

THE CHICKASAW NATION DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Higher Education Student Handbook



**Education Division
Education Services Department**



The Chickasaw Nation
Bill Anoatubby, Governor

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I. Introduction:

The Chickasaw Nation programs and services for higher education are available to undergraduate, graduate and doctoral college students (undergraduate student – part-time = three to 11 hours, full-time = 12 or more hours; graduate students – part-time = three to eight hours, full-time = nine or more hours). Funding assistance is also available to full-time Chickasaw employees attending college as part-time students (undergraduate student – part-time = three to nine hours; graduate students – part-time = three to eight hours) (see the Chickasaw Nation *Higher Education Student Handbook – Full-time Employee Edition requirements*). **Students will have an “active” Chickasaw citizenship status which is determined by the tribe’s citizenship office.** Active and inactive citizenship status is differentiated by the tribe’s citizenship office. Inactive status means that a citizen has relinquished his citizenship with the Chickasaw Nation and received citizenship with another tribe, while active status means the person maintains his citizenship with the Chickasaw Nation. The programs and services provided by education services are intended to supplement educational needs for all citizens pursuing a degree from an accredited institution of higher education. Higher education assistance does not provide funding for conferences, symposiums or workshops (ACT/SAT prep workshops are excluded). The field of study is not limited to any particular discipline. Comprehensive universities, regional universities, two- or four-year colleges, private institutions and online universities worldwide are acceptable as long as they are accredited by the United States Department of Education.

Education services will help Chickasaw citizens with only one associate’s, one bachelor’s, one master’s and one doctoral degree. Once a citizen has received funding for a particular type of degree (i.e., associate’s, bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral), he becomes ineligible for future funding for that same type of degree, upon graduation. Students working towards their baccalaureate degree will be funded up to 150 hours. For example, if education services funds a citizen for a bachelor’s degree in nursing, upon returning to college, the citizen cannot obtain funding for a bachelor’s degree in business. In no instance will education services fund a citizen for two associate’s degrees, two bachelor’s degrees, two master’s degrees or two doctoral degrees.

Tribal awards may affect the student’s federal and other funding sources which

can result in an over award. An over award occurs when more funds are awarded to a student than financial aid rules allow. Funding may change in award amounts from semester to semester. In no instance will a student be reimbursed for completed course work.

II. **Elaboration of Documentation:**

A. **High School/College Transcript(s):**

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| High School | An applicant will provide a completed high school transcript that reflects his final GPA or a copy of his GED/HSE score. High school seniors will submit a final official high school transcript to apply for Governor's, Lt. Governor's and Legislators' scholarships and Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes Johnson O'Malley (JOM) scholarship. High school seniors' deadline to apply and have all required documentation turned in to the higher education office for the Governor's, Lt. Governor's, Legislators' and JOM scholarships is <u>September 1st</u> . |
| College | An <i>official</i> updated college transcript will be submitted each semester. Students may submit the transcript themselves. Scanned images of official college transcripts can be submitted; however, if the image is not legible, the student will be required to mail the official copy. The education office will not accept photos taken by phone or camera of an official transcript or other required documentation. |

B. **Proof of Enrollment:**

An applicant will provide a copy of his current college class schedule. Enrollment will show the student's name, semester, name of college/university and total credit hours in which the applicant is enrolled.

Funding:

Funding is intended to minimize or alleviate the financial responsibility of the student; however, seeking other financial support is encouraged. The higher education program does not provide funding for conferences, symposiums, workshops, college fees or application fees.

III. **Deadlines:**

A. Deadlines are stated on the application.

B. Notification of a completed file will NOT be sent. Once your file has been determined to be complete, the next letter you receive will be the awards summary listing your semester awards. All letters and emails detailing missing documents are sent to students as a courtesy as time allows. It is the ultimate responsibility of the student to ensure that applications and documentation are received or postmarked by the established deadlines on the application. Please refer to the *Student Self-Service* site at

www.chickasaw.net/highered for your award status. Incomplete applications or applications received after the deadline dates will not be processed. Notification of incomplete files will continue to be handled primarily by email. If you do not have an email address, documentation letters of incomplete files will be mailed to you.

- C. Guidelines for deadlines are subject to change. If a deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will roll over to the first business day of the following week. **The applicant is responsible for reading the student handbook from semester to semester for updates.**
- D. The application and required documentation will be postmarked or hand-delivered to education services before or on the established deadline dates. **Incomplete or late applications will not be processed.**
- E. Education services is not responsible for sending or receiving documentation to or from the Chickasaw Foundation office.
- F. If you plan to study abroad, please speak with your education specialist regarding your official transcript and deadline.
- G. An academic term is a division of an academic year, the time during which a school, college or university holds classes. These divisions may be called terms. Deadlines are set on a semester system dividing the academic year into two terms of relatively equal lengths, fall and spring; however, some academic years may be set in quarter systems that divide the academic year into four terms of relatively equal lengths. For quarter system or online students the deadline will be one month from the start date of the quarter.

IV. Programs, Grants and Scholarships:

- A. Higher education grant
- B. General scholarship
- C. Governor's, Lt. Governor's and Legislators' scholarship (high school seniors only)
- D. Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes JOM scholarship (high school seniors only)
- E. Concurrent enrollment (high school seniors only)
- F. Text book grant
- G. ACT/SAT services

- H. College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- I. Chikasha Holitoplichí - laptop scholarship program
- J. Chikasha Holitoplichí - graduation stole program
- K. Degree completion incentive
- L. Graduation assistance program
- M. License and certification fee assistance program

V. Guidelines/Award Amounts:

Students applying for the above-mentioned programs and services will meet the guidelines described for each individual award. Students have the option to submit their application and required documentation online on the Student Self-Service site at www.chickasaw.net/highered. For technical assistance with your login or password, please contact the service desk at (580) 272-5801 or (866) 939-5552.

Home-school Graduates:

Home-school students will submit their ACT scores with their programs, grants and scholarships application.

GED/HSE Graduates:

Students completing a GED/HSE will submit their GED/HSE scores with their programs, grants and scholarships application.

Prerequisite for Graduate/Doctorate:

Students requiring prerequisite classes for admission into a master's/doctoral program will be awarded according to the level of the courses for which they are enrolled (the Chickasaw Nation Higher Education Services will fund up to 12 hours of prerequisite courses). Students will provide verification from the college that the prerequisite classes are required. Only coursework requirements for admission into master's/doctoral programs will be awarded. Students attending a dual degree program will be funded according to the level of the courses for which they are enrolled.

First time applicants who are unable to provide a high school transcript, GED/HSE or ACT scores will only be eligible to apply for the higher education grant. Once a college grade point average (GPA) is established, the applicants' future funding will be based on their current official college transcript.

For programs that require a cumulative GPA, the requirements will be satisfied based on the cumulative or retention GPA type, whichever is higher. Once an award has been based on one GPA, that same GPA type will be used

for hours earned.

Students will submit an application and required documentation each semester/quarter/term for which assistance is needed.

A. Higher Education Grant – Maintain a semester GPA of 2.0 or higher for undergraduates, graduates or doctoral students. Students will be enrolled in at least three credit hours.

Students who are funded will complete the number of credit hours for which they were funded and meet minimum GPA requirements.

1. Undergraduate student funding three to 15 hours)

Community	Regional	Research	Private
Fifteen or more hours equals \$1,500 per semester	Fifteen or more hours equals \$2,250 per semester	Fifteen or more hours equals \$3,525 per semester	Fifteen or more hours equals \$4,350 per semester
Three to 14 hours equals \$100 per credit hour	Three to 14 hours equals \$150 per credit hour	Three to 14 hours equals \$235 per credit hour	Three to 14 hours equals \$290 per credit hour

2. Graduate students funding three to nine hours.

Regional	Research/Private
Nine or more hours \$2,400 per semester	Nine or more hours \$2,400 per semester
Three to eight hours equals \$200 per credit hour	Three to eight hours equals \$250 per credit hour

3. Doctoral students funding three to nine hours

Research/Private
Nine or more hours equals \$3,000 per semester
Three to eight hours equals \$250 per credit hour

B. General Scholarship - Chickasaw students attending three credit hours or more each semester in college while maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or higher each semester will be eligible for this scholarship.

Home-school students applying for the first time will submit their ACT scores with their programs, grants and scholarships application. Scores of 20 or higher will be considered a B average and students with those scores may apply for the general scholarship. GED/HSE scores of 2500 or higher will be considered a B average, enabling the student to apply for the general scholarship. ACT and GED/HSE scores will only be used the first semester of the applicant's freshman year of college. This will apply to the student's first semester of funding, after which the student will submit an official college transcript showing his semester GPA.

The following formula will be used in determining the amounts to be awarded for this scholarship program. All students will be evaluated on a four-point GPA scale and awarded in accordance with the grade listed on the student's official college transcript. In schools where grades are not given on a four-point scale, the grades given will be converted into a four-point scale for ease of comparison.

Students of all classifications who have earned a 3.0 GPA or higher for their previous semester, or high school students who have a GPA of 3.0 or higher, may apply for a scholarship through this program. Students will maintain the required 3.0 GPA each semester to continue eligibility.

1. Students (undergraduate students 12 hours/graduate and doctoral students nine hours)

Grade Point Average	Freshman/Soph.	Junior/Senior	Graduate/Doctoral
3.0-3.49	\$300	\$400	\$450
3.5-3.99	\$350	\$450	\$500
4.0	\$400	\$500	\$550

2. Students (undergraduate students five to 11 hours/graduate and doctoral students four to eight hours)

Grade Point Average	Fresh/Soph.	Junior/Senior	Grad/Doctoral
3.0-3.49	\$200	\$300	\$350
3.5-3.99	\$250	\$350	\$400
4.0	\$300	\$400	\$450

3. Students (undergraduate students three to four hours/graduate and doctoral students three hours)

Grade Point Average	Fresh/Soph.	Junior/Senior	Grad/Doctoral
3.0-3.49	\$150	\$200	\$225
3.5-3.99	\$175	\$225	\$250
4.0	\$200	\$250	\$275

4. Suspension will occur if:

- a. student fails to meet the semester GPA of 3.0 or fails to complete the hours for which he was funded.

C. Governor's, Lt. Governor's and Legislators' Scholarships - Scholarship is awarded one time only to high school seniors who possess a GPA of 3.85 or higher (weighted GPAs may be taken into consideration). The Governor's, Lt. Governor's and Legislator's scholarships

1. Governor's Scholarship - GPA of 3.95 and up = \$500
2. Lt. Governor's Scholarship - GPA of 3.90-3.94 = \$400
3. Legislators' Scholarship - GPA of 3.85-3.89 = \$350

D. Inter-Tribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes - Johnson O'Malley (JOM)

Scholarship - Scholarship is awarded one time only to high school seniors who attend a public school with a JOM program within the Chickasaw Nation boundaries.

1. Awards one male and one female student.
2. \$300 award per student.
3. Will submit a letter of recommendation.
4. Submit a 500-word typed essay (12-point font) regarding future goals, as well as tribal and community involvement.

E. Concurrent Enrollment – High school seniors who are eligible for concurrent enrollment and enrolled at an accredited college/university in no less than three credit hours. If the student's state of residence pays concurrent tuition, higher education will pay costs for fees and books. Students will follow all of the guidelines of the higher education grant and submit the following:

1. Complete higher education programs, grants and scholarships application.
2. High school transcript.
3. Copy of college class schedule.
4. If seeking textbook reimbursement - a receipt for textbooks with the vendor's name and contact information that shows amount paid.
5. Detailed billing statement showing cost of fees and tuition (please keep in mind that we will not fund over the normal amount of regular funding).

F. Text Book Grant - Available to students each semester to allow for the purchase of textbooks or required software related to academic field of study. Other required material related to courses will be considered on a case-by-case basis (education services will be contacted for approval prior to the student making the purchase). The grant will be given in the form of a pre-paid *VISA* gift card or on a reimbursement basis to each qualifying Chickasaw applicant attending a college or university.

1. Pre-paid *VISA* gift card:

If a student selects the textbook *VISA* card, he will have six months from the date of the load to use all of the credit on the card. If a balance remains on the textbook card after six months, the balance will be pulled off the card and re-deposited into the Chickasaw Nation account and the student will forfeit that amount. The student may not discard the *VISA* card if he sees a need for the textbook grant in the future. There will be a \$10 replacement fee for any card lost or stolen. The replacement fee will be paid in the form of a cashier's check or money order made payable to the Chickasaw Nation.

2. Reimbursement:

Reimbursement checks will be issued at the face value of the submitted receipts not to exceed \$250 for students attending three to 11 credit hours and \$500 for students attending 12 or more credit hours. Student will maintain a semester GPA of 2.0 or higher and submit a completed application with required documentation by the established deadline.

Students will also complete the number of credit hours for which they were previously funded and adhere to the following additional guidelines:

1. Students attending 12 credit hours or more for undergraduates; nine credit hours or more for graduate/doctoral will receive up to \$500 per semester.
2. Students attending three to 11 credit hours for undergraduates; three to eight credit hours for graduate/doctoral will receive up to \$250 per semester.
3. Students on probation or suspension will not receive the textbook grant.
4. Misuse or attempted misuse of the textbook card will result in the immediate suspension of the remaining funds available on the card and suspension will also occur for the next semester.
5. Reimbursement - itemized textbook receipts will be received by the following deadlines. Fall textbook receipts by October 15th – spring textbook receipts by March 15th – summer textbook receipts by July 1st.
6. VISA gift card textbook receipts will be received by the next semester deadline.
7. If books are included in college tuition, student may request that the grant be mailed to the college.

Acceptable Textbook Grant Purchases

Classroom textbooks

Software related to academic field of study

Unacceptable Textbook Grant Purchases Include. But Are Not Limited. To

Alcohol	Hair products (shampoo, conditioner, hair spray, mousse, gel, hair color, barrettes, rubber bands, etc.)	Jewelry	Personal bills
Electronic equipment	Coats, jackets and suits	Lotion	Music/videos
Gas	Belts, socks and ties	Make-up	Tobacco
Groceries (fast food)	Pants, shirts and shorts	Perfume	Tobacco products
Shoes (of any kind)	Transportation expenses	Scrubs	Tuxedo rentals
Bathing suits	Printer ink	Uniforms	Skirts and dresses
Underclothing		Backpacks	Caps and hats
Vehicle expenses		Paper	Pens and pencils
Scantrons			

G. ACT/SAT Services - Adult Chickasaw students and Chickasaw freshmen

through sophomores in high school are eligible for one ACT voucher per year. Chickasaw students may request either a voucher for the National ACT test or reimbursement for a test up to \$55. High school juniors and seniors are eligible

for more than one voucher or reimbursement per year. The original receipt for payment for the ACT, and the *Programs, Grants and Scholarships Application* will be received by the education services office before reimbursement can be issued. Only reimbursement up to \$55 is provided for the SAT, no vouchers. The request for reimbursement will be made within six months after receipt of payment. Vouchers are provided for the Cargill ACT Prep workshop and reimbursement up to \$55 for any other ACT prep workshop.

- H. College Level Examination Program (CLEP) – Students will provide proof of learning satisfactory scores on the CLEP subject examination before reimbursement can be issued. The original receipt for payment for the CLEP and the *Programs, Grants and Scholarships Application* will be received by the education services office before reimbursement can be issued. The request for reimbursement will be made within six months after receipt of payment. Award amount is not to exceed the funding amount per credit hour through the higher education grant.
- I. Laptop Scholarship Program - This scholarship is limited to undergraduate students attending at least 12 hours per semester (beginning with their sophomore year in college who have completed at least 29 credit hours) and graduate and doctoral students currently enrolled at an accredited college or university for higher education with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Eligibility is limited to one laptop throughout the student’s college career. This program is not available during the summer semester or if the student is on probation or suspension with education services. The Chickasaw Nation and education services are not responsible for any expenses incurred for warranty work, technical issues or upgrades to computers. Education services will not replace lost or stolen laptops.
- J. Graduation Stole Program - This program is limited to students who will successfully earn an associate’s degree or higher at an accredited institution for higher education. Eligibility is limited to one award per student per degree. The student is responsible for obtaining permission, from his school, to wear the stole during commencement. Application for the graduation stole will be made at the beginning of the final semester.
- K. Degree Completion Incentive - Students completing a bachelor’s degree or

higher are eligible for the \$1,000 graduation incentive. Students will provide a completed application along with a final official college transcript showing degree awarded. Application for the degree completion incentive will be made within six months after graduation. Misuse or non-completion of hours funded during the last semester of college will incur reduction in the degree completion incentive.

Chickasaw Nation School-to-Work students and full-time employees of the Chickasaw Nation are ineligible to receive the degree completion incentive through education services.

L. Graduation Assistance Program - Students are eligible to apply for reimbursement for graduation expenses once per degree up to \$150. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: photos, rings, caps and gowns, invitations, thank-you cards and graduation fees. Application for the graduation assistance will include the original receipt and will be made within six months of graduation.

M. License and Certification Fee Assistance Program - This program provides assistance for licensing and certification test/exam fees such as, but not limited to the GRE, LSAT, MCAT, PCAT, OSAT, OPTE and OGET. Students are limited to license and certification fee assistance once per student per certification. Students are eligible for test/exam fees only up to \$500 per test/exam on a prepayment or reimbursement basis: Application for the license and certification reimbursement will be made within six months of the student's receipt of payment. The following is needed for:

1. Prepayment:
 - a. Application.
 - b. Copy of test/exam registration.

The following is needed for:

2. Reimbursement:
 - a. Application.
 - b. Original receipt of payment.

VI. Probation and Suspension: (Higher education grant, general scholarship, textbook grant and laptop scholarship only)

Students who do not maintain the GPA requirements and complete the number of credit hours for which they were funded will be placed on probation and possible suspension from funding.

Students have the option of reimbursing the Chickasaw Nation for previously funded but not completed hours. It is the student's responsibility to contact his education specialist for the amount owed and to arrange reimbursement prior to the semester deadline. Reimbursements can only be made in the form of a cashier's check or money order made payable to the Chickasaw Nation. Education services will not accept personal checks for reimbursement payment.

The reimbursement calculation will include all programs awarded.

A. Probation will occur if:

1. the student's GPA falls below the required 2.0 GPA for the semester.
2. the student does not pass and complete the number of hours for which he was funded. An adjustment in the student's award amount will be based on the number of hours completed. For instance, if a student completes five of 12 hours, the future award will be based on the five hours completed with a semester GPA of 2.0 or higher.

B. End of Probation:

Probation will end once a student completes the hours for which he was funded and with the semester GPA of 2.0 or higher.

A student on probation or suspended from the higher education grant will not be eligible for the general scholarship, textbook grant or laptop scholarship for that same semester.

C. Suspension will occur if:

1. the student fails to meet the semester GPA of 2.0 and completion of the hours awarded while on probation.
2. the student withdraws or fails all previous hours awarded.

D. End of Suspension:

When a student is placed on suspension the student can be removed from suspension in two ways:

1. The student can pay back the amount of hours owed.
2. The student can complete semester with a workload equivalent to the amount of credit hours the student was funded while on probation. Once a student completes the hours for which he was funded while on probation with a semester GPA of 2.0 or pays back money owed to education services, suspension will end.

A student on probation or suspended from the higher education grant will not be eligible for the textbook grant or laptop scholarship for that same semester.

VII. Hardships:

A "hardship" is defined by this handbook as "an event, whether medical or emotional, that keeps a student from completing the hours in the semester for which

he has been awarded.” Examples of hardships may include, but are not limited to, prolonged illness, surgery, pregnancy, car accidents or death of a close friend (i.e., known for several years or close family friend), family member or divorce. These hardships may be excused and a student may become eligible provided he submits documentation that verifies the circumstances. The student will provide the following to be considered for hardships:

A. For class withdrawals or Fs:

1. If for medical reasons:

- a. medical statement from physician as to why student withdrew or could not complete classes successfully; and
- b. letter from the student asking for a hardship award. Letter will explain hardship circumstances.

OR

2. Other reasons:

- a. letter from the student asking for a hardship award. Letter will explain hardship circumstances.

Those students with withdrawals or Fs will be funded according to the last semester completed successfully. Once the student completes his probationary semester, he will present his official transcripts verifying that he has completed the exact amount of hours awarded previously with a semester GPA of 2.0 or higher to have probation removed.

B. For incomplete (I) grades:

1. If for medical reasons:

- a. medical statement from physician as to why student could not complete classes successfully; and
- b. letter from the student asking for a hardship award and a future date of when the course in which he received an incomplete grade “I” would be completed.

OR

2. Other reasons:

- a. letter from the student asking for a hardship award and a future date of when the course in which he received an incomplete grade “I” would be completed.

A student with one or more incompletes on his transcript will be awarded an amount prorated to the number of hours he completed during that semester. Once incompletes are changed to satisfactory letter grades, the remaining funds will be awarded. The later transcript will be submitted by the end of the next semester (example: incompletes in a fall semester will be complete by the end of the following spring semester). If the later transcript is not provided by the end of the next semester, the funding will stand as originally awarded.

VIII. Note: This manual rescinds education division bulletins: Higher Education – 01-01, Funding Supplement – 01-02, Millennium Scholarship - 01-03, Education Foundation Scholarship - 01-04, Governor’s, Lt. Governor’s and Legislators’ scholarships - 04-01 and the following policies: Lifetime Scholarship - 07 ES 1000, Chikasha Holitoplichí - Higher Education Honor Society - 07 ES 1000; Laptop Scholarship Program - 07 ES 1008, Graduation Assistance Program - 07 ES 1009, License and Certification Assistance – 07 ES 1010; Chikasha Holitoplichí - Graduation Watch Program - 07 ES 1011, Chikasha Holitoplichí - Semester Pin - 07 ES 1012, Chikasha Holitoplichí - Graduation Stole - 07 ES 1013 and Chikasha Holitoplichí - Incentives Program – 07 ES 1014.