2026-2027

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Your success at Ridgewater College starts with getting to know your college

PROUD TO BE A WARRIOR!

RIDGEWATER COLLEGE

A member of Minnesota State

"The spirit of community will be sustained by a climate on the campus where personal relationships are prized, where integrity is the hallmark of discourse, and where people speak and listen to each other carefully."

-Ernest Boyer, Former US Commissioner of Education

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Disclaimer

NOTE: Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the material contained within this Student Handbook as of the date of publication. However, all policies, procedures, academic schedules, and fees are subject to change at any time by appropriate action of the faculty, the College administration, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees or the Minnesota Legislature without prior notification. The provisions of this handbook do not constitute a contract between the student and the College. The information in this handbook is for use as college guidelines and is subject to change at any time.

For most current information, go to www.ridgewater.edu.

2026-2027 CALENDAR – RIDGEWATER COLLEGE

20-21 Professional Development/ Duty Days (No Classes)

24 Fall Semester Begins

AUGUST 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SEPTEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

1 Labor Day Holiday (College Closed)

15-16 Teacher Conventions (No Classes)

OCTOBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOVEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

11 Veterans Day Holiday (College Closed)

26-27 Thanksgiving Break (College Closed)

14-18 Final Exams

18 Fall Semester Ends

21-31 Semester Break

25 Christmas Day (College Closed)

DECEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

JANUARY 2027						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1 New Year's Day (College Closed)

1-8 Semester Break

7-8 Professional Development/Duty Days (No Classes)

11 Spring Semester Begins

18 M.L. King Jr. Holiday (College Closed)

15 Presidents' Holiday (College Closed)

Note: Precinct Caucuses take place in February. No classes can take place after 6:00 pm that day.

FEBRUARY 2027						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

MARCH 2027						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

1-5 Spring Break

9 Professional Development/Duty Day (No Classes)

APRIL 2027						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

MAY 2027						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

10-14 Final Exams

13 Hutchinson Campus Graduation

14 Spring Semester Ends/Willmar Campus Graduation

24 Summer Term Begins

31 Memorial Day Holiday (College Closed)

Fall Semester		Spring Semester	
- Class	74	- Class	77
- Finals	5	- Finals	5
- Duty	2	- Duty	3
Total	81	Total	85

+ 5 flexible days for faculty

Student Days = 161
Faculty Days = 171

JUNE 2027						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

JULY 2027						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Jun 18 Juneteenth Holiday Observed (College Closed)

July 5 Independence Day Holiday Observed (College Closed)

July 30 Summer Term Ends

REV. 04.17.24

President's Welcome

Dr. Cheryl Norman
President

Welcome to Ridgewater College!

Whether you are beginning your college journey, returning to continue your education, or exploring a new career path, you belong here.

At Ridgewater, our commitment is to help you achieve your goals. You will find dedicated faculty and staff who are invester in your success both inside and outside the classroom. We encourage you to take advantage of the many resources, services, and opportunities available to support your academic, personal, and career development.

This handbook is designed to help you navigate college life. We offer courses in a mix of online, hybrid/flexible, and face-to-face instructional formats with a combination of in person and virtual support services and resources. As you begin the year, I encourage you to get involved, ask questions, build connections, and challenge yourself to grow. Consider joining a student club, volunteering for Student Senate or engaging in student activities.

We are honored that you have chosen Ridgewater, and we look forward to supporting you every step of the way. We are here to help you reach your education, career, and life goals!

Vision

Ridgewater is a student-centered educational leader focused on innovation, excellence and affordability.

Mission

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

Equity Commitment

Ridgewater 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.

Anti-Racism Commitment

Ridgewater College fully commits to opposing racism, bigotry and all forms of exclusion and unjust bias based on personal identity. We view such actions as critical threats to the health and well-being of our College and the communities we serve. Read our anti-racism statement.

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.

Who to Call for Help - Student Services

Department	Willmar	Hutchinson
Academic Advising	320-222-5971	320-222-5971
Academic Coaching	320-222-5971	320-222-5971
Academic Support/Tutoring	320-222-5260	320-234-8636
Accessibility & Disability Services	320-222-8040	320-234-8650
Bookstore	320-222-5590	320-234-8524
Business Office	320-234-8596	320-234-8596
Career Services	320-222-5983	320-222-5983
Community Resource & Inclusion Office	320-222-6932	320-222-6932
Counseling Services	320-222-5971	320-222-5971
Financial Aid	320-222-7488	320-222-7488
Library	320-222-7538	320-234-8511
Multicultural Affairs	320-222-6932	320-222-6932
Pregnant & Parenting Student	320-222-8040	320-222-8040
Records & Registration	320-222-5971	320-222-5971
Scholarships/Foundation	320-222-6095	320-222-6095
TRIO Student Support	320-222-8075	320-234-8650
Veterans Resources	320-222-5634	320-222-5634

Accreditation

Ridgewater College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

Higher Learning Commission
230 S LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411
800-621-7440
www.hlcommission.org

Ridgewater College acknowledges its legal and moral responsibility to ensure equal employment and educational opportunities with no discrimination regarding race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law. The college is in compliance with Title IX and Section 504 and will continue its affirmative action commitment to removing barriers to equal employment and educational opportunity.

Minnesota's colleges and universities have accepted special roles and responsibilities in fostering Minnesota's colleges and universities have accepted special roles and responsibilities in fostering diversity in our society. We are dedicated to the search for knowledge and the rights of every individual in our learning communities to pursue that search with freedom, dignity, and security regardless of religious affiliation, race, ethnic heritage, gender, age, sexual orientation, or physical ability. Representing all sectors of higher education in Minnesota, we publicly declare our intentions:

- to continue the development of multi-cultural learning communities that will not tolerate acts of harassment and intolerance.
- to establish, communicate and enforce standards of behavior for students, staff and faculty that uphold our academic values and our legal obligations.
- to promote the acceptance and respect for individuals in an atmosphere of caring for others.

Introduction

The Ridgewater College community extends to you a warm welcome. We are so glad you have chosen us to be part of your educational journey. Your time here should be one of tremendous growth, exploration, and learning, but within the boundaries of guidelines that protect your rights as well as those of your fellow community members.

This handbook is carefully prepared annually to provide you with information about campus resources, student life, and college policies and procedures. Students who have questions about anything included within this handbook should feel free to ask any college employee for clarification. The College makes this handbook available to each student and publishes it each fall semester. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with its contents. By enrolling at this institution, you agree to comply with all rules and regulations. Ignorance of a policy or regulation will not be considered an excuse for failure to observe it. The College reserves the right to alter the regulations and policies stated herein through normal channels.

A very important part of the handbook is the Student Code of Conduct Policies and Procedures. Please take a moment to review it in its entirety and be aware of our expectations of our students.

Ridgewater College does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, familial status, or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law. We strongly believe that being part of a community means we support each other. We are grateful that you chose us and we care deeply about your success.

Again, welcome!

Heidi L. Olson
Dean of Students

Student's Rights and Responsibilities

Students are expected to be familiar with the policies and procedures as described in this handbook. The handbook is available on the College's website. Printed copies may be obtained upon request from Student Services.

Students are expected to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct as presented in this handbook and as posted on the College's website. The rights and responsibilities of students and the expectations of the College are described in this handbook, along with appeals, grievances and other procedures.

Students are expected to exhibit, and are held responsible for, behavior that demonstrates respect for self and others and that does not interfere with other students' right to receive an education and that does not impede the College's ability to deliver education and services to all enrolled students. Students will be held accountable for actions that result in or contributes to any impingement on the safety and well-being of others. Behavior that is threatening to the safety or welfare of one's self or others, or that is harassing or discriminatory in nature will be reviewed promptly by the College, and appropriate action will be taken. The Student Code of Conduct does not replace or reduce the requirements of civil or criminal laws.

Rights and responsibilities of students enrolled in institutions of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (Minnesota State) are addressed in Minnesota State Board Policy 3.1. Click here to read the policy in full.

Ridgewater College is committed to providing campuses that are welcoming and inclusive. To better meet the needs of our campus community and ensure safety, Ridgewater College has three-foot washing stations and gender inclusive bathrooms - two on the Willmar campus and one on the Hutchinson campus. In Willmar, they are located in the lower level of the Student Center and the lower level of the Library. On the Hutchinson campus it is located near the Liberal Arts faculty suite on the north end of our main campus location. These spaces are single stall bathrooms that include a lower level/floor sink and

additional paper towel dispensers. They are all multi-use and open to everyone.

We also have a private and secure lactation pod on each of our campuses. The Willmar one is located upstairs in the Student Center near the Cafeteria and the Hutchinson one is located just down the north hallway from the Commons. Stop by Student Services if you need help locating or accessing any of these resources.

Access for Individuals with Disabilities

Ridgewater College is committed to providing for the needs of students who have disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The college policy in its entirety can be viewed on our website by clicking here.

It is Ridgewater College's policy that each campus shall make available accommodations for any student who, through a recent assessment, can document a disability.

Ridgewater Contacts
Jay Morrison, ADA Title II Coordinator
Office #A119 – Willmar Campus
jay.morrison@ridgewater.edu - 320-222-8040

Sarah Fosso, ADA Title II Coordinator
Office #116 - Hutchinson Campus
sarah.foss@ridgewater.edu - 320-234-8650

Affirmative Action in Employment

Ridgewater College is committed to and supports aggressive affirmative action steps and programs intended to remedy the historical under-representation of persons of color, women, and persons with disabilities in the workforce.

Contact Chris Henderson, Office #329, Hutchinson Campus, chris.henderson@ridgewater.edu, 320-234-8607

Alternative Format

This document is available in alternative formats upon request by calling 800-722-1151 or 320-222-5200 or through the Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 or 711.

Authorizations for the Collection and Release of Data (Tennessen)

POLICY
Students will be provided with information regarding students' rights, responsibilities, and authorizations for the collection and release of data (Tennessen warning - M.S. 13.04, subd 2). Click here to read the Tennessen warning in full.

Campus Security Report

On or before September 30 each year, Ridgewater College publishes and makes available a Campus Security Report as required by the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act of 1990. The purpose of this report is to inform the students about campus crime prevention programs, crime reporting procedures, emergency response, and a three-year statistical history of criminal activity on the College campus. A copy of the Campus Security Report is posted on the College's website and is electronically distributed to students and employees. It is available in print form from Student Services. Prospective students and employees can obtain this information from the College website or by calling 800-722-1151.

Diversity

Ridgewater College seeks 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.

Ridgewater College, a member of Minnesota State, recognizes and respects the importance of all similarities and differences among human beings. The system and its institutions are committed, through their programs and policies, to fostering inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance, and respect in a multicultural society. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, age, ethnic origin, national origin, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, disability, religious beliefs, creeds, and income. Minnesota State is committed to confronting prejudicial, discriminatory, or racist behaviors and policies.

Email

All students registering for credit coursework are assigned an official Ridgewater email account upon initial registration. Ridgewater College uses this email as the primary method of communication with students. Students are responsible for information, notices, and deadlines disseminated through email. Students will have access to their secured email account by using their Star ID. (See page 18 for information about your Star ID). Updating and maintaining a password will be necessary and is the student's responsibility.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The purpose of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act is to afford certain rights to students concerning their education records. The primary rights afforded are the right to inspect and review their education records, the right to seek to have the records corrected, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from the records. Click here to read the full policy.

Personal Property

Ridgewater College is not responsible for loss of personal property left in classrooms, labs, or in any other area in or around the College.

Pets or Children on Campus

With the exception of service animals required to assist students with disabilities, animals are not allowed on campus. Due to disruption and the possible risk of harm, children may not be left unsupervised in the common areas of the College. Students may not bring children to classrooms or labs when the student is attending class.

Title IX

It is the policy of the college not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its admissions, educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Student inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be directed to Title IX Coordinator Chris Henderson at 320-234-8607 and employee inquiries may be directed to Tara Strey at 320-222-5211. You may also contact the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

A student who believes they are a victim of sex discrimination in violation of Title IX, or any of the other above areas, may choose to visit with a College Counselor or campus investigator, regarding the incident, and/or file a grievance in writing or report the incident anonymously by visiting Ridgewater's Sexual Violence/Misconduct and Title IX webpage. Copies of the complete policy statement and grievance procedure are available online.

Voting/Voter Registration

Registering to vote can sound complex and intimidating if you don't know the steps required to engage in the process.

Please visit our website to learn more about how to register to vote and to access the information/materials you will need to register. You will also find contact information for our current Campus Vote Coordinator if you have questions or need assistance and there you can also view our most recent plan to educate our students.

College Policies and Procedures

All college policies and procedures can be viewed on our website. You may access our Policies and Procedures home page by clicking here.

Higher Education Opportunity Act

Ridgewater College has worked to fulfill the requirements set forth by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) which was signed into law on August 14, 2008. The HEOA primarily addresses obstacles that can make it difficult for qualified students to obtain a college education, but it also includes specific statements requiring colleges and universities to comply with digital copyright laws. The law requires us to take the following steps to deter illegal downloading:

- An annual disclosure to students describing copyright law and campus policies related to violating copyright law.
- A plan to "effectively combat" copyright abuse on the campus network using a variety of technology-based deterrents.

- Provide access to and offer alternatives to illegal downloading. Ridgewater has the following document posted: Video and Audio Recording of Classroom Lectures.

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education

Ridgewater College is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity. Click here to view the policy in its entirety.

Procedures for Filing a Complaint of Discrimination, Harassment, or Sexual Violence

The goal of these procedures is the elimination of any unwelcome harassment behavior so the environment in which the employee/ student functions is respectful of individual rights and organized to promote efficiency and effectiveness.

1. If your objections are not successful or if you are uncomfortable approaching the person who is harassing you, discuss the situation with the campus Title IX and Harassment/Discrimination Officer, Chris Henderson, Office #329 - Hutchinson Campus, Office #S145-Willmar Campus, or at 320-234-8607 or chris.henderson@ridgewater.edu.
2. The campus officer's goal is to put an end to the harassment. The officer will do so informally or formally.
3. After the completion of a formal investigation, a written report will be filed with the campus decision-maker.
4. The decision-maker will render a decision based on the investigative documents. The verification of sexual harassment could result in sanctions such as reprimand, reassignment, suspension or termination of employment by the supervising authority.
5. The above action does not preclude a complainant's right to pursue a complaint through the Minnesota Department of Human Rights or the court system.

What do you do if you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted? Immediately, day or night, with permission of the victim, contact either:

1. Willmar or Hutchinson Police Department - 911.
2. Safe Avenues at 320-235-0962 or 800-792-4210.
3. Any Ridgewater faculty or staff member, who will in turn contact the Harassment/ Discrimination Officer for further referral.

Ridgewater staff will respect the victim's confidentiality and will only contact the police with the victim's consent. Confidentiality should be respected as much as possible. Support for victims should be provided in every possible manner.
Victims of sexual assault should be made aware of the need to release information for the protection and safety of others; their wishes regarding the amount of detail to be released should be honored with every effort made to protect their anonymity.

Accounts of sexual assault will be recorded by the Harassment/Discrimination Officer's investigation, whether reported by an identified victim or a third party. As much detail as possible regarding the location, date and time of the alleged assault, and any details which might help identify the assailant, will be accepted. Since it is known that very few victims report, third person reports are welcomed and encouraged.

Under the Right To Know Act, statistics concerning reports of assault are available upon request.

Right to Know

The College will make available to all enrolled and prospective students statistics on completion or graduation rates, transfer-out rates, and employment, pursuant to the Student Right To Know Act of 1990. This report is available from Student Services by calling 800-722-1151.

Sexual Discrimination/ Harassment Definitions

If you have experienced sexual misconduct or sexual harassment on a Ridgewater campus or involving Ridgewater College, call 911 for emergencies or to start a possible criminal investigation through local law enforcement.

To start an investigation through the College, please contact any of the contacts listed below to file a formal complaint. You may submit a report through the online reporting form.

Individuals may report incidents of sexual violence anonymously or with their name. Anonymous reports may not initiate a college investigation.

Ridgewater Contacts
Chris Henderson, Title IX Coordinator
Office #329 – Hutchinson Campus, Office #S145 - Willmar CAmpus, chris.henderson@ridgewater.edu
320-234-8607
Tara Strey, Title IX Deputy Coordinator
Office #H125 – Willmar Campus
Office #222 – Hutchinson Campus
tara.strey@ridgewater.edu
320-222-5211

Sexual Misconduct Policy

Ridgewater College is committed to maintaining a campus community free from sexual misconduct. The College acknowledges and adheres to the definitions and processes described in Minnesota State Policy 1B.3 - "Sexual Misconduct Policy" and the related procedure document 1B.3.1 - "Response to Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Sexual Harassment". This policy applies to all Ridgewater College students and employees and to others, as appropriate, where alleged incidents of sexual misconduct have occurred on Ridgewater College property. Ridgewater College offers a training to all students and staff through D2L each year.

Student Code of Conduct

Ridgewater College is committed to the creation and maintenance of an academic community which fosters the intellectual, personal, social and ethical development of its students. Respect for the rights of others and self-discipline are essential for the fulfillment of these goals. This Code of Conduct is designed to explain the rights and responsibilities inherent in membership in this community. Click here to read the Student Code of Conduct in full.

Student Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedures

Ridgewater College acknowledges and adheres to the definitions and processes described in Minnesota State Policy 3.8 - "Student Complaints and Grievances"(www.minnstate.edu/board/policy/308.html) and Minnesota State Procedure 3.8.1 - "Student Complaints and Grievances" (www.minnstate.edu/board/procedure/308p1.html). These documents address a student's right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement through a designated complaint or grievance procedure. Ridgewater College encourages students to use available informal means to have decisions reconsidered before filing a complaint or grievance. No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participation in a complaint or grievance. Complaints and grievance procedures are protected under data privacy rights. Ridgewater College is part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (Minnesota State) of public two and four year institutions of higher education designated by Minnesota Statutes Chapter 136F and governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. Ridgewater College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). If you wish to file a complaint about Ridgewater College with the HLC, contact:

Higher Learning Commission
230 S. LaSalle St., Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1413

Ridgewater College takes student complaints and grievances seriously. If you have a complaint about Ridgewater College we encourage you to utilize the Institution's Student Complaint and Grievance Process provided in Minnesota State Board Policy 3.8 and System Procedure 3.8.1. If your grievance involves a Board Policy, the actions of the Ridgewater College President, an issue of institutional or program quality such as an institution's compliance with the standards of an accrediting or licensing agency, or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practices, you may appeal to the Office of the Chancellor pursuant to the Board Policy 3.8 and System Procedure 3.8.1. The contact information for the Office of the Chancellor is:

Academic and Student Affairs
Office of the Chancellor
Wells Fargo Place
30 7th St. E., Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101-7804

This process does not apply to other complaints or grievances subject to different procedures specified in board, college, or university policies or procedures, or other regulations, including:

- Academic grade disputes. Grade appeals must

be handled under Ridgewater's Grade Appeal Policy found at: https://ridgewater.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Grade_Appeal.pdf.
Student complaints regarding discrimination or harassment are subject to Board Policy 1B.1 and System Procedure 1B.1.1, and filed with the institution's Harassment/ Discrimination officer, Chris Henderson

Zero Tolerance for Violence in the Workplace

Ridgewater College will foster an environment where employees, students and visitors are at zero risk of involvement in workplace violence. This will be accomplished by encouraging mutual respect among all individuals, establishing open and honest communication, inviting all employees to provide input, and enforcing zero tolerance for any type of violent behavior. The policy and procedures can be viewed here.

Academics and Registration

Academic Freedoms for Students

FREEDOM TO LEARN
In addition to the basic constitutional rights enjoyed by all citizens, students in colleges and universities have specific rights related to academic freedom and their status as students. Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. Students are expected to exercise their freedom with responsibility.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
Individual students and student organizations shall be free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They shall be free to support causes by orderly means that do not disrupt the regular and essential operation of the institution. In the classroom, students shall be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION
Students shall be free to organize and join organizations to promote their common and lawful interests, subject to institutional policies or regulations. Registration or recognition may be withheld or withdrawn from organizations that violate institutional regulations.

Academic Evaluation

Student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on the basis of academic standards, including any requirements that are noted in the catalog, course syllabus, or student handbook. Students shall have protection against prejudiced or capricious evaluation and shall not be evaluated on the basis of opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students shall have the right to review their corrected examinations or other required assignments used by the faculty in evaluating the student's academic performance.

Grade Points

A letter grade is assigned at the end of the term for each course in which the student enrolled. A grade point value for each credit in the course is assigned to each letter grade, as listed below.

Grade point credits include grades of:

A	4.00 grade points per credit
A-	3.67 grade points per credit
B+	3.33 grade points per credit
B	3.00 grade points per credit
B-	2.67 grade points per credit
C+	2.33 grade points per credit
C	2.00 grade points per credit
C-	1.67 grade points per credit
D+	1.33 grade points per credit
D	1.00 grade points per credit
D-	0.67 grade points per credit
F	0.00 grade points per credit

Calculating my GPA

To calculate your GPA, you need to make a list of all of the classes for which you want to know the GPA. Add up the credits. Add up the grade points. Take the total credits and divide by the total grade points. The answer is your GPA. Or, to put it into "math language", the formula for a GPA is:

GPA = Total Credits ÷ Total Grade Points

To compute grade points, multiply the credits of a class by the numerical value of the letter grade. The numerical values for all of the letter grades are in the chart listed above.

Example:

- If you got an A- in CHEM 101, the grade points for the class would be: 4 credits X 3.67 (value for an A-) = 14.68
- If you got a B+ in BIOL 200, the grade points for the class would be: 5 credits X 3.3 (value for a B+) = 16.5

Example Calculating a GPA:

Course #	Credits	Grade	Grade Points
PSYC 1310	4	C	4 x 2 = 8
CHEM 1510	5	B+	5 x 3.3 = 16.5
ENVS 1410	4	A-	4 x 3.67 = 14.68
ECON 2070	3	B-	3 x 2.67 = 8.01
TOTAL	**16**		**47.19**

GPA: 47.19 ÷ 16 = 2.95

Academic Honors

At the end of fall and spring semesters, students who completed a minimum of nine (9) credits will be named to the Deans' list if they have a semester GPA of at least 3.50. A Deans' List notation will be posted on the transcript in the term earned.

Active Duty with the Armed Forces

Students who are members of any branch of the U.S. military reserves and who are unable to complete a semester due to having been called to active duty shall to the extent possible be provided one of the following options:

1. The student may be given a full refund of tuition. Students receiving financial aid who choose this option should be made aware that they may be liable for any required refunds of state or federal financial aid funds.
2. The student may be given a grade of incomplete in a course and complete it upon release from active duty. Course completion may be accomplished by independent study or by retaking the course without payment of tuition. Under federal financial aid policies a course that is retaken this way may not be counted toward a student's enrollment load.
3. If in the instructor's judgment the student has completed sufficient coursework to earn a grade of "C" or better, the student may be given credit for completion of a course.

Students who find themselves in this situation should see a college counselor as soon as possible.

Attendance

Any department may have a written attendance policy. Attendance requirements are written into the course syllabus and explained to all students. Fair treatment will be afforded to all students under any and all circumstances.

Catalog and Course Information

To the extent possible, students will be provided relevant and accurate information regarding courses prior to enrollment. Catalog descriptions will be accurate and based on information existing at the time of publication. To the extent possible, class schedules will list the names of faculty teaching courses. The most current information is available online at www.ridgewater.edu under Academics.

Classification of Student Status

Full Time

A student carrying at least 12 credits is considered full time. The recommended average load is 15 credits per semester to complete a two-year diploma or degree in two years. Fifteen credits is considered full time for Minnesota state grants for financial aid recipients.

Part Time

A student enrolled in at least one course for credit and carrying fewer than 12 credits is considered part time.

Visiting Students

Minnesota State allows students who are currently admitted at another system college or university to enroll as a visiting student. A visiting student shall not be required to submit an application for admission to Ridgewater College, and is not a candidate for a degree, diploma or certificate at Ridgewater College. Financial Aid is not available to visiting students, but may be available at the college or univer-

sity they are accepted to.

Visiting Student Provisions

- Visiting students shall satisfy Ridgewater College course prerequisites.
- Visiting students who have an enrollment hold due to conduct or satisfactory academic progress must submit an appeal following the Ridgewater College Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.
- Students who have an enrollment hold from another Minnesota State system college or university due to outstanding financial obligations will be denied enrollment at Ridgewater College.
- Visiting Student registration window will be published online at www.ridgewater.edu.
- Ridgewater College may limit enrollment of visiting students in high demand courses.

Senior Citizen

As defined in Minnesota Statute 135A.51, a senior citizen is a legal resident of Minnesota who has reached 62 years of age prior to the start of the semester in which a course is pursued, or a person receiving a railroad retirement annuity who has reached 60 years of age prior to the start of the semester. The senior citizen rate applies only to students who are not collecting financial aid (including grants, loans, scholarships or other third party funding). A student wishing to audit a class must declare this intention at the time of registration. The student will be responsible for purchasing books and course materials. A senior citizen may register for a course during the add/drop period the day after the first class session is held if there is space available in the course. A senior citizen who wishes to guarantee his/her enrollment in a course may register earlier but will be required to pay full tuition and fees. If a senior citizen guarantees enrollment by registering early, he/she will not be allowed to utilize the tuition benefit for that course at a later date.

Senior citizens taking courses for credit will be charged:

- $20 administrative fee per credit
- Health service fee per credit
- State-wide student government fee per credit
- Technology fee per credit
- Parking fee per credit
- Any personal property fee associated with registered courses

Senior citizens taking courses for audit will be charged:

- Health service fee per credit
- Parking fee per credit
- Any personal property fees associated with registered courses

A senior citizen may also enroll without payment of an administrative fee in non-credit courses except those courses designed and offered specifically and exclusively for senior citizens. A senior citizen enrolled in a non-credit course must pay for any materials, personal property or service charges for the course.

A senior citizen enrolled in closed enrollment contract training or a professional continuing education program is not eligible for these benefits.

This procedure has been developed in accordance with Minnesota State Board Policy 5.11 and Minnesota State System Procedure 5.11.1.

Audit

Students auditing courses are required to pay the regular tuition and fees but are not required to take tests or complete assignments. No credit is awarded for audited courses. Students wishing to audit a course must declare this at the time of registration. Students wishing to audit a course may enroll on a space-available basis. Financial aid is not awarded for an audited course. A student does not need to be admitted to the college to audit a course.

Credit for Prior Learning

Ridgewater College acknowledges and adheres to the definitions and processes described in Minnesota State Policy 3.35 – "Credit for Prior Learning" (https://www.minnstate.edu/board/policy/335.html) and Minnesota State Procedure 3.35.1 – "Credit for Prior Learning" (https://www.minnstate.edu/board/procedure/335p1.html).

Ridgewater College recognizes that some students will have had life, occupational or vocational experiences which have given them knowledge in subject field areas sufficient to warrant college credit.

The following govern credit for prior learning at Ridgewater College:

1. Ridgewater will not limit the total number of

credits students may be awarded for CPL, but there are graduation requirements that will limit the number of CPL credits that can be awarded towards a particular degree, diploma or certificate.
2. Students may not repeat examinations, enroll, or receive credit in a lower sequential course.
3. Credit awarded through CPL external assessment does not apply toward residency credit requirements.
4. Credit awarded through CPL internal college/ university assessments must apply toward residency credit requirements at the college or university.
5. Fees are not charged for granting credit for external assessments.
6. A fee per credit will be charged for internal assessments.

Ridgewater College permits students to receive Credit for Prior Learning in two categories. Details can be found in the policy and procedures.

1. EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS - Credits granted are recorded in the transfer section of the official transcript. These credits do not apply towards residency.
   a. Credit by Examination
      1. College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
      2. Advanced Placement (AP)
      3. International Baccalaureate (IB)
      4. World Language Seals and Certificates (ACTFL)
      5. Other Nationally Recognized Evaluations, such as Dantes Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), Project Lead the Way (PLTW) or Science, Technology, Engineerning and Mathematics (STEM) examinations.
   b. Articulated High School Credit
   c. American Council of Education (ACE)
   d. Other National Standardized Assessments, Industry recognized credentials, license, certifications and non-credit instruction in continuing education and customized training not mentioned above.
   e. Military Courses and Military Occupations

2. INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS - Credits are recording within the term the credit is granted on the official transcript. These credits apply towards residency.
   a. Course Test Out
   b. Portfolio Review

3. COURSE TEST-OUT – A student may request to challenge a course. After discussing with the instructor, the student will submit a Credit for Prior Learning form and make arrangements with the instructor for the exam. A fee is payable prior to completing the exam.
   a. A student may attempt a test-out of a particular course only once within a twelve-month period.
   b. The test-out option is not available to students who want to test-out of a course they have failed, received an N/C (no credit), or in which they wish to improve their course grade.
   c. The test-out option is not available in all courses.
   d. A student may request to challenge a course. After discussing with the instructor, the student will submit a Credit for Prior Learning form and make arrangements with the instructor for the exam.
   e. Students may not test out of a course they are enrolled past the fifth day of the term.

4. PRIOR LEARNING EXPERIENCE – Students may apply to use prior experiential learning for transfer toward course credits. The learning may result from a variety of experiences: college classroom, work experience, internships, library, life experience. These experiences must be:
   a. recent and relevant, and
   b. of sufficient length with verified satisfactory performance.

5. MILITARY EXPERIENCE CREDIT – Credit shall be granted for veteran's military training and service in compliance with Subd. 2 of Minnesota Statute 197.775 – "Higher Education Fairness," according to the standards and equivalencies of the American Council on Education. A student must present evidence of satisfactory completion of such education to the Transcript Evaluator. The credits awarded are entered on the student's transcript without grades. When necessary, the Transcript Evaluator should consult with departments and/or

disciplines regarding transferability of military credits. Please contact the Registrar if you wish to obtain further details. A non-refundable fee will be charged for each credit.

Degree Audit Reports/DARS

A degree audit or DARS report is designed to help you identify and understand your current academic requirements for degree or program completion. It helps you plan and monitor progress by:

- Identifying all the requirements needed to complete your specific program.
- Indicating courses you have already completed, both at Ridgewater College and in transfer, and how they pertain to your requirements.
- Specifying what you still need to complete your program and the courses from which you may select to satisfy each requirement.
- The option is located under "Academic Records" after you login with your Star ID and password to Student eServices. Just click on "Academic Records," then on "Degree Audit" and a link to the report will appear on your screen.

Grade Appeal Policy

Ridgewater College recognizes the long-standing and widely accepted practice that the individual classroom instructor is the final authority in evaluating student performance in their courses. Also recognized is the fact that this right brings with it a responsibility to provide students with a clear statement of course grading policies and/or fairly and consistently applying these policies. A corollary to this is the student's right to receive from an instructor an explanation of any grade received.

While recognizing the rights and responsibilities of the instructor, in extraordinary circumstances, students have the right to appeal for a grade review in instances where they believe that a final course grade was assigned unfairly or in a manner inconsistent with the stated course grading policy. Click here to read the Grade Appeal Policy in full. submitted by the student.

Grade Periods and Grade Reports

The college operates on a semester system. Grades for each semester will be posted via eServices on the college website at www.ridgewater.edu. Click on eServices in Student Logins. You will need your Star ID and your password to proceed from this point.

Graduation Policy

Requirements

To be considered eligible for graduation with an associate degree, diploma, or certificate (9 credit minimum), as defined by Minnesota State, each student must meet the following requirements:

Registration Adjustment Policy

Dropping or adding a class during the designated dates of a semester will be classified as a registration adjustment. Students may drop or add courses online during the drop/add period. The College reserves the right to drop students from class.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students must perform at an acceptable academic level to continue enrollment and to receive financial aid. Students will be evaluated both qualitatively (GPA) and quantitatively (completion percentage and maximum time frame) each term. The entire policy can be viewed online.

At the end of each semester following the passing of the grading deadline, college officials run a check of all progress. As stated in the policy, students must meet the required standards in order to avoid academic warning or suspension. As a member of Minnesota State, we are also required to uphold the suspension status of other Minnesota State institutions so students that come to us from other Minnesota State institutions who are suspended must go through our appeals process.

Student Records

Student Records Purpose

Records pertaining to students are kept for the benefit, promotion and welfare of the student.

May I Review My Record?

Yes. A student may review the contents of their file by making an appointment with a counselor.

What If A Record Is Inaccurate?

A student may challenge the accuracy of a record and request that it be changed if the information in that record is found to be inaccurate. Please see our Data Practices Policy for more information on this process.

Where Are They Kept?

Student records are kept in Student Services. This office is responsible for the gathering and maintenance of all student files.

What Does A Student File Contain?

1. Student Transcript — The transcript contains the following: name, the last 4 digits of your Social Security number, major, graduation date, if degree/diploma was awarded, course titles, credits and grades.
2. Tentative and Supplement Records — In addition to the transcript, supplemental records are kept primarily for the internal use of members of the professional staff in working with students.

These records are kept no longer than five years following graduation from a program, with the exception of financial aid records which are kept for a period of three years or as stated in federal statutes and guidelines. A student's file may contain:

a. Application form
b. Transcript of grades from last high school attended
c. Transcript of grades from another post-secondary institution
d. Copies of correspondence with student or referral agencies
e. Permanent record release forms
f. Other records which may contribute to the progress or understanding of the student.

How Are The Records Released To Others?

Academic records may be released only by written request from the student. The college will not send records or information without the written permission of the student. The form to authorize the release is located on the website under Student Forms.

How Can I Have My Records Released?

To request the release of a transcript, the student must sign a release form. This must be signed for each request made.

To request the release of financial aid records that contain financial information of the student or student's parents, a Release of Parent's and/or Student's Request for Release of School Financial Aid Information form is required. These forms may be obtained in Student Services. If the student has graduated or is no longer in attendance, a written request signed by the student, including the Social Security number, and the name and address of the person to receive the record, must be received by Student Services.

Veterans Benefit Information

The Veterans Administration Form 22-1990, which is the Application for Education Benefits, should be filled out by the veterans benefit recipient immediately after being accepted at the college. The 22-1990 form can be completed by contacting your local veteran's service officer or the College VA representative. Because certain veterans and their children may be eligible for benefits under the GI Bill® and other laws, all veterans, war orphans, and children of disabled veterans must notify the VA representative of their status at the time of their application. Veterans/military members are directed to receive approval from your ESO, military counselor, or service prior to enrolling at Ridgewater College.

If advanced payment is selected, the Veterans Administration Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification, needs to be signed and dated by the student and then filled out and signed by the certifying official of the campus. The 22-1999 form needs to be sent at least 30 days before classes begin, but no more than 120 days in advance.

It is the responsibility of any student receiving VA Educational benefits to notify the VA representative of any changes in student status that can affect the payment of those benefits. It is also the student's responsibility to bring a copy of the DD-214 to the VA representative for their student file.

Ridgewater College is approved by the Minnesota State Approving Agency for veterans' educational benefits.

Ridgewater College provides in-kind office space to a Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs Representative on each campus. To get in touch with this person, please stop by the Veterans Resource Center or email them at veteranscenter@ridgewater.edu or by calling 320-222-5634 or 320-491-2734. There are several links to VA resources and sites on our website as well.

Transcript Policy

Official transcripts are requested at www.getmytranscript.com. The charge is $10 for a mailed paper copy or electronic transcript.

Withdrawal from a Single Course

After the drop period of a term has elapsed, a student has the right to withdraw from a course through the online eServices process. The final date for official course withdrawal shall be the date on which eighty percent (80%) of the days in the academic semester have elapsed. For courses not on a standard academic semester schedule, the final date for official course withdrawal shall be established as the date on which eighty percent (80%) of the instructional days for the course have elapsed. Withdrawal dates for each course can be viewed in the online course schedule.

Students withdrawing during the withdrawal period receive a transcript symbol of "W" on their transcript. While a "W" has no impact on the GPA calculation, it has a negative impact on percentage of completion used to evaluate Satisfactory Academic Progress for both academic and financial aid purposes. In addition, withdrawing from courses may have tuition and financial aid implications.

Beginning with the sixth (6) business day of the semester, there will be no refund for withdrawals from individual courses. Refunds will only be given for total withdrawals (i.e., withdrawing from all courses) according to the refund schedule.

Note: Although the student has the right to withdraw, it is the College's expectation that a student desiring to do so will discuss course withdrawal with the relevant instructor(s) prior to withdrawing. At the discretion of the instructor, a student may forfeit the right to withdraw from any course in which the student has received a failing grade due to academic dishonesty. A student may not withdraw from any course that is completed or for which an earned grade has been assigned by the instructor.

After the withdrawal period has elapsed, a student with documented extenuating circumstances must have their withdrawal approved by the instructor and the appropriate Instructional Dean. The supporting document should be forwarded with the late withdrawal request to be included in the student's file. This can be done by submitting a Registration Adjustment Petition form and marking "Late Withdrawal" on the form.

Withdrawal from All Courses

A student may initiate a complete withdrawal from all courses by meeting with a counselor and completing the required forms in the Counseling Office, as long as the withdrawal period for any of the student's courses has not elapsed. The student will receive a "W" with no designation as to passing or failing the courses. A student may not withdraw from any course which is completed or for which an earned grade has been assigned by the instructor.

Student Services

Student Services include a variety of campus-based activities designed to assist potential and current students in gathering information, making decisions about their lives, and implementing plans for their future. Student Services staff facilitate success for people from an early informational stage to beyond graduation. Click here to access each department's webpage.

Bookstores

Ridgewater College has two campus stores: one located in Willmar and one located in Hutchinson. The campus stores have everything you need to begin and succeed in your classes. They have supplies, tools, clothing, snacks, beverages, novelty items, backpacks and so much more available for purchase all year round. Students may purchase new or used textbooks, e-books or choose to rent their books. By visiting www.ridgewaterbookstore.com you are

able to buy your textbooks, course materials, supplies, and new Ridgewater gear all at once! Online orders can be shipped to you via UPS, picked up at the Willmar campus store, or picked up at the Hutchinson campus store.

Textbook Refund Policy

- A receipt must be presented for all refunds or exchanges.
- New books must be in good condition, free from any writing, highlighting, or creases.
- Shrink-wrapped items that are opened are non-returnable.
- Special orders are non-returnable.
- Refunds will be allowed within the first five days of the semester.
- Textbooks purchased after the refund deadlines or for short length classes are refundable for up to 48 hours if they have not been used by the customer.

Emergency Loan Funds

There are limited emergency funds available for those who have experienced an unforeseen financial hardship that prohibits them from fully participating in college. To initiate a discussion about the funds available and eligibility requirements, students need to meet with a counselor to determine if they meet the qualifications.

Housing

The College does not maintain dormitory facilities, nor does it mediate misunderstandings between households and students regarding rental agreements or rules and regulations required by householders. Students seeking housing are encouraged to check our website for housing resources or check the local newspapers.

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Board Policy 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education and federal and state law prohibit discrimination and harassment against pregnant and parenting students. Please contact Title IX Coordinator Chris Henderson for more information on Board Policy 1B.1, including how to file a complaint.
Ridgewater College supports pregnant and parenting students. See the college website for more information.

We also have a Community Resource Coordinator who serves as a navigator and resource for pregnant and/or parenting students. Feel free to contact Mark Taylor, 320-222-6932 or mark.taylor@ridgewater.edu.

Veterans Resource Center

The Veterans Resource Center is located in Room B62 in Willmar and Room 405 in Hutchinson. The Center is designed to support our student veterans and their families during their time here at Ridgewater College. The Center provides services that include VA program information, Minnesota state veterans' representative, information and resources for veterans and their families. The Center also provides space and computers for our student veterans.

Student Technology Information

Activate your StarID

StarID is a universal username and password system that will allow you access to your student e-mail, D2L, e-Services account, and other technology-related services on campus.

• Go to http://starid.minnstate.edu/
• Select Activate StarID, then select Tech ID (student ID)
• Provide 8-digit Ridgewater Student ID and Social Security number.
• Create password
  -Must contain 3 of the following: lowercase letters, capital letters, symbols or numbers
  -Must be 8-28 characters in length
  -Cannot use your name as part of the password
  -You will be given your StarID

Write down your StarID and StarID password and keep it somewhere that is easy to access. You cannot change your StarID number and will need it to access other services.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

We recognize that today's college students have a lot of new tools and ways to access information available to them. Please note, regarding the use of AI, students will be held responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content you submit, regardless of whether it originally comes from you or an AI tool.

It is important to ask your instructor what their stance is on the use of AI in any college work, and if allowed, what their preferred method of citing AI as a source is. If used and not properly cited, it can be considered plagiarism and academic dishonesty, both which violate College policies and can result in discipline. It is up to each instructor to set expectations on the use of AI in their classrooms and in related class work.

D2L - Brightspace

D2L is a tool used to run all online classes, but it may also be used for some in-class courses. Check with your instructor to see if D2L is something you will be using for any of your on-campus classes.

To log into your D2L account

- Use your email login and Star ID password to access D2L.
- Once you are logged into D2L, any classes that will be using D2L will be listed. The class will become a blue hyperlink that you can click on the first day of the semester.
- Log into D2L and click on each class during the first week of school so that your instructor knows you will be attending class.
- D2L can be used to post assignments, quizzes and readings - it can also be used to upload papers or other assignments for class
- Each online class will have an instructor, and their contact information will be listed on the syllabus on the D2L class page.

eServices Makes It Easier

eServices is your individual online student portal where you can access your grades, register for classes, pay your bill, and see your financial aid award letter.

To Log into eServices

Go to www.ridgewater.edu and click on Logins, then eServices. Enter Star ID and StarID password to access:

Courses and Registration

- Search and register for courses
- View and modify class schedule

Grades and Transcripts

- View semester grades (they are not mailed)
- View your unofficial transcript
- View your DARS report (verify you are taking the right courses to graduate)

Financial Aid Info

- Check the status of your application
- See your possible awards

Bills and Payment Info

- Check out your full account details
- Pay online

Email

Email is the official means of communication at Ridgewater College. Please check your student email frequently to keep in touch with issues that are pertinent to you as a student.

Your email will consist of your first name.last name followed by @go.ridgewater.edu. Example: Ryan Johnson's email would be ryan.johnson@go.ridgewater.edu. If you have a common name, you will want to check with IT to see if your email address may deviate due to duplicate email addresses.

To Log into Email

Go to ridgewater.edu, click on 'Logins' and then 'Email & Office 365'. You will need your StarID and StarID password to access email (e.g. xx1234xx@go.minnstate.edu).

Follow us on Social Media

Be sure to LIKE the official Ridgewater College page on Facebook and FOLLOW US on Twitter. Social media is a fantastic way to keep in touch with what is happening on campus.

Facebook
Instagram: ridgewatercoll
YouTube

Snapchat:
- Hutch Campus Snapchat: ridgewater-h
- Willmar Campus Snapchat: ridgewater-w

LinkedIn
TikTok

Student Logins

To access student logins, go to www.ridgewater.edu. Find the link at the top of the page called LOGINS. Once here, you can link to virtually anything a Ridgewater student would need:

- Academic Support
- Course Schedules
- Email
- Important Dates
- Technology Help
- Campus Activities
- D2L
- eServices
- Important Information
- And Much More!

Student Use of College Computers and Networks

Use of College computers and networks is meant to further the educational mission of the College, support the instructional objectives of College courses/programs, and enhance the educational experience of students. All rules and regulations in this policy document are designed to support these proper uses. Click here to view the policy in full.

Printing

SEMESTER PRINTING CREDIT

Each student will receive **$10 in printing credit** at the start of every semester. This credit is automatically applied to your account and can be used for printing and copying services on campus. The credit cannot be used for any other purchase.

PRINTING & COPYING RATES (Single or Double-Sided)

- Black and white (B & W): $0.02 per page
- Color: $0.10 per page

CREDIT RESET DETAILS

- Your $10 credit resets at the beginning of each semester.
- Unused credit will not carry over.

NEED MORE PRINTS?

If you need additional printing beyond your credit, you can add funds to your account by visiting the Business Office.

QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE

Please contact:
IT Support
320-234-8777
Helpdesk Portal

Technology and StarID Issues

If you have any issues with your StarID or any other of the technology services at Ridgewater College, please contact the Ridgewater Information Technology (IT) Department for assistance.

Ridgewater IT Helpdesk: 320-234-8777
After hours, contact the Minnesota State Help Desk at 1-877-466-6728.

Other Technology Services

Use your StarID and StarID password to get onto the wireless network, campus computers and to access printing services.

Business Services and Financial Aid

Registration – Financial Obligation

The act of registration at Ridgewater College is considered an acknowledgment on the part of the student that they will attend and pay for the registered course. Any drop or withdrawal request must be processed within the established timelines, and payment will be required for all courses that remain on a student's schedule past the add/drop period whether or not the student attends classes.

Ridgewater College does mail monthly invoices to students, but it is best to access this information through eServices online.

Financial Obligations

Students who have any financial obligations to the college or any other Minnesota State institution, with the exception of loans scheduled to mature at

a future date, will be prevented from registering for classes and may be dropped from courses in future terms if their obligations are not paid by established deadlines. Official transcripts and degrees/certificates/diplomas may also be withheld until all financial obligations have been met.

Students who are removed from campus, i.e. suspended or expelled due to conduct violations, will be responsible for tuition and fees through the end of the semester in which they are removed.

Payment of tuition and fees will be required for all courses for which you are enrolled after the drop/add period.

What does this mean?

1. If you are registered for a class after the fifth day drop/add period (for fall and spring terms) or the third day (for summer term) you will be expected to attend and pay for the course.
2. If you do not attend a class for which you are registered, you will receive the earned grade (probably F) unless you complete official course withdrawal paperwork by the established deadline.
3. If you do not pay for the courses for which you are registered:
a. You may not register for any subsequent terms.
b. You may not receive a transcript.
c. Your debt will be sent to a collection agency when it is over 150 days past due.
NOTE: You are entitled to have the opportunity to attend one class session without obligation.

Registration Cancellation for Non-Payment

Students may have their class registrations canceled for non-payment if payment is not made by the published due dates. Tuition and fees are due by the fifth business day after the start of each term. Students who have not paid their tuition and fees by the payment deadline may have their class registrations canceled unless one of the following conditions is met:
1. You have applied for financial aid, and the College has received your results. Your tuition and fees are deferred and you will remain registered and financially obligated. You will need to pay in full or initiate a payment plan for any balance due not covered by financial aid.
2. You have submitted a Third Party Billing Authorization to the Business Office.
3. You have enrolled in the Post Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) program.
4. You have applied for the Nelnet Tuition Management Payment Plan before the payment due date and have submitted the required down payment.
5. You have completed a veteran's deferment form which includes your expected graduation date or have completed the Request for Deferment form.
6. You have made a payment of $300 or 15% of tuition and fees, whichever is lower.

Monitor your online student account/financial aid information by logging in to eServices with your Star ID and password at www.ridgewater.edu under eServices. If any known payment or financial aid information is not appearing on the online screens, this should be reported for resolution as early as possible. Students who register and later change their plans for attendance should not rely on the registration cancellation for nonpayment process to complete administrative drops for them. Those who no longer wish to be enrolled must cancel their courses via the online registration process or should officially withdraw from Ridgewater College for accurate determination of their obligation to the College, if any.

Seek assistance early to ensure that your class registration will not be canceled.

Payment Options

Tuition is due as published:

OPTION 1:

Financial Aid recipients: Charges not covered by financial aid must be paid in full by the due date.

OPTION 2:

To help you meet your education expenses, Ridgewater College offers Nelnet as a convenient budget plan. This is not a loan program. You have no debt, there are no interest or finance charges assessed, and there is no credit check. The cost to budget your interest-free monthly payment plan is a $34.00 per semester nonrefundable enrollment fee. You may budget your tuition and fees in the following ways:

a. Payments may be made by automatic bank payment (ACH) directly from either your checking or savings account.

b. Or payment may be automatically charged to the credit card you designate.

To access the Nelnet payment plan, go to the Ridgewater College website at www.ridgewater.edu.
a. Click on the Admissions & Aid link, then Paying for College, then Paying Tuition.
b. Select eServices and sign in using your Star ID.
c. Select "Bills and Payments".
d. Click on "Enroll in Nelnet Payment Plan" link.

PAYMENT IN FULL DATE: Your account must be paid in full by the 25th business day after the start of the semester. Full payment requires that your account is paid in full or you have an active payment plan in place.

LATE FEE: A $50.00 late fee will be applied to all delinquent accounts 25 business days after the start of the semester.

REGISTRATION HOLD: You will not be permitted to register for subsequent semesters until your account is paid in full. If you have an unpaid balance and are not making the required payments on the payment plan, your registration for subsequent semesters may be dropped. You will be allowed to re-register upon receipt of full payment for the past due balance.

Financial Aid

Students have the right to ask college officials:

- What financial assistance is available including information on all federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs.
- What the deadlines are for submitting applications for each of the financial aid programs available.
- What is the cost of attending, and what is the refund policy.
- What criteria it used to select financial aid recipients.
- How that criteria determines your financial need. This process includes how costs for tuition fees, room and board, books and supplies, personal and miscellaneous expenses, etc., are considered in the calculation of student needs.
- What resources (such as parental contributions, other financial aid, your assets, etc.) are considered in the calculation of student need.
- How much financial need, as determined by the college, has been met.
- If a student believes they have been treated unfairly, they may request reconsideration of the award which was made.
- What portion of the financial aid received must be repaid and what portion is grant aid. If the aid is a loan, a student has the right to know what the interest rate is, the total amount that must be repaid, the pay back procedures, the length of time to repay the loan, and when payment is to begin.
- How the school determines whether a student is making satisfactory progress, and what happens if he/she is not.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Review and consider all information about the program before enrollment.
- Pay special attention to the application for student financial aid.
- Complete it accurately and submit it on time to the right place. Errors can result in long delays in receipt of financial aid. Intentional misreporting of information on application forms for federal financial aid is a violation of a law and is considered a criminal offense subject to penalties under the U.S. Criminal Code.
- Return all additional documentation, verification, corrections, and/or new information requested by either the financial aid office or the agency to which the student submitted an application.
- Read and understand all forms and keep copies of them.
- Accept responsibility for all signed agreements. If you have a loan, notify the lender of changes in your name, address, or school status.
- Perform in a satisfactory manner the work that is agreed upon in accepting a College Work Study award.
- Know and comply with the deadlines for application or reapplication for aid.
- Know and comply with the College's refund procedures.
- Compare the awarded amount of aid against the actual amount received.

Generally, there are three types of aid available:

1. GIFT ASSISTANCE
   a. Federal Pell Grant Program
   b. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
   c. Minnesota State Grants

   d. Scholarships
2. LOANS
   a. Federal Stafford Student Loan (Subsidized and Unsubsidized)
   b. SELF - Student's Educational Loan Fund
   c. PLUS - Parent's Loans for Students
3. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
   a. Federal Work Study
   b. Minnesota State Work Study
   c. Institutional Work Study

The principle difference between the three types of student assistance is that gift aid and employment do not have to be repaid, while loans are repaid (principal plus interest) either after or during the student's educational experience. For further information contact Student Services.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- You are responsible for the successful transmission of all online transactions. Remember to keep a screen print of all online transactions.
- It is ultimately your responsibility for all tuition and fees incurred. Failure to receive an invoice does not release you from your financial obligation. Failure to attend class does not constitute withdrawal and/or exemption from payment.

Financial Aid Payment

Disbursement Policy and Procedures

With the exception of monies paid to students for work performed through the work study program, all institutionally administered financial aid funds (grants and loans) will be paid beginning on the twelfth day of each semester.

Procedures

1. Student Services and Business Office will develop and publish a calendar of payment dates.
2. Work study paychecks will normally be issued per the published payroll dates in the Student Employment Handbook.
3. All monies due the student will be paid by direct deposit to a checking or savings account.
4. No financial aid funds will be released until all required materials are submitted to Student Services.

Student Worker Policy

Ridgewater College utilizes two types of student employees:

- Students employed under the Work Study Program.
- Students employed by the college through the student worker program.

The following criteria and guidelines apply to each:

WORK STUDY

This is a need-based assistance which originates in Student Services. The financial aid funds for these positions are provided by either or both federal and state financial aid programs. A percentage of the funds for these positions will be provided by the College. All students will be paid through campus payroll.

STUDENT WORKER

This is a non-need employment program which utilizes student workers to augment and supplement existing staff. The student worker program is funded by the College and is allocated through the regular budget process. These funds are intended to be used to employ students with very specialized skills that are not work study eligible as defined through the financial aid process. Each office or department may recommend students to be hired. Each student will be placed by Student Services. All students will be paid through the campus payroll.

Enrollment Policy for Student Employees

In order to be employed on campus, a student must be enrolled at least half-time (six credits). Student employees utilizing state funds must be enrolled in at least six credits. Exceptions to this enrollment requirement can be made on an individual basis for students utilizing college funds. No exceptions to this enrollment requirement will be made for students utilizing state or federal funds.

All work study or student workers will be required to complete a variety of forms and a contract. In addition, a supervisor-led, job-specific orientation and safety session must be completed.

Wage Rates

Wages are subject to change on an annual basis. The current rate is $15.00 per hour. All student employees

will be paid at the same hourly rate. The President shall consult with the Student Senate prior to changes in wage rates.

Hours of Employment

Students may work a maximum of 15 hours per week while classes are in session and no more than eight hours each day. When the College is not in academic sessions, students may work up to 40 hours per week depending on eligibility for the program. For specific information please refer to the Student Employee Handbook generated by Student Services for specific information.

Continued Eligibility

Student eligibility is verified each enrollment term.

ALLISS Educational Foundation Grant

WHAT IS THE ALLISS GRANT?
The ALLISS grant is an opportunity grant, designed to help adult learners begin college or return to college. The grant is not based on family income and is available to all students who qualify. Please see the application on our website or ask for a copy in Student Services to see if you might be eligible to apply.

Foundation Scholarships

The Ridgewater College Foundation awards approximately $450,000 in scholarships each academic year to over 300 talented and deserving students. All incoming and current Ridgewater College students (non-PSEO) who are in good academic standing and enrolled in six or more credits are eligible to apply. The Foundation administers over 150 different scholarship funds with award amounts ranging from $2,500 to $3,000 per student. Scholarships vary by type (program-related, general, leadership, nontraditional) and criteria. The Foundation uses an online scholarship application that automatically match applicants to scholarships for which they meet eligibility requirements. One application works for all scholarships. Application deadlines are June 1 and November 1 each year. Awarded scholarships are applied toward the students' tuition and fees for the following semester. For full information on the Foundation's scholarship program, application instructions, FAQs go to: www.ridgewater.edu/scholarships.

To contact the Foundation Office, please call 320-222-6095 or email foundation@ridgewater.edu .

Health and Safety

Accidents

Accidents must be reported immediately to the staff member in charge of the college activity or class. In the event that no staff member is in attendance, report it as soon as possible to a college official so that an accident report can be filed. Car accidents should be reported to the police department.

After-Hours Access

In the interest of safety and to prevent unsupervised use of facilities (such as labs, shops and classrooms) after hours and weekends, maintenance staff will not open any department area for student use unless the activity has been approved in writing by the appropriate academic dean or the designated instructional faculty is present. Students found in unsupervised instructional areas after hours will be escorted out of the area.

AIDS Guidelines and Policies

On the basis of presently available scientific information regarding HIV/AIDS, Ridgewater College recommends the following guidelines. The terms "infected college employee" and "infected individual" are used in these guidelines to apply to persons infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) including those who have been diagnosed as having Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). All people infected by the HIV infection are capable of transmitting the virus. It is to be emphasized that there is no evidence that the HIV infection is transmitted in casual contact settings.

Discrimination/Harassment

Discrimination against any student or staff member with the HIV infection, including hostile, intimidating or offensive behavior, will not be tolerated.
(See process for filing a complaint based upon discrimination or harassment.)

Unwelcome conduct or communication that is based on actual or perceived membership in a protected class, including stereotypes of protected classes, that has a negative effect or is likely to have a

negative effect on the complainant or the workplace or educational environment. Harassment may occur in a variety of relationships, including faculty and student, supervisor and employee, student and student, staff and student, employee and employee, and other relationships with persons having business at, or visiting the educational or working environment. Discriminatory harassment includes, but is not limited to:

1. Oral or written conduct such as jokes, innuendo, slurs, name-calling, negative comments about cultural norms, circulating rumors;
2. Physical contact, battery, blocking movement;
3. Non-verbal derogatory gestures, stalking, interference with work performance;
4. Visual displays, including but not limited to, posters, drawings, screen savers, emails and texts with derogatory meaning, epithets written on complainant's personal property or other symbols associated with particular protected classes

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention

Ridgewater College recognizes alcohol and drug misuse and abuse as a potential health, safety, and security problem and that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. The various health risks and penalties associated with the use of illicit drugs and the abuse of alcohol are explained in the policy enclosed in the student orientation packet. It is the intent of Ridgewater College to provide a drug-free, healthy, safe, and secure educational and work environment.

The College has a policy which addresses the issues raised by the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226). All students and employees will be provided with a copy of the College Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention policy annually and must abide by the terms of the policy.

Although the Minnesota Medical Cannabis Law and program allows seriously ill Minnesotans to use medical marijuana to treat certain conditions, the possession and use of marijuana remains illegal under federal law, including the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, the Controlled Substances Act, and the Campus Security Act, and Board Policy 5.18 Alcoholic Beverages or Controlled Substances on Campus. Therefore, the use, possession, production, manufacture and distribution of marijuana continues to be prohibited while a student is on college owned or controlled property or any function authorized or controlled by the College.

Campus Crime Awareness and Reporting Procedure

All criminal actions occurring on campus shall be reported immediately. The report may be presented orally or in written form. Authorized college personnel will respond by reporting the occurrence to city police authorities immediately or in a timely manner following receipt of the information. In the event that no college personnel are available, the individual reporting the occurrence is encouraged to contact city police directly by dialing 911 for emergencies or 320-235-2244 for non-emergency incidences on the Willmar campus and 320-587-2242 on the Hutchinson campus.

Local campus personnel have no enforcement authority over instances of criminal actions; thus campus personnel are not expected to attempt to detain a person suspected of such actions. Any intervention attempts will be viewed as voluntary. A report will be filed to include information on date, time, category, and description of the occurrence and persons witnessing and reporting the incidence.

Information to promote awareness of crime prevention tactics and to encourage students and staff to be responsible for their own safety and the security of others, will also be presented at that time. This may be accomplished through the use of video productions, brochures, speakers or any other available resources.

Information concerning the possession, use and sale of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs, and enforcement of federal and state drug laws, and descriptions of drug and alcohol abuse education programs, is also provided during orientation sessions in compliance with section 1213 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended (PL 101-226).

Campus Security

Ridgewater College complies with the Student Right to Know Act of 1990, as amended, and the Higher Education Amendment of 1992. Policies, prevention services, and crime statistics are available in Student Services on either the Hutchinson or Willmar campuses or on our webpage.

Emergency Preparedness Drills

Emergency preparedness drills are conducted regularly. Students are required to participate and follow all drill instructions as provided by the Incident Management Team or local authority assisting with the drill.

Evacuation Procedures for Individuals with Disabilities

Everyone has a responsibility to develop their own personal emergency evacuation plans, this includes individuals with disabilities or individuals who will need assistance during evacuation. If requested, the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator will work to develop a plan and consult the appropriate building and safety personnel. When developing a plan, safety needs should be determined on a case-by-case basis because it varies with each individual and building. Please contact Accessibility and Disabilities Services as soon as possible after you begin your educational experience if you need assistance in developing a plan.

Sarah Fosso, ADA Coordinator - Hutchinson Campus, sarah.fosso@ridgewater.edu, 320-234-8650, Disability Services

Jay Morrison, ADA Coordinator - Willmar Campus, jay.morrison@ridgewater.edu, 320-222-8040, Disability Services

Handicap Accessibility

Ridgewater College is committed to providing accessibility to those with disabilities. Both campuses are fully wheelchair accessible.

Immunizations

All students born after 1956 who are enrolled in more than one class are required to be in compliance with the Minnesota College Immunization Law (Minn. Statute 135A.140). This law was enacted by the Minnesota legislature in the spring of 1989 in response to the growing concern over outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, mumps, and rubella.

In order to show compliance with this law, students need to complete an immunization record including the most recent "booster" dates for tetanus (your tetanus shot must be within the last ten years) and diphtheria and also the most recent dates of your shot(s) against measles, mumps, and rubella.

Exceptions:

- You are exempt if you graduated from a Minnesota high school in 1997 or later.
- You are a transfer student from a different post-secondary school in Minnesota and your transcript or other records indicate you have met the immunization requirements.

The employees with Student Services can help you with questions about how to fill out the required forms.

Infection Control

College personnel will follow Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Hepatitis B Virus (HIV/HBV) infection control principles on campus and at clinical sites. Staff considered at risk will be offered Hepatitis B vaccination at the College's expense. Students will be encouraged to voluntarily obtain Hepatitis B vaccinations at their own expense prior to the clinical experiences.

Employees and/or students who may possibly have been exposed to HIV/HBV need to report the incident to their instructor or supervisor and family physician immediately or as soon as possible. The college Safety Administrator or designee is responsible for notifying the College's medical advisor regarding all potential exposures to HIV/HBV which occur at the college. Exposures which occur at clinical sites during scheduled class hours will require that the student notify the program director or supervising instructor and follow the protocol for treatment and recommendations of the clinical site. The College policy will apply if the clinical site has no protocol.

The College has social distancing guidelines that refer to various community, workplace, and classroom non-pharmaceutical interventions intended to limit the spread of infectious disease by reducing opportunities for close contact between individuals and groups.

Pandemic

In the event of a pandemic or locally significant disease, guidelines will be implemented to protect the health and safety of students and employees.

Specific guidelines/requirements may include but are not limited to:

- Participation in the Center for Disease Control campaigns for hand washing and covering of cough/sneeze.
- Instructing students to stay home from classes and college events if they have symptoms consistent with the pandemic or significant local disease outbreak.

Specific guidelines/requirements will be provided as information regarding the disease becomes known. It is the responsibility of all students, staff and faculty to follow these guidelines/requirements.

International Students Health Insurance

All international students attending Ridgewater College are required to purchase the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities' international student accident and illness insurance plan. International students are only allowed to register for one online class unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond the college's control (COVID for example) and they must be registered for at least 12 credits unless they are in their final semester and do not need 12 credits (if they needed to repeat a course, had an internship, etc.).

Messages for Students

It is the policy of Ridgewater College to only deliver emergency messages to students. If there is an emergency, such as an illness, accident or death in the family, our staff will relay the message to the student.

Due to factors such as campus size, the large number of students enrolled and our reluctance to interrupt classes, we cannot deliver messages which are not emergencies.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Instructors shall base the requirement for personal protection equipment on an evaluation of the hazard relative to the task(s) to be performed, conditions present, duration of use, and the hazards and potential hazards identified.
Protective equipment, including personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head, and extremities, protective clothing, respiratory devices, and protective shields and barriers, shall be used and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition by the student.

Protective eye and face equipment such as face shields, safety glass, chemical resistant goggles, etc., may be required in:

- Science, Medical Assistant, Nursing, Cosmetology, and/or Veterinary Technology classes to protect the student from the specific hazard exposure.
- All shop/lab activities while participating in or in the vicinity of activity that could result in exposure to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation. Use of industrial quality eyewear with side shields and/or face protection sufficient to protect against the specific hazard exposure will be required and enforced by the instructor. Examples of programs that may require eye and face protection may be: Art, Theater, Science labs, Cosmetology, Auto Body, Auto Mechanics, Agriculture, Electrician, Machine Tool, Welding, and Nondestructive Testing Technology.

Foot, head and hand protection must be worn when working in areas where there is a danger of foot and/or head injuries due to falling or rolling objects, or objects piercing the sole, and where hands, head and/or feet are exposed to electrical hazards. Hand protection to protect against severe cuts, severe punctures, abrasions or absorption will be required and enforced by the instructor. Programs such as Auto Body, Auto Mechanics, Agriculture, Electrician, Machine Tool, Nondestructive Testing, and Welding, may require hazard-specific PPE.

Respirators are required for Auto Body students. Prior to use of a respirator, Auto Body students are required to have completed a medical evaluation and a fit test of the approved respirator.

Students failing to comply with personal protection (PPE) requirements may be temporarily suspended from participation in said course and the registration of a student for such course may be canceled for willful, flagrant, or repeated failure to observe requirements.

Star Alert (Emergency Closing)

Star Alert is the Ridgewater College emergency notification text message system. All students are automatically opted in to this system once enrolled. In the event of an emergency that threatens life, safety, or campus operations, Star Alert will deliver a text message to the cell number and/or e-mail address of registered users indicating the nature of the emergency, appropriate actions, and where to go for further information. The system will also be used to send notification of campus-wide closures or cancellations such as those due to severe weather. This is a critical component to the college's emergency communications plan. It is being used in conjunction with other communication tools, including campus e-mail, telephone broadcasts, public address systems (Hutchinson campus), and the college website.

Please note: While text messaging and emails from Star Alert are good, 100% delivery rates cannot be guaranteed because of uncontrollable circumstances through the wireless carriers.

Weather & Emergency Closing or Cancellation Procedure

When weather conditions are severe, the college president may cancel all classes for a period of time or close one or both campuses entirely in accordance with Minnesota State Policy 4.4. If there is severe weather in the area, there are many ways to determine if classes have been canceled or the campus closed:

- Star Alert emergency text message notification.
- Class cancellations on the website
- Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
- Check your Ridgewater College email
- Local radio stations:
  - KWLM/KQIC - Willmar 1340 AM
  - Big Country - Willmar 100.1 FM
  - Q102 - Willmar 102.5 FM
  - KDUZ - Hutchinson 1260 AM
  - KARP - Hutchinson 106.9 FM

Students are encouraged to use their own best judgment regarding the weather and safety of travel.

Tobacco Use Policy

Ridgewater College is committed to providing a smoke and tobacco-free environment for students, employees, and visitors. The College prohibits the use of smokeless tobacco, smoking and the use of nicotine delivery devices on college premises. Use of tobacco products and nicotine delivery devices in college-owned or state-owned vehicles is also prohibited. The use, sale, free distribution, or advertising of tobacco products (in any form) and electronic delivery devices (more commonly referred to as e-cigarettes) are always prohibited in and on all college-owned, leased or operated property, including but not limited to any buildings, grounds, walkways, arenas, playing fields, owned vehicles, and other motorized equipment. No designated smoking areas or ashtrays will be provided.

The policy is applicable to all campus persons, including students, faculty, staff, administrators, outside contractors, and the general public. To the extent possible, the College will provide access to cessation programs to help students and employees who presently use tobacco products. Information on cessation resources can be viewed anytime online or by calling 651-201-5000.

Definitions:

Smokeless Tobacco: Chewing tobacco (leaves) or tobacco powder (snuff) that allows the nicotine to be absorbed through the mucous membrane of the oral cavity or digestive tract.

Smoking: Inhaling, exhaling, burning, or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other lighted or heated tobacco or other product intended for inhalation (such as marijuana), in any manner or in any form. Smoking also includes the use of an e-cigarette which creates a vapor, in any manner or any form, or the use of any oral device for the purpose of circumventing the prohibition of smoking in this Policy.

Nicotine Delivery Devise: Any electronic oral device, such as one composed of a heating element, battery, and/or electronic circuit, which provides a vapor of nicotine or any other substances for inhalation. The term shall include any such device, whether manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, or under any other product name or descriptor, but does not include any

product specifically approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in medical treatment, such as an asthma inhaler.

College Premises/Property: Any building or structure, athletic playing field, parking lot or any other outdoor property owned, leased, or contracted by the College; as well as vehicles owned, leased, or contracted by the College.

Enforcement:

All Ridgewater College students and employees are expected to share the responsibility for informing others of this policy. Problems unresolved with students will be referred to the Dean of Students and will be subject to discipline in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of this policy by employees will be handled through their supervisor and will be subject to discipline in accordance with the appropriate bargaining agreement. Vendor and contractor violations will be reported to the Ridgewater College Business Office for appropriate reinforcement of contract expectations.

Exceptions:

Tobacco use in private vehicles in college parking areas is permitted as long as tobacco users demonstrate respect for individuals and the environment. Tobacco use or products for instructional purposes in laboratory and classroom instruction/experiments, or artistic purposes is permitted, but all research, educational, and/or artistic purposes that involve the use of tobacco on campus, must be approved by the President or their designee, and such use must be preceded by reasonable advance notice to the public. This policy does not apply to specific activities used in connection with the practice of cultural activities including those of American Indians that are in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, 42 U.S.C. sections 1996 and 1996a. All ceremonial use exceptions must be approved in advance by the President of the College or their designee.

Vehicle Use by Students

Any student who needs to drive on college business must visit with their supervisor and be approved through the process described in the vehicle use policy.

All students (and staff) wishing to drive on college business must complete a vehicle use agreement form and be approved before being allowed to travel.

Campus Life

Athletics

Ridgewater College is proud to offer a variety of athletic opportunities to eligible students. We offer a variety of Division III and club sport activities. The most up-to-date information on schedules, offerings, coaches and their contact information, etc., can be found on our website

Bulletin Boards

Ridgewater College, an agency of the State of Minnesota, allows use of College facilities by the community when they are not needed for curricular or extra-curricular programs. Click here to read the bulletin board postings policy.

Please direct questions and/or seek guidance regarding approvals, location and methods from the following individuals:
Hutchinson Campus:
Mandi Lighthizer-Schmidt | 320-222-6090
mandi.lighthizer-schmidt@ridgewater.edu
Willmar Campus:
Joslyn Pappadackis | 320-222-6089
joslyn.pappadackis@ridgewater.edu

Fitness Center

Ridgewater College's Fitness Center serves the fitness needs of all students, faculty, and staff on campus and is free to current students. The Willmar Fitness Center is located in the Fine Arts building in Room F105 and the Hutchinson Fitness Center is located in Room 240. Hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Center is occasionally closed for class sessions, during the summer, and anytime the college is closed. All users are required to sign a log book.

Fundraising

1. Any approved club, interest group, student club, student activity or class must submit a Fundraising Activity Approval form at least two weeks prior to any fundraising activity on campus.
2. Approval for any campus fundraising must be obtained from the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinator on the respective campus as well as the Foundation and President's offices.
3. All clubs, organizations, etc., must abide by the following rules:
   - Organization members are to purchase the materials needed for their respective fundraiser. If intending to seek donated materials for your fundraiser, those items must also be preapproved by the Foundation Office.
   - All fundraising involving food sales on the College campuses must comply with guidelines established between college and private food vendors.
   - Any club, organization, etc., that does fundraising without applying for and obtaining permission is subject to losing their charter as an approved club or interest group, forfeiting all proceeds from the fundraiser or both.

Identification Cards for Students

Each student will be issued a nontransferable Warrior ID card which will provide identification for the test center, library, student center, athletic events, theater tickets, Student Life equipment rental, registration and financial aid. Warrior ID cards are free. Other identification cards specific to academic programs will cost $1 per card printed. ID cards can be obtained at the Student Services desk on each campus.
To obtain a Warrior ID card you may stop at our front desk on either campus or request electronically through our web page (https://ridgewater.edu/student-services-activities/warrior-card-discounts). This page also lists a number of local discounts available in our communities by showing your card.

Invited Speakers and Programs on Campus

The policy which follows shall be in effect at Ridgewater College:

1. Speakers and programs arranged for a class by an instructor are the sole responsibility of that instructor, and require no further approval.
2. Speakers and programs arranged by a club, interest group, or organization for the club, interest group, or organization, are the sole responsibility of that group, and require no further approval.
3. Speakers and programs for the college, other than those arranged by (a) instructors and (b) clubs/interest groups/organizations as previously indicated, are the sole responsibility of the committee officially established for this purpose, and require no further approval.
4. In all instances the use of facilities shall be arranged through the established procedure of the College.
5. In all instances any financial obligations shall be approved through the normal budget procedure and shall be within an approved budget.
6. No individual or group shall be allowed to appear on campus for the purpose of the promotion or sale of any commercial product under this policy.
7. The sponsorship or a speaker does not imply approval or endorsement of the views expressed, either by the sponsor or by the College.

It is understood that this policy refers to invited speakers and is not intended to limit the right of free speech for members of the college community.

Library

The Ridgewater College libraries (Willmar and Hutchinson campuses) hold a print collection of over 50,000 volumes including 100,000 electronic books, over 250 unique magazine & journal titles, and many other materials available on- or offline. The library collections are searched through the PALS online catalog. Additionally, materials from the collections of 125+ libraries in Minnesota are available for free through the state supported Minitex program via interlibrary loan. Numerous general and subject-specific online databases provide citations and full text articles to magazines, journals, and newspaper articles, books, and a variety of other reference sources. Computers are available to students in each campus library for research and study. Both libraries also offer a laptop lending program for students. Reference services are provided to students individually, through classroom instruction, and library orientation sessions by the professional librarian. A professional librarian

is also available 24/7 via chat service to assist with your research.

The Willmar campus library is housed in the center of the library building while the Hutchinson campus library is in the northwest corner of the main building (Room 130).

Lost and Found

Items found anywhere on campus should be turned in to the front desk. Unclaimed items will be held for 60 days. During that time, items may be claimed by the owner. After 60 days, the items will be donated or disposed of.

Parking Policy

Ridgewater College is required by state statute to charge a parking permit fee to adequately support the operation, maintenance and development of campus parking facilities.

The authority for establishing traffic and parking regulations on the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities campuses is granted by Minnesota Statute Section 169.966, Subd. 8 (1988). These regulations have been approved by the Ridgewater College President pursuant to the statute.

Vehicle Registration

1. All employees, students, and renters will pay a parking fee. The parking fee is approved by the College President up to the maximum amount set by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees.
2. The College will charge the parking fee to employees and students on the basis of academic terms: fall and spring.
3. The College will apply the parking fee equitably to all employees and credit-based students. The College President or designee will notify employees and students of changes as they occur.
4. Student Parking Fee:
   a. Students will pay a per-semester-credit parking fee, up to a maximum fee per semester.
   b. The parking fee will be collected at the time of payment of tuition.
   c. Parking fees will not be assessed for:
      i. Completely online - asynchronous courses. 100% of instruction is online with no in-per son or synchronous meetings and no proctored exams.
      ii. Completely online - synchronous courses. 100% of instruction is online with no in-per son meetings and no in-person proctored exams. Course has required synchronous online meetings or activities off-campus classes and online classes
      iii. Off campus courses - 100% of instruction is held off campus
   d. Per Minnesota State Board Policy, there are no fee waivers for the parking fee.

Parking Locations

1. Designated parking for visitors is located on the Willmar campus in Lot A East and D West. Designated parking for visitors on the Hutchinson campus is located west of the main building by Student Lot D. Visitors parking is available in front of of each campus at no cost.
2. Handicapped parking is open to those with a state-issued handicapped permit. Permits must be properly displayed. Students and staff may park in any approved marked handicap spot regardless of their student/employment status.
3. No parking is permitted by anyone on service roads, yellow marked areas, and/or posted areas.
4. Students and staff are responsible to park between designated parking spaces.

Refund Policy

Refunds for parking fees will be made if a student withdraws from the College according to the tuition and fees refund policy.

Parking Regulations

1. Parking at the College is on a first-come, first-served basis.
2. In compliance with MN Statute 169.346, only vehicles with a state-issued handicapped parking permit are allowed in designated handicapped parking space. Parking permits must be displayed and be clearly visible.
3. Visitors' parking spaces are reserved for guests. Employees and students should not use the Visitor parking.
4. Vehicles must be parked only within the designated parking spaces in the paved parking lots, in compliance with all traffic and parking signs and should not impede traffic flow or create a hazard to persons or property.
5. Vehicles must not be parked in entryways, driveways, roadways, fire lanes, loading zones,

medians, on the grass or sidewalks.

6. Non-approved overnight parking at the College is not allowed.
7. Illegally parked vehicles will be ticketed by the local police department and/or towed. The College cannot rescind parking tickets issued by the police and will not intercede with the police department on behalf of the owners of ticketed vehicles. (For example, unauthorized vehicles parked in handicap spaces or areas posted as no parking zones.)
8. Owners of towed vehicles are solely and personally liable and responsible for towing and impoundment fees, as well as for any damage claims stemming from the tow and must personally resolve towing fees and claims with the towing company. The College is not responsible for the costs of towing and impoundment, or for any damages incurred. The College will not intercede with the towing company on behalf of the owner of a towed vehicle.
9. The College is not responsible for personal vehicles or property within the vehicles while in the parking lot.

Responsibility

1. The person in whose name the vehicle is registered shall be held liable for all violations attached to the vehicle and is subject to any and all fines or disciplinary action resulting from violations. In the event the vehicle does not have a permit, the registered owner of the vehicle will be assessed a parking violation fee.
2. Anyone operating or parking vehicles on campus is responsible for becoming knowledgeable with and complying with all regulations and posted signs pertaining to the operation and parking of a motor vehicle.
3. Physical damage to a vehicle, or loss of property due to a crime or accident, should be reported to the city Police department.
4. It is the responsibility of the person driving the vehicle to drive slowly and carefully.
5. The College is not responsible for any damage to vehicles.

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

Ridgewater College is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and recognizes them as our official National Honor Society. The group has been very active, and both the members and advisors have received several awards and grants in recent years. Students are invited to join based on meeting eligibility requirements. More information and contact members for the current advisors can be found online on our website.

Student Involvement in Decision Making

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (Minnesota State) is committed to student involvement in the governance of state colleges. In order that such involvement may be accomplished on an orderly basis, students at Ridgewater College shall establish a forum and student government with a constitution which spells out how representatives of the student bodies are to be selected and how the form of student government is to be ratified by the student body. The College President shall recognize the student government as the official representative of the students, upon receipt of evidence that the student body has approved the constitution of the student government.

Students shall have the right to present their views to the College President/designee(s) on all matters related to the six areas listed below:

a. General matters
b. Personnel
c. Student affairs
d. Curriculum
e. Facilities
f. Fiscal matters

Meetings for an Exchange of Views (EOV) may be initiated by either the students or the College President/designee. Meetings shall be at times mutually agreeable. Agenda items shall be in the hands of the College President/designee at least two weeks before the meeting. The College President/designee shall distribute an agenda at least one week prior to the meeting. All time requirements may be waived by mutual consent.

Each campus Student Senate, or a committee primarily comprised of students appointed by the student government, or a committee agreed to by the Student Senate, shall be the primary group authorized to make written, official recommendations concerning student activity program operation and program budgets to the College President or designee.

If the College President or designee does not concur with the written recommendation, the President or des-

ignee will confer with the student government/ committee before any final decisions are made (unless the situation makes conferring impossible). When such conferring takes place, the President or designee will discuss the detailed programs and budgets proposed, and the reason for this proposal, before making a final decision. The college student government shall have the sole right to charter clubs, interest groups, and organizations (non-activity) on campus. This policy will be in effect at each Minnesota State college unless the college submits a substitute policy approved by the student government and the administration and has it approved by the Board of Trustees.

Student Life - Clubs, Interest Groups, and Organizations

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 Student Life and Student Senate 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.

Student Life Budget Committee

A. Establishment and Membership

The Student Life Committee will be made up as follows:

- Up to 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 Coordinator from each campus (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 Budget 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 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:

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 empowers diverse learners to reach their full potential and enrich their lives through personalized and relevant education in an accessible, supportive and inclusive 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 FUNDS MAY BE USED TO FUND:
- Up to a maximum of $200.00 of each clubs' student life allocation each academic year to host a club membership gathering or to cater a meal for an off-campus event. This would be intended to help students connect with each other and promote team building
- Welcome Day prizes or supplies for their table (or for any other tabling opportunities to promote or showcase their club)
- Travel expenses for club trips (excluding field trips specifically for academic programs)
- The purchase of apparel (or other items that remain in their personal possession) for advisors or students, as long as each individual contributes 50% of the costs of the item that will remain in their possession (the 50% may come from the club's fundraising account, if available and appropriate)
- Conference registration fees and lodging expenses
- Costs related to sponsoring/hosting a campus wide event, including food, as long as it serves a broader population outside of its club membership and is advertised at least two weeks prior to the event indicating such.

This list is not exhaustive or intended to impose any limits, they are simply examples. If you have questions about the use of funds, please direct it to the Student Life Coordinator on either campus.

STUDENT LIFE FUNDS SHALL NOT BE USED TO FUND:
- Graduation banquets and graduation receptions
- 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, or 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)
- Facilities/maintenance/renovation projects unrelated to Student Life
- Individual dues or membership fees, but can be used for club organizational dues that cover the entire club
- Personal recreational equipment rental or purchase
- Items for personal use

Any unspent student life monies are swept from individual club accounts and rolled to student life reserves at the end of each fiscal year.

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 fund rules. If a club is inactive for five (5) or more years and has fundraised dollars remaining, they will be closed out and evenly disbursed to all current clubs' fundraising accounts on their respective campus.

All fundraised dollars are held in separate college accounts and roll over from year to year.

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, ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation.

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 Member ship 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 club kick-off meeting and a spring club check-in 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, communicated to the club advisors, and 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.
- 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, if offered. All meetings between clubs and the Student Senate 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).

7. Be knowledgeable about Ridgewater College purchasing policies and procedures. Direct all questions regarding purchases to the Business Office.

Failure to fulfill the advisor responsibilities, as indicated above, could result in future non-renewal of a club advisor position. Faculty who serve as club advisor will be paid a stipend in the spring of each year at the rate defined in the MSCF contract. Staff advisors are not eligible for club stipends but may perform the duties of a club advisor during their workday with their supervisor's approval.

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: 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 and 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.

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, ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation.

TO SECURE APPROVAL, AN INTEREST GROUP MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

- Have at least five 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.

Questions or suggestions about Student Life should be directed to the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinator on the respective campus.

Student Senate

Student leadership is centered in the Student Senate. New members are elected by an interview process and are voted in by current Senate members. The Senate sponsors campus activities that help to promote social, cultural, intellectual, legislative and recreational activities, and represents the student body on matters of policy through consultation with the College administration. Members of the Student Senates develop leadership skills through opportunities to

practice decision making, team building, and problem solving. Interested students should contact the Student Activities and Wellness Coordinator.

Use of College Facilities

Student organizations sanctioned by the Student Senate may use school facilities for meetings at no charge providing no additional custodial services are required and the meetings are scheduled on days when school is in session. Student organizations may communicate with their advisor or the Library to schedule a room for their organization's activity.

RIDGEWATER
COLLEGE
A member of Minnesota State