

College Merit Scholarship Guide

Updated for the 2026-27 / Fall 2027 application cycle

Verified and refreshed August 20, 2026

What changed: outdated links were replaced where current official pages were available; Davidson was corrected to Davidson College; scholarship deadlines and award amounts were added when officially published; University of Richmond was added as a strong merit-aid option. No school was removed solely for lacking a fixed published award amount.

Important: Amounts and deadlines can change during the admission cycle. “Not yet posted” or “varies” is used instead of guessing. Always re-check the linked official page before submitting an application.

How to use this guide Prioritize the earliest scholarship deadline, not the regular admission deadline. For full-ride or honors-based awards, expect separate essays, nominations, interviews, or Honors College applications even when general merit aid is automatic.

UNC System Schools

School	Merit award / amount	Deadline / timing	Official link
Appalachian State University	Chancellor’s Scholarship: full institutional costs for 8 semesters. Other first-year awards vary.	Nov. 15, 2026 priority scholarship/Honors consideration.	Official page
East Carolina University	Brinkley-Lane Scholars: fully funded tuition, fees, room and board + \$5,000 study-abroad stipend. Honors College Fellows: \$15,000 over 4 years.	Dec. 1, 2026 Honors College application.	Official page
Elizabeth City State University	Chancellor’s Academic Scholarship: full tuition, fees, housing, meals and textbooks for 4 years. UNC Campus Scholarship: up to \$3,000/year for eligible NC residents.	Foundation scholarship deadline for 2026-27 was June 30, 2026; Fall 2027 deadline not yet posted.	Official page
Fayetteville State University	Automatic merit: Platinum \$5,000/year; Gold \$3,000/year; Silver \$2,000/year. Competitive “debt-free” awards also available.	No separate merit application; awards continue until funds are depleted. Apply early.	Official page
North Carolina A&T State University	Honors Distinguished Scholars (Cheatham-White, Dowdy, February One): premier full-ride awards; Cheatham-White covers tuition, fees, housing, meals, books, laptop, supplies, travel and personal expenses.	Nov. 15, 2026 priority Honors/Distinguished Scholars deadline.	Official page
North Carolina Central University	Chancellor’s Cycle of Success: \$7,500 / \$3,500 / \$2,500 award levels. Cheatham-White: fully funded 4-year scholarship.	Apply/enroll early; 2027-28 test scores optional. May 1, 2027 enrollment confirmation.	Official page
NC State University	Park Scholarship: approx. \$129,000 in-state or \$244,000 out-of-state for Class of 2031, plus enrichment support.	Nov. 1, 2026: both NC State admission and Park Scholarship applications due.	Official page

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UNC Asheville	University Merit Award: amount varies by residency and academic profile; renewable up to 4 years.	Fall 2027 amount/deadline not yet posted; first-year applicants are considered when applying by the regular decision deadline.	Official page
UNC-Chapel Hill	University merit awards are limited; major external merit programs include Morehead-Cain and Robertson Scholars. Amounts range up to full cost of attendance, depending on program.	Program-specific nomination/application deadlines; check each program early in senior year.	Official page
UNC Charlotte	NinerScholars awards vary; Martin Scholars and other competitive merit awards may require separate applications.	Portal opens late Oct.; first-year deadline Feb. 15 (current published timeline). Some programs have earlier deadlines (e.g., Dec. 1).	Official page
UNC Greensboro	Blue & Gold merit awards vary. Honors Scholar awards include \$35,750-\$40,000 total, and selected full-cost awards.	Jan. 15 priority for first-year merit; Honors application requirements may apply.	Official page
UNC Pembroke	Merit scholarships: amounts vary. Maynor Honors awards include unmet tuition/fees/room/board support and Honors Scholar Fellowships.	Automatic consideration for many awards; separate apply-to scholarships may have their own deadlines.	Official page
UNC School of the Arts	Institutional scholarships may be based on artistic merit (audition/interview), need, or both; amounts vary by arts school.	FAFSA priority: first day of February. Artistic scholarship timing varies by school/program.	Official page
UNC Wilmington	University and departmental scholarships vary; many are merit- and/or need-based.	Fall 2027 award amounts/deadlines vary by scholarship; use the official scholarship portal/current financial aid page.	Official page
Western Carolina University	Catamount Commitment (latest posted class): \$1,000-\$3,000/year based on weighted GPA; other WCU scholarships vary.	WCU Scholarship Application opens Oct. 1 and is due Feb. 1.	Official page
Winston-Salem State University	Institutional and donor-funded scholarships include merit-based awards; amounts vary by fund.	Deadlines vary; verify in the current scholarship portal after admission.	Official page

