UTSA. The University of Texas at San Antonio™ TOP SCHOLAR

Knowledge ♦ Leadership ♦ Service

Scholar Handbook
2020-2021

UTSA.
The University of Texas at San Antonio™
HONORS COLLEGE

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) Top Scholar program recognizes exceptional students, enriches their lives, and nurtures their development as future leaders. The program is located within the Honors College, which has a vision to distinguish itself as a premiere destination for highly talented students seeking a non-traditional, liberal arts approach to higher education. The Honors College uses an experiential curriculum to assist students of all majors to become **S**ervant leaders, develop as **P**rofessionals, and **I**ntellectually achieve beyond their GPA. We help students to emerge as **C**ulturally sophisticated global citizens, live **E**ngaged and intentional lives, and acquire **S**kills that help them to flourish. We genuinely value our community, always seeking new and innovative ways to help students gain a deep sense of belonging.

UTSA Top Scholar program mission

Recruit and retain very high achieving students in an environment where intellectual curiosity is stimulated and conducive to in-depth and engaged learning; leaders are empowered to grow and develop professionally; and social consciousness and service to society is used to influence the world for the better.

UTSA Top Scholar program vision

To be a premier scholar program well-known and highly regarded across the state for developing award winning, academically talented and exceptional servant leaders.

We embrace an ethos based on guiding principles of an ethical life that:

- **H**onors what is honorable, approaching the good with respect;
- pursues what is **E**quitable, just, and fair;
- practices **R**esiliency;
- uses education to foster **B**enevolence and kindness toward humans, animals, and the environment; and
- **S**upports each other and those whom their own actions impact.

The UTSA Top Scholar program, program staff, and scholar participants believe in these values, and will conduct themselves accordingly.

The program will advance the core values of The University of Texas at San Antonio to encourage an environment of dialogue and discovery, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered. Program participants are encouraged to fully explore their talents and aspirations, understanding that great opportunities create even greater responsibilities to make the state, nation, and world a better place.

The three pillars of the UTSA Top Scholar program are:
- o Knowledge: Passion for lifelong learning
- o Leadership: Investment in excellence
- o Service: Commitment to a stronger community

The program includes:

- o A renewable undergraduate scholarship that covers up to four years of tuition, mandatory fees, and fees for room and board;
- o Guaranteed space in the on-campus residence halls
- o A funded global experience; and
- o Funding for enrichment activities, which enables the UTSA Top Scholar to learn and experience the value of community involvement, global awareness, and professional growth.

Student Learning Outcomes

As part of the UTSA Honors College, UTSA Top Scholars are fully immersed in the experiential learning process. UTSA Top Scholars excel in their academic disciplines *and* achieve learning outcomes beyond the classroom.

Honors College Ideals and Outcomes		
Milestone Accomplishment		The artifact or experience that defines the student learning in the course.
Guiding Ideals	Wonder	The embracing of new questions.
	Engagement	The embodied pursuit of knowledge.
	Discovery	The invention that results from engagement.
	Guidance	The guidance provided to facilitate engaged learning.
Learning Outcomes	Creative Courage	The ability to use knowledge, skills and materials at hand to produce a self/team designed product, solution, or presentation to an outside agency.
	Academic Resilience	The ability to learn from failure, accept constructive criticism, and/or handle setbacks.
	Project Management	The ability to take a major, long-term project from idea to completion.
	Agency through Accomplishment	Gaining self confidence by delivering outcomes of high-quality. Quality is demonstrated by the level of the peer review and notability of the accomplishment.
	Collaborative Decision Making	The ability to effectively work with a group to solve a multi-layered problem that has multiple possible approaches and solutions.
	Intellectual Dexterity	The ability to creatively synthesize information, make significant "leaps" across domains of knowledge, and/or apply skills in unique ways.
	Team/Independent Learning	The ability to work in a team setting toward producing a "co-authored" accomplishment. The ability to effectively self direct toward questions, materials, and solutions.
	Intercultural Competency	The ability to appreciate and flourish in a cross-cultural experience.
	Effective Communication	The ability to effectively present ideas, information, and materials to diverse groups and beyond the classroom.
	Self-Reflection	The ability to clearly demonstrate awareness of the multitude of effects that learning has had upon you and the ways in which your engagement and discoveries have impacted others.

You have been chosen as a UTSA Top Scholar based on your extraordinary intellectual ability, the capacity to motivate and lead fellow students, and overall good citizenship. The UTSA community welcomes you.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Each academic year, scholars will be reviewed to ensure they remain in academic compliance with the UTSA Top Scholar program and the Honors College. To remain in good standing and maintain eligibility with the UTSA Top Scholar program, the following requirements must be fulfilled:

Minimum GPA and Credit-Hours

Scholars must maintain a semester and overall cumulative 3.50 GPA at UTSA. Course grades of a B or better are required in all major courses. Any scholar whose GPA falls below a 3.50 must appear before the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee. Competitive graduate and professional schools seek students with GPAs of at least 3.50-3.75, with excellent grades in major and professional school pre-requisite courses. Nationally competitive awards generally look for students with GPAs of 3.75 or better. NOTE: Academic struggles should be reported immediately to Program Administrators. Communication (or lack thereof) will be considered a factor in an appeal for special circumstances.

Scholars are required to take 15 hours in each long (Fall and Spring) semester. If a scholar wishes to take more than 18 credit hours or less than 15 credit hours in any one semester, written approval must be received from Program Administrators prior to registration. Petitions for exceptions to this policy must be received with required documentation by the published deadline each semester.

Honors College Eligibility

Eligibility for the Honors College must be maintained, including GPA, curricular, experiential, and events requirements. Any scholar placed on academic probation by the Honors College, or who are deemed at risk for losing Honors College benefits following academic compliance reviews, must appear before the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee. Academic compliance with the Honors College is assessed at the end of each spring. Top Scholars are expected to exceed, not just meet, Honors College requirements.

Communication

Scholars must communicate professionally and consistently with Program Administrators, in a timely manner. Scholars are expected to respond to emails and phone calls within 24 hours, and keep Program Administrators abreast of any circumstances which could impact academic or program performance. This includes, but is not limited to, items such as class grades, financial issues, employment status, health issues, and family commitments which may avert the scholar's time and attention. Changes or alterations to schedules which might impact a bill should be communicated immediately to Program Administrators. Exceptions to any Top Scholar

requirements or policies should be *requested,* in writing, with as much notice as possible. This includes any and all requests related to required reports such as the mid-year and end-of-year report. Failure to communicate promptly and professionally with Program Administrators, can result in appearing before the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee, placement on an improvement plan, and possibly face loss of benefits.

Scholars referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards, local or other law enforcement offices, or any other pertinent agency for a suspected violation are required to immediately inform the Program Administrators in writing and provide regular updates about the status of case, including any and all factors which might impact the final determination of the case or sanction. This includes, but is not limited to, an alleged violation of a state, federal, or international law, UTSA policy, honor code, conduct code, or ethical expectations, even if no independent administrative proceeding is pursued.

Email is the preferred method of comminution with all university officials, including Top Scholar Program Administrators. Text messages and phone calls outside of normal business hours should be reserved for emergency situations.

Enrichment Requirements
UTSA Top Scholars are expected to fully participate in enrichment activities.

Annual Orientation/Retreat
Prior to the start of each academic year, scholars are required to attend a retreat with other members of the UTSA Top Scholar program. If a scholar is unable to participate, a written request with justification for permission for an excused absence must be provided to Program Administrators. Excused absences will only be permitted in truly extraordinary circumstances. Personal, family, and other travel as well as matters of convenience will not be excused. For first year students, the retreat is designed to introduce the UTSA Top Scholar program, its administrators and fellow scholars, and build esprit de corps. For students in subsequent years, the retreat is a time for planning, professional and leadership development, reflection, and team building. Unexcused absences may be referred to the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee and could result in possible loss of benefits.

Global Experience
Scholars must complete one global experience. Program Administrators will provide information and resources on various opportunities. Scholars are expected to also explore options on their own to tailor the global experience to individual educational goals. Program Administrators will assist scholars in connecting to alumni and other professionals in their area of interest; however, it is the responsibility of the scholar to apply, interview, and secure the global experience. All global experiences funded by the UTSA Top Scholar program must be registered with UTSA Education Abroad Services. Global experiences which do not have a credit bearing component will require substantial additional justification and documentation.

