

FALLON PAIUTE-SHOSHONE TRIBE

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM POLICY

SECTION I – PURPOSE:

The Higher Education Program is a financial assistance program based on a need to provide educational opportunities for the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribal members to attend a higher education institution. The program criteria are based on the FPST's annual funding agreement with the BIA 638 contracts and the FPST Tribal Education Assistance Grant. This program is designed to offer support and guidance to FPST Tribal members in attaining a higher education.

Students must be entering, returning or continuing with their post secondary education at the undergraduate level and require financial support. The FPST funding is a supplementary financial aid program and is distributed in a fair and equitable manner.

SECTION II – ELIGIBILITY:

To be eligible for a grant, an applicant must be:

1. An enrolled member, certified with the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe.
2. Students may be eligible for funding up to five (5) years or ten (10) semesters.

SECTION III – CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

1. The FPST Higher Education Advisory Committee (HEAC) will abide by the HEAC bylaws regarding conflict of interest.
2. Committee members shall refrain from any actions involving family members that may be construed as a conflict of interest.

SECTION IV – DETERMINATION

1. The responsibility of determining an applicant's eligibility shall lie with the FPST Education Director.
2. Eligible students who demonstrate a financial need.

SECTION V – STANDARDS OF PROGRAM APPLICATION AND FUNDING:

Contingent upon the amount of funds made available to the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, eligible students will be funded according to the following policies.

1. Applicants will be funded based upon a completed application. A completed application consists of:
 - a. A Higher Education Program application.

- b. A letter of acceptance from the college or university or proof of enrollment.
 - c. A Financial Needs Analysis (FNA) completed by the college financial aid officer documenting financial need.
2. If a continuing student, official grade transcript must be submitted upon request from the Education Director.
 3. High school diploma or GED. (required once only)
 4. Complying by the Higher Education Program application deadlines and timeline as follows:

Fall Semester

- ❖ June 1st, **Higher Education Program Application Page** must be submitted for Fall Semester. (minimum)
- ❖ June 15th, **Notification of application status** to be sent out by letter from FPST Education Director or designee.
- ❖ June 30th, **Final deadline** for all information and documents to be submitted for Fall semester.
- ❖ Following the deadline, within 10 working days, the Higher Education student recommendation list will be presented to the HEAC for their approval.
- ❖ The HEAC recommendations will be presented at the next available council meeting for approval.
- ❖ A letter from the Education Director or designee will be sent to all applicants approving or denying higher education funding.

Spring Semester

- ❖ November 1st, **Higher Education Program Application Page** must be submitted for Spring Semester. (minimum)
- ❖ November 15th, **Notification of application status** to be sent out by letter from FPST Education Director or designee.
- ❖ November 30th, **Final deadline** for all information and documents to be submitted for Spring semester.
- ❖ Following the deadline, within 10 working days, the Higher Education student recommendation list will be presented to the HEAC for their approval.
- ❖ The HEAC recommendations will be presented at the next available council meeting for approval.
- ❖ A letter from the Education Director or designee will be sent to all applicants approving or denying higher education funding.

5. The Fall Semester funding period includes the months of August, September, October, November and December.

6. The Spring Semester funding period includes the months of January, February, March, April and May.
7. Students continuing from the fall semester into the spring semester must re-apply for Higher Education assistance by the deadline date. This process includes: (a) Application Page and (b) Grades. A financial needs analysis (FNA) is not needed if the previous FNA included both semesters.
8. Incomplete applications may be considered if reason is beyond student's control in accordance with appeal procedures.

SECTION VI – CALCULATION OF AWARD:

The calculation process of the award for applicants is based on a Financial Needs Analysis (FNA) and the Unmet Need.

Total Expenses - (minus) Total Resources = (equal) Unmet Need

Total Expenses considered include: Tuition/Fees, Room/Board, Books/Supplies and Transportation.

Total Resources considered include: Pell Grants, other grants and scholarships.

The college Financial Aid Officer (FAO) completes the Tribe's FNA form. The Education Director follows the Tribal Higher Education Program policy to determine the Unmet Need based on the FAO's input. The student is awarded up to three thousand dollars (\$3,000) of their unmet need. Tribal allocation is a maximum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) per semester. Adjustments may be made to the calculated student award based on the available yearly budget. Adjustments will be made across the board in a fair and equitable manner.

SECTION VII – ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS:

The following requirements for academic progress will be used to determine continuation of funding under the Tribal Higher Education Program.

The student must notify the Education Director in writing immediately upon electing not to proceed with their courses or at any time he/she is dismissed from school. The student is responsible for filing a withdrawal from the school. Failure to make this contact may adversely affect future funding.

1. All students shall maintain a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) for at least 12 credit hours per semester.
2. Those earning less than a 2.0 in one semester will then be placed on Academic Probation.

3. Students withdrawing or leaving school after funds have been distributed will automatically be suspended from the Higher Education Program until they show that they have returned equivalent dollar amount received.

SECTION VIII – ACADEMIC PROBATION OR SUSPENSION:

1. A student who does not meet the minimum academic requirement for one semester will be funded on Academic Probation status during the next semester.
 - a. Academic Probation Requirement: Student will be required to receive a 2.0 or higher GPA on college credits equivalent to that amount that was lost resulting in being placed on academic probation.
 - b. Notification of this action will be made to the student by letter from the Education Director; lack of notification does not negate the action. If substantial progress is not made during probationary period, the student's Tribal funding shall be suspended.
2. Once a student's Tribal funding has been suspended, the student will not be considered for funding UNTIL the student, through other funding sources, earns a minimum of college credits equivalent to what was previously funded for and lost, earning a 2.0 or higher GPA.
3. After a student reinstates his/her Tribal funding by fulfilling the requirements, he/she will continue to be eligible for funding as long as he/she maintains the academic requirements stipulated by the program.

Special circumstances may be considered by the HEAC on a case-by-case basis and through the appeal process.

SECTION IX – AUDIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM:

1. A minimum of 5 randomly chosen applicant files will be audited for accuracy by the HEAC at each funding period in a closed session. The audit is to take place prior to submitting the proper documents to the Fallon Business Council for final approval .

SECTION X – APPEAL PROCESS:

1. Special circumstances may be considered by the HEAC on a case by case basis and through an appeal process.
 - a. Students have the opportunity to contact the FPST Higher Education Committee to appeal any decision made by the FPST Education Director within 30 days of receiving the decision.
 - b. All appeals will be handled within 30 days of receiving notice of an appeal made by an applicant.

Right to a Hearing

Upon filing a written request as provided herein, a student shall be entitled to a hearing before the HEAC.

Definitions

1. A student is defined as anyone participating in a program or funding sponsored by the FPST Education Department.
2. Appeal or complaint is defined as any dispute with respect to the FPST Education Department regulations, guidelines, or procedures, which affects the rights, duties, welfare or status of the student.

Procedure Prior to a Hearing

Any appeal or complaint shall be presented in writing to the Education Director so that the appeal may be informally discussed and settled without a hearing. The appeal or complaint must be signed by the student and filed with the Education Director.

If the appeal is not resolved informally, then the complaint will be heard by the Higher Education Advisory Committee.

Procedure to Obtain a Hearing

Request for a Hearing: The complainant shall submit a written request for a hearing to the Education Director and be heard within twenty (20) days or next regular HEAC meeting (whichever occurs first) after receipt of such request.

The Hearing

1. The Hearing shall be held within twenty (20) days or next regular HEAC meeting (whichever occurs first) by the FPST HEAC.
2. The HEAC shall prepare a written decision, together with the reasons within twenty (20) days after the Hearing. A copy of the decisions shall be sent to the student and a copy will be kept on file.

FINAL DECISION

1. The final decision shall lie with the Fallon Business Council.
2. Request for a Hearing: The complainant shall submit a written request for a final hearing to the Fallon Business Council Secretary and be heard within twenty (20) days or next regular meeting (whichever occurs first) after receipt of such request.
3. The decision of the Fallon Business Council shall be based solely and exclusively on the facts presented at the Hearing.
4. The Fallon Business Council shall prepare a written decision, together with the reasons within twenty (20) days after the Hearing. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the student and a copy will be kept on file.