Private & Out-of-State Schools

School	Merit award / amount	Deadline / timing	Official link
Davidson College	John M. Belk Scholarship: comprehensive cost (tuition, fees, food, housing) plus \$10,000 in special opportunity stipends.	Nov. 1 nomination; Nov. 15 admission application for nominees.	Official page

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Duke University	Duke-administered merit scholarships cover tuition, mandatory fees, housing and standard meal plan for 4 years. Most require no separate application; Robertson is an exception.	Based on Duke admission application; Robertson has a separate program deadline.	Official page
Elon University	Engagement Scholarship: \$5,000/year + one-time \$2,000 grant. Honors Program: \$15,000/year plus \$12,000 Presidential Scholarship and \$1,000 global study grant. Fellows: typically \$8,000 + \$1,000 global grant.	Admission by Nov. 1 for Fellows consideration; Fellows application Nov. 10 (current program page).	Official page
High Point University	Merit scholarships: \$5,000 to full tuition. Presidential Founders awards average \$40,000-full tuition; other levels commonly \$10,000-\$20,000/year.	Nov. 15 priority for full Presidential/High Point Scholars consideration.	Official page
Wake Forest University	Competitive merit scholarships include Carswell, Gordon, Reynolds and Presidential awards. Some cover full tuition; amounts and selection vary by award.	Merit consideration tied to admission application; check current official merit page for the Fall 2027 cycle.	Official page
University of South Carolina	Nonresident Academic Scholar packages: about \$6,500-\$30,000/year. Top Scholars (Stamps/McNair/Horseshoe) can exceed \$147,000-\$219,000 over 4 years including tuition reduction/enrichment.	Nov. 15 for Top Scholars/Honors; Dec. 1 for general merit consideration.	Official page
Clemson University	First-year recruiting scholarships range from \$500/year to full cost of attendance; automatic evaluation from admission application.	Jan. 1 admission application; required materials by Jan. 10 for recruiting scholarship consideration.	Official page
Coastal Carolina University	Merit examples: Presidential \$6,000 in-state / up to out-of-state tuition-level award; other awards typically \$2,000-\$13,000+ depending on residency and level.	Admit by Jan. 1 or until funds are exhausted (current published merit guidance).	Official page
College of Charleston	Merit and Honors scholarships vary in amount; competitive awards are based on the admission record and scholarship criteria.	Fall 2027-specific merit amounts/deadlines not clearly posted yet; verify on the current official scholarship page.	Official page
University of Georgia	Foundation Fellowship and other academic scholarships offer substantial merit funding; exact award packages vary by program/residency.	Nov. 1, 2026 Foundation Fellowship application deadline for Fall 2027.	Official page
University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Out-of-State Volunteer: \$3,000-\$18,000/year. In-State Volunteer: \$3,000-\$9,000/year. Chancellor's awards: \$5,000-\$10,000/year.	Nov. 1 for competitive scholarships; Dec. 15/Jan. 5 deadlines apply to several automatic/institutional awards depending on residency.	Official page
University of Virginia	Jefferson/Walentas Scholarships: full cost of attendance for 4 years. UVA Achievement Award: full tuition for eligible Virginians.	Jefferson/Walentas are nomination-based; local nomination deadlines vary by region/school.	Official page

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Virginia Tech	University, college and Honors merit scholarships vary. General Scholarship Application is required for many opportunities.	Jan. 22 priority deadline for General Scholarship Application and FAFSA; some Honors recruitment scholarships close earlier.	Official page
Auburn University	Merit scholarship amounts vary by academic profile and residency; additional general/departmental scholarships use AUSOM.	Dec. 1, 2026: complete admission file/test scores for merit consideration; early Feb. 2027 financial aid/AUSOM priority.	Official page
Florida State University	Presidential Scholars: \$42,000 over 4 years + out-of-state tuition waiver for nonresidents. Stamps: up to full estimated cost of attendance + \$20,000 enrichment. OOS National Merit package approx. \$91,808 over 4 years.	Dec. 1 Honors/Presidential Scholars supplemental deadline; National Merit first-choice deadline May 1. Apply early because funds are limited.	Official page
University of Florida	Limited freshman merit awards; recent published in-state levels include up to \$5,000-\$10,000/year depending on award. About 10% of admitted freshmen receive a merit scholarship.	No separate scholarship application; admission application is used. Notifications generally by mid-March.	Official page
University of Mississippi (Ole Miss)	2026-27 nonresident Academic Merit: \$3,000-\$20,790/year depending on GPA/test scores. National Merit package can include full tuition + standard double room + nonresident fee.	Jan. 10, 2027 Freshman Scholarship/CAP application for competitive awards; automatic merit based on admission/qualifying scores.	Official page
Vanderbilt University	Signature merit awards (Ingram, Cornelius Vanderbilt, Chancellor's) generally provide full tuition, with program-specific additional benefits.	Dec. 1 is the long-standing merit scholarship application deadline; verify the Fall 2027 portal date once posted.	Official page
Sweet Briar College	Academic merit scholarships are automatically considered; performing arts scholarships are also available. Current award tiers vary by GPA and program.	Academic awards generally considered with admission; performing arts deadlines vary by audition/application.	Official page
University of Miami	Merit scholarships range from several thousand dollars to full tuition/full cost of attendance for premier awards such as Stamps, Singer, Weeks and Hammond.	Premier scholarship consideration generally requires Early Decision I/Early Action by Nov. 1; program-specific requirements apply.	Official page
University of Alabama	2027 automatic merit scholarships published for incoming freshmen; award varies by GPA/test score. Competitive scholarships also available.	For Fall 2027, official scholarship materials indicate Dec. 4, 2026 for many freshman competitive/automatic merit materials; later automatic consideration may be funds-available.	Official page

School	Merit award / amount	Deadline / timing	Official link
University of Richmond	Richmond Scholars: full tuition + housing + food. Presidential Scholarship: one-third tuition. Oliver Hill Scholars: one-half tuition.	Dec. 1 for Richmond Scholars; Jan. 1 for Presidential/Oliver Hill consideration.	Official page

Quick deadline watchlist

Nov. 1, 2026: NC State Park; Davidson Belk nomination; University of Tennessee competitive scholarships; many Early Action / premier scholarship programs.

Nov. 15, 2026: App State priority; NC A&T Honors Distinguished Scholars; South Carolina Top Scholars; High Point priority.

Dec. 1, 2026: ECU Honors; Auburn merit file; Vanderbilt merit (typical/current standing deadline); Richmond Scholars; FSU Honors/Presidential Scholars.

Jan. 1-22, 2027: Clemson Jan. 1/10; Ole Miss Jan. 10; UNCG Jan. 15; Virginia Tech Jan. 22; several general university scholarship portals.

Feb. 1-15, 2027: Western Carolina Feb. 1; UNC Charlotte Feb. 15; many institutional scholarship portals close in this window.

Research note: This guide uses official university scholarship/admission pages available as of August 20, 2026. Where a Fall 2027 amount or date was not yet published, the table says so rather than carrying forward an older figure as if it were current.