

**POLICY****TUITION, FEES, WAIVERS, AND RELATED FUNCTIONS**

The MnSCU Board of Trustees has the authority to set the tuition rate for the College. The President is responsible for consulting with appropriate groups and making tuition recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The President also will consult on campus and within Board Policy to set the College fee structure. The College will ensure that its procedures regarding tuition and fees are in compliance with MnSCU Board Policy 5.12 and MnSCU Procedure 5.12.1, which can be found online at <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/512.html> and <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/procedure/512p1.html>.

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*History:*

*08.13.07 Adopted*

**PROCEDURES****TUITION, FEES, WAIVERS, AND RELATED FUNCTIONS****Registration Adjustment**

A *registration adjustment* is an addition, deletion or change made to a student's course schedule. Registration adjustments include, but are not limited to:

- a. dropping and/or adding courses
- b. withdrawing from a single course
- c. withdrawing from all courses

It is the student's responsibility to initiate drops or withdrawals. A student who stops attending a course prior to the completion of the semester without following the College policy and procedures will receive the earned grade for the course and will be charged all appropriate fees. Such students will be denied any refund and may be deprived of future acceptance at other academic institutions. Failure to attend class does not in itself constitute cancellation. The College reserves the right to drop a student from a course.

**Dropping and/or Adding Courses**

Students may add courses through the online registration process through the first five (5) business days of fall and spring terms and for the first three (3) business days of summer term. Business days are defined as Monday through Friday, excluding posted holidays. For any course that does not begin the first week of the semester, a student must add the course before the second scheduled class session. Any exceptions must be approved in writing by the instructor and the appropriate Instructional Dean and processed through the Records and Registration Office. Tuition must be paid by the tuition due date.

Students may add courses at any time during the semester if the course has not started and there are openings in the course.

For courses that start the first week of the semester, a student may drop these courses through the first five (5) business days of that semester to receive a tuition adjustment. For courses that do not start the first week of the semester, a student has the right to attend one class meeting and still retain the right to drop the course. The drop must be accomplished prior to the second class meeting. Students may drop courses through the online registration process. Courses dropped within the drop/add period do not appear on the transcript.

For flex lab and independent study courses, students have the first five business days of the semester or the first five days after registration (whichever is later) to drop the course. The registration date counts as the first day, and days are counted as business days, not calendar days or scheduled class days.

Drops made after the add/drop period are sometimes back-dated to within the add/drop period in order to generate a 100% tuition refund. Once the proper paperwork, as described below, is completed and approved, it will be forwarded to the Records and Registration Office for processing. The Records and

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Registration Office will then forward it to the Business Office and Financial Aid Office for any necessary financial adjustments. Following is a list of situations where back-dating is acceptable:

1. Switching sections of same course.
2. Switching to lower or higher level course.
3. Course has not yet started.
4. Course was cancelled.
5. College error.

Item #1 and Item #2 require approval of the Instructional Dean. This approval is obtained by completing a Registration Adjustment Form with the Instructor's and Dean's signature, with appropriate supporting documentation attached.

Item #3 requires a completed Registration Adjustment Form but can be processed in the Records and Registration Office without a Dean's signature as long as the course has not yet started.

For courses that start on or after the first five instructional days of a semester (or first three instructional days of a summer session), a student has the right to attend one class meeting and still retain the right to drop the course. The drop must be accomplished prior to the second class meeting. A Registration Adjustment Form containing the appropriate Instructional Dean's signature must be submitted to the Records and Registration Office in order for the drop to be processed. These drops may be done online. Any drop may result in an adjustment of the student's financial aid award.

Item #4 requires approval of the appropriate Customized Training Coordinator or the Instructional Dean if the course is cancelled after the five-day add/drop period. Approval may be given via email.

Item #5 requires approval of an Instructional Dean on a Registration Adjustment Form, with appropriate supporting documentation attached.

Withdrawing From a Single Course

After the drop period of a term has elapsed, a student has the right to withdraw from a course by submitting a signed and completed Registration Adjustment Form to the Records and Registration Office per the following schedule:

<u>Scheduled Course Length</u>	<u>Number of Business Days to Withdraw after the First Class Day</u>
1 week	2 days
2-4 weeks	6 days
5-7 weeks	17 days
8-10 weeks	29 days
11-13 weeks	40 days
14-16 weeks	51 days

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Students withdrawing during the withdrawal period receive a grade of “W” on their transcript. While a “W” grade 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. A student is thus directed to obtain the instructor’s signature on the Registration Adjustment Form, thereby confirming that the instructor has been made aware of the student’s intention to withdraw. If the instructor’s signature is not obtained, the student must present the Registration Adjustment Form to the appropriate Instructional Dean for further action. 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 cheating or plagiarism. 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 extenuating circumstances must have his/her withdrawal approved by the instructor and the appropriate Instructional Dean. This approval is indicated by the course instructor’s signature on the Registration Adjustment Form.

**Withdrawing 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.

**Refund of Tuition and Fees:**

A student who receives confirmation of total withdrawal from the Records and Registration Office is eligible for a refund according to the following schedule. Refund checks generally take two to three weeks to process and return to the student. The effective date of a drop or total withdrawal is the date the request is received by the Records and Registration Office.

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For fall and spring terms:

<b>Withdrawal Period</b>	<b>Refund %</b>
1st through 5th business day of term	100
6th through 10th business day of the term	75
11th through 15th business day of the term	50
16th through 20th business day of the term	25
after 20th business day of the term	0

For summer term and other terms at least three weeks but less than ten weeks in length:

<b>Withdrawal Period</b>	<b>Refund %</b>
1st through 5th business day of the term	100
6th through 10th business day of the term	50
after the 10th business day of the term	0

For course terms less than three weeks in length:

<b>Withdrawal Period</b>	<b>Refund %</b>
1st business day of the term	100
2nd through 3rd business day of the term	50
after the 3rd business day of the term	0

The refund schedule is based on the policy adopted by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees. This policy can be found online at <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/512.html>.

A financial aid recipient who completely withdraws from a term prior to the 60% point of that term is subject to the return of federal aid not earned, as well as the refund calculation for the Minnesota State Grant and the SELF Loan. Examples of both calculations are available from the Financial Aid Office at the student's request.

The responsibility to repay unearned federal aid is shared by the College and the student in proportion to the aid each is assumed to possess. The College's and student's shares of the unearned aid are allocated among the following financial aid programs in the following order: Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, Federal Subsidized Stafford Loan, Federal Perkins Loan, PLUS Loan, Federal Pell Grant, and Federal SEOG. *Note: The College's share will be allocated before the student's share.* Any remaining unearned

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aid is the responsibility of the student. The unearned aid must be collected from the student and subsequently allocated among the federal aid programs in the order indicated above.

The College will calculate and return its share of unearned federal funds no later than thirty days after it determines that the student withdrew. A student will return his/her share of unearned aid attributable to a loan under the terms and conditions of the promissory note. The College may allow a student to repay unearned aid attributable to a grant under a payment arrangement satisfactory to the College. This applies when a student withdraws from the College or it is determined that he/she is no longer in attendance.

**Special Tuition Rates****Reciprocity:**

Special agreements have been reached between various states allowing students to pay tuition rates which are less than the non-resident rates. These arrangements are called reciprocity agreements. There are currently reciprocity agreements between Minnesota and Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Manitoba. There is also the Midwest Student Exchange program with Kansas, Michigan, Missouri and Nebraska.

Students from states covered by reciprocity agreements must apply to their home state. Applications are available from the Ridgewater College Admissions Office. Once the home state has processed the application, the College will be notified. Students with approved reciprocity agreements will be charged the reciprocity rate for their state of residence.

**Non-Resident:**

If a student lives in a state that has a reciprocity agreement with Minnesota, tuition and fees will be based on the student's home state reciprocity agreement. Students should contact the Admissions Office for further information. Ridgewater College allows students who reside in states that do not have reciprocity agreements with the state of Minnesota to pay in-state tuition rates.

**Senior Citizen:**

Minnesota residents 62 years of age or older may enroll in credit courses on a space-available basis without payment of tuition and activity fees. The senior citizen rate applies only to students who are not collecting financial aid. An administrative fee of \$20 per credit for credit courses will be charged to a senior citizen enrolled for credit. A senior citizen who wishes to take a course but not receive credit may "audit" a credit-based course at no charge. A student wishing to audit a class must declare this intention at the time of registration. In either situation, the student will be assessed mandatory parking and statewide student association fees. The student will also be responsible for purchasing books and course materials. A senior citizen may register for a course 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.

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A senior citizen may also enroll without payment of tuition and activity fees 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.

**Waivers**

The President or designee may waive amounts due to the College for the following reasons:

- employee benefit provided by a bargaining agreement
- death of a student
- medical situation
- military duty
- college error
- course conditions (a course condition exists when the location or timing of the course results in the student not being able to use the service intended by a fee)
- natural disasters or other situations beyond the control of the College
- Summer Session I & II 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> day course withdrawal

A student interested in pursuing a waiver must complete a student petition form which includes the request, the rationale and supporting documentation. The completed form must be submitted to the waiver authority, currently the Dean of Student Services.

**MnSCU Employee Tuition Waiver:**

Employees of MnSCU or their dependents may be eligible for a tuition waiver based on the employee's employment contract. Students may apply for this waiver by completing a waiver petition, which is initiated in the College's Human Resources Office. Students are responsible for paying fees associated with courses.

**Students Called into Active Armed Services:**

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:

- a. The student may be given a full refund of tuition. Students receiving financial aid who choose this option should be aware that they may be liable for any required refunds of state or federal financial aid funds.

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- b. 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 in this manner may not be counted toward a student's enrollment load.
- c. If, in the instructor's judgment, the student has completed sufficient course work to earn a grade of C or better, the student may be given credit for completion of a course.

Students should visit with a counselor to discuss the options available to them.

This procedure has been developed in accordance with MnSCU Board Policy 5.12 and MnSCU Procedure 5.12.1, which can be found online at <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/512.html> and <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/procedure/512p1.html>.

**Tuition and Fee Payment Due Date**

At Ridgewater College, the act of registration is considered an acknowledgement on the part of the student that he or she will attend and pay for the registered courses. Fee statements are available online, and are not mailed to students.

**Tuition and Fee Due Date:**

Tuition and fees are due six (6) business days before the start of each term. Tuition must be received in the Business Office by 4:30 p.m. on the tuition due date.

A student shall have his/her registration cancelled for non-payment when payment is not made in full, as defined by the established due date. A student registering after the tuition and fee due date is expected to make payment in full at the time of registration. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the student's course registrations. Cancellation for non-payment will occur periodically, at the College's discretion.

The Director of Business Services will cancel a student's courses on the morning after the tuition and fee due date. After the cancellation list has been run, a new candidate list will be run to collect the names of students who have enrolled and have not made payment in full since the original list was developed. These students, who have not made payment in full, will have their registrations cancelled on the sixth business day of the term. Refer to MnSCU Board Policy 5.12 and MnSCU Board Procedure 5.12.3 at <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/512.html> and <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/procedure/512p3.html>.

**Definitions:**

*Payment in Full:* Payment in full is defined through any appropriate combination of (a) cash, check, money order or credit card; (b) financial aid applied to tuition and fees; (c) an approved tuition and fee payment plan; (d) an approved waiver, such that the combined total is at least equal to the amount of tuition and fees owed; (e) a third party authorization on file with the Cashier stating which state or federal agency/program is to be billed for the student's tuition and fees.

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*Financial Aid Applied to Tuition and Fees:* Once the College receives confirmation from the federal government that a student's FAFSA has been processed, the "Financial Aid Applied to Tuition and Fees" requirement shall be met. Financial aid will be applied to the student's account the second week of the semester. Only amounts of financial aid in excess of the outstanding balance will be disbursed to the student.

*Safe Harbor Payment:* A student may pay \$300 down in order to be excluded from the registration cancellation for non-payment process.

*Veterans:* A student who is receiving veteran educational benefits must contact the Counseling Secretary in charge of veterans' assistance. A veteran who has submitted the appropriate paperwork will not have his/her registration cancelled for non-payment.

