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Native American Waiver and Education Program Form

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UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM
Native American Waiver and Educational Program

Purpose

The purpose of the Native American Waiver and Educational Program is to encourage Native American students to participate in public higher education in Maine. Our goal is to provide sustained support for all University of Maine System (UMS) Native American students who wish to pursue post-secondary study and, in particular, those who wish to obtain a certificate and/or an associate, baccalaureate, or graduate degree or some other appropriate credential that will serve them personally and professionally as they plan for the future.

Native American Waiver

This waiver covers tuition and mandatory fees (required fees charged of all students enrolled at the institution and automatically assessed at the time of registration exclusive of fees associated with contracted training or other educational activities provided by an external agency, business or organization including but not limited to travel and accommodation fees related to travel courses and other extraordinary fees such as health insurance). Tuition and mandatory fees will be waived for qualified students, both matriculated and non-matriculated, who are enrolled in academic, credit-bearing courses at the undergraduate, graduate, or continuing education level at the campuses of the University of Maine System.

Program Eligibility

- A student must be a member and be included on the current tribal census of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet, the Aroostook Band of Micmac, or have at least one parent or grandparent who is included on the current tribal census of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet, the Aroostook Band of Micmac. **OR:**
- A student must be a member and be included on the current tribal census of a Canadian Wabanaki Tribe or have at least one parent or grandparent who is included on the current tribal census, and have lived in Maine for at least twelve months, for purposes other than education, immediately prior to application. **OR:**
- A student must be a member and be included on a current tribal census of a federally, state or provincially recognized Native American Tribe and who have lived in Maine for at least twelve months, for purposes other than education, immediately prior to application.
- Proof of residency is required for all applicants with the exception of current tribal members and their direct biological descendants (e.g., parent or grandparent was a tribal member) of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, the Penobscot Nation, the Houlton Band of Maliseet, or the Aroostook Band of Micmac. The residency guidelines are the same as those employed for any student and can be located within the UMS Administrative Practice Letter found at: http://www.maine.edu/pdf/IV-G_002.pdf.
- Matriculating students must apply for financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and supply all required documentation to the Financial Aid Office at the campus they are attending. For the academic year and/or the fall semester, the FAFSA must be filed and the aid application completed by September 1st. For the spring semester, the FAFSA must be filed and the aid application completed by January 1st.
- All students must remain eligible to register for classes and maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress as defined by federal guidelines. Degree seeking students will be evaluated based on the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy of the campus where they are matriculating. Students who are not matriculating at any campus of the University of Maine System will be evaluated using the University of Maine Satisfactory Academic Progress policy. The policy can be found at: <http://umaine.edu/stuaid/sap/>.

Students must notify the Wabanaki Center of their intentions of transferring to another UMS campus. Students must also contact the coordinator of the campus they will be attending to sign a new agreement letter. If a student will be participating in a course on another UMS campus (where they are not matriculated), it is the student's responsibility to notify the Student Billing/Bursar office at the additional campus that they are receiving the Native American Waiver.

Students who entered the program prior to Fall 2012 will have their eligibility grandfathered for the receipt of the waiver portion of the benefit until graduation from their current degree program or through academic year 2017-2018, whichever occurs first. If they subsequently apply for an additional degree (either at the completion of their current degree or after 2017-2018), the new eligibility requirements will be in effect.

The total amount a student receives from the Native American Tuition Waiver Program and from all other sources of financial support for the same purpose, whether from the institution or from outside agencies, may not exceed the student's cost of attendance. The receipt of other aid may, in some rare cases, reduce or eliminate the receipt of the tuition waiver.

Native American Room and Board Grant

The Native American Room and Board Grant Program is a need based award for qualified Native American students living in a residence hall of the campus where they are matriculating. Students will be subsidized at the double occupancy rate for the student's residence. Charges for single, double single, or computer or telephone devices, for which there is a separate charge, will be the responsibility of the student tenant. Board charges will be subsidized at the rate associated with the standard meal plan, not to exceed the cost of the maximum meal plan. Room and board charges will be covered only during the traditional academic year (fall and spring terms) and are not covered for breaks between semesters. Exceptions may be granted in cases where a student's major requires enrollment in an academic session outside the traditional academic year.

Grant Eligibility

- Students must meet all eligibility requirements of the Native American Waiver and Educational Program and be certified as eligible by the Wabanaki Center at the University of Maine.
- Students must be matriculating in an undergraduate or graduate degree program within the University of Maine System, enrolled in a minimum of twelve (12) credit hours for undergraduates or nine (9) credit hours for graduate students at USM, or six (6) credits hours for graduate students at UM at the end of add/drop, and living in a residence hall of the campus where they are matriculating. Full time enrollment for graduate students working on their thesis or dissertation, and/or on a campus other than UM and USM, will be classified as full time in accordance with the policies on their campus of matriculation. Exceptions to the minimum enrolled hour requirement may be granted in cases where educational accommodations are required. Room and board charges will be covered ONLY during the time period when the student is actively enrolled.
- Students must apply for financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and supply all required documentation to the Financial Aid Office at the campus at which they are matriculated. For the academic year and/or the fall semester, the FAFSA must be filed and the aid application completed by September 1st. For the spring semester, the FAFSA must be filed and the aid application completed by January 1st. In order to qualify for the full range of financial aid available to qualified applicants, students are strongly encouraged to file their FAFSA by the priority financial aid filing date specified at their institution.
- Students must meet all of the general eligibility requirements of the Federal Title IV Financial Aid programs, including Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements.
- Students who maintain a permanent private residence, other than the parent's home, within commuting distance of the university are NOT eligible for room and board grants.

- Persons employed by the University of Maine System on a half-time or greater basis and who are carried on the University employee payroll are NOT eligible for the room and board grant.

The maximum eligibility for the Room and Board Grant will not exceed the cost of the standard room and board charges, less all federal and state gift aid the student may receive for the purpose of funding education expenses, as well as other assistance specifically identified as paying for room and board charges. For the purposes of this calculation, 50% of a Federal Pell Grant will be considered. During the award process, the maximum eligibility is then compared to the students remaining need and reduced if necessary so that an over award situation is not created.

The total amount a student receives from the Native American Room and Board Grant and from all other sources of financial support for the same purpose, whether from the institution or from outside agencies, may not exceed the student's calculated financial need. The receipt of other aid may, in some cases, reduce or eliminate the receipt of the room and board grant.

An eligible Native American student's university bill will be credited with a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees and/or room and board grant after initial authorization from the campus staff member serving as Coordinator/Director of the Native American Waiver and Educational Program and the financial aid office.

A student dissatisfied with a decision regarding the waiver and/or grant may, within six months of the date of the decision, ask the Native American Waiver and Educational Program Coordinator for a statement of reasons for the denial. The applicant may then respond to what s/he contends are the factual or legal errors in the statement of reasons. If the Native American Waiver and Educational Program Coordinator does not change the decision regarding the applicant based on the applicant's response, the applicant may submit all materials to the UMS Chief Student Affairs Officer for final review. The UMS Chief Student Affairs Officer may change the decision only upon a showing of clear factual error or a misapplication of the governing Program Agreement. For other appeals (e.g., academic issues, financial aid, housing, billing, etc.), Native American students will use the appropriate campus appeals processes.

The Native American Waiver and Educational Program Coordinator has the authority to investigate improprieties in the use of the Native American Waiver and Educational Program. If the Coordinator determines misuse of the Program, s/he has the authority to suspend, temporarily and/or permanently, an individual's eligibility for the Native American Waiver and Educational Program.

I have read and agree to the above terms of this program. I understand that the Coordinator/Director has the authority to deny the Native American Waiver and Educational Program based on academic or disciplinary action by the campus.

Student (Print Name): _____ Student ID (EMPL ID): _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____