

STUDENT LIFE, CLUBS AND INTEREST GROUPS

POLICY**I. Student Life Program Structure and Philosophy**

The college strives to develop student life/activity programming to provide a wide range and balance of student activities that complement the curricular offerings of the institution. The existence and structure of all student clubs must be approved by administration after the club has met the requirements outlined in this policy and procedure. There is a limit of one club per academic department per campus. The revenue generated by the student life/activity fee authorized by [Minnesota State Board Policy 5.11](#) shall be used to fund student activities as defined in [Minnesota Statute Section 136F.01, Subd. 5](#). The distribution of these funds will be recommended by the Student Life Budget Committee to the President and requires the President's approval.

II. Funding: Student Life/Activity Committee**A. Establishment and Membership**

The Student Life Activity Committee will be made up as follows:

- Ten (10) students appointed by the Student Senate with representation from each campus.
- Two (2) faculty members appointed by the college MSCF President with a representative from each campus.
- Three (3) non-faculty members: the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinators (serve as committee co-chairs) and the Dean of Students.

The Vice President of Finance and Operations serves as advisor to the committee.

B. Committee Responsibility

The Student Life Activity Committee shall annually recommend to the Student Senate the amount of the fee in the ensuing year, the allocation of revenues, policies and procedures for administering the student life/activities budget and expenditures consistent with the system and institution policies and procedures. They may meet other times during the academic year to review and recommend policy changes and to hear requests for overage amounts not funded by budget dollars awarded through the prior year's budget approval process. If approved by this group, the changes would be recommended to the College President for action.

The goal of this committee in recommending a budget to the College President is to provide Ridgewater College students with a comprehensive, balanced student life program to meet the diverse needs of students. The college values community service, civic engagement and social responsibility by all of its members and encourages the integration of these principles in the learning experiences of students. The annual budget recommendation will take into account the following factors:

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Overall Club and Organization Expenditures:

- Overall cost, including personnel and non-personnel expenses

Outreach to the Community:

- Number of people from surrounding communities who attend the activity and develop affiliation with Ridgewater College through the activity
- Number of Ridgewater College students and staff who attend the activity

Strength of the Link to the College Mission:

- Ridgewater College provides quality educational opportunities for diverse student learners in an inclusive, supportive and accessible environment

Benefit to Students:

- Activity is designated for the benefit of students' educational student life experience
- Activity appeals to wide variety of students
- Activity provides leadership opportunities for students
- Activity provides opportunities for students to develop leadership and interpersonal skills
- Activity provides educational outreach opportunities

Student life/activity funds shall not be used to fund:

- Graduation banquets and graduation receptions
- Food (*Note: Food can be purchased if the club is hosting an event for a broader population outside of its club membership. The food purchase for an event must fall in line with the mission of the club.*)
- The purchase of alcohol
- Donations to college or university foundations or other external charitable organizations, or scholarships or grants to individuals
- Instructional items
 - Required component of a course or program
 - Supplies or equipment
- Club activities only open to an academic program (exceptions would include clubs who are affiliated with national organizations who require rigid membership criteria specific to academic training and education).
- The purchase of apparel (or other items that remain in personal possession) for advisors or students, unless they contribute at least 50% of the costs
- Student per diem meals for trips
- Political parties/candidates
- Facilities/maintenance/renovation projects unrelated to Student Life
- Personal dues or membership fees, but can be used for organizational dues
- Personal recreational equipment rental or purchase
- Items for personal use
- Recreational travel expenses

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III. Fundraised Funds

There are no limitations on money earned through fundraising, however, money earned should support the mission of the club. For example, food and clothing may be purchased with fundraised dollars. Student Life fundraising match dollars are considered student life funds and fall under the student life/activity fund rules.

A. Campus Student Association

The student life/activity fee shall fund student government through the annual allocation/budgeting process.

B. Authority for Expenditures

The Student Life Activity Committee shall present the student life/activities budget, including the amount and procedure for the collection of fees and allocation of revenues, to the Student Senate for review and recommendation to the College President for approval. The College President shall approve, reject or modify the fee and budget. Committing to purchases in excess of the approved budget amount is prohibited. The committee shall be consulted on any modification to their recommendations prior to implementation. Unspent student life/activity monies are swept from individual accounts and rolled to student life fund reserves at the end of each fiscal year.

C. Budget Reserves

Reserves may be established and their status shall be annually reported to the Student Life Activity Committee.

 02.02.06 Adopted and Implemented
 12.16.08 Revised
 09.23.09 Revised
 09.20.11 Revised
 08.13.15 Proposed; 11.16.15 Revised; 07.12.18 Proposed; 09.14.18 Revised
 09.24.19 Proposed; 03.13.20 Revised

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PROCEDURES**To Form A New Club:**

Any group of students wishing to form a club must secure an approval for charter from the Student Senate before they can be recognized as an official club of Ridgewater College. Membership of all clubs is open without regard to race, religion, national origin, sex or sexual preference, except where such discrimination is protected by state and federal law and constitutions.

To secure approval, a club must meet the following requirements:

- Have five or more members who hold a current student status at Ridgewater College.
- Have a purpose for the club that will benefit the college and enhance leadership and serviceship within Ridgewater College students.
- Identify a college employee willing to serve as the advisor for the club.
- Submit a written constitution and application to the Student Senate. If the proposed club is affiliated with a state or national organization, the terms of affiliation must be clearly described in the request.
- A representative from the group must appear before the Student Senate and petition orally for the charter.
- Approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Student Senate is required.

To maintain active status and be eligible to receive student life funds each year, a club must meet the following requirements:

- Fulfill its stated purpose (from its constitution).
- By October 15, submit to the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinators (on their respective campus):
 - Declaration to be Active Form and Membership Roster (including an officer list)
 - Revisions and/or amendments of the club's Constitution/Bylaws
 - Club Advisor Responsibility Form
 - Annual mission statement and goals form. These goals should include leadership development activities, educational awareness activities, social service/civic consciousness duties and student life activities.
- If these materials are not submitted or renewed, the club will not be eligible for funding for the year and will be moved to inactive status.
- In addition, each club will designate a student club member to participate as a Club Liaison to the student senate. The purpose of the club liaison would be to contribute communication throughout the academic year with the Student Senate and allow the Senate to assist each club with current events, questions or concerns that may arise within their club.
- The liaison will be required to attend a fall and spring Club Liaison meeting for their respective campus. Date and time of said meetings will be during the beginning of each semester and will be identified by the senate vice president, and will be communicated to the club advisors, and will be advertised throughout campus. The first meeting in the fall is an orientation to the club liaison process and it is essential that clubs attend this meeting for that purpose. If a club liaison is unable to attend either of these two (2) required meetings, the club liaison must coordinate with the senate vice president to reschedule the meeting.

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- The Club Liaison could then choose to participate as a liaison through the following process.
 - The liaison may choose to attend optional additional liaison meetings scheduled throughout the year. All club meetings will be coordinated through the Vice President of each Senate and communicated to club advisors, club presidents and/or liaison representatives.

The College reserves the right to revoke the charter of any club whose members knowingly and willingly violate the policies and regulations of the College or which fails to comply with its own constitution.

Responsibilities of Club Advisor:

It is the goal of the college to have well-directed, meaningful activities for the student members of approved clubs. Therefore, it is expected that all club advisors will fulfill the following expectations and responsibilities: *(A signed copy of the Club Advisor Responsibilities Form must be submitted to the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinators (on their respective campus), along with other required information, by October 15).*

- 1) Attend one (1) advisor meeting in either the fall or spring semester and review policy with the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinators.
- 2) Assist the club in executing activities and events, unless alternative arrangements have been made; monitor club financial accounts; ensure travel requests are completed and submitted; and all necessary club documentation is current to keep the club in active status.
- 3) If the club is interested in completing a Fundraising Activity, follow protocol provided by the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinators.
- 4) Be knowledgeable and encourage compliance with the college's student code of conduct policy and make it available to students upon the first meeting of the club and/or revisit prior to travel activities.
- 5) Inform the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinators as soon as possible if a club disbands or becomes inactive.
- 6) Annual stipend payment for faculty will be processed after May 1. (Each club is limited to one stipend. If more than one advisor is identified, the stipend payment will be split equally.)

Failure to fulfill the advisor responsibilities, as indicated above, could result in future non-renewal of a club advisor position.

Interest Group Definition:

An interest group allows students with similar interests to gather together on campus while foregoing the paperwork involved to create a club. Interest groups will gain access to advertise their group activities on campus through communication with the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinator. Interest groups differ from clubs in that:

- Interest groups do not receive funding from the Student Life budget.
- Interest groups do not have an advisor and therefore may only meet on campus between 8:00 am-4:30 pm, Monday-Friday on days when faculty/staff are present on campus.
- Interest groups may only book the Club Hub and Library study rooms for meetings. They will not have access to other classrooms on campus. Interest groups are free to meet in common spaces such as the Commons or Cafeteria.

Interest groups may apply for a charter to transition into becoming a club by following the club process outlined in this policy and procedure.

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To Form A New Interest Group:

Any group of students wishing to form an interest group must secure approval from the Student Senate before they can be recognized as an official interest group of Ridgewater College. Membership of all interest groups is open without regard to race, religion, national origin, sex or sexual preference, except where such discrimination is protected by state and federal law and constitutions.

To secure approval, an interest group must meet the following requirements:

- Have at least 5 members who hold a current student status at Ridgewater College.
- Elect a representative for the interest group to maintain contact with the Student Senate and Student Activities and Wellness Coordinator.
- Submit a written application and list of interest group rules to the Student Senate.
- A representative from the group must appear before the Student Senate and petition orally for approval.
- Approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Student Senate is required.

To maintain active status, an interest group must meet the following requirements:

- Send a representative to meet a minimum of once per semester with the Student Senate and the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinator.
- Keep interest group contact information up to date and inform the Student Senate and Student Activities and Wellness Coordinator of any changes.
- Maintain a membership count of at least 5 members.
- Follow the Ridgewater Code of Conduct.

The College reserves the right to disband any interest group whose members knowingly and willingly violate the policies and regulations of the College or which fails to comply with its own interest group rules.

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