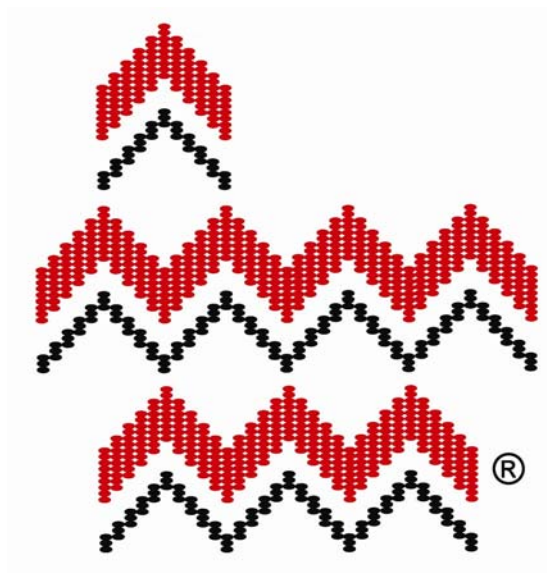


Tribal Scholarship Program Policies & Procedures



**Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
Tribal Scholarship Program
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**MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS
TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
REVISED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

REVISED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Purpose

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians has consistently placed education as a high priority and emphasized the importance of increasing the number of students entering and completing post-secondary educational programs. To this purpose, the Tribal Scholarship Program was established to provide scholarship funds to eligible tribal members who wish to further their education beyond the secondary level.

B. Objectives

The objectives of the Tribal Scholarship Program are:

- 1.0 To provide supplemental financial assistance to eligible members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians who are committed to furthering their education by pursuing a defined program of study at a post-secondary educational institution.
- 2.0 To provide coordination with other Tribal Programs and Financial Aid Offices of post-secondary institutions to build the best possible financial aid package for each student.
- 3.0 To counsel and assist tribal members in structuring their, educational endeavors.
- 4.0 To serve, when necessary, as a student's advocate with the post-secondary educational institution.

C. Eligibility Requirements

- 1.0 Be an enrolled member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians.
- 2.0 Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a post-secondary educational institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency approved by the U.S. Department of Education that is not a for-profit proprietary school or business.
- 3.0 Have obtained a high school diploma or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED).
- 4.0 Have met the following entrance requirements.

The following entrance requirements have been established to assure that Tribal Scholarship Program students have a basic level of academic preparation required for success in postsecondary educational programs.

- 4.1. Scholarship applicants planning to attend college must meet one of the following entrance requirements.
- (a) Minimum composite score of 15 on the enhanced ACT, or its equivalent SAT score, or
 - (b) Minimum composite score of 10 on the ACT if taken prior to 1989, or
 - (c) Minimum composite score of 12th Grade on the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE), Level 7, or
 - (d) Minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on at least 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) of college level core academic classes, including English Composition I with a minimum grade of "C".
- 4.2 First time applicants and students who have not received assistance for five (5) or more years and who do not meet the requirements of Section 4.1 may be provided tuition, fees, and books for up to 24 credit hours of academic courses.

These hours must include:

- (a) English Composition I with a minimum grade of "C", and
- (b) Intermediate or College Algebra, and
- (c) Study Skills and developmental courses as approved by the Tribal Scholarship Program Staff

The classes may be taken at East Central Community College, Meridian Community College, Jones County Junior College, Dyersburg State Community College, South West Tennessee Community College, or other public community college approved by the program. Students must obtain a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on all classes taken to be eligible for full scholarship consideration to attend a community college.

D. Application Procedure

1.0 First time applicants

All students will be responsible for ensuring that all required documents are submitted to the college or university's Financial Aid Office by the school's Financial Aid deadline. All students must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each academic year and apply for assistance through the financial aid office of the college or university the student plans to attend. It is the responsibility of all

full-time students to have the college's Financial Aid Office provide a Tribal Scholarship Program Financial Aid Package Form to the Tribal Scholarship Office.

Students who plan to enroll in vocational or technical programs must apply for assistance with appropriate tribal programs, such as the Vocational Education Program and Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

- 1.1 A Tribal Scholarship Program application file for first-time applicants will include the following documents:
 - (a) Five hundred word essay written by the student requesting assistance and stating educational goals and progress toward those goals
 - (b) Tribal Scholarship Program application
 - (c) Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood
 - (d) Student Information Release Form
 - (e) Transcript Release Form
 - (f) Official high school transcript or official GED scores
 - (g) One of either ACT, SAT, or TABE scores
 - (h) Official college transcripts from all colleges attended
 - (i) Copy of Student Aid Report (result of Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
 - (j) Copy of Financial Aid Award Letter, if applicable
 - (k) Letter of acceptance from the college or documentation of recent or current enrollment
 - (l) Identified Program of Study and Expected Completion Date
 - (m) Schedule of classes
- 1.2 Additional Requirements for full-time students.
 - (a) Employment Verification Form OR Non-Employment Verification Form
 - (b) Tribal Scholarship Financial Aid Package Form completed by the college or university financial aid office

2.0 Continuing Students

All students will be responsible for ensuring that all required documents are submitted to the college or university's Financial Aid Office by the school's Financial Aid deadline. All students must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each academic year and apply for assistance through the financial aid office of the college or university the student plans to attend. It is the responsibilities of all full-time students to have the college's Financial Aid Office provide a Tribal Scholarship Program Financial Aid Package Form to the Tribal Scholarship Office.

Students who plan to enroll in vocational or technical programs must apply for assistance with appropriate tribal programs, such as the Vocational Education Program and Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

2.1 A Tribal Scholarship Program application file for continuing students will consist of:

- (a) Two-hundred-fifty word essay written by the student requesting assistance and stating educational goals and progress toward those goals
- (b) Tribal Scholarship Program Renewal Application for each academic year with additional renewals required for summer coursework.
- (c) Current college transcript(s) immediately following each academic year (i.e. at the end of each spring term) and grade reports immediately following all other terms.
- (d) Student Information Release Form
- (e) Copy of Student Aid Report (result of Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- (f) Copy of Financial Aid Award Letter, if applicable
- (g) Letter of acceptance, if transferring to another college
- (h) Class Schedule
- (i) Change of Program of Study or Expected Completion Date, if applicable

2.2 Additional Requirements for full-time students

- (a) Tribal Scholarship Financial Aid Package Form completed by the college or university financial aid office
- (b) Employment Verification Form OR Non-Employment Verification Form

3.0 Deadlines for Applications and Supporting Documents

Applications will not be accepted if the following application deadlines are not met. The deadlines for initial or renewal applications for all students will be as follows:

3.1 Full-time Students

<u>Term</u>	<u>Applications</u>	<u>Supporting Documents</u>
Fall Semester/Quarter/Trimester	May 30	Aug 1
Winter/Spring Semester/Quarter/Trimester	October 31*	December 1
Summer	March 15	May 1

3.2 Part-time Students

<u>Term</u>	<u>Applications</u>	<u>Supporting Documents</u>
Fall Semester/Quarter/Trimester	June 30	Aug 1
Winter/Spring Semester/Quarter/Trimester	November 30*	December 1
Summer	April 15	May 1

- Deadlines for winter and spring term applications from students enrolled in institutions using the quarter/trimester system will vary depending on start date, but will be approximately four weeks prior to beginning of the term.

4.0 Incomplete Applications

Incomplete application files (i.e. those without all supporting documents or a completed application received by applicable deadlines) will not be provided financial assistance for the term. Students who have met all program and school application deadlines but who are waiting for supporting documents from the educational institution may enroll in classes, but no financial aid will be provided from the scholarship program until all supporting documents are received.

E. Satisfactory Academic Progress

- 1.0 Students who are provided tribal scholarship funds are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress in order to maintain their eligibility for future scholarships. Students who do not maintain adequate progress will be placed on probation.

2.0 In order to meet the tribal standard for satisfactory academic progress, tribal scholarship students must:

2.1 Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, **and**

2.2 Meet the following standards for adequate progress:

(a) Part-time students must complete the equivalent of nine (9) out of each twelve (12) semester hours for all attempted courses;

(b) Full-time students must successfully complete the minimum number of credit hours required by the school's financial aid office to be classified as a full-time student. This is usually 12 semester hours or its equivalent.

F. Probation

1.0 Students placed on probation for failure to meet satisfactory academic progress must meet with the Scholarship Program staff and have written approval of course schedules prior to their registration in any classes to be paid for by the scholarship program.

2.0 Students placed on probation for failure to meet the standards for satisfactory academic progress must meet the standards by the end of the following term attempted, or they will be suspended from the Tribal Scholarship Program.

3.0 Students who have had two prior probationary periods and who would otherwise be placed on probation for failing to make satisfactory academic progress in their current term will be suspended from the Tribal Scholarship Program.

G. Suspension

1.0 Students who have been suspended for failure to meet satisfactory academic progress must meet the following requirements in order to be reenrolled in the Tribal Scholarship Program:

1.1 Remain out of the Tribal Scholarship Program for at least one year after their suspension, and

1.2 Complete at least six (6) semester credit hours or the equivalent after their suspension, and

1.3 Obtain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale, or

1.4 Remain out of the Tribal Scholarship Program for five years.

2.0 All students who have been suspended from the program must meet the requirements of Part C, Eligibility Requirements to be reenrolled in the Tribal Scholarship Program.

H. Computers

1.0 The Tribal Scholarship Program will provide a computer to those students who:

1.1 are enrolled on a full-time basis in the Tribal Scholarship Program and are not on probation or suspension, and

1.2 have successfully completed twenty-four (24) semester hours of college level coursework while enrolled as a full-time student, and

1.3 has submitted a Computer Request Form with a letter of request, verification of enrollment status, classification and grade point average.

2.0 Eligible scholarship participants will have the option to select either a laptop or desktop computer; however the Tribal Scholarship Program will select and order standard computers for all students.

3.0 Computers provided to scholarship participants will become the property of the participant when received, and the scholarship program will have no responsibilities for their support, maintenance or replacement. Computers provided scholarship students are considered a gift from the tribe when received by the student.

4.0 Only one computer will be provided per individual student at any time in their education.

5.0 A graduate level student who has never received a program computer may be eligible for one even if enrolled on a less than a full-time basis.

6.0 The scholarship program will assist scholarship participants who do not have a personal computer to identify public or tribal computer laboratories available for their use.

I. Exceptions and Exclusions

1.0 The Tribal Scholarship Program will not provide any financial assistance for:

1.1 Students classified below the post-secondary level except for high school seniors who meet the following qualification requirements for dual enrollment in postsecondary core academic coursework

(a) Minimum composite score of 25 on the ACT or of 1140 on the SAT,

(b) A letter of recommendation from their high school principal and

(c) Concurrence from the college or university.

- 1.2 Students attending colleges or universities outside the United States of America or students participating in study abroad. (Students who study abroad as a part of their program of study in a domestic college or university may have their tuition and books paid for by the program.)
- 1.3 Students enrolled in correspondence courses at any level.
- 1.4 Students enrolled in classes that lead to Continuing Education Units (CEU) only.
- 1.5 Students participating in seminars, conferences, travel, and professional development activities that do not earn college credit and/or lead to a college degree.
- 1.6 Registration fees, study guides or review courses for:
- (a) Entrance exams such as the ACT, SAT, TABE, GRE, MAT, GMAT, MCAT, LSAT, or
 - (b) Professional certification exams, such as the CPA or bar exams, that are not taken within one year of graduation or that are not required for completion of a degree
- 1.6 Students attending proprietary (for-profit) schools.
- 1.7 Repayment of Student Loans.
- 1.8 College charges that are more than 2 semesters/terms in arrears. (Students are responsible for ensuring that accounts are cleared each semester.)
- 2.0 Because of the Tribal Scholarship Programs' rapidly growing number and cost of full-time scholarships, the Tribal Scholarship Program has established some limits to full-time scholarship awards for living expenses. All students will continue to receive assistance for the costs of tuition, fees, and books whether on a part-time or full-time basis.
- 2.1 Full-time scholarships that include living expenses will be limited to one degree at each level;
- Vocational or technical certification
 - AA, AS or AAS degree
 - Bachelor degree
 - Master degree
 - Doctorate or professional degree.

- 2.2 Scholarships for living expenses will not be provided to students who:
- Have received a full-time scholarship for more than ten semesters while pursuing a degree at or below the bachelor level or
 - Have received a full-time scholarship for more than three semesters while pursuing a one-year master degree.

J. Assistance Provided

1.0 Part-time Students.

The Tribal Scholarship Program will provide full tuition, fees, and books to the extent that those expenses are not covered by other tribal financial aid sources, such as employers, federal grants or other scholarships. No assistance from the Tribal Scholarship Program will be provided for travel childcare, supplies, or any other charges associated with part-time classes. The graduation fee will be provided during the semester the student graduates.

2.0 Full-time Students.

The amount of assistance awarded to full-time students is based on the information provided to the program by the college's Financial Aid Office as documented on the Tribal Financial Aid Package Form. To be considered a full-time student by the Tribal Scholarship Program, the student must be defined as a full-time student by the college's Financial Aid Office. Awards for full-time students who also work fulltime will be limited to tuition, fees and books.

The scholarship program will use the Tribal Financial Aid Package Form to ensure that every student has adequate money for direct charges, such as tuition, fees, books, dorm room, and meals. In addition to the budget for direct charges which schools publish in their catalog, every school has a Cost of Attendance (budget) that they use for awarding grants, loans, and institutional scholarships. It is this expanded budget documented on the tribe's Financial Aid Package Form that includes estimated expenses for off-campus housing, travel and miscellaneous personal items that is used by the Scholarship Program to determine scholarship awards for full-time students who are not employed full-time.

The On-Campus Cost of Attendance will be used for all full-time students except those living with their parents. For students' not living on-campus or with their parents, scholarship amounts for living expenses will be limited to the greater of the on-campus budget or 80 percent of the school's off-campus budget for living expenses.

K. Definitions

The following terms are used throughout the Policies and Procedures Manual:

Academic Year The period of time in which a full-time student is expected to complete the equivalent of at least two consecutive semesters (i.e. Fall and Spring), or the equivalent in terms, quarters, or trimesters, excluding summer sessions.

Accredited School An educational institution in any state that has been certified as meeting a set of standards by their regional accreditation association.

Attempted Courses For purposes of determining a student's satisfactory academic progress, all courses that appear on the student's transcripts are considered Attempted Courses with the exception of (1) those courses in which the student was enrolled by institutional error and (2) all courses which have been approved for 'Academic Forgiveness' by the college. Courses in which the student receives a grade of W, WP, WF, and I are considered Attempted Courses except in the case of "Academic Forgiveness" as stated above. Courses that carry Pass/Fail or Credit/No-Credit grades are considered Attempted Courses, but are not used in the Grade Point Average calculation.

Core Academic Courses Core academic courses refer to those courses in the areas of English, mathematics, science, social science, and oral communication that are generally required in the first two years of a university or college program, such as English Composition I & II, literature courses, College Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) An average of all course work completed at all post-secondary institutions, which is computed by dividing the total number of quality points, earned at all post-secondary institutions by the total number of hours attempted at all postsecondary institutions. For courses that are repeated, the student's highest grade will be used in calculating the cumulative grade point average.

Financial Aid Package Form A needs analysis form which provides documentation of an individual student's college budget, resources and financial aid.

Full-time student A student who is enrolled in a minimum number of credit hours defined by an educational institution to be full-time status. Generally it is 12 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for undergraduate students and 9 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for graduate students. To be considered a full-time student by the Tribal Scholarship Program, the student must be a full-time student as defined by the financial aid office at one educational institution. Example: an undergraduate student who is enrolled in 9 hours at one institution and 3 hours at another institution cannot be defined by the financial aid office

by either institution as full-time, unless there is a Memorandum of Understanding between the two schools.

Living Expenses Living expenses may include estimates for off-campus housing, meals, travel and other miscellaneous personal items included in the school's Title IV Cost of Attendance.

Part-time student A student who is enrolled in less than the minimum number of credit hours required to be considered full-time. Generally it is less than 12 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for undergraduate students and less than 9 semester credit hours (or the equivalent) for graduate students.

Post-Secondary Educational opportunities beyond the high school and GED level.

Probation A one semester trial period following a semester in which a student failed to meet the tribal standard for satisfactory academic progress.

Program of Study A documented sequence of courses, usually listed in the official catalog of any given college that represents the requirements for a major. Some universities allow the student and his/her advisor to tailor a program of study to meet the specific needs and interests of the student.

Proprietary School Proprietary Schools are for-profit businesses that provide education and training. They may be privately owned, a partnership or a corporation.

Regional Accrediting Agencies the United States Secretary of Education is required by law to publish a list of recognized accrediting agencies that the Secretary determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training provided by the institutions of higher education and the higher education programs they accredit. Tribal Scholarship students may choose to attend colleges that are accredited by the following Regional Accrediting Organizations which are recognized by the United States Secretary of Education:

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Middle States Commission on Higher Education
New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools the Higher Learning Commission
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities

Satisfactory Academic Progress Maintenance of the equivalent of a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale, and the required completion of attempted course work each semester as defined by Part E, Section 2.2.

Student Aid Report A report that summarizes the information provided by a student on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Student Information Release Form A required Tribal Scholarship Program form on which the student identifies to whom information can be released.

Suspension Ineligibility for assistance for a specific period of time.

Title IV Cost of Attendance Established by each individual post-secondary educational institution, the Title IV Cost of Attendance (COA) is the total amount it should cost a student to attend that institution, and is usually expressed as an academic year figure (Fall, Winter, Spring). The Cost of Attendance covers tuition, fees, housing, meals, books, supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses. This is the maximum budget that the Financial Aid Office at any particular school uses to award all types of financial aid. Additionally, most schools establish a separate COA for students who reside 'On-Campus', 'Off-Campus' (self-supporting), and 'With-Parents' which means that budgets may vary for students at the same institution.

MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS

RESOLUTION CHO 06-076

**A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAM**

REVISED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

WHEREAS, the Revised Constitution and Bylaws of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Article VIII empowers the Tribal Council to establish procedures for the conduct of all tribal government and business operations; and

WHEREAS, the tribe has operated the tribally funded scholarship program since 1995; and

WHEREAS, over the past ten years, the program has provided scholarships to more than 1,500 enrolled tribal members; and

WHEREAS, the program has provided a good opportunity for tribal members to improve their quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the program has expanded rapidly over the past several years, but has operated under the same basic policies for ten years, and

WHEREAS, several areas have been identified in which the program policies could be improved to both assure a greater rate of success for tribal scholarship participants and to provide for a more efficient use of tribal funds; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council does hereby adopt the attached Tribal Scholarship Program Revised Policies and Procedures, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the attached Tribal Scholarship Program Revised Policies and Procedures will be in effect beginning with the Fall 2006 academic term; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Tribal Council docs hereby phase in the implementation of new standards as follows:

- 1. The entrance requirements described in Section C under items 4.0, 4.1, and 4.2 will become effective for student entering or reentering the program after January 1, 2007; and**
- 2. The recording of credit hours attempted and completed for the purposes of measuring**

compliance with the new standard for determining Satisfactory Academic Progress as described in Section E.2.2 will begin with classes enrolled in for the Fall 2006 semester; and

3. All students enrolled in the program for the Fall 2006 academic term will remain eligible for program services unless suspended in accordance with Section G of the Revised Policies and Procedures with the exception of scholarships for full-time living expenses which will be limited for students based upon their classification as follows:

- a. Freshman Ten Semesters
- b. Sophomore Eight Semesters
- c. Junior Six Semesters
- d. Senior Four Semesters

Certification

I, the undersigned, Secretary-Treasurer of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, certify that the Tribal Council of said Band is composed of 16 members, 16 of whom, constituting a quorum, were present at a Regular Tribal Council Meeting thereof, duly called, noticed, convened, and held this 11th day of April 2006; and that the forgoing Resolution was duly adopted by a vote of 13 members in favor, 3 opposed, and 0 abstaining.

Dated this 11th day of April, 2005.

ATTEST:



Phillip Martin, Chief



Phyliss J. Anderson, Secretary-Treasurer



TRIBAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
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MISSISSIPPI BAND OF CHOCTAW INDIANS
P. O. BOX 6085
CHOCTAW MS 39350

Verification of Receipt of Tribal Scholarship Policies

My signature below verifies that I, _____, have received and
(Please Print Name)
read the Tribal Scholarship Program Policies which were adopted by the Tribal Council
on April 11, 2006. I understand that it is my responsibility to adhere to each and every
section of the policies and to contact the Tribal Scholarship Program staff if I need
clarification of any portion therein. I further understand that failure to sign, date and
return this form to the Scholarship Office may result in forfeiture of scholarship funding.

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Social Security Number

Parent's Signature if student is under 18 years of age

Date