

Sitting Bull College: Priorities for the 118th Congress (February 2024)

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) provide rigorous postsecondary education and research opportunities for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIANs) and other rural community residents. TCUs offer higher education that is uniquely Tribal, founded on Native languages, culture and philosophy with strong student support systems and community engagement. Unfortunately, federal education completion metrics fail to consider the unique nature of TCUs and our students. Federal completion rates focus on first-time, full-time students. But success at TCUs is defined holistically and most students attend part-time or are transfer students. Our shared vision: Strong Sovereign Nations through Excellence in TRIBAL Higher Education.

SITTING BULL COLLEGE AT A GLANCE

- Enrollment Trends (Spring 2023/Fall 2023):
 - Spring 2023 – 253, Fall 2023 - 273
- Affordable Tuition:
 - \$1,800 full-time (12-18 credits) undergraduate, \$350 per graduate credit
- Student to Faculty Ratio: 9 to 1
- Part-time/Full-time:
 - Spring 2023 – Part-time 71/ Full-time 182
 - Fall 2023 – Part-time 75/Full-time 198
- Persistence Rate: 70%
- Highest Level of degree/program available: Master's
- TRIO Program: No



SBC Presidents – Past 50 Years

Sitting Bull College offers the following critical student support services that are unique to meeting the needs of our students: Language Immersion/Childcare Center, food pantry, transportation (bus/vouchers), clothing exchange, mental health/counseling, free coffee and meals, online, and face-to-face tutoring, emergency aid assistance, paid internships, and cultural activities.



Sitting Bull College 1994 Land-Grant Programs

1994 Land-grant institutions: The Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act created the “1994 Land-grants” more than 25 years ago. Since then, funding for the 1994 land-grant programs and resources have remained inadequate to address the growing agriculture needs and opportunities in Indian Country.

Sitting Bull College in 2023 started a Veterinarian Technician Program with emphasis on the knowledge of the Ochethi Sakowin as part of the TCUs Equity Grant Program. The College has partnered with a number of local veterinary clinics, along with ranchers on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation to provide a wide range of experiential learning for students in the Veterinarian Technician Program.

The Extension Grant program provided a number of equine events that included: basic horsemanship, colt starting, rodeo horse training clinics, a youth rodeo series including an awards banquet to recognize the event winners, cultural rides, bronc riding, and bull riding. There is also a bucking machine for physical and mental focus available for participants use. The grant uses a community oriented approach, were meeting are held to incorporate community engagement. In addition, the grant assisted with vegetable production, forage production for livestock, use of agriculture equipment, vegetable preservation and the implementation of a community market to promote the use of locally produced good, agricultural business planning and borrower workshop an youth Agriculture loan facilitation.

REQUEST: \$40 M TCU IT Service Fund
USDA – Rural Utility Service

The ongoing pandemic has exacerbated the digital divide and underscored the lack of broadband access across Indian Country. To address these deficiencies that could leave Indian Country – and AI/AN students – behind the rest of the U.S. for generations, Congress must act to establish a *permanent TCU IT Service Fund* within the **USDA-Rural Utilities Service Program**. An annual \$40 million set-aside for TCUs, which are 1994 land-grant institutions served by USDA, would help cover rapidly increasing network, connectivity, and equipment costs, maintenance, infrastructure expansion, and IT staffing.



Sitting Bull College Broadband and IT Challenges

- High cost for hardware and software
- High demand of time and energy for current IT staff
- Developing processes and controls, institutional infrastructure, and institutional workforce skills to protect and secure data and supply-chain integrity



REQUEST: \$3.2 billion TCU Construction Fund
DOI – Bureau of Indian Education

A July 2021 AIHEC survey of TCUs revealed many chronic unmet facilities and infrastructure needs, including lack of student and faculty housing, inadequate classroom space, insufficient libraries, and outdated laboratories.

- TCU deferred maintenance/rehabilitation: \$400 million (total)
- TCU completion of master plans: \$2.7 billion (total)
- TCU operation and maintenance: \$20 million (annual, recurring need)

AIHEC strongly urges Congress to fund dedicated TCU facilities programs through DOI-BIE to modernize current facilities and build safer 21st century campuses.

Sitting Bull College Construction, Maintenance, Rehabilitation

Survey data from students, faculty, staff, and community indicate that the number one need for facilities for Sitting Bull College is for a gymnasium. Currently, the College does not have the facilities to provide any sports opportunity for students, this limits the College's ability to recruit students interested in playing sports. The second need would be for a cafeteria. Currently, the only meal options for students are those that are provided free of charge during student events.

The challenge of building new facilities due to the remote location of the College include the following:

- Funding for construction projects
- Finding qualified contractors to bid on projects
- High cost of construction per square foot