



Education and training at the *speed* of business.

# Financial Aid Policies & Procedures 2019-2020

# HIGH PLAINS

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## **VISION**

Education and training at the speed of business

## **MISSION**

Turning education and training into work place success

## **CORE VALUES**

- Professionalism
- Quality
- Affordability
- Customer
- Innovation
- Excellence

The culture at HPTC encourages a team approach to achieving the vision and mission; open lines of communication, participatory management styles of administrators and an overall attitude of “work hard, play hard” characterize a culture that is dedicated to meeting the needs of the students. By striving to be industry-focused, student-centered, and performance-driven, our students have a greater probability of success.

High Plains Technology Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, pregnancy, gender, national origin, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Director of Student Services or the Assistant Superintendent.

High Plains Technology Center no discrimina en base a raza, color, género, estado de embarazo, nacionalidad de origen, religión, discapacidad, estado de veterano, orientación sexual, edad o información genética. Las preguntas o inquietudes deben dirigirse al Director de Servicios Estudiantiles o al Asistente del Superintendente.

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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Federal regulations mandate that institutions have written policies and procedures. The purpose of this handbook is to record policies and procedures surrounding the delivery of financial aid at High Plains Technology Center (also referred to in this handbook as HPTC). If no policy or procedure addresses a given issue the Financial Aid Director is expected to use professional judgment based upon the intent of all financial aid programs and practices (see Professional Judgment section of this handbook).

This handbook:

- ❖ Sets forth the institution's policies in regard to student aid and describes the procedures which must be taken to implement these policies.
- ❖ Provides general procedures in order that a systematic and consistent approach may be taken in the operation of all programs; ensuring that similar operations will be handled in a uniform manner.
- ❖ Provides quick reference to various practices.
- ❖ Facilitates the orientation and training of personnel when changes occur.

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## FINANCIAL AID REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

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In addition to the Federal Student Financial Aid Policy and Procedures Manual and other regulations which affect student aid will be adhered to. These regulations and guides are as follows:

- ❖ Student Handbook and Student Consumer Information Handbook
- ❖ Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook
- ❖ Federal Registers (Financial Aid Legislation)
- ❖ U.S. Department of Education Audit Guide
- ❖ The Blue Book
- ❖ EDConnect User's Guide and Technical Reference
- ❖ EDEExpress User's Guide and Technical Reference
- ❖ Higher Education Act as amended

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## EFC FORMULA GUIDE

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- ❖ Dear Colleague Letters from the Department of Education
- ❖ NSLDS Reference Materials
- ❖ SAR and ISIR Reference Materials

### **HPTC MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of High Plains Technology Center is, **“Turning education and training into workplace success.”** High Plains Technology Center’s training programs, workshops, and seminars are designed to serve the needs of our patrons.

### **FINANCIAL AID PHILOSOPHY**

HPTC believes that everyone who desires training should have the opportunity of attending school regardless of their financial situation. We continue to promote financial assistance opportunities to eligible students who might otherwise be depriving themselves of the benefit of technology training. The primary purpose of the financial program at HPTC is to provide financial assistance to students who, without aid, would be unable to attend school. Financial assistance is offered in the form of grants, scholarships, and federally funded programs. Financial assistance is viewed only as supplementary. The student and the family of a student, when applicable, are expected to make a maximum effort to assist with educational expenses. It is the policy of HPTC to award federal financial aid in accordance with federal regulations and guidelines pertaining to the type of assistance requested.

### **FEDERAL AID HISTORY**

HPTC began participating in the Federal Title IV Student Financial Assistance Program in 1984.

### **PERSON DESIGNATED TO ADMINISTER TITLE IV FINANCIAL AID**

Michelle Ketcherside, the Financial Aid Director, is responsible for administering financial aid and consumer information to students at HPTC. The director is available to see students Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and may be reached at 580-571-6177 or at [mketcherside@hptc.edu](mailto:mketcherside@hptc.edu).

High Plains continually promotes financial assistance opportunities to eligible students who might otherwise be deprived of the benefits of career training. The Financial Aid Office is available to disseminate information concerning financial assistance. Personnel are available upon reasonable notice during normal administrative working hours.

### **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

The Financial Aid Director is responsible for initiating the development of financial aid policies and procedures at HPTC. Others, including Students Services, will be involved.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE, FINANCIAL AID ORGANIZATION, & OFFICE MANAGEMENT/RECORDS

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### **PURPOSE OF FINANCIAL AID OFFICE**

Purpose of the Financial Aid Office The purpose of the Financial Aid Office is:

- ❖ Provide professional financial counseling to students and parents concerning meeting the costs of education
- ❖ Administer Title IV Aid programs competently according to the institution's philosophy and policies and according to federal regulations
- ❖ Maintain institutional records of assistance programs and students assisted

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FINANCIAL AID DIRECTOR**

The primary responsibilities of the Financial Aid Director are to assemble and maintain student aid records, assess eligibility of applicants for aid, authorize aid, and complete federally mandated reports and design and implement systems to accomplish these tasks. This position requires knowledge of federal regulations, institutional policies and procedures, ability to deal with clients about sensitive issues and the ability to deal with continually changing program regulations. Specific responsibilities of the Financial Aid Director include the following:

- ❖ Maintaining student financial aid records/files
- ❖ Authorizing and processing Pell Grant awards and payments
- ❖ Verifying application data on selected applicants
- ❖ Calculating student Pell Grant awards
- ❖ Collecting progress reports for satisfactory progress
- ❖ Calculating return of funds/overpayments/post-withdrawal disbursements when a student withdraws
- ❖ Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of relevant federal regulations
- ❖ Coordinating fiscal matters with the Business Manager, including cash requests, cash accountability and cash disbursements
- ❖ Revising Student Consumer Information, Financial Aid Policy and Procedures, Drug-Free School and Workplace.
- ❖ Preparing Federal Title IV Reports
- ❖ Processing incoming mail
- ❖ Performing other general office duties

### **PROOF OF ALL INCOME REPORTED ON THE FAFSA**

- ❖ Proof of all income reported on the FAFSA [IRS Tax Return Transcript(s), and W-2(s) or non-filer form]
- ❖ Completed and appropriately signed (independent or dependent) verification worksheet
- ❖ Proof of high school completion status, GED, home school transcript
- ❖ Valid government issued photo I.D.
- ❖ Proof of marital status
- ❖ Other documentation may be required to verify discrepancies

### **LOCATION OF FINANCIAL AID RECORDS**

All financial aid records are located in the Financial Aid Office.



### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND INSPECTION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID RECORDS**

All information (written or oral) that a student and/or family reveals in the process of seeking assistance is confidential. Access to this information is restricted to the Financial Aid Director. Application materials become the property of HPTC upon submission and are maintained in the student's file.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that affords parents of minor students and “eligible students” over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days from the day the technology center receives a request for access.

Parents of minor students or eligible students must submit a written request to the director or appropriate technology center official that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. This administrator will make arrangements for access to the education records and will notify the parent of a minor student or eligible student of the time and place where these records may be inspected.

2. The right to request correction of the student's education records that the parent of a minor student or eligible student believes inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights.

Parents of minor students or eligible students may ask the technology center to amend a record they believe is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights. They must submit a written request to the director or appropriate technology center official, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights.

If the technology center decides not make changes in the record as requested, the technology center must notify the minor student’s parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for correction. Additional information about hearing procedures will be provided to the minor student’s parent or eligible student at the time of this notification.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent (34 CFR § 99.31).

Technology center officials with legitimate educational interests are permitted disclosure without consent. An official is a person employed by the technology center as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member, including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel; a person serving on the board

of education; a person or company with whom the technology center has contracted to perform a special task, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist; or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another official in performing his or her tasks.

An official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the technology center will disclose education records without consent to officials of another technology center in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

Technology centers may disclose, without consent, "directory" information; however, the technology center must inform parents and eligible students about directory information, allowing them a reasonable amount of time to request that the technology center not disclose directory information about that student.

Technology centers must notify parents of minor students and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA by means of a special letter, bulletin, student handbook and/or other means left to the discretion of each technology center.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the technology center to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

**Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901**

#### **LENGTH OF TIME TO MAINTAIN STUDENT RECORDS**

Federal Regulations require that student files be maintained for the current award year and three years beyond closing of the previous award years. A student's file ultimately includes the student's FAFSA application, SAR/ISIR and all related documentation.

#### **ELECTRONIC STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT**

The Financial Aid Director maintains Electronic Statements of Account by fiscal year in financial aid files. This document transmits information about the school's Pell Grant authorization. As the authorization amount increases, a new Statement of Account will be sent to the school. Electronic Statements of Account summarize current and future payment data submitted via Origination Records and Disbursement Records. The Financial Aid Director reconciles the statement.

#### **PELL PROCESSED DISBURSEMENT LIST/FINANCIAL AID EXCEL SPREADSHEET**

The Financial Aid Director uses the Pell Processed Disbursement list and a school developed Excel spreadsheet recording disbursements to students to reconcile total disbursements made.

These two reports should equal. The total disbursed is then reconciled with G5 and the Electronic Statement of Account.

#### **THE BUSINESS OFFICE/G5**

The Business Manager at HPTC, Karen Roach, maintains the records of the money ordered through G5. She uses computer entry to track the receipt and disbursements of federal money from the General Fund.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF ACCOUNTS**

General Fund: All receipts and disbursements of cash related to the Pell Grant Program are recorded in this account.

#### **FINANCIAL AID WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS**

The Financial Aid Director attends Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education Financial Aid meetings, OASFAA meetings, FSA Conferences, and VA Conferences, U.S. Dept. of Education meetings, as well as video-conferences and webinars.

#### **STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION**

Please see the Student Consumer Information Handbook at [www.hptc.edu](http://www.hptc.edu) or obtain a hard copy of the handbook in the Student Services, or in the Financial Aid Office.

#### **PERSONS DESIGNATED TO PROVIDE STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF FORMS**

Michelle Ketcherside, HPTC's Financial Aid Officer, located in Student Services, is the designated employee responsible for distributing applications, forms and information to current and prospective students concerning financial assistance.

#### **CONSUMER INFORMATION FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

The U.S. Department of Education provides comprehensive student aid information to students and their families through the Student Aid on the web site at <http://studentaid.gov>. This streamlined website includes comprehensive information on the student aid life cycle and includes tips and guides for students like FAFSA caster, things to consider when selecting a school, and comparing colleges brochure.

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### **PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY/ FIVE YEAR RE-CERTIFICATION**

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#### **INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY**

Documentation regarding HPTC's eligibility for all aid assistance programs is located in the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Director is responsible for the coordination of the Program Participation Agreements (PPA), the Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (ECAR), and the five year federal Recertification.

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## TITLE IV FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE AT HPTC

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### **PELL GRANT**

Financial Aid is available at HPTC to students who qualify for Federal PELL Grants. HPTC does not participate in the Federal Direct Student Loan Program or the Federal Family Education Loan Program. HPTC does not participate in or provide information regarding any private education loan programs nor does it have any preferred lender lists.

### **PURPOSE OF THE FEDERAL PELL GRANT PROGRAM**

The Pell Grant Program is a federally funded grant program, which, for the 2019-2020 academic year provides up to \$6095 to full time postsecondary students and up to \$3048 to postsecondary students who are enrolled at least half time. The purpose of the program is to provide a foundation of aid to needy students. An academic year at HPTC is one in which a student completes a minimum of 26 weeks and 900 hours of instruction. HPTC awards federal financial aid according to federal regulations and guidelines.

