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WKU relaxes requirements for most scholarships

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Western Kentucky University is making major changes to its scholarship programs, which will qualify nearly twice as many students for financial support.

Beginning in the fall of 2020, WKU will no longer use ACT scores to award most academic merit-based and targeted scholarships for incoming freshmen. WKU also will make an additional \$5.2 million in scholarship funding available to a larger group of students by expanding offers to students with a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher and raising the minimum award from \$1,500 to \$2,500.

WKU salad is creating additional opportunities for underrepresented minority students through an expansion of the Cornelius A. Martin Scholarship.

“We are committed to being an institution of access and opportunity,” WKU President Timothy C. Caboni said.

He said WKU’s scholarship program will rewards students for their academic work over four years, not just their performance on a single test. “One number should not define your ability to go to college or to be able to afford a WKU experience.”

In a statement, WKU said an estimated 80 percent of incoming freshmen will be eligible for some type of institutional scholarship. That’s more than double the percentage from this fall.

While WKU has been working on a new scholarship model for the past 18 months, the timing is right for presenting it publicly, according to Jace Lux, WKU’s director of recruitment and admissions.

“With the Free Application for Federal Student Aid opening Oct. 1, we know that financial aid considerations are foremost in the minds of students and their parents,” Lux said. “This timing allows us to bring this information forward as these financial conversations are taking place.”

Those discussions should lead to more students choosing WKU as their higher education partner, Caboni said.

“By being aggressive with our scholarship offerings, we not only increase student access, retention and graduation rates, we grow our University’s net tuition revenue,” he said in a news release. “This important work serves as a critical component of our 10-year strategic plan, *Climbing to Greater Heights*, and supports WKU’s core mission to transform the lives of students and elevate its community.”