



Operating Policy

AY 2022-2023

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Higher Education Division Mission Statement

The mission of the Higher Education Division is to provide guidance and financial assistance to Ho-Chunk members who intend to pursue a postsecondary education. Scholarships are granted as a privilege with the intent that graduates will return to the Ho-Chunk Nation to use their knowledge and expertise to protect and strengthen the economic self-sufficiency and sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation.

Early Applications and Availability of Funds

Please be aware that all scholarships and support programs are subject to the availability of funds. Students are encouraged to **apply early** and submit their required documents as soon as possible in order to increase the likelihood of receiving a scholarship or support program funding. In addition, students attending four-year institutions and who are eligible for a BIA Scholarship must complete the additional steps required (see below). Further, students who are eligible for military benefits must use those resources before a scholarship will be disbursed from the Ho-Chunk Nation. These guidelines have been enacted to be good stewards of the financial resources allocated to us by the Ho-Chunk Nation Legislature.

Funding Sources

The Higher Education Division operates on two sources of funding: Net-Profit Distribution (NPD) and a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) grant. The NPD funds is money directly from the Ho-Chunk Nation gaming revenue while the BIA grant is disbursed to the Ho-Chunk Nation from the United States government and is available for need-based students who are attending a four-year institution. As earlier stated, students attending four-year institutions who are eligible for a BIA Scholarship must complete the additional steps required for that process.

Dr. Josephine P. White Eagle Gi Ska Inga (Clear Day)

Dr. Josephine P. White Eagle was a Ho-Chunk member who was known for her linguistic research and program development for early education to preserve Ho-Chunk language for future generations. She completed her undergraduate education at the University of Minnesota in 1961 and her master's degree jointly from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Department of Linguistics and Philosophy. In 1983, she received her Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) from Harvard University and held a post-doctoral fellowship at MIT.

She became a valued faculty member of the School of Education at Harvard and at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and was well known for her commitment to Native heritage, language preservation, and Community Development. She was a key member of the community in ensuring the Wisconsin Winnebago Business Committee constitution was approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). This BIA recognition, in turn, made it possible for Ho-Chunk members to get grant dollars for such services as healthcare, education, economic

development, and housing. Among her many talents, Dr. White Eagle was a musician, Sunday School teacher, and made beautiful baskets.

Dr. White Eagle is a role model in education for her courage, commitment, and is an inspiration.



Dr. Josephine Pearl White Eagle

Virtual Student Support and Advising Statement

The Higher Education Division is committed to student success. An integral part of our approach is through our advising team. Throughout the process, advisors from the Higher Education Division will work with students to monitor their progress, connect them with on-campus resources, and inform students about support programs within our department that may be of assistance. Our team is pleased to offer virtual advising sessions for the students' convenience.

While this is intended for the benefit of all students, we recognize that some students may not need additional advising. However, our advisors will attempt to connect, support, and assist all students, especially those students who may be experiencing academic challenges. The purpose of our advising focus is to ensure that our students move through the process smoothly and earn college degrees.

Financial Aid and Tax Filing Statement

Per capita and Children's Trust Funds (prior to May 4, 2018) must be claimed on your federal taxes because they were acquired through Indian Gaming. In order to receive a Ho-Chunk Nation Scholarship, students are required to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with accurate information. Accurate information includes a declaration of all funds acquired from Ho-Chunk gaming revenue (e.g. per capita) and the full value of the student's Children's Trust Fund, if applicable. Failure to completely and accurately file one's taxes and/or FAFSA will make any student ineligible for a Ho-Chunk Nation Scholarship until such discrepancies are resolved.

The Higher Education Division team may request additional documents (e.g. Student Aid Report) to resolve conflicting information. For more information about this requirement, contact the Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice at (800) 294-9343 extension 11301.

Written Plan

Students may be required to submit written plans and requested supporting documentation to the Higher Education Division Manager for approval. Written plans may be because of conditional acceptance, academic probation/suspension, or other circumstances during the course of a student's academic career. This process is designed to help the student understand their current situation and be proactive in resolving the issues. Students who would like further help in composing their written plan may contact the Higher Education Division via email at higher.education@ho-chunk.com.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

As a participant in the Ho-Chunk Nation Scholarship Program:

1. I agree that participation in this program is **strictly voluntary**; once an award is used, I acknowledge my requirement to abide by the minimum qualifications of the scholarship. I further understand violations may result in repayment of the award in full.
2. I hereby acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the rules, terms, and conditions of the Higher Education Division Operating Policy and agree to abide by said rules, terms, and conditions of the policy and scholarship award letter.
3. I understand that my failure to comply with all such rules, terms and conditions, currently existing or as amended or modified in the Higher Education Division Operating Policy, may result in probation, suspension and/or a financial obligation that is my responsibility.
4. I understand and agree if I withdraw, drop out, or am expelled from any classes, or if I reduce the initial number of credits, or classes taken, I must provide written notification to the Higher Education Division immediately as funding may result in the return of scholarship funding to the Ho-Chunk Nation Higher Education Division. I further understand that failure to do so may result in my probation, suspension and/or a financial obligation that is my responsibility.
5. I understand that the Ho-Chunk Nation assumes no responsibility and no liability for any effects that the Scholarship Program may have on any other funding anticipated or actually received by the participant, including but not limited to; Welfare, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicare, or other grants, scholarships and/or fellowships provided by any private, state, or federal entities currently existing or created in the future.
6. I acknowledge that the funding process may take several weeks to complete, and that it is in my best interest to apply early. I understand that the Ho-Chunk Scholarship I am applying for cannot be processed until all supporting documents have been submitted by me.
7. **I further acknowledge my financial responsibility for school fees and charges until awarded and sent to the school.**
8. I understand and agree that funds may be returned due to changes in my enrollment status or failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).
9. When applicable, I understand that it is my responsibility to **report the value of my Per-Capita Trust Fund(s)** when I complete my FAFSA.
10. I further understand if assets are not properly listed on the FAFSA, it will delay or make me ineligible for Ho-Chunk Scholarship until it is resolved.
11. I understand my tax filing responsibility to claim all required per-capita payments I receive from the Ho-Chunk Nation on my taxes and FAFSA each year.