### **FEDERAL PELL GRANT ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for a Federal PELL Grant, a student must have an eligible EFC (Expected Family Contribution). This number is an index of the student's ability to contribute to the cost of education. Grant amounts are based upon cost of attendance, the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and the hours a student will attend during an award year. The government provides a Payment Schedule annually to be used to determine the amount of a Pell Grant. The neediest students will have an EFC of 0 and may be eligible for the maximum award. As the EFC increases, the amount of the award decreases and, after a certain point, the award becomes 0. The EFC cutoff index number for receiving a Pell Grant for the 2019-2020 academic year is 6195. The EFC is printed on the Student Aid Report (SAR/ISIR) which is the official notice of the student's eligibility (or ineligibility) for a Federal Pell Grant. The EFC is computed by the Central Processing System and is based on the information reported by the student on the financial aid application. Eligibility is also based upon meeting the general criteria which is given below or can be viewed online at [www.hptc.edu](http://www.hptc.edu). Furthermore, students may not receive a Pell Grant from more than one institution concurrently.

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## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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### **U.S. CITIZEN OR ELIGIBLE NON-CITIZEN**

An applicant must be a citizen or eligible non-citizen. Unless the SAR/ISIR demands it, U.S. citizens who answered yes on the FAFSA to the citizenship question do not have to verify citizenship. Permanent residents must submit proof of their status to the aid office. This proof becomes a permanent part of their file. All eligible noncitizens must submit proof of status for file. Proof includes U.S. passport stamped "non-citizen national" or "Form-I-151" (green cards.) Other forms of documentation are rare and the Financial Aid Director will consult the Federal

Student Financial Aid Handbook if necessary. A document verification request will be made on all aliens seeking aid

#### **REGISTERED WITH SELECTIVE SERVICE**

A male applicant at least 18 years of age and born after December 31, 1959 must be registered with Selective Service.

#### **UNDERGRADUATE STATUS**

An applicant states on the FAFSA application that she/he does not have a Bachelor's degree. Students who have undergraduate bachelor degrees are not eligible for the Pell grant.

#### **DETERMINATION OF FINANCIAL NEED**

HPTC employs the Federal Needs Analysis Methodology in assessing financial need and eligibility for Title IV Assistance. The Federal Needs Analysis Methodology is based on the following philosophy of financial aid:

- ❖ to the extent that they are able, parents have the primary responsibility to pay for their children's education
- ❖ parents will, as they are able, contribute funds for their children's education
- ❖ students, as well as their parents, have a responsibility to help pay for their education
- ❖ The family should be accepted in its present financial condition

A needs analysis system must evaluate families in a consistent and equitable manner, while recognizing that special circumstances can and do alter a family's ability to contribute. Four broad categories of family resources are examined in need analysis. They are:

- ❖ parent's/student's income
- ❖ parent's/student's assets
- ❖ number in household
- ❖ number in college (post-secondary education)

#### **REGULAR STUDENT/ENROLLMENT STATUS/ELIGIBLE PROGRAM STATUS**

An applicant must be regular student which is defined as a student who is enrolled in an eligible program (an eligible program/major for Pell purposes must be at least 600 clock hours and 23 weeks in length) is working toward a certificate and is attending at least part-time (15 clock hours per week).

#### **HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA/GED/HOME SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY**

An applicant must have a high school diploma (this can be from a foreign school), GED or a home school equivalency in order to qualify for a Pell Grant: **EXCEPTION: A student who was enrolled in a Title IV eligible program prior to July 1, 2012 and had qualified for Title IV by passing an independently administered, approved ATB test or successfully completing 225 clock hours of postsecondary education.**

## **DEFAULT/OVERPAYMENT STATUS**

An applicant signs a statement when completing the FAFSA stating that they are not in default on federal student loans or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay it, and that they do not owe money back on a federal student grant or have made satisfactory arrangements to repay it. A student who is defaulted on federal loans or who is in Pell overpayment status is not eligible for further Title IV assistance unless and until satisfactory arrangements for repayment are made. Students in default on loans must have a letter from the holder of the loan stating that the student has made satisfactory repayment arrangements and is eligible for Title IV funds or the Financial Aid Director must receive a new Institutional Student Informational Record (ISIR) and National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) report showing that the default status has been resolved before any funds may be disbursed.

## **VALID SSN**

An applicant must have a valid Social Security Number. **EXCEPTION: Students from the Republic of Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia or the Republic of Palau.**

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)**

After a student's first (upon enrollment) eligibility, the student must thereafter maintain Title IV eligibility by meeting all criteria for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as set forth in HPTC's SAP policy. Please see the Satisfactory Academic Progress section of this handbook for complete information on SAP.

## **STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE**

All applicants must sign a statement on the FAFSA verifying statement of educational purpose (using Title IV funds only to pay the cost of attending an institution of higher education) and accuracy of information provided on the FAFSA.

## **EDUCATIONAL HISTORY OF STUDENTS**

If the student has attended this school in the past three award years, the Financial Aid Director reviews previous files and determines whether the student was making satisfactory progress in previous course work at HPTC. If the student has attended other schools in the past, the Aid Director can access the NSLDS information from the SAR/ISIR concerning defaults and overpayments. If the student has attended another school and the Aid Director determines that it has been within the current award year, she will then access the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) on the web at [www.nsls.ed.gov](http://www.nsls.ed.gov) If the student is a transfer student for Pell purposes, NSLDS will give the student's current year Pell disbursement and the current year scheduled award. This information will be used in award calculation.

## **DRUG CONVICTION AFFECTING TITLE IV ELIGIBILITY**

A drug conviction for any drug offense during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV, HEA program funds under any federal or state law involving the possession or sale of illegal drugs will result in the loss of eligibility for any Title IV, HEA grant, loan, or work-study assistance. An applicant who has been convicted of drug-related offenses that occurred while receiving Title IV aid may not be eligible to receive federal financial aid for a period of

time. These are general eligibility requirements and can be discussed with the Financial Aid Director. Eligibility requirements concerning felonies that are specific to majors are discussed in the description of that major. A student that loses eligibility will be notified in writing by the Financial Aid Office with an explanation of the loss of eligibility, as well as, information on how to regain eligibility. Please see the Financial Aid Director for further information on penalties for drug offenses as they relate to title IV, HEA (Pell) grants.

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## APPLYING FOR THE PELL GRANT

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### APPLICATION PROCESS

Adult students are encouraged to apply for financial aid. Students can complete the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" (FAFSA) in print or online at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) Identify HPTC as your school code choice on the FAFSA application. HPTC's Federal Code is 016118. Application forms can also be obtained by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED AID. Students are directed to read the instructions carefully when completing the FAFSA. All records and other materials used in completing the application should be saved. This information may be needed later to prove the information submitted is correct.

Students can submit their FAFSA on the Web at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) they can mail the paper FAFSA with the envelope provided in the paper form, or the FAFSA can be sent electronically through the Financial Aid Office. TTT users (for the hearing impaired) may call 1-800-730-8913.

After submitting the FAFSA, the student will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) which includes a summary of application information and the determination of the expected family contribution (EFC). This EFC is the result of computations established by Congress involving the financial and non-financial data submitted on the application that indicates how much of your family's financial resources should be available to help pay for school. The method of computation is applied to all dependent and independent students uniformly. Students should review all the information on the SAR. If any changes are necessary, the student can make corrections online using his/her PIN or the student can resubmit by mail part two of the SAR to the Pell Grant processor following the directions for making corrections on the form, or the Financial Aid Director can submit the corrections electronically. After submission of any corrections, if necessary, and if the student meets all eligibility requirements, they will receive an award letter notifying them of the amount of their Pell Grant award, any required documents, and projected payment schedule.

Students who applied for financial aid the previous year may qualify to use a renewal FAFSA. The student may access the Renewal Application online by using their PIN. On the renewal the student should correct or update his or her information and submit it to the processing center. The school will receive an Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). The student will receive a SAR Information Acknowledgement by mail in three to five working days for their inspection. The student must sign a copy of the ISIR certification, have a copy of the signed renewal notice, or have an electronically signed ISIR for their financial aid file. This ISIR will be used to determine the student's award.

## **IRS DATA RETRIEVAL TOOL**

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool allows student and parents who are using FAFSA on the Web and who have already submitted their federal tax return to electronically transfer their tax data from the IRS database. While use of this is voluntary, **students and parents are strongly encouraged to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool** because it is accurate, efficient, and useful for verification and corrections.

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## **PROCESSING STUDENT RECORDS**

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### **PREPARATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FOLDER**

The Financial Aid Director prepares the student's folder by making a label for the file showing the student's name. The aid director also looks at the past years' student files and keeps the previous years' records with the new file.

### **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING MISSING FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION**

If information is missing, the Financial Aid Director requests the student to bring missing documents. Once documentation is submitted, it is filed in the student's financial aid file.

### **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING CONFLICTING FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION**

The Financial Aid Director reviews documents to make sure there is no conflicting information in the file. If conflicting information exists, the student is contacted in an attempt to resolve any conflicts. If no conflicts exist, the Aid Director proceeds with processing.

### **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING VOID FINANCIAL AID APPLICATIONS**

The Financial Aid Director reviews comments on the letter explaining why the SAR/ISIR is void. If the applicant submits a void application, the Aid Director assists the applicant in the interpretation of the letter and the corrective actions that may be required. The usual problem is failure of the student and/or parent to sign the original application either with a "wet" signature, or sign electronically with a PIN number.

### **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING REJECTED FINANCIAL AID APPLICATIONS**

Comments will appear on the Student Aid Report (SAR) explaining the application rejection and indicating the action the applicant may take to correct his information so that eligibility may be determined. The Financial Aid Director's role is the same as with the void application stated above.

### **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING INELIGIBLE SAR/ISIR**

If the eligibility letter states that the EFC (Expected Family Contribution) is too high for a Pell Grant, the Financial Aid Director checks information on the information Review Form for accuracy. If correct, the applicant is probably ineligible. If the information is not correct, the applicant should resubmit a FAFSA correction, or have the Financial Aid Director make corrections with the student's (and parent's if the student is a dependent) signature giving the



aid director permission to make corrections, or the student may make corrections online using the student's/parent's PIN.

### **SAFEGUARDING STUDENT PRIVACY**

#### **INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

HPTC is committed to maintaining reasonable and appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of federal student aid information, including the safeguards required by the Federal Trade Commission Standards for Safeguarding Customer Information (16 CFR Part 314) and by FERPA (20 U.S.C. § 1232g, 34 CFR Part 99). All student financial aid records are collected, accessed, processed, used, transmitted, stored, and disposed of by the Financial Aid Director. Access to this information is restricted to the Financial Aid Director and other authorized personnel or as requested by independent auditors during annual reviews to ensure compliance with federal, state, and institutional policies. All student financial aid files are kept on-site in a locking cabinet within a locked room with access by authorized personnel only. All electronic records are kept on secure private servers in an on-site locked server room with access by authorized personnel only. Service providers for financial aid records are limited to the U.S. Department of Education's software programs of ED Connect, ED Express, NSLDS, and COD. The secure disposition of the shredding of paper records is handled by authorized personnel only. Additional information can be found in this handbook, as well as in the Financial Aid Policies and Procedures Handbook.

