



To: Department Chairs, Program Directors, and Directors of Undergraduate Studies
Department and Program Managers

From: Rebekah Peeples, Associate Dean for Curriculum and Assessment

Re: Undergraduate Prize Policies

March 20, 2024

As we look ahead to the annual prize submission process in AY 2023-2024, I write to remind you about the policies governing undergraduate prizes administered in cooperation with the Office of the Dean of the College.

These policies were updated in 2022 and apply to prizes for which there is discretion to set the amount and number of prizes.

Per University policy, prizes administered centrally through the ODOC prize process are listed in the annual Commencement program and recorded on the student's official transcript. Those administered locally by your department or program may be awarded to students on Class Day, but will not be listed in the Commencement program and will not be listed on a student's official transcript.

I. Amount of Cash Awards

For **University-wide prizes** recognizing distinction across the University (e.g., those prizes given out at the Class Day ceremony or for which eligibility is not limited to students majoring in a particular department), ODOC recommends that the value of the prize range from between \$4000 to \$8000. The prize amount should be linked to the competitiveness of the award, such that prizes with narrow eligibility should be at the lower end of the range and those open to a large population (e.g., all seniors) should be at the higher end of the range.

For **disciplinary prizes** that recognize merit within a department or discipline (for instance, distinction in a senior thesis or junior paper), ODOC recommends that departments and programs set the value of the prize at \$2500 per award, although a range between \$2000 and \$3000 is acceptable. Departments and programs are free to use general funds to "top up" prize amounts in cases where there is insufficient income to make awards in the suggested ranges.



For prizes designed to support research while honoring academic distinction, ODOC recommends a value between \$5000 and \$8000, and that the prize be awarded when possible to rising juniors and seniors so that funds can be used to support research for independent work. Note that the University's recommended summer stipend amount is \$700 per week, which represents a student's likely summer living expenses.

II. Number of Awards

In keeping with donors' intention to recognize superior achievement, ODOC recommends that selection committees choose a single winner for each prize. If more than one winner is selected, the full amount should be awarded to each of the two co-winners.

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III. Future Planning

Whenever possible, prize balances available to departments and programs have been adjusted to facilitate awards in these ranges for the current prize cycle. Prize funds may also carry over small deficits to the following fiscal year, with the expectation that future earnings will grow to cover the recommended amounts.

As always, departments and programs that seek to establish new prizes should first discuss their goals with the Office of Advancement.

More information about the annual prize process will follow later this spring, with specific instructions about recognizing students in the current academic year.

In the meantime, please feel free to contact me with your policy questions and Vicky Glosson for assistance with procedural questions.

cc: Robert Berness, University Counsel, Office of the General Counsel
Jill Dolan, Dean of the College
Vicky Glosson, Program Manager, Office of the Dean of the College
Marianne King, Finance and Special Projects Coordinator, Office of the Dean of the College
Catherine Kossou, Senior Associate Dean for Finance and Administration, Office of the Dean of the College
Peter Krivcov, Director of Gift Accounting, Office of the VP for Finance and Treasurer
Tracy Kueny, Senior Financial Manager, Office of the Dean of the College
Steven Semenuk, Assistant Vice President for Planning, Budget & Analysis, Office of the VP for Finance & Treasurer
Tatiana Tkachuk, Budget Analyst, Office of the VP for Finance & Treasurer