I. Ho-Chunk Nation Scholarship Program

A. Purpose of the Program

The Ho-Chunk Scholarship Program provides both academic advising and financial resources to help enrolled Ho-Chunk members complete a progressive postsecondary degree. The recipients must attend a non-profit Title IV regionally accredited institution. The Ho-Chunk Scholarship Program is intended for students working toward degree completion.

B. Eligibility and Requirements

In order to receive funds from this program, both the student and the institution must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. All valid documents must include the student’s name or their student ID number.
2. Students must meet all of the following criteria in order to receive funding:
 - a. Be an enrolled member of the Ho-Chunk Nation by the start of the academic term. If the student is enrolled into the Ho-Chunk Nation during an academic term, **they will become eligible for scholarship funding for the following academic term.**
 - b. Be accepted/admitted into a progressive degree program that is financial aid eligible at a [Title IV regionally accredited non-profit institution](#):
 - 1) **All students** must submit a copy of their acceptance/admissions letter.
 - 2) **Graduate students** must submit a copy of the admissions letter from their Graduate School.
 - 3) **Conditional and preparatory students** are students who are not fully admitted to their institutions or to their academic program/majors. They may be eligible for scholarship funding with a written plan approved by the Higher Education Division Manager. See “C. Application Requirements.”
 - 4) “Progressive degree” refers to a student’s personal academic progress. Example: a student who has earned a bachelor’s degree will not be considered for funding toward a second bachelor’s degree, associate degree, or technical diploma. See chart at the bottom of this page.
 - 5) The Ho-Chunk Scholarship will be awarded to students attending academic institutions within the United States of America, our ancestral homeland.



- c. Complete the academic institution’s financial aid process with accurate tax and financial information. Failure to do so will result in “conflicting information” that must be resolved in order to receive full scholarship consideration.

- d. Provide a copy of the academic institution's Financial Aid Award Summary and/or Financial Aid Offer.
- e. Submit a current, itemized billing statement and/or invoice that includes the student's name, tuition, fees, etc.
- f. File federal and/or state income taxes, including per capita distribution for the appropriate year. This is so students can accurately complete the financial aid process at their schools and be considered for federal, institutional, and state aid.
- g. Complete and submit a Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application (HSA). The application and supporting materials may be submitted electronically to higher.education@ho-chunk.com except students who receive a BIA Scholarship. BIA Scholarship recipients must submit a hard copy application via mail.
- h. **All applications must be received no later than the first day of class. Applications received after that time will be deemed ineligible. For summer courses with varying start dates, please refer to the summer funding portion section of this policy.**
 - 1) Students are encouraged to apply early.
 - 2) Students will be provided a one-time only opportunity (per degree level) to qualify for scholarship consideration after the deadline with submission of a letter that explain the student's late application.
- i. Submit a copy of the student's Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from the Ho-Chunk Enrollment office or the Bureau of Indian Affairs to prove enrollment in the Ho-Chunk Nation. The CDIB must reflect the student's current legal name. Students will be afforded one full term to correct their CDIB, if needed.
- j. Close out any previously funded services (e.g. official transcript, trip report, etc.).
- k. Students who are found to be ineligible for federal financial aid may be considered for tuition, required fees, and books.
 - 1) Students on financial aid suspension from their academic institution may be considered for tuition, required fees, and books up to the program maximum, contingent upon submission of a written financial aid plan that indicates the student's corrective action to resolve the suspension. The plan is subject to approval by the Higher Education Division Manager and/or Financial Aid Administrator.
 - 2) Students on financial aid suspension will be required to participate in academic advising from their institution and/or with the Higher Education Division advising staff in order to return to good standing.
 - 3) Students may be able to appeal their financial aid suspension with their academic institution. The Higher Education Division can provide assistance to students with their appeal letter, if requested.

C. Application Requirements

Ho-Chunk Scholarship Applications can be obtained from the Higher Education Division by contacting the Education Department at (800) 362-4476 or higher.education@ho-chunk.com. A complete academic year file includes all of the following:

Note: All supporting documents must be received by the Higher Education Division's midterm deadline. Students that did not meet the midterm deadline must submit an official transcript no later than one month after the last day of finals in order to receive a scholarship for that term. The last day of finals will be determined using the academic institution's academic calendar.

