

STUDENT HANDBOOK

**POLICIES & PROCEDURES
FOR THE
SISSETON WAHPETON OYATE
HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM**



**Sisseton Wahpeton College
Old Agency Box 689
Sisseton, SD 57262**

Introduction

This Student Handbook has been compiled to provide information on the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Higher Education Grant Program. This program is operated by the Sisseton Wahpeton College under P.L. 102-325 Title XIII, Part B, of the Higher Education Tribal Grant Authorization Act. This office is dedicated to serving enrolled members of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate who are pursuing degrees of Higher Education.

The student handbook policies were developed by the Sisseton Agency School Board members from 1983 to June 1996, at which time the Sisseton Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Indian Education Programs Officially closed due to reduction in force. The Higher Education Grant Program is now being administered by the Sisseton Wahpeton College as a direct grant.

ELIGIBILITY:

To qualify for financial assistance from the SWO Higher Education Grant Program you must:

1. Be an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate.
2. Must be accepted for admission at an institution of Higher Education, working towards an undergraduate Associate or Bachelor's degree.
3. Must be enrolled full-time according to the College or University's admission standards. **PLEASE NOTE:** Students will be considered for assistance if they enroll in at least 9 credits, but their budgets must reflect this status. Students who are enrolled as **three-quarter time** will be funded at a lesser amount than what a **full-time** student receive.
4. Must show financial need as determined by the College or University's Financial Aid Officer. If the financial need is less than the set grant amount, SWO Higher Education Grant Program will assist up to the student's need; based on the financial aid budget form.
5. Freshman (30 credits or less) must maintain a semester grade point average of at least 1.50.
6. Sophomore, Junior, Senior (31 credits or more) must maintain a semester grade point average of 2.00.
7. Summer School Funding is not available.
8. **Term grade reports must be submitted to the Higher Education Office at the end of each term (semester).**
9. Students who are in default with any of the Federal Family Education Grant Programs may be considered for funding from the Higher Education Grant program if they have access to other sources of financial assistance in addition to the Higher Education Grant.
10. Post Graduate and Graduate level students will be considered at the end of the year for funding. **If funds are available** and will only be funded once per academic year.
11. Students receiving funds from the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Adult Vocational Training Program will **NOT** be eligible for funding under the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate's Higher Education Grant Program.
12. Application received after deadline, will be placed on waiting list.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

All students must complete the following in order to be considered for funding:

1. A complete application with signature.
2. Letter of acceptance from the College or University.
3. Financial aid budget form, completed by the Financial Aid Office at the school you will attend. We will also accept estimated budgets if they are signed by the Financial Aid Officer. If budget form is only for the Fall term (not academic year) then student must submit a budget form for Spring Term.
4. Proof of Tribal Enrollment.
5. Copies of grades from all Colleges and Universities previously attended, showing term GPA.
6. Students **MUST** complete a new application for each academic year in which financial assistance is requested.
7. Must provide fall term grades before December 15th deadline in order to receive spring term funding.

Waiting List Procedures:

1. It is the responsibility of the student to include and/or submit all information with their application.
2. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.
3. A student is added to the “waiting list” according to the **date that all** of the missing information has been submitted to the Higher Education Office and the application becomes complete.
4. Students on the waiting list will be reviewed when all the information has been submitted, **if funds are still available**. If funding is limited applicants will be awarded in the order of each complete application received.
5. If funds are not available the student’s application will not be reviewed until the following semester (only if it is during the same calendar year).
6. All students must complete a new application for each academic year in which financial assistance is requested. If you have applied for the academic year you do not need to submit another application for the spring semester.
7. Students must be enrolled in 9 or more credits in order to be eligible for funding

ALL APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM OFFICE BY THE DEADLINE DATE.

DEADLINE DATES:

June 15th of the year for the Fall semester or quarter.

December 15th of the year for the Spring semester or quarter.

AWARD PROCESS:

The Scholarship Officer will screen all applications received for eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student to call and see that their application has been received and if their file is complete. Priority will be given to full-time continuing students making satisfactory academic progress.

Award amounts per year may vary depending on the number of students eligible and total funds available for disbursement.

Students attending colleges that have quarterly or trimester terms will be awarded based on the colleges beginning term. Students must submit grades after each term this will help the Scholarship Officer to determine if student is eligible and if student is continuing with next term. Terms being funded must be within present academic year, academic year has been set.

Award notices will be mailed directly to the Financial Aid Office at the College or University attending.

