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UVI Free Tuition Now Available to Part-Time, Online Students

New legislation expands eligibility for free tuition scholarships to include part-time and online students, maximizing financial aid opportunities for Virgin Islands residents pursuing their first undergraduate degree

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The University of the Virgin Islands has announced that part-time and online students are now eligible for the Free Tuition Scholarship program.

This expansion comes thanks to new legislation that broadens eligibility criteria to include more Virgin Islands residents seeking their first undergraduate degree. Additionally, new UVI policies have been implemented to help students maximize financial aid through the Free Tuition

Scholarship program and other supplemental sources, including federal, private, and local awards. New students are encouraged to apply to UVI now for the 2024 fall semester.

“We are extremely pleased with the recent legislation that makes it possible for more Virgin Islanders to achieve their dream of a college education,” said UVI President Dr. David Hall. “I would like to thank members of the 35th Legislature for their support and specifically Senator Samuel Carrión for sponsoring Act # 8814 that extends the free tuition benefits to a wider population. Furthermore, I would like to recognize the important role of the UVI Board of Trustees in making the necessary policy and procedural changes quickly so that students can take advantage of the benefits right away.”

According to UVI, to qualify for the Free Tuition Scholarship, students must meet the following criteria: be graduates of a USVI high school they attended for three or more years; have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher in high school; be seeking their first undergraduate degree (associate or bachelor’s); enroll as at least a part-time student (6 or more hours per semester); and be a current resident of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Students are eligible regardless of whether they graduated from a private, public, or parochial high school, and irrespective of age, graduation date, or household income.

“The new legislation opens the door to so many Virgin Islands residents for whom part-time or online studies are the only viable option due to work schedules or family obligations,” said Louis Gaubatz, vice provost of Enrollment Management at UVI. “This is an incredible opportunity, especially for individuals already in the workforce looking to earn a college degree and advance their careers. We are also encouraging current students to contact the Registrar’s office or a member of the enrollment team to check for eligibility under the expanded criteria.”

An important aspect of the UVI policy changes is how the Free Tuition Scholarship is administered. When an eligible student applies to UVI, the UVI Office of Financial Aid will now apply the Free Tuition Scholarship funding first towards the cost of tuition. If students require supplemental financial aid to cover expenses such as room and board, books, and other fees, that financial aid—whether federal (FAFSA), private, or local awards—will be applied after the Free Tuition Scholarship funding.

“This is an important policy change that essentially allows students to maximize the financial aid they receive to cover as many college-related expenses as possible,” explained Gaubatz. “Since the Free Tuition Scholarship program covers strictly tuition, students can unlock the ‘Plus’ part of the program by applying for federal aid through the FAFSA to cover non-tuition expenses. And students who, for whatever reason, do not want to apply for financial aid can still receive the Free Tuition Scholarship.”

For more information about the Free Tuition Scholarship program, visit freetuition.uvi.edu. To apply to UVI, visit uvi.edu. For more information and to apply to UVI Online, visit online.uvi.edu.