1. Complete and submit Ho-Chunk Scholarship Applications to the Higher Education Division. A new application must be completed each academic year for each academic institution that the student attends.
 - a. Incomplete or illegible applications will not be processed. The applications will be sent back to the student to resubmit and/or edit.
 - b. **All applications must be received no later than the first day of class. Applications sent after that time will be deemed ineligible. For summer courses with varying start dates, please refer to the summer funding portion of this document.**
 - 1) BIA Scholarship recipients must submit a hard copy Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application via mail.
 - 2) Students will be provided a one-time only opportunity (per degree level) to qualify for scholarship consideration after the deadline with submission of a **letter of explanation** for late application.
 - c. Students must submit a degree audit from their institution once per academic year to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward degree completion.
2. File federal and/or state income taxes, including their per capita distribution for the appropriate year. This is so students can accurately complete the financial aid process at their schools and be considered for federal, institutional, and state aid.
3. Complete all requirements at the school's financial aid office, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is available online at: www.fafsa.gov. The financial aid office at the student's school will send the required Financial Review Form to the Higher Education Division. Scholarships will not be processed until the Financial Review Form is received from the financial aid office at the student's school. Students must also complete any necessary releases with their school to expedite the financial aid process.
4. Submit a copy of the academic institution's Financial Aid Award Summary for the term and/or academic year that the student plans to attend.
5. Students must submit a valid copy of their itemized billing statement from their academic institution for each term.

6. Submit a copy of the acceptance/admission letter for new, transfer, and reentering students.
 - a. Undergraduate students need an acceptance/admissions letter.
 - b. Graduate students need an admissions letter from their Graduate School.
 - c. Conditional and preparatory students may be considered with a written plan that **explains the conditions**. The plan must be approved by the Higher Education Division Manager.
7. Submit a copy of a valid class schedule showing: student name, school name, academic term, courses, and number of credits.
8. Submit a copy of the student's Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from the Ho-Chunk Enrollment office or the Bureau of Indian Affairs to prove Ho-Chunk Nation membership.
9. Students who previously received scholarships (other than BIA Scholarship recipients) must turn in an official transcript to close out any prior scholarship terms. Electronic transcripts may be sent to higher.education@ho-chunk.com from the school's transcript clearinghouse. BIA Scholarship recipients must submit a hard copy official transcript via mail.
10. Incarcerated students may have a simplified scholarship process because they may be ineligible for federal and state student aid if not attending a "second chance Pell Institution." If so, they are eligible for tuition, books, and fees through the Ho-Chunk Scholarship Program.

Note: Incomplete applications will not be considered for financial assistance and will be sent back to the student for revision.
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D. Scholarship Award Determination

Funding is determined once all documents have been received and evaluated. Scholarship Awards are based on information from the needs analysis prepared by the school's financial aid office as determined by FAFSA results, the school's budget, the student's enrollment status, valid billing statement, and remaining terms of funding eligibility. The Higher Education Division cannot retroactively award funding for a term that is no longer in session. All scholarships are subject to availability of funds.

1. Scholarship disbursement may take up to thirty days to be processed and mailed to the vendor after all documents are received, and the financial information from the student's academic institution has been reviewed by the Higher Education Division. The Higher Education Division does not reimburse students for previous student loans incurred at their own expense or any late fees imposed by the student's institution.

2. NEED-BASED STUDENTS:

Those undergraduate students who are determined to be “need-based”, according to the academic institution’s financial aid office, may be considered for Ho-Chunk Scholarship funding for tuition, books, and required fees based on the school’s standard budget, not to exceed the program maximum not covered by another source. **BIA-funded students will be considered for living expense not to exceed the program maximum, their cost of attendance, and is not covered by another source.**

3. NON-NEED/GRADUATE STUDENTS:

Students who are determined to have “no financial need”, according to the academic institution’s financial aid office, may be considered for a Ho-Chunk Scholarship toward tuition, required fees, and book purchase (not book rental), not to exceed the program maximum not covered by another source. (FTE – Full Time Equivalent; PTE – Part Time Equivalent).

4. Awards for FULL-TIME STUDENTS per standard academic year (September to May):

- a. Undergraduate maximum funding: \$10,000 (\$5,000/semester or FTE).
 - 1) Students who are eligible for a BIA Scholarship may receive up to \$12,000 (\$6,000/semester or FTE).
- b. Graduate Program maximum funding: \$24,000 (\$12,000/semester or FTE) for tuition, books, and fees.
- c. Full-time enrollment for graduate students is 9 or more credits per semester per nine-month academic year. Some institutions consider fewer than 9 credits full-time for graduate students. **In those cases, the Higher Education Division will determine a semester equivalent standard for full-time based on program length and enrollment requirements at the institution.**

5. Awards for PART-TIME STUDENTS per standard academic year (September to May) are for direct costs (tuition, required fees, books) not covered by another source:

- a. Undergraduate maximum of \$9,000 (\$4,500/semester or PTE).
- b. Graduate maximum of \$18,000 (\$9,000/semester or PTE).

E. Student Responsibilities

Providing incorrect or incomplete information may delay or suspend the funding process with the United States Department of Education, an academic institution’s financial aid office, and the Higher Education Division. Students must complete the following to be considered for funding:

1. Complete and submit a Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application (HSA) each academic year.
 - a. **All applications must be received no later than the first day of class. Applications received after that time will be deemed ineligible. For**

summer courses with varying start dates, please refer to the summer funding portion of this document.

