

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

## **HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**February 1, 2017**



*The Seminole Tribe of Florida's Tribal Council and the Seminole Tribe of Florida's Education Department have the right to interpret the content of these Policies and Procedures. Nothing contained in these Policies and Procedures confer any right, contractually or otherwise upon any third party. These Policies and Procedures may be amended at any time.*

## Table of Contents

<i>HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</i> .....	2
<i>BILLY L. CYPRESS SCHOLARSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURES</i> .....	2
<i>COMPUTER POLICY AND PROCUDRES</i> .....	9
<i>CAREER TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS SCHOLARSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURES</i> ...	9
<i>CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURES</i> .....	14
<i>TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES</i> .....	17
<i>GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT (GED) TEST AND DIPLOMA POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR ADULTS</i> .....	20



### **Education Department:**

**MAIN OFFICE: 3100 North 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (DSO Building)  
Hollywood, Florida 33024  
PHONE: (954) 989-6840  
FAX: (954) 893-8856  
TOLL FREE: (877) 592-6537**

## HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Higher Education Program offers the Billy L. Cypress Scholarship which covers the following:

- a. Two and four year undergraduate and graduate degrees
- b. Trade and Technical colleges and institutions
- c. Continuing education
- d. General Education Diploma for adults
- e. Adult Basic Education (ABE)

## TWO AND FOUR YEAR UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE DEGREES SCHOLARSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Billy L. Cypress Scholarship (BLCS) is for the specific purpose of financially assisting eligible Seminole Tribe of Florida students who are enrolled in an accredited college, and/or university, pursuing a degree leading to an Associate, Baccalaureate, and post-graduate degree. To verify if the college, and/or university that you are interested in attending is accredited and an eligible school, please contact The Education Department. The purpose of these policies is to set forth rules and regulations to govern the awarding of the BLCS funds as administered by The Education Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

### Costs Covered by The Education Department

- Application fees related to the cost of applying to certain institutions as indicated on institutions scheduled fees. A maximum of five (5) application fees can be submitted for reimbursement per calendar year.
- Tuition.
- Fees. (This includes any mandatory fees as required to be part of your academic program. For example, a mandatory Health Fee.)
- Text books and/or eBooks (*if eBooks are provided for within the tuition costs, physical text books will not be covered*).
- Rental of textbooks is covered; the Tribal Member pays upfront for the cost and the Education Department will reimburse the Tribal Member for the rental fees/cost of the text books (*if eBooks are provided for within the tuition costs, physical text books will not be covered; even if rented*).
- Required supplies as stated in the course syllabus.
- One (1) re-take of any 'failed' course for the length of the student's current degree/program (*the student will be responsible for payment of any additional re-takes*).
- On-campus housing (*dorm/lodging*) for the individual student only and housing outside the campus, as long as it is owned by the college/university and payment is made directly to the institution.
- Travel arrangements to and from school/home at beginning and end of semester.
- Travel arrangements must be made by/through The Education Department. Any other personal travel arrangements will be at the expense of the student.

Students who continue onto graduate school are eligible to receive assistance with standardized prep and testing for admissions, (Example: GRE, MCAT, etc.). Higher Ed – will pay for the cost of the exam, and if the student wants/needs tutoring and/or prep for the exam. The student must submit a request to the Education Services Manager to assist further with setting that up for the student. In Higher Ed, we should

identify the students' readiness to sit for the exam or if they require tutoring. If the student is requesting an outside prep course for the admissions entrance exams, the student will be responsible for the payment of said course.

**Costs/expenses not covered by the Scholarship to include, but are not limited to the following:**

- Retakes due to a low/passing grade.
- Retakes due to Withdrawals.
- Physical text books, if eBooks are already provided for within the Tuition costs.
- Travel arrangements not made by/through The Education Department.
- Meals or Meal Plans.
- Off-campus housing.
- On-campus housing for families.
- Campus housing fees including cleaning, damage, etc.
- Off Campus Housing – Not covered during externships/internships, even if it is required and/or mandatory by the university/college/school. Housing will be considered while on externship/internship if it is a mandatory event, as dictated per university/college/school policy and curriculum. (Documentation must be provided from the school for consideration).
- Externship/Internship Travel, which includes flights/hotel/car rental, etc., are limited per term, as they relate to externships/internships to two (2) visits.
- Meal plans – Not covered/during enrollments at the school, even if required/mandatory by the school.
- Car Rental/Uber/Hotel – travel related expenses – Not covered/during externships, even if required/mandatory by the school.
- Car Rental/Uber/Hotel – travel related expenses – Not covered/during return for holidays or Beginning or End of terms; (only approved Travel for thirty (30) days ahead).
- Any and all “late fees” incurred by the student for late registration, etc.
- Library fees for overdue or lost books, lost textbook(s) and any other fees incurred through the negligence of the student.
- College/University Parking passes and/or any citations.
- Student health insurance provided by/through the institution.
- Extra-curricular activities.
- International or studies abroad (Please Note: \*If International tuition and fees are **required (not optional)** as part of the program completion, those requests will be reviewed by the Higher Ed Program Manager.
- Basic school supplies (*to include, but are not limited to pens, note books, book bags, etc.*)
- Miscellaneous expenses including telephone, cable, Internet, car maintenance, gasoline, child care, costs for moving and other personal expenses.
- Second equivalent degrees (For example, second (2<sup>nd</sup>) AA, second (2<sup>nd</sup>) BA, second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Master's or second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Doctoral degree(s). In order to promote advancement in the educational journey).

