



News Release

For Immediate Release – 5/11/2020
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Ridgewater's Massage Therapy Program Receives National Endorsement

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WILLMAR and HUTCHINSON, MN – Ridgewater College is proud to announce that its Massage Therapy program recently received recognition from the national Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA).

The COMTA endorsement is the culmination of a thorough review of curriculum and faculty expertise.

“The COMTA staff and Commission appreciate the diligence and high standards you have set to create a curriculum which meets or exceeds national curriculum standards,” stated the congratulatory letter from COMTA Executive Director Dawn Hogue to Ridgewater’s Massage Therapy instructor Dr. Katy Lundell-Stuhr.

The Endorsed Curriculum designation is a newer designation from COMTA and is effective until April 30, 2024.

“Taking this opportunity to assess our strengths and challenges and have another expert in the field of massage therapy curriculum review our educational plans and competencies was something that I was excited about,” explained Dr. Katy Lundell-Stuhr, Ridgewater’s Massage Therapy instructor. “You can only get better when you look for new ideas and continually review what you are doing to make sure it’s useful and relevant. Are we teaching students what they need to be successful when they graduate from Ridgewater College? I believe this endorsement puts a ‘stamp of approval’ on our program.”

Ridgewater is one of three Minnesota colleges and one of eight U.S. schools to have this new Endorsed Curriculum designation.

Lundell-Stuhr has been with the Ridgewater Massage Therapy program for six years and recently also received Minnesota State recognition as a 2020 Outstanding Educator. In addition to working toward this COMTA curriculum endorsement, Lundell-Stuhr is also active in a state-wide effort to help draft legislation to require massage therapy licensing in Minnesota. Quality training and services are high priorities for Lundell-Stuhr.

“This new endorsement gives students, alumni and potential students the knowledge that they have received or will receive a strong, well-rounded education that will help them succeed,” Lundell-Stuhr said.

Students who choose Ridgewater for Massage Therapy training have two credential options – a 32-credit diploma and a 60-credit Associate of Applied Science degree. The program typically operates with an afternoon/evening schedule that includes experience in the Ridgewater Student Massage Center public clinic on the Willmar campus.

This in-demand career field has a projected growth rate of 22% from 2016 to 2026, according to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

To learn more about Ridgewater’s Massage Therapy program, go to www.ridgewater.edu/massagetherapy.

To learn more about COMTA, go to www.comta.org.

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Ridgewater College is a community and technical college with campuses in the central Minnesota communities of Willmar and Hutchinson. The college serves more than 5,000 students through its nearly 100 academic programs and more than 68,000 training hours for individuals and businesses through customized training and continuing education. The college is a member of Minnesota State and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

Minnesota State includes 30 community and technical colleges and 7 state universities serving approximately 400,000 students. It is the fourth-largest system of two-year colleges and four-year universities in the United States.

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