The following guidelines provide financial aid administrators at California Community Colleges with clarification regarding the process of selecting Osher Scholars, as part of the California Community Colleges Scholarship Endowment. These guidelines take into account feedback received from both individual colleges and The Bernard Osher Foundation during the course of the first academic year in which these scholarships were awarded (2009-10), with new information highlighted in yellow. The intent of the scholarship process is to minimize the administrative burden and reporting requirements, while maintaining accountability and integrity for the program and ensuring that the Osher Foundation’s original intent of rewarding students who demonstrate the highest need and persistence in their educational goals is realized.

OVERVIEW

Scholarship funds from the California Community Colleges Scholarship Endowment are distributed annually to individual colleges by the Foundation for California Community Colleges. To benefit as many California Community College students as possible, a minimum floor of 5 percent of the invested principal is used in determining scholarship payouts for colleges, with a minimum of five full-time scholarships provided to each California Community College. Additional information about how the Endowment works and specifics regarding the spending policy are available at www.SupporttheEndowment.org in the “Resources for Colleges” section, or by contacting endowment@foundationccc.org.

Scholarship recipients can receive up to $500 per semester for a total of $1,000 per year*, and part-time students will receive prorated scholarships, determined as follows:

- Full-time (12 or more units per term) = up to $500 per semester (or $1,000 cumulative)
- Three-quarter-time (9-11.99 units per term) = up to $375 per semester (or $750 cumulative)
- Half-time (6 – 8.99 units per term) = up to $250 per semester (or $500 cumulative)

*The scholarship amount will also be adjusted for inflation in increments of no less than $100, ensuring that students will reap the same benefit in the future economy. The Foundation for California Community Colleges will alert colleges to the updated figure upon adjustment.

Selection of Osher Scholars

To be considered for a scholarship, students are required to undergo an application process, which is administered by the local college. Colleges must choose scholarship recipients for the Osher funds based on pre-established criteria, with financial need receiving top priority. Specifically:

1. Student must have completed 24 or more “degree applicable” semester units (or the equivalent) at the time of the initial scholarship disbursement. Transfer units from another institution may be included in this determination as long as they have been determined to meet your college’s requirements for degree applicable coursework.
2. Student must be enrolled at least half time (6 or more units) during all terms in which the award remains active.
3. Student must have received a CCC Board of Governor’s Fee Waiver.

Template applications are available from the Foundation for California Community Colleges, but local colleges may use existing applications if the minimum qualifications can be easily identified through that process. It remains the local college’s responsibility to ensure all Osher Scholars meet the criteria required to receive a scholarship.

Recipients will be designated “Osher Scholars,” joining thousands nationwide who have benefited from Osher support and given back to their communities, creating a cycle of support and education.

**Additional Criteria to be Considered**

The Osher Foundation wishes to target these scholarships to the neediest students. Applicants must be making satisfactory progress toward a degree, but academic performance, such as grades or test scores, shall not be considered by the selection committee as stand-alone criteria.

The Grant Agreement between the Osher Foundation and Foundation for California Community Colleges specifically states: “Priority shall be given based upon need, as determined by the College in its discretion, and so long as an applicant is making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the applicant’s academic performance shall not be considered by the selection committee.”

This affords colleges some flexibility to work within the awards criteria in determining “financial need.” However, the Osher Foundation specifically stipulates that academic performance, including GPA, not be criteria for consideration in selecting student scholarship recipients. Additional criteria which colleges may consider in determining a student’s financial need may include:

- Financial need according to federal formula
- Narrative describing other hardships or non-federal formula financial needs
- Remaining financial need after other aid is considered

**Additional Criteria Require by Individual Donors**

Individual donors may contribute to the Endowment on behalf of a specific college, and may require additional criteria, such as an area of study, for the scholarships that are awarded from their gift(s). Criteria imposed by an individual donor would still need to include the minimum criteria established in these guidelines. If a college is receiving scholarship funds derived from both the Osher Foundation’s gift and contributions from college-specific donors, the Foundation for California Community Colleges will alert the college of this fact in the scholarship estimates provided each spring. It remains the responsibility of the local college to ensure the intents of individual donors are honored in the scholarship awards process.

