

STUDENT HANDBOOK

*College Now*

**SMSU COLLEGE NOW PROGRAM:**

Southwest Minnesota State University has offered concurrent enrollment courses since 1984-85, hosting the longest continually running concurrent enrollment program in Minnesota. The program strives to grow, develop, and transform to meet the needs and standards set forth around concurrent enrollment. Our educational philosophy is that mentorship, collaboration, professional development, and curriculum combine to create the college academic classroom in the high school. That is our goal every day. We are focused and passionate about bridging the gap from high school to college for our students.

**PROGRAM BENEFITS:**

* Allows students to earn college and high school credit simultaneously
* Provides transition and introduction to university study and procedures
* Offers advanced-learning opportunities for motivated students
* Concludes with a college grade on a college transcript
* Allows for more flexible scheduling upon enrollment at the university
* Can accelerate student degree completion, therefore lowering the overall expense of college
* Inspire increasing numbers of high school students to attend college
* Promotes student self-confidence
* Strengthens relationships between high schools and SMSU

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR COLLEGE NOW STUDENTS:**

**Seniors –** need to meet **one** of the following requirements:

* a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher
* be in the top half of their graduating class
* score in the 50th percentile on a nationally standardized test

**Juniors –** need to meet **one** of the following requirements:

* a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher
* be in the top third of their graduating class
* score in the 70th percentile on a nationally standardized test

**Sophomores –** need to meet **one** of the following requirements:

* a cumulative high school GPA of 3.5 or higher
* be in the top 10% of their graduating class
* score in the 90th percentile on a nationally standardized test
  + Sophomore students are required to submit a Sophomore Documentation Form and transcripts in order to enroll in a College Now course. The form can be found on our College Now website under [Student Resources](https://www.smsu.edu/academics/collegenow/studentresources/index.html) and will be used to verify that the high school recommends the sophomore student for the course. Their transcripts are collected as documentation that the student meets eligibility requirements.

**STUDENT APPEAL PROCESS:**

Southwest Minnesota State University does allow students to complete the [College Now Student Appeal](https://www.smsu.edu/academics/collegenow/studentresources/student-appeal.html) if they do not meet the eligibility standards, but are interested in earning college credit. The appeal process is an online process that requires a student to first complete an application to SMSU. Once applied, students will use their StarID and password to log into the Student Appeal Form found on our [Student Appeal](https://www.smsu.edu/academics/collegenow/studentresources/student-appeal.html) page.

Below are the items needed to complete an appeal:

1. A completed, online Student Appeal form (found on the [Student Appeal](https://www.smsu.edu/academics/collegenow/studentresources/student-appeal.html) page)
2. A personal letter from the student
3. A [Student Appeal Reference Form](https://www.smsu.edu/resources/webspaces/academics/collegenow/college-now-appeal-reference-form.pdf) completed by a teacher and/or administrator
4. High school transcripts (must include grades for the most recent semester/trimester/quarter completed at the high school).

Here is a [Step-by-Step Guide to the Appeal Process](https://www.smsu.edu/resources/webspaces/academics/collegenow/step-by-step-guide-to-the-student-appeal-process.doc) that students may find helpful when completing this process.

Appeals should be submitted within the first five days from the start of the course at the high school.

**APPLICATION PROCESS:**

Students are encouraged to complete the application process the semester prior to the start of the course or as soon as they plan to enroll in a College Now course. This will help make the actual registration process go a little smoother for both the students and the teachers.

\**Important Notes:*

If a student already has a StarID from another MinnState institution, they should use that StarID and password to log into their application account instead of creating a new StarID. Failure to do so will result in complications later in the process.

Students who have already applied to the SMSU College Now program do not need to complete a new application. One application is all that is needed during a student’s time in high school.

A Step-by-Step Guide to the E-Application Process can be found online at: [College Now E-Application Process](https://www.smsu.edu/resources/webspaces/academics/collegenow/step-by-step-guide-to-e-application1.doc).