- b. Applications and supporting documents may be submitted electronically to higher.education@ho-chunk.com except BIA Scholarship recipients. BIA Scholarship recipients must submit hard copy applications and official transcripts via mail.
 - 1) **Please note that electronically submitted transcripts must be sent from the student's institution and/or its clearinghouse service. Electronic transcripts sent directly from the student will not be accepted due to concerns related to authenticity.**
 - c. Incomplete or illegible applications will not be processed. The applications will be sent back to the student to resubmit and/or edit.
2. Apply each year for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). **Income information is required, including per capita and children's per capita trust funds.** All assets must be claimed or it may constitute fraud. The Higher Education Division Team may request additional documents (e.g. Student Aid Report) to resolve conflicting information. Contact Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice at (800) 294-9343 extension 11301 for more information.
 3. Maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined in "F. Academic Requirements."
 4. Submit a valid class schedule, which includes student name, school name, courses, credits, and term.
 5. Submit a valid itemized billing statement for the current term.
 6. Submit a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) – one-time submission only.
 7. Submit all supporting documents by the deadline established by the Higher Education Division each term.
 - a. Students that did not meet the midterm deadline must submit an official transcript no later than one month after the last day of finals in order to receive a scholarship for that term. The last day of finals will be determined using the academic institution's academic calendar.
 - b. Required supporting documents can be found on the cover sheet of the Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application.
 8. Ensure that their mailing address, email address, telephone number, and other contact information is updated with the Higher Education Division. Immediately notify the Higher Education Division in writing of any changes, including:
 - a. Schedule changes (drops, adds, withdrawals)
 - b. Withdrawals from school
 - c. Degree programs
 - d. Legal name

- e. Address
 - f. Contact telephone numbers
 - g. Email address(es)
 - h. Receipt of additional financial aid
9. Submit an official transcript at the student's expense each academic term to close out credits funded by the Higher Education Division. **Failure to do so suspends any further funding until an official transcript has been received.**
- a. Unofficial transcripts may be accepted on a temporary basis in extraordinary circumstances. Students must also provide proof of payment that an official transcript has been ordered for that term.
 - b. Electronic transcripts are accepted except BIA Scholarship recipients. BIA Scholarship recipients must submit hard copy applications and official transcripts via mail.
 - 1) **Please note that electronically submitted transcripts must be sent from the student's institution and/or its clearinghouse service. Electronic transcripts sent directly from the student will not be accepted due to concerns related to authenticity.**
 - c. Transcripts sent via postal mail must be addressed to:

Ho-Chunk Nation
Attn: Higher Education Division
P.O. Box 667
Black River Falls, WI 54615
10. Students are responsible for notifying the Higher Education Division if they change schools and must submit a new Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application for the school they plan to attend by the first day of class at their new school. The Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application gives the Higher Education Division permission to communicate with the school on the student's behalf.
11. Students must submit a copy of an approved consortium agreement, or similar supporting documentation, if they are attending more than one academic institution during the same term.

F. Academic Requirements

Students will be required to maintain satisfactory academic progress by completing all credits funded by the Higher Education Division, and to maintain a satisfactory term grade point average (GPA), which will determine continuation of Ho-Chunk Scholarship funding. GPAs will be established by degree program as follows:

1. Undergraduate/technical program students must maintain a 2.5 minimum GPA on a 4.0 scale each term or term equivalent.
2. Graduate students must maintain 3.0 minimum GPA standard on a 4.0 scale (9 credits or FTE). Professional students' (J.D./M.D./D.D.S.) statuses will be

determined based upon the academic institution's definition of good standing. Many professional schools grade on a curve and the student may be in good standing with their institution, yet not meet the 3.0 or 2.0 GPA requirement.

3. Schools using alternative grading such as pass/fail or credit hours will have a satisfactory academic progress equivalency scale established by the Higher Education Division. For inquiries, please contact the Higher Education Division.
4. Students may be placed on either probation or suspension for failure to earn the required GPA. Full-time credits will be established by degree as stated below:
 - a. Undergraduate/technical program students with a term GPA of 1.5 up to 2.499 will be placed on probation.
 - b. Graduate students with a term GPA of 2.0-2.999 will be placed on probation.
 - c. Undergraduate/technical program students with a term GPA below 1.5 will be suspended.
 - d. Graduate students with a term GPA below 2.0 will be suspended.
 - e. Professional students' (J.D./M.D./D.D.S.) statuses will be determined based upon the academic institution's definition of good standing. Many professional schools grade on a curve and the student may be in good standing with their institution, yet not meet the 3.0 or 2.0 GPA requirements of the Ho-Chunk Scholarship, as mentioned above.
5. Students must successfully complete all of the credits for which the Higher Education Division has provided funding.
 - a. Students who do not complete all of the credits for which they were funded will be placed on probation.
 - b. Students placed on probation maintain eligibility for continued funding.
 - c. Students placed on suspension are ineligible for funding until they return to good standing with the Ho-Chunk Scholarship Program.
 - d. Students who do not complete at least half of the credits for which they were funded will be suspended.
 - e. Students who do not meet all of the probation requirements as listed in their Higher Education Division Probation Letter will be suspended.
6. Students with documented disabilities are requested to inform the Higher Education Division who, in consultation with the Education Department's Disabilities Director, will establish attainable academic standards (e.g. term GPA) to ensure satisfactory academic progress and scholarship eligibility.
7. Students on suspension are ineligible for Higher Education Scholarship funding until they are brought back into good standing. **Students on suspension status must rely on other funding sources.**
8. To be reinstated for continued funding (with the exception of students who qualify for the "H. Forgiveness Policy"), students must complete the equivalent number of credits they were funded during the term of academic suspension. Only credits at

the 100-level and above (or equivalent) will count toward reinstatement. Students should refer to their suspension letter for specific reinstatement requirements.