Prior to departure scholars must complete a safety briefing with the Program Director. Upon return from the experience scholars are required to submit a reflection report and participate in the Honors College Experiential Learning Fair. Additional information about the Global Experience, including applying for funding, budget requirements, and requirements during the trip and upon return can be found in the appendix to this handbook. Scholars are required to enroll in HON 3951, a course designed to help students reflect and document learning outcomes, while abroad. In light of the COVID 19 pandemic this requirement may be waived if deemed appropriate and necessary by Program Administrators.

Professional and Research Experience

UTSA Top Scholars must complete at least one professional or research experience related to their field of study. Scholars are encouraged to complete one per year beginning no later than the second year of study. Program Administrators will assist scholars in connecting to professionals and researchers in their area of interest; however, it is the responsibility of the scholar to apply, interview, and secure the professional or research experience. Scholars should use the resources and information provided by the UTSA Career Center, the Office of Undergraduate Research, or the college of their major to explore potential opportunities and to tailor the experience to individual educational goals. Professional and research experiences include, but are not limited to: internships, special projects, lab placements, or co-ops. More information on requests for funding to attend professional conferences can be found in the appendix to this handbook. It is also the expectation that research will be presented in some form at the Honors College Experiential Learning Fair, a conference, symposium, or other venue.

Service Component

Scholars must participate in community service throughout their four years on campus, including at least one cohort service project during each year. Individual service goals should be established each long semester, and demonstrate progressively more focus, commitment, and purpose over the course of 4 years.

Faculty Mentoring

Faculty mentors will be matched with scholars in the second year of study pending special circumstances. Scholars are expected to actively engage in the faculty mentoring process, including identification and recommendations of a faculty mentor to Program Administrators. Scholars will meet with faculty mentors several times during each semester to discuss academic projects, professional opportunities, and development of post-graduate plans. Under the guidance of a faculty mentor, all scholars will develop, and maintain, a plan for professional development. Additional information about faculty mentoring can be found in the appendix to this handbook.

Cultural and Social Activities

Scholars are expected to participate in cultural and social activities throughout their four years on campus. Examples of social and cultural experiences include Roadrunner Days, Social Justice

Events, activities with the Student Leadership and Volunteer Services Center, Women's History Month, Honors College events, the UTSA Top Scholar program end of year celebration and the UTSA Top Scholar program winter holiday party.

Mandatory Agreements, Meetings and Reports

A tentative schedule of deadlines and events for the upcoming semester will be provided to students each semester. The official schedule will also be posted in Blackboard Learn and distributed via email.

Acceptance Agreement

Scholars must agree to the terms contained in the Acceptance Agreement, to be signed on an annual basis. If the scholar is a minor, the Acceptance Agreement must also be signed by a parent or guardian. An example of the UTSA Top Scholar program Acceptance Agreement appears in the appendix to this handbook.

University Housing

Scholars must adhere to the terms contained in the University Housing Contract while living on campus. This includes all obligations and agreements, financial and otherwise, outlined in the University Housing Contract. Scholars must adhere to the standards and obligations set forth as part of the Housing and Residence Life Code of Conduct. If for any reason a scholar fails to maintain eligibility or decides for personal reasons to withdraw from the program and scholarship benefits are terminated, he or she remains responsible for charges accrued under the University Housing Contract, including but not limited to the Liquidated Damages Charge and remaining rent for unfulfilled contracts. Any and all fees outside of mandatory room charges are the sole responsibility of the scholar. This includes but is not limited to damages, late fees, change fees, and cancellation charges.

Scholars referred to the Office of Housing and Residence Life for a suspected violation are required to immediately inform the Program Administrators in writing and provide regular updates about the status of case, including any and all factors which might impact the final determination of the case or sanction. This includes, but is not limited to, an alleged violation of a UTSA policy, honor code, conduct code, or ethical expectations, even if no independent administrative proceeding is pursued.

Scholars must give permission for the UTSA Top Scholar program to have access to any and all information, including FERPA protected data, pertaining to any and all conduct cases or sanctions.

If any scholar is dismissed from the UTSA Top Scholar program, that scholar may not remain in a room reserved for UTSA Top Scholars. Exceptions to these terms will only be granted in extraordinary circumstances negotiated directly with The University of Texas at San Antonio Office of Housing and Residence Life.

The deadline to declare housing preferences is February 1 each year.

Disclosure of Scholarship Funds

UTSA Top Scholars must disclose all scholarships to the UTSA Top Scholar program, including external funds not routed through UTSA. This disclosure must be completed and turned in by every scholar every year, even if there are no outside scholarships to disclose. A copy of the disclosure agreement can be found in the appendix to this handbook. This disclosure must be turned in to Program Administrators prior to the beginning of the fall semester each year or at any time a scholarship or external funding is received.

Class Schedule

No later than the census day of each semester, scholars must submit a final class schedule to Program Administrators. This should be submitted via email in a day x time format. Program Administrators will notify scholars of census dates.

Grade Report

Program Administrators will conduct midterm and final semester grade checks within 72 hours of their official submission each semester. Scholars are responsible for informing Program Administrators promptly of any anticipated problems with grades. Any student demonstrating academic difficulty will be placed on an Academic Improvement Plan.

Degree Plan, Resume, and Personal Statement

Scholars must submit a copy of their degree plan to Program Administrators no later than the end of their first semester. An updated copy of the degree plan, resume, and personal statement must be submitted to Program Administrators once per year each spring semester. Scholars should consult with the UTSA Career Center for assistance with resume development.

Enrichment Progress Report

No later than 7 calendar days after returning from a Top Scholar supported or funded enrichment experience, global experience, or professional experience activity, scholars must submit a reflection report providing an overview of the experience. The overall format of the report is unspecified, but should include (1) reason this activity was chosen, (2) several items discovered or learned from participating in the activity, and (3) whether or not the major goals of participating in this activity were accomplished. Scholars must complete a blog chronicling their global experience and enroll in HON 3951.

Mid-Year Report

No later than the end of November each year, scholars must submit a written mid-year report to the Top Scholar program. An in-person meeting may also be required at the discretion of Program Administrators. Specific deadlines for this report and presentation will be published via Blackboard Learn and/or email. Any exceptions to the deadlines or submission requirements must be requested in writing, in advance. Unexcused, incomplete, or otherwise insufficient mid-year reporting may be referred to the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee and

could result in possible loss of benefits. An example of the requirements for this report can be found in the appendix to this handbook.

Annual End of Year Report and Presentation

An annual end of year report and presentation will be required by each scholar. This report and presentation is due at the end of each spring semester before final exams begin. Specific deadlines for this report and presentation will be published via Blackboard Learn and/or email. Any exceptions to the deadlines or submission requirements must be requested in writing, in advance. Unexcused, incomplete, or otherwise insufficient end-of-year reporting may be referred to the Top Scholar or Honors Standards Committee and could result in possible loss of benefits. An example of the requirements for this report can be found in the appendix to this handbook.

All scholars are expected to attend at least one (1) end of year presentation in addition to their own.

Senior Exit Report

Each scholar must submit a senior exit report prior to the end of their graduation semester. The report should include an overview of the scholar's entire experience in the UTSA Top Scholar program. Previous annual reports and plans for professional development (developed with faculty mentors) will be beneficial in preparing this final report. Specific deadlines for this report and presentation will be published via Blackboard Learn and/or email. Any exceptions to the deadlines or submission requirements must be requested in writing, in advance. Unexcused, incomplete, or otherwise insufficient senior exit reporting may be referred to the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee and could result in possible loss of benefits.

All scholars are expected to attend at least one (1) senior exit presentation. This requirement is in addition to attending a regular end of year presentation.

Meetings

Scholars will have regularly scheduled meetings with the Program Administrators each semester. All-Scholar meetings will be held every week during the long semesters, and as necessary. Attendance is mandatory unless the scholar obtains prior written approval.

Contact Information

It is each scholar's responsibility to provide Program Administrators with current contact information, including all phone numbers, email, and mailing addresses. Program Administrators must be notified in a timely manner if any information changes. Each scholar must have a current emergency contact on file with the UTSA Top Scholar office at all times.