#### **CYBERSECURITY AND THE GRAMM-LEACH-BLILEY ACT (GLBA)**

As a post-secondary educational institution entrusted with student financial aid information, HPTC continues to develop ways to address cybersecurity threats and to strengthen our cybersecurity infrastructure. Under the U.S. Department of Education's Program Participation Agreement and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) (15 U.S. Code § 6801), HPTC protects student financial aid information, with particular attention to information provided to HPTC by the U.S. Department of Education or otherwise obtained in support of the administration of the Title IV Federal student financial aid programs. This includes, but is not limited to, developing, implementing, and maintaining a security program, limiting access to authorized users, and conducting risk assessments. The Information Technology (IT) Director oversees HPTC's cybersecurity program with limited access by other authorized personnel as needed.

#### **IDENTITY THEFT PREVENTION**

HPTC strives to ensure compliance with the Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act, 15 USC. §1601 et seq. and the Federal Trade Commission's rules regarding Identity Theft (the "Red Flag Rules"). The technology center is subject to the Red Flag rules if it is a "Creditor." The technology center is a Creditor if it provides any goods or services for a fee and as a matter of course extends credit to its customers by offering them the ability to pay for those goods and services after they are provided as opposed to requiring prepayment or contemporaneous payment. The technology center is a creditor with respect to limited areas involving a low risk of identity theft. Areas in which the technology center allows a debtor to defer payment owed the technology center include, but are not limited to, adult education tuition, facility use charges, and similar accounts. HPTC has developed an Identity Theft Program designed to detect, prevent, and mitigate identity theft in connection with any covered accounts.

This information is presented as a summary and is intended to serve as a guideline for students and parents. Any questions should be referred to the Assistant Superintendent.

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## VERIFICATION

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Verification is the process of checking the accuracy of information submitted by applicants when they apply for financial aid. Students selected by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, will be required to verify the accuracy of family financial information and other data before any Title IV funds are disbursed.

### SELECTION OF FINANCIAL AID APPLICATIONS TO BE VERIFIED

If a Pell Grant application is selected by the central Processing System (CPS) for verification, an asterisk will appear by the EFC, and comments will appear on part one of the SAR and page one of the ISIR addressing the verification requirements. Even though schools have the authority to verify any applicant, HPTC only verifies those applicants who are chosen by the federal processor or those who have conflicting information comments. It is the policy of HPTC to verify all CPS selected applicants and all students who have conflicting information. Students who are selected for verification by the processor or by the Financial Aid Office in cases of conflicting information must submit supporting documentation which may include, but is not limited to:

- ❖ Proof of all income reported on the FAFSA (i.e. copy of federal income tax transcripts)
- ❖ Non-filers must provide a signed statement, a Verification Worksheet certifying their non-filer status and listing all the sources and amounts of income earned from work; in lieu of such a statement, the person can provide W-2 forms for all the income
- ❖ Completed and appropriately signed Verification Worksheet
- ❖ Proof of child support paid
- ❖ Proof of SNAP (food stamps) received
- ❖ High School Completion, Identity, and Statement of Educational Purpose
- ❖ Number of Household Members, Number in College (HPTC is considered college for verification)

### FINANCIAL AID DISBURSEMENTS PRIOR TO VERIFICATION

HPTC withholds disbursement of any Title IV Federal Financial Aid until a student has completed the verification process. Although the school has the option of processing one Pell payment without verifying the application, HPTC does not take that option due to the risk of financial liability.

### VERIFICATION DEADLINE

**Failure to comply with verification requirements may result in forfeiture of aid.** If a student does not complete verification by June 30th of the current academic award year in which he was chosen for verification, then the student forfeits his Pell for that award year.

### ITEMS TO BE VERIFIED/ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTATION

The Financial Aid Director collects appropriate documentation from the applicant based on the guidelines published in The Federal Student Aid Handbook. Items that generally must be verified by comparing the data items on the SAR/ISIR with identical data items on the IRS tax return transcript and/or other primary documentation are listed below. The Financial Aid Director uses the verification tracking flag code on the ISIR to determine what verification worksheet to use for each student chosen. All forms must be filled out accurately according to their specific requirements then signed and dated.

Items To be Verified	Tax Filers	Non-Filers	All	Acceptable Documentation
Household size			✓	Verification Worksheet
Number Enrolled in College			✓	Verification Worksheet/ Listed schools may be contacted. Count student and any that are part of household size attending at least half time 6 credit hours per semester at least one term or 15 clock hrs. per week. Must be working towards a degree or certification recognized at Title IV eligible school. Dependent student exclude parents as number enrolled.
Adjusted Gross Income	✓			Copy of students Federal Income Tax return & W2's for base year. Dependent Students parents Federal Tax return & W2's Successful use of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool on FASFA are considered verified.
Income Earned from Work		✓		Verification Worksheet certifying their non-filers status & W2's. In addition a "Verification of Non-Filing Letter" from the IRS or Transcript indicating "no record of return filed" or "no transcript on file". If unable to provide IRS Documents, they may provide a sign statement verifying their non-filers status stating unable to provide IRS documents.
U.S. Income Tax Paid	✓			Copy Student and or Parents Federal Income Tax Return/Transcript & W2's for based year. use of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool on FASFA are considered verified
Education Tax Credits	✓			Federal Tax Transcript
IRA/Keogh Deductions	✓			Federal Tax Transcript
Foreign Income Exclusion	✓			Federal Tax Transcript
Interest on Tax-Free Bonds	✓			Federal Tax Transcript
Untaxed Income	✓			Federal Tax Transcript
High School Completion Status				High School Diploma/GED or recognized equivalent. Or copy of applicant's final high school transcript.
Identity /Statement of Educational Purpose				Verification Worksheet completed & signed in person by student presenting government issued ID (Driver's License).

#### LOCATION OF INFORMATION ON IRS FORMS

Some information needed for verification can be found on the tax return transcript or tax return on the lines listed below:

#### EXEMPTIONS FROM FINANCIAL AID VERIFICATION

VERIFIED ITEMS	1040	1040A	1040EZ
ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME	37	21	4
INCOME TAX PAID	55	35	10
TAX EXEMPT INTEREST INCOME	8B	8B	
DEDUCTIBLE IRA/KEOGH	28+32	17	
EDUCATION CREDITS	49	31	
FORGEIGN INCOME EXCLUSION	Form 2555, line 45		or Form 2555EZ line 18
UNTAXED PORTION of IRA DISTRIBUTIONS	15A-15B	11A-11B	
UNTAXED PORTION of PENSIONS (excludes rollovers)	16a-16b	12a-12b	

A selected application may be exempt from some or all of the verification requirements due to unusual circumstances. Except in the case of the student's death, however, none of these exemptions excuse the school from the requirement to resolve conflicting information.

#### **VERIFICATION PROCEDURES**

When the Financial Aid Director has received all necessary verification documents, she compares them to information originally reported on the application and the student's SAR/ISIR. If no corrections need to be made and there are no outstanding issues, aid may be awarded. If any adjustments need to be made the Aid Director or the student will correct or update the information. Aid will be disbursed when a new ISIR resolving the issues is received. HPTC must also have on file the final and valid ISIR showing the official EFC.

#### **CORRECTING ERRORS**

For students who are selected for verification, changes that result to any non-dollar item and to any "dollar item of \$25 or more then the student information must be reprocessed. The Financial Aid Director may submit the corrections electronically through EExpress, or the student may correct the FAFSA information online using his/her PIN.

#### **SUBMITTING CORRECTIONS**

If the Aid Director is submitting corrections, all corrections must have documentation signed by the student and parent. This can be signatures on Part 2 of the SAR, a signed copy of the correction or update, or a signed verification document. When the reprocessed SAR/ISIR is received, it is reviewed. If the SAR/ISIR is now accurate, the verification process is complete all verification documents are filed in the student's financial aid file folder.

#### **VERIFICATION STATUS CODES**

A Verification Status Code of "V" - Verified indicates the Financial Aid Director has completed verification and all information is correct.

A Verification Code of "W" - Without Documentation indicates that verification is required, but the verification process is not completed and a first disbursement has been made. **HPTC requires verification to be completed prior to any disbursement. Therefore, the status code "W" is never used.**

A Verification Status Code of "Blank" - A blank space indicates that the SAR/ISIR was not selected for verification by CPS or HPTC.

#### **CONFLICTING INFORMATION THAT CANNOT BE RESOLVED**

If the school and student cannot resolve conflicts that may occur regarding verification, the case will be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Student Validation Branch. Cases of suspected fraud will be referred to the Regional Office of the Inspector General if they cannot be resolved locally. Based on verification completion the grant is determined according to the guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Education. No financial aid disbursements will be made until verification is complete.

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## AWARDING TITLE IV AID

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### **AWARDING TITLE IV AID**

The Pell Grant Program is a federally funded grant program, which, for the 2019-20 academic year provides up to \$6195 to full time postsecondary students and up to \$3098 to postsecondary students who are enrolled at least half time. The purpose of the program is to provide a foundation of aid to needy students. An academic year at HPTC is one in which a student completes a minimum of 26 weeks and 900 hours of instruction. HPTC awards federal financial aid according to federal regulations and guidelines. The method of computation is applied to all dependent and independent students uniformly.

### **AWARD YEAR/ACADEMIC YEAR**

Funding for the Pell Grant program is provided based on an award year basis. The award year begins on July 1 of one year and extends to June 30th of the next year. For Pell Grant payments to students, an academic year of 900 hours/26 weeks (with a payment period of 450 hours/13 weeks) is applicable to Career Majors/Programs that are 900 hours or greater. For Career Majors that are less than 900 hours, the payment period is one half of the total hours of the Career Major.

### **EFC FORMULA**

The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is the amount a family can be expected to contribute toward a student's college costs. Financial aid administrators determine an applicant's need for federal student aid from the U.S. Department of Education and other sources of assistance by subtracting the EFC from the student's cost of attendance. The EFC formula is used to determine the EFC and ultimately determine the need for aid from the following types of federal assistance that HPTC participates in: Federal Pell Grants and Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grants (OTAG). The methodology for determining the EFC is found in Part F of the Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

All data used to calculate a student's EFC comes from the information the student provides on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which is submitted to the Central Processing System (CPS) for processing. The CPS sends either an electronic or paper output document called a Student Aid Report (SAR) to the student. The SAR lists the student's EFC. All schools listed on the student's FAFSA will receive application information and processing results in an electronic file called an Institutional Student Informational Record (ISIR).

There are three regular (full-data) formulas - (A) for the dependent student, (B) for the independent student without dependents other than a spouse, and (C) for the independent student with dependents other than a spouse. Also, there is a simplified version of each formula with fewer data elements. Additional information regarding EFC formulas, accompanying worksheets, and tables are available upon request from the Financial Aid Office.

