

# Upper Sioux Community Higher Education Handbook and Application



*Revision on December 22, 2015*  
*Revision on September 17, 2013*  
*Revision on December 1, 2011*  
*Revision on June 1, 2010*  
*Revision on September 18, 2009*  
*Revision on July 15, 2008,*

*Revision on July 10, 2023*

# Upper Sioux Higher Education Program

## **Introduction**

This Higher Education Handbook has been compiled, amended, and approved by the Upper Sioux Board of Trustees. It is to provide information concerning eligibility and guidelines for educational assistance for Upper Sioux Community members. This program is operated by the Upper Sioux Education Director, with oversight by the Upper Sioux Community Board of Trustees.

## **Mission**

*The **mission** of the Upper Sioux Community is to provide culturally based programs and services that preserve the Dakota traditions, promote and support education, healthy families, and a diversified and growing economy, leading to increased self-esteem and self-sufficiency for individual community members and the Upper Sioux Community, Pezihutazizi Oyate.*

The **Goal** of the Upper Sioux Higher Education Program is to advocate and administer higher education resources for Upper Sioux Community members. With the growing population of the community and the need to become economically diverse, the Upper Sioux Community requires diverse skills. Equally vital to the community is the need to support Dakota language learners, Dakota historians, and to foster culturally competent citizens. While the Upper Sioux Community supports members pursuing higher education and skills away from the community, we need members to return and serve the community.

## **Eligibility**

To qualify for any and all Higher Education assistance you must:

1. Be a member of the Upper Sioux Community.
2. Be accepted for admission at an accredited institution of higher education.
3. Be enrolled for credit to the institution and working towards a degree or certificate program.
4. Be in good standing with the Upper Sioux Higher Education Program.
5. If seeking Housing Assistance, the student must not be living in a HUD subsidized house. For example, cannot be living in a low-income rental unit or a Lease-to-Own unit. Assistance is given only to those living in documented campus-dormitories, documented rental units, and attending school at least half-time. A check will be authorized to the property owner, not to the student and there will be no back pay for past rent.
6. For the Laptop Incentive Program, the student must be attending school full-time and be in good academic standing.

## **Assistance**

The Upper Sioux Community Higher Education Program provides the following (based on criteria and eligibility):

1. Advocacy and technical assistance (finding a program, filling out FAFSA, applications, seeking other scholarships, fellowships, internships, resume' development, etc.);
2. Financial Assistance
3. Rental, room/board assistance, when grant funds are available (USC IHA must follow the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rules and regulations for expenditure of HUD funds. This means that each applicant must meet the income guidelines as published by HUD).
4. Laptop incentive, when grant funds are available.
5. Graduation incentives.
6. One-time \$500.00 scholarship for graduating high school students (to be mailed to the institution/college), provided student attends fall semester of graduating year.
7. Maximum Lifetime Program. Participation is:
  - limited to ten (10) academic years, up to 250 credit hours.

### **Requirements**

1. Letter of acceptance to institute (one time only per institute).
2. Completed application/s.
3. Copies of official transcripts, degrees, certificates previously attended and/or completed (when applicable).
4. Fee statement, indicating number of registered credits (each semester).
5. Copy of each semester's grades/transcripts (to be turned in each semester).
6. Completed, signed USC Higher Education Program Form.
7. Complete and file a Federal Assistance for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) application (annually).
8. Supply documentation of lease, or room/board statement, income verification for each applicant through tax returns, Per Capita verification, etc., each semester.
9. To be eligible for Higher Education Program, student must maintain a minimum of ½ time status.
10. Written authorization to the Upper Sioux Community Education Department to access official transcripts/school records.

### **Assistance Determination**

We ask that applications be completed and returned to USC Higher Education Director prior to school beginning. All financial assistance is based upon the number of registered credits. All award notices and checks will be mailed directly to the college or university. Students must go through the Financial Aid Office at their college/university.

Note: If you are taking all online classes through the accredited college or university you must reside within the 15-mile radius to receive funding. Members residing outside the 15-mile radius must physically attend ½ time to be eligible for funding for online classes.

### **Minimum Academic Progress**

All students must meet the following minimum standards:

1. Maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0.
2. Maintain the number of registered credits.

3. Be working towards a specified degree or certificate program (you must declare a major within two (2) years of initial funding).

**Probation/Suspension**

A student is placed on Probation status if the student fails to meet the minimum academic progress. During this probation, the student MUST improve the following semester to the minimum level of academic progress. If the student fails to meet the minimum academic standards once again, they will be placed on suspension. During suspension, the student will not receive any higher education assistance until they have successfully met the minimum academic standards for the equal number of prior registered credits.