**REGISTRATION PROCESS:**

Registration for a course takes place within the first 10 days of the class. Registration is our term for enrolling in a College Now course in order to receive college credit. Students will need to be admitted to the SMSU College Now program before they attempt to register for a course.

Students will not be able to e-apply and then immediately attempt to register as it does take up to two business days for an application to be processed.

It is important for students to know that enrollment in a course requires two steps: 1) admission into the College Now program and 2) registration for the individual course. Credits cannot be awarded unless both steps are complete.

A Step-by-Step Guide to the Registration Process can be found online at: [College Now Registration Process](https://www.smsu.edu/resources/webspaces/academics/collegenow/stepbystepguidetocourseregistration.doc).

**COURSE ELIGIBILITY:**

The majority of College Now courses do not have a pre-requisite listed for the course. This means that students simply need to meet the eligibility requirements of the program in order to enroll in the course. However, six courses do have course pre-requisites:

* 1. English 151
  2. Math 110
  3. Math 125
  4. Math 135
  5. Spanish 201
  6. Spanish 202

SMSU English courses require a 2.6 high school GPA and approval from the high school counselor.

SMSU Math courses require a 2.8 high school GPA and approval from the high school counselor.

SMSU Spanish courses require approval from the high school counselor.

For these pre-requisites, the high school counselor verifies eligibility.

**COURSE LOAD**

College Now students are allowed to enroll in a maximum of 21 credits per semester. This includes all concurrent enrollment or PSEO credits from either SMSU or any other MinnState institution. If a student wishes to go over this number of credits, they must complete a Student Course Petition form through our [Registration and Records Office](https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/index.html).

Although students are allowed to go over the 21-credit limit, it is not recommended. Most college students will take 12-18 credits in a semester and be considered full time. Students should be aware of the rigor and expectations of a college course when deciding how many credits to take on in a semester. The general rule of thumb is to spend two to three hours studying outside of class for every one hour in class.

**DROP/WITHDRAWAL:**

There is a significant difference between the drop and withdrawal of a College Now course. It is important that students are aware of this difference when making their decision regarding courses.

A drop happens within the first 10 days of the course and it will not be recorded on a college transcript for the student. The high school will also not be charged for that student when billings are sent out. Students process the drop directly through E-services using the following steps:

1. Log into [E-Services](https://eservices.minnstate.edu/esession/authentication.do?campusId=075&postAuthUrl=http%3A%2F%2Feservices.minnstate.edu%2Fstudent-portal%2Fsecure%2Fdashboard.do%3Fcampusid%3D075%26_ga%3D2.217017555.494656476.1533562635-1809001876.1470345690) using their StarID and password
2. Select “Courses and Registration”
3. Select “View/Modify Schedule”
4. Click on the “x” button to the left of the course title that will be dropped
5. Enter the student’s password
6. Hit the “Drop/Withdraw” button
7. Select “View/Modify Schedule” tab again and verify the course is no longer listed on the schedule

A withdrawal happens after the initial 10-day registration window, but before the withdrawal deadline for the course. Students have the first 80% of the class to withdraw from the course. A “W” will appear on the student’s transcript, but it does not count toward their college GPA. It does however, count toward their overall completion rates. The high school will still be responsible for the tuition of this student when billings are sent.

Withdrawals will need to be processed by the College Now Office at SMSU. We request an email be sent directly from the teacher or the counselor at the high school to our Assistant Director regarding the request. This email should include the student’s name, the course they are withdrawing from, and their last date of attendance. This email will serve as documentation for the request and will be entered into their student file.

### LEARNING RESOURCES:

E-Services:

E-Services is an account where students will register for classes, look up grades, and pull unofficial transcripts. Students will utilize E-Services to register for a course and to verify that the registration is complete. It is the responsibility of the student to verify that the course appears on their schedule for the semester. Failure to take the correct steps to register could result in a student not earning college credit for the course.

To verify registration, a student should first log into E-Services using their StarID and password. They will then select the "Courses and Registration" tab on the left side. From there, students will choose the "View/Modify Schedule". If the correct course is listed, then the student is registered. If not, then they will need to contact their counselor/teacher regarding the situation.