**Scholarship Renewals**

If students receiving Osher Scholarships continue to qualify in subsequent academic years, they may be renewed, not to exceed a cumulative award total of three times the amount of the annual maximum award. For example, if the current annual maximum award is $1,000, then the cumulative award total that a renewing student may qualify for would be $3,000. As long as the college can confirm that the student remains qualified by continuing to meet the required criteria and making satisfactory academic progress, the student does not need to submit a full application for continued funding. It is important to note that no student should be given the
impression that funding is guaranteed for more than one year at a time, and that all renewals are subject to the availability of funds. Fluctuations in endowment performance and the distribution of FTES across the system could possibly reduce the amount an individual college will receive from year-to-year.

Use of Scholarship Funds
The Osher Foundation stipulates that all scholarship funds specifically be used for educational purposes. Since students must receive a Board of Governor’s fee waiver in order to qualify for Osher Scholarships, the scholarship awards will not need to be used for fees. They can be used for other educational expenses, including textbooks, lab fees, uniforms, tools, and other equipment required by a student’s course of study. It is up to each college to ensure, to the best of its ability, that students understand the purpose of the scholarship.

Scholarship Awards Timeline
The Foundation for California Community Colleges provides colleges with their allotment of scholarship funds twice annually: prior to the fall term (August of each year) and prior to the spring term (January of each year). The Foundation will provide the funds to colleges as early as possible in these months in order to allow for disbursement to students prior to the start of the term. Colleges/districts on a quarter system will receive the same biannual payments as other colleges (one payment in August and the second in January of each academic year), but may pay out the scholarships to their students in a manner that works best within their academic calendar.

Recommended Process Flow Framework
The following recommended process flow provides a framework for how the Osher scholarships may be implemented on your campus or within your district. This is provided as a recommendation only; colleges may implement the Osher Scholars program into existing awards processes if they deviate from this.
Osher Scholar Requirements
Once a student receives an Osher Scholarship, they should be prompted to take the following action:

• Send a thank you letter to The Osher Foundation, via the Foundation for California Community Colleges, for its generous support. The letters will be forwarded by the Foundation for California Community Colleges for inclusion in its annual reporting to The Osher Foundation.

The Trustees of The Bernard Osher Foundation
c/o The Foundation for California Community Colleges, Resource Development
1102 Q Street, Suite 3500
Sacramento, CA 95811

In addition, the following are requirements necessary for an Osher Scholar to remain in good standing:

• Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at all times, according to your college’s policy.
• Maintain at least half time enrollment status (6 units or more) to qualify for initial and all subsequent payments.*
• Continue to meet all student criteria to remain eligible for a scholarship renewal in the following academic year. Awards are renewable up to a maximum disbursement of three times the maximum annual award.
• Amounts will be adjusted to reflect the student’s enrollment status each term under the following definitions:
  – Full time (12 or more units per term) = Maximum $500/semester
  – Three quarter time (9 -11.99 units per term) = Maximum $375/semester
  – Half time (6 - 8.99 units per term) = Maximum $250/semester

*If a student’s enrollment status dropped below half-time during a scholarship-supported year for an excusable reason, such as severe illness or a family emergency, then the college in its discretion can continue scholarship support while adhering to all other program guidelines.

Reporting Requirements for California Community Colleges
Each year, the Foundation for California Community Colleges will report to The Osher Foundation, on behalf of the California Community Colleges and the CCC Chancellor’s Office, the scholarship awarded for that year. Accordingly, California Community College scholarship offices are requested to submit reporting data of their Osher Scholars to the Foundation for California Community Colleges. To make this process as simple and straightforward as possible, a reporting template will be provided to California Community Colleges at the end of the 2009-10 academic year, and will be due to the Foundation for California Community Colleges in Fall 2010. Specific details and timelines will be communicated with the distribution of the reporting template.

Submit general questions regarding the California Community Colleges Scholarship Endowment to endowment@foundationccc.org or (866) 325.3222 ext. 144. Questions regarding the scholarship process can be directed to Tim Bonnel in the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office at tbonnel@cccco.edu or (916) 445.0104.