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

To remain in good standing and maintain your scholarship with the UTSA Top Scholar program, UTSA Top Scholars must agree to the UTSA Code of Conduct and participation in UTSA Top Scholar program activities.

Disciplinary Action Plan

In most instances, when a behavioral or other program expectation is not met, the following disciplinary action plan will be implemented:

First violation: Verbal warning from program administrators with witness present

Second violation: Written warning from Dean of the Honors College

Third violation: Referral and request for evaluation by the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee.

Cases which involve clear and egregious behavior may also be referred directly to the Dean of the Honors College, Top Scholar Standards Committee, or Honors College Standard Committee.

Code of Conduct

As a UTSA Top Scholar, I will uphold the core values of The University of Texas at San Antonio which are integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation. I will ensure my every act, behavior and decision will exemplify honesty, integrity and honor whether academic, social, professional or otherwise. I will treat all individuals fairly and with dignity regardless of race, gender, age, disability, national origin, and sexual orientation. I will abide by all policies of UTSA regarding academic integrity.

UTSA Top Scholars are models for civility and good behavior amongst their fellow Roadrunners. UTSA Top Scholar are expected to uphold the letter and spirit of the Code of Conduct to the highest standard. Behavior inconsistent with the Code of Conduct is subject to immediate review by the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee and possible loss of benefits.

UTSA Top Scholar Program Activities

Special Opportunities

Scholars must attend all mandatory special events, unless prior permission from Program Administrators has been received. These events are designed to provide interaction with scholars, donors, faculty, and alumni. Scholars will be expected to represent the UTSA Top Scholar program and the University in various capacities on and off campus as the need arises. Program Administrators will communicate if an activity is optional.

Each scholars is expected to attend at least 1 event during each long semester in which they serve as a program, college, or university representative. This is in addition to selection and other all scholar or cohort mandatory events.

Cohort Trips

Scholars must attend all cohort trips and stay for the duration of the trip, unless prior permission from the Program Administrators has been received. Prior to departure, any pre-trip meetings must be attended and liability waivers must be signed.

Mentor Program

Current scholars should be willing to act as a mentor to new scholars. After graduation, scholars are encouraged to serve as a mentor for future scholars.

Recruitment

Scholars may be asked to participate in recruitment activities such as giving a campus tour or hosting a prospective student during the academic year. Scholars must fully participate in selection activities for prospective scholars, including, but not limited to, communicating with an assigned finalist prior to their arrival, attending mandatory events and serving as a guide or host. After graduation and schedule permitting, scholar alumni may be asked to assist with recruitment efforts and participate in selection events.

Web Presence/Marketing Materials

Scholars must assist the Program Administrators by providing content for the UTSA Top Scholar program website and marketing materials, including, but not limited to interviews, quotes, pictures or blog submissions. If any scholar is contacted directly by any media outlet, the media outlet must be referred to the Program Administrators. Scholars should actively engage with UTSA Top Scholar Social Media, which currently includes Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts.

Campus Life Engagement

Scholars are expected to participate in groups and organizations appropriate to their interests, both academic and personal, and actively engage in campus life. Scholars must participate in at least one registered student organization outside of the UTSA Top Scholar program and Top Scholars Student Organization, per long semester.

Top Scholars Student Organization (TSSO)

The Top Scholars Student Organization (TSSO) strives to advance the three pillars of the UTSA Top Scholar program, by assisting students in their professional development by providing them with leadership experience through community service, teamwork, project planning, and project management, and to conduct programs of interest to Top Scholars. The TSSO also aims to provide an informal environment in which Top Scholars can socialize, support, mentor, and learn from one another, and to help Top Scholars become more involved in UTSA and the San Antonio community.

All UTSA Top Scholars must be members of and participate in the TSSO. Ms. Elisa Perkins, Honors College Program Manager, serves as faculty advisor for the registered student organization.

Outside Employment

To enable each scholar to participate fully in extracurricular, educational, and cultural activities and to fulfill campus leadership and community responsibilities, scholars are prohibited from

full or part-time employment while receiving Top Scholar funding.

With prior approval from the Program Administrators, exceptions may be made when an opportunity serves a legitimate academic purpose.

Scholars may hold campus-wide leadership positions that carry small, symbolic salaries, such as research assistant, peer mentor, supplemental instructor, teaching assistant, resident advisor, orientation advisor, student government, etc.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Payments for tuition, mandatory fees, and fees for room and board are based on the Cost of Attendance as calculated by Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services at UTSA.

Tuition

The UTSA Top Scholar program pays tuition for up to eight long session semesters at The University of Texas at San Antonio for any undergraduate courses in which scholars are enrolled which apply toward their degree plan. Any exception, such as a 5-year academic program, and extra elective courses, must be approved by Program Administrators.

The UTSA Top Scholar program will not pay for scholars to retake courses. The UTSA Top Scholar program will not pay for summer courses.

Mandatory Fees

The UTSA Top Scholar program pays for mandatory fees, including the Chaparral Village housing application fee, student orientation fee, and mandatory course fees. This does not include optional fees. The UTSA Top Scholar program does not pay for parking fees or family orientation fees.

Housing and Meals

UTSA Top Scholars are permitted to move out of Chaparral Village into other on-campus facilities after 1 year, provided they meet the requirements stipulated in the policy for Housing for 2nd, 3rd and 4th year UTSA Top Scholars. A copy of the policy can be found in the appendix to this Handbook. 1st and 2nd year scholars must have a university meal plan. Third and fourth year scholars who do not purchase a meal plan will have the housing allowance disbursed in one lump sum at the beginning of the semester and the meal allowance disbursed in monthly installments via the scholar's regular student account. The Top Scholar class of 2021 is automatically grandfathered into the 2017-2018 housing policy (see handbook from that year for details).

Financial Aid Refunds

After all university fees, including room and board charges when living on campus, have been paid, the remainder of any funds will be disbursed back to the scholar in the form of a general refund through UTSA Fiscal Services. This refund will serve for miscellaneous expenses and

books. Scholars are individually responsible for managing their money wisely.

Direct Deposit

Scholars must sign up for direct deposit via the UTSA ASAP system. Direct deposit information must be kept current for all student and employee (e.g., "Student Volunteer") records.

Taxes

UTSA is not allowed to give tax advice to students, and all scholars should consult with appropriate non-university tax professionals as needed. Upon request through Fiscal Services, UTSA will send every student an IRS form 1098T that can be used when filing taxes. Information about this tax topic may be found at: https://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc421.

Enrichment Activities

Mandatory group enrichment activities, such as the College of Business Career Action Program and Spring Leadership Retreat, will be paid by the UTSA Top Scholar program.

Scholar may apply for additional enrichment funding as outlined previously and in the appendix of this handbook. All funded activities exceeding $250 requires participation in the Honors College Experiential Learning Fair.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Top Scholar Standards Committee will be formed in consult with the Director for the UTSA Top Scholar program with members selected by the Associate Dean of the Honors College. The Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee will review all scholars at risk for not meeting program standards. Appeals to the Top Scholar and Honors College Standards Committee are heard by the Dean of the Honors College. All decisions from the Dean are final.

Scholars must appear before the Top Scholar or Honors College Standards Committee if they fail to maintain the minimum GPA or credit hour minimum. Scholars must also appear before the Standards Committee for any violation of the Code of Conduct or failing to meet program requirements as stipulated in this handbook. Top Scholars are expected to serve as an exemplary citizen and representative in achievement and conduct. Failure to meet expectations of the code of conduct or failure to fully and completely uphold the core values of the UTSA, Honors College, and Top Scholar program will result in a referral to the Top Scholar Standards Committee, and may cause dismissal from the UTSA Top Scholar program.

The Top Scholar and Honors College Standards Committees may require that a scholar at risk for loss of scholarship and termination of benefits be subject to following an individualized improvement plan. Scholars who fail to successfully complete the aforementioned improvement plan may be subject to dismissal from the UTSA Top Scholar program. In some cases, the Top Scholar and Honors College Standards Committees may be authorized to recommend immediate loss of benefits or expulsion from the UTSA Top Scholar program.

LOSS OF SCHOLARSHIP AND TERMINATION OF BENEFITS

The Top Scholar and Honors College Standards Committees has the authority to terminate scholarship and program benefits upon the completion of due process.

If a scholar withdraws or is expelled from The University of Texas at San Antonio, the Acceptance Agreement between the scholar and the UTSA Top Scholar program will be null and void and funding will cease immediately.

If a scholar voluntarily withdraws from the UTSA Top Scholar program for any reason, the Acceptance Agreement will be null and void and funding will cease immediately.

AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHOLAR HANDBOOK

The UTSA Top Scholar Handbook is a working document and the UTSA Top Scholar Program Administrators reserve the right to make changes at any time. Any changes to the handbook will be communicated to the scholars immediately.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Program Administrators

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Scholar Handbook: Appendices

Scholar Handbook Appendices

Appendix 1: Acceptance and agreement form

UTSA Top Scholar Acceptance Agreement

An example of the UTSA Top Scholar Acceptance Agreement appears below.

Official Acceptance Form
2020-2021
UTSA Top Scholar Program

Initials	
_____ Initials	I **ACCEPT** this scholarship. I agree to meet all requirements listed in the award letter in order to maintain my eligibility for this scholarship. **I also agree to attend donor and other UTSA Top Scholar functions as requested. I agree to allow the release and use of my name and photograph by the UTSA Top Scholar program.**
_____ Initials	I understand all formal communication from UTSA Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services will be sent to my preferred email account as I have indicated on my ASAP account or to my UTSA email account if my preferred email is invalid or blocks your communication.
_____ Initials	I have read the award letter offering me this scholarship and understand the specific requirements.
_____ Initials	I **DECLINE** this scholarship. I understand that by declining this scholarship, it will be offered to another qualified applicant. I understand I must complete a General Scholarship Application each year to be considered for other scholarships in the future.

_____   _____
Student Signature   Date

_____   _____
Print Student Name   Student I.D. Number

Information Release

I waive my rights under the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (Buckley Amendment), by allowing the UTSA Top Scholar program, the Honors College, and Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services to release information about me to the donor(s) of the above named scholarship, potential donors, and media.

_____   _____
Student Signature   Date

Failure to return this acceptance form by the stated deadline will result in automatic termination of this scholarship. Send both pages of the acceptance form via email to kristi.meyer@utsa.edu or top.scholar@utsa.edu.

UTSA Top Scholar Program
Acceptance Agreement
2020-2021

I, _____ (SCHOLAR NAME), choose to participate in the UTSA Top Scholar program.

I understand and agree to the following conditions of the UTSA Top Scholar program: (*please initial each statement*)

_____ 1. I am required to maintain a 3.50 UTSA GPA each semester and an overall 3.50 GPA. If my GPA falls below 3.50, I will be subject to a review process and potential loss of scholarship. Scholars entering prior to 2018 are grandfathered into their original acceptance agreement GPA requirements.

_____ 2. I am required to fulfill the following program components:
- Attend the UTSA Top Scholar program Retreat annually (each August, before the start of the Fall semester)
- Participate in Enrichment Activities, including a community component, a global experience (i.e., study abroad or an international volunteer trip) and a professional growth opportunity (either an internship or research)
- Complete at least 30 credit hours each academic year
- Live on campus. Scholars entering prior to 2018 are grandfathered into their original acceptance agreement
- Not be employed

_____ 3. I am required to submit the following mandatory reports:
- UTSA Top Scholar program Acceptance Agreement (annually)
- UTSA Top Scholar program Handbook Acknowledgement (annually)
- Outside scholarship disclosure form (annually)
- Mid-year report at the end of each fall semester (annually)
- End-of-Year report at the end of each spring semester (annually)
- Senior exit report during final semester in the UTSA Top Scholar program
- Reflection report following any UTSA Top Scholar sponsored enrichment activity

_____ 4. I am required to attend all scheduled meetings with UTSA Top Scholar program staff at least once each semester, in addition to any All Scholar meetings.

_____ 5. I am expected to be engaged in all UTSA Top Scholar program activities and the Honors College.

_____ 6. I agree to the use of my name and image for purposes of describing and promoting the UTSA Top Scholar.

Loss of scholarship:
- If for some reason I fail to maintain eligibility or decide for personal reasons to withdraw from the UTSA Top Scholar program, my scholarship benefits will be terminated.
- The scholarship is awarded to students attending The University of Texas at San Antonio. If I choose to withdraw from the University, the acceptance agreement made between me and the UTSA Top Scholar program is null and void.
- The program administrators of The University of Texas at San Antonio in their sole discretion, may condition or revoke my scholarship at any time for my failure to comply with this Agreement, or for acts or omissions which they determine to be inconsistent with: (1) exemplary standards of honesty, tolerance, integrity, honor and moral and ethical behavior; (2) the UTSA Top Scholar program Handbook, as amended from time to time; and/or (3) the UTSA Top Scholar program.

The UTSA Top Scholar program will provide the following, to be renewed each year for the Scholar's four years of undergraduate enrollment, assuming the Scholar has met the terms of the Top Scholar Program:
- The last dollar up to the Cost of Attendance, including tuition and mandatory fees and room and board as calculated by the Office of Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services at The University of Texas at San Antonio
- Additional funding for approved enrichment programs and one travel abroad experience
- Costs associated with any UTSA Top Scholar program components and cohort activities

Signatures:

Scholar Signature _____   Date _____

Program Administrator Signature _____   Date _____

Please sign and return this form immediately

Appendix 2: Disclosure of scholarship funds

Disclosure of Scholarship funds

This disclosure must be completed and turned in by every scholar every year, even if you have no outside scholarships to disclose.

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Scholarship disclosure

You must disclose **all scholarships**, including external funds not routed through UTSA, to the UTSA Top Scholar program. This disclosure must be updated each year <u>and</u> whenever you receive additional scholarships or external funding. List all scholarships that you are receiving or plan to receive during the 2020-2021 academic year (upcoming fall and spring).

Scholarships awarded during the regular school year or at a time outside of the regular reporting schedule (e.g., not listed below due to the time of the award) should be reported to the UTSA Top Scholar program no more than 30 days after the award notification has been made.

Failure to fully notify the UTSA Top Scholar program of all scholarship funds received may result in loss of your Top Scholar scholarship.

Name of scholarship	Expected disbursement date	Amount	Is this a renewable scholarship?	Is this scholarship disbursed directly to you or to the school?

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

For office use only
Date received _____ Received by: _____

Last updated 6/19/2020 Meyer

Appendix 3: Global experience

Global Experience

UTSA Top Scholars are required to complete at least one global experience, and are encouraged to complete more if their degree plan permits. Funded opportunities should be directly connected to a scholar's academic, career, or professional goals as well as a connection to the Top Scholar pillars of knowledge, leadership, and service. Some examples of global experiences are, but not limited to, study abroad, faculty-led group travel, international research, international internships, and student exchange programs. Global experiences which do not have a credit bearing component will require additional justification and documentation. Scholar must enroll in HON 3951 while aborad. Program Administrators will provide information and resources on various opportunities, and assist scholars in connecting to programs and professionals in their area of interest. Scholars are expected to also individually explore options to tailor experiences to their own educational goals. All global experiences funded by the UTSA Top Scholar program must be registered with UTSA Education Abroad Services and International SOS. Scholars are expected to fully engage with the International SOS app (phone app for emergencies) while abroad. Due to the COVID 19 global pandemic this requirement may be waived if deemed appropriate by the UTSA Top Scholar program and Honors College administration.

The following guidelines apply to global experiences funded by the UTSA Top Scholar program.

Scholars must notify Program Administrators in writing of their intention to participate in a global experience by completing the initial funding request by the following deadlines:

Travel semester	Deadline to notify Program Administrators
Spring 2021	May 1, 2020
Summer 2021	December 1, 2020
Fall 2021	December 1, 2020
Spring 2022	May 1, 2021
Summer 2022	December 1, 2021

It is the responsibility of the scholar to apply, interview, and secure the global experience. Scholars should have a passport and preliminary research completed about the experience they want to pursue when they notify Program Administrators of an intention to go abroad. Scholars must provide Program Administrators sufficient information on the proposed experience so that the program's relevance to a scholar's educational and career goals is apparent. Global experiences must be programs that the UTSA Education Abroad Services office has deemed legitimate and safe for undergraduate students. An application must be submitted to the UTSA Education Abroad Services office within 2 weeks (14 days) of submitting a request for initial funding.

The UTSA Top Scholar program will fund the cost of one experience up to $7,000. In most cases, students going abroad during a regular long semester may also apply a portion of their tuition and fees scholarship funds toward the experience. All expenses greater than allowable scholarship plus up to $7,000 are the responsibility of the scholar. Application fees, and personal and indirect costs (local transportation, spending money, side trips, etc.) are the responsibility of the scholar. A request for early disbursement must be submitted through the UTSA Top Scholar program to the Office of Student Financial Aid no later than the beginning of the semester prior to the scheduled experienced. Scholars are highly encouraged to also seek funding through individual departments and outside foundations (such as the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship) to help pay for global experiences. All scholars requesting funding should submit a budget using the template provided by the UTSA Education Abroad Services office. Receipts and other confirmations of costs and payments made will need to be submitted as soon as possible.

All Scholars are expected to create, and update at least once per week, a blog documenting their global experience. The blog address must be created and identified no later than one full calendar week prior to departure on the trip. The exact format for the blog is unspecified but must include an acknowledgement of the UTSA Top Scholar program for funding the opportunity.

After the experience is completed, scholars are responsible for securing any and all documents, including transcripts and syllabi, needed for academic credit to be awarded. Scholars must submit an enrichment report to Program Administrators no later than 2 weeks (14 calendar days) after returning from the experience.

Reflection Rubric

Within 14 days of returning from the Global Experience scholars are required to provide a written report to the UTSA Top Scholar program. The exact format and length of this report is not prescribed. However, this report should include, at a minimum,

> (1) reason for choosing this particular Global Experience
>
> (2) a plan of action for sharing lessons learned while abroad with fellow scholars, and
>
> (3) 3-5 items discovered or learned from the time abroad related to personal, academic, or career goals.

Scholars are expected to share photos during and after their time abroad which the UTSA Top Scholar program may use in marketing, presentations to on and off campus partners, and other public relations materials.

Scholars are expected to participate in the Honors College Experiential Learning Fair following their return from abroad. The poster for the fair must include an acknowledgement of the UTSA Top Scholar program.

UTSA Top Scholar Global Experience
Request for funding

UTSA Top Scholars are required to complete at least one global experience. Some examples of global experiences are, but not limited to, travel abroad, faculty-led group travel, local cultural immersion/festival organization, international research, and student trade programs. It is the responsibility of the scholar to apply, interview, and secure the global experience no later than the stated deadlines outlined in the UTSA Top Scholar handbook. Study Abroad experiences must be programs that the UTSA Education Abroad Services office has deemed legitimate and safe for undergraduate students. An application must be submitted to the UTSA Education Abroad Services office within 2 weeks (14 days) of submitting this request.

The UTSA Top Scholar program will fund the cost of the ex̶̶̶̶̶̶ to $7,000. Scholars going abroad during a regular long semester may also apply ̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶scholarships funds toward the experience. All expenses greater than the allowa̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶00, passport fees, application fees, and personal and indirect costs (loc̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶̶ ̶money, side trips, etc.) are the responsibility of the scholar.

Name of Scholar:	
Semester abr̶̶̶	
Current ̶̶̶̶̶ **expi**̶̶	
Name ̶̶̶	
Locatio̶̶̶ **ogram:**	
Faculty point of contact (if any):	
Estimated total cost of experience:	
First payment deadline:	
Final payment deadline:	

Along with this form, provide a written statement detailing (1) why you have chosen this particular program, (2) how it fits into your career and school plans, and (3) how you plan to bring something from your time abroad back to the Top Scholar program (not a souvenir, but something that you might learn and be able to share with your fellow scholars – you will also be expected to keep blog while you are abroad, sharing your experience with your fellow scholars in that way).

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UTSA Top Scholar Global Experience Funding agreement

UTSA Top Scholars are required to complete at least one global experience. Some examples of global experiences are, but not limited to, travel abroad, faculty-led group travel, local cultural immersion/festival organization, international research, and student trade programs. It is the responsibility of the scholar to apply, interview, and secure the global experience no later than the stated deadlines outlined in the UTSA Top Scholar handbook. Study Abroad experiences must be programs that the UTSA Education Abroad Services office has deemed legitimate and safe for undergraduate students.

The UTSA Top Scholar program will fund the cost of the experience up to $7,000. Scholars going abroad during a regular long semester may also apply up to $10,000 of scholarships funds toward the experience. All expenses greater than the allowable scholarship plus $7,000, application fees, and personal and indirect costs (local transportation, spending money, side trips, etc.) are the responsibility of the scholar. Outside scholarships must be disclosed to the Top Scholar program and will be subtracted from the allowable cost of the experience.

Name of Scholar:	
Semester abroad:	
Departure date:	
Return date:	
Name of program:	
Location of p...	
Faculty point o... any):	
Estimated total cost of experience:	
Estimated expense paid by Top Scholar program:	

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By initialing the following statements and signing below, the UTSA Top Scholar accepting funds agrees:

_____ I am fully accepted into a global experience program approved by the UTSA Top Scholar program, the UTSA Education Abroad Services office, and my academic advisor. I understand and agree to submit appropriate documentation upon my return for academic credit to be awarded.

_____ All expenses greater than the allowable scholarship plus $7,000, application fees, and personal and indirect costs (local transportation, spending money, side trips, etc.) are my personal responsibility. Outside scholarships must be disclosed to the Top Scholar program and will be subtracted from the allowable cost of the experience.

_____ If my experience is non-credit bearing, I will enroll in and successfully complete HON 3951. I understand there is a cost for this course and that it is my responsibility to make sure this bill is paid by the regularly scheduled deadlines.

_____ I will remain in regular communication with UTSA Top Sch... ...inistrators about all aspects of the Global Experience once in country. I fully underst... ...lan formulated with the UTSA Top Scholar program administration.

_____ I will give a presentation to UTSA... ...op Scholar program administrators at a mutually agreed upon time... ...ding a presentation at the Honors College Experiential Learning Fair...

_____ I have established a b... ...per the communication plan formulated with Top Scholar program a... ...wledges the UTSA Top Scholar program for sponsorship.

_____ I ... ...to the UTSA Top Scholar program within 14 days of returning from th... ...This report should include, at a minimum, (1) why I chose this particular prog... ...n of action for sharing some of the lessons learned while abroad with fellow scholars, ...-5 items that I took away from my time abroad related to my personal, academic, or career go... s.

_____ If I fail to complete any of the requirements outlined above I understand that a registration and transcript hold will be placed on my student account and that I may be required to pay back university funds already disbursed.

_____ If for any reason, academic, personal, or otherwise, I do not complete the Global Experience and earn full credit for the experience, I will be responsible for paying back any and all university funds previously disbursed.

SAMPLE

_____   _____
Scholar Signature   Date

_____   _____
UTSA Top Scholar Administrator Signature   Date

myUTSAID _____ Student's First Name: _____ Last: _____

UTSA

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Request for UTSA Top Scholar program Stipend Early Disbursement

This form is to be used to request an early disbursement of your Top Scholar Program study abroad stipend. You must realize that Financial Aid & Scholarships will, in good faith, disburse your Top Scholar Program study abroad stipend based on your indication that you will remain enrolled in and successfully complete your study abroad courses.

STEP 1: Indicate below that you understand and agree to the following statements:

☐ I am requesting to have my Top Scholar stipend for study abroad disbursed early. I am aware that if I withdraw from the study abroad program, or fail to complete it for any reason, that I will owe the funds back to UTSA.

☐ I completed the UTSA Education Abroad General Application Questionnaire and Budget Form via the Terra Dotta student portal.

☐ I have been accepted to my study abroad program by the UTSA Education Abroad department and I have committed to the program.

STEP 2: You must attach your confirmation e-mail from the Top ~~Scholar~~ that you are approved to receive the Top Scholar stipend for study abroad.

STEP 3: Please provide the dollar amount that ~~you~~ disbursement: $_____
Note: This amount must be a whole ~~dollar~~ ceed your Top Scholar study abroad stipend total.

- You must attach docume~~nt~~ ~~reque~~st for an early disbursement of the Top Scholar stipend for study abroad. Docu~~mentation~~ ~~rel~~ated to your program.
- Examples of ac~~ceptable~~ ~~includ~~e, but are not limited to:
  - A copy ~~of~~ ~~th~~e dates for your study abroad program.
  - A copy of ~~fli~~ght/travel expenses.

SAMPLE

STEP 4: Certification and Signature
Your signature on this document confirms your acknowledgement of the following:
- Any updates or request for additional information will be e-mailed to my preferred e-mail account as indicated on ASAP
- During peak seasons, there may be a 5-7 business day processing time for the request.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Office Use Only

RRAAREQ Code: ZTS1

Date: _____ Received By: _____ Processed By: _____ WebX Code: FA_SCH_Top_Scholar

(Rev. 3/6/17)

Page 1 of 1

One UTSA Circle | San Antonio, TX 78249 | 210-458-8000 | (800) 669-0919 | (210) 458-4638 [fax] | onestop@utsa.edu

The University of Texas at San Antonio

UTSA Education Abroad Services

Program Name: Third Party/Partner Provider - [COMPANY NAME]   **Updated:**
Program Location: [CITY & COUNTRY]
Program Term: [SEMESTER]
Program Dates: [PROGRAM DATES]

Items billed to your UTSA ASAP account:

UTSA Tuition*	0
UTSA Education Abroad Fees (application and program fee)	225
UTSA International Insurance Fee $20 x weeks of travel*	
UTSA ASAP Subtotal:	**$225**

Items you pay directly to program provider:

Program Fees/Instructional Fees/Tuition	
Housing	
Meals Included	
Program Activities and Excursions Included	
Transportation	
Books and Supplies	
Misc. (i.e. program application fee, etc.)	
Provider/Department Subtotal:	**$0**

Items you pay out of pocket (estimates):

Passport (U.S. passport)	
Immigration Fees: Visa*	
Airfare, Airport, Airport Pick-up, and Baggage Fees	
Transportation	
Meals / Non-Program Meals*	
Books, Supplies, and Transcripts	
Personal Expenses*	
Out of Pocket Estimated Subtotal:	**$0**

Total Estimated Cost of Attendance:	**$225**

Notes:

* Personal expenses will vary widely and include travel, shopping, and other personal spending

*Insurance charges: any partial week will be charged as a full week

Appendix 4a: Housing for 4th year UTSA Top Scholars, Class of 2021

Housing for 4th year UTSA op Scholars (Class 2021)

UTSA Top Scholars are permitted to move off campus, provided the following:

- The Scholar is in good standing with all aspects of the UTSA Top Scholar program, including academic and non-academic program expectations.
  - Scholars whose records indicate problems with tardiness, unexcused absences, and/or program disengagement will not be permitted to move off campus.
- The Scholar personally assumes all liability, including financial and otherwise, associated with off-campus housing.
- The desired off-campus housing is no more than 5 miles from the Main Campus. A list of apartments which cater to UTSA students will be provided separately.
  - Off-campus housing location cannot have a record of safety violations
  - Off-campus housing must provide the opportunity for an individual lease
- Prior to signing an off-campus lease the Scholar submits the UTSA Top Scholar Housing Form for 3rd and 4th year Scholars to the UTSA Top Scholar program, which lists the following:
  - Name and address of complex
  - Dates of lease
  - List of estimated costs (deposits, rent, utilities, etc.)
  - Names of roommates
  - Transportation plan (shuttle, personal vehicle, etc.)
- Changes to housing, including changes of expenses, roommates, transportation, or otherwise, must be submitted in writing within 10 working days (2 weeks) of the change, to program administrators.
- Roommates must be UTSA students; UTSA Top Scholars and UTSA Honors students preferred.
  - UTSA Top Scholars and Honors College students who live together allow greater opportunity for studying and the forming of collegiate learning communities
- The UTSA Top Scholar program reserves the right to disapprove housing payments at any time if provisions outlined above are not met.

Scholars who move off-campus will be provided a monthly allowance for housing and meals. This monthly allowance will be in addition to the scholarship paid to cover the exact cost of tuition and fees. The allowance will be disbursed through financial aid into the scholar's student account each month during the regular long semesters (August – May). This money will then be "refunded." We strongly recommend that scholars set up direct deposit so that monthly payments can be received as quickly and easily as possible.

Students who move from Chaparral Village to another on-campus facility (with no meal plan) will have the housing allowance disbursed in one lump sum at the beginning of the semester and the meal allowance disbursed in monthly installments via their regular student account.

For AY 2020-2021:

- The housing allowance will be $6,908.00 ($690.80 per month for 10 months)
- The meal allowance will be $3,660 ($366.00 per month for 10 months)

The housing and meal allowance is subject to change each year.

Students who choose to move from Chaparral Village to another on-campus facility must submit an application for housing via the regular Housing and Residence Life process.

Scholars entering their 4th year should submit notice of their housing intentions no later than February 1 each year.

Scholars may remain in on campus housing any time.

Scholars who move off campus must attend a budgeting workshop with financial aid prior to the move, and again annually each spring semester.

Resources for finding off-campus housing:

http://www.utsa.edu/studentlife/documents/pdfs/apartment-database.pdf

http://www.apartmentguide.com/apartments/Texas/San-Antonio/college-4mf/

http://www.apartmentfinder.com/Texas/San-Antonio-Apartments

Appendix 4b: Housing for 2nd, 3rd and 4th year UTSA Top Scholars Classes of 2021, 2022 and 2023

Housing for 2nd, 3rd and 4th year UTSA Top Scholars (Class of 2022 forward)

UTSA Top Scholars are permitted to move out of Chaparral Village, provided the following:

- The Scholar is in good standing with all aspects of the UTSA Top Scholar program, including academic and non-academic program expectations.
- The Scholar personally assumes all liability, including financial and otherwise, associated with the move.
- Approved housing for 2nd, 3rd and 4th year scholars include:
  - Laurel Village
- Changes to housing, including changes of expenses, roommates, transportation, or otherwise, must be submitted in writing within 10 working days (2 weeks) of the change, to program administrators.
- Roommates must be UTSA students; UTSA Top Scholars and UTSA Honors students preferred.
  - UTSA Top Scholars and Honors College students who live together allow greater opportunity for studying and the forming of collegiate learning communities
- The UTSA Top Scholar program reserves the right to disapprove housing payments at any time if provisions outlined above are not met.
- The housing allowance will be equal to or less than the cost of a room at Chaparral Village.

Students who choose to move from Chaparral Village to another on-campus facility (with no meal plan) will have the housing allowance disbursed in one lump sum at the beginning of the semester and the meal allowance disbursed in monthly installments via their regular student account.

For AY 2020-2021:

- The meal allowance will be $3,388 ($338.80 per month for 10 months)

The housing and meal allowance is subject to change each year.

Students who choose to move from Chaparral Village to another on-campus facility must submit an application for housing via the regular Housing and Residence Life process.

Scholars entering their 2nd, 3rd and 4th years should submit notice of their housing intentions no later than February 1 each year.

Scholars must attend a budgeting workshop with financial aid annually each spring semester.

Appendix 5: Mid-year and end of year reports

Mid-year report

An example of the mid-year report is provided below. This report is due in November each year. This form will be made available electronically each year.

Scholar Name:_____   Semester: _____

Academics

Current schedule of classes: Expected grade

Anticipated spring 20___ schedule:

How would _____ __-class and other academic experiences so far this year?

Professional and Leadership Development

What professional and leadership development activities have you participated in this semester? These may be experiences formally associated with UTSA Top Scholar or with UTSA more generally. Examples: SACNAS Conference, USPAA Scholar Summit, and meeting with Career Services

Which of these experiences have been the most beneficial for you? Why?

```
[                                                    ]
```

Which of these experiences have you found least helpful? Why?

```
[                                                    ]
```

What suggestions do you have for future professional and leadership development?

```
[                                                    ]
```

Community Service

What community service activities participated in since joining the UTSA Top Scholar program? These may be formally associated with UTSA Top Scholar or with UTSA more generally. Please number of hours you worked with each activity.

```
[                                                    ]
```

Which of these experiences have been the most beneficial for you? Why?

```
[                                                    ]
```

Which of these experiences have you found least helpful? Why?

```
[                                                    ]
```

What suggestions do you have for future community service projects?

```
[                                                    ]
```

End of year report

An example of the end of year written report is provided below. This report is due at the end of each spring semester before final exams begin. This form will be made available electronically each year.

Scholars are expected to attend at least one (1) end of year presentation and one (1) senior exit presentation in addition to their own.

UTSA Top Scholar End of Year Report

The purpose of this exercise is to give each Scholar the opportunity to reflect on, and then synthesize their experiences from the year, and to provide the program administrators a synopsis of those experiences. Additionally, this is a chance to look forward to next year as a team. This is not an essay exam. The intent here is to begin a dialogue about what we (you and the program staff) have completed, how those things went, and what we want to do in the near future. Questions have been written to help provide some structure while also allowing each Scholar to be creative in their responses.

- Present a professional PowerPoint presentation lasting 10-15 minutes to Top Scholar staff followed by 10 minutes of discussion with the staff.
  - o Format for the verbal presentation is not prescribed
  - o Professional dress
- Submit an accompanying written report with an updated resume and degree plan.
  - o Written reports should be submitted no later than 48 hours prior to the time that presentation is scheduled
  - o Report should address how you have embodied the UTSA Top Scholar 3 Pillars: Knowledge, Leadership, and Service
  - o Template for the written report is provided below

Scholar Name:_____   Semester: _____

What are a few of the major things you learned this year at UTSA?

In approximately 150-300 words, describe how you have grown during this year at UTSA. Expand text box as needed.

- **Provide a summary of things you have completed and accomplished during this year. This may include items outside of the UTSA Top Scholar program.**

> *In this section, address each of the three UTSA Top Scholar pillars: Knowledge, Leadership, and Service. Provide a list of items in each category with short, 1-2 sentence, descriptions as appropriate. Expand text box as needed.*
>
> - Knowledge/Academic accomplishments
> - Leadership/Professional Development
> - Service/Community Involvement

- **What has helped you the most this year?**

> *In fewer than 100 words, ___ have found to be most beneficial to you this year. Expand ___.*

- **Is there any ___ out this year that you would have liked to be different?**

> *In fewer than 100 words, explain what you would change, or what you would have liked to be different during your most recent year at UTSA. Expand text box as needed.*

- **What are your summer plans?**

> *In a few sentences, describe what you plan to do this summer, and why. How do your plans for the summer contribute to your long term goals? Expand text box as needed.*

- **Did you accomplish your SMART goals from the previous year?**

> *In a few sentences, tell us whether or not you accomplished the SMART goals for yourself and with staff members. Explain why or why not. Expand text box as needed.*

- **What are your major goals for 201_-201_?**

> *List 2-3 major things you would like to accomplish in the upcoming year. Expand text box as needed.*

- **How did you have fun this year?**

> *List 2-3 things that you had fun doing this year.*

- **How did you give back to the program this year?**

> *Briefly describe 1-2 things that you did to give back to the UTSA Top Scholar program or your fellow scholars this year.*

- **Share any other final thoughts.**

> *Take as much or as little space to share any final thou_____ ____ ___ _our performance, or the program related to the pre___*

SAMPLE

Appendix 6: Request for professional development, enrichment, and conference funding

Request for enrichment funding

UTSA Top Scholars are encouraged to participate in enrichment experiences offered through offices outside of the UTSA Top Scholar program. Examples of these experiences include, but are not limited to, experiences offered through individual academic departments, Alternative Breaks, the Civil Rights and Social Justice Experience offered through the Student Leadership Center, events with the Center for Civic Engagement, Texas Diversity Council events, experiences with the College of Business Center for Student Professional Development, and Inclusion Center Heritage banquets. Program Administrators will provide information and resources on various opportunities. Scholars are also expected to explore options on their own. Student affairs offices, faculty, and student organizations are excellent sources for finding enrichment experiences appropriate for undergraduates. Regular UTSA courses are not considered enrichment programming.

Scholars may apply for up to $500 per semester (including summer) and no more than $1,000 per academic year in enrichment funding. Scholars may not receive more than $4,000 total in enrichment funding during their time as a UTSA Top Scholar.

Scholars should submit a request for funding in writing to Program Administrators no later than 30 days prior to experience, or 90 days if the experience involves any kind of travel. Students participating in an experience as a leader will be given priority for funding. Requests for funding should include:

- Full name of the event and organization sponsoring the experience
- Dates of the experience
- Purpose of the experience
- Scholar's anticipated level of participation (student leader, session presenter, co-presenter, participant, etc.)
- Estimated costs (registration fee, lodging, and transportation)
- List of who will be attending with you
- List of classes, including professors, which might be missed

Requests for the UTSA Top Scholar program to fund experiences should be submitted directly to the Program Director by email. ***Reimbursements for enrichment activities will only be processed in the most extraordinary circumstances. Students are expected to make arrangements so that the program can pay directly for experiences.***

No later than 7 calendar days after returning from a Top Scholar supported or funded enrichment experience scholars must submit a reflection report providing an overview of the experience. The overall format of the report is unspecified, but should include (1) reason this activity was chosen, (2) several items discovered or learned from participating in the activity, and (3) whether or not the major goals of participating in this activity were accomplished.

Request for professional conference funding

UTSA Top Scholars are encouraged to attend professional conferences within their respective fields of study. Program Administrators will provide information and resources on various opportunities. Scholars are also expected to explore options on their own. Faculty mentors, faculty within the college of your major, and career oriented student organizations are excellent sources for finding professional conferences appropriate for undergraduates.

Scholars should submit a request for funding in writing to Program Administrators no later than 90 days prior to the beginning of the conference. Students presenting scholarly research will be given priority for funding. Requests for funding should include:

- Full name of the event and organization sponsoring the meeting
- Dates of the conference
- Purpose of the conference
- Scholar's anticipated level of participation (concurrent session presenter, co-presenter, poster presenter, participant)
- Estimated costs (registration fee, lodging, and transportation)
- List of who will be attending the conference with you
- List of classes, including professors, which might be missed

Requests for the UTSA Top Scholar program to fund attendance at professional conferences should be submitted directly to the Program Director by email. ***Reimbursements for conference travel, including airfare and hotel expenses, will only be processed in the most extraordinary circumstances. Students are expected to make arrangements so that the program can pay directly for expenses.***

No later than 7 calendar days after returning from a Top Scholar supported or funded enrichment experience scholars must submit a reflection report providing an overview of the experience. The overall format of the report is unspecified, but should include (1) reason this activity was chosen, (2) several items discovered or learned from participating in the activity, and (3) whether or not the major goals of participating in this activity were accomplished.

Request to attend annual Scholar Summit

The Undergraduate Scholars Program Administrators Association (USPAA) Scholar Summit is an annual meeting designed to be an intensive networking, learning and leadership experience that will challenge undergraduate scholars in new and unique ways. This 3-4 day summit, hosted by different scholar programs across the country each year, takes place in the late fall (usually November). The UTSA Top Scholar program can send 2-3 scholars to the summit each year.

Scholars should submit a request, in writing, to Program Administrators to attend the summit. If accepted to attend, the UTSA Top Scholar program will incur the cost of the registration fee and travel expenses, including transportation and lodging. Scholars will be selected to represent the UTSA Top Scholar program at the annual summit based on the following criteria:

- Academic standing and class (upperclassmen will be given priority)
- Previous participation in UTSA Top Scholar activities
- Engagement in university-wide enrichment activities
- Demonstrated leadership within the UTSA Top Scholar program
- Commitment to return from the summit and serve as an agent of change within the UTSA Top Scholar program, sharing lessons learned and being a leader among fellow UTSA Top Scholars

Requests to attend the USPAA Scholar Summit may be submitted directly to the Program Director by email.

No later than 7 calendar days after returning from the USPAA Scholar Summit, scholars must submit a reflection report providing an overview of the experience. The overall format of the report is unspecified, but should include (1) reason this activity was chosen, (2) several items discovered or learned from participating in the activity, and (3) whether or not the major goals of participating in this activity were accomplished.

