SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FAQs:  
Frequently Asked Questions  
(Updated: 9-1-15)

1. Who is eligible for Ridgewater College Foundation Scholarships?  
   In general, you must be an incoming or current Ridgewater College student to apply for the Ridgewater College Foundation scholarships, although there are a few exceptions*.  (High school students attending Ridgewater under PSEO may not apply until the spring of their senior year for Fall scholarships).

*EXCEPTIONS:  Heritage Bank and Pioneer Heritage Insurance scholarships are available to students who attend other colleges besides Ridgewater College.  Students can apply for these scholarships through the Ridgewater College Foundation’s online scholarship application.

2. How do I apply for scholarships?  
   The entire application process takes place online using the Award Spring scholarship program which is accessible only through our web site.  (Only on rare occasions for special scholarships do we offer or accept paper applications).  There is a very helpful “How to Apply Instructions” document on the web site that details all of the steps and walks you through each part of the application.  In summary, the steps for applying include:

   a) Obtain a copy of your most recent (unofficial) transcript and one letter of recommendation.  It is helpful to do this before registering on Award Spring and beginning the application process, as you will need to upload these items (PDF or Word format).

   b) Go to www.ridgewater.edu/scholarships and click the “Apply Now” link to access Award Spring.  Use your email address and a password to register and create your account. Once registered, you can login and out as many times as you need to before completing your application.

   c) Provide the information requested on each section of the application, including personal information, academic information, financial information, qualification questions, and personal statement and recommendations.  Once you complete each section, click “NEXT” to proceed to the next section.  Upload any required documents (transcript and recommendation letters).

3. How many Foundation scholarships can I apply for?  
   You may apply for as many scholarships as Award Spring finds for you.  The qualification wizard will match you to the scholarships for which you appear to be qualified for, based on the information you provided in your application.  Award Spring will “auto apply” you for these scholarships, unless there is an additional requirement involved.

4. How do I know which scholarships are available and which ones I should apply for?  
   Award Spring matches you to potential scholarships, based on the information you provide in your application.  To learn which scholarships are currently being offered, you should review the “Listing of Available Scholarships” provided on the web site.

5. What are my chances of getting a scholarship?  
   The number of available scholarships and applicant pool changes from semester to semester, so this is very difficult, if not impossible, to predict.  In general terms, approximately 300-400 students out of the approximately 1000+ students who apply each year will receive a scholarship from the Foundation.

6. When is the application deadline?  
   Our deadlines are end of day on October 15 and April 15 each year.  Scholarships are offered twice per year -- once in the fall and again in the spring.

7. What tips or suggestions do you have for me as I complete the application form?  
   a.  READ THE INSTRUCTIONS and gather the required materials before doing the online application.
b. Fill in each section of the application form completely, honestly, and accurately. Answer all of the questions. We will be able to confirm such things as your completed credits, enrolled major, cumulative GPA, etc. before reviewing your application, so if you “stretch the truth”, we will catch it and you may be disqualified from receiving any scholarships if you provided inaccurate information.

c. Use proper grammar and capitalization. Typos, blanks, and/or incomplete or inaccurate information may count against you in the review process.

d. Take time to thoroughly answer the Personal Statement essay questions. Be sure to answer/include all of the elements that are required for each question. We recommend that you prepare your answers in Word and save them ahead of time. Then, as you complete the online application, you can copy and paste your answers into the application.

e. Make sure your current name and any other prior names that you have had, as well as your student ID, are on ALL documents that you upload/attach to your application!

8. Why do I need to provide a transcript when I already sent one to the college when I was admitted?

While you may have provided a transcript to the college upon your admission, the Foundation does not have access to the college’s student files. You must provide another unofficial copy of your transcript to the Foundation, uploaded* with your application. If we do not receive it, your application will be deemed incomplete. If you are unable to upload your transcript, contact the Foundation for assistance.

9. Which transcript(s) should I provide? I got my Ridgewater transcript from the counseling office (or from E-Services) and it doesn’t have my high school GPA on it; also, because this is my first semester, I don’t have a Ridgewater GPA. I’m confused. Help!

If you are in your first semester at Ridgewater and this is your first college ever attended, we want your high school transcript which shows courses completed and grades received.

If you have attended another college for at least one full semester before coming to Ridgewater and this is your first semester at Ridgewater, then we want your transcript from the last college you attended showing courses completed and grades received.

If you have completed at least one semester at Ridgewater College, then we only want your Ridgewater transcript, also known as a Student Academic Record. (Do not send us your DARS). The unofficial transcript may be obtained and printed by the student through E-Services or through the college’s registration office.

There is no need to send multiple transcripts … just your most recent one showing courses completed and grades received.

10. Does the transcript need to be an original, certified, and in a sealed envelope?

No, no and no. An unofficial copy of your transcript is sufficient. Do not upload your report cards, course schedules, degree audit report (DAR), test scores, immunization records, etc.. We just need to see the transcript with courses completed and grades received.

11. I don’t know what to put in the GPA box since I don’t have a GPA here at Ridgewater yet.

If you have never attended any college before Ridgewater and this is your first semester at Ridgewater so you don’t yet have a GPA here, put 0.0 for your Ridgewater GPA. If you have attended other colleges
12. Can I use the GPA from last semester or do I need to use my cumulative GPA?

Wherever we ask for GPA, we are referring to a cumulative GPA that summarizes all semesters. If you use a current semester GPA because it is higher than your cumulative one, we will catch it and change it on your application when we confirm GPAs off your transcript. BE HONEST and use your cumulative GPA.

13. I don’t remember what my high school GPA was and I have no way of getting my high school transcript. What should I put on the application?

You will need to estimate your high school cumulative GPA as best you can, based on the following scale:

- A average = 4.0
- B average = 3.0
- C average = 2.0

14. I did not graduate from high school but I got a GED so I don’t have a GPA. What do I put on the application?

You will need to put 0.0 in the GPA box. There is an option for you to choose “GED” on the application. And, in the “Other information” area of your Personal Statement, you can add something that says “I received a GED on [date]” so we know that you got a GED.

15. If I applied for a Ridgewater Foundation scholarship last semester or another semester in the past, do I still need to provide a transcript and letter of recommendation again this semester?

YES. We are going to want an updated and most current transcript showing the most recent courses taken and grades received.

16. Who should complete a letter of recommendation for me?

A current instructor, advisor, counselor, employer or another person who knows you well should complete the letter of recommendation form, or write a personal recommendation letter, for you. (Recommendations from family members, roommates, friends or neighbors are discouraged). Note that some of our scholarships require a recommendation from an instructor or other person. The system will prompt you when this is the case.

17. What format should the recommendation letter be in? Can my references write a letter or send an email?

Do they have to use the Recommendation Form that’s provided on the web site?

There is a Recommendation Form available on our scholarships web page, but recommendations in letter or email format are also acceptable. Recommendations should always be signed by the recommender. (If your recommender writes their own letter, they do not need to use the Recommendation Form as a cover sheet). Recommendations will need to be obtained in or converted to PDF or Word or other electronic format so that you can upload them to your application. (There are copiers on campus to use for scanning in your recommendations and saving them, or come and see us for help).

18. How many letters of recommendation do I need to submit?

One letter of recommendation is all that is required. The maximum we accept is three.

19. Will I still be considered for a scholarship if I don’t include a transcript or letter of recommendation?

No. Reviewers will disqualify you from consideration because you did follow the directions and provide the required documents.

20. What does “non-traditional student” mean?

A “non-traditional student” is someone who has been away from a college setting for 6 or more years at any point in time.
21. When and how will recipients be notified of their application status?
   Applicants may check their dashboard for updates in Award Spring at any time. All applicants will be notified via email approximately 4 weeks after the scholarship deadline. We use the email address that you provide in your online application.

22. How and when will I receive my scholarship funds, if I receive an award?
   Ridgewater College Foundation scholarship awards are disbursed directly to the student's account at Ridgewater College to be applied for tuition, fees and books for the semester they are awarded. In some instances with extenuating circumstances, checks may be issued to the student but only with prior approval. Student must contact the Foundation to discuss other payment arrangements.

23. Will a scholarship affect my other sources of financial aid?
   Scholarships do not affect a student's grants, but they may reduce the amount of loans and/or work study that a student can receive. The Ridgewater College Foundation is required to report all scholarship awards to the Financial Aid office so that all sources of financial aid for a student are coordinated. A student's combined financial aid and scholarship awards cannot exceed the annual estimated cost of attendance.

24. Are Ridgewater College Foundation scholarships the only scholarships that are available to me?
   No. There are hundreds of other scholarship opportunities available from other sources that you may research and pursue. Go to the “Other Scholarship Resources” and “Scholarship Search Sites” links on our web site. (Note that the Ridgewater College Foundation does not endorse, promote or otherwise support these other sources; they are provided for your information only). You should also watch your Ridgewater email for scholarship alerts, which the Foundation sends out periodically to notify students of outside scholarship opportunities.

25. If I applied for and received a certain scholarship last semester, am I prohibited from applying for and receiving that scholarship again?
   Maybe. There are a few scholarships that you cannot receive more than once. But you may apply and re-apply for all Ridgewater College Foundation scholarships as long are you are a current student here returning for the next semester.

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Workshops to show students how to use the Award Spring application may be scheduled each semester on campus. Watch your Ridgewater email each semester for notification of workshop dates and times. Or, feel free to contact our Scholarship Coordinator for individualized help.

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