

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
1994 TRIBAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM FELLOW EXPERIENCE
PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIP AGREEMENT**

between the

USDA Sponsoring Agency:

Higher Education Institution:

USDA 1994 Tribal Scholar:

This agreement articulates the commitments and responsibilities between the USDA Sponsoring Agency, the Higher Education Institution, and the 1994 Tribal Scholar (“Scholar”) under the USDA 1994 Tribal Scholars Program. The Scholar for this position is given an excepted service appointment as authorized by 5 CFR 213.3102 (r) and USDA’s Fellows Experience Program (FEP), herein referred to as the Schedule A (r) authority. Appointments under this authority are time-limited, not to exceed four years, and provide opportunities for developmental, professional and personal growth through on-the-job formal training.

Position Title: _____
Series/Grade: _____ Full Performance Level: _____
Organization Program Area: _____
Supervisor: _____

This agreement is entered into for the period of: _____
Expiration Date is: _____ (not to exceed four years from date of original appointment)

1. All parties to this agreement shall accept the responsibilities described herein:
 - A. The USDA 1994 Tribal Scholar is expected to:
 - 1) Comply with the University and Agency code of ethics.
 - 2) Maintain a full-time course load each semester quarter as specified by the 1994 Institution’s Scholarship policy. The USDA Sponsoring Agency and or University policy may grant exception to the full-time course load requirement due to extenuating circumstances with the concurrence of the university.
 - 3) Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
 - 4) Pursue the bachelor’s degree requirements for the agreed-upon discipline as identified in the letter of acceptance of the Scholarship.
 - 5) Complete all applications prior to an academic year semester for admissions, award letters, course registrations, and housing meal plans (i.e. FAFSA).

- 6) Declare with the academic advisor the agreed-upon degree curriculum at the start of the year. Each semester quarter the Scholar should successfully complete the degree courses according to the agreed-upon curriculum sequence.
- 7) Advance towards meeting degree requirements in a timely manner.
- 8) Provide the USDA 1994 Program Liaison and the USDA Sponsoring Agency with academic records (official transcripts, schedules, course syllabus etc.)
- 9) Meet with the USDA 1994 Program Liaison, no less than three (3) times per semester quarter. Provide current contact (i.e., primary email and cell phone) information to Program Liaison and USDA Sponsoring Agency to ensure accessibility.
- 10) Inform Program Liaison and USDA Sponsoring Agency of accomplishments and achievements, impeding problems, issues, and concerns.
- 11) Meet with the university academic advisor and or professors, but no less than once monthly.
- 12) If the minimum of 640 hours of work experience is achieved prior to the end of the agreement the Scholar still must report to their assigned work site in the summer.
- 13) Work a minimum of an 8-week internship per summer unless authorized by the USDA Sponsoring Agency for a lesser period.
- 14) Notify Program Liaison before obtaining approval from USDA Sponsoring Agency prior to taking unscheduled breaks sabbaticals from school or work periods that may delay the completion of course work or work period obligations, and
- 15) Consult the Program Liaison and USDA Sponsoring Agency prior to:
 - a. Obtaining approval to drop or withdraw from a course or making any changes to the academic program.
 - b. Changing his or her Institution and or discipline for which the Scholarship was awarded.

Note: Unauthorized changes may affect continuation of the Scholar's participation in the program.
- 16) Report mid-term and final grades to Program Liaison within 5 days of issuance by the University.
- 17) Report to worksite as assigned.

B. The participating Higher Education Institution is expected to:

- 1) Provide the 1994 Program Liaison and USDA Sponsoring Agency with documentation pertaining to Scholar's progress (i.e.; official transcripts, course listing, degree curriculum, grades), along with Scholar's financial business records.) Also provide 1994 Program Liaison with all University's request forms needed to conduct Scholar's business.
- 2) Provide academic curriculum counseling, mentor mentee relationship, and other academic personal development support services.

- 3) Notify 1994 Program Liaison prior to Scholar either dropping quitting a course or changing academic degree program.
- 4) Process the documents for the payment of the costs of full tuition and fees (less other financial aid received by the Scholar from all other sources) within 3 weeks of the beginning of each semester.

C. The USDA Sponsoring Agency is expected to

- 1) Establish Position for the FEP Scholars Placement. Prior to recruiting to fill a position in the FEP, hiring managers must first determine the specialty/program area position to be filled, the purpose of the position, i.e., to provide exposure and development in the program area, or to provide expertise in the accomplishment of a project, or to meet workforce objectives. Once this is determined, in consultation with hiring manager, the HR specialist will classify the position description.
- 2) Initiate a SF-52, Request for Personnel Action, for purposes of effecting the appointment of a Scholar under the Schedule A(r) authority and attach a position description of duties and any other required documentation.
- 3) Provide the Scholar with performance standards if the appointment is expected to last longer than 90 days and follow the required performance management procedures.
- 4) Establish an Individual Development Plan for the tenure of the Scholar and update annually.
- 5) Provide the full cost of tuition, fees, and books required under the program, less any financial aid received by the Scholar.
- 6) Provide funding for room and board for the Scholar during semester enrollment periods, to the extent allowed by Agency regulation and policy.
- 7) Provide funding for lodging expenses for the Scholar during their work assignment and training opportunities to the extent allowed by Agency regulation and policy.
- 8) Provide employment opportunities and work schedules that are commensurate with the Scholar's academic major area course of study and foster completion of the required hours necessary for conversion.
- 9) Monitor the Scholar's academic compliance, progress and work performance at the end of each semester quarter and work period and provide counseling and performance feedback to assist the Scholar achieve success.
- 10) Provide transfer of Scholarship funds to the Institution within 3 weeks of the beginning of each semester upon receipt of documents in Section B.

Conversion After Successful Completion of the Program

Upon successful completion of the 1994 Tribal Scholarship Program the sponsoring agency, through the USDA Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), may noncompetitively convert the Scholar to an appointment in the competitive service in accordance with section 12519 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, 7 U.S.C. § 2279j.

Agencies will cite for Conversion: 5 CFR 213.3102, code “ZLM”

Successful completion is defined as follows:

- Graduation with the agreed upon degree from the specified major course study and

- Completion of at least 640 related work hours with the USDA Sponsoring Agency.

Conversion of eligible Scholar will be effective within 120 days after completion of education and Scholarship program. This 120-day period is meant for administrative purposes such as obtaining official transcripts and approving and processing the paperwork authorizing the conversion. Conversion will be to a career-conditional appointment into the competitive service. Eligibility for conversion does not imply entitlement to conversion, nor is it required by the agency to convert a Scholar.

D. Degree Requirements

The Sponsoring Agency will communicate bachelor's degree requirements for the agreed-upon discipline as identified in the letter of acceptance of the Scholarship. Every effort must be made to complete the courses for degree requirements at the initial Higher Education Institute which this agreement is with. If degree requirements for the agreed-upon discipline are not fully available at the initial qualifying Higher Education Institute (HEI) the Scholar may request for continued scholarship support per terms of this agreement by requesting and receiving approval from the Sponsoring Agency and OPPE 1994 Tribal Scholars National Program Coordinator. Scholar's request must demonstrate a clear connection of both Higher Education Institutes and demonstrate how that connection may lead to qualifying degree for a permanent position. A Scholar request in this manner does not guarantee enrollment into an additional Higher Education Institute. A Scholar should not make enrollment plans into an additional Higher Education Institute prior to gaining approval for such as identified. Tribal Scholar must at a minimum, have fulfilled or demonstrated the following:

- Completion of a degree or course work which meets as much of the degree requirements as allowed for at the initial qualifying HEI.
- Must be in good standing with the initial qualifying HEI.
- Additional Higher Education Institute must be willing to accept terms of their responsibility as the Higher Education Institute as defined in this agreement and must be willing to accept courses credited from initial HEI.
- Scholar must be able to complete degree required before termination of FEP appointment.
- Scholar's request must demonstrate a clear connection of degree path.

E. Service Agreement

This Scholarship agreement is subject to the terms and conditions of the accompanying 1994 Tribal Scholarship Program Service Agreement signed by the Scholar as a condition of receiving financial assistance towards his or her academic degree program. See details of the USDA 1994 Tribal Scholarship Service Agreement.

The Scholar agrees to pay to USDA the amount of the tuition, housing, fees and books incurred by the USDA in connection with the training program if the Scholar is voluntarily separated from the service of the USDA Sponsoring Agency before the end of the period of the Scholarship Service

Agreement, unless the USDA Sponsoring Agency determines that recovery of funds provided to the Scholar would be against equity, good conscience, or the public interest. Such determinations will be made on a case by case basis between the Scholar and the USDA Sponsoring Agency and may be submitted to the Sponsoring Agency or Office Head or designee for reconsideration.

F. SIGNATURES

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

USDA 1994 Tribal Scholar

Date

**Signature of Parent/Guardian
(if Scholar is under 18 years old)**

Date

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays the valid OMB control number, 0503-0016. The time required to complete this service agreement is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time needed for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

SIGNATURES (continued)

1994 HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature _____

USDA SPONSORING AGENCY

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature _____

USDA AGENCY PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Printed Name: _____

Signature _____