Master Academic Plan 2025-2028

The Master Academic Plan is a holistic, long-term approach providing a comprehensive educational institution framework. It integrates academic goals, resource allocation, and performance metrics to ensure a focused and sustainable pathway toward excellence. The MAP offers a strategic vision that drives institutional success by encompassing all aspects of the educational experience, from curriculum development to faculty support.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Master Academic Plan is to provide a framework that guides the development, implementation, and assessment of academic programs at Ridgewater College. This plan aims to align academic offerings with the evolving interests and needs of students, the local community, and the broader workforce landscape. It seeks to foster an inclusive learning environment while prioritizing student success and achievement.

Ridgewater College's Master Academic Plan guides the academic initiatives of Ridgewater College. It is linked to and supports the college's Strategic Plan, Annual Work Plan, Equity Plan, Facility Plan and Strategic Enrollment Management Plan to guide and integrate with other college functions.

The guidelines in the Master Academic Plan are based on Ridgewater College's Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles.

Purposes of the Master Academic Plan:

- To maintain a focus and guide future decisions on student learning, experience, and success as central to the college's mission, vision, and guiding principles.
- To drive support for Ridgewater College's institutional learning outcomes.
- To expand program/course offerings with a focus on accessibility for all students.
- To utilize industry feedback to inform programmatic decisions.
- To cultivate a climate that supports educational growth for employment and personal and professional advancement.
- To increase faculty and staff professional development opportunities to improve student success and equitable student outcomes.
- To apply lessons learned from COVID experience in how we design and deliver instruction in the future.

Ridgewater College Vision, Mission, Equity Commitment and Guiding Principles

Vision
Ridgewater College will be a dynamic educational leader exemplifying innovation and excellence within a student-centered learning environment.

Mission
Ridgewater College empowers diverse learners to enrich their lives and reach their full potential through personalized and relevant learning experiences in an accessible, supportive, and inclusive environment.

Equity Commitment
Ridgewater College is committed to providing welcoming and inclusive campuses that value and respect the unique experiences, needs and contributions of individuals and groups from every background and identity to ensure that each student, employee, and community member has a genuine opportunity for participation and success.

Guiding Principles
- *Enterprising* - We are future-focused and change-oriented, developing creative solutions to challenges that maximize our institutional, system and local resources.
- *Empowerment* – We develop and empower employees to make decisions to best serve students and stakeholders.
- *Excellence* – We strive to exceed expectations in all that we do.
- *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* – We seek to understand and appreciate the needs and experiences of every individual and actively work to provide genuine opportunities for everyone to succeed and participate in college activities and processes.
- *Trust and Respect* – We are committed to developing a culture based in processes and behavior that create trust and respect among all stakeholders.
- *Collaboration* – We connect and work together to achieve common goals while respecting needs and interests of stakeholders.
- *Curiosity and Creativity* – We constantly strive to understand, learn, change, and improve.
- *Accountability* – As individuals and groups, we willingly accept and take ownership of our successes and failures.

Ridgewater College Institutional Learning Outcomes

Communication
Develop students who communicate in both written and oral formats
- Communicate effectively in oral formats
- Communicate effectively in written formats

Social Responsibility
Develop students who engage ethically in global citizenry
- Identify the interrelationships among the self, local and global communities
- Engage in the local and global community

Critical thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills
Develop students who integrate facts, creative thought, and problem-solving

- Apply methods of inquiry in order to solve problems or draw logical conclusions
- Assemble evidence for analysis of problems

Technology Skills
Develop students who utilize various modes of technology

- Apply technology skills
- Adapt to changes in technology

Master Academic Plan Framework

The Ridgewater College Master Academic Plan will span three academic years: 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. The number of initiatives prioritized each year will vary based on the scope of the initiatives and considerations will include necessary resources, number of people/programs/areas impacted, cost, timelines, etc.

A focus to align Ridgewater College Master Academic Plan initiatives annually with the Ridgewater College Workplan and ongoing Ridgewater College Strategic Plan will be prioritized.

Core Element A – **Provide quality programs and services to enhance student experience while developing future programs to respond to our student and community needs.**

- Utilize internal and external stakeholder input and data to ensure our programing is meeting student and community expectations.
    - Approach
        - Identify a comprehensive set of data sources and how they will be used to inform decision-making specific to credit and non-credit programing
        - Analyze data to drive future programing needs and resource allocation
        - Provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff specific to dataset access and usage
- Develop new programs based on student and market demand and evolving workforce needs
- Utilize data-informed decision-making to drive program enhancements and resource allocation
- Implement and refine the program review process to ensure relevancy
    - Approach
        - Conduct regular reviews of existing programs to ensure alignment with industry standards, student interests, and emerging trends
        - Assess student feedback and enrollment trends
        - Develop a consistent set of actionable metrics for the program review process
        - Integrate a model of curricular review into the program review process
        - Continue to update program learning outcomes across the college
- Develop and implement co-curricular assessments/goals (enhance, develop, strengthen)
    - Approach
        - Identify/develop co-curricular activities
        - Develop assessments/goals specific to co-curricular activities
        - Develop program review/assessments for Customized Education, Continuing Education, and Non-teaching (Library) programing

