

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

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**POLICY**

Ridgewater College maintains an open-door admission policy, assesses students admitted, and provides developmental coursework and other programs of assistance to support student success. 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). All periods of enrollment will be included in the measurement of progress, including periods when the students do not receive financial aid.

**I. Qualitative Measure of Progress (Grade Point Average)**

To earn a Certificate, Diploma or Associate Degree from Ridgewater College, a student must have a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or better in college-level courses. Accordingly, a 2.0 GPA is the standard for all satisfactory academic progress.

If a program or discipline has academic standard guidelines and procedures that are more stringent than the Ridgewater College Academic Suspension Guidelines and Procedures, the program/discipline guidelines supersede these guidelines and procedures.

**II. Quantitative Measure of Progress (Completion Rate and Maximum Time Frame)****A) Required Completion Percentage**

Students must earn 66.67% of the cumulative credits registered. The completion percentage will be calculated dividing the credits successfully completed by the credits attempted. Courses for which the student receives an *F*, *NC*, *W*, *I* and *FW* are treated as attempted but not successfully completed. See Grading Policy for definitions.

**B) Maximum Timeframe**

Students may continue to receive financial aid through the number of credits required for the completion of a Ridgewater College degree/diploma/certificate multiplied by 150%. Students who have attempted over 75 semester credits should meet with their advisor to fill out an academic plan.

Students who have double majors will be evaluated based on the required course work for both programs.

Students who change programs or return for an additional degree/diploma/certificate will be evaluated based on their current program of study requirements.

*History:*

09.26.05 Adopted and Implemented

09.29.11 Revised

01.28.14 Revised

09.14.18 Revised

08.24.21 Proposed – Reviewed and Revised for Equity Compliance

11.30.21 Revised

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**PROCEDURES****Admissions**

New or returning students are required to appeal their suspension only if they have an active suspension hold on their account in our Student Information System from Ridgewater or another MinnState College. In addition, if a suspended Ridgewater student is returning to Ridgewater and they have successfully completed 12+ transferable credits at another Minnesota State or NON-Minnesota State College since their suspension, they do not need to appeal. An official college transcript is required to determine that 12+ transferable credits have been completed successfully.

**Evaluation Period**

Students will be reviewed at the end of each term (fall, spring and summer). Faculty will submit grades to the Registrar within 72 hours of the end of each term to allow enough time for progress to be evaluated. Reviews will be completed prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the academic term.

**Failure to Meet Standards****Warning Status**

If at the end of the evaluation period a student has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 and/or a completion percentage below 66.67%, the student will be allowed to continue at Ridgewater College under a warning status for one evaluation period. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their advisor and/or counselor.

Reinstatement of Students on Warning Status: If at the end of the warning period a student who has been on warning status has met Ridgewater College's cumulative qualitative and quantitative standards, the student will return to good academic standing.

**Suspension**

Suspension of Students on Warning Status: If at the end of the warning period a student who has been on warning status has not met Ridgewater College's cumulative qualitative and/or quantitative standards, they will be suspended immediately.

**Maximum Time-Frame Suspension**

If at the end of the evaluation period a student has failed to meet Ridgewater College's standard for measurement of maximum timeframe, they shall be suspended from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

**Suspension of Students for Extraordinary Circumstances**

Students may be suspended from financial aid in the event of extenuating circumstances including, but not limited to, previously suspended (and reinstated) students whose academic performance falls below acceptable standards during a subsequent term of enrollment; students who register for courses, receive financial aid, and do not attend any classes; and students whose attendance patterns appear to abuse the receipt of financial aid.

A student who has been placed on suspension status at another Minnesota State institution within the last five years (at the point of application to the college) shall have that suspension in effect at Ridgewater College. A student would have to follow the appeal process stated below to be considered for re-instatement.

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**Suspension for Inability to Meet Program Requirements within the Maximum Time Frame**

If at the end of any evaluation period Ridgewater College determines that it is not possible for a student to raise their GPA or course completion percentage to meet the standards before the student would reach the end of the program for which they are receiving financial aid, they shall be suspended from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

**Appeals**

Students who are suspended due to unsatisfactory academic progress (from this or any other Minnesota State institution) have the right to appeal based on an error of record or on extenuating/unusual circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances that may be considered for an appeal include, but are not limited to, death of a relative, illness, hospitalization, injury of the student or other unusual circumstances the student believes should be given consideration. Students are notified in writing via their suspension letter that sitting out a period of time in and of itself does not re-establish eligibility. The student must submit, as part of the appeal, documentation regarding why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress, and what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the end of the next evaluation period. Students must provide proof of the extenuating circumstances in addition to a written explanation, along with their Appeal Form.