- a. Suspended undergraduate students must earn at least a 2.5 term GPA to apply for reinstatement. Graduate students must earn a term GPA of 3.0 or higher for reinstatement.
9. Students must be in good standing or on probation before they are eligible to receive a scholarship.
 10. Students are not able to reimburse the Higher Education Division for credits funded to avoid probation and/or suspension after the term. When funding is returned by the school, attempted credits will be adjusted accordingly. If overpayment is sent directly to the student in error, repayment is required to be eligible for further scholarship consideration.
 11. In the event that a student withdraws from their program and the school returns the scholarship to the Ho-Chunk Nation, the remaining financial obligation at the school will be the responsibility of the student, not the Ho-Chunk Nation.
 - a. Students are strongly encouraged to email the Higher Education Division prior to withdrawing from a course or from an institution to discuss the potential academic and financial ramifications of those decisions. What is best for the student academically may not be best financially and vice versa.

G. Appeals to the Scholarship Program

The appeals procedure is a formal process for requesting consideration to an official decision, not an informal conversation with a staff member. An applicant who has been placed on suspension or otherwise denied funding by the Higher Education Division will receive written notice and may then file an appeal provided they meet the criteria of extenuating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all their mailing address, email address, telephone number, and other contact information is updated with the Higher Education Division so that notice can be sent to the student. Students should also update their permanent contact information with the Ho-Chunk Enrollment Division. To file an appeal, students must complete the steps in "III. Appeals Procedure."

H. Forgiveness Policy

Students who have been suspended (e.g. transcript suspension, academic suspension, etc.) for ten or more years, may reapply to the scholarship program and will be considered for reentry on a probationary status at the start of the next term. For example, if a student was suspended for poor academic performance during the Fall 2009 term, they will not be eligible to receive a scholarship under the forgiveness policy until Spring 2020.

I. Length of Funding Eligibility

Students are eligible for a specific number of full-time terms to attain their educational goals. Part-time credit coursework will be **prorated** in accordance with the chart on the next page.

Undergraduate Credits Prorated by Term Type		
Credits	Semester	Quarter to Semester Equivalent
1-5	.25	.166/.167
6-8	.5	.333/.334
9-11	.75	.5
12 +	1	.666/.667
Graduate Credits Prorated by Term Type		
Credits	Semester	Quarter to Semester Equivalent
1-3	.25	.166/ .167
4-6	.5	.333/ .334
7-8	.75	.5
9 +	1	.666/ .667

Maximum Funding Eligibility Chart	
Degree or Award type	Eligibility Limits
Technical Diploma or Associate Degree	Maximum of six semesters (or equivalent)
Transfer or 2+2 Program(s)	Maximum of six semesters (or equivalent) to complete Freshman/Sophomore courses and an additional four remaining terms to complete Junior/Senior coursework, not to exceed ten semesters (or equivalent)
Bachelor's Degree	Cumulative undergraduate maximum of ten semesters (or equivalent)
Master's Degree*	Maximum of six semesters (or equivalent) two academic years of study and one year to complete thesis/project/presentation [See note below*]
Juris Doctorate (J.D.)	Cumulative graduate program maximum of eight semesters (or equivalent) four academic years of study calculated with previously funded graduate level coursework
Academic/Professional Doctoral Degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., etc.)	Cumulative graduate program maximum of ten semesters (or equivalent) three academic years of study and two years to complete dissertation work
Professional Medical Degree (MD, DDS, DPT, DNP, etc.)	Cumulative graduate program maximum of ten semesters (or equivalent) is allowable upon submission of a detailed academic plan

Master's programs that **require more than 45 credits (e.g. clinical psychology or speech-language pathology) may be eligible for an additional two terms of scholarship funding pending approval of a plan by the Executive Director of Education.*

II. Summer Scholarship Program

A. Purpose of Program

The Summer Scholarship is for students who take summer coursework at a non-profit Title IV regionally accredited academic institution. The summer coursework must apply to degree completion.

B. Eligibility and Requirements

In order to receive funds from this program, both the student and the institution must meet eligibility criteria (see “B. Eligibility and Requirements” in Section I).

C. Application Requirements

Summer Scholarship Applications can be obtained by contacting the Education Department at (800) 362-4476 or higher.education@ho-chunk.com. A complete academic file requires all of the following:

1. Summer Scholarship Applications **must be received no later than the first day of class**.
 - a. Incomplete or illegible applications will not be processed. The applications will be sent back to the student to resubmit and/or edit.
 - b. Applications and supporting documents may be submitted electronically to higher.education@ho-chunk.com, including the official transcript. Electronic transcripts must be sent directly from the school or the institution’s clearinghouse, not the student. Electronic transcripts are not accepted from the student due to authenticity concerns.
 - c. Summer terms have varying start dates at many institutions. Students will be considered for a scholarship for each summer term, provided the student’s application is received before the first day of class for that term.
2. Submit a valid copy of the school’s itemized billing statement for the current term.
3. Submit a copy of the letter of acceptance/admission for new, transfer, and reentry students (refer to “B. Eligibility Requirements” in section I).
4. Submit a copy of a valid class schedule showing: student name, school name, academic term, courses, and number of credits.
5. Apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and complete the financial aid process at the institution. **Income information is required, including per capita and children’s per capita trust funds.** All assets must be claimed or it may constitute fraud. **Contact Ho-Chunk Nation Department of Justice at (800) 294-9343 extension 11301 for more information.**
6. Submit a valid copy of the student’s Financial Aid Award Summary or Financial Aid Offer letter for the summer term. *Students may be required to complete an additional financial aid application by their school.*

7. The financial aid office at the student’s school will send the required Financial Review Form to the Higher Education Division. Scholarships will not be processed until the Financial Review Form is received from the financial aid office at the student’s school. *Students may be required to complete an additional financial aid application by their school.*

D. Summer Scholarship Award Determination

The Summer Program is based on the student’s tuition, required fees, and books not to exceed the annual program maximum: \$5,000 for undergraduates and \$9,000 for graduate students. Refer to page 10 for full- and part-time definitions and prorating guidelines.

