

Higher Education Program



Policy Manual

Gila River Indian Community
Higher Education Program
Approved GR-224-23



GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY

SACATON, AZ 85147

RESOLUTION GR-224-23

A RESOLUTION RESCINDING RESOLUTION GR-145-16 AND APPROVING THE REVISED HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM POLICY MANUAL

WHEREAS, the Gila River Indian Community (the "Community") is a federally recognized tribe, the Gila River Indian Community Council (the "Community Council") is the governing body of the Gila River Indian Community; and

WHEREAS, the Community Council, is empowered pursuant to Article XV Section 1 (a) (9), of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Gila River Indian Community (adopted March 17, 1960 and codified July 7, 2021) to promote the health, peace, morals, education and general welfare of the Community and its members; and

WHEREAS, the Community has established the Tribal Education Department ("TED") to provide and administer quality educational services and programs for the Community; and

WHEREAS, the TED is responsible for the Higher Education Program which provides financial assistance to eligible Community members seeking a certificate, diploma, or degree at a regionally accredited college or university; and

WHEREAS, the Community Council has previously approved, rescinded and approved revised versions of the Higher Education Program Policy Manual, Resolution GR-229-00, Resolution GR-228-00, Resolution, GR-94-04, Resolution GR-125-13, and Resolution GR-145-16; and

WHEREAS, the TED has worked with the Education Standing Committee to revise the Higher Education Program Policy Manual, as attached to this Resolution; and

WHEREAS, to ensure the continued effectiveness of the Higher Education Program, changes to the Higher Education Program Policy Manual have been proposed, including changes to the application process, vocational schools and school accreditation requirements; and requirements for continuing students and students re-entering higher education and/or vocational education programs; and

WHEREAS, the Education Standing Committee recommends rescinding Resolution GR-145-16 and replacing the Higher Education Program Policy Manual with the attached Higher Education Program Policy Manual.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Community Council hereby approves the attached Higher Education Program Policy Manual, effective upon approval by Community Council.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Governor, or in the Governor's absence the Lieutenant Governor, is hereby authorized to take any actions necessary to carry out the intent of this Resolution.

CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to authority contained in Article XV, of the amended Constitution and Bylaws of the Gila River Indian Community, ratified by the Tribe January 22, 1960 and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on March 17, 1960, the foregoing Resolution was adopted on the 1st day of November, 2023, at a Regular Community Council Meeting held at the Governance Center, Sacaton, AZ, at which a quorum of 10 members were present by a vote of: 10 FOR; 0 OPPOSE; 0 ABSTAIN; 7 ABSENT; 0 VACANCY.

GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY


GOVERNOR

ATTEST:


COMMUNITY COUNCIL SECRETARY



Gila River Indian Community Higher Education Program Policy

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Article 1. Definitions

1. **Academic Term:** The length of one semester, one quarter, one block, or a time period designated by an educational institution.
2. **Academic Year:** The length of two semesters, three quarters, or as designated by the educational institution.
3. **Accredited Colleges and Universities:** Higher Educational Institutions that have been accredited by one of the following accrediting Associations:
 - ACCJC Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
 - HLC Higher Learning Commission
 - MSCHE Middle States Commission on Higher Education
 - NECHE New England Commission of Higher Education
 - NWCCU Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
 - SACSCOC Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
 - WASCUC Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior Colleges and University Commission

 - AMA American Medical Association
 - ABA American Bar Association
 - The appropriate accrediting association for highly specialized majors including, but not limited to, the National Architectural Accrediting Board for schools of architecture.
4. **Applicant:** The person applying for Program financial assistance and has not yet been accepted into the Program.
5. **Associate Degree:** The degree acquired by the student who completes all required course work in an Associate Degree program.
6. **Award Letter:** An Official letter from Student Services notifying the student of his/her financial assistance.
7. **Baccalaureate Degree:** The degree acquired by the student who completes all required course work in a Baccalaureate Degree program.
8. **Clock Hours:** The number of hours spent in class for a vocational program of study.
9. **Code of Conduct:** Behavior that promotes a positive self-image of the student and the Gila River Indian Community, as prescribed in Article 13.
10. **Continuing Student:** A student currently receiving funding who meets the requirements of the Program to progress to the next semester.
11. **Credit Hour:** A unit of academic credit.
12. **Cumulative Grade Point Average:** The overall average, figured by dividing the total number of credits attempted by the total number of grade points earned.