If the student does not attend school the following quarter/semester to become current with the number of credits needed to satisfy the previous funding period, the student will be required to pay back the amount funded (Higher Education/HERA programs) to the Upper Sioux Community by way of a total payment or PC assignment.

Any fraud committed will be a four (4) year suspension from the Higher Education and HERA programs. In addition, the student will be required to pay back all funding received during the affected period.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Upper Sioux Higher Education Assistance Program Services:

## Advocacy and technical assistance

The Higher Education Director is available to meet to assist with the following:

- Seeking a suitable program and institution
- Completing the FAFSA
- Application/s to college/universities
- Filling out financial scholarship, fellowship, internship applications
- Academic counseling

## Financial Assistance

The Higher Education Program provides financial scholarships to all eligible students at the following rates:

- \$300 per credit for all Graduate Program credits.
- \$350 per credit for all Post-Graduate Program credits.

## Housing Assistance

The Upper Sioux Tribally Designated Housing Entity is equally committed to higher education and may make available funds on a year-to-year basis. When available, financial assistance is made available to those students attending college at the following rates: The HERA program is for “rental assistance” only. Applicants who reside in residence as a homeowner would not qualify for rental assistance.

- Up to \$300/month for half time students (registered for a minimum of 6 credits or the equivalency of half-time as determined by the college/university)
- Up to \$600/month for full time students (as considered full time by the college/university)

## Graduating Incentives

<i>Accredited Technical School degree</i>	<i>\$ 750</i>
<i>Accredited Associate degree</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>
<i>Accredited Undergraduate degree</i>	<i>\$2,500</i>
<i>Accredited Master’s degree</i>	<i>\$3,500</i>
<i>Accredited Ph.D./J.D./M.D./Ed.D.</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>

## Laptop Incentive

The Upper Sioux Community Telecommunications Department has been established under a commitment to higher education and supporting alternative educational modes. A laptop computer will be provided to each student attending school full-time, based on availability. You will be notified if one is available.

# Upper Sioux Higher Education Assistance Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address while attending school: \_\_\_\_\_  
*If different than home address* \_\_\_\_\_

Institution & address attending: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Major/Field of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree or certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of program: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Semesters yet to be completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Credits registered for this Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester I   Semester II   Summer Session   Other \_\_\_\_\_  
*Circle One*

I am requesting assistance for: \_\_\_\_\_ financial assistance.  
\_\_\_\_\_ housing assistance (please ask if available)  
\_\_\_\_\_ laptop incentive (please ask if available)

All other assistance, see Higher Education Director.

I agree that the above is correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand fraud or falsifying information is automatic dismissal for any assistance.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Upper Sioux Higher Education Financial Assistance Program

This page is to be completed by the institution's **financial aid officer** and faxed or mailed back to the Higher Education Director at:

**Upper Sioux Community  
Board of Trustees Office  
Higher Education Director  
P.O. Box 147  
Granite Falls, MN 56241  
Phone: 320.564.3853      Fax: 320.564.4482**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Institution & Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Semester I \_\_\_\_\_ Semester II \_\_\_\_\_  
Summer Session I \_\_\_\_\_ Summer Session II \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of credits registered for \_\_\_\_\_

Tuition _____	Pell Grant _____
Fees _____	SEOG _____
Est Books _____	GSL/Loans _____
Room/Board _____	ISAP _____
Transportation _____	Work Study _____
Daycare _____	Other scholarships _____
Other _____	Other _____

Total Expenses \_\_\_\_\_ Total Funds \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Need \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Aid Officer: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name  
Phone number to be reached at: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_

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Financial Aid Officer Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Upper Sioux Higher Education Assistance Agreement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand  
*Name*

the Upper Sioux Higher Education Handbook. I further understand the goal of the Upper Sioux Higher Education Program is to assist those individuals dedicated and committed to excellence and achievement.

I will honestly supply all requirements as defined in this handbook in a timely manner. If I do not supply current information and documentation, I understand that assistance will be delayed and/or not supplied.

I fully understand that minimum academic standards must be maintained in order to receive assistance.

***To allow one (1) semester to make good on grades/credits or failure to attend the following semester will result in an automatic Per Capita deduct till paid in full for the funded semester.***

If placed on probation, I understand that future assistance is in jeopardy and will conscientiously work towards improvement. I further understand that if I am placed on suspension all assistance will be terminated until I successfully complete the same prior number of credits on my own, without USC assistance.

Any fraud or abuse of the program assistance will be reimbursed to the Upper Sioux Community Higher Education Fund by means of a Per Capita Deduction in an amount of up to \$150 per month and garnishment of adjustments until paid in full.

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Student's Signature

Date

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Higher Education Director

Date

# Upper Sioux Community Laptop Incentive Program

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Name of College attending \_\_\_\_\_

Majoring in \_\_\_\_\_

In consideration of the students' agreements contained in this contract, the Upper Sioux Community will provide the above Student with the use of a laptop computer for the term described below.

The term of this contract is for the term of (circle: One-Year/Two-Year / Four Year/Other \_\_\_\_\_) ending on the last day of finals unless contract ends (see below)

Upon student's documented completion of program certification/graduation, the laptop becomes property of the student. Proof of completion must be provided within one year of your expected completion date.

*This is one time per student per lifetime.*

## **Termination of Contract**

Failure to remain in good academic standing (see handbook) and/or withdrawing from school will result in payment. The amount charged will be deducted from Per Capita Payment (if not paid in cash) at the amount of \$100 per month until paid in full.

Upon Student's **withdrawal or termination** from the Upper Sioux Community Laptop Incentive Program you will be charged with the original purchase price.

## **Indemnity**

Student is solely responsible for the consequences of any misuse of the equipment and the liability resulting from misuse. Student shall indemnify Upper Sioux Community and Upper Sioux Community's Board of Trustees for any injuries, damages, or losses incurred due to the intentional or negligent acts of Student. The student's obligation of indemnification to Upper Sioux Community survives the term of this Agreement.

Upper Sioux Community and Upper Sioux Community’s Board of Trustees are not responsible for injuries, damages, penalties, or losses, including legal costs and expenses incurred by Student or other person due to installation of software, transporting the laptop, or any other use of equipment described herein. Upper Sioux Community is not responsible for unauthorized use of his/her resources, and security of data transmitted on their information technology resources cannot be guaranteed.

**Termination of Student Eligibility**

The student will cease to be eligible to participate in the Laptop Incentive Program and this agreement will terminate upon any of the following events:

- Failure to maintain good academic standing (see handbook)
- Withdrawing from school
- Student’s attempt to transfer possession or assign his/her interest in this Agreement and/or the laptop.

I have completed this form to the best of my knowledge. I understand that providing any misleading or false information is a fraudulent offense and will lead to the cancellation of the agreement and may result in disciplinary action by Upper Sioux Community.

Upon breach of contract, I authorize the Finance Department to deduct the cost from my Per Capita payments. I will be responsible for FULL payment of my charges according to the terms of this contract. In addition, if I lose or damage the equipment, I agree to pay all repair or replacement costs. I also agree to pay any additional fines, collection fees, or interest as applied by the Laptop Incentive Program in conjunction with the Upper Sioux Community, Finance Department and its collection policy. By signing below, I am indicating that I have read this statement and agree to the conditions stated within. I understand that any per capita funds may be diverted to pay those expenses as outlined in this agreement.

Upper Sioux Community reserves the right to terminate this program at any time. The laptop incentive program is based upon availability of funds.

**By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the conditions stated above and on the contract. I am aware of my responsibilities and the consequences of defaulting on this agreement.**

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Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Higher Education Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Upper Sioux Higher Education Program

## Checklist:

- ✓ Letter of acceptance from the college/university (per institution)
- ✓ Completed Application/s (each semester)
- ✓ Copies of any prior transcripts, degrees, certificates attended/completed (if applicable)
- ✓ Fee Statement, showing number of registered credits (each semester)
- ✓ Grades/transcripts after each semester
- ✓ USC Higher Education Program Agreement Form
- ✓ Completed FAFSA (each year)
- ✓ Financial Aid Officer Form
- ✓ Copy of lease, room/board statement (rent is monthly, other is each semester if applying for housing assistance)
- ✓ Laptop Incentive Application & Agreement Form

If you are having difficulties or going to make a change in residency, classes, etc., you must inform the Higher Education Director. The Upper Sioux Higher Education Department is committed to excellence and achievement in higher education and will work with you on **your success!**

## People who will help me with my success:

### Upper Sioux Higher Education Director:

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Name & Phone Number

### Financial Aid Officer:

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Name & Phone Number

### Academic Counselor:

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Name & Phone Number

### Dean of Students:

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Name & Phone Number

### Other mentors:

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## **Authorization Form for the Release of Information**

**I hereby authorize the individual (s) listed below to inquire and receive information:**

**Name:** Caralyn Trutna - Upper Sioux Community Higher Ed Director

**Address:** 5722 Travers Lane

**City, State, Zip:** Granite Falls, MN 56241

**Telephone Number:** (320) 564-6327

**Please retain this Authorization Form for Release of Information in your files for future inquiries from the person named above.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Name)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Address)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(City, State, Zip Code)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Signature)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Date)**