## LIVING COSTS

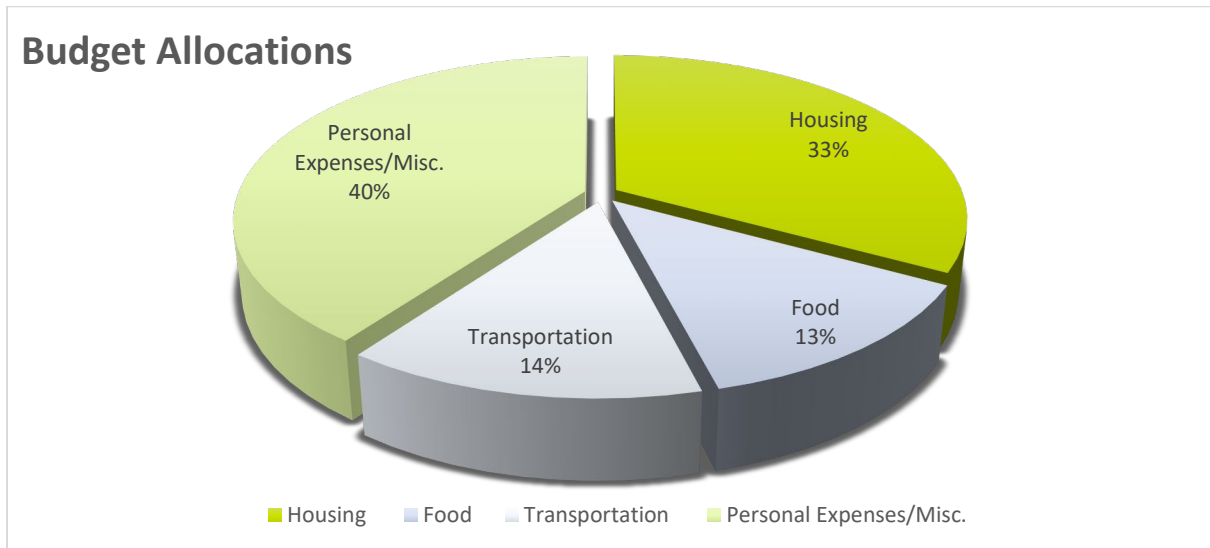
HPTC does not offer institutional housing or board to its students. All students live off campus and commute. For purposes of awarding Title IV need -based assistance, the school estimates reasonable expenses over a nine-month period for the following categories of students.

STUDENT CLASSIFICATION	NINE MONTH
INDEPENDENT-in	\$19,861
DEPENDENT –in	\$11,147

A breakdown of the cost of attendance is available in the Financial Aid Office. Documentation provided by and based on the Oklahoma Department of Commerce Consumer Price Index dated January 2017. Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

These expenses are allocated as follows:



The cost of tuition, books, supplies and fees are added to determine cost of attendance.

## STEPS IN COMPUTING THE PELL GRANT AWARD

There are five steps in computing a Pell Grant

1. Determination of Cost of Attendance
2. Determination of Scheduled Award
3. Determination of Payment Periods
4. Determination of Payment for each Payment Period
5. Determination of Total Expected Disbursement

The method of computation is applied to all dependent and independent students uniformly. The Financial Aid Director determines if all application requirements have been met. If so, she uses the ISIR and the current Pell Grant Payment Schedule to determine the scheduled Pell

Award and estimated disbursement. The specific computations involved in the calculation may be obtained in the Financial Aid Office.

### **CODING ON PELL PAYMENT DOCUMENT USING COMMON ORIGINATION AND DISBURSEMENT (COD)**

HPTC uses EdExpress in submitting Pell Origination and Pell Disbursement Records. This system also conducts edit checks to make sure necessary information is submitted. This information is exported to the Department of Education. The Department processes it and returns it back to HPTC to import from EdConnect, the federal electronic mailbox.

### **DETERMINATION OF COST OF ATTENDANCE**

Pell Grant cost of attendance is used to determine Pell Grant payments to students. Cost of attendance for purposes of the Pell Grant is the cost of tuition and fees for a full time student for a full academic year plus an allowance for room and board, books, supplies, transportation and personal expenses incurred by the student for a full academic year.

### **DETERMINATION OF SCHEDULED AWARD**

Once the Pell Cost of Attendance is determined, the Financial Aid Director determines the scheduled award on the full time regular payment schedule for Pell Grants for the award year. The full time chart is always used regardless of the student's actual enrollment status.

### **TUITION/FEES**

Tuition cost is \$2.25 per hour for in-district adults and is \$4.50 per hour for out-of-district adults. For Practical Nursing tuition and fees please see the section below. Tuition and fees for each major are given on program sheets located in the Student Services.

### **TUITION/FEES FOR THE PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM**

Tuition and fees for Practical Nursing are \$6021.75 for in-district adults and \$9043.50 for out-of-district adults. These costs include tuition and fees paid to HPTC for Practical Nursing.

### **PELL GRANT CALENDAR AND CALCULATION WORKSHEET**

To facilitate Pell Grant calculations, a Pell Grant Calendar and Calculation Worksheet have been developed at HPTC. The procedures for using this worksheet are as follows

- ❖ The Financial Aid Director completes the top portion of the Calendar and Calculation Worksheet with student's name, major, dependency status, district status, and dates of attendance.
- ❖ The Financial Aid Director completes the appropriate cost of attendance.
- ❖ The Financial Aid Director determines the payment periods, classifies payment periods into award years and shows the expected disbursement for each payment period in the award year.
- ❖ The Financial Aid Director adds the expected disbursement for each payment period to determine total expected disbursement.

This sheet becomes a part of the student's file and serves as both a worksheet and support to assist the aid director in calculations concerning days attended, why a student received a particular award etc.

#### **DETERMINATION OF PELL PAYMENT PERIODS, INCLUDING CROSSOVER PERIODS**

The Financial Aid Director determines if disbursement is an initial (first ever received) Pell disbursement. Students are paid the first time based on their enrollment and good standing if an ISIR/SAR is received prior to the end of student's first pay period. Disbursements thereafter are based on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and upon completion of the hours in the student's previous pay period. The Aid Director consults a calendar sheet and ascertains the beginning and ending dates of each payment period. She then determines in which award year each payment period belongs. An award year is defined as July 1st of one year to June 30th of the next year. For crossover periods where the payment period occurs within two award years, if the majority (more than 50%) of a payment period occurs entirely within an award year, it is part of that award year.

#### **DETERMINATION OF PAYMENT PER-PAYMENT PERIOD**

For each payment period classified as being part of the current award year, the formula for determining payments are clock hours in the payment period multiplied by the scheduled award from full time payment chart and divided by hours in the academic year.

#### **DETERMINATION OF TOTAL EXPECTED DISBURSEMENT FOR REGULAR STUDENTS**

The total expected disbursement is the sum of expected disbursements for all payment periods classified as belonging to the current award year.

#### **TRANSFER STUDENTS AND DETERMINATION OF AWARD DISBURSEMENT**

A student who has received a Pell Grant from another school in the current award year is a Transfer Student. The Financial Aid Director will consult NSLDS and determine the scheduled award and disbursement. A student may receive only one federal Pell Grant award during a single award year if the eligible student is enrolled at least half-time and is in a program in which the major leads to a certificate. The expected disbursement at the second school may have to be adjusted to avoid over-awarding a transfer student. To determine the percentage of the Scheduled Pell Award received at previous school: Divide the amount the student received at the previous school by the student's Scheduled Award at that school. Subtract this percentage from 100 percent and multiply by the Scheduled Award at HPTC. The result is the maximum amount of Pell Grant Award that the student generally may receive at HPTC.

If a student transfers from one program/major to another at HPTC, in order for that student to be considered in the same payment period, the program/major hours that the student is transferring must be accepted toward the new program/major.

#### **PRIOR CREDIT/ADVANCED STANDING CREDIT AND DETERMINATION OF AWARD DISBURSEMENT**

Students enrolling at HPTC who have Prior Credit (previous educational experiences) will be asked to provide a transcript indicating both courses taken and grades received at previous



institutions. Students with previous military service will also be asked to provide AARTS, SMART, CGI, and CCAR transcripts. The instructor will meet with the student either prior to enrollment or at the beginning of his major to determine what, if any credit will be applicable to the major at HPTC. For evaluation purposes the instructor will keep in mind the timeliness of the training the pertinence to the courses in the major, and the changes that may have taken place in business and industry since the training was received. After a thorough discussion between the student and instructor, the instructor may choose to make contact with the previous institution, may issue a performance test, or may determine that credit is applicable with no further investigation. The student will be informed of the instructor's decision within five school days after reviewing the student's prior educational training or experience. If the instructor decides to grant credit for the previous training or experience, the student will receive Advanced Standing Credit (ASC) in the program/major.

### **ADVANCED STANDING CREDIT**

Advanced standing Credit can also be issued to HPTC students who complete one major at HPTC and then enroll in another, or those who may change from one major to another. In order for credit from one program/major to be transferred to another program/major at HPTC, the new major into which credit is being transferred should have courses that are applicable to the new major and are in the same scope and sequence.

**Financial Aid recipient's hours for their program/major and their financial aid award will be adjusted accordingly by the Financial Aid Director for the Advanced Standing Credit.** If prior or advanced standing credit is granted to a student for previous educational or training experiences, such credit will be documented in the student's file, and **the student will not be charged tuition or fees for the advanced standing credit hours.**

### **POST MILITARY EDUCATION AND ADVANCED STANDING CREDIT**

The Board of Education at HPTC recognizes that service members acquire knowledge and skills during military duty and has established procedures which permit veterans to attain advanced academic standing linked to military service or other education, training or experience. In accordance with the Post-Military Service occupation, Education and Credentialing Act HPTC will award appropriate academic credit in its education programs consistent with the experience, education and training of military personnel. HPTC's award of advanced standing in accordance with the Act will supplement its existing procedures for advanced standing credit for career majors.

### **PRINCIPLES OF EXCELLENCE FOR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SERVING SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS, SPOUSES, AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS (SHOPPING SHEET)**

#### **COLLEGE FINANCING PLAN (Formerly Financial Aid Shopping Sheet)**

In carrying out Executive Order 13607, Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and Family Members, HPTC commits to voluntarily provide a College Financing Plan to veterans and service members who are considering enrollment at HPTC to provide a personalized financial aid offer to help them as prospective students better understand the cost of attending school, the type and amount of aid they have qualified for, and an easy comparison of aid packages offered by different educational institutions before making a final decision to enroll.

## **COURSE REPETITIONS AND DETERMINATION OF AWARD DISBURSEMENT**

Students wanting to repeat a specific program/career option must have permission of the instructor and Assistant Superintendent to do so. NOTE: A repeated class is NOT eligible for a federal financial aid award.

