

Response to Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research **Exhibit C1**
Questions Posed by **Sept. 15, 2011**
Members

1. What are dates included in the data? 10 years? When did we start the program? We need data from beginning.

Arkansas partnered with Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) State Doctoral Scholars Program in August 1996 (15 years ago).

2. How much money has Arkansas spent on this program? Break out by institution since beginning. How much is SREB money and how much is from Arkansas institutions?

Arkansas has spent approximately \$4 million since 1996 to support 82 Arkansas scholars. See table below for breakdown of support by institution. Over the past 15 years, Arkansas' share of the cost to administer the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program has been approximately \$700,000 (about \$50,000 per year) of its \$4 million dollar investment. SREB provides in-kind contributions to support the operational administration of the program (e.g., office space, accounting, HR services, etc.). Institutional contributions include up to five years of tuition and fee support per scholar plus two years of stipend support, typically through assistantships.

Institutional Name	Total by Inst
Arkansas State University	\$300,000.00
Jackson State University	\$171,000.00
Mississippi State University	\$102,000.00
Oklahoma State University	\$17,000.00
Southern Illinois University Carbondale	\$60,000.00
Texas Christian University	\$17,000.00
University of Alabama at Birmingham	\$20,000.00
University of Arkansas	\$2,235,000.00
University of Arkansas at Little Rock	\$85,000.00
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	\$60,000.00
University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences	\$80,000.00
University of Georgia	\$50,000.00
University of Iowa	\$51,000.00
University of Kentucky	\$51,000.00
University of Maryland-Baltimore County	\$20,000.00
University of Mississippi	\$222,000.00
University of Missouri-Kansas City	\$51,000.00
University of New Mexico	\$51,000.00
University of New Orleans	\$51,000.00
University of Northern Colorado	\$51,000.00
University of South Carolina	\$51,000.00
University of Tennessee Health Science Center	\$51,000.00
Vanderbilt University	\$51,000.00
Wichita State University	\$51,000.00
	\$3,949,000.00

3. Who are the Arkansas recipients from the beginning of the program and where are they now?

Arkansas has supported 82 scholars; 60 attending Arkansas institutions and 22 attending out-of-state institutions. A table listing the scholars and institutions is attached.

4. What doctoral areas are eligible? Is there any preference to STEM?

All campus-based Ph.D. programs are eligible to participant in this program. The SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program only supports the Ph.D. The program does not support professional degrees and programs (Ed.D., J.D., D.B.A., M.D., D.D.S., Psy.D., etc.).

The SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program set as its goal to have 50 percent of its awards in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) disciplines. Currently, 36 percent of all awards are in the STEM disciplines. Over the history of the program, representation in STEM has been as high as 47 percent of all awards. In Arkansas, 31 percent of all awards have been to scholars in the STEM disciplines. The SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program makes a special effort to encourage applicants who seek Ph.D.s in those STEM disciplines which have a particularly low minority representation.

5. Are the universities paying for this or SREB? Are the universities currently telling prospects that they have no money for this program?

The state of Arkansas set a goal of supporting 15 scholars per year. This support includes the stipend given to the scholars while in the program, plus the fee paid to SREB to administer the program. In addition, universities are required to waive the tuition and fees for scholars.

The current cost for Arkansas to participate in the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program, based on a goal of 15 scholars per year, is \$375,000/year. Until the 2011-12 academic year, Arkansas was able to meet this goal using annual payments of \$200,000 plus unallocated Arkansas funds on account at SREB. Beginning in 2011-12, annual support of \$200,000 will effectively cut the number of Arkansas scholars able to participate annually from 15 to 8. Based on a three-year cycle of support for each scholar, Arkansas will go from supporting five new scholars per year to supporting two new scholars per year. For Arkansas to maintain support for 15 scholars per year as it has in the past, funding would need to rise to \$375,000 per year.

It is unclear what Arkansas institutions might be telling prospective scholars. SREB operates under the premise that even with reductions, as many scholars as possible should be encouraged to apply, especially those pursuing Ph.D.s in the STEM disciplines.

