grant award level. Monitoring will include a quarterly reconciliation of actual disbursements by fund detail code. This may be done directly in the Scholarship Management System (SMS) using the *My Scholarship Reconciliation* feature or through a data warehouse query.

Block grant administrators are responsible for monitoring and ensuring continued recipient eligibility for scholarship support.

Block grant administrators are required to submit a preliminary utilization report to the Graduate School by October 31, 2017 and a year-end utilization summary and assessment report by August 31, 2018.

Reporting Requirements
Accountability will be built into the annual competition process such that at the end of each block grant award period, programs/departments must demonstrate the impact the University Graduate Laurels Block Grant has had on the quality and diversity of graduate students within their program(s).

Preliminary Utilization Report:
A brief preliminary utilization report is to be submitted by October 31, 2017 by all block grant recipients regardless of the duration for which the block grant has been made (i.e., both one- and two-year block grant recipients must comply.) The preliminary utilization report is to include:
- the amount of block grant funds that have been allocated to date (disbursed and encumbered) and the strategic goal (i.e., quality or diversity) for which they have been allocated;
- the amount of funds that still are expected to be utilized within the award period (i.e., new scholarships yet to be offered) and the strategic goal for which the funds will be allocated. Please briefly describe your plan for using remaining funds to meet UGLGB program objectives by the end of the fiscal year; and,
- the amount of surplus funds *not* expected to be utilized by the end of the grant period. Surplus funds identified in the preliminary utilization report will be returned to the Graduate School for immediate reallocation and will result in a reduction of the graduate program/department's block grant budget.
- A brief description of your program's potential for increased capacity toward UGLGB program goals in the event additional Laurels funding becomes available during the current block grant period. Specify number of additional students that could be supported, the additional dollar amount that could be utilized effectively, and the strategic goal(s) for which additional funding could be allocated.

Year-end Assessment Report:
Block grant recipients are expected to show improvement in the quality and diversity of their graduate students by the end of the block grant award period. Year-end assessment reports are to reflect upon the gains made toward the graduate program's recruitment and retention targets in each category (quality and diversity) and the outcomes for each goal articulated in the grantee's funded proposal. The report will discuss implementation of the plan as outlined in the block grant proposal, including any deviation from the plan, and will highlight the outcomes achieved through plan implementation.

Metrics identified in the proposal are to be included in the year-end assessment report. Standard metrics will include, but will not be limited to:
- the *total* number of new students recruited to the graduate program during the block grant award period and percent change as compared to the average number of all new students recruited in the prior three years;
- the *total* number of students retained by the graduate during the block grant award period and percent change as compared to the average number of all retained students in the prior three years;
- the average time to degree for students within the graduate program.
Graduate programs/departments that identified other metrics in their proposal also are to report on those outcomes in their year-end assessment report.

Assessment reports will be used to inform the selection process for future University Graduate Laurels Block Grants. Graduate programs/departments will submit their 2017-2018 year-end assessment reports to the Graduate School by August 31, 2017. Those awarded two-year block grants will be required to submit their final assessment report by August 26, 2018.

<u>Questions or Concerns</u>

Please address any questions or concerns to Fran Saveriano, Assistant Dean- Graduate Student Financial Support & Recruitment, fran.saveriano@oregonstate.edu.

Reports should be sent to graduate.scholarships@oregonstate.edu.

Date XXXXXX

«First Name» «Last Name»
«Graduate Major»
Oregon State University Campus

Dear **«Student's Name»:**

Congratulations! Oregon State University has authorized awarding tuition scholarships to a limited number of highly qualified graduate students. It is my pleasure to inform you that you have been selected to receive a 2017-2018 University Graduate Laurels Scholarship in the amount of <<**INSERT TOTAL AMOUNT HERE>>.**

Should you accept this scholarship offer, the award will be disbursed directly to your student business office account in **«Insert_Number of Installments»** installments at the beginning of each term **«Insert_Terms»** as a credit toward your tuition charges. You will remain financially responsible for **«any remaining tuition_charges»,** matriculation and mandatory student fees, additional charges for any credits beyond 12 per term, and tuition and fees associated with INTO-OSU and OSU Extended Campus enrollment.

You must remain in full time degree-seeking status in the <<**graduate major**>> graduate program to remain eligible for this offer. You may not transfer this award for use in another graduate program. In addition, you must be registered for a minimum of 12 credits during each term of the scholarship period. Audit registrations, course withdrawals, and enrollment in INTO-OSU courses may not be used to satisfy enrollment requirements for this award. In addition, tuition charges associated with INTO-OSU courses may not be paid by a Laurels Scholarship. Until further notice, the university allows E-Campus courses to satisfy the 12-credit enrollment requirement. Only the tuition portion will be remitted through the tuition remission process. You will continue to be responsible for payment of fees, including the Distance Education fee and other applicable fees. Questions regarding these enrollment distinctions may be directed to your graduate advisor. Award continuation will be dependent upon your timely and satisfactory degree progress.

Please note that graduate assistants are not eligible for University Graduate Laurels Scholarships because tuition remission is provided under the graduate appointment. If you accept a graduate assistantship offer after accepting this scholarship, please notify me immediately to avoid duplicate tuition payments on your student account.

It is your responsibility to report in writing any change in status to your graduate program within 30 days of the change. Changes in status include (but may not be limited to): change of major, deferring admissions after receiving an award, failure to maintain minimum GPA requirements, reduction in qualifying enrollment level, or receipt of multiple tuition awards (including GTA, GRA, International Cultural Service Program, or other tuition remission scholarships awarded by the Graduate School or entities external to OSU.)

If you accept this award, please sign where indicated below and return a copy of this letter to me by April 15, 2017, though an earlier response is welcome. If you do not respond by April 15, we will assume that you do not accept the award. Please keep a copy for your records. I also encourage you to contact the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office to determine how this scholarship may impact other aid you may be scheduled to receive.

We hope you will find it possible to accept this scholarship and that it will be of assistance to you in finalizing plans for a happy and successful experience at Oregon State University.

Sincerely,

Name and Title (Chair/Head/Program Coordinator)
Name of Graduate Program

I accept the award as outlined above.

_____   _____
Student Name   **Date**
OSU ID#
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