**I. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Must be an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.
- B. Must be officially accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution.
- C. Must be enrolled as either a full-time or part-time (3/4 time (9-11 credits) undergraduate or graduate student.

- D. Undergraduate students must have/maintain cumulative semester GPA of 2.5 or GPA requirement from the institution student will/is attending.
- E. Graduate students must have/maintain a minimum cumulative semester GPA of 3.0.
- F. If on probation, must follow and adhere to the Academic Improvement Plan (including course load, level of difficulty, etc.) which will be included in the Academic Improvement Plan.
- G. Must respond to any/all communications received from The Education Department and/or Recruiter, as required (via e-mail, text, phone or social media forums).

## II. ENROLLMENT PROCESS

The BLCS is awarded for the full duration of each semester enrolled, contingent upon meeting the prescribed academic requirements. All applications will be screened by the Higher Educational program for completeness and eligibility.

### *Application Deadlines*

**An application is required at the initial matriculation to a higher education institution. If the student remains in good standing at the same higher education institution, a new application is not required. In lieu of the application for continuing students, the class schedule must be submitted by the deadlines below.**

The BLCS application is required to be submitted to the Higher Education Program on or before:

- April 1<sup>st</sup> for the summer semester
- July 1<sup>st</sup> for the fall semester
- November 1<sup>st</sup> for the winter or spring semesters

*Please Note: Failure to adhere to the stipulated deadlines may result in denial of the scholarship and/or a delay in the payment for the initial semester. In addition, this may also result in a delay of tuition payment for those individuals already enrolled. It is the responsibility of the student to submit the application and required documents in a timely manner to avoid class cancellation.*

### **Application Requirements for New Students:**

- Submission of fully completed BLCS Application.
- Copy of high school transcript and/or diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) from an accredited institution, as approved by The Education Department. (Please Note: \*If High School Diploma or GED is found to be unacceptable at the time of new or re-entry submission of the BLCS, those requests will be reviewed by the Higher Ed Program Manager).
- Official transcripts or grade reports from all previously attended colleges/universities, if applicable.
- Letter of Acceptance from college/university or proof of registration from a community college. (Please Note: The student must meet all scholarship criteria, including minimum cumulative GPA).

### **Application Requirements for Continuing Students:**

- Submit final semester grades within two (2) weeks after grades are posted.
- Submit the upcoming class schedule by the specified deadlines noted above.

- Update and submit a BLCS ‘Personal Information’ Continuation Education Form to the Higher Education Recruiter, as applicable.
- The student must be in good standing (not suspended) prior to any tuition payment. (Please Note: Students who were previously suspended from the BLCS Scholarship or dropped/withdrew from the program without approval; will be required to submit a new application and meet and adhere to the current policy and criteria for New Applicants).

### RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR NEW AND CONTINUING STUDENTS

- Students approved for the scholarship must submit their class schedule by the deadlines below:
  - April 1<sup>st</sup> for the summer semester
  - July 1<sup>st</sup> for the fall semester
  - November 1<sup>st</sup> for the winter or spring semesters
- In order to remain eligible every semester, students must submit a copy of their official transcript and/or grade report to the Higher Education Recruiter within two (2) weeks of the grade posting for the semester/trimester.
- Students must update and submit a BLCS ‘Personal Information’ Form.
- Students may attend different schools while in the process of earning an Associate or a Bachelor’s degree. However, the student must complete the current semester and meet the GPA requirement before any transfers will be approved. Also, the student must meet with the Higher Ed Recruiter to discuss transfer viability, as it relates to credits and be approved by the Higher Ed Program Manager.

### ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW AND CONTINUING STUDENTS

The following academic requirements will be used to determine eligibility and continuation of the BLCS.

#### **Grade Point Average (GPA) and Credit Hours**

- **Full time student(s):** must earn a minimum of 12 credit hours with a semester/trimester GPA of 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of a regular semester/trimester.
- **Part time student(s):** who attends a higher education institution with a semester/trimester calendar:
  - Must earn a minimum of nine (9) credit hours or more within a cumulative semester/trimester and GPA of 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of a regular semester/trimester.
  - Must earn a minimum of six (6) credit hours or more within a cumulative semester/trimester and GPA of 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of the summer session.
  - Earn a minimum of 18 credits within a regular year and six (6) credits during the summer, if applicable, for a total of 24 credits.
- **Part time student(s):** who attend a higher education institution with a quarter calendar:
  - Must earn a minimum of six (6) credit hours or more within a cumulative quarter and GPA of 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of a regular quarter.
  - Must earn a minimum of six (6) credit hours or more within a cumulative quarter and GPA of 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of the summer session.
  - Earn a minimum of 18 credits within a regular year and six (6) credits during the summer, if applicable, for a total of 24 credits.

- **Summer student:** Must earn a minimum of six (6) credit hours with a cumulative semester/trimester GPA of 2.5 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of the summer session.

#### **Masters and Doctoral Students:**

- **Full time student:** must earn a minimum of six (6) credit hours or more with a cumulative semester/trimester GPA of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of a regular semester/trimester.
- **Part time student:** must earn a minimum of three (3) credit hours or more with a cumulative semester/trimester GPA of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0 at the end of a regular semester/trimester.