E. Student Responsibilities

Failure to provide correct information may delay and/or suspend the funding process with the Higher Education Division.

F. Academic Requirements

Can be found on page 13.

G. Appeals Procedure for Summer Scholarship

An applicant who has been placed on suspension or otherwise denied funding by the Higher Education Division may file an appeal for summer scholarship awards. To file an appeal, students must complete the steps in “III. Appeals Procedure.”

H. Length of Summer Funding Eligibility Chart

Degree	Maximum Terms of Funding
One-year degree/certificate	1 term
Associate’s Degree	3 terms
Bachelor’s Degree	6 terms
Master’s Degree	8 terms
Professional/Doctoral Degree	10 terms

* Terms are calculated cumulatively

III. Higher Education Division Appeals Procedures

An applicant who has been placed on probation, suspension, or denied funding by the Higher Education Division may file an appeal. Failure to complete the steps outlined below may affect the outcome of the appeal.

1. An appeal is for circumstances beyond the student's control. Such extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Major medical emergencies (for self or relative)
 - b. Other medical challenges (e.g. depression, anxiety, etc.)
 - c. Major life change (e.g. death of a loved one, divorce, separation, child birth, etc.)
 - d. Active military service
 - e. Adverse impacts of the coronavirus pandemic (e.g. mandated online coursework, postponement of courses/examinations, etc.)
2. The following examples are NOT considered extenuating circumstances:
 - a. Insufficient planning or preparation
 - b. Taking a large credit load
 - c. Poor time management
3. Submit an appeal letter with supporting documentation (including degree audit form from the student's institution) to higher.education@ho-chunk.com or via postal mail to:

Ho-Chunk Education Department
Attn: Higher Education Division
P.O. Box 667
Black River Falls, WI 54615
4. The student's appeal letter must clearly outline relevant extenuating circumstances, the reason(s) s/he has chosen to appeal, and the **specific action** the student requests the Higher Education Division to take.
 - a. Example of specific action: A student may request that their suspension is overturned and that they is reinstated into probationary status.
5. The Executive Director of Education will determine the outcome of a student's appeal in conjunction with the Higher Education team.
6. After review, the Executive Director's decision will be emailed. If additional information is requested, it must be submitted within the timeframe stipulated by the Executive Director.
 - a. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all contact information is updated with the Higher Education Division.

IV. Employee Relations Act

The Employee Relations Act protects the employees of the Ho-Chunk Nation from abusive treatment. In accordance with the Employee Relations Act, the Nation reserves the right to deny services and entry to the Nation's property to members of the public, visitors, and employees who are physically and/or verbally abusive or disruptive of services and operations.

For more information about the Ho-Chunk Nation's Education Leave Policy, please consult the Ho-Chunk Employee Relations Act.

V. Students with Disabilities Services

The Ho-Chunk Nation Education Department is committed to the success of all students. Students with documented disabilities are requested to inform the Higher Education Division who, in consultation with the Education Department's Disabilities Director, will establish attainable academic standards (e.g. term GPA) to ensure satisfactory academic progress and scholarship eligibility. Prior to matriculation, students with education-related disabilities (or those who believe they may have a disability) are encouraged to contact the Education Department's Disabilities Director and the Higher Education Division at (800) 362-4476.

VI. Special Request: Life Skills Program

A. Purpose of the Program

Ho-Chunk students with documented disabilities who are enrolled in a Life Skills Program or its equivalent through a non-profit, Title IV regionally accredited institution are eligible for an additional \$3,000.00 per academic year. Due to the expensive nature of these programs, the \$3,000.00 is designed to assist in covering the student's additional tuition, books, and fees.

B. Eligibility and Requirements

Ho-Chunk members may be eligible if they meet the following criteria:

1. Complete the Special Request Form and check the box for Life Skills Program
2. Complete the Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application process in its entirety
3. Provide any supporting documentation requested by the Higher Education team

VII. Special Request: Graduation Achievement Award

A. Purpose of the Program

The Graduation Achievement Program provides enrolled Ho-Chunk students attending Title IV regionally accredited institutions with achievement incentives for degree completion.