An appeal may be approved only if Ridgewater College:

- Has determined that the student will be able to meet SAP cumulative (Pace and GPA) standards after the subsequent evaluation period; or
- Has assigned to the student an academic plan that will require a term GPA standard of 2.50, and a term completion standard of 85.00%. This academic plan shall also determine the appropriate credit load and courses that the student may attempt.

Students who have been suspended for not meeting SAP standards (at another Minnesota State college or university) that have successfully completed (at a 2.0 or higher GPA) 12 or more college-level transferable credits at an accredited college or university since that suspension are not required to complete the appeals process.

We will analyze any submitted transcripts to determine whether or not the student would be allowed to re-enter on probation.

Results of all appeals shall be communicated to students in writing and shall include the standards that the student is expected to meet and/or the academic plan that the student is expected to complete in order to retain eligibility.

Notifications of denied appeals shall describe the reason for the denial and the process for appealing the denial.

Students who are suspended from Ridgewater or who are suspended from another Minnesota State institution are required to meet with a college counselor to prepare an Academic Success Plan to be included with the appeal. This meeting will review documents, make suggestions for a stronger appeal, and initiate an Academic Success Plan to accompany the suspension appeal.

All appeals will be initially considered by the Director of Financial Aid. Appeals of reinstatement denials may be considered by an Appeals Committee which will meet at the end of each evaluation period and as needed

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135 throughout the remainder of the year. The Chief Academic Officer will establish an Academic Suspension Appeals  
136 Committee that will consist of 1-2 Academic Deans, the Financial Aid Director, and the Registrar. The committee  
137 will also include 2-4 faculty (with representation from both campuses) as well as a counselor from each campus.  
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139 Students who have a grade change after the initial evaluation may also appeal for a new evaluation. Students who  
140 successfully appeal will be allowed to continue enrollment under their current status as deemed by the SAP  
141 guidelines.  
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**Probation Status**

143 A student who has successfully appealed will be placed on financial aid probation for one semester. If at the end of  
144 the next semester (evaluation period), a student on probation status:  
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- 147 a) has met the cumulative qualitative and pace standards, the student will be returned to good standing.
- 148 b) has failed to meet the cumulative qualitative and pace standards but have satisfied the conditions  
149 specified in their academic plan, the student will be allowed to continue but will need to continue to  
150 meet the conditions of their academic plan.
- 151 c) has failed to meet the cumulative qualitative and pace standards and failed to meet the conditions  
152 specified in their academic plan, the student shall be suspended immediately.  
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**Notification**

154 Students who fail to meet standards and are being placed on warning, probation or suspension prior to the start of  
155 the next semester will be notified via email by the Registrar. Included with the notification of suspension will be an  
156 Appeal Form as well as the date the appeal must be returned.  
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**Reinstatement**

159 Students who have been suspended and wish to return to college (or who are currently suspended from any other  
160 Minnesota State institution) and who feel as though they have mitigated their extenuating circumstances shall follow  
161 the appeals process described above.  
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**Additional Elements**

164 **Students will not, for general purposes, be readmitted as probationary students for the summer semester.**  
165 **Consideration will be granted to programs who only have summer starts and to other extenuating**  
166 **circumstances.**  
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**A. Treatment of Grades and Credits:**

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171 *Completion Percentage* – The completion percentage will be calculated by dividing successfully completed  
172 credits by attempted credits. Courses for which a student receives an *I, F, NC, W or FW* are considered not  
173 successfully completed. In Progress *IP* and Audited *AU* courses are not counted in the calculation of  
174 completion percentage.

175 *Grade Point Average* – Grade point average (GPA) is the student's grade point total divided by the grade point  
176 credit total. Each grade report shows the student's GPA for the term and cumulative GPA since admission. An  
177 *I, AU, P, NC, IP, FW or W* does not carry a grade point value and, as such, is not calculated in the GPA.  
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179 *Incompletes* - Credits for which an “I” is received are considered attempted credits but not successfully  
180 completed credits for the purpose of monitoring satisfactory academic progress. Thus, an “I” does not impact  
181 GPA but does negatively impact the cumulative completion percentage.

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183 *Registered Credits* – The total number of credits for which a student is officially enrolled at the end of the  
184 drop/add period each term.

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186 **B. Academic Amnesty:** Ridgewater College does not offer academic amnesty.