*Payment Plans:* A student may meet the requirement of payment in full for tuition and fees at or before the tuition and fee due date by entering into an approved payment plan. A payment plan may be the primary method of payment, or it may supplement other forms of payment such as financial aid or tuition waiver. The College has a payment plan, called FACTS, which allows students to make monthly payments for tuition and fees. Through the e-Cashier on the College's website, you will be able to:

- Arrange for monthly payments
- Arrange for a down-payment and monthly payments
- Pay in full

Through an agreement with FACTS, payments will be automatically processed each month (either on the 5th or 20th), either by automated bank payments or by charging payments to Visa, MasterCard, or Discover. This is not a loan, and there is no interest/finance fee. The only fee to budget payments through FACTS is a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$25.00 per semester. A student who has any scheduling changes and is enrolled in this program will see his/her payments automatically corrected. An email from FACTS will be sent.

The application process is quick and easy. A student can sign up for FACTS online at the College's website. Contact the Business Office at 320-222-5741 or 320-234-8528 with any questions.

Third Party and Private Scholarship Funds:

If a third party agency is providing payment, whether partial or full, on behalf of a student for the cost of his/her college charges for tuition, student fees, course fees, textbooks, etc., a written authorization must be provided to the Business Office before the payment due date of each term. Depending on the funding source, there are different requirements.

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Send authorizations (vouchers) to:      Business Office - Third Party  
Ridgewater College  
PO Box 1097, 2101 15<sup>th</sup> Ave NW  
Willmar, MN 56201

The College does not accept authorizations specifying that payment will be delayed until the final grades for the term are posted.

The third party authorization is recorded on the student's account, and the College invoices the third party agency if all information is provided. If the third party agency notifies the College that the authorization has been cancelled, the student then becomes financially liable for the College charges on his/her account.

Funding from third party agencies is considered financial assistance to the student. Therefore, the authorization amount is included in the student's overall financial aid award package.

**Late Fees:**

A late fee will be charged to a student's account each semester when an outstanding balance remains after the published due date. The late fee will be applied thirty days after the published due date. The late fee is \$30 and is subject to change without notice. The Director of Business Services is the only person authorized to cancel a late fee.

A student with a tuition balance is not permitted to register for subsequent terms until full payment of that balance is made. In addition, transcripts and/or diplomas will not be released until full payment is made.

**2008-2009 Fee Amounts/Definitions**

**Credit by Exam Fee:** (Transfer courses = \$25/credit; technical courses = \$25/lecture credit, \$50/lab credit)  
This optional fee applies to a student who feels s/he has sufficient prior knowledge of a course to test out with a passing score rather than take the course. A student must obtain a "Credit by Examination/Test-Out" form from the Counseling Office, complete the form, and follow the instructions provided on the form. Students are encouraged to follow this process prior to registering for the course.

**Health Service Fee:** (\$0.85/credit)

This fee is designed to provide health information for students and to address health and safety issues that affect the College's educational environment.

**Laptops**

Several programs require students to lease a laptop computer. Details regarding cost and laptop requirements are available through the Admissions Office.

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This fee is collected by the College and sent to the Minnesota State College Student Association, which represents students in matters related to students' rights, legislation, etc.

Parking Fee: (\$2.05/credit; maximum of \$32.80/semester)

This fee is mandated by the Minnesota legislature and designed to provide repair and replacement of parking lots. Students who demonstrate that they do not use campus parking facilities may file a parking waiver form to receive a refund. Waiver forms are available at the Main Reception Desk or at the Business Office on either campus.

Personal Property Fee: (Varies)

Colleges may charge students the actual cost of property and services. The fee shall be for items that become the personal property of a student and have an educational or personal value beyond the classroom or for services for or on behalf of the student.

Prior Learning Experience Fee: (Transfer courses = \$15/credit; technical courses = \$15/lecture credit, \$30/lab credit)

This fee is charged to students who make application to use prior experiential learning for transfer toward course credits. A "Request for Prior Learning Experience Credit" form can be obtained from the Counseling Office.

Student Life Fee: (\$6.65/credit)

This fee is to support student activities at the College. Activities include dances, clubs, intramurals, guest speakers/entertainers, etc.

Technology Fee: (\$7.25/credit)

This fee is for updating and maintaining access to technology.

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*History:*

*08.13.07 Adopted*

*07.10.08 Revised with Updated Fee Amounts*