



PARTNERING HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK

College Now

2025-2026

SMSU COLLEGE NOW MISSION STATEMENT:

The SMSU Concurrent Enrollment program provides high school students the opportunity to earn college credit by means of a high-quality experience in the high school comparable to that of the university classroom.

SMSU COLLEGE NOW PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

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.

College Now classes are university level classes offered at the high school to sophomore, junior, and senior students during their regular school day. Our program is accredited by the [National Alliance for Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships \(NACEP\)](#), which ensures that the courses offered through College Now are being taught at a rigor equivalent to courses offered on our campus.

Instructors are qualified high school teachers who meet SMSU requirements and faculty approval to be facilitative teachers. Instructor qualifications, syllabi, assignments, textbooks, exams and grading requirements are equivalent to those at SMSU. Classes are monitored by supervising faculty from SMSU.

SMSU has selected a group of courses appropriate for delivery to regional high schools via College Now. The majority of these courses are lower-division, general education courses that have been certified as meeting the requirements of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. This designation indicates the course meets state-wide curricular standards. Students who successfully complete such a course are assured of course acceptance at any of Minnesota's public colleges and universities. Additionally, the courses are generally accepted at any college or university. SMSU believes these courses offer College Now participants flexible educational options for their future college careers and support statewide higher education goals.

PROGRAM GOALS AND 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

RESPONSIBILITIES BY PARTICIPANT–

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS:

1. Will attend New Teacher Orientation session at the summer workshop
2. Will attend Professional Development session at the summer workshop, once in a three-year period.
3. Will work with their faculty mentor to deliver the content of the College Now course.
4. Will provide a course syllabus to the faculty mentor for approval prior to the start of the course.
5. Will provide a course syllabus to students at the start of the course.
6. Will follow the course learning outcomes/syllabus and textbook/materials for the course.
7. Will help students register for their College Now course, if necessary.
8. Will verify course rosters in e-Services once registrations are complete.
9. Will initiate request for an earlier visit date if necessary or additional visit if needed.
10. Will respond to communications from faculty mentors and CN staff in a timely manner.
11. Will contact mentoring professors with any questions that arise regarding the course.
12. Will request supplemental course materials if needed.
13. Will encourage participation in the end of course student satisfaction survey.
14. Will submit final course grades and any course materials to mentors after course completion.
15. Will have the final authority on the high school transcript grade.

FACULTY MENTORS:

1. Will provide New Teacher training during the summer workshop.
2. Will provide a Professional Development session during the summer workshop.
3. Will work with the high school instructor as they develop their course content.
4. Will provide instructors with learning outcomes/syllabus, as well as textbook/course material expectations.
5. Will assist high school instructor as they finalize their course syllabus.
6. Will visit the instructor at least once, either in-person or via Zoom, during the offering of the course.
7. Will be available via phone, email, fax, Zoom, or other form of communication for their teachers.
8. Will provide curriculum, materials, tests, and supplements upon request.
9. Will take all necessary steps to ensure College Now courses meet SMSU academic standards.
10. Will review submitted grades/course materials and have final authority on the university transcript grade.

SMSU COLLEGE NOW STAFF:

1. Will move New Teacher Applications through our internal review process in a timely manner.
2. Will provide annual New Teacher and Professional Development sessions during the summer workshop.
3. Will maintain continuous communication regarding concurrent enrollment policies, procedures, and deadlines.
4. Will help troubleshoot issues that arise during the application and registration programs.
5. Will review student appeal documentation and communicate decisions with students and school liaisons.
6. Will answer questions regarding admissions, program eligibility, student advising, and transferability of courses.
7. Will create courses and assign faculty mentors during the summer prior to the start of the school year.
8. Will address concerns regarding College Now courses/instructors/mentors accordingly.
9. Will remain current on state statutes, policies, and procedures.
10. Will ensure the College Now program meets university policies and NACEP standards.

HIGH SCHOOL LIAISON/COUNSELOR/ADMINISTRATION:

1. Will sign and return annual Concurrent Enrollment Program Agreement.
2. Will request College Now courses for the upcoming school year.
3. Will confirm course offerings prior to the start of each semester.
4. Will help students complete the College Now application, appeal, and registration processes.
5. Will check College Now rosters for each course and will verify students meet any pre-requisites prior to billing.
6. Will act as a liaison between the high school instructors/students and the SMSU College Now Office.
7. Will pay College Now invoice within 45 days after the bill is issued.
8. Will inform College Now Office of extended leave dates and coverage plans if approved instructor will be on leave for more than two weeks of a course.
9. Will maintain continuous communication with the College Now Office.
10. Will reach out to the CN Office with any concerns or questions that arise within a course.

