

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Higher Education Department**



# Oneida Higher Education

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**Monday through Friday (Central Standard Time)**  
**8:00am – 4:30pm**

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# HIGHER EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM

## MISSION

*The Higher Education program of the Oneida Nation promotes higher education to eligible Tribal members by providing guidance, support, and financial assistance to those attending accredited institutions of higher learning with a goal toward self-sufficiency through a viable career.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Oneida Nation Scholarship is based off Tiered Funding formula (BC Resolution 1-30-10-A) which can award up to \$20,000 per academic year for bachelor's degree or lesser degree, \$25,000 per academic year for master's degree and \$30,000 per academic year for doctoral. Yearly funds are subject to change and are based on Federal and Tribal allocations. Funding will be based on the Oneida Higher Education academic year of August 1 to July 31.

The intent of the Oneida Higher Education award is to provide "supplemental" educational grant monies. It is not intended to replace annual income or meet total personal/household expenses. The award is based on the standard school expenses as determined by each individual college/university.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Be an enrolled member of the Oneida Nation.
2. Have a High School Diploma, HSED or GED.
3. Be accepted into a diploma or degree seeking program at an accredited college, university or vocational college within the United States.
4. Must have a complete Oneida Higher Education student file (see "Funding Process" pg. 3).

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Submit a copy of the College Admission or Acceptance letter.
2. Complete the annual Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
  - Apply for financial aid by completing the FAFSA online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). (The FAFSA is required for students who carry six or more credits per semester or term).
3. Complete the \*Oneida Higher Education Application each academic Year (August to July).
  - Recommend application dates: April 15 (Fall Term), October 1 (Spring Term), and May 1 (Summer Term).

4. Complete the \*Oneida Participant Acknowledgment and Agreement form each academic year.
5. Complete the Oneida Higher Education Academic Plan each semester/term.
  - It must be signed by both the student and school counselor/advisor.
  - Students must complete the Academic Plan that is provided by the Oneida Higher Education Office. A class schedule is NOT acceptable.

(All Higher Education applications/forms can be obtained on the Oneida Nation website [www.oneida-nsn.gov/highered](http://www.oneida-nsn.gov/highered))

\*Our Oneida Nation Higher Education Application and Participant Acknowledgement & Agreement Form can be submitted online through our website [www.oneida-nsn.gov/highered](http://www.oneida-nsn.gov/highered)

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All expenses incurred prior to attending school will be the student's responsibility. Expenses may include the following: Admission fees, housing deposits, transportation to the school, and other related fees prior to the start of school.
2. Each year students are required to apply for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and complete the Oneida Higher Education Grant Application Forms
3. Students are expected to periodically check with the Oneida Higher Education office and the school's financial aid office regarding the status of their files.
4. Students are required to complete the number of credits within the semester or term for which the Oneida Higher Education grant was provided. This includes video and/or on-line courses. Failure to do so may result in probation or suspension with the Oneida Higher Education Office.
5. Student must submit a copy of their official grades at the end of each semester or term to be considered for continued funding (*Refer to "Funding Process," "Copy of Official Transcripts" for clarification*).
6. Upon graduation or completion of a program, students are required to submit a copy of their final transcripts, certificate, license, diploma or degree.
7. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Oneida Higher Education office of any and all changes, e.g., a change in schools, mailing address, email, telephone number, a change in the number of college credits, etc.
8. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all required documentation is received by the Higher Education office before their semester/term/quarter ends. Refer to *Ineligible Funding Factors* Section.

## FUNDING PROCESS

1. Students who wish to be considered for Oneida Higher Education funds are required to have the following documents completed and on file prior to the end of semester/term.

- **Oneida Higher Education Application**
- **Oneida Higher Education Academic Plan**
- **Participant Acknowledgment and Agreement Form**
- **Copy of College Admission or Acceptance Letter**
- **Financial Needs Analysis (FNA)** (*Oneida H.E. sends this form directly to the school's financial aid office for completion. The school's financial aid office uses the appropriate FAFSA to complete our FNA*) (*Students taking 5 or less credits/term are not required to have complete FAFSA*)
- **Copy of Official Transcripts** (*for continuing students only*). (*Official transcripts must come directly from the higher education institution (college/university) to the Oneida Higher Education Office. Transcripts received from the student or "issued to the student" will not be accepted. Transcripts can be requested through a variety of options and the cost will vary per institution. It will be the student's responsibility to request the transcript and pay any applicable fees. Official transcripts can only be sent to the HE office via postal mail, rush service (e.g., FEDEX) or official e-transcripts through such services like eScript-safe, Parchment, Credentials Solution, National Clearinghouse, etc.*)

**\*If being mailed via U.S. Post office, please have the transcript mailed to:**

Oneida Higher Education  
PO Box 365  
Oneida, WI 54155

**\*If being delivered by a rush service such as FEDEX, please have transcripts delivered to:**

Oneida Higher Education  
3759 W Mason Street  
Suite 3  
Oneida, WI 54155

**\*If your school utilizes a "third party" transcript service such as eScript-safe, Parchment, Credentials Solutions, National Student Clearinghouse, etc. – the official electronic transcript can be sent to:**

[highered@oneidanation.org](mailto:highered@oneidanation.org)

**We do not accept faxed transcripts.**

2. Students who have all the required documents in their files will have their files reviewed and awarded in order of completion. It is important to have files completed as early as possible to ensure funding is received in a timely manner. Allow the Higher Education office 10 working days to award a completed file

3. An Oneida Higher Education award letter listing the Oneida grant amount(s) will be sent to the student, with a copy sent to the school's financial aid office. *Emailed documents are our*

*preferred method of delivery.*

4. Oneida Higher Education funding will be based on an August 1 to July 31 academic school year.
5. The Oneida Higher Education grant can award up to \$20,000 per academic year for bachelors, \$25,000 for graduate or \$30,000 for doctoral as determined by the school's standard cost of attendance and the Oneida Higher Education guidelines. All awards will be equally divided between the number of terms/semesters/quarters your college offers within an Academic Year.
6. The Oneida Higher Education grant award will be sent directly to the school for disbursement. Each school has their own policy regarding the release of financial aid funds in which the student must abide by.

**IMPORTANT: Students are advised NOT to start school/classes until they receive the Oneida Higher Education Grant Award Letter. Students who choose to start prior to the receipt of the Oneida award letter are responsible for any incurred costs.**

## FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

1. Full-time students are "traditionally" 12 credits or more per semester or term at the vocational/undergraduate level, and 9 credits at the graduate level. Full-time students will be eligible for tuition, fees, required books, and the room & board allowance. (Final determination of full-time status will be determined by the Oneida Higher Education Office).
2. Part-time student are "traditionally" 6-11 credits per semester or term at the vocational/undergraduate level, and 6-8 credits at the graduate level. Part-time students are eligible for tuition, fees and required books. (Final determination of part-time status will be determined by the Oneida Higher Education Office).
3. All students taking 1 to 5 credits per semester or term are eligible for tuition, fees and required books.
4. Doctoral students who are considered full-time while working in their dissertation phase will be considered for full-time funding.
5. Students are eligible to pursue progressive degrees, e.g., Associate of Arts (AA/AS), Bachelors (BA/BS), Masters (MA/MS), Doctorate (PhD). Multiple or continuous degrees at any one level is prohibited.
6. Accredited certificates or apprenticeship programs must be eligible for college credit or result in a state license. Students are eligible for tuition, fees and required books.
7. Funding for study abroad will only be considered when it is a requirement to graduate. Funding will be coordinated with the school's financial aid office to include the cost of tuition, room & board and transportation. Personal & misc. expenses will be the student's responsibilities.
8. Funding for non-required study abroad college credit will consist of actual tuition and required books.

- 9. Accredited schools that do not offer a standard school budget or do not participate in the federal financial aid program will only be provided with the cost of tuition, fees and required books.
- 10. Students taking video and/or on-line courses must complete all credits within the awarded semester or term.

**LENGTH OF FUNDING TERMS/ELIGIBILITY**

Students are eligible to receive a specific number of terms to obtain their degree:

**Degree seeking:**

**Eligibility:**

Vocational/Technical .....	6 Terms
(Associate, Certificate, Apprenticeship, License)	
Undergraduate .....	10 Terms
Graduate .....	6 Terms
Doctorate .....	10 Terms

- Students funded under the 1-5 credit program are not subject to the above length of eligibility. The 1-5 credit program is only an option available to students who have not used up their terms of eligibility.
- Summer school will be pro-rated and counted as a term when the total number of full-time credits are reached.
- Students are eligible to pursue progressive degrees, e.g., Associate of Arts (AA/AS), Bachelors (BA/BS), Masters (MA/MS), Doctorate (PhD). Multiple or continues degrees at any one level is prohibited.

**EXTENDED TERMS OF FUNDING**

Students who have reached their maximum terms of funding but have followed their school academic curriculum, have not changed programs/majors or colleges and lost credits, who are in good standing with their school and the Oneida Higher Education Office, but deficient in credits required to graduate; may request additional terms of funding.

Students must contact the Oneida Higher Education Office to request the “Extended Funding” form.



## INELIGIBLE FUNDING FACTORS

The Oneida Higher Education Grant does not cover the following:

- Students who are pursuing a duplicate or lesser degree. (*Students are eligible to pursue progressive degrees in consecutive order, e.g., Associate of Arts (AA/AS), Bachelors (BA/BS), Masters (MA/MS), Doctorate (PhD).*)
- Students who are ineligible for financial aid at their school for any reason besides family income, e.g., suspended for federal financial aid
- Students who are in student loan default.
- Students' seeking funding after the semester or term has ended.
- Students must ensure the Higher Education Department has their complete file before the semester/term/quarter they are looking for funding ends.
- Workshops, seminars, conferences, continuing education credits/units or courses required to update/maintain a state license.
- Students who are currently on suspension with Oneida Higher Education Office.

## COLLEGE CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING/EXPERIENCE

Students have the opportunity to earn academic credit for previous education or life experience for which credit has not already been earned. These types of credit opportunities are coordinated through the student's school.

Students must submit their original receipts and documentation of successful credit completion to be considered for reimbursement. Applicants must comply with the Oneida Higher Education grant program requirements.

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights respect to their education records.

FERPA regulations protect a student's "education records," which include grades, finances, and discipline records. Your son or daughter (or spouse) can choose to release information from these records to a third party

According to FERPA, college students are considered responsible adults and are allowed to determine who will receive information about them. While parents understandably have an interest in a student's academic progress, they are not automatically granted access to a student's records without written consent of the student. Parents are encouraged to consult with the student if academic information is needed. Your child may give permission for a third party to access his/her records by filing a "FERPA Release of Information" form obtained on the Oneida Nation Higher Education web site: [www.oneida-nsn.gov/highered](http://www.oneida-nsn.gov/highered) clicking "Applications and Forms" and selecting "FERPA (Student Consent to Release)".

## ACADEMIC/GRADING REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to submit a copy of their official transcripts at the end of each semester/term (refer to “Funding Process,” “Copy of Official Transcripts” for more details).

Calculating Grade Point Averages (GPA's ): Students are required to “successfully complete” all the credits/courses they were funded for within the semester/term funded. Therefore, courses that do not have associated grades or grade points averages such as, incompletes, withdrawals, audits, in progress, unsatisfactory, failing, etc., will be considered as non-passing grades. The semester or term grade point average (gpa) will then be recalculated based on the number of actual credits funded for.

- **Vocational/Technical students** must maintain a semester/term **2.0 grade point average (gpa)** on a 4.0 grading scale.
- **Undergraduate students** must maintain a semester/term **2.0 gpa** on a 4.0 grading scale.
- **Graduate students** must maintain a semester/term **3.0 gpa** on a 4.0 grading scale.
- **Doctoral students** must maintain a semester/term **3.0 gpa** on a 4.0 grading scale. (*Higher Education Office can utilize a school’s grading policies for those professional doctoral students (MD’s and JD’s) where a gpa below 3.0 is acceptable to remain in good standing*).
- **Apprenticeship/Certificate/License students** must maintain academic progress, be in good standing, and submit scheduled/monthly progress reports.

## PROBATION AND SUSPENSION ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

The following guidelines will be used to determine the continuation of funding under the Oneida Higher Education Grant Program.

**Note: grade point averages will be calculated by Higher Education and will be based on the number of credits funded for the semester/term (see Academic/Grading Requirements).**

1. Students may be placed on either probation or suspension for failure to earn the required semester/term grade point average (gpa).
  - a. Undergraduate/technical students with a semester/term gpa of 1.0 up to and including 1.9 will be placed on **probation**. Graduate students with a semester/term gpa of 2.0 up to and including 2.9 will be placed on **probation**.
  - b. Undergraduate/technical students with a semester/term gpa that falls below 1.0 will be **suspended**. Graduate/Doctoral students with a semester/term gpa that falls below 2.0 will be **suspended**.

2. Students may be placed on either probation or suspension for failure to **successfully complete** all of the credits for which Oneida Higher Education has provided a grant award. **Note: a course is not considered successfully completed unless credits are earned.**
  - a. Students who do not complete all of the credits for which they were funded will be placed on **probation**.
  - b. Students who do not complete at least half of the credits for which they were funded will be **suspended**.
3. Students may be placed on either probation or suspension for combinations of #1 and #2 above.
  - a. If students complete at least half of the credits for which they were funded with a semester/term gpa of 1.0 or better for undergraduate/technical and 2.0 or better for graduate they will be placed on **probation**.
  - b. If students complete at least half of the credits for which they were funded but their semester/term gpa is below 1.0 for undergraduate/technical or 2.0 for graduate they will be **suspended**.
4. Students who do not meet the probation requirements listed on their Oneida Higher Education academic warning letter will be **suspended**.
5. Students who are on financial aid suspension through their school **are not eligible** for the Oneida Higher Education Grant.

**PROBATION:**

Students on probation will continue to receive the Oneida Higher Education Grant for their next semester or term. They are encouraged to meet with their school's advisors to develop a plan for academic improvement.

- a. During the student's probation period they must complete all the credits for which they received an Oneida grant, with a gpa of a 2.0 or better as an undergraduate/technical school student or a 3.0 or better for a graduate student.
- b. Students must send verification of their grades at the end of the semester or term to determine if they meet the program requirements.
- c. Students who do not meet the probation requirements will be **suspended**.

**SUSPENSION:**

Students will be denied the Oneida Higher Education Grant while on suspension. To be reinstated, students have the following options:

- a. Students must complete the same number of credits that were funded during the term of academic suspension. The student must earn a grade point average of 2.0 or better for undergraduate/technical credits and 3.0 or better for graduate credits that will

count toward reinstatement. The student must rely on other funding sources during the suspension period.

- b. Students may repay the entire Oneida Higher Education grant that was awarded to them for the semester/term in which they were placed on suspension status.

*(Higher Education Office can utilize a school's grading policies for those professional doctoral students (MD's and JD's) where a gpa below 3.0 is acceptable to remain in good standing).*

## STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT OPTIONS

Students who are in student loan default "may" have the following options available to be reconsidered for financial aid. (Please confirm options with the holder of the loan).

1. **Obtain a loan** from a personal banking institution to pay off loan default.
2. **Default Rehabilitation Program:** Consolidate loan balance into a ten-year period. After one year of timely payments, the default status will be removed (only one default rehabilitation permitted). \*\*
3. **Income Sensitive Program:** Students are to provide documents why the client is unable to make recommended monthly loan payments. With documentation, it can be lowered for one year. After one year, it will however resume to the original monthly amount.
4. All guaranty agencies and the U.S. Department of Education (Department) will accept regular monthly payments that are both reasonable to the agency and affordable to you. Call 1-800-433-3243 and speak to a customer service representative or visit <https://studentaidhelp.ed.gov/app/home/site/fafsa>

\*\* Commonly, after six months of successful payments on programs #2 or #3, individuals can apply and be reconsidered for other financial aid consideration (the required number of successful months could vary from lender services).

## APPEAL PROCEDURE

If an applicant is denied funding or suspended from the Oneida Higher Education Grant program, they may file an appeal as follows:

1. After receiving written documentation from the Oneida Higher Education Advisor informing the student, they are not eligible for funding and the specific reason; the student has the opportunity to appeal the decision.
2. The student can request an appeal form from the Oneida Higher Education Office containing the appeal process directions. The student has (30) calendar days from the date the appeal application was mailed to return all required forms, grades and documentation to the Oneida Higher Education Advisor. The appeal will be reviewed, and the Higher Education Advisor has (10) working days from the receipt of the appeal to respond in writing to the appeal

decision.

3. If the student's appeal has been denied, the student can submit a second appeal in writing with attached documents within (30) calendar days from the date of the denial letter directly to the Higher Education Manager: Oneida Nation, Attn: Higher Education Dept., P.O. Box 365, Oneida, WI 54155. The Manager has (10) working days from the receipt of the appeal to respond in writing to the appeal decision.

4. If the student is denied by the Higher Education Manager, the student may appeal in writing with attached documents within (10) working days from the second denial letter to the Education and Training Area Manager: Oneida Nation, Attn: Education & Training Area Managers Office, P.O. Box 365, Oneida, WI 54155. The Area Manager has (10) working days to respond in writing to the appeal.

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES AVAILABLE

- Career assessments
- Resource library to include catalogs, brochures and applications
- Miscellaneous scholarship information.
- Assistance with completion of financial aid and other school forms.
- Financial aid workshops
- Area High School visits

The Higher Education Student Handbook is subject to change  
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