## **AWARD NOTIFICATION**

If a student meets all eligibility requirements and all required documentation is received (including verification documents if necessary) and the student's financial aid file is complete, then the amount of the grant will be calculated by the Financial Aid Officer according to federal regulations. The student will then receive an award notice that contains the amount of the Pell Grant they are expected to receive for that academic year, along with disbursement procedures. The student will be contacted by the Financial Aid Office to complete the necessary paperwork and sign their Pell Award Form/Contract.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF RECIPIENTS**

Right-to-Know:

- ❖ The institution's accrediting and licensing organizations
- ❖ All programs offered and detailed information regarding each program of interest
- ❖ Information on financial aid, including criteria for eligibility and methods of disbursement
- ❖ Information on the school
- ❖ Information on students' rights under FERPA
- ❖ How satisfactory academic progress is determined, including eligibility and appeals
- ❖ The institution's refund policy
- ❖ The institution's annual campus security report
- ❖ Drug and alcohol policies
- ❖ Net Price Calculator
- ❖ Grievance Procedures
- ❖ Constitution Day, Voter Registration, & Vaccination Policies

Responsibilities:

- ❖ Use financial aid funds for school related expenses
- ❖ Report all outside aid to the Financial Aid Office
- ❖ Maintain satisfactory academic progress
- ❖ Report changes in enrollment to the Central Office and the Financial Aid Office
- ❖ Notify the Financial Aid Office before withdrawing
- ❖ If you don't understand the financial aid process ask questions
- ❖ Complete the required paperwork requested by the Financial Aid Office

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## **DISBURSEMENTS**

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### **DISBURSEMENT OF PELL GRANT**

Payment is disbursed by check from High Plains Technology Center. HPTC typically has two payment periods per award year and Pell Grants will be disbursed twice a year, dependent upon when the student enrolled in the major and on whether the majority of the hours in a payment period fall within that award year. Pell Grant funds will be disbursed approximately six to eight (6-8) weeks from the payment period start date. Students will be paid the first time based upon the fact that they are enrolled and in attendance in an approved program. Satisfactory academic progress will be monitored before further disbursements will be made. Due to open entry/exit enrollment dates, the disbursement dates vary with each student. All financial aid funds will be disbursed through the Administrative Assistant (Student Services) on the dates listed on the student's signed Pell Award Form/Contract. Students will also be notified by the Administrative Assistant (Student Services) when checks are ready to be disbursed. The student must show a photo ID to receive his/her disbursement. NOTE: Failure to provide the necessary documents requested by the Financial Aid Office will necessitate the withholding of payment.

### **DISBURSEMENT PROCEDURES**

The student Pell Award Forms/Contracts, which are signed by both the student and the Assistant Superintendent, serve as a requisition for the HPTC business office. They are submitted to the business office indicating the names of the students receiving funds and the amount of the disbursements. Once the business office receives disbursement paperwork confirmation, they request funds through G5. The funds are electronically deposited into the General Fund. Funds are not drawn from G5 until after they are disbursed to the student's account. HPTC never holds funds past 3 business days. The business office issues checks as directed by the contracts received from the Financial Aid Director. Checks are given to the Administrative Assistant (Student Services) for disbursement to the student.

### **INITIAL DISBURSEMENT**

The Financial Aid Director determines if disbursement is an initial (first ever received) Pell disbursement. Students are paid the first time based on their enrollment and good standing if ISIR/SAR is received prior to the end of student's first pay period. Disbursements thereafter are based on Satisfactory Academic Progress (see Satisfactory Academic Progress section in this handbook and completion of hours and weeks in the first payment period).

### **SUBSEQUENT DISBURSEMENT**

If this is a subsequent (not first ever received) Pell disbursement, student must have maintained Satisfactory Academic Progress for the previous payment period, and must have completed all hours in the previous payment period. Please see the Satisfactory Academic Progress section of this handbook.

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## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

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### SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) FOR FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

To be eligible for a financial aid, students must be in good standing according to High Plains Requirements for Continuing Enrollment and Student Eligibility and must make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) based on qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (completion rate/maximum timeframe) standards. Students are expected to be continually aware of their progress. Progress will be reviewed at the end of each payment period. All enrollment periods will be reviewed, including those for which financial aid was not requested.

- *Grade Point Average (GPA)*

All students must maintain a cumulative academic average of “C” (defined as 70%- 79%) for all programs with the exception of the Nursing Program which defines a “C” as 80% -86% on all required course work.

- *Attendance*

Students are held responsible for regular and punctual attendance. Students must be in attendance 90% of the program. For example, a student scheduled to complete a 900 hour program must be present for a total of 810 hours of the entire program

- *Completion Rate*

Students must successful complete at least 75% of attempted hours per payment period. Example: 337.50 hours of coursework/450 hour payment period.

- *Maximum Timeframe*

All students must complete the program within (1.33 times or 133%) of the normal length of time required to complete the program as defined in the enrollment agreement. This time frame will be measured in terms of clock hours attempted. An approved Leave of Absence (LOA) will extend the student’s maximum time frame as well as the student’s contract period by the number. Students requiring more time to complete the program have a maximum time frame of 133% of the normal length of the program to complete with the exception of those students who have been placed on ADA (American with Disabilities Act) 504 plans. High Plains works with these students for a longer period of time based on the estimated completion date established in the student’s individual plan of study.

\*It is also important to note that in order for a student to be eligible for a next or subsequent payment under 34 CFR 668.4, the institution must determine that the student has successfully completed both the clock hours and the instructional curriculum hours required for that period.

SAP will be evaluated at the point when the student’s scheduled clock hours and weeks of instruction for the payment period have elapsed. The instructor will complete student

progress reports, which are submitted to the Financial Aid Office, so eligibility can be determined for subsequent payment periods.

Course incompletes and withdrawals do not affect GPA. If a student repeats a course, the GPA can be affected; the highest grade may be used in calculating the GPA. However, course incompletes, withdrawals, and repetitions all affect a student's pace of completion. The total number of hours it takes a student to complete a course will be used as their attempted hours.

A student who withdraws from a program and reenters the same program after 180 days will be treated the same as a transfer student. The program hours will be reduced by the number of hours for which the student received credit. Therefore, the hours for which the student receives credit count as attempted and completed.

### **UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Any student who does not meet the preceding SAP criteria is determined to have unsatisfactory academic progress and is not eligible to receive a Pell disbursement for his or her subsequent payment period following the period of unsatisfactory academic progress, unless the student has appealed and has been placed on financial aid probation.

High Plains provides notification to students of the results of an evaluation that impacts the student's eligibility for their Pell Grant disbursement. The student is also advised he or she has a right to appeal.

Financial aid probation status is assigned by High Plains to a student who fails to make SAP at the end of a payment period, has appealed the determination by High Plains they are not making SAP, and has had their appeal granted.

A student on financial aid probation may receive their Pell disbursement for one payment period. High Plains may require a student on financial aid probation to fulfill specific terms and conditions determined in an academic plan. At the end of one payment period on financial aid probation, the student must meet SAP standards or meet the requirements of the academic plan developed by High Plains to qualify for further Pell disbursements.

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## **MONITORING SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)**

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### **MONITORING PROCESS/PROGRESS REPORTS**

SAP is monitored upon completion of the scheduled hours and weeks in each pay period using progress reports issued by the Financial Aid Director to the student's instructor. For example, a full time student enrolled in a 600 hour major will have a progress report upon completion of the first 300 hours and 11.5 weeks. The second progress report will be made upon completion of the last 300 hours and 11.5 weeks in that major. When an interval spans a period of non-enrollment, progress will be assessed at the point where attendance recommences. The aid director attaches the student's attendance from a printed report obtained from the Student Accounting System to the progress report. The progress reports are filled out by the instructor

indicating the student's cumulative grade, verifying student's attendance, and the student's completion of 75% of the programs/majors learning objectives. The instructor then gives the progress report to the Financial Aid Director and she determines if the student is meeting SAP standards for that payment period.

#### **FINANCIAL AID WARNING AND SUSPENSION STATUS**

If a student receives a progress report that is not in compliance with the SAP requirements as outlined above, the student will be informed in writing about his failure to maintain SAP. The first time a student does not meet SAP requirements he/she will be placed on financial aid warning status for the next pay period. There is no appeal process necessary for the warning status. The student may continue to receive Title IV aid for one warning period. During the warning period, the student must maintain all SAP requirements. Students who fail to maintain SAP during the warning period will then be placed on financial aid suspension and will be suspended from receiving further Title IV financial aid at HPTC.

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#### **FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION PROCEDURES**

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##### **RE-ESTABLISHING FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY AFTER BEING PLACED ON FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION**

A student who is placed on financial aid suspension and denied further disbursements due to failure to meet SAP during a warning period will be informed in writing of his suspension status and Title IV financial aid for that student will be suspended at HPTC. A student who has been placed on financial aid suspension after failing to meet SAP during a warning period may file an appeal to have their Title IV funds reinstated.

##### **SUSPENDED STATUS STUDENT TRANSFERRING TO A NEW PROGRAM/MAJOR**

A student who is suspended in a program/major, and who then transfers to or comes back to a new program/major at HPTC, and who has hours from the previous program/major that would transfer into the new program/major will remain on suspended status if the hours that are transferred render the student to be out of compliance with the SAP requirements. If the transferred hours do not render the student to be out of SAP compliance, then that student would be eligible for financial aid in the new program/major. A student who is on suspended status comes back in a new program/major in which none of the previous hours would transfer into the new program/major is eligible for aid in the new program/major from hour one.

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#### **FINANCIAL AID WARNING STATUS**

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A student will be on **financial aid warning** after having their Title IV aid reinstated following a successful appeal. **A student on warning status may receive aid on this status for only one payment period.** If a student fails at any time to meet SAP after being placed on financial aid probation status, then that student would once again be placed on financial aid suspension. **A student who has failed to meet SAP requirements while on financial aid warning status may**

**not file another appeal.** The only way that student can become eligible for aid is to once again meet SAP requirements in a pay period for which they are responsible for their tuition and/or fees which are to be paid by the tenth day of the next pay period unless other arrangements are made and agreed upon by the business office and the Assistant Superintendent.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

High Plains Technology Center permits a student to appeal a determination by the school that he or she is not making SAP. Students who are denied aid on the grounds of unsatisfactory progress have the right to appeal the denial of aid. To appeal, a student must file a written request to the Appeal Review Committee within 7 business days of the date of the written notification by the Financial Aid Director of the loss of Title IV aid due to unsatisfactory progress.

The student must describe any unusual or mitigating circumstance which contributed to the unsatisfactory progress status and denial of aid and believes deserves special consideration. Mitigating circumstances may include, but are not limited to, serious illness experienced by the student, accident resulting in severe injury to the student, or death in the student's immediate family. Other circumstances may be classified as mitigating if they are serious in nature, prevent the student from attending classes, and are deemed to be so by the Appeal Review Committee. The student must provide information as to why the circumstance interfered in making SAP and what has changed that will allow them to make SAP by the next evaluation point. The student should provide as much documentation to substantiate and support their appeal such as a letter from a doctor or hospital admission forms, etc.

Once the Appeal Review Committee receives the appeal, they will evaluate the appeal and provide a written decision within ten (10) business days. The student will either be denied their appeal or the appeal will be granted and aid reinstated. All decisions of the Appeal Review Committee are final.

If the student wins the appeal they will then be placed on Financial Aid Probation, which is a status assigned by the institution to a student who fails to make SAP, who has appealed and has had their Title IV eligibility for aid reinstated for one payment period. The student must meet the school's SAP standards or meet the requirements of the academic development plan in order to qualify for additional Title IV aid. Appeals are limited to one appeal per award year.

### **ACADEMIC PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

Requirements below are to be attained for the payment period the student was placed on financial aid warning/probation.

- Maintain an attendance percentage that will ensure the student will meet Satisfactory Academic Progress by the next payment period
- Complete all required test and projects assigned (test and projects must be completed and turned in when requested).

- The academic improvement plan will be monitored by the School Director and Director of Nursing, as applicable.
- The school will notify the student each month on their academic improvement status during a monthly progress report/advising session. Status of the students report will be written on the progress report form for the student to sign.

Students choosing to remain in school while requesting an appeal will be responsible for charges accrued whether or not the appeal is granted.