***High school staff, in consultation with the College Now program, will advise students of available resources, benefits to taking concurrent enrollment courses, and any negative implications associated with taking college classes.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH COLLEGE NOW EXPECTATIONS:

If a faculty mentor is not satisfied with a teacher's performance or has issues with the course, the first step is an open dialogue with the teacher about expectations and needs. Our goal is always to have open communication with clear expectations and goals.

In the rare occurrence that concerns continue, the faculty mentor brings the College Now Director into the communication process. A meeting is set up with the high school teacher, SMSU faculty mentor, College Now Director, and High School Principal. During this meeting, all concerns are expressed and a professional improvement plan is put into place with a date for follow up. The teacher and their work on the professional improvement plan is reviewed following that date. Failure to meet the improvement plan expectations can result in suspension of that instructor.

COLLEGE NOW CALENDAR –

Fall Semester

August/September Class Start Date

- Best time to apply: April – May
- Appeal deadline: 5th business day from start of course
- Application/Registration deadline: 10th business day from start of course

November/December Class Start Date

- Best time to apply: September – October
- Appeal deadline: 5th business day from start of course
- Application/Registration deadline: 10th business day from start of course

Spring Semester

January/February Class Start Date

- Best time to apply: November – December
- Appeal deadline: 5th business day from start of course
- Application/Registration deadline: 10th business day from start of course

March/April Class Start Date

- Best time to apply: January – February
- Appeal deadline: 5th business day from start of course
- Application/Registration deadline: 10th business day from start of course

PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES –

NEW TEACHER APPLICATION:

The process to becoming an approved instructor in our College Now program begins by submitting a New Teacher Application Form. Applications for new teachers are due each spring for the following school year. New teachers should be approved prior to submitting a course request in April. Interested teachers must submit these five items:

1. A [New Teacher Application Form](#)
2. Cover Letter
3. A completed Minimum Qualifications Form (found below) for each discipline looking to teach
4. Current/Updated Vitae
5. A Letter of Reference from H.S. Principal
6. Official transcripts from all colleges/universities you have attended (both undergraduate and graduate work)

Once these materials have been received, they can be submitted to our Assistant Director for processing.

NEW TEACHER APPLICATION DECISIONS:

The review of instructor credentials for eligibility to teach in the College Now program will include the following four levels of evaluation:

1. Full Approval

- a. This means that the candidate meets both minimum qualification requirements for an adjunct faculty member, as well as the department requirements for high school teachers offering concurrent enrollment courses.
 1. Minimum qualifications for adjunct based on IFO contract states: “An adjunct will have a master’s degree, specialized licensure, or other special preparation or experience.”
 2. Department requirements will be developed regarding what the department would like to see their candidates have in order to teach their 100/200 level courses through College Now.
- b. No additional follow-up with the application is required with a full approval.

2. Provisional Approval

- a. This means that the candidate meets the minimum qualification requirements of an adjunct, but they do not meet the department requirements for high school teachers offering concurrent enrollment courses.
- b. Departments will indicate what the candidate needs in order to meet full approval. This will become the progress plan for the candidate.
- c. Candidates will be reviewed yearly to verify progress towards their plan. After five academic years of teaching under a provisional status, their updated application materials will be sent to the department for review.
- d. Upon review,
 - i) If the candidate has successfully completed the progress plan, they will be moved to full approval.
 - ii) If the candidate still does not meet department qualifications, but they are able to meet if given one additional year, they will remain on provisional status and will be reviewed after one additional year.
 - iii) If the candidate does not meet department qualifications and will not be able to meet them within a year’s time, they will be placed on suspension and will no longer be allowed to teach that subject area.

3. Denial

- a. This means that the candidate does not meet the minimum qualifications for an adjunct faculty and there is not enough content area knowledge to allow for provisional approval.
- b. Teachers who are denied will not be allowed to teach that discipline within College Now.

4. Suspension

- a. If at any point after one year of teaching in the program, a teacher is deemed unable to meet learning outcomes within a course, their approval/provisional status can be revoked and that teacher will not be able to teach that course in future semesters. Depending on the circumstances, this may or may not include a probationary period that contains an improvement plan.
- b. A suspension will remain in effect until a teacher is able to provide evidence of additional content area expertise. At that time, they will need to complete the New Teacher application process for review. The department may conduct an interview to determine how the original reasons for the suspension have been addressed.