13. **Degree:** An Associate, Baccalaureate, Masters, or Doctorate earned by a student who has met all requirements of his/her Program of Study at an Accredited College or University.
14. **Diploma:** A document issued by an educational institution that the recipient has earned a degree or completed a particular Program of Study.
15. **Education Standing Committee (ESC):** A branch of the Community Council. ESC is the recommending body on all educational policy matters. ESC provides recommendations and assistance in formulating, upholding and amending the higher education policies.
16. **Enrollment Agreement:** The contract signed between the student and the institution that specifies the conditions under which the school will provide instruction to the student. It also specifies all costs a student must pay in order to enroll in a specific school program. A copy of the completed enrollment agreement must be given to the student upon enrollment.
17. **Financial Needs Analysis (FNA):** An analysis of a student's cost of attendance provided by the educational institution.
18. **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** The application used when applying for Federal Aid for educational costs.
19. **Full Time Student:**
 - a. Undergraduate-As defined by the educational institution
 - b. Graduate-As defined by the educational institution
 - c. Doctorate-As defined by the educational institution
20. **Gila River Indian Community (Community):** A federally recognized Indian Tribe including its governmental structure, departments and programs.
21. **Good Standing:** To be in compliance with all program requirements.
22. **Grade Point:** The point value given to a grade received for the student's course work.
 - A = 4.0
 - B = 3.0
 - C = 2.0
 - D = 1.0
 - F = 0.0
23. **Grade Point Average (GPA):** The average grade earned per term, figured by dividing the grade points earned by the numbers of credits attempted.
24. **Graduate Student:** A student who has acquired a Baccalaureate degree and is enrolled in a Masters or Doctorate program.
25. **On-line:** Courses that are offered via the Internet.
26. **Part-time Student:**
 - a. Undergraduate- less than 12 credit hours per semester
 - b. Graduate-As defined by the educational institution
 - c. Doctorate-As defined by the educational institution.

27. **Program:** The Gila River Indian Community Higher Education Program approved through GR-94-04.
28. **Program of Study:** The classes or course criteria set forth by the educational institution to obtain a diploma, certificate or degree.
29. **Program Requirements:** Requirements, regulations, and policies that all persons must follow.
30. **Recipient:** An applicant that has been accepted into the Program and has not yet received funding.
31. **Student:** An individual who has applied and been accepted into the Program and is receiving funding.
32. **Student Aid Report (SAR):** The document received 3 to 4 days after your FAFSA is processed. Your educational institution will also receive a copy. The amount awarded is contingent upon the student's financial need.
33. **Undergraduate:** A student who is enrolled in a program that, upon completion of curriculum requirements, becomes qualified for an Associates or Baccalaureate degree.
34. **Unmet Need:** The difference between a student's total cost of attendance and the student's total available assistance.
35. **Verification:** A process used by the educational institution to confirm information a student has provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Article 2. Purpose and Goal

- A. The Program is not an entitlement program and eligibility to participate is a privilege.
- B. The purpose of the Gila River Indian Community's ("Community") Higher Education Program (the "Program") is to provide financial assistance to eligible enrolled Community Members seeking a Certificate/Diploma/Degree at a Regionally Accredited College or University.
- C. The goal of the Gila River Indian Community's Higher Education Program is to provide eligible enrolled Community Members with support and resources to achieve their educational endeavors.
- D. The Gila River Indian Community Council recognizes the disparity in education attained by Community members and desires to achieve a public policy goal of educating Community members in order to fulfill the employment needs of the Gila River Indian Community and enhance the Tribal economy.

Article 3. Administration

- A. The Program is administered by the Community's Tribal Education Department. Student Services and the Tribal Education Department are responsible for the Program and are authorized to ensure student benefits are administered in accordance with the Higher Education Program Policy, subject to Community Council approval.
- B. The Education Standing Committee is responsible for providing recommendations and assistance on policy formulation and clarification to the Tribal Education Department. The Education Standing Committee reviews and makes recommendations to the Community Council on educational proposals and plans presented by the Tribal Education Department.

Article 4. Confidentiality

- A. Student Services will maintain the Program files in a confidential manner that restricts access except to authorized individuals.
- B. Authorized individuals include:
 - a. The Student
 - b. Parents and/or Legal Guardians if the student is under the age of 18
 - c. Student Services staff and their Supervisors
 - d. Individuals authorized access by the Policy or by applicable law.
- C. A student may give notarized, written permission to Student Services for someone other than the student to have access to the student's file.
- D. All students must give written permission for Student Services to have access to the student's file at their educational institution.

Article 5. Eligibility Requirements

- A. Must be an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community.
- B. Must have a High School Diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED).
- C. Must be accepted into an accredited College or University from one of the following regional accreditations:
 - ACCJC Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
 - HLC Higher Learning Commission
 - MSCHE Middle States Commission on Higher Education
 - NECHE New England Commission of Higher Education
 - NWCCU Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
 - SACSCOC Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
 - WASCUC Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior Colleges & University Commission
 - AMA American Medical Association
 - ABA American Bar Association
 - The appropriate accrediting association for highly specialized majors including, but not limited to, the National Architectural Accrediting Board for schools of architecture.
- D. Must be accepted into an accredited vocational school from one of the following trade school accrediting boards:
 - Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools
 - Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges
 - Council on Occupational Education
 - National Accrediting Commission of Career Arts & Sciences
- E. Must not be incarcerated at the time of the award.

Article 6. Application Process

- A. Student Services must receive a completed application packet with all required documents on or before the posted deadline date.
 - June 1st – Fall Semester
 - November 1st – Spring Semester
 - Approved Vocational Programs- No deadline, must submit complete application packet two (2) months prior to start date.
- B. All applications received after the deadline date will not be considered.

- C. Completed application packets must be mailed, hand delivered, or emailed to Student Services. Emailed applications must be sent to Student.Services@gric.nsn.us.
1. Mailed application packets should be certified mailed to Student Services and postmarked by the deadline date.
 2. Hand delivered application packets must be submitted to Student Services on or before the deadline date.
 - a. If the deadline is on a non-business day, the application packet must be submitted by the next business day.
- D. Faxed application packets will not be accepted.
- E. All mailings must be sent via **Certified** mail to:

Gila River Indian Community
Education Department/Student Services
PO Box 97
Sacaton, AZ 85147
(Student Services will not refund or pay for delivery)

Article 7. Required Application Documents

- A. Complete and signed Gila River Indian Community scholarship application.
- B. A typed, 200 word essay summarizing your educational goals and future plans; dated and signed.
- C. Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB) provided by Gila River Indian Community Enrollment Office that has not exceeded the day's expiration by the application deadline.
- D. Admission or Acceptance letter from educational institution.
- E. Enrollment Agreement with anticipated graduation date (for vocational students only).
- F. Program of Study from the school's academic catalog.
- G. Finalized class schedule from the College or University that reflects the semester the student is requesting financial assistance.
- H. High School/GED official transcripts or diploma that reflects the student's graduation date.
- I. Official transcripts from all previously attended Colleges, Universities, or Vocational schools regardless, whether or not student was funded by the Program. Unofficial transcripts will not be accepted. All transcripts are due on the deadline date and transcript receipts will not be accepted.
 1. Official transcripts mailed must be unopened and received by the deadline date.
 2. Official transcripts that are hand delivered must be unopened from educational institution and submitted to Student Services on or before the deadline date.

3. Electronic transcripts must be ordered through the educational institution and sent to Student Services. Electronic transcripts can be sent to Student.Services@gric.nsn.us.
- J. Copy of Student Aid Report (SAR) from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) website at www.fafsa.ed.gov .

Article 8. Required Documents for Continuing Student

- A. Current students must submit the following documents within 3 weeks after the end of their academic term to be considered for continued financial assistance.
1. Official Transcripts with current academic term grades posted are due on the deadline date and transcript receipts will not be accepted.
 - a. Official transcripts mailed must be unopened and received by the deadline date.
 - b. Official transcripts that are hand delivered must be unopened from the educational institution and submitted on or before the deadline date.
 - c. Electronic transcripts must be ordered through the educational institution and sent to Student Services.
 2. Finalized Class schedule from the College or University that reflects the term the student is requesting financial assistance.
 3. Updated Degree Progress Report due annually
 4. A letter requesting continued funding must include the following:
 - a. Typed 200 word letter, signed and dated.
 - b. Student must state the semester requesting financial assistance.
 - c. Discuss current semester accomplishments, challenges, etc.
 - d. Expected graduation date.
 - e. Include current contact information.
 5. Annual Student Aid Report (SAR)
- B. Students who decline continued funding will need to submit the following within 3 weeks after the term:
1. A letter indicating their decision to decline continued funding.
 2. Official transcripts with current term grades posted.

Article 9. Student Responsibilities

All students must read and comply with the requirements listed in the Policy; failure to do so will result in funding ineligibility.

- A. Must comply with the requirements of the educational Institution.

- B. Must notify Student Services in writing and complete a change of educational institutional form, approval **must** be received by Student Services **prior** to an official withdrawal or transfer from an educational institution stated in the Award Letter.
- C. Must notify Student Services in writing within 5 business days of the following changes to:
 - 1. Credit load.
 - 2. School enrollment status (i.e. suspension or academic probation).
 - 3. Class schedule.
 - 4. Program of study.
 - 5. Mailing address (submit updated Student Information Form).
 - 6. Phone number.
 - 7. Name.
 - 8. Tribal enrollment status.
 - 9. Any other information critical to a student's file.
- D. Must submit a student progress grade check each semester after midterms have been completed.
- E. Must submit an official transcript to Student Services within 30 days of graduation date with confirmed degree and date listed.
- F. Official transcripts must have an official grade and grade point average; grade interpretations will not be accepted.
- G. Must attend scholarship orientation conducted by Student Services.
- H. Must accept all grants and scholarships or aid from any federal, state or private institutions.
- I. A student who requests Program accommodations due to a documented disability (*See the Americans with Disabilities Act for guidelines*) must submit current documentation of the disability to Student Services.
 - 1. Program accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.
 - 2. Program accommodations will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis, based on the submitted documentation, and in accordance with the Student Services Policies and Procedures.
 - 3. Students must submit documents from the educational institution of the documented disability.
 - 4. Any disability documentation submitted to Student Services will be maintained in a confidential manner pursuant to Confidentiality under Article 4.
- J. Students wanting to pursue a dual major must receive approval from the Student Services Adult Education Manager prior to the start of their program of study.
- K. Students attending an educational institution outside the state of Arizona must establish residency in the state they are attending college.
- L. Students must have completed the Verification process with their financial aid office at their educational institution by the start of the academic term.

Article 10. Academic Standards

All students must comply with the following academic standards to receive financial assistance:

- A. Requirements for Full-Time Undergraduates:
 - 1. Enrolled in 12 or more credit hours.
 - 2. First year freshmen are only approved to take 12-14 credits per term for the first academic year.
 - 3. Have an Academic Term GPA of 2.5 or above.
 - 4. Follow program of study on file with Student Services.
 - 5. Must earn approved amount of credit/clock hours funded by the Program.

- B. Requirements for Part-time Undergraduates:
 - 1. Enrolled in 11 credits hours or less.
 - 2. Have an Academic Term GPA of 2.5 or above.
 - 3. Follow program of study on file with Student Services.
 - 4. Must earn approved amount of credit/clock hours funded by the Program.

- C. Requirements for Full-Time Graduate/Doctoral Students:
 - 1. Enrolled in the number of credit hours for full time status as defined by the educational institution.
 - 2. Have an Academic Term GPA of 3.0 or above.
 - 3. Follow program of study on file with Student Services.
 - 4. Must earn approved amount of credit/clock hours funded by the Program.

- D. Requirements for Part-Time Graduate/Doctoral Students:
 - 1. Enrolled in the number of credit hours for part time status as defined by the educational institution.
 - 2. Have an Academic Term GPA of 3.0 or above.
 - 3. Follow program of study on file with Student Services.
 - 4. Must earn approved amount of credit/clock hours funded by the Program.

Article 11. Length of Program

- A. Students may receive Program funds for the following maximum number of Academic Terms:

<u>Undergraduate:</u>	Twelve (12) semesters or eighteen (18) quarters.
<u>Graduate:</u>	Twelve (12) semesters or eighteen (18) quarters.
<u>Doctorate*:</u>	Sixteen (16) semesters or twenty-four (24) quarters.

*Doctoral Degree Maximum Time Limit

Doctoral students must complete all program requirements within five years after passing the comprehensive examinations. Any exceptions must be approved by the student's supervisory committee, the head of the academic unit and the ESC.

- B. Part-time students will have their funding counted as a half semester up to the maximum number of allowable academic terms.

- C. The Program will only fund, within the maximum number of academic terms, an eligible student to progressively earn:
 - One (1) Certificate/Diploma
 - One (1) Associate Degree
 - One (1) Baccalaureate Degree
 - One (1) Master's Degree
 - One (1) PhD
 - One (1) Professional Degree (medical school, law school, dentistry, etc.)
- D. The Program may fund an additional 2nd degree as long as funding limits (per degree category) have not exceeded the maximum limit, need for a second degree must be significant such as a career change or lack of employment opportunities.

Article 12. Financial Assistance

- A. The Student will utilize all available sources of funding such as Pell, SEOG, tuition grants and outside scholarships before using Program funds.
- B. Student Services will make all determinations for the use of Program funds in accordance with the Policy.
- C. The Program's financial assistance is not guaranteed and is contingent upon available funding.
- D. Upon receipt of the Award Letter, the Student has five (5) business days to notify Student Services in writing upon declining the scholarship.
- E. The Program may provide financial assistance based on the Unmet Need from the Financial Needs Analysis (FNA) Form.
 - 1. The school will complete the FNA based on the student's enrolled credit hours. The FNA includes the Cost of Attendance and Campus Based Awards.
 - 2. Unmet Financial Needs is determined by the following formula:
 - a. Total Cost of Attendance minus Campus Based Awards = GRIC Scholarship Award.
- F. To receive Program financial assistance a Student must meet all the requirements in Academic Standards under Article 10.
- G. Full-Time students will receive financial assistance for the following educational expenses:
 - 1. Tuition and fees
 - 2. Books and supplies
 - 3. Room and board
 - 4. Transportation (On-line classes do not qualify)
 - 5. Mandatory requirements made by the institution as part of the Program of Study
 - 6. Personal
- H. Part-Time students will receive financial assistance for the following educational expenses:

1. Tuition and fees
 2. Books and Supplies
 3. Transportation (On-line students do not qualify)
 4. Mandatory requirements made by the institution as part of the Program of Study
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- I. Depending upon available funding, eligible students may also receive one-time funding for certification exams, licensing exams, graduate admission exams, preparatory courses and other related expenses associated with taking the examination. Must apply and submit request 60 days prior to start date.
 - J. The Program will send funds directly to the educational institution. Each educational institution has its own disbursement policies and procedures that the student must follow.
 - K. The Program is not responsible for fees incurred through the negligence of the student.
 - L. The Community will not be responsible for or pay any tax, penalties, or interest incurred as a result of benefits provided under the Program. Each Community member receiving benefits should consult with his/her own tax advisor to determine the income tax consequences of the Program. The Community intends that benefits provided pursuant to the Program will be excludable from income for federal income tax purposes, under Section 117 of the Internal Revenue Code and/or under the general welfare doctrine of federal tax law.
 - M. The Program will not reimburse a student for previously accrued expenses of attending an educational institution.
 - N. The Program will not pay any costs incurred at the educational institution if the student begins school before they are approved for funding by the Program.
 - O. The Program will not pay for any fees not related to educational expenses (i.e. application fees, sporting events, special events, late fees incurred by student for late registration, etc).
 - P. The Program will not pay for housing deposits.
 - Q. The Program will not pay for any repeat courses.
 - R. Depending upon available funding, the Program will provide funding for Continuing Students to attend the summer academic term.
 - S. Applicants desiring to attend an educational institution outside the continental United States will be limited and based upon the field of study, and must submit a letter requesting a special meeting with the Tribal Education Director and the Adult Education Manager. All requests for out of country funding will be approved on a case-by-case basis, and need approval of the Tribal Education Director and the Adult Education Manager.
 - T. If it is determined that the application or any supporting documents were falsified, or if the student committed fraud or are improperly provided with financial assistance, the student will not be eligible to reapply and will be required to reimburse the Program.

Article 13. Code of Conduct

- A. Student must promote a positive self-image that is a credit to him or herself and to the Gila River Indian Community.
- B. Students must adhere to the educational institution's code of conduct.
- C. Any person such as a Parent or Guardian who is designated by the student to act on his or her behalf must also comply with the Code of Conduct.
- D. A student whose conduct is offensive toward Student Services staff, educational institution personnel, Community department employees, Community officials or other students may be considered in violation of the Code of Conduct.
- E. Offensive conduct that violates the Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Written or verbal threats/abuse.
 - 2. Sexually suggestive comments or actions.
 - 3. Inappropriate gestures.
 - 4. Physical contact.
 - 5. Comments intended to embarrass, demean, or intimidate others.
 - 6. Vandalism.
 - 7. Inappropriate behaviors/attitudes (i.e. yelling, tantrums, plagiarism, academic dishonesty).
- F. Any student or person designated by the student, who violates the Code of Conduct will be disciplined as follows:
 - 1. First level: written warning from the Adult Education Manager.
 - 2. Second level: meeting with the Adult Education Manager.
 - 3. Third level: meeting with the Tribal Education Director.
 - 4. Fourth level: rendered ineligible for future funding from the Program.Serious violations will be advanced directly to the second or third level.
- G. A Code of Conduct report will be signed by the person asserting the violation along with the Adult Education Manager and will be placed in the student's file.
- H. The student will be notified of the suspension within five business days after receipt of the allegation.

Article 14. Probation

- A. A student can only be placed on Probation a maximum of two times per degree while a student of the Program. Students who exceed the maximum time for Probation will be suspended from the Program.

- B. Student Services may place a student on probation for any of, but not limited to the following reasons:
1. Did not earn the enrolled credit hours for the Academic Term for which they were funded (i.e. failed, incomplete, etc.).
 2. Did not earn a minimum 2.5 term GPA as an undergraduate student.
 3. Did not earn a minimum 3.0 term GPA as a graduate student.
 4. Did not remain in academic good standing with the educational institution's policies.
 5. Did not comply with Article 8 "Required Documents for a Continuing Student" and Article 9 "Student Responsibilities".
- C. The Program will provide a student on Probation with financial assistance for the following educational expenses:
1. Tuition and fees.
 2. Books and Supplies.
 3. Transportation (On-line classes do not qualify).
- D. Students placed on Probation must make up the credits for which they received funding by the Program during the Probation Academic Term and earn the minimum term a 2.5 GPA as an undergraduate and 3.0 as a graduate student.

Article 15. Disqualification

A student may be disqualified from the Program for any of but not limited to the following reasons:

1. A student who is placed on probation and does not complete his/her probationary requirements.
2. Did not comply with Article 8. Required documents for a Continuing Student.
3. Did not comply with Article 9. Student Responsibilities.
4. Did not comply with Article 10. Academic Standards.
5. Suspended, dropped, or terminated by the educational institution.
6. Falsified information to obtain Program funds.
7. Receives a Grade Point Average of 1.0 or less for the academic term.
8. Violated the Code of Conduct.
9. Exceeded the maximum number of academic terms (Article 11).
10. Exceeded the maximum amount of semesters allowed for Probation (Article 14).