E-Services is also where students will gain access to an unofficial transcript. This can be found under the "Academic Record". An unofficial transcript can be used for scholarship purposes or possibly as a registration tool for a student's first year of college. An unofficial transcript cannot be used to transfer SMSU credits to another institution. The transferring of credits requires a student to complete an official transcript request through our [Records and Registration Office](https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/index.html).

Here is a link to the site: [SMSU E-Services](https://eservices.minnstate.edu/esession/authentication.do?campusId=075&postAuthUrl=http%3A%2F%2Feservices.minnstate.edu%2Fstudent-portal%2Fsecure%2Fdashboard.do%3Fcampusid%3D075%26_ga%3D2.217017555.494656476.1533562635-1809001876.1470345690)

D2L Brightspace:

D2L Brightspace is the online learning management system used by SMSU. Similar to on-campus, some mentoring professors encourage their high school teachers and students to use this program, while others do not. Those who use it will post supporting materials, online tests and quizzes, online drop boxes to submit coursework, and some will host online discussions using this platform. Only students who are registered for the course will have access to the class in D2L Brightspace.

Please note that the system does have an overnight update, so a student will not see the course appear in their D2L account until the day after they have successfully registered for the course. In addition, teachers will not see a student listed on their D2L course roster until the day after a student has registered. Students will access the D2L Brightspace account using their StarID and password.

Here is a link to the login site: [SMSU D2L Brightspace](https://smsu.learn.minnstate.edu/?_ga=2.261458120.494656476.1533562635-1809001876.1470345690).

For additional information about this resource, please refer to the [D2L Brightspace Student Support page](https://www.smsu.edu/informationtechnologyservices/d2l/student-information.html).

SMSU Library:

College Now students have access to our library both physically and online at [www.smsu.edu/library](http://www.smsu.edu/library). Registered students will use their StarID and password to log into the SMSU online library resources. If a student is unable to log into the library, please verify registration via E-Services. If still unable to access the library resources, students should contact the College Now Office.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES:**

Accessibility Services:

SMSU does provide services for students with disabilities and IEPs at the high school. However, accommodations may vary from what is available at the high school. At the university level, a 504 plan or IEP are tools to assist the Accessibility Services Office and the student in determining reasonable and appropriate accommodations. If a student taking a College Now course in their high school would like consideration of accommodations from their plan, a request must be submitted to the College Now Office.

For more information about this service, please visit our [504/IEP Resource](https://www.smsu.edu/academics/collegenow/504-and-iep-resource.html) page or contact the College Now Office.

Writing Center:

The [SMSU Writing Center](http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/writingcenter/) can work with students on identifying a topic, organizing ideas, learning how to cite appropriately, or how to use punctuation correctly. Writing Center tutors will guide students through the writing process while helping you to become a more independent writer.

Online appointments and e-tutoring are available for College Now students. For additional information about this service, please visit the [SMSU Writing Center](https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/writingcenter/index.html).

Math Learning Center:

Whether students need regular tutoring or just a little help with a homework question, they are encouraged to utilize the Math Learning Center. This resource is available to help students succeed in their mathematics coursework. Tutors are available for College Now students either face-to-face or through online tutoring.

For additional information about this service, please visit the [SMSU Math Learning Center](https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/mathlearningcenter/index.html).

Tutoring Services:

Tutoring can help support retention and completion efforts, aid with course grade improvement, and improve the overall college experience for students. SMSU offers 24/7 access to free tutoring through [Tutor.com](file:///C:\Users\xr8532oc\Downloads\Tutor.com). This tutor service is easy to use and can be accessed on any device that connects to the internet.

For additional information about this service, please visit [SMSU Tutoring Support](https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/dgssc/what-is-tutor.html).

**COLLEGE NOW ID CARDS:**

As part of our College Now program, we want students to recognize that they are SMSU students. For this reason, we provide all students with a College Now Student ID card. This ID card will provide free admittance for students into many Southwest Minnesota State University events including general athletic events, band and choir concerts, and theatre productions.