NEW TEACHER APPLICATION MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

The process for approving instructors is done on a case-by-case basis by each individual academic department. As per SMSU's [Minimum Faculty Qualifications for Course Assignment Policy](#), while a Master's degree in discipline is preferred, a variety of credentials, qualifications, and experiences are considered. Undergraduate and graduate coursework, teaching experience, previous involvement with teaching of other college level courses (ie: AP, IB, CEP), ongoing professional development involvement, tested experience outside the classroom demonstrating breadth and depth of knowledge in the subject area, and other factors will be taken into consideration. Each department has a minimum criterion for consideration. This minimum criterion is in no way an indication of approval, but simply the very minimum criteria for which that department will review candidacy. Approval depends on all factors listed above, sometimes including a testing opportunity and/or personal interviews. Teachers are approved under an SMSU faculty mentor who is the teacher of record for the course.

Minimum qualifications for consideration are: (these will continue to be updated online as additional information becomes available):

Art: Strong teaching experience. Proof of continual work outside of teaching in the field (active artist). Some graduate credits highly preferred.

Biology: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Biology](#)

Chemistry: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Chemistry](#)

Communication Studies: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Communication Studies](#)

Education: Master's degree in discipline required.

English: [Minimum Qualifications Form for English](#)

Geography/Economics/Management: Prior experience teaching the course with undergraduate or graduate coursework in the specific discipline. A combination of adequate coursework, teaching experiences, and additional professional opportunities and tested experience considered.

Math: Strong teaching experience and strong math undergraduate coursework. Graduate coursework preferred. Personal interviews always conducted to gauge knowledge and competency. Scaled approval process:

- Level 1 - Algebra
- Level 2 - Trigonometry
- Level 3 - Pre-Calculus
- Level 4 - Calculus
- Level 5 - Statistics

If approved for higher course, automatic approval of lower course is included. For higher level approval, candidates must go back through the approval process for reconsideration.

Music: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Music](#)

Physics: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Physics](#)

Political Science: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Political Science](#)

Psychology: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Psychology](#)

Sociology: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Sociology](#)

Spanish: [Minimum Qualifications Form for Spanish](#)

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS:

Substitute teachers are required to submit an application for review if the approved instructor will be gone for more than two consecutive weeks within a given course. This application must be submitted at least one month prior to the leave when possible; however, we do recognize that emergency situations do arise and will accept applications for immediate review in those situations.

If an approved instructor is absent periodically, but it will or it starts to equate to a total of two weeks or more, please communicate with the mentor and the College Now Office regarding the circumstances and we will determine if any additional information is needed.

Schools not informing SMSU of a substitute teacher may be subject to additional fees or the cancellation of a course for college credit. Substitute teacher fees may apply if:

- SMSU is not made aware of substitute teacher coverage in a classroom in a timely manner
OR
- a school is unable to provide an approved substitute, resulting in additional involvement from an SMSU mentor for continuation of the course.

There is no additional fee if the high school is able to find an approved substitute teacher that does not require additional oversight from an SMSU mentor.

A substitute application consists of the following items:

- [Substitute Teacher Application form](#) (*found online under Teacher Resources*)
- A letter of recommendation from the regular approved high school teacher explaining the situation and need for a substitute, along with an explanation of any assistance they plan to provide during their leave.
- Current/updated resume from substitute teacher
- Transcripts from substitute teacher (undergraduate and graduate coursework)

SMSU will work with schools as much as possible; however, the cancellation of a College Now course could happen if an approved substitute is not available or a feasible solution is not agreed upon between the partnering high school and SMSU.

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
- 4.) approved instructor is unable to finish the course and an approved substitute is not available
(*SMSU will do its best to work with the school to find an alternate solution in this situation.*)

SUMMER WORKSHOP – NEW TEACHER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

SMSU offers an annual summer workshop for College Now teachers, liaisons, and administration. This workshop occurs on the first Tuesday in August and is held virtually for ease of our partnering teachers. It is an opportunity for teachers to learn about the expectations of the program, discuss ideas that are covered within the courses, and to network with other teachers and mentoring professors within the program. The workshop is split with a New Teacher Session occurring in the morning and a Professional Development session for both new and returning teachers in the afternoon.

Attendance is mandatory for all first-year teachers to the program. If life-circumstances prevent you from attending the workshop, please notify the College Now office as soon as possible. If approved, we will arrange other pathways for the information to be shared with you prior to the start of your course.

Continuing teