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## **WKU REMOVES ACT REQUIREMENT FOR MOST SCHOLARSHIPS, MAKES \$5.2 MILLION MORE IN SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS AVAILABLE TO INCOMING STUDENTS**

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. – Western Kentucky University is increasing the affordability of a higher education by making a number of major changes to its [scholarship programs](#).

Beginning in the fall of 2020, WKU will no longer utilize ACT scores to award most academic merit-based and targeted scholarships for incoming freshmen. WKU will also 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 is also 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. “Our retention analysis, and national research, show that GPA is the best indicator of a student’s likelihood of success. We want a scholarship program that rewards students for their hard academic work over four years, not just their performance on a single day. One number should not define your ability to go to college or to be able to afford a WKU experience.”

With these changes, an estimated 80 percent of incoming freshmen will be eligible for some type of institutional scholarship. That’s more than double the percentage for fall 2019.

“Students often tell us that cost is an obstacle to their ability to persist and graduate,” President Caboni said. “We need to invest in our students and allow them to focus more on achieving their goal of earning a college degree.”

The new scholarship program also allows WKU to shape a first-year class that will graduate in four years.

“Incrementalism is not a recipe for success,” President Caboni said. “This is a bold move that positions us to make the WKU experience accessible while keeping our net costs tens-of-thousands of dollars below other institutions in the Commonwealth.”

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,” Dr. 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, President 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. “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.”

- WKU -

More WKU news is available at [www.wku.edu](http://www.wku.edu).

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Scholarships

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