STUDENT HANDBOOK

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

Sisseton Wahpeton College
Old Agency Box 689
Sisseton, SD 57262

MISSION STATEMENT

Sisseton Wahpeton College provides extensive, relevant, and varied educational programs and opportunities for the intellectual, cultural, and personal growth of all its community. The college values its role as an educational leader, embracing change and responding to the complex needs of those it serves.

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.

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ELIGIBILITY

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

1. **Be a member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate.**
2. Must be accepted for admission at an accredited institution of Higher Education (College/University), working towards an Undergraduate Associate or Bachelor's degree or *Certificate Program (must be 30 credits long or more to graduate with certificate) or Graduate Level Program (Masters, Doctoral)..
3. Must be enrolled full-time according to the College/University's admission standards (**PLEASE NOTE:** Students who are enrolled ***less-than-half-time, half-time and three-quarter time*** will be funded at a lesser amount than what a ***full-time*** student receives).
4. Freshman (30 credits or less) must maintain a semester grade point average of at least 1.50.
5. Sophomore must maintain a (31 credits to60 credits) 1.75 semester GPA.
6. Sophomore, Junior, Senior (31 credits or more) must maintain a semester grade point average of 2.00.
7. *Post Graduate and Graduate level applicants will be awarded with undergraduates.
8. Applications received after deadline, will be placed on the waiting list (Please see waiting list procedures).
9. Lineal Descendants will not be eligible for the SWO Higher Education Grant.
10. Funding for Summer School is not available.
11. ***Less-than-Half-Time is 1 to 5 credits, Half-time is 6 to 8 credits, 3/4 - time is 9 to 11 credits** and **Full - time is 12 credits** and above. Those in Quarter system or Trimesters will be awarded similar to the semester system.

GRADUATE STUDENT 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. Post Graduate and Graduate level students will be reviewed and funded with under-graduates.
3. The waitlist procedures apply just the same as undergraduate students.
4. Funding for summer classes are not available.

ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS

All students must apply ONLINE to be considered for funding:

1. Search link: **https://swcollege.awardspring.com/prospective/signin**
2. Click Register, click Create Account, select the "I agree to the AwardSpring Terms of Use and Privacy Policy", click "Accept Agreement", then click Apply to complete Application. There are a few sections to the application.
3. Upload proof of Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate membership, (Tribal ID or CIB).
4. Upload current FALL/SPRING acceptance letter from the College/University you are attending.
5. Upload Fall/Spring Unofficial Transcript showing current term GPA.
6. Students will be asked to send a request to be completed by the Financial Aid Officer at the College/University you are attending obtain address to send award.
7. Sign Release of Information Form.
8. There are two application sections. The Freshman section and the Sophomore, Junior & Senior section. Please apply according to your status.
9. SWC students will also be able to apply for Federal Work Study (FWS), & the South Dakota Education Access Foundation (SDEAF).
10. Students **MUST** complete a new application for each academic year.
11. Students **MUST** update information each FALL/SPRING semester.
12. Must provide spring term grades before **June 15th** deadline in order to receive fall term and funding 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. 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 (*Unless you have enrolled in a different school for the second half of the academic year (spring semester), then you will need to submit a new completed application, completed financial aid budget form signed by the financial aid officer at the college/university you will be attending, letter of acceptance.).*
6. *To receive funding students must submit unofficial transcripts for each Fall/Spring semester.*
7. Students must be enrolled in 3 or more credits and also must be enrolled in a degree program in order to be eligible for funding.

ALL APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED FORMS MUST BE SUBMITTED ON AWARD SPRING ONLINE search link: https://swcollege.awardspring.com/prospective/signin 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.

***Notice:** *"In the event of the SWO Higher Education Grant Program paperwork being accidentally sent to the SWO Higher Education Program, the student will then therefore be responsible for retrieving all the required paperwork, and submitting them properly to their respective SWO Higher Education Department."*

AWARD PROCESS

The Financial Aid Office will screen all applications received, for eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student to do a follow up to see that their application has been received and if their file is complete. Priority will be given to full-time continuing students making progress as outlined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) guidelines.

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

Students attending colleges/university's that have quarterly or trimester terms will be awarded based on their established terms. Students must submit their final grade report after each term, this will help the Financial Aid Office to determine if the student is eligible and if the student is continuing into the next term. Terms being funded must be within the present academic year.

Award notices will be mailed directly to the Financial Aid Office at the College/University the student is attending, and disbursements of scholarship checks will be made directly to the students name and in care of the Financial Aid Office at the College/University the student is attending. Each student is required to provide identification and also sign for receipt of the Higher Education Grant Program check each term. The funds disbursed to each student will be according to disbursement policy (**PLEASE NOTE:** The SWO Higher Education Grant Program does not pay for past terms, the award amount must be applied to present term only).

AWARD

SWO Higher Education grant program awards eligible students up to $2000.00 for the Academic year depending on each eligible students need (depending on need a student can be awarded Graduate Programs $2000.00 or $1000.00/semester and undergraduate *$2000.00 for a Full-time student, $1500.00 for a 3/4-time student, $1000.00 for Half-Time, or $500.00 for Less-than-Half-Time)*). For students attending semester colleges the award will be split into two $1000.00 awards for each semester. For students attending colleges with quarterly or trimester terms the award will be split into two $667.00 and one $666.00 awards for each term.

REFUND POLICY

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

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

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

1. Maintain a Class Level Grade Point Average (GPA) of 1.5 for Freshmen and 1.75 for Sophomores, for 2.0 Juniors and Seniors.
   A. A Student will be placed on warning on the following if he/she fails to maintain the required minimum grade point average.
   B. If a student fails to meet the minimum required grade point average after being placed on warning he/she will then be placed on suspension.
   C. Student on suspension must then complete a semester successfully and earn a minimum grade point average for the class level mentioned above before the student will be eligible for funding again.
2. In addition to maintaining a Satisfactory Academic Progress per term, SWC Higher Education Grant Program supports and commits to students in their future education goals. Students are also encouraged to complete their four-year degree program within a period of five years or 10 semesters.

GRADE REPORTS

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

ACADEMIC YEAR AND TERM DEFINITIONS

Academic year is defined as:

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

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

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

Trimester

Fall, Winter and Spring quarter defined for program purposes are as follows:

- **Fall** – Classes taken August through October/November.
- **Winter** – Classes taken November/December through February/March.
- **Spring** – Classes taken February/March through May/June.

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 in a timely manner.
2. To adhere to the requirements that are outlined in the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.
3. To immediately report any changes in enrollment status to the SWO Higher Education Grant Program Office.
4. Update any changes such as 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 Office 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 scholarship check in a timely manner.
5. To request an appeal hearing regarding any denial of Higher Education Program funds. A written appeal must be made to the Financial Aid Office and will be reviewed by the Scholarship Committee.

For more information concerning the SWO Higher Education Grant Program Award Spring please contact the Financial Aid Department at the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Higher Education Grant Program Office located within the Sisseton Wahpeton College in Agency Village, SD.

Apply ONLINE: **https://swcollege.awardspring.com**

CONTACT US

Mailing Address:

Sisseton Wahpeton College
SWO Higher Education Grant Program
12572 BIA HWY 700
Old Agency Box 689
Sisseton, SD 57262

Financial Aid Director: Aaron Keeble
Email: **akeeble@swcollege.edu**
Phone: (605).698.3966 – Ext. 1121

Financial Aid Specialist: Mary Jo Keeble
Email: **mkeeble@swcollege.edu**
Phone: (605).698.3966-Ext.1122
Fax: *Main* - (605).698.3132 **or** *Administration* - (605).742.0394