Second, it would be helpful if the purpose of the proposed changes was communicated in the EP. It is difficult to understand what is trying to be accomplished by the section added as well as actual language being used: “To the extent possible, the University of Hawaii strives to maintain consistent levels of financial assistance for students who maintain eligibility criteria for all years of enrollment in their approved academic degree or certificate program, provided there are no significant changes to a student’s corresponding academic, athletic, or financial eligibility. Due to limited amounts of funding in the various financial assistance programs, all sources of financial aid (Federal, State and Institutional) will be considered in order to renew students’ awarded levels of financial assistance in subsequent years. Therefore, eligible students are required to reapply for financial assistance annually by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).”

Second, it would be helpful if the purpose of the proposed changes was communicated in the EP. It is difficult to understand what is trying to be accomplished by the section added as well as actual language being used: “To the extent possible, the University of Hawaii strives to maintain consistent levels of financial assistance for students who maintain eligibility criteria for all years of enrollment in their approved academic degree or certificate program, provided there are no significant changes to a student’s corresponding academic, athletic, or financial eligibility. Due to limited amounts of funding in the various financial assistance programs, all sources of financial aid (Federal, State and Institutional) will be considered in order to renew students’ awarded levels of financial assistance in subsequent years. Therefore, eligible students are required to reapply for financial assistance annually by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).”

Two of the biggest flaws in this policy as written are as follows:

1. Because of its placement in the EP, the implication is that it requires the completion of the FAFSA “in order to renew students’ awarded levels” for all types of scholarships below where the statement is placed. This means that it could be interpreted that international students would need to complete a FAFSA when they are not eligible for Federal Student Aid in order to receive a renewal of an International Student Scholarship.

2. This statement requires students to “reapply for financial assistance annually by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid” for Federal Student Aid. However, the policy does not require that students APPLY with the FAFSA to receive the initial merit scholarship. Is that the intent? You can get an initial merit scholarship without the FAFSA but get a “renewal” you must complete the FAFSA? So to get around this, institutions could just not make any merit scholarships renewable?

Change made to clarify that only students eligible to receive federal financial aid are required to fill in the FAFSA.

We are very concerned about creating this as a requirement for students to retain their Achievement Scholarships. 1. This EP revision risks adding more complications to the student pathway and interrupting their ability to persist. According to UHM data:

AY2021: 34.85% of students awarded a merit scholarship did not complete a FAFSA
AY2020: 38.32% of students awarded a merit scholarship did not complete a FAFSA
AY2019: 30.77% of students awarded a merit scholarship did not complete a FAFSA

We recognize the concern, but the policy change will allow for wider spread use of scarce financial aid resources.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.

Depending on what is actually trying to be accomplished, I would suggest striking this entire statement at the top of the document and then just add the FAFSA requirement into each individual scholarship type that you believe should require a student to complete a FAFSA. Another option would be to put your “why” statement here in easy to understand language and then add the FAFSA requirement to each scholarship fund as applicable. Either make the FAFSA a requirement of the scholarship or not. Do not make it a requirement for subsequent renewals but not a requirement for the initial award, that makes no sense.

Based on comments from athletics and admissions officers, it was decided that only the renewal or consecutive awarding of the merit scholarships would require the FAFSA. The language was revised to make it clearer.