Appendix 7: Faculty Mentoring

UTSA Top Scholar program mentoring initiative

Faculty are invaluable resources to Top Scholars. Academic learning begins in the classroom with instruction from expert, dedicated faculty. This learning extends outside the classroom where faculty mentor Top Scholars by encouraging them to engage in research, study abroad, develop grant proposals, attend professional conferences, and seek internships.

Scholars are expected to actively engage in the faculty mentoring process, including identification of a faculty mentor. This includes working with program administrators to identify research interests and academic goals, and appropriately narrowing those interests and goals for the purposes of finding potential a faculty mentor.

During their first year at UTSA, scholars should:

- Identify 2-3 major academic and career goals
- Identify a field and discipline interest
- Identify 2-3 faculty with whom they share common research or academic interests
- Conduct informational interviews, and independently learn more about faculty members' areas of expertise, and lab programs

Faculty mentors will be matched with scholars in the second year of study pending special circumstances. Scholars will meet with faculty mentors several times during each semester to discuss academic projects, professional opportunities, and development of post-graduate plans. Under the guidance of a faculty mentor, all scholars will develop, and maintain, a plan for professional development.

The following items are provided as guidelines for faculty mentoring a UTSA Top Scholar:

- Mentors will meet with students individually once per month during the first semester after being matched, and at least two times each subsequent semester;
- Mentors will discuss opportunities for research or creative projects in the students' fields of interest;
- Mentors will advise and possibly sponsor students applying for grants;
- Mentors will alert students to professional opportunities, such as conferences or internships;
- Mentors will annually review the scholars' Plans of Professional Development; and
- Mentors will encourage the students' development of postgraduate plans, such as applying to leading graduate programs and prestigious national fellowships, or seeking employment in highly successful companies, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, etc.
- The UTSA Top Scholar program will offer support in the form of funding and other resources for approved activities through enrichment funding that scholars can apply to receive.

- The UTSA Top Scholar program will provide faculty mentors a letter to be included in the faculty member's professional portfolio.
- Matches between mentor and scholar will be made in the scholar's second year of study pending special circumstances.
- At the end of each academic year mentors will be asked to provide feedback on their scholar and the UTSA Top Scholar program mentoring initiative.

Plan of Professional Development

The Plan of Professional Development (PPD) allows each scholar to explore available opportunities, to organize them into a coherent and well-reasoned plan of action, and to maintain maximum flexibility in achieving personal and professional goals. Scholars will bring to their mentors the rough components to be included in this PPD, including a resume or CV, a personal statement explaining their individual career goals and objectives, and a list of short and long term goals. These plans, which will look very different according to discipline and research area, will be further developed into a cohesive plan or portfolio in consultation with the faculty mentor. The plans are particularly important in guiding their tremendous academic talents and in developing their outstanding potential to excel in coursework, to undertake research and artistic projects, to assume leadership positions, and to engage in community service activities.

Suggested activities and topics for discussion

The UTSA Top Scholar program suggests the following activities and topics for discussion as a means to initiate conversation and foster productive growth toward a plan for professional development. All of these items may be adjusted and tailored as appropriate for varying disciplines and areas of study.

Scholar initiated activities and questions

- Compile a resume or CV, a personal statement explaining individual career goals and objectives (Scholar Story), and list of short and long term goals (SMART goals). Take these items when meeting with your mentor.
- Shadow a faculty mentor for a day. Learn what a day in the life of a professor really looks like.
- Read the latest publication from their mentor.
- Ask probing questions about a mentor's personal and professional experience. Examples include:
  - How did you decide to enter your profession? How did you get in to your specific research area?
  - How do you decide when and where to present your work?
  - What is the process for publishing in your research area?
  - Who are/were your mentors?
  - What was your process for finding a graduate program?
  - What are the top 3-5 programs in your area of research?
  - What do you look for in graduate students? What do you look for in new colleagues?

- o If you were preparing for a job interview, what would you do?
- o What has been your most valuable professional experience? How did you find and be a part of that experience?

Throughout the semester, the UTSA Top Scholar program will check in with scholars and mentors about the activities and discussions they are engaging in together.

Faculty initiated activities and questions

- Share 2-3 pieces of literature which have been pivotal to your own career development.
- Recommend 2-3 people for your scholar to interview or talk with who are doing great work in your area of interest.
- Invite your scholar to observe one of your graduate classes. If appropriate, have the student read 1-2 items to prepare for the class.
- Invite your scholar to attend a graduate journal club.
- Review your scholar's resume or CV. Make suggestions for improvement.
- Ask your scholars about where he or she wants to be in 3 years, 5 years, and 10 years. Make suggestions for actions to help them achieve those goals.
- Encourage professional experiences such as lecture attendance, conference attendance, and internships.
- Share stories and advice from your personal and professional journey.

Resources for Mentors and Mentees

Mentoring College Students: A Critical Review of the Literature Between 1990 and 2007, by Gloria Crisp and Irene Cruz - http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11162-009-9130-2#

MBRS-RISE/MARC-U*STAR Guide - http://utsa.edu/mbrs/resources/advice/FindMentor.pdf

Nature's Guide for Mentors - http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v447/n7146/full/447791a.html

Other Mentoring Programs

UNC Park Scholars - http://park.ncsu.edu/the-park-experience/faculty-mentoring/

Clemson National Scholars - http://www.clemson.edu/academics/programs/national-scholars/programs/mentoring.html

UTSA MBRS-RISE and MARC U*STAR - http://utsa.edu/mbrs/mentorapp.htm

SUNY New Paltz Scholars- http://www.newpaltz.edu/smp/structure.html

UCF McNair Scholars - http://mcnair.ucf.edu/mentor/index.php

Appendix 8: Petition to enroll in fewer than 15 SCH

Petition to enroll in fewer than 15 SCH

Per the UTSA Top Scholar Acceptance Agreement scholars are required to enroll in and complete at least 15 SCH per semester and 30 SCH per academic year. Any and all exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by UTSA Top Scholar program administrators via a petitioning process. An example of the petition is provided below. The most up-to-date petition and deadlines for submission are posted in Blackboard Learn.

UTSA.
Top Scholar

Petition for Top Scholar permission to enroll in fewer than 15 SCH

Per the UTSA Top Scholar acceptance agreement and handbook, all Top Scholars are required to enroll in and complete at least 15 SCH per semester and 30 SCH per academic year. Any and all exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by UTSA Top Scholar program administrators. As of spring 2020, requests for permission to enroll in a reduced course load requires approval via a petitioning process.

Complete this form fully and completely no later than the last day of the semester prior to the semester in which you are requesting reduced enrollment (e.g. if requesting reduced enrollment for spring, this form is due no later than the end of the fall). Attach a degree plan and Honors College Experience Plan that is current as of the time of submission of this petition. The degree plan must have been reviewed with an Academic Advisor (2ⁿᵈ – 4ᵗʰ years scholars) or Honors College Counselor (1ˢᵗ year scholars) and include all majors, minors, and certificates being pursued, and reflect plans for study abroads and study aways (e.g., Archer, internship, etc.) through graduation.

Student name: _____ UTSA id (abc123): _____

Current major(s) and minor(s): _____

Semester requesting petition: _____

Requested course schedule:

Course number (Ex: BIO 1404)	Course title (Ex: Biosciences I)	What requirement does this course fulfill?	Is this course online?

Number of courses remaining until graduation: _____ Current expected graduation: _____

Date of last academic advising appointment: _____

Date of last Honors counseling appointment: _____

How many future semesters do you expect to request an exception to the Top Scholar 15 SCH policy? _____

List all previous semesters that you completed fewer than 15 SCH?

_____

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For the following questions, use as much space as needed.

Why are you requesting an exception to the Top Scholar 15 SCH course load policy?

What will you do with the time gained from a reduced course load? Include pertinent references to extra-curricular activies. Be specific.

Student Signature: _____   Date:_____

_____

For office use only:

Approved: _____   Not approved: _____   More information required: ___

Signature of reviewing administrator: _____

Date of decision: _____

Administrator comments: _____

_____

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Handbook last updated August 16, 2020

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