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#### ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR STUDENTS ON FINANCIAL AID

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Adult students on financial aid are required to attend 90% of the hours in each pay period. Acceptable attendance is defined as missing no more than 10% of any pay period<sup>1</sup> documented or undocumented. The 10% of class time missed during a pay period may be considered excused and the student's pay period will not be moved forward for absences that fall within the 10%. Failure to attend the 90% of the hours in, a pay period will result in the student being placed on financial aid warning or suspension status.

Attendance is recorded in three-hour increments, i.e. a student attending six hours per day is counted absent twice when the whole day is missed. Adult students attending under funding by federal aid or other outside agencies, or who are in a program or major leading to a licensure are responsible for maintaining their attendance as required by these agencies/departments.

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#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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Only one leave of absence in a 12 month period will be approved (unless jury duty or military reasons apply). The leave of absence cannot extend beyond 60 calendar days. Student taking an approved leave retains in-school status, however, tuition will not be charged for the time frame of the leave of absence. A financial aid disbursement period will be extended the number of days equal to the number of days of the leave of absence. Student will not be paid for leave of absence. If the leave of absence is medically related, the student must provide the medical release to the counselor/administrator prior to returning. Re-admittance will not be allowed without a release. Upon a student's return, the student will be allowed to complete course work that was started prior to the leave. Students failing to return from an approved leave of absence will be dropped from their program and a Return to Title IV calculation will be completed on the student. If student chooses not to return cannot re-enroll for 18 weeks. Additional subsequent leaves may be granted for jury duty and/or military reasons (FMLA 1993).



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## REVISION OF FINANCIAL AID AWARDS

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There may be instances that warrant a change to the original student Pell contract. The Financial Aid Director may review a student's circumstances, make an adjustment to an award and revise the notification letter. The student is notified of the change, the revised contract is then signed again by both the student and the contract revised so that the appropriate adjustments can be made to the Pell funding which the student is to receive. The student is also given a copy of the revised contract.

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## OVERPAYMENT AND COMMON TYPES OF OVERPAYMENT

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### EXPLANATION OF OVERPAYMENT

An overpayment occurs anytime a student receives a payment that is greater than the amount for which the student is eligible. Examples of the four most common types of overpayments are as follows:

- Student error, such as failing to report the spouse's income on the application
- School error, for instance, when a student's award is taken incorrectly from the Pell Payment Schedule, or when the school pays a student who is not making SAP
- Required recalculations, when a student never begins attending class or withdraws from school after receiving a cash disbursement for living expenses
- Optional payments, for instance, when the school makes an interim disbursement to a student selected for verification, but the student never completes verification. (HPTC does not make disbursements until verification is complete; therefore, this is a situation that should not occur at HPTC)

### OVERPAYMENT DUE TO INSTITUTIONAL ERROR

If the Financial Aid Director discovers an overpayment due to aid office error, she will adjust the student's total award to compensate for the error, if possible. If not possible, HPTC will make repayment to the Pell Program and attempt to recover repayment from the student.

### OVERPAYMENT DUE TO INCORRECT DATA

If the overpayment is due to incorrect data on the SAR/ISIR, the Financial Aid Director will assist the student in correcting the SAR/ISIR. The Aid Director will withhold subsequent payments until the corrected SAR/ISIR is received. If possible, the Aid Director adjusts the total award. If this is not possible, then the Aid Director will attempt to collect overpayment from the student. If the overpayment cannot be collected from the student, the Aid Director will consult the Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook to determine if referral to the U.S. Department of Education is appropriate. If so, the student's case will be referred to the U.S. Dept. of Education Debt Collection Service (DCS) for collection.

## **RECEIPT OF ADDITIONAL STUDENT FUNDING RESOURCES**

A Pell Grant is an entitlement program. A Pell Grant is never to be adjusted downward because a student receives additional resources during the award year.

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## **WITHDRAWAL AND INSTITUTIONAL REFUND**

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### **WITHDRAWAL PROCESS**

A student wishing to withdraw from HPTC prior to the end of a semester and/or financial aid disbursement period must provide notice to the school either in writing or verbally. This is an official withdrawal. Students are given a letter grade at the time of withdrawal. Students making SAP at the time of their withdrawal who return to the same program/major within 180 days are considered to be in the same payment period. Written or verbal notice should be submitted to the HPTC Counselor and Attendance Officer. The notice should contain the date the student will cease attendance and the reason for the withdrawal. The official withdrawal date is the date the student has the withdrawal form signed by the administration; however, for Title IV Return of Funds Calculation's, the last date of attendance is always used for scheduled hours of attendance in a pay period. After this, the following process will be followed:

- ❖ The notice will be forwarded to the student's instructor to obtain the student's grade, progress rate, and attendance at the time of the withdrawal.
- ❖ The notice will also be immediately forwarded to the Financial Aid Office if the student is on financial aid.
- ❖ The Financial Aid Office will calculate any refunds due to the Title IV program and notify the student in writing within thirty days.
- ❖ The student will be billed for any refunds due to the Federal Financial Aid programs.
- ❖ If the student has not repaid the funds within 45 days after certified mail notification by HPTC, the repayment due will be posted to the National Student Loan Data Base showing the student is ineligible for further funding.
- ❖ If the student has not repaid the funds within 45 days, the Collection Department of the U.S. Department of Education will be notified.

### **REFUND POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS FOR WITHDRAWAL**

It is the policy of the technology center Board of Education that students who have paid tuition for adult programs be given full or partial refunds under conditions stated in established guidelines. This policy applies when a student officially withdraws from a full-time or short-term adult program prior to the specified time within the instructional period for which he/she has been charged and includes full or partial refund of tuition, fees and other charges.

The term "withdrawal" shall mean written notification by a student of his/her intention to discontinue class attendance.

## **INSTITUTIONAL REFUND POLICY**

High Plains will abide by the following refund policy if the student officially withdraws through Student Services.

1. 100% tuition and supply fees are refundable to the student if the technology center cancels the program.
2. 100% tuition if the student formally withdraws on the 1st thru the 10th day of class.
3. Once the student has completed the withdrawal process and it has been determined that the student is due a refund, a check will be processed and available within five to seven working days.
4. Nonattendance of classes does NOT constitute official withdrawal. The student must complete an official withdrawal form in order to be eligible for a refund.
5. A refund request will not be approved unless all financial obligations to the technology center have been met.
6. When a student is eligible for a refund, the amount of the refund may be credited toward enrollment in another High Plains Technology Center course.
7. 0% tuition refund after the 10th day of class for the enrollment period.
8. No refund is given for books and or fees.
9. Return of Title IV repayment formulas will be used for students receiving Pell Grants.

## **FULL-TIME PROGRAMS**

100% of the tuition will be refunded if the student withdraws before classes start or on the 1<sup>st</sup> thru 10<sup>th</sup> day of class. There is no refund after the 11<sup>th</sup> day of class. Nonattendance of class does not constitute an official withdrawal in order to be eligible for a refund. The withdrawing student must request a refund in Student Services. The Administrative Assistant will be responsible for calculating refunds that are not Title IV.

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## **TREATMENT OF RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS**

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### **TITLE IV RETURN OF FUNDS**

If a student withdraws, drops, or fails to complete a period for which they have paid the tuition, HPTC will calculate what, if any, return needs to be made. If the student is a Pell Grant recipient in many cases it may require a return of a portion of the monies received by both the institution and the student to the Pell grant program. The calculation will be according to the Department of Education's Return of Title IV Funds using the Department's Return to Title IV worksheet. The regulation requires a calculation based on the actual percentage of the period the student was scheduled to attend. An example calculation is demonstrated below. Other examples and calculations may be obtained in the Financial Aid Office. Refunds to students who are paying their own tuition or agencies that are sponsoring a student who withdraws or is dropped, may receive a refund according to the institutional refund policy as noted in the Withdrawal and

Institutional Refund section of this handbook, the Student Handbook, the Student Consumer Guide.

Examples of the application of the refund policy are available upon request. An appeals process exists for students who believe that individual circumstances warrant exception from the published policy (see the Appeals Process section in this handbook).

#### **RETURN OF TITLE IV/REPAYMENT FORMULAS USED FOR STUDENTS RECEIVING PELL GRANTS**

If a student does not return from an approved leave of absence or if a student quits attending class, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of non-attendance the student will be unofficially withdrawn, and the last date of attendance will be used for calculations of hours scheduled to attend. If a student has unofficially withdrawn and HPTC does not become aware of this until records are checked at the end of an academic period, the withdrawal date will be determined within 30 calendar days of

- ❖ the end of the payment period
- ❖ the end of the academic year, or
- ❖ the end of the student's educational program

#### **CALCULATING THE TITLE IV RETURN OF UNEARNED FUNDS**

As a general rule, grants do not need to be repaid. However, a student may have to repay a certain amount if he/she withdraws or is dismissed prior to completing more than 60% of a payment period. When a student has exhausted all leave according to the attendance policy (see the attendance policy in the Student Handbook or the Student Consumer Guide. Obtain a hard copy in Student Services, or the Financial Aid Office), and a leave of absence has not been requested (or one has been requested but denied).

The last date of attendance is the date used as the calculation for scheduled hours for the student's attendance on the Return of Title IV Funds Calculation Worksheet. The portion of a federal grant that the student is entitled to receive is calculated on a percentage basis by comparing the total number of hours in a payment period to the hours scheduled to complete in the payment period upon the student's last day of attendance. For example, if the student completes 30% of the payment period, he/she earns 30% of the assistance that he/she was originally scheduled to receive. This means that 70% of the scheduled award remains unearned and must be returned to the Department of Education. Once a student has completed more than 60% of the payment period, he/she has earned all (100%) of the grant money for that pay period.

Once the amount of Title IV aid earned by the student and school is determined by the Financial Aid Office, the student will receive a letter stating how much Title IV aid was earned. The letter will also explain if the student has an outstanding balance that is owed to the school for tuition and fees. The student must realize that tuition and fees may be offset from the amount earned by the student.

Upon withdrawal if the amount earned by the student is greater than the amount disbursed, then a post- withdrawal calculation is performed (see the Post-Withdrawal Disbursements section of this handbook). If the amount earned by the student is less than the amount disbursed, then a Title IV Return of Fund. Calculation is performed. If the amounts earned and disbursed are equal, no further action is taken.

**Example 1:** A student receives a Pell Grant in the amount of \$2,865 for a payment period that is 450 clock hours in length. As of the student's last date of attendance, the hours scheduled to be completed for the payment period are 350 of the 450 hours, which is 77.78%. In this case, neither the student, nor the school owe any money back.

**Example 2:** A student receives a Pell Grant in the amount of \$1,882 for a payment period that is 300 clock hours in length. As of the student's last date of attendance, the hours scheduled to be completed for the payment period are 63 of the 300 hours, which is 0.21%. The student had tuition and fee charges of \$600 which were paid for with the Pell Grant. The Return of Title IV Funds calculation determines that the student is required to repay \$941 to the Pell Grant program. This calculation also determines that HPTC is required to return \$599 to the Pell Grant program. Please refer to the Return of Title IV funds worksheet at the back of this handbook to see what calculations are involved or contact the Financial Aid Director at 580-571-6177 for more information.

#### **AID TO BE RETURNED**

If the student receives more Pell Grant monies than the amount earned, HPTC or the student, or both must return the unearned funds. When a return of Pell Grant funds is due, HPTC and the student both have a responsibility for returning funds. Whatever funds are not returned by the school must be returned by the student. The student's repayment obligation is determined after the school's earned/unearned funds are calculated. HPTC will return all unearned funds within 30 days from the date Financial Aid Director determines the student withdrew. Necessary funds will be returned to the Federal Pell Grant Program by the Business Office by reducing the authorization drawn from G5, by electronic transfer payment through the G5 system.