B. Graduation Achievement Award Eligibility and Requirements

Ho-Chunk members may be eligible if they meet the following criteria:

1. A completed Special Request Application, and an official transcript must be received by the Higher Education Division within one calendar year from degree conferral date.
2. Close out all previous services/terms funded by the Higher Education Division.
3. Provide a copy of the diploma or official documentation from the registrar from a Title IV regionally accredited postsecondary school within one year of degree conferral date* for the Treasury Department to process payment.
4. Complete and submit a W-9 tax form within one calendar year of degree conferral date.
5. Submit a copy of the student's Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from the Ho-Chunk Enrollment office or the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
6. All documents must be received before the Graduation Achievement Award can be considered and processed. Students who receive Higher Education Division Achievement Awards are not eligible for monetary graduation achievement awards from other Ho-Chunk Nation programs.
7. The names of Graduation Achievement Award recipients may be released to the Ho-Chunk Nation Office of the President, Personnel Department, Labor Department, and other Executive Branch entities for potential employment opportunities (e.g. management or Executive Director positions). This release is consistent with the Ho-Chunk Nation Higher Education Division Mission Statement, which states: "Scholarships are granted as a privilege with the intent that **graduates will return to the Ho-Chunk Nation to use their knowledge and expertise** to protect and strengthen the economic self-sufficiency and sovereignty of the Ho-Chunk Nation." The Executive Director of Education will approve the release of information to the aforementioned Ho-Chunk Nation entities.
8. *Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the adverse impact on the Nation's finances, students who graduated between January 2020 and December 2021 who did not receive a Graduation Achievement Award may still apply and be considered.

A. Graduation Achievement Award Disbursement

Recipients may receive a Graduation Achievement Award for each progressive degree earned. The amount awarded for certificates, associate’s, and bachelor’s degrees may not exceed the **cumulative award total** for each progressive degree level attained. However, advanced degrees (master’s, Juris Doctorate, and doctorates) will be awarded the full amount listed below. Students who previously received a Graduation Achievement Award and earned a subsequent graduate degree are not eligible to receive the difference between previous and current Graduation Achievement Award amounts.

Degree	Amount
One-year certificate or diploma	\$300
Associate’s degree	\$750
Bachelor’s degree	\$1,500
Master’s degree	\$3,000
Juris Doctorate	\$4,000
Doctorate	\$5,000

VIII. Special Request: Study Abroad, Professional Development, and Other Services

A. Study Abroad

Study abroad is a program in which students attend school in a country outside the United States of America and receive academic credit toward their degrees. The most common forms of study abroad include exchange programs, direct study abroad, intensive language programs, faculty-led programs, international student teaching, and teaching licensure.

B. Professional Development

Professional development provides students with funding to attend conferences and workshops, join professional societies related to their degree programs, and other experiences that strengthen professional skill sets including required research (e.g., theses and dissertations) and other scholarly activities.

C. Proctoring Exams

The Higher Education Division may be able to provide proctoring services for required tests/exams with advanced notice at no cost. **The Higher Education Division will not pay for proctor fees offered by outside agencies.** All requests for proctoring services will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Interested students should contact the Higher Education Division office.

D. Tutoring Services

The Higher Education Division will provide financial support for tutoring services not to exceed \$500 per academic year. Students are required to consult with on-campus tutors before securing outside tutoring support. All tutor payment requests must be approved by the Higher Education Division Manager and be accompanied by an academic plan.

E. Licensure Expense Assistance

The Higher Education Division may reimburse approved costs associated with **initial** professional licensures for professions such as PK-12 teachers, social workers, lawyers, doctors, etc. up to \$1,000. The program does not pay for renewals of existing licenses. Licensure expense requests will be granted only once and must be received by the Higher Education Division within one year from degree conferral date.

F. Certified Nursing Assistant Funding

Students who wish to earn a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credential may be eligible for financial assistance. Students will be required to complete a Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application, providing supporting documents including a class schedule, valid billing statement, acceptance letter, and any other documents requested by the Higher Education Division. In addition, students must sign an irrevocable per capita waiver so that the Ho-Chunk Nation can recuperate the expended funds in the event that a student does not complete the CNA course. The irrevocable per capita waiver is required in order to ensure full consideration for CNA funding.

G. Required Travel Expenses for Distance Learning Students

The Higher Education Division may **reimburse** approved costs associated with travel required for an online student to complete in-person coursework for a necessary program-specific course. Required travel expense reimbursement subject to approval by the Higher Education Division.

These funds do not apply to students who commute regularly (e.g., daily/weekly) to their academic institution.

H. Eligibility and Requirements for Professional Development, Study Abroad, and Required Travel.

1. See chart page 26 for further details about eligibility
2. Complete and submit current Ho-Chunk Scholarship and Special Request Applications.
3. Be enrolled in a Title IV regionally accredited postsecondary school as a degree-seeking student.
4. The Special Requests Program has rigorous academic eligibility requirements for students. Specifically, undergraduate students must maintain a 2.75 term GPA. Graduate students must maintain a 3.25 term GPA and cannot be on probation or suspension with the Higher Education Division.
5. Submit a copy of the student's Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) from the Ho-Chunk Enrollment office or the Bureau of Indian Affairs (one-time submission only).
6. Study Abroad degree credits must apply toward degree completion.
7. Provide documentation on how the professional development experience, study abroad, or required travel is related to the student's degree area.
8. Provide a written budget breakdown of the total expenses.
9. Professional development funding may be used for the following purposes:
 - a. Travel expenses.
 - b. Lodging expenses.
 - c. Professional memberships.
 - d. Will not reimburse for alcohol, cigarettes, ATM receipts, etc.
10. Study abroad funding may be used for the following purposes:
 - a. Tuition, required fees, and books.
 - b. Food expenses associated with the travel.
 - c. Travel expenses associated with the trip.
 - d. Lodging expenses associated with the trip.

- e. Other expenses associated with the study abroad experience may be considered.
 - f. Will not reimburse for alcohol, cigarettes, ATM receipts, etc.
11. Required Travel funding may be used for the following purposes:
- a. Lodging expenses associated with the travel.
 - b. Gas expenses associated with the travel.
 - c. Food expenses associated with the travel.
 - d. Will not reimburse for alcohol, cigarettes, ATM receipts, etc.
12. Provide a detailed, written, or multimedia trip report within two weeks after return from the conference/workshop or within one month for study abroad.
- a. Failure to submit required trip report will result in scholarship suspension until the report is received.

I. Professional Development and Study Abroad Disbursement

1. Maximum funding amount for professional development is not to exceed \$1,000 per conference/workshop/professional membership per academic year. For further information, see chart on page 26.
2. Maximum funding amount not to exceed \$3,000 per Study Abroad program.
3. Undergraduate student disbursement is based on grade status and earned credits toward degree (please refer to the chart for program eligibility). **Priority will be given to undergraduate students for study abroad.**
4. Graduate students are eligible to participate in a conference/workshop each academic year, though preference will be given to undergraduate students.
5. Graduate students will be eligible to participate in study abroad **once per graduate degree.**
6. All graduate students are eligible for a combined total of \$1,000 per year for Professional Development and Required Travel.

J. BIA Computer Program

1. The Special Request Computer Program provides emergency COVID relief funding for computer and limited accessories to Ho-Chunk postsecondary students who are enrolled in a Title IV regionally accredited non-profit institution.
2. Eligible students will be awarded by the division, and the aid will be processed directly to the school.
3. Computers and accessories are limited to requirements for degree programs.
4. This is not a reimbursement program.
5. Students must have a completed 2022-23 Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application on file with the Higher Education Division.
6. Students must be a degree-seeking student and enrolled in coursework at a non-profit Title IV school.
7. Students must agree to provide the necessary documentation to process and close out the Special Request Application for the emergency COVID relief computer program in a timely manner established by the Higher Education Division.
8. Students must provide a printout from their institution’s bookstore with an estimate of computer and accessories they wish to purchase.

K. Special Request Eligibility Chart

Undergraduate Students				
Credits	Degree Status	Year	Eligibility	Life Skills Eligibility
1-30	Freshman	1 st	One professional development experience and/or study abroad while in Freshman and Sophomore status	Students with documented disabilities are eligible for the Life Skills Program throughout their postsecondary career
31-60	Sophomore	2 nd		
31-90	Junior	3 rd	One professional development experience and/or study abroad while in Junior or Senior status	
91-120+	Senior	4 th +		

Graduate Students	
Master’s degree	Up to three years of Professional Development, Required Travel, & one Study Abroad
Juris Doctorate	Up to three years of Professional Development, Required Travel, & one Study Abroad
Ph.D./MD/DDS/ PharmD/Ed.D.	Up to three years of Professional Development, Required Travel, & one Study Abroad

IX. College Access Program

A. Purpose of Program

The purpose of the College Access Program is to assist Ho-Chunk members with payment of fees necessary to gain acceptance into a Title IV regionally accredited institution. These fees include entrance preparatory courses, entrance exams/tests, and application fees.

1. Preparatory courses are courses that prepare the student for a specific **entrance exam**, e.g. the COMPASS, Accuplacer, ACT, SAT, GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT, etc.
2. The American Indian Law Center's Pre-Law Summer Institute is eligible for this program. This will be sent directly to the American Indian Law Center in one payment upon the student's enrollment.

B. Eligibility and Requirements

1. Ho-Chunk Nation enrolled students must meet the following eligibility requirements to receive funding under this program:
 - a. Complete and submit a College Access Program Application and supporting documentation.
 - b. Submit a copy of test exam results, transcripts, and receipts of payment for reimbursement within one year of test date or payment. Documents must be received prior to reimbursement consideration.
 - c. All applicants, except currently enrolled high school students requesting payment or reimbursement of testing fees, are required to complete a Ho-Chunk Scholarship Application, and must have a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) on file.
2. The College Access Program does not pay for enrollment deposits or registration deposits because those are paid by the Ho-Chunk Scholarship.

C. College Access Program Funding Chart

Test/Exams and Preparatory Course Fees	Technical College (2-year)	College (4-year)	Graduate	Maximum Funding Approved
Application fees	2 fees	4 fees	6 fees	
GED/HSED test				Up to \$200
SAT/ACT and/or SAT/ACT Prep Course				Up to \$150
COMPASS/Accuplacer	2 fees			Up to \$75
Prerequisite Courses (Required for Admission)	Lifetime limit			Not to exceed \$5,000 lifetime limit per student
College Level Examination Program (CLEP) fees	Lifetime limit			Not to exceed \$500 lifetime limit per student
Graduate Entrance Exam			2 fees	Up to \$700
Graduate Exam Preparatory Course				\$2,500 Maximum half paid upon approval remainder paid after enrollment
American Indian Law Center Pre-Law Summer Institute	N/A		1 fee	Up to \$2,000 Paid in one payment upon enrollment
Incarcerated Students	Up to 4 courses			Up to four courses with a plan approved by Higher Education Division Manager

School Level	Test Type	Test Description
High School	HSED	High School Equivalency Diploma
	GED	General Equivalency Diploma
Undergraduate	SAT	Formerly Scholastic Aptitude Test
	ACT	Formerly American College Test
	COMPASS/Accuplacer	Placement Test
Graduate	GRE	Graduate Records Exam
	LSAT	Law School Admissions Test
	MCAT	Medical College Admissions Test
	GMAT	Graduate Management Test
	MAT	Miller Analogies Test