



UK Institutional Research Brief: The Legacy Scholars Program

September 2009

Eight years ago, the University established a new scholarship program to benefit the children of UK alumni who live out of state. The Legacy Scholarship program provided a grant that paid for the difference between resident and non-resident tuition for students who had a parent who received a degree from the University. The scholarships were awarded for the first time to freshmen enrolled in the Fall 2002 semester. Students from the 2001 cohort also were permitted to apply for the scholarship.

From 2002 to 2005, all Legacy Scholarship recipients received a grant that essentially charged them resident tuition rates. Starting in 2006, however, the program established criteria involving high school grades and standardized test scores that awarded different monetary incentives based on a student’s academic credentials. Currently, the program awards three levels of scholarship based on the following criteria:

- **Tier 1** - Students applying with a minimum 1360 SAT (M+CR) or 31 ACT and a 3.75 un-weighted high school grade point receive the difference between resident and non-resident tuition rates. These students are able to attend UK at the rate of in-state tuition.
- **Tier 2** - Eligible students with a minimum 1250 SAT (M+CR) or 28 ACT and a 3.30 un-weighted high school grade point average will be considered for a scholarship which provides \$4,500 per year.
- **Tier 3** - All other eligible students will receive \$3,000 per year, for up to four years of undergraduate study.

Incoming academic credentials and subsequent academic performance statistics for seven cohorts of Legacy Scholars are presented in Table 1. The chart reveals that Legacy

Table 1: Performance of All Legacy Scholars: Fall 2002 – Fall 2008 Cohorts

Cohort	First Fall	First Fall	First Fall	First Fall	First Fall	Four Year	Six Year	HS GPA	ACT Comp	First	First
	Enrollment	to Spring	to 2nd Fall	to 3rd Fall	to 4th Fall	Degree	Degree			Fall	Year
	N	%	%	%	%	Completion	Completion	Mean	Mean	UK GPA	UK GPA
2002	70	85.7	77.1	74.3	74.3	42.9	68.6	3.34	24.86	2.80	2.73
2003	122	93.4	79.5	79.5	68	39.3		3.48	25.06	2.76	2.8
2004	101	90.1	87.1	82.2	80.2	43.6		3.41	25.24	2.80	2.77
2005	138	94.2	83.3	73.9	69.6			3.45	25.54	2.81	2.84
2006	106	95.3	83.0	76.4	71.7			3.47	24.44	2.93	2.94
2007	73	95.9	83.6	79.5				3.49	25.93	3.01	3.12
2008	63	96.8	92.1					3.54	24.75	2.97	2.98

Scholars arrive at UK with similar high school grades and slightly higher ACT Composite scores than the average freshman. Retention rates for this group are well above average, ranging from 77.1 percent for the fall 2002 cohort to 92.1 percent for the fall 2008 cohort. Over two-thirds (68.6%) of the fall 2002 cohort of Legacy Scholars graduated in six years, well above the graduation rate for their entire freshman class (57.5%). Legacy Scholars earn better than average grades during their first year at UK.

A Look at the Impact of New Scholarship Criteria on Academic Performance

The Office of Institutional Research examined the incoming academic preparation and eventual academic success of the last three cohorts of Legacy Scholars who received the three levels of awards mentioned previously. Table 2 shows high school GPAs, ACT scores, retention rates, and grades earned at UK for differing levels of awards.

Table 2: Performance of Legacy Scholars by Tier-level Awards

Cohort	Award Type	First Fall Enrollment	First Fall to Spring Retention	First Fall to 2nd Fall Retention	First Fall to 3rd Fall Retention	First Fall to 4th Fall Retention	HS GPA	ACT Comp	First Fall UK GPA	First Year UK GPA
		N	%	%	%	%	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
2006	Tier1	7	85.7	71.4	85.7	71.4	3.95	30.00	3.40	3.42
	Tier2	13	100	92.3	84.6	84.6	3.77	28.69	3.40	3.41
	Tier3	86	95.3	82.6	74.4	69.8	3.38	23.35	2.82	2.83
2007	Tier1	8	100	100	100		4.01	32.00	3.78	3.77
	Tier2	16	100	100	93.8		3.79	29.31	3.46	3.46
	Tier3	49	93.9	75.5	71.4		3.31	23.84	2.73	2.89
2008	Tier1	4	100	100			4.09	32.75	3.48	3.64
	Tier2	8	100	87.5			3.77	28.88	3.01	3.09
	Tier3	51	96.1	92.2			3.46	23.47	2.92	2.91

Over the last three years, the numbers of students receiving Tier 1 and Tier 2 awards have been relatively small. Consequently, statistics for these groups may sometimes be fairly unstable. These generalizations are offered about the program:

- Legacy Scholars earning Tier 1 and Tier 2 awards present incoming academic credentials that are well above the norm for UK first-year students.
- Students who earn Tier 3 awards present high school grades and standardized test scores that are on par with most freshmen.
- Each group of Legacy Scholars achieves better grades at UK than their classmates.
- Generally, Legacy Scholars are retained at substantially higher rates than the typical first-year cohort. In the two instances above, when Legacy cohorts achieved somewhat lower one-year retention rates, their First Fall to 3rd Fall retention rates rebounded to higher than average levels.