Disbursements of scholarship checks will be made directly to the student in care of the Financial Aid Office at the College or University attending.

Each student is required to produce identification and also sign for receipt of the Higher Education Grant Program check each term. The actual funds disbursed to each student will depend on the schools disbursement policy. Note: SWO Higher Education Grant Program does not pay for past terms; award must be applied to present term only.

AWARD:

SWO Higher Education grant program awards eligible students up to \$1600.00 for the Academic year depending on each eligible student need (*\$1600.00 for a Full-time student and \$1200.00 for a 3/4-time student*). For students attending semester colleges the award will be split into two \$800.00 awards for each semester. For students attending colleges with quarterly or trimester terms the award will be split into two \$533.33 and one 533.34 awards for each term.

If a student's need is under the \$1600.00/\$1200.00 amount that students award will be broken down and awarded based there need. (*Example: if a student's need is \$12.00 for academic year, semester students will be awarded two \$6.00 awards and for trimester/quarterly three \$4.00 awards.*)

REFUND POLICY:

All Higher Education Grant checks not disbursed to the student must be returned to the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Higher Education Grant Program, Old Agency Box 689 Sisseton, SD 57262 for cancellation.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS:

All students funded by the Higher Education Grant Program must meet the following standards:

1. Maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 1.5 for Freshmen and 2.0 for Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors.
 - a. A Student will be placed on probation the following if he/she fails to maintain the required grade point average.
 - b. If a student fails to meet the required grade point average after being placed on probation he/she will then be placed on suspension.
 - c. The student on suspension must then complete 6 credit hours and successfully earn a grade point average of 2.0 or above before reinstatement of eligibility and continued funding.
2. In addition to maintaining a satisfactory academic progress per term, students are encouraged to complete their four year degree program within a period of five years or 10 semesters.

GRADE REPORTS:

All students funded by the Higher Education Grant Program are required to submit copies of grade reports at the end of each academic term.

STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

When accepting the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate's Higher Education Grant, the student must comply with the standards set by the Sisseton Wahpeton College.

The responsibilities of the student are:

1. To submit grade reports on a timely basis. Grade reports can be e-mailed to sjflute@swc.tc or faxed.
2. To adhere to the requirements of satisfactory academic progress.
3. To immediately report any changes in enrollment status to the SWO Higher Education Grant Program Office.
4. To notify the Higher Education Grant Program Office of any changes in the current mailing address.
5. To apply for other sources of financial assistance.
6. It is the student's responsibility to check with the Higher Education Grant Program to see that their file is complete.

The rights of the student are:

1. To receive fair and equitable treatment from the SWO Higher Education Grant Program Office.
2. To receive upon request an application for the Higher Education Grant Program.
3. To receive in a timely manner the information related to specific requests regarding eligibility and receipt of award upon request.
4. To receive the scholarships check on a timely basis.
5. To request an appeal hearing regarding any denial of Higher Education Program funds. A written appeal must be made to the Scholarship Program Officer and will be reviewed by the Scholarship Committee.

For more information concerning the Higher Education Grant Program please contact the Financial Aid Director or the Assistant Financial Aid Director at the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate's Higher Education Grant Program Office located within the Sisseton Wahpeton College in Agency Village, SD.

The office telephone number is (605) 698-3966 ext. 1183. Sorry but collect calls cannot be accepted. The fax number is (605) 698-3132 or (605) 742-0394. (E-mail address: sjflute@swc.tc)

The mailing address is: SWO Higher Education Grant Program
 Sisseton Wahpeton College
 Old Agency Box 689
 Sisseton, SD 57262

Academic year is defined as:

- **Academic Year** - August through May.

Fall and Spring semesters are defined for program purposes are as follows:

- **Fall** - classes taken August/September through December.
- **Spring** - Classes taken January through May.

Graduate students Eligibility

Students to qualify for financial assistance from the SWO Higher Education Grant Program you must:

1. Be an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate.
2. Do not need to be registered Full-time.
3. Must be registered for the entire academic year or completed an undergraduate program then registered in a graduate program in the same academic year.
4. A completed Financial Aid budget form but do not have to have a need; completed by the College or University's Financial Aid Officer.
5. Summer School Funding is not available.
6. **Term grade reports must be submitted to the Higher Education Office at the end of each term (semester).**
7. Post Graduate and Graduate level students will be considered at the end of the year for funding. **If funds are available** and will only be funded once per academic year, if funding is limited applicants will be awarded in the order of each complete application received.