

**USDA/1994 TRIBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM
STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM/SERVICE
AGREEMENT**

between the

Sponsoring Agency

USDA Agency

and

Name of the University Here

1994 Institution

Name of the Scholar Here

USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar

This agreement is the basis for developing understanding and responsibilities between the **Sponsoring Agency** and the above identified 1994 institution in the employment of **Name of Selected Student** who was selected to participate in the USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars Program implemented under the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP).

The SCEP is a planned and progressive educational program that provides for the integration of the scholar's academic studies and Federal work experience with potential for noncompetitive conversion into the Federal career service. It is consistent with the guidance contained in Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 213 and 410, Executive Order 12015, and the USDA Agency's program policy.

This agreement describes the responsibilities of the participants (agency, institution, and scholar) required under the USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars Program.

A. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY: The USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar must:

1. Be selected to the USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars Program;
2. Be a U.S. citizen;
3. Meet the USDA Agency's policy on nepotism;
4. Be enrolled at one of the thirty-two 1994 Land-Grant Institutions

**STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM/SERVICE
AGREEMENT**

2

5. Demonstrate an interest in public service and pursuing a course of study from a list of required major fields/area published annually in the USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars Program Application Booklet.

B. SELECTION: A USDA agency may appoint students who:

1. Meet all tests, GPA, citizenship, application and/or other requirements established by the USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars Program; and
2. Meet all requirements for enrollment at the 1994 Institutions.

C. APPOINTMENT: The USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar is:

1. Employed as a SCEP student;
2. Appointed under Schedule B (5 CFR 213.3202) authority; and
3. Eligible for noncompetitive conversion within 120 days after satisfactory completion of educational and work-related requirements (640 hours of work experience is required for baccalaureate degree students).

D. PAY AND BENEFITS: The USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar will receive:

1. Pay in accordance with established pay schedules during periods of work; and
2. Employee benefits, such as:
 - retirement coverage
 - life and health insurance coverage
 - promotions, within-grade increases, and awards commensurate with work performance and academic achievements
 - vacation and sick leave, and holiday time

E. ACADEMIC YEAR:

1. The USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar is expected to:

- a. Maintain a full-time course load (as specified by the 1994 Institution but no fewer than 12 credit hours or the equivalent thereof, unless otherwise approved by the sponsoring USDA agency) and a minimum 2.75 cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale (or its equivalent) for the first semester or quarter; and a minimum GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale (or its equivalent) for all subsequent semesters and quarters. The sponsoring agency may grant exception to the full-time course load requirement due to extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the scholar. At the option of the sponsoring agency, scholars who fail to meet the academic standards are subject to be placed on academic probation or dismissed from the Program. The period of probation will be for a period not to exceed one academic semester. It is at the discretion of the sponsoring agency to determine if the scholar has improved enough to remain in the program. If the scholar fails to meet the USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars Program requirements during the probationary period, he/she may be removed from the program by the USDA Sponsoring Agency;
- b. Pursue degree requirements for agreed-upon discipline identified in the letter of acceptance; and
- c. Advance towards meeting degree requirements in a timely manner. If, after advice and counsel, it is determined that the scholar is not proceeding in a timely manner, the USDA (only) retains the right to dismiss the scholar from the program.
- d. Provide a copy of current transcript to the USDA Agency Program Coordinator at the end of each semester.
- e. Work 1 year for **USDA/Sponsoring Agency name here** for each year of financial assistance received.

2. The participating 1994 Institution is expected to:

- a. Provide mentoring, tutoring, and leadership training.
2. Provide documentation on the scholar's progress such as transcripts, course listing, and grades;
3. Provide curriculum counseling and mentor/mentee relationships; and
- d. Process payment documents in a timely manner.

3. The USDA Agency is expected to:

- a. Provide full tuition, fees, and books;
- b. Provide a loaned computer printer and applicable software (computer and software are the property of the federal government and must be secured by and/or returned to the USDA 1994 Tribal College Liaison [or other designated official or location] during school breaks and at the conclusion of the school year and/or course work);
- c. Provide periodic employment with pay and with duties that are commensurate with the student's major area and course of study;
- d. Maintain and process the necessary administrative records relating to the scholar's employment and benefits;
- e. Monitor the scholar's academic progress and work performance, and provide counseling when necessary;
- f. Provide mentor/mentee (Agency expert in field of study) relationships and career counseling; and

- g. Provide timely transfer of scholarship funds to the Institution.

NOTE: A scholar may change Institution and/or discipline for which the scholarship was awarded if mutually agreed upon and coordinated by the 1994 Institution and the USDA Sponsoring Agency.

F. WORK ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Each work experience must be planned consistent with the scholar's academic studies or career goals and be designed to meet the minimum study-related work hours required for permanent conversion.
2. Scholars will be identified as trainees receiving progressive work assignments related to their academic studies.
3. Scholars will be given an Individual Development Plan (IDP) based on requirements needed to fully perform in a position related to academic studies (e.g., computer specialist, accountant, etc.).
4. Upon fully meeting academic requirements for an occupation, scholars may receive promotions based on continued satisfactory performance and established rules and regulations.

G. WORK SCHEDULES:

Scholars may work a variety of schedules. While not in a work status and attending school, scholars will remain on the USDA Agency's roles and kept in a Leave Without Pay (LWOP) status. Work schedules include:

1. Full-time or alternating: Under this schedule, a scholar may work full-time in a semester or quarter and skip a semester or quarter of classes, and attend classes the next semester and not work for that semester.
2. Part-time or parallel: Under this schedule, a scholar may work part-time while attending classes full-time.

3. Summers Only: Under this schedule, a scholar may work only at summer time to receive full credit for conversion eligibility (special approval required).

H. PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS:

USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars will be evaluated in two areas - academic and work-related performance. Results of both evaluations will be shared by USDA and the 1994 Institutions.

1. Academic evaluation: Standards will be determined by the USDA/American Indian Higher Education Consortium Leadership Group.
2. Work-related evaluation: Standards or criteria will be determined by the supervisors consistent with the USDA Agency's performance appraisal system.

If the academic or work-related performance falls below a fully successful level established by the standards, the scholar will be given an opportunity to improve. Failure to improve to an acceptable level will result in dismissal from the Program.

Both evaluations will be completed on an annual basis, with periodic reviews for conformance.

**I. EMPLOYMENT AFTER COMPLETION OF USDA/1994 TRIBAL
SCHOLARS PROGRAM:**

1. **The USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar:**
 - a. *Agrees to provide a year of service to USDA for each year of financial support received. Periods of work performance during the term of the scholarship are creditable to meeting the service requirement;*

**STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM/SERVICE
AGREEMENT**

7

- b. *Agrees to reimburse USDA for costs of education (excluding the employee's pay and allowances) incurred by USDA if the scholar is voluntarily separated from the service of USDA before the end of the period for which the scholar has agreed to continue in the service of USDA unless USDA determines that recovery would be against equity, good conscience, or the public interest. The percentage of the costs to be repaid may not exceed the proportion of the agreement not completed.*
- c. May be noncompetitively promoted and converted to a career or career-conditional appointment within 120 calendar days after completing educational requirements;
- d. Will be terminated from SCEP program if not converted; and
- e. Will consult with and obtain the approval of the sponsoring agency prior to any changes to the academic program. Unauthorized changes will affect continuation of the scholars' participation in the program.

All participants in the USDA/1994 Tribal Scholars Program will receive full consideration without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, status, physical or mental disability or political or personal preference.

SIGNATURES

The undersigned have agreed and fully understand their role and responsibilities as outlined in the foregoing, and adhere to all the requirements contained herein.

USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar

Date

**Signature of Parent or Guardian if
USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar is under 18 years
of age**

Date

President, 1994 Institution

Date

Administrator, Sponsoring Agency

Date

Agency Program Coordinator

Date

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
USDA/1994 TRIBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM
STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM
STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

between the

Sponsoring Agency Name Here

USDA Agency

and

Name of the University Here

1994 Institution

Scholar Name Here

USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar

The statements below are to be addressed by each student at the time of appointment to a position under the Student Career Experience Cooperative Education Program.

1. I have received a copy of the Student Career Experience Program/Service Agreement between my academic Institution and the **Sponsoring Agency Name Here**
2. My questions concerning the terms of the Agreement have been answered to my satisfaction.
3. I understand that my employment as a SCEP student may extend the time necessary to complete the degree requirements depending on the work schedule selected.
4. I agree to provide a copy of my current transcripts to the USDA Agency Program Coordinator at the end of each semester.
5. I understand that I must maintain the academic and work performance standards as outlined in the Agreement, and that failure to do so may result in termination from the program.
6. I must complete all required work hours prior to graduation for noncompetitive conversion to permanent employment.
7. This Agreement covers and applies to an academic program leading to an undergraduate degree and cannot be extended to include a graduate degree. *(A new Agreement would have to be signed).*

**STUDENT CAREER EXPERIENCE PROGRAM
STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

8. I agree to the provisions of the Agreement which permit the sharing of appraisal information between the employing USDA Agency and the 1890 academic Institution. I understand that my authorization is necessary in view of the Privacy Act of 1974 and that my failure to authorize could result in disqualification for participation in the Program.

9. It is my understanding that the employing USDA Agency will make every effort to place each scholar in an employment position upon completion of the program.

10. I agree to work 1 year for USDA/**Sponsoring Agency Name Here** for each year of financial assistance I receive.

Signature of Scholar

Date

**Signature of Parent or Guardian if
USDA/1994 Tribal Scholar is under 18
years of age**

Date

NOTE: This statement of understanding will be filed in the Scholar's Official Personnel File.