<b>TIMELINE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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Under the part-time and full-time scholarship status, the respective degrees or programs must be completed within the timeframe indicated below:

- Associate degree not to exceed four (4) years.
- Bachelor's degree not to exceed six (6) years, including the years/semesters spent earning an Associate degree, if applicable.
- If a student requires more than four (4) years to earn an Associate degree, or more than six (6) total years to earn a Bachelor's degree, the student may enroll, but he/she will be financially responsible for the costs (tuition, fees and books) associated and/or incurred thereafter.
  - If the student is in compliance with the 'Academic Requirements' upon completion of the degree attempted, the student may be eligible for future scholarships for additional or advanced degrees.
  - Reinstatement is granted on a one time basis.

<b>ACADEMIC PROBATION AND SUSPENSION POLICY</b>
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If a student fails to adhere to the BLCS Academic Requirements, they will be placed on probation for the following semester. *Please Note: Students who were previously suspended from the BLCS Scholarship or dropped/withdrew from the program without approval, will be required to submit a new application and meet and adhere to the current policy and criteria for New Applicants.*

#### **Academic Probation**

- Students who do not meet the minimum BLCS Academic Requirements for one semester will receive an Academic Probation Notification from The Education Department, placing the student on probation for the following semester/trimester.
- Once a student is placed on probation, the student must earn a GPA of 2.5 or better (3.0 for postgraduate students) for the next semester as a part-time or full-time student.
- Students who fail to meet the GPA requirement after being placed on Academic Probation will be suspended and deemed ineligible for the scholarship program.

#### **Suspension Due to GPA**

- Students will automatically be suspended from the BLCS for failure to meet the minimum 2.5 GPA requirements while under probationary status.
- Once a student's BLCS has been suspended, the student will not be eligible for future scholarships or reinstated until the student earns a minimum of nine (9) credit hours (over any time frame) and a GPA of 2.5 or better (*3.0 for postgraduate students*) for all classes attempted while on suspension.
- Students will only be allowed one (1) opportunity for re-instatement following a suspension and earn a minimum of nine (9) credit hours (over any time frame) and a GPA of 2.5 or better (*3.0 for postgraduate students*) for all classes attempted while on suspension.
- Upon reinstatement, if the student fails to adhere to the scholarship rules and requirements, they will be automatically suspended and rendered ineligible for future scholarships.

### **Automatic Suspension/Denial of Scholarship**

Students will be automatically suspended and rendered ineligible for the scholarship (with no probationary period) and will be required to reimburse costs and fees awarded for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to complete the semester/trimester without prior approval from *the Higher Education Program Manager*.
- Failure to notify the Higher Education Program of 'withdrawal/drop' status with supporting documentation **within five (5) working days** after the separation. (For example: medical, death in Clan, etc.)
- Suspension or dismissal from the school/academic institution for policy violations.
- Providing false information.

### **Dropping or Withdrawing from a Class or Classes**

- Dropping or withdrawing from a class/school must be pre-approved by the Higher Education Program.
- Student must notify the Higher Education Program of their intent to drop or withdraw from a class/school in writing prior to withdrawing from or dropping any class. Failure to notify the Higher Education Program prior to dropping a class/classes or withdrawing from a class/school prior to STOF payment for the class/classes will result in the student being responsible for repayment to The Education Department. Failure to repay class(es) dropped/withdrawn without notification, will result in immediate BLCS suspension.

### **Academic Progress and Improvement Plan**

- As a part of the Academic Progress and Improvement Plan, the student's progress will be reviewed by the Higher Education Recruiter. Reasons for the unsatisfactory performance and a Plan for Improvement (including course load, level of difficulty, circumstances, etc.) will be part of the Academic Improvement Plan.
- Any student who falls below a 2.5 GPA in any given term, (*3.0 for postgraduate students*), the Higher Education Recruiter will be required to document a joint conference held with the student and institution Advisor. Once completed, a copy of the Action Plan will be emailed/mailed to both the Education Department and the student within three (3) weeks.



- In order to remain eligible, students **must** submit a copy of their official transcript or grade report to the Higher Education Office within two (2) weeks of grade posting.
- Transcripts will be reviewed by the Higher Education Recruiter. In order to ensure academic success and timely completion of degree and programs, the following is required:

<b>STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
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General student responsibilities are as follows:

- Must adhere to all deadlines for submitting the BLCS application or Continuing Student Education Update Form for program enrollment.
- Students will be responsible to find tutors in their schools/institutions as soon as academic difficulty is experienced or needed. If assistance is required, prior to being withdrawn from a class or school, the student must seek tutoring services at/through the enrolled institution before contacting the STOF Tutoring Program.
- Must take responsibility to speak with an Academic Advisor/Dean, when appropriate.
- Must adhere to the rules and regulations of the school/institution, as well as adhere to all residency policies.
- Any cost incurred as a result of infractions or damages is the responsibility of the student.
- Any cost incurred with breaking the lease of housing is the responsibility of the student.
- Submit official copy of transcript/grades no later than two (2) weeks after grade posting.
- Grant the Higher Education Program permission to access your academic records by providing student login information.
- Attend the institution specified within the application and award letter. Transfer between institutions during the semester is not allowed. Transfers may only occur after the student has completed a semester and has notified the Higher Education Program Manager.
- Immediately report any changes in personal status (marital name, etc.), address and contact information.
- Maintain monthly contact with Higher Education Recruiter (e-mail, phone, text, etc.)
- Employment in a related field of study is encouraged on a part-time basis, contingent upon successful academic performance.
- Comply with school requirements and complete all documentation to include, but not be limited to State residency requirements. Sign all waiver forms offered by the school.
- Students eighteen (18) years of age or older, will be solely responsible for communication with The Education Department concerning scholarship or academic standing, unless student gives written permission for another individual to give or receive information from The Education Department.
- The following fees/expenses are not covered by the BLCS and are therefore the student's responsibility.
- Any and all "late fees" incurred by the student for late registration, etc.
- Library fees for overdue or lost books, lost text books fees, and any other fees incurred through the negligence of the student.
- Telephone, cable, car maintenance, gasoline, parking, citations, child care, parking tickets, costs for moving and other personal expenses.

## **Appeals:**

Applicants may appeal any denial decision to the Higher Education Program Manager within five (5) business days of receiving notice of the determination.

The appeal must be in writing and either emailed or mailed to The Education Department to the attention of the Higher Education Program Manager setting forth the reason(s) why the applicant believes the decision should be reversed.

- Within ten (10) business days of receipt of an applicant's appeal, the Higher Education Program Manager will consult with The Education Department Director (or designee) and the Higher Education Representative(s) will deliberate the appeal. Thereafter, a final decision will be submitted in writing to the applicant.

## **COMPUTER POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Education Department Policy and Procedures request for computers (iPad, desktop, laptop, Microsoft Pro 3 tablet, personal computer) is as follows:

### **Higher Education Program:**

1. Both full time (12 credit hours) and part time (9 credit hours) Higher Education students are eligible for a computer, only after being enrolled in their course of study.
2. New and Current students must provide proof of current enrollment status and be in good standing with their Tribal scholarship requirements, which includes a 2.50 GPA.
3. The Education Department will reimburse the Tribal Member for the purchase of the unit not to exceed \$1,200.
4. Higher Education students are eligible to receive a computer every five (5) years, if they meet the current enrollment requirements, along with Tribal scholarship requirements.
5. If a student is entering a Higher Education program and has already received a computer allowance within the past five (5) years, she/he will not be eligible for another computer until the five (5) year period is over.

*\*\*Please note that the five (5) year waiting period for a new electronic device is a combined total, to include the length of your last electronic device from the K-12 program.*

## **CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP (CTES) POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Career Technical Institutions provide Tribal Members with the opportunity to earn a certificate for a specific career, trade or profession; that will enable the student to obtain employment or career advancement from an accredited institution. For a full list of accredited and eligible schools, please visit [www.chea.org](http://www.chea.org).

The purpose of these procedures is to set forth rules and regulations to govern the awarding of funds administered by The Education Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

### **Costs Covered by The Education Department**

- Tuition
- Fees

- Text books and/or eBooks (*if eBooks are provided for within the tuition costs, physical text books will not be covered*).
- Rental of textbooks is covered; the Tribal Member pays upfront for the cost and The Education Department will reimburse the Tribal Member for the rental fees/cost of the text books (*if eBooks are provided for within the tuition costs, physical text books will not be covered, even if rented*).
- Required supplies and lab fees as stated in the course syllabus.
- One (1) re-take of any ‘failed’ course for the length of the student’s current degree/program (*the student will be responsible for payment for any additional re-takes*).

**Cost/expenses not covered by The Education Department to include, but not be limited to the following:**

- Retakes due to a low/passing grade.
- Retakes due to Withdrawals.
- Physical text books, if eBooks are already provided for within the Tuition costs.
- Travel arrangements not made by/through The Education Department.
- Meals or Meal Plans.
- Off-Campus housing and On-campus housing for families.
- Campus housing fees including cleaning, damage, etc.
- Any and all “late fees” incurred by the student for late registration, etc.
- Library fees for overdue or lost books, lost textbook(s) and any other fees incurred through the negligence of the student.
- College/University Parking passes and/or any citations.
- Student health insurance provided by/through the institution.
- Extra-curricular activities.
- International or studies abroad. (Please Note: \*International tuition and fees are subject to approval from the Executive Administrative Office).
- Basic school supplies (*to include, but are not limited to pens, note books, book bags, etc.*)
- Miscellaneous expenses including telephone, cable, Internet, car maintenance, gasoline, child care, costs for moving and other personal expenses.
- Second equivalent degrees (For example, second (2<sup>nd</sup>) AA, second (2<sup>nd</sup>) BA, second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Master’s or second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Doctoral degree(s) (in order to promote advancement in the educational journey).

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Must be an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.
- B. Must be officially accepted to an accredited post-secondary institution.
- C. Must be enrolled as either a full-time or part-time undergraduate or graduate student.
- D. Undergraduate students must have/maintain a minimum cumulative semester GPA of 2.5 or GPA requirement from an institution student will/is attending.
- E. Graduate students must have/maintain a minimum cumulative semester GPA of 3.0.
- F. If on probation, must follow and adhere to the Academic Improvement Plan (including course load, level of difficulty, etc.), which will be included in the report.
- G. Must respond to any/all communications received from the Education Department and/or Recruiter as required (via e-mail, text, phone, or social media forums).