6. Is tuition remission a part of this program so that the 25k award is for other purposes?

Institutions contribute up to five years of tuition and fee support. The \$25,000 covers stipend (\$20,000), attendance at annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring for scholar and mentor (\$1,500), and regional program services from SREB (\$3,500).

7. How is a doctoral granting institution chosen for the program and why are some not eligible?

All Ph.D. granting institutions in Arkansas are eligible to participate in the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program. The SREB program does not support scholars pursuing degrees considered to be professional doctorates (Ed.D., J.D., D.B.A., M.D., Psy.D., etc.). All Ph.D. scholars who express a serious interest in a career in academe—teaching—are encouraged to apply.

8. How can we justify the disparity between the amount of money (25k a year for up to 4 years, right?) and those applying for a UA Walton award, for example, and the amount given for doctoral assistantships, which require WORK?

SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program awards are based on a three-year cycle of support at \$25,000 per year (\$20,000 stipend; \$1,500 annual meeting for scholar and mentor; and \$3,500 for regional program services). Stipend support for doctoral scholars varies widely in the academy. The funds SREB scholars receive is typically more than a scholar would receive in the humanities, but less than what a scholar would receive in engineering. What distinguishes the SREB program, like its motto says, “More than a Check and a Hand Shake,” is providing the other/additional kinds of support that lead to the desired outcomes and success.

SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program prides itself on being a good steward of the state funds provided to support the program. The goal, design, and function of the Doctoral Scholars Program are to ensure support, success, and placement of minority Ph.D. scholars. The nearly 90 percent retention/graduation rate and 80 percent of graduates employed in education are clear evidence of this success. Further, these percentages far exceed the national numbers for minority Ph.D. scholar success and academic hiring.

9. Are references or recommendations required?

Application packages must include letters of recommendation, a personal statement, transcripts, GPA and GRE scores. This additional information is a valuable factor in the selection process when applications out-number the slots allocated. By definition, all program applicants are qualified (they have applied and been admitted to graduate school on their own merit); therefore reference letters and personal statement take on added significance in the selection process.

10. What about entry GPA? Continuing GPA requirement?

The SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program does not have an explicit entry GPA requirement. Scholars who apply to the SREB must already be admitted to a graduate program before they are eligible to apply for the SREB Award. Thus, the de facto GPA is whatever the requirement is for particular departments/graduate schools — typically, above a 3.0 GPA and 1100/1200 on the GRE. Also, SREB abides by university/departmental rules and guidelines for being in “good academic standing” or making satisfactory academic progress. SREB staff is in regular contact with scholars and departments to confirm satisfactory progress.

11. Says all coursework must be completed before entry but how would that be possible? How can they get the work done before they get in? Does this mean the payment can be retroactive?

The only part of the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program guidelines that refers to scholars having completed all coursework refers to the Dissertation Scholar Award. This award is given to scholars who have completed all coursework, exams, and successfully defended their dissertation prospectus. The Dissertation award is a one-year award given to scholars who have reached “candidacy”— and are ready to write and then defend the dissertation.

12. Who makes decision as to continuance of \$\$? What are the determining factors? What are the standards?

The Arkansas legislature ultimately determines whether program funding is continued. Funding for the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program is provided through the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. ADHE maintains fiduciary and performance oversight. SREB annually (January) meets with all state participants in the program to report on expenditures and scholar performance data. Program performance data may be found on the SREB-State Doctoral

Scholars Program web site (click on Statistical Profile). Scholars may continue in the program from year-to-year as long as they remain in good academic standing in their doctoral programs.

13. Are recipients required to work in Arkansas? If so, for how long?

Scholars are not required to work in Arkansas, but they are strongly encouraged to seek employment (apply first) in the state that provides their support. Hiring practices in higher education discourage hiring “your own or your state’s” graduates. The idea is to bring new and fresh ideas and research to the institution. As a consequence, it is unlikely that a UA graduate will find employment in Arkansas without first getting experience elsewhere.

