



## HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES

Revision Approved By the Yurok Tribal Council 13 November 2015

### I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Tribal Higher Education award serves students as a supplemental source of aid for enrolled members of the Yurok Tribe pursuing regular course work required to meet a degree objective. Grant funds may be used for tuition, living expenses, required fees, textbooks, and miscellaneous expenses related to attendance at an accredited college.

### II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURE

- Applicants must be an enrolled Yurok Tribal member.
- Applicants must apply for the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA). The FAFSA must be completed for each academic year of attendance. Go to <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> for specific deadlines and to complete the FAFSA for free.
- Applicants are required to apply for acceptance into an accredited college or university and meet all of the educational institution's deadlines for admission.
- Applicants must be a high school graduate or have earned a General Equivalency Degree (GED). Minors must provide proof of completion when applying for Tribal funding.
- Students should submit an application for scholarship funds to the Yurok Tribe after they have secured admission to an accredited college.
- Students must be currently enrolled in the semester for which they are seeking funding assistance.
- Application forms for educational grant assistance are available upon request by contacting the Yurok Tribe or can be downloaded from [www.yuroktribe.org](http://www.yuroktribe.org) under the Education Department via the *Higher Ed* link.
- Applications are accepted only during the open period. Complete applications postmarked before the deadline may also be accepted.
- Completed applications will be funded on first-come, first-serve basis pending availability of funding. All applicants will be notified via mail of receipt within ten business days.

### III. FUNDING REQUIREMENTS AND AWARD AMOUNTS

#### School Terms: Semester & Quarter Systems

The Higher Education Grant is awarded twice each school year; once per fall semester and once per spring semester. Students must reapply for each term. Students enrolled on different school terms (e.g., quarter or trimester) must apply only during the Tribal grant's open period, too. Furthermore, students with different school terms must show proof that they are enrolled either full- or part-time.

#### Full-Time Students:

Funds may be awarded to students who are attending college full-time and are enrolled in a minimum of 12 units per semester. Current allocation amount is based on availability of funds.

### **Part-time Students**

Funds may be awarded to students who are attending college part-time and are enrolled in a minimum of 6 units per semester. The amount is half of what a full-time student receives. Current allocation amount is based on the availability of funds.

### **Graduate Students:**

Applications for graduate students will be accepted. Graduate students should contact the American Indian Graduate Center (AIGCS.org) for other scholarship opportunities at (505) 881-4584. Minimum number of units required for full- or part-time funding may vary and is determined by university policy or documentation.

## **IV. UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE ACCREDITATION**

The institution the student elects to attend must be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency; by the State accrediting agency; or be an institution whose credits are accepted on transfer by no fewer than three institutions which are accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association on the same basis as if transferring from an accredited institution. This latter alternative is referred to as “three institutional” certification. Junior colleges may qualify if they meet any of these criteria.

## **V. CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUATION OF GRANT**

- Maintain minimum 2.0 GPA for each school term.
- Maintain enrollment in minimum number of units for full- or part-time status.
- Submit a new Higher Education application for each new school year.
- Submit unofficial transcripts or grades for each term in which an award was given.
- Submit new class schedule for each applicable term.
- Submit proof a FAFSA for every school year. Proof may constitute an email confirmation from FAFSA; the first page of a SAR report; a college financial aid award letter.

*Please note:* Students earning less than a 2.0 GPA will be placed on probationary status for one semester and will receive only half funding. If the student does not bring his or her GPA up to 2.0 by the following, third semester, his or her funding will be suspended and he or she will be required to complete a semester with a 2.0 GPA without Tribal funding before funds can be reinstated. **In the event that the student has experienced “extreme circumstances” and has not fully completed his or her semester, the student will be required to provide medical or other professional documentation. The Department Director will review the documentation provided and notify student in writing of their decision. See Section X for further explanation.**

## **VI. APPLICATION REVIEW**

Completed applications will be reviewed on an individual basis and either approved or disapproved by the Education Department. Do NOT send high school transcripts; diplomas; GEDs; or college letters of admission unless specifically requested by the Education Department.

The following chart indicates what constitutes a completed grant application:

<b>Documents Needed</b>	<b>New Applicant</b>	<b>Continuing Applicant</b>	<b>Former Applicant</b>
Grant Application (Submit each year)*	X	X**	X
Proof of Tribal Membership	X		
Class Schedule that shows units enrolled*	X	X	X
Proof of FAFSA completion*	X	X**	X
Unofficial College Transcripts*	(No)	X	X

\*Students are responsible to have these forms sent to the Yurok Tribe's Education Department.

\*\*Submit only once per fall semester if not transferring schools.

#### **VII. RELEASING TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD & PENALTIES**

- Approved grant award will be paid by check to the student.
- When a student withdraws (either partially or fully) or is dropped from college, a refund of the unused grant funds will be made to the Yurok Tribe by the student.
- Alternatively, the amount will be deducted from the student's eligible allocation the following term in which the student seeks funding assistance.
- Students will not be eligible for any educational grant award until the debt is resolved.

#### **VIII. PROBATIONARY STATUS**

- Students are required to submit their term grade reports to the Education Department.
- Funding for the upcoming term will not be allocated until the grade report is received.
- A grant recipient who does NOT meet the academic requirements explained in Section V of these policies will be placed on financial aid probation for a period of one (1) term.
- To remove the probationary status the student must meet the minimum standards of eligibility by the end of the probationary term. If the student does not meet minimum standards, the grant will be suspended until he or she successfully completes a term.

#### **IX. SUSPENDING GRANT ELIGIBILITY**

- A student receiving a Tribal scholarship who is on financial probation and fails to meet the academic standards will be suspended from the scholarship program.
- A suspended student is ineligible for future funding until he or she earns a minimum GPA of at least 2.0 for a single term at full- or part-time enrollment depending on the student's previous enrollment status in which they received an award.
- A suspension notice will be sent to the student.

## **X. APPEAL PROCESS**

Students can appeal their probationary or suspension status via written request. The grievance process shall be as follows:

### **Step 1**

The student shall submit the written grievance to the Yurok Tribal Director of Education Programs. The Education Director will review all material available, including any new information submitted, within 10 working days and inform the student via letter of the decision made. If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily then the student can move to the next step of the appeal process.

### **Step 2**

The student shall then submit within five working days the written grievance to the Executive Director of the Yurok Tribe. The Executive Director will review all material available within 10 working days and inform the student via letter of the decision made. If the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily then the student can move to the next step of the appeal process.

### **Step 3**

The student shall then submit within five working days the written grievance to the Yurok Tribal Council. The Tribal Council will review all material available within 30 days and make a determination in writing. The decision of the Tribal Council is final.