



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MORRIS

A renewable, sustainable education.

American Indian Tuition Waiver and Student Success

The University of Minnesota, Morris: A Model Liberal Arts College

The University of Minnesota, Morris is the undergraduate liberal arts campus of the University of Minnesota. Morris’s mission is highly distinctive as an academically rigorous, public undergraduate liberal arts college. Morris was cited as “a model liberal arts college” by The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Founded in 1959, the Morris campus is built on a 120-year-old campus in west central Minnesota. The Morris student body is comprised of about 1,700 students representing 28 different states and 14 different countries.

American Indian Tuition Waiver

In recognition of the Morris campus’s history as an Indian Boarding School from 1887-1910, American Indians admitted to the University of Minnesota, Morris are not required to pay tuition. To be eligible for the tuition waiver, students must show membership in a state or federally recognized American Indian tribe or provide other documentation or certification of American Indian ancestry/heritage. Applicants are not required to be residents of Minnesota. At current enrollment levels, the annual impact on Morris’s budget is more than \$1.5M based on 2006-2007 tuition.

Historic Roots

The Morris American Indian Boarding School was established in 1887, on the site that is now the University of Minnesota, Morris, by the Catholic Order of the Sisters of Mercy. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs took over the operation in 1896, reopening the school as the Morris Industrial School for American Indians. American Indians from the Dakotas and northern Minnesota attended this contract boarding school from its inception until 1909. At that time, Congress reduced the number of non-reservation boarding schools, deeding the campus and facilities to the State of Minnesota. On March 3, 1909, the Morris campus was transferred to the State of Minnesota with a federal congressional stipulation that American Indian students “shall at all times be admitted to such school free of charge for tuition and on terms of equality with white pupils.” The West Central School of Agriculture, a regional agricultural high school operated by the University of Minnesota, on the site from 1910-1963. Since its opening in 1960, the University of Minnesota, Morris has honored this legislation, waiving tuition for qualified American Indian students admitted to the college.

Legislative Statutes

The formal U.S. Congressional mandate is found in the *Congressional Record*, Vol. 43, p. 1412 (Senate) and 1490 (House) for 1909, as well as the report of the Secretary of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the 1909 fiscal year. These contain the mandate language: “that Indian pupils shall at all times be admitted to such school free of charge for tuition.”

Minnesota State Chapter 137.16 echoes the federal mandate in its acceptance of the property. “The said lands and buildings described in section 1 hereof shall be held and maintained by the state of Minnesota as an agricultural school, and Indian pupils shall at all times be admitted to said school free of charge for tuition and on terms of equality with white pupils.” Laws 1961, c. 312, §§ 2,3.

Impact: American Indian Tuition Waiver – University of Minnesota, Morris

Year	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
American Indian Student Enrollment	143	148	178	181	171

The tuition waiver is an unfunded legislative mandate for the University of Minnesota.

A Significant Student Population

American Indian/Alaska Native students comprise just one percent of undergraduate students nationally. In fall 2008, Morris enrolled 171 students with American Indian heritage, more than 10 percent of the total student population of nearly 1,700. With a rising enrollment, students with American Indian heritage are the largest student of color population on the campus. Morris is one of the most ethnically diverse colleges in Minnesota, with 18 percent of the student body comprised of students of color.

Persistence to Graduation

American Indian students at Minnesota's four-year colleges and universities show a six-year graduation rate of about 35 percent, the lowest of all racial and ethnic group. For this same cohort at Morris, 41 percent of American Indian students graduated from Morris in six years. Morris's four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates for American Indian students lead the University of Minnesota system. The campus is developing new programs to further American Indian student success and graduation.

Active American Indian Student Community Enhances Campus Life

The Circle of Nations Indian Association (CNIA), a student-led organization, meets weekly. In its 24th year, CNIA's Powwow brings 10 drum groups and 80 dancers to the campus each spring. CNIA's Peace Run is a highlight of the annual World Touch Cultural Heritage Week celebration at Morris.

Academic and Cultural Resources

The Multi-Ethnic Student Program supports the successful recruitment, retention, and graduation of talented students of color. Faculty members of American Indian heritage teach courses in literature, anthropology, and languages. Lakota/Dakota and Anishinaabe languages offered on the campus meet Morris's general education language requirement. Guest poets-in-residence, speakers, and performers enrich the campus community.

Support from the American Indian community

Morris's American Indian Advisory Committee advises campus leaders and supports students. The 11-member committee links Morris with the Dakota and Ojibwe nations in Minnesota and the Dakotas.

Alumni who make a difference

Tiospa Zina Tribal School teacher Mindy Crawford Deutsch '95, elementary education, worked with the education faculty to place Morris student teachers in the school near Sisseton, S.D. Deron Dunkley '93, economics, serves as the Commissioner of Finance for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. Jill Doerfler '01, history with an emphasis in Native American studies, researches and works with the Wild Rice Project and is active in the White Earth Ojibwe Reservation in Minnesota. Reid LeBeau '02, political science, was a Truman scholar and graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 2005. Johanna Farmer '05, political science and theatre, completed a U.S. Department of Agriculture internship in Washington, D.C., and was Morris's student representative to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents. Paulette Fairbanks Molin '66 is a 2005 recipient of the Morris Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Award.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
MORRIS

A renewable, sustainable education.

Office of University Relations

11 Education
600 East Fourth Street
Morris, Minnesota 56267
morris.umn.edu