Performance Outcomes

- Complete program reviews and provide evidence of documented changes
- Complete program learning outcomes for programs and disciplines
- Assess co-curricular activities specific to student learning
- Explore credit and non-credit programming to emerging trends in student interests and needs
- Develop and analyze student survey/feedback data to guide the continuous improvement process

Core Element B – Enhance and foster internal and external partnerships to encourage college growth and strengthen community relationships.

- Align college-wide communication/work with industry partners
  - Approach
    - Develop a college-wide unified industry database
    - Increase scope and engagement of advisory board partnerships
    - Utilize college department and auxiliary functions to create college-wide partnership database
- Increase depth and breadth of partnerships with K-12 schools
  - Approach
    - Increase dual enrollment high school opportunities
    - Improve communication and education partnerships with area K-12 schools
- Expand opportunities that leverage Customized Training and Continuing Education and Credit-based options to meet workforce demand
  - Approach
    - Increase industry credentials of value
    - Develop intentional pathways between credit and non-credit courses and programs

Performance Outcomes

- Increase advisory partnerships academic year over academic year
- Partner with industry to encourage collaboration opportunities to connect students with Ridgewater educational and career pathways
- Facilitate improved internal collaboration by establishing cross-departmental partnerships, resulting in at least two joint initiatives
- Establish a goal of developing ten new internal and external partnerships within the academic year, fostering collaboration with various stakeholders

Core Element C – **Provide support (access, time, and resources) to faculty and staff for professional development opportunities to support continuous improvement of student learning and engagement.**

- Measure faculty and staff workplace engagement
    - Approach
        - Analyze college workplace survey results to Identify opportunities for engagement
- Perform annual professional development check-ins
    - Approach
        - Submit annual Faculty Professional Development plan to Dean's office
        - Review and encourage faculty professional development in teaching and learning
- Provide Reasonable Credit Equivalencies (RCEs) for faculty assignments as Curricular Specialists
    - Approach
        - Curricular Specialists will:
            - Coordinate the New Faculty Academy for probationary faculty
            - Support all faculty with curriculum development and enhancement
            - Implement Office of Scientific Quality Review (OSQR) process
            - Facilitate faculty conversations and professional development opportunities that promote success in the classroom
- Provide professional development opportunities for faculty to incorporate new technologies into teaching and learning
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff to enhance student learning
- Explore potential model for part-time faculty roles in academic administration support work
    - Approach
        - Identify model
        - Identify potential projects
        - Develop Compensation structure

Performance Outcomes

- Establish baseline data to show increases in engagement with curricular specialists
- Establish baseline data to determine the implementation of new teaching technologies
- Track participation in professional development initiatives
- Align professional development activities with institutional goals and strategic plans, demonstrating a clear connection between faculty and staff development and the overall mission of the institution

Core Element D – Reduce Barriers to Student Success

- Identify and reduce barriers
  - Approach
    - Identify and address barriers through student feedback
      - Increase access to courses
      - Increase resources within courses
      - Increase access to college resources
      - Reduce financial barriers
- Create supports to improve student success in courses
  - Approach
    - Use Power BI to identify success by demographic groups
      - Provide professional development for faculty to understand data tools
    - Identify student success needs
      - Implement tutor (professional or peer) imbedded into courses
- Enhance proactive advising programs to support student progress and success
- Enhance student support services, such as first-year experience, E-Orientation, tutoring, counseling, and career advising, to address barriers to student achievement
- Utilize early warning system to identify and assist students at risk of falling behind
- Foster inclusive environments to attract and retain diverse student and employee populations
  - Approach
    - Develop and maintain Communities of Practice
    - Utilize human resources to advertise postings in non-traditional ways
- Align strategies to Equity 2030 goals
  - Approach
    - Implement Equity By Design practices
    - Implement Guided Learning Pathways practices
      - Work with faculty to develop and implement interactive program guides.
      - Implement interactive Graduation Planner application and software
    - Implement and enhance Academic Coach functions in the Student Services unit

Performance Outcomes

- Ensure students have access to support services, such as counseling, tutoring, and academic advising, contributing to a more holistic and student-centered approach
- Increase the utilization of the early warning system and intervention program
- Implement and track referrals to academic/student resources
- Increase in overall student retention rates by 2% year-to-year implementing targeted initiatives to address barriers hindering student success