## **ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

There are no set application deadlines for Career Technical Institutions Scholarships. However, depending on the program of choice, the institution may have a separate deadline for enrollment. The Higher Education Program requires a minimum of forty-five (45) working days to evaluate your enrollment and funding status.

### **Application for New Students:**

- A fully completed BLCS Application.
- Copy of high school transcript and/or diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) from an accredited institution, as approved by The Education Department. (Please Note: \*If High School Diploma or GED is found to be unacceptable at the time of new or re-entry submission of the BLCS, those requests will be reviewed by the Higher Ed Program Manager).
- Official transcripts or grade reports from all previously attended colleges/universities, if applicable.
- Letter of Acceptance from the institution, or proof of registration.

### **Returning Students:**

- Returning students are those who discontinue their program or took a leave of absence (LOA) sanctioned by the institution and approved by The Education Department:
  - Students must be in good academic standing (no probation, suspension or outstanding fees).
  - Must have notified The Education Department and presented with supporting documentation within five (5) working days after the separation. (For example: medical, death in Clan, etc.)
  - Maximum re-instatements allowed per degree program are one (1).
  - Notification and approvals must be documented in writing.

## **RULES AND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

The following Academic Requirements will be used to determine eligibility and continuation in the program:

- Grade Point Average (GPA) and/or Credit Hours.
- Students must maintain a 2.5 GPA and meet credit hour requirements each semester/trimester or evaluation period.
- All students must submit their class schedule/Acceptance Letter before the first week of classes.
- In order to remain eligible, students must update and submit all contact information and submit a copy of their transcript(s) or grade report to the Higher Education Program Manager within two (2) weeks of the end of each semester/trimester.
- Students must have/maintain a minimum cumulative semester/trimester GPA of 2.5 or must have required credit completion hours per evaluation period.

<b>ACADEMIC PROBATION AND SUSPENSION POLICY</b>
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If a student fails to adhere to Academic Requirements, they will be placed on probation for the following semester/trimester.

## Academic Probation

- Students who do not meet the minimum Academic Requirements for one (1) semester/trimester or evaluation period, will receive an *Academic Probation* notification from the Higher Education Program, placing the student on probation for the following semester/trimester.
- Students who fail to meet the requirements after being placed on *Academic Probation* will be suspended and ineligible for the scholarship program.

## Academic Suspension

- Students who were previously on probation, will be suspended from scholarships if they fail to meet the minimum scholarship requirements for the second time.
- If a student continues his/her studies for the next term, he/she is responsible for all his/her own school expenses.
- If a student wants to re-apply to the scholarship, the student must show proof of earning a minimum of nine (9) credit hours part-time, 12 credit hours full-time and a GPA of 2.5 or better (3.0 or better post graduate students).
- Automatic suspension (no previous probation) will be enforced for any of the following reasons:
  - Termination of program or withdrawal from school without valid reason, appropriate notice and approval from the Higher Education Program Manager
  - Failure to repay monies incurred, but not be limited to, premature withdrawals from school, etc. There will be a maximum of two (2) reinstatements allowed per degree program.
- Once a student has been suspended, the student will not be eligible for future scholarships or reinstated until the student earns a minimum of 12 credit hours (over any time frame) and a GPA of 2.5 or better (3.0 for postgraduate students) for each class.
- Students will only be allowed one (1) opportunity for re-instatement.
- Upon reinstatement, if the student fails to adhere to the scholarship rules and requirements, they will be automatically suspended and rendered ineligible for future scholarships.

## Automatic Suspension/Denial of Scholarship

Students will be automatically suspended and rendered ineligible for the scholarship (with no probationary period) and will be required to reimburse costs and fees awarded for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to notify the Higher Education Program Manager of ‘withdrawal/drop’ status **within five (5) working days** after the separation.
- Suspension or dismissal from the school/academic institution for policy violations.
- Providing false information.

## Dropping or Withdrawing from a Class/School

- Dropping or withdrawing from a class/school must be pre-approved by the Higher Education Program Manager.
- Students must notify the Higher Education Program Manager of their intent to drop or withdraw from a class/school in writing prior to withdrawing from or dropping any class.
- Failure to notify the Higher Education Program Manager prior to dropping a class/classes or withdrawing from a class/school prior to STOF payment for the class/classes will result in the

student being held responsible for repayment to The Education Department. Failure to repay class(es) dropped/withdrawn without notification, will result in immediate BLCS suspension.

## **Academic Requirements**

In order to remain eligible, students **must** submit a copy of their official transcript(s) or grade report to the Higher Education Recruiter within two (2) weeks of the end of each semester/trimester or evaluation period. Official transcripts will be reviewed by the Higher Education Recruiter. The Higher Education Recruiter will evaluate the interim progress of each student to ensure academic milestones and progress is being achieved. In order to ensure academic success and timely completion of degree and programs, the following is required:

- Under full or part time status, the respective degrees or certificates must be completed within the timeframe as indicated below:
  - Career Technical certificate must be completed within the designated time frame noted on the Enrollment Agreement signed by the student.
  - The Higher Education Program will allow a six (6) month grace period from the last day of attendance for completion of the program. Failure to do so will result in Suspension from the program.
- If applicable, when a student requires more than the allotted time to complete the certificate program, a maximum of an additional six (6) months may be approved by the Education

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

For the student to maintain eligibility status, the following is also required:

- A. Submit **official** copy of college transcripts/grades no later than two (2) weeks after each term has ended or grant the Higher Education Program permission to access your academic records by providing your login information.
- B. Attend the institution specified by the application and validated by the Award Letter. Transfer between institutions during the semester is not allowed. Once the student has completed a semester/trimester, only then will the student be able to transfer to another institution.
- C. Complete and submit an Add/Drop/Change Update Form and indicate the change of program on the form.
- D. This must be approved by the Higher Education Program Manager prior to actually occurring.
- E. Immediately report any changes in personal status (marital name, etc.), address and contact information.
- F. Maintain regular contact with Higher Education Recruiter (e-mail, phone, text).

- If assistance is required, prior to being withdrawn from a class or school, the student must seek tutoring services at/through the enrolled college/university before contacting the STOF Tutoring Program.
- G. Employment in a related field of study is encouraged on a part-time basis, contingent upon successful academic performance.
- H. Comply with school requirements and documentations to include, but not be limited to, state residency requirements, etc.

The following fees/expenses are not covered by The Education Department and are therefore, the student's sole responsibility:

- Any and all "late fees" incurred by the student for late registration, etc.
  - Library fees for overdue or lost books, lost textbooks and any other fees incurred through the negligence of the student.
  - Telephone, cable, car maintenance, gasoline, child care, parking tickets, costs for moving and other personal expenses.
- I. Students eighteen (18) years of age or older, will be solely responsible for communication with the Education Department concerning scholarship or academic standing, unless student gives written permission for another individual to give or receive information from the Education Department.

### **Appeals**

- A. Applicants may appeal any denial decision to the Higher Education Program Manager within five (5) business days of receiving notice of the determination.
- B. The Appeal must be in writing and mailed to the Higher Education Program Manager, setting forth the reason(s) why the applicant believes the decision should be reversed.
- C. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of an applicant's appeal, the Higher Education Program Manager will consult with The Education Department Director (or designee) and the Higher Education Representative(s) will deliberate the appeal. Thereafter, a final decision will be submitted in writing to the applicant.

<b>CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP POLICY AND PROCEDURES</b>
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The Higher Education Program provides for continuing education where certificates and licenses are earned, based upon a structured set of non-credit courses which focuses on skills and knowledge applicable to a specific content area. The purpose of these procedures is to set forth rules and regulations; in order to govern the eligible participants seeking continuing education scholarships administered by The Education Department of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

### **Costs Covered by the Education Department**

- Cost of registration for the course.
- Text books and/or eBooks (*if eBooks are provided for within the tuition costs, physical text books will not be covered*).

- Rental of textbooks is covered; the Tribal Member pays upfront for the cost and The Education Department will reimburse the Tribal Member for the rental fees/cost of the text books (*if eBooks are provided for within the tuition costs, physical text books will not be covered, even if rented*).
- The Education Department will only pay for one (1) continuing education program at a time.

**Cost/expenses not covered by The Education Department to include, but are not limited to the following:**

- Retakes of the course(s).
- Physical text books, if eBooks are already provided for within the Tuition costs.
- Travel arrangements.
- Travel expenses (airfare, hotel, gas, tolls, mileage, and luggage).
- Meals.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Must be an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.
- B. Must have completed an undergraduate, post-graduate or Career Technical Certificate from an accredited institution. For a full list of accredited and eligible schools, please visit [www.chea.org](http://www.chea.org).

**ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

There are no set application deadlines for Continuing Education Certification Programs. However, depending upon the program of choice, the institution may have a separate deadline for enrollment. The Education Department requires a minimum of thirty (30) working days to communicate your enrollment and funding status.

**Application for Students:**

- Fully completed Application.
- Copy of College/University transcript from an accredited institution, as approved by the Education Department.
- Letter of Acceptance or Proof of Registration from approved institution.

**RULES AND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS**

- All students approved must submit their class/course schedule before the start of the continuing education program. Students are required to complete the certificate within the designated time frame as stated in the Registration Form or Enrollment Agreement.
- All students must submit a transcript, grade report or certificate of completion showing completion to the Higher Education Program for review.



- Any student with the intention of dropping or withdrawing from the Continuing Education Program is required to adhere to the following procedures:
  - Officially notify the Higher Education Recruiter of intention to withdraw verbally and in writing within five (5) working days.
  - If the student withdraws or fails to complete the program without notification and approval, the student must repay the STOF for all expenses incurred by the program.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

For the student to maintain eligibility, the following is also required:

- A. Submit **official** copy of transcripts, grades or certificate of completion no later than one (1) week after the program has ended.
- B. Attend the institution specified by the application, award letter or registration form.
- C. A participant cannot start a new program until the previous one is completed.
- D. Maintain regular contact with Higher Education Recruiter (e-mail, phone, text).
- E. The following fees/expense are not covered by the Education Department and therefore, are the student's responsibility:
  - Any and all "late fees" incurred by the student for late registration, etc.
  - Pencils, Pens, Notebooks, etc.

## **Appeals**

- A. Applicants may appeal any denial decision to the Higher Education Program Manager within five (5) business days of receiving notice of the determination.
- B. The Appeal must be in writing and mailed to the Higher Education Program Manager, setting forth the reason(s) why the applicant believes the decision should be reversed.
- C. Within ten (10) business days of receipt of an applicant's appeal, the Higher Education Program Manager will consult with The Education Department Director (or designee) and the Higher Education Representative(s) will deliberate the appeal. Thereafter, a final decision will be submitted in writing to the applicant.

## TRAVEL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### **Definition of Education Travel**

Student travel expenses covered in this section are limited to:

- Only trips sponsored and/or approved by The Education Department.
- Visits to higher educational schools and colleges for the purpose of obtaining information prior to the submission of college application and/or admission.
- Required college orientation for the college to which the student was admitted.
- Travel for summer programs and leadership experience opportunities will not be covered by The Education Department.
- Travel arrangements must be made by/through The Education Department at least thirty (30) days in advance. Any personal travel arrangements will be at the expense of the student.

### **Student Travel – General Requirements**

- The following are the qualifying guidelines for any college visit(s) sponsored by The Education Department:
  - Be a high school/GED graduate
  - Have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5
  - Pass the Tribe-required drug test
  - Must meet the admissions requirements for the prospective college/university/institution
- **International travel or International Study Abroad programs either associated with the school, college, university or any other organization will not be sponsored by The Education Department.** (Please Note: \*If International tuition and fees are **required (not optional)** as part of the program completion, those requests will be reviewed by the Higher Ed Program Manager.
- Students must be in good standing and have good academic records for the current year in which travel is to take place.
- The Education Department has a zero tolerance drug policy. All students will be drug tested before any arrangements of travel are made. Any student found in possession of, or using drugs during a trip sponsored by the Education Department will not be eligible to attend any other trips for the remainder of the school year.
- Students who exhibit behavioral issues on any trip sponsored by the Education Department will be counseled by the appropriate staff member and given an opportunity to make corrective changes.
- Any intent to cancel and/or withdraw from a trip must be communicated to The Education Department within seven (7) working days prior to departure (if and when foreseen and allowable). Documentation may be required.
- If a student fails to show up on the day of travel, or cancels the trip for reason(s) not approved by the Education Department (other than emergencies), the student must reimburse The Education Department for all costs incurred.
- All travel must be approved/arranged by the Office Manager through the STOF's Native American Travel Department. If a parent/student arranges travel, they are responsible for the cost incurred and will not be reimbursed.

## **Student Travel – College Tour Requirements**

- College trips must be coordinated through the Higher Education Program Manager.
- Students must be an enrolled member of the Seminole Tribe of Florida.
- Student are allotted a maximum of two (2) out of state college visits per school year, and two (2) in state college visits that require an overnight stay and/or STOF travel expenses per academic year. *Overnight arrangements will only be made for travel exceeding two hundred (200) miles beyond the traveler's home.*
- All local in-state college visits that do not include or require an overnight stay are permitted.
- The participating student must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 on their most recent grade report/transcript.
  - a. Students who are recruited by a college/university and invited to visit the institution must provide the following documents:
    - Letter stating the request from the college/university (on College/University letterhead)
    - Detailed program or schedule itinerary from the School
  - b. Maximum days for a visit sponsored by The Education Department will not exceed three (3) working days (including travel time). If a student exceeds the three (3) working days, then the student will be responsible for any/all additional expenses incurred.
  - c. If the student chooses to visit another school within the same state and exceeds the three (3) days maximum travel time, such visit will be considered the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) and final visit allotted for the academic year.
  - d. The student must submit a completed College/School Visitation Form thirty (30) days prior to travel. After any college visit, the student will be required to submit the completed College Visit Information Form and return it to the Higher Education Recruiter within two (2) weeks after travel.

## **Orientation Visits**

To qualify, the student must be accepted to an accredited college or university.

- Travel for full-time students attending in-state or out-of-state freshman orientation will be paid for by The Education Department.
- Travel expenses for in-state students will include the following:
  - Car rental
  - Hotel, if dormitory is not provided
  - Allotted 'per diem' will be paid only to the Tribal member parent or Tribal member chaperone.
- Students must submit the following documents to the Higher Education Program Recruiter
  - Letter of Acceptance (on school letterhead)
  - Letter stating the request from college/university (on school letterhead)
  - Detailed schedule/agenda
- Pass the Tribe-required drug test.
- Adhere to the rules of good behavior as set forth by The Education Department.

### **Education Travel Expenses Covered**

Applicable travel expenses for the student will be covered by The Education Department as outlined below:

- All travel must be requested at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the departure date.
- Costs will be covered for round-trip transportation including airfare, hotel and car rental.
- Allotted ‘per diem’ will be paid to the student, when staying overnight. This is equal to \$50 dollars per night per authorized traveler, as applicable.
- Reimbursement for luggage fees is limited to one (1) piece of luggage per traveler. Any additional luggage or excess baggage weight requiring extra fees will be the responsibility of the traveler.
- The travel expenses for the chaperone of students nineteen (19) years of age or older will not be covered by The Education Department. If a parent/chaperone is not available, the student will be accompanied by a Higher Education Recruiter. If the student/parent/chaperone chooses to travel on their own accord, then all travel expenses will be their responsibility and will not be reimbursable by The Education Department.

### **Rules for Student on Education Department Travel**

- Travel arrangements will be made for students who have passed drug screenings and have met all academic requirements.
- Alcohol and drugs are strictly prohibited and may jeopardize future travel.
- Students are representing their families and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. It is expected that all students will conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines of this policy.
- Any behavior including, but not limited to, destruction of property, theft, disrespect to adults or other students, criminal activity, the use of drugs or alcohol, fighting, inappropriate sexual conduct, refusing to comply with written or verbal rules; will impact any consideration for future trips.

### **Student Travel Procedures**

- The Higher Education Recruiter must receive the completed Education Department Travel packet including Higher Education Travel Request Form, at least thirty (30) days prior to travel.
- If the trip includes an overnight stay, the traveler(s) will be instructed to:
  - a. Schedule a drug screening fourteen (14) days prior to departure and
  - b. Sign a release at the clinic/facility for the results to be sent to The Education Department.
- After the traveler(s) returns the signed Travel packet and the ‘cleared’ drug screening has been received by the Higher Education Recruiter and forwarded to the Higher Education Program Manager, travel arrangements will be initiated.

## **GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (GED) TEST AND DIPLOMA POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR ADULTS**

The Education Department recognizes that the GED program may be the best option for some students to complete their high school education.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

- Seminole Tribe of Florida GED adult candidates must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- Upon the first day of the month, after the eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>) birthday, the GED Minor will be reclassified as a GED Adult and will be required to adhere to GED requirements, as per the Higher Education Policies and Procedures.

### **GED Enrollment Procedures**

The candidate must meet with the Higher Education Recruiter to complete the following:

- GED Application
- Education Department Tutoring Request
- GED Commitment Agreement Form

The Higher Education Recruiter will:

- Add the student to the GED Adult Master List, obtaining contact information.
- Maintain monthly communication with the student to discuss progress.

The Tutoring Program staff will:

- Assist student with pre-test participation to develop a learning plan for the student.
- Track student progress.
- Monitor student participation hours.

### **GED Participation Requirements**

- Tutoring Program staff will be assigned by the Seminole Tribe of Florida and *all* sessions are required to be held in The Education Department.
- Adult students enrolled in the GED program may spend a **maximum of four (4) hours per week (Monday through Friday)** with the assigned Tutoring Program staff in preparation for the GED test.
- The maximum hours allotted for Tutoring Program assistance is four (4) hours per week. This does not include the time spent taking tests or engaged in independent study. There is no make-up of time.
- Students must display proper behavior when attending a session.
- All GED students are allotted six (6) months to complete the GED program, unless the student has an IEP and/or The Education Department Director or designee has approved for the student to continue the GED process for an additional six (6) months.
- Assistance sessions will begin for each subject area upon completion of that subject's GED pre-test.

### **GED Testing Procedures – Pre-Test**

- GED students are required to meet with the Higher Education Recruiter to register for the official GED pre-test.
- The student will be issued for (4) GED vouchers to cover the cost of the initial pre-test administered.

### **GED Testing Procedures – Official Exam**

- Upon completion of preparation for the Official GED Test, the student must inform the Higher Education Recruiter of their desire to move forward with taking the official GED Test.
- The Recruiter must refer to the rules and regulations for GED testing in the county of which the student resides.
- The student must register for the official GED Test and select a GED Testing Center.
- The student must pay for all sections of the Official GED Test at the time of registration.
- The student may request reimbursement for official testing fees **upon receipt of a passing score.**
- If the student registers for, but does not take the official test as scheduled, the student will not be reimbursed.
- It is the student's responsibility to reschedule a test **prior** to the scheduled test day and within the timeframe required by the testing agent.
- The student must provide The Education Department Recruiter with the password and username upon registration.
- All students needing accommodations must check "yes" when prompted to do so during the online registration.
  - a. The student will receive an e-mail with specific instructions, in order to receive accommodations by the Pearson VUE Accommodations Scheduling team (*Notification on the decision is usually delivered in writing within thirty (30) days*).
  - b. If approved, student will be provided with specific instructions on the process to schedule their GED Test with the Pearson VUE Accommodations Scheduling team.
  - c. If the request is not approved, the student will also be provided information on the appeal process.
- The GED test is scored by computer.
  - a. The passing standard is a score of 150 on a scale of 100 to 200 scaled score points for each of the four (4) content areas.
  - b. The students will need to earn a total of 600 or higher to receive the GED test credential.
  - c. Students may also earn an "Honors" score if they receive a score of 170 or higher on any subject.
- The GED Testing Service allows individuals to take the test three (3) times without any waiting period. After the third attempt, students must wait sixty (60) days after their last attempt before they can test again. Therefore, test-takers have the opportunity to take the GED test up to a maximum of eight (8) times in any given year, if required.
- Students may take sections of the new GED test in any order they choose.

### **Completion of the GED Program/Receiving a Diploma**

- Students are required to inform the Recruiter immediately upon passing the GED Test.
- The Recruiter will request the GED diploma from Pearson VUE on behalf of the student. The student must give the Recruiter the official GED document within five (5) days of receipt.
- Upon receipt of the GED Diploma, the K-12 Advisor or Higher Ed Recruiter will:
  - a. Scan the document with the transcripts into the Student Tracking System.
  - b. Scan and email the document to the Office of Trust Management.
  - c. Notify the diploma recipient and coordinate for delivery of the diploma.