The ID cards are provided to students during their first semester as a College Now student and will remain valid through their senior year. The back of the card provides information on how to transfer SMSU credits to other institutions. The process of officially sending a transcript from SMSU to another school is done online. The back of this card, along with the Mustang ID on the front, should make this a smooth and easy process.

**COURSE SYLLABI:**

A college syllabus is an outline or summary of the topics to be covered within the course. It will list many items including the course title and number, the SMSU mentoring professor, the description of the course, layout of the tests/quizzes, the grading policy, any attendance policies in place, and much more. The syllabus should also include information about SMSU’s academic honesty and plagiarism policies.

Students should keep any syllabus they receive from their College Now courses. A copy of a course syllabus may be requested when a student is attempting to transfer college credits to another institution.

**GRADING PROCESS:**

Once a College Now course is complete, grades will be sent by the high school teacher to the mentoring professor for review. This process can take up to three weeks before the grades will be posted in the system.

Students can check SMSU grades by logging into E-Services, choosing the "Academic Records" tab, and then the “Check Grades” option. Students will want to ensure that the correct semester is selected for their course and then click “Get Grades”. This should pull up the grades posted for that semester. The grade listed is the final grade for the course and it is what will appear on the student’s permanent SMSU transcript. It is important for students to know that they will receive the grade that they have earned for the course. This includes grades ranging from an A through F in any course.

If a student has a question or feels there is a discrepancy with the grade that appears, their first contact should be with the high school teacher for that course. It is possible for the high school grade to vary from the college grade, so students will want to make sure they have this discussion with the high school teacher first. Although most schools find it easier to have one grade for both levels, some schools choose to offer a separate grading scale to allow for an alternate grade at the high school level. This information should be addressed with the students at the start of the class.

**TRANSFERABILITY OF CREDITS:**

The transferability of credits is ultimately up to the receiving institution. However, many of the College Now courses we offer fall under what is called the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. This is an agreed-upon set of general courses that are required at all Minnesota State Colleges and University institutions.

Here is a link for additional information about these general requirements: [MN Transfer Curriculum.](https://catalog.smsu.edu/liberal-education-mntc/minnesota-transfer-curriculum/)

Students going outside of the MN State Colleges and Universities system may find the [Transferology](http://www.transferology.com) website helpful to determine how their credits will transfer to other institutions. Although this site does not have a complete listing of all colleges and universities, it does have several to choose from in the region.

If any student encounters difficulty with the transfer of SMSU credits, they are encouraged to contact the Director of Concurrent Enrollment at [Jessica.Mensink@smsu.edu](mailto:Jessica.Mensink@smsu.edu) or 507-537-6390.

### TRANSCRIPT REQUEST PROCESS:

When a College Now course is complete, high school teachers will have one week to send grades and course materials to their mentoring professor for review. Mentors then have up to two weeks to review and post grades into the system.  Final grades should appear within three weeks of the course ending. Please wait until the last week of class to submit a transcript request and choose the “Hold until Grades Posted” option to ensure proper processing.

A link to the online transcript request process can be found at [www.smsu.edu/go/transcripts](http://www.smsu.edu/go/transcripts).  Instructions for this process can also be found on the back of the College Now Student ID card.

Students continuing at SMSU do not need to request a transcript.

Students transferring credits to another school within the MinnState system do not need to request a transcript. They just need to inform the Registration and Records Office at their new institution of their previous coursework with SMSU.

All other students will need to complete an official transcript request after completing their senior year of high school and all grades have been posted. This can be completed by going to [www.SMSU.edu/go/transcripts](http://www.SMSU.edu/go/transcripts).

Should a student have a form that must accompany their SMSU transcript, please order the transcript online and upload the form to the National Student Clearinghouse.

Questions about ordering transcripts can be directed to: [transcripts@smsu.edu](mailto:transcripts@smsu.edu) or 507-537-6207.

### COURSE CANCELLATION:

Although rare, under extreme circumstances, cancellation of a College Now course could happen if:

1. less than 51% of the course is taking the class for college credit
2. less than five students are enrolled in the course
3. high school personnel does not successfully complete the course objectives required for the class

### SURVEYS:

For accreditation purposes, the College Now program is required to conduct several surveys of different individuals involved with our concurrent enrollment program. Links to all of our surveys can be found online on the [SMSU College Now Survey](http://www.smsu.edu/academics/collegenow/?id=7306) site.

The Student Satisfaction survey is completed at the end of each college course. The survey is not an evaluation of the high school teacher itself; it is merely used as a tool to ensure that we are offering a strong program that meets the needs of the students.

For those taking our English 151 course, there is another discipline-specific survey that we ask students to complete in addition to the Student Satisfaction survey at the end of that course.

Two additional surveys that we conduct include both a one-year and four-year out alumni survey of past participants in the College Now program. From these surveys we look to gain an understanding of how our credits transferred to other institutions and what our past students experienced in their post high school education. Please be aware that these survey opportunities will be coming in the future.

**STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT:**

SMSU College Now students will receive the same rights and are held to the same expectations as are traditional on-campus students. A full listing of these rights and expectations is available in our [SMSU Student Handbook](http://www.smsu.edu/administration/studenthandbook/).

Below is information regarding our Academic Honesty policy and our Plagiarism policy. These two policies should be included on any SMSU syllabi for College Now courses. A full listing of the policy can be found at:

<https://catalog.smsu.edu/policies-procedures/academic-honesty>.

Academic Honesty Policy:

The aim of the academic honesty policy is to sustain the academic integrity of Southwest Minnesota State University and to promote an intellectual climate of honesty and integrity.  To maintain an environment of academic integrity all students are required to accept personal responsibility for their work at Southwest Minnesota State University.  Any offense against the academic honesty policy compromises the educational integrity of Southwest Minnesota State University and will be considered a grave matter.

Offenses against academic honesty are acts which unfairly and unjustly advance one’s academic standing at Southwest Minnesota State University and include knowingly permitting or knowingly aiding a person in an offense against academic policy.

Plagiarism Policy:

Forms of academic dishonesty include plagiarism and cheating.  Examples of plagiarism and cheating include, but are NOT limited to:

1. Presenting or submitting another individual’s work or ideas as your own without proper use of a documentation style.  This includes but is not limited to homework assignments, term papers, research reports, lab reports, group projects, artistic works, tests, and class presentations.  This includes copying from online or library resources of any kind.
2. Submitting work as your own that was created with the assistance of artificial intelligence or machine learning platforms.
3. Using artificial intelligence or machine learning technologies to complete formal assessments such as assignments, exams, or quizzes.
4. Submitting someone else’s electronic work or ideas as your own without proper use of a documentation style, including but not limited to video clips, audio clips, electronic files, electronic programs, and any other copied electronic page,  document, article, review, etc.
5. Submitting another individual’s work as your own, either by means of paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting, without the proper use of a documentation style, or submitting someone else’s work as your own with only minor alterations.
6. Submitting another individual’s work without appropriate use of quotations, footnotes, or references.
7. Submitting the same work for credit for more than one course or the same course without written permission from all instructors involved.
8. Submitting or presenting falsified research and/or falsified or fabricated sources.
9. Copying from other individuals during any type of examination or knowingly allowing other students to copy off one’s own exam.
10. Having another individual or entity take an individual’s exam.
11. Receiving answers to an exam from another person or media before or during an examination or communicating exam answers to other students.
12. Tampering with any course material, including but not limited to syllabi, assignments, quizzes, or examinations.
13. Using any material or resources not permitted by the instructor for an assignment, quiz, or examination.
14. Acquiring or providing another person with an assignment, quiz, or examination or a portion of an assignment, quiz, or examination without consent of the instructor.
15. Changing, attempting to change or falsifying academic records, including attendance records or sign-in sheets.
16. Uploading course materials to websites during or after the completion of the course without the instructor’s permission.  Examples of course materials include, but are not limited to, examinations, essay questions, or other assessment related materials.
17. Any other forms of academic dishonesty as outlined in the instructor’s syllabus or assignment instructions.