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188 **C. Audited Courses:** Audited courses will not be funded by financial aid and are not included in any satisfactory  
189 academic progress measurements.

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191 **D. Consortium Credits:** Credits for which financial aid is received under a consortium agreement shall be  
192 recorded in the Student Data System to be included in cumulative GPA, pace percentage, and maximum  
193 timeframe calculations.

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195 **E. Remedial/Developmental Courses:** Credits awarded for course work with a course prefix below 1000.  
196 Students may receive financial aid for developmental credits up to a maximum of 30 semester credits.  
197 Developmental courses do not count toward graduation but will be included in the qualitative (GPA). Courses  
198 taken Fall 2021 or later will be excluded from pace percentage measurement of satisfactory academic  
199 progress. Up to 30 developmental credits shall be excluded from the maximum timeframe calculation.

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201 **F. Repeated Courses:** A course may be repeated for an improved grade. A student will not be permitted to  
202 receive financial aid for more than one repetition of a previously passed course. Repeated courses are coded  
203 automatically at the end of each semester. Only the higher grade will be counted toward graduation and in the  
204 computation of the overall grade point average. All attempts are counted toward calculation of the overall  
205 completion rate. An *R* will be entered on the transcript next to the initial grade to indicate the course was  
206 repeated. The maximum number of credits that may be repeated is 18. A student may repeat a course no  
207 more than two times. If a student wishes to satisfactorily repeat or complete a course for which they previously  
208 earned an *F* or *NC*, the student must register for the course again.

209 **G. Transfer Credits:** Transfer credits accepted by Ridgewater College and applied to the student’s program  
210 requirements shall be counted as credits attempted for calculation of completion percentage. Grades  
211 associated with these credits shall not be used in calculating cumulative GPA. Credits accepted in transfer and  
212 applied toward a student’s general education or degree requirements shall apply towards maximum time frame  
213 evaluation.

214 **H. Withdrawals:** Credits for which a *W* or *FW* are received are considered attempted credits but not successfully  
215 completed credits for the purpose of monitoring satisfactory academic progress. Thus, a *W* or *FW* does not  
216 impact GPA but does negatively impact the cumulative completion percentage. (Ridgewater College does not  
217 offer withdraw passing or failing grading options.)  
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220 **Definitions**

221 **Academic Plan** - A student who successfully appeals for reinstatement may be required by an institution to  
 222 complete, during a probationary period, specific requirements contained in an academic plan developed for that  
 223 student by the institution.

224 **Evaluation Period** - Institutions shall measure Satisfactory Academic Progress at the end of each academic term  
 225 or at the mid-point of programs less than one year in length.

226 **Suspension of Students on Warning Status** - A student on suspension status is not eligible to attend. Students  
 227 who have been suspended may regain their eligibility only through the institution's appeal process or when they are  
 228 again meeting the institution's satisfactory academic progress cumulative grade point average and completion  
 229 percentage standards. Students suspended after spring term should contact the college counselor to appeal for fall.  
 230 Appeals to be reinstated for summer will not be accepted unless there are specific program requirements for  
 231 summer.

232 **Maximum Time Frame** - The maximum number of cumulative attempted credits within which a student must  
 233 complete his or her academic program.

234 **Probation Status** - A status under which a student who has successfully appealed a suspension shall regain his or  
 235 her financial aid eligibility for one evaluation period, after which they must either have met the institution's  
 236 cumulative GPA and completion percentage standards or have successfully completed the requirements of an  
 237 academic plan developed for that student by the institution.

238 **Qualitative Measure** - The Grade Point Average (GPA) a student must maintain in order to retain eligibility.

239 **Quantitative Measure** - The "Pace" at which a student must progress through his or her program in order to retain  
 240 eligibility.

241 **Required Completion Percentage** - The percentage of cumulative attempted credits a student must successfully  
 242 complete in order to retain eligibility.

243 **Warning Status** - A status under which a student shall continue to retain her or his eligibility for one evaluation  
 244 period despite a determination that they have not met either an institution's grade point average standards, or  
 245 completion percentage standard or both.

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247 *History:*

248 *06.05.06 Adopted and Implemented*

249 *06.30.06 Revised; 09.12.06 Revised*

250 *02.27.07 Revised; Implemented 07.01.07*

251 *09.29.11 Revised; 01.28.14 Revised*

252 *09.14.18 Revised*

253 *08.24.21 Proposed – Reviewed and Revised for Equity Compliance*

254 *11.30.21 Revised*

255 *09.25.23 Proposed*

256 *11.08.23 Revised*