If a student owes a repayment to the Pell Grant Program, HPTC will notify the student by certified mail within 30 days that he/she must repay the overpayment. In the notification HPTC will inform the student that:

- ❖ The student owes an overpayment of Pell Grant funds
- ❖ The student's eligibility for additional Title IV funds will end if the student fails to take positive action by the 45th day following the date the school sent or was required to send notification to the student

There are two positive actions a student can take to extend eligibility for Title IV funds.

- ❖ The student may repay the overpayment in full to the school within 45 days
- ❖ The student may sign a repayment agreement with the Department of Education

If the student fails to take one of the positive actions during the 45-day period, the student's overpayment will be reported to NSLDS and referred to the Department of Education for collection:

Mailing address:                      National Payment Center  
   P.O. Box 105028  
   Atlanta, GA 30348

The student should contact the school to discuss his/her options.

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## POST-WITHDRAWAL DISBURSEMENTS

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If the Return to Title IV Funds calculation determines the student received less federal aid money than the amount earned, High Plains Technology Center will make a disbursement of the earned aid that was not disbursed if the student has met all other eligibility requirements (satisfactory academic progress and completed hours from previous pay period). Written notification will be sent no later than 30 days after the date the Financial Aid Officer determines the student withdrew. The notification will advise the student that he or she can receive a direct disbursement, identifying the type and amount of these title IV funds and explaining that the student may accept or decline some or all of those funds. Earned funds in excess of tuition and/or books will be disbursed directly to the student. The student will be advised they have 14 calendar days from the date the school sent notification to accept the disbursement. High Plains Technology Center may choose to make a post-withdrawal disbursement after the 14-day period on a case-by-case basis. Disbursements cannot be made after 180 days.

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## PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT

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### **PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW FOR PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT**

A student may request a review of special circumstances or the Financial Aid Director may determine after reviewing the student's application that the student may need special consideration. The Aid Director will request the student/parent file a written explanation describing the situation or special circumstances. Official documents, such as court orders, or other evidence such as receipts, bills, tax forms and schedules will be required.

The Financial Aid Director will review the request and decide whether professional judgment should be exercised. The Aid Director will document the decision, how the decision was reached and the action to be taken. The student's request or written explanation, along with supporting documentation and the decision of the Financial Aid Director will be filed in the student's financial aid file folder.

When Professional Judgment is used, the Financial Aid Director completes the appropriate section(s) of the School Use box on the SAR/ISIR or the FAA adjustment box on the EdExpress ISIR tab. This indicates to CPS that a data element or dependency status has been changed.

#### **AREAS IN WHICH PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT CAN BE EXERCISED**

The HPTC Financial Aid Director authorizes case-by-case adjustments in the following areas:  
Data items used to calculate EFC, which may include:

- ❖ Unusual medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance
- ❖ Extended family support
- ❖ Elementary and secondary education tuition and dependent care expenses
- ❖ Unusual debt
- ❖ Income reduction
- ❖ Loss of job due to circumstances other than being fired or quitting job )
- ❖ Death of family provider
- ❖ Dependency Status
- ❖ Satisfactory Academic Progress(SAP)

#### **DEPENDENCY STATUS AND PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT**

Students are automatically considered to be independent if they meet the following criteria:

- ❖ They were born before January 1, 1991
- ❖ The student will not be working on a master's or doctorate program during the school year
- ❖ The student is married as of the date he or she applies
- ❖ The student has children and provides more than half of their support
- ❖ The student is an orphan or a ward of the court (or has been a ward of the court at any time since the age of 13)
- ❖ The student is a veteran of the U.S. armed forces
- ❖ The student is currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces for purposes other than training
- ❖ The student has certain dependents (other than a spouse or children) that live with the student and the student provides more than half of their support
- ❖ The student is or was an emancipated minor as determined by a court in his state of legal residence
- ❖ The student was determined to be homeless or to be an unaccompanied youth by his high school or school district homeless liaison at any time on or after July 1, 2013
- ❖ The student was determined to be an unaccompanied youth who was homeless by a director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development at any time on or after July 1, 2013
- ❖ The student was determined to be an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or was self-supporting and at risk of being homeless by a director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center of transitional living program at any time on or after July 1, 2013

- ❖ The student is or was in a legal guardianship as determined by a court in his state of legal residence

The Financial Aid Office has the authority to make students (who do not meet the above criteria) independent under special circumstances using Professional Judgment. Special circumstances must be documented and a copy of the documentation must be maintained in the student's file. Examples of special circumstances include, but not limited to:

- ❖ An abusive relationship with the family
- ❖ A student who has been abandoned by parents
- ❖ Incarceration of both parents

The Financial Aid Director adjusts the student's dependency status by recording a Dependency Override code of "1" in EdExpress. The Aid Director may also cancel a dependency override that another school performed. To do this, the Aid Director records a code of "2" in EdExpress. Dependency overrides can also be recorded by marking the D/O oval on a paper FAFSA.

However, according to federal regulations, the following instances **do not qualify** as special or unusual circumstances meriting a dependency override:

- ❖ Parents refuse to contribute to a student's education
- ❖ Parents are unwilling to provide information for the FAFSA or verification
- ❖ Parents do not claim the student as a dependent for tax purposes
- ❖ Student demonstrates total self-sufficiency
- ❖ Student does not live with parents or lives with other family members

#### **APPEAL PROCEDURE FOR PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT**

Students who feel their request for review of special circumstances has not been processed properly have the right to appeal such decisions to the FA Appeal Committee consisting of the Counselor, the student's instructor (current or prospective), the Financial Aid Director, the Assistant Superintendent and a neutral party appointed by the Assistant Superintendent. Students do not need a special form to file this appeal. Students requesting an appeal of special circumstances need to provide in writing a request addressing the FA Appeal Committee stating that they would like to have a meeting to present the special circumstances they feel warrant a change in their dependency or financial aid status. The committee will meet with the student and the student will receive written notification of the committee's decision within five school days.

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#### **APPEAL PROCESS FOR ALL OTHER FINANCIAL AID GRIEVANCES**

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For financial aid grievances in general, (i.e. those that are not mentioned previously in this handbook) students may appeal to the FA Appeal Committee consisting of the Counselor, the student's instructor (current or prospective), the Financial Aid Director, the Assistant Superintendent and a neutral party appointed by the Assistant Superintendent. Students do not need a special form to file this appeal.



Students requesting an appeal for such general grievances need to provide in writing a request addressing the FA Appeals Committee stating that they would like to have a meeting to present the special circumstances they feel warrant an action concerning their financial aid at HPTC. The committee will meet with the student and the student will receive written notification of the committee's decision within five school days.

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## MISREPRESENTATION REGULATIONS

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A school is deemed to have engaged in substantial misrepresentation when the school itself, one of its representatives, or other related parties (see below), makes a substantial misrepresentation regarding the school, including about the nature of its educational program, its financial charges, or the employability of its graduates.

### MISREPRESENTATION

Misrepresentation is defined as, "A false, erroneous or misleading statement made directly or indirectly to

- ❖ A student, prospective student, or any member of the public, or
- ❖ An accrediting agency, a state agency, or the Department.

A misleading statement includes any statement that has the likelihood or tendency to deceive or confuse. A statement is any communication made in writing, visually, orally, or through other means. This definition applies to statements made by

- ❖ an eligible school
- ❖ one of its representatives, or
- ❖ any ineligible institution, organization, or person with whom the eligible institution has an agreement to provide educational programs, or to provide marketing, advertising, recruiting or admissions services.

Misrepresentation includes the dissemination of a student endorsement or testimonial that a student gives either under duress or because the school required the student to make such an endorsement or testimonial to participate in a program.

### SUBSTANTIAL MISREPRESENTATION

Substantial misrepresentation is defined as any misrepresentation on which the person to whom it was made could reasonably be expected to rely, or has reasonably relied, to that person's detriment. Substantial misrepresentations are prohibited in all forms, including those made in any advertising, promotional materials, or in the marketing or sale of courses or programs of instruction offered by the institution.

### MISREPRESENTATION SANCTIONS

If the Department of Education determines that an eligible institution has engaged in substantial misrepresentation, it may

- ❖ revoke the eligible institution's Program Participation Agreement;
- ❖ impose limitations on the institution's participation in the FSA programs;
- ❖ deny participation applications made on behalf of the institution; or
- ❖ Initiate a proceeding against the eligible institution under subpart G of 34 CFR 668.

#### **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 34 CFR 668.75**

An eligible institution, its representatives, or any ineligible institution, organization, or person with whom the eligible institution has an agreement may not describe the eligible institution's participation in the Title IV, HEA programs in a manner that suggests approval or endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of the quality of its educational programs.

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#### **FRAUD**

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There are difficult situations where students and/or parents purposefully misrepresent information in hopes of obtaining additional assistance. The Financial Aid Director is required to have a policy of referral when confronted with actual or suspected cases of fraud and abuse.

#### **POLICY FOR FRAUD**

Students and parents who willfully submit fraudulent information will be investigated to the furthest extent possible. All cases of fraud and abuse will be reported to the proper authorities.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR FRAUD**

If, in the Financial Aid Director's judgment, there has been intentional misrepresentation, false statements or alteration of documents which have resulted in the awarding or disbursement of funds for which the student is not eligible, the Aid Director will notify the student and schedule an appointment to discuss the situation with the student. If the student does not make an appointment, the Aid Director may

- ❖ Not process a financial aid application until the situation is resolved satisfactorily
- ❖ Not award financial aid
- ❖ Cancel financial aid
- ❖ Determine that financial aid will not be processed for future years

**Fraudulent situations will be forwarded to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Education, at 755-2270 or 1-800-MIS-USED.**

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#### **AUDITS**

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#### **AUDIT REQUIREMENTS**

Financial aid records and student files are audited every year. Auditors review a sample of student aid-files to ensure that the Financial Aid Director is in compliance with federal, state and institutional policies.

### **PREPARATION FOR AUDIT**

The only preparation for an audit is to cooperate with the auditor's requests. Typically, the auditor will randomly select a specific number of students to inspect. The files are pulled and given to the auditor. Any additional assistance requested is responded to promptly. The results of the audit are then submitted through EZ Audit. If any revisions need to be made they are resubmitted within 15 calendar days.

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## **OTHER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE AT HPTC**

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### **OKLAHOMA TUITION AID GRANT (OTAG)**

Purpose of the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant Program the Oklahoma Legislature enacted the Oklahoma Higher Education Tuition Aid Grant Act authorizing and directing the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to implement a program of Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grants. The purpose of these grants is to assist Oklahoma college students with demonstrated financial need to meet the cost of attendance at Oklahoma postsecondary institutions. Student State Incentive Grants (SSIG) are known as Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grants (OTAG) in this state. These grants pay up to 75% of the cost of tuition and fees for 9 months to eligible residents of Oklahoma.

#### **Application Procedures**

Students desiring to apply for OTAG should follow the application procedures for Title IV funds. The student must complete the Oklahoma residency section on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). For best consideration, the student needs to have filed a FAFSA by March 1st.

#### **Eligibility Requirements**

To be eligible for a grant and to receive payments a student must:

- ❖ Meet eligibility requirements
- ❖ Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as post-secondary (undergraduate) student.
- ❖ Have substantial financial need as determined annually in accordance with OTAG criteria.
- ❖ Be a resident of Oklahoma
- ❖ Maintain satisfactory progress and attendance in his course of study.
- ❖ Not be in default on a Guaranteed Student Loan or Parent Loan for undergraduate students received for attending any institution.

- ❖ Not owe a refund on a Title IV grant received from any institution.
- ❖ Sign the statement on the FAFSA that money received will be used solely for expenses related to attendance or continued attendance at HPTC.

#### Criteria for Selecting Recipients from Group of Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are funded to the limit of available funds on a first come, first served basis. Deadlines for application are established yearly. All students who meet the eligibility requirements receive scholarships. Criteria for continued eligibility and re-establishing eligibility are based upon the same satisfactory progress requirements for PELL.

#### Criteria for Determining Amount of Student's Aid

Grant amounts are based on:

- ❖ Financial need: awards run from 5 to 75% of tuition and fee costs for 9 months depending upon applicant's financial strength.
- ❖ Costs at the school applicant attends
- ❖ Oklahoma Board of Regents makes final decisions.

#### Method and Frequency of Disbursement

Students are advised of awards by the Financial Aid Director after receipt of a list from OSRHE of eligible recipients who are attending HPTC. Payment is by check, usually twice during a nine-month enrollment period. Checks are sent to the school and disbursed by the Central Office Secretary.

#### **OKLAHOMA'S PROMISE**

This is an Oklahoma Scholarship for students that take a required list of academic classes in high school and meet a GPA of 2.5. Student eligibility is determined by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE). Students will be required to file FAFSA for the award year of their first year of attending a postsecondary education institution which will provide the required second income verification.

#### Application Procedures

This scholarship is applied for by the student at their high school when they are in the 8th, 9th or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility is dependent upon enrollment in a program that is offered through a cooperative agreement, co-enrollment at the degree granting institution with which HPTC has an alliance agreement. Criteria for continued eligibility and re-establishing eligibility are based upon the same satisfactory progress requirements for PELL. Students who believe they may qualify should contact the financial aid office to ensure proper procedures are taken for the student to receive their benefit.

#### Criteria for Selecting Recipients from Group of Eligible Applicants

Student eligibility is determined by the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE). Students must maintain required standards set by the OSRHE for the scholarship. All students who meet the eligibility requirements receive scholarships.

#### Criteria for Determining Amount of Student's Aid

The amount of aid is determined annually by the OSRHE is dependent upon enrollment in a program that is offered through a cooperative agreement, co-enrollment at the degree granting institution with which HPTC has an alliance agreement.

#### Method and Frequency of Disbursement

Oklahoma's Promise funds are credited to a student's account each semester and if there is a credit balance a check is made and disbursed to the student.

### **WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)**

WIOA is a federal program providing financial aid, employment information, job search support, training, and educational programs to applicants that meet economic, employment, and geographical guidelines as determined by a WIOA counselor. Assistance, along with method and frequency of benefit could vary with each student dependent upon his/her needs. Criteria for continued eligibility and reestablishing eligibility along with SAP standards for this program are administered by WIOA office. For more information or to apply, contact the local Workforce Oklahoma office 1117 11th St, Woodward, OK 73801, (580) 256-3308.

### **TRIBAL AGENCY GRANTS/BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs awards educational grants to students who meet their eligibility requirements. Assistance could vary with each student dependent upon his/her needs. Students who are listed on a tribal roll and believe they may qualify should contact their Tribal Agency Educational Office for application information. Criteria for continued eligibility, re-establishing eligibility, method and frequency of benefit, along with SAP standards for this program are administered by the student's Tribal Agency Educational Office. For additional information students, should contact their tribal agency.

### **OTHA GRIMES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

Purpose of Otha Grimes Memorial Scholarship the Otha Grimes Memorial Scholarships are reserved for adult students who have initiated formal training to achieve technology career objectives.

#### Application Procedures

Applicants must use the authorized application form provided them by their Counselor; fill out as directed and return to the Counselor's Office by the stated deadline.

#### Criteria for Selecting Recipients from Group of Eligible Applicants

Scholarships are reserved for adult students who may not qualify for other scholarships or student assistance programs. Scholarships are awarded more on the basis of need and

commitment, rather than on grades. Scholarships are determined by the Oklahoma State Department of Career and Technical Education Foundation. The scholarship stipulates that the award be used toward books, tuition, and other direct expenses incurred for technology training.

#### **Method and Frequency of Disbursements**

Scholarships are awarded once each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Funds are issued to the school, and are applied first toward tuition and fees. If tuition and fees have been paid by other sources, a check is then issued by the Central Office Secretary to the student for approved expenses.

### **VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**

Vocational Rehabilitation assists individuals who have barriers to employment. Services include testing, psychological evaluation, medical examination, and counseling services. Eligibility, application, and funding are determined by the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (ODRS). Educational benefit, criteria for continued eligibility and re-establishing eligibility, and SAP standards for this benefit are administered by the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation. For more information and to apply, contact a local Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at 580.233.0244.

### **NEXT STEP TUITION WAIVER**

High school graduates from HPTC sending schools who live in the district can receive 1050 hours tuition-free hours. The tuition waiver is available for four years immediately following the students high school graduation. In addition to graduating from a HPTC sending school, the student must not have previously completed their 1050 hours of tuition free training while in high school. All students who meet the eligibility requirements are eligible.

High Plains Technology Center is offering a student tuition fee waiver award to assist adult students in accessing or completing a career and technology education career major. Scholarship awards must be used to assist with the cost of tuition only. Scholarship amounts will vary depending on funds available. Application process necessary.

### **PHYSICIAN MANPOWER TRAINING COMMISSION**

Sponsored by the State of Oklahoma through PMTC the Nursing Student Program provides assistance to Oklahoma nursing students pursuing LPN, ADN, BSN, or MSN degrees and who are interested in practicing nursing in Oklahoma communities, with emphasis placed on rural communities.

From its inception, over 6,500 nursing students have received scholarship awards. For more information or to apply go to their website at <http://pmtc.ok.gov/nurses>

### **VETERANS AFFAIRS TUITION WAIVER**

High Plains Technology Center offers a tuition waiver (1050 Hours) to any veteran enrolling in our school in the daytime programs that are Pell-eligible. The veteran must produce proof of service and have obtained an honorable discharge by providing the form DD214.

The student should contact Michelle Ketcherside in the Financial Aid Office for additional information. 580-571-6177 or [mketcherside@hptc.edu](mailto:mketcherside@hptc.edu)

#### **EVIE MATTHEWS (PN) SCHOLARSHIP**

Evie Matthews was the beloved mother of Tommy and Alex Matthews who passed away from cancer. Evie lived to bring joy to others and had such incredible empathy. It is the goal of Tommy Matthews that this scholarship become a Rainbow in someone's cloud - a leg up, a break, a chance, a rainbow for someone who might not otherwise wouldn't get help to continue with their education.

#### **TED KYLE SCHOLARSHIP (PN) SCHOLARSHIP**

Ted Kyle was a member of the HPTC board for numerous years. He along with Carl Bogdahn were the people who were instrumental in getting the Career Tech off the ground. When Ted passed away, his family donated money to HPTC to be used for scholarships for students in need. All adult students are eligible to apply. The scholarship application inquires about the student's involvement in the community, future goals, and economic need. A committee of three HPTC employees review all applications and select the recipient

#### **ADMISSION OF STUDENTS WITH ADVANCED STANDING**

Students who apply for advanced standing must meet all admission requirements and provide documented proof of participation in an accredited program to include courses taken, grades received, possible clinical experience, and attendance. Students may be asked to meet with program instructor and take a challenge exam. High Plains Technology Center evaluates military education and training for prior credit. Evaluation of a U.S. Armed Forces veteran's previous education and training will be completed by the program instructor and Student Services Director to ensure appropriate advanced standing. This evaluation will not only include academic transcripts but also military transcripts and military experience. Credit will be granted as appropriate and the credit hours will be shortened accordingly.

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS**

Other scholarships at HPTC are administrated following the policies and regulations as stated by the agencies awarding said scholarships.

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### **IN-SCHOOL LOAN DEFERMENT AND NSLDS**

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#### **IN-SCHOOL LOAN DEFERMENT**

HPTC does not offer loans or participate in any loan programs. Students may, however; defer payments on educational loans previously received at other institutions while attending school on at least a half-time basis at HPTC. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information and in-school loan deferment forms.

## **NATIONAL STUDENT LOAN DATA SYSTEM (NSLDS)**

The National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) is a database of information about loans and grants awarded to students under Title IV aid. Students may view their personal student loan or grant information on the website [www.nsls.ed.gov](http://www.nsls.ed.gov) by logging in with their PIN. Students must never share their PIN with any other entity. For more information, contact the Financial Aid Office.

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## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

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High Plains Technology Center is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and other federal laws and regulations.

It is the policy of High Plains Technology Center to provide equal opportunities without regard to sex/gender, age, race, marital status, religion, color, national origin, disability or veteran in the operation of its educational services, recruitment, admissions, financial aid or employment practices. Inquiries concerning application of this policy may be referred to

Amber Riley/Tony Haskins  
Title IX/Section 504 Compliance Coordinators  
3921 34th Street  
Woodward, OK 73801  
580.256.6618

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## **HIGH PLAINS TECHNOLOGY CENTER STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION**

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A copy of the Student Handbook is provided to all students enrolled in approved/accredited programs. The disclosure is enclosed into student handbook. The contents of the Student Handbook are reviewed with students the beginning of each school year. Additional copies of the Student Handbook or a separate paper copy of each disclosure are available upon request from Student Services, the Counselors Office, or the Financial Aid Office.

The Student Consumer Guide is available in Student Services, Counselors Office, and Financial Aid Office. All handbooks and disclosures are also available on our website at [www.hptc.edu](http://www.hptc.edu).

### **Student Right-to-Know**

*The following information can be found in this handbook. Paper copies of all information are available upon request from the Financial Aid Office.*

- The institution's accrediting and licensing organizations
- All programs offered and detailed information regarding each program of interest



- Information about the school → Information on the school's admissions policy
- Cost of Attendance
- Information on financial aid, including eligibility, application, and methods of disbursement
- Information on a consistent needs analysis system to evaluate families in an equitable manner
- Information on students' rights under FERPA
- How Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is determined, including eligibility and appeals
- The institution's refund policy and Return to Title IV policy
- The institution's annual Campus Security Report
- Completion/Graduation, Retention, and Placement Rates
- Drug and alcohol policies
- Gainful Employment
- Net Price Calculator
- Grievance Procedures, Non-Discrimination Policy
- Copyright Infringement, Constitution Day, Voter Registration, & Vaccination Policies

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Complete the required paperwork requested by the Financial Aid Office
- Use financial aid funds for school related expenses
- Be aware that grant or scholarship amounts received in excess of qualified educational expenses could be subject to taxation
- Report all outside aid to the Financial Aid Office
- Recognize that students, as well as parents, have a responsibility to help pay for their education
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- Report changes in enrollment to the Counselors office and the Financial Aid Office
- Notify the Financial Aid Office before withdrawing
- Return to Title IV any received funds the student is determined ineligible for
- Read directions thoroughly, complete all applications accurately, & comply with all deadlines
- Ask questions if you don't understand the financial aid process