Collusion or Assisting in Dishonesty:  Any student who intentionally aids another student in the performance of any of the above acts or has knowledge and/or information regarding another student's misconduct concerning academic honesty and does not bring it to the attention of the proper authorities (for example, course instructor or Academic Dean) will be held responsible for their action or inaction and subject to disciplinary measures for academic dishonesty.

SMSU Grievance/Complaint Policy and Procedure:

Another policy for College Now students to be aware of is our SMSU Grievance/Complaint policy. Additional information about this policy can be found at: <https://catalog.smsu.edu/student-handbook/rights-responsibilities/grievance-complaints/>

No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participating, or refusing to participate, in a grievance. Retaliation may be subject to action under appropriate student or employee policies.

1. Students shall first attempt to resolve complaints informally at the point of the dispute.
2. If the dispute cannot be resolved informally, students shall submit, in writing, their grievance/complaint to the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.
3. The Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs may refer a grievance/complaint to an appropriate staff member ("designee") for investigation and/or disposition of the grievance/complaint.
4. The Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs or her/his designee will meet with the student within ten (10) class days to discuss the student's grievance/complaint.
5. The grievance/complaint will be investigated and resolved in a timely manner. Only in exceptional circumstances will this take more than thirty (30) class days. All documentation regarding the grievance/complaint shall be kept in the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.
6. Once an inquiry into a grievance/complaint has reached a conclusion, the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs or her/his designee will meet with the student and inform him/her of the outcome of the grievance/complaint.
7. If a student wishes to file an appeal of a grievance/complaint, that student will have to do so within five (5) class days of the closing meeting. Appeals from this grievance procedure shall be routed to the Office of the President for consideration.
8. Following the determination by the university President, a student wishing to further pursue an appeal may do so by contacting the System Director for Policy and Procedure at [Gary.Hunter@minnstate.edu](mailto:Gary.Hunter@minnstate.edu) or by contacting the Higher Learning Commission at [www.hlcommission.org/Student-Resources/complaints.html](http://www.hlcommission.org/Student-Resources/complaints.html)

**FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA):**

According to the US Department of Education, the FERPA policy regarding concurrent enrollment students states:

“If a student is attending a postsecondary institution - at any age - the rights under FERPA have transferred to the student.  However, in a situation where a student is enrolled in both a high school and a postsecondary institution, the two schools may exchange information on that student.  If the student is under 18, the parents still retain the rights under FERPA at the high school and may inspect and review any records sent by the postsecondary institution to the high school.  Additionally, the postsecondary institution may disclose personally identifiable information from the student’s education records to the parents, without the consent of the eligible student, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes under the IRS rules.”

SMSU’s practice regarding FERPA is to exercise caution and we may request additional information from the student before talking with or releasing specific information to anyone other than the students themselves.

For additional information please see the US Department of Education website at: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

**STUDENTS CONTINUING AT SMSU:**

Although College Now students are considered SMSU students already, they are not officially admitted as an undergraduate student should they be looking to continue their education at SMSU after high school. For these students, they will be required to go through an official undergraduate admission process. For more information about this process, please go to our admission website at: [SMSU Admission](https://www.smsu.edu/admission/index.html).

Below are additional links students may find useful as they learn more about SMSU and all that we have to offer:

[Academic Catalog](https://www.smsu.edu/catalog/index.html)

[Campus Map](http://www.smsu.edu/maps/map.pdf)

[Financial Aid](http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/financialaid/)

[Residence Life](http://stage.smsu.edu/campuslife/residencelife/index.html)

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

For issues related to concerns with mentors, academic misconduct, student appeals, and any general issues or concerns with the SMSU College Now program, contact:

Jessica Mensink – Director of Concurrent Enrollment

507-537-6390

Jessica.Mensink@smsu.edu

For issues on registration including e-applications, course registration, roster verifications, new teacher applications, and course requests, contact:

Ellie Ahmann – Assistant Director of College Now

507-537-6138

[Ellie.Ahmann@smsu.edu](mailto:Ellie.Ahmann@smsu.edu)

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