Article 16. Reinstatement

- A. A student who exceeded the allowable Probation semesters will not be reinstated until the student graduates from their current degree program for which they were funded.
- B. A student suspended from the Program shall not be eligible to re-apply to the Program until one of the following:
1. Funds owed to the Community have been paid back.

2. Credits made up must apply to their current program of study and achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.5 as an undergraduate or a 3.0 as a graduate.

Article 17. Dispute Resolution Process

- A. If a student wishes to dispute any action taken by Student Services, the student must submit a letter of dispute to the Tribal Education Director within five business days of receipt of the determination letter. The student must include any supporting documentation to be considered for the resolution of the dispute.
- B. The Tribal Education Director, or designee, may schedule a meeting with the student and the Adult Education Manager of Student Services within fifteen business days after receipt of the student's letter to review the dispute.
- C. The Tribal Education Director, or designee, will provide the student with a letter notifying the student of the outcome within five business days after the scheduled meeting.

Article 18. Appeal Process

- A. The ESC will serve as the governing body for the appeal process.
- B. A student may appeal a written decision from the Dispute Resolution.
- C. The student must mail a letter of appeal to the ESC with the same documents submitted in the Dispute Resolution Process to the ESC Chairperson within five (5) business days after the letter received from the Dispute Resolution Process. Students are responsible to contact the Community Council Secretary's Office (520-562-9720) for ESC submission deadlines.
 1. A student may only provide ESC with the same documents that were provided to Student Services during the Dispute Resolution Process. ESC will only consider the documents submitted during the Dispute Resolution Process.
 2. A complete copy of the appeal letter and supporting documents must be simultaneously submitted to Student Services.
 3. Letters to ESC and Student Services must be sent via certified mail.
 4. Letters to ESC must be address as follows:

Gila River Indian Community
Chairperson of the Education Standing Committee
c/o Administrative Assistant
P.O. Box 2138
Sacaton, AZ 85147

5. Letters to Student Services must be addressed as follows:

Gila River Indian Community
Tribal Education Department/Student Services
c/o Student Services Adult Education Manager
P.O. Box 97
Sacaton, AZ 85147

- D. The ESC Chairperson will notify the recipient/student of the date and time of the appeal hearing via certified mail. Generally, appeal hearing will be heard at the first ESC meeting of the month.
 - 1. Appeal hearings will be scheduled at the discretion of the ESC.
 - 2. The ESC Chairperson will notify the student and Student Services of the date and time of the appeal hearing at least five business days prior to the scheduled hearing.
- E. A student must be present at the hearing, however if the student has received notice as evidenced by the certified mail receipt and fails to appear, the ESC may conduct the hearing without the student present.
- F. Out-of-state recipients/students may request a teleconference and such requests must be included in the appeal letter.
- G. All appeal hearings will be held in Executive Session.
- H. In all matters subject to appeal under this Section the ESC determines whether facts exist that constitute any violation(s) or non-compliance with any requirements, restrictions, prohibitions, or other provisions of the Program.
- I. The ESC will issue a written determination within five business days of the appeal hearing.
- J. All determinations of the ESC will be final and not subject to judicial review.

Article 19. Approved Vocational Schools

Students will only receive funding from the Program at the following approved schools on file with Student Services.

- 1. Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools
- 2. Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges
- 3. Council on Occupational Education
- 4. National Accrediting Commission of Career Arts & Sciences

Article 20. Amendments to the Program

- A. Student Services may amend the Higher Education Policy with approval by the Education Standing Committee and the Community Council.
- B. Student Services will notify all students within ten (10) business days of any approved amendments by mail and email.

Article 21. No Waiver of Sovereign Immunity from Suit

- A. Nothing contained in these Policies waives the Gila River Indian Community's sovereign immunity from suit.