14. Are recipients required to be Arkansas citizens? If so, for how long?

In the application process for the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program award, a preference is given to but not limited to Arkansas residents in the application process. It is also preferred that Arkansas applicants pursue the Ph.D. at an Arkansas institution, but guidelines do not limit degree pursuit to Arkansas institutions. All Arkansas applicants must be U.S. citizens or have resident alien status.

15. What are the requirements of SREB for this program in terms of advertisement, recruitment, funding, and maintenance of records including follow up of those receiving funds and graduates? What is SREB administration cost of this program?

The SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program provides member states with the opportunity to share costs and efficiencies for services that individual states would find difficult to fund on their own. Now in its 18th year, the Doctoral Scholars Program has built the reputation as one of the nation’s best and most productive producers of minority Ph.D. scholars. The program has been recognized as such by the Chronicle of Higher Education, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, Inside Higher Education, Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Council Graduate Schools, and National Institutes of Health BEST Commission. The program has also received several prestigious national recognitions including the John Hope Franklin Award and the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring. The point is the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program has built a reputation that is known by scholars, departments, and institutions for its successful model of support and outcomes — graduating minority Ph.D.s.

In addition to the occasional bulletin board flyer sent to four-year and graduate schools, the program’s best advertisement and recruiters are its own graduates — 70 percent of whom are teaching, administering, or conducting postdoctoral research on campuses.

The SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program model was designed and staffed from its inception to be able to record, track, and provide credible data to states and institutions concerning the academic and employment progress of each scholar.

The administrative cost for the Doctoral Scholars program is \$3,500/scholar/year (based on a three-year cycle of support). It currently takes 134 fully funded scholars per year to pay for minimum program operations.

16. What are the responsibilities of ADHE for this program? How much money are we spending on administration?

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) serves as “pass through agent” for the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program. ADHE oversees funds distributed to SREB.

ADHE has no budget for administrative costs.

17. What are the responsibilities of the institutions for this program? How much money are they spending on administration?

Institutions do not have responsibilities or administration costs for the SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program. SREB provides all day-to-day fiduciary and operational management.

18. Do we currently have a shortage of minority doctorates in our institutions? What is data to support?

African American students are underrepresented in the number of doctoral degrees awarded; the situation is even worse for Hispanics and Native Americans. Further, the representation of African American and Hispanic faculty in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines shows even greater deficit.

Percent African American	*Graduate Enrollment (07)	Doc. Degrees(07)	Faculty (08)**
United States	13.1	8.6	5.4
SREB States	18.5	13.2	8.6
Arkansas	13.5	6.2	7.7

These data are taken from the SREB Fact Book on Higher Education 2009.

*These data represent all graduate enrollments (Master's and Ph.D.).

**On-third of African American faculty in U.S. teach at PBI/HBI; one-half of African American faculty in SREB states teach at PBI/HBI; Two-fifths of African American faculty in Arkansas teach at PBI/HBI.

19. Who is considered a minority for purposes of this award?

Scholars are considered underrepresented minority if they are members of a racial or ethnic minority (including African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latin American, or Native American).

20. Did the students who rec'd the awards actually graduate? And how did their graduation rate compared to other students'. Also, did the UA (or other schools) recruit for these students? If so, where? I believe that we have cooperative agreements with a couple of historically black schools. What were the GRE scores and GPA of these students? (If the scores weren't so good, was there a special mentoring program?)

In Arkansas, of the 82 scholars supported, 76 are either graduated (43) or still enrolled (33), representing a 93 percent retention/graduation rate. The overall SREB-State Doctoral Scholars Program retention/graduation rate is 88.7 percent. Of the 32 Arkansas graduates for whom there is employment data, 41 percent work in Arkansas; 80 percent are employed in education — 77 percent as faculty members. Currently, 19 Arkansas graduates are working outside the state and four graduates from other SREB states are working in Arkansas.