Administrative Practice Letter

Native American Waiver and Educational Program

The University of Maine System has tuition waiver and room and board grant programs for eligible Native American students. The purpose of these programs is to encourage Native American students to participate in public higher education in Maine. The goal is to provide sustained support for all 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 Tuition Waiver Program

This program covers tuition and mandatory fees. 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. Mandatory fees are those fees which all students must pay including any course or program fees as determined by the campus (travel and accommodation fees related to travel courses and any fees which could be construed as books or supplies are NOT covered by the waiver).

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, or 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.

- 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.

- Students must remain eligible to register for classes and maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress as defined by federal guidelines at the campus where they are enrolled.

- Students who entered the program prior to Fall 2012 would be 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 requirements will be in effect.

As mentioned within the eligibility criteria above, members and descendants of members of a Canadian Wabanaki Tribe and members of a federal, state or provincially recognized Native American Tribe must provide proof of in-state residency. 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.

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 is a need based award for qualified native 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. Room and board charges will be covered only during the traditional academic year (fall and spring terms).

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, and living in a residence hall of the campus where they are 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.

- 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 grants.

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 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 calculated financial need. The receipt of other aid may, in some cases, reduce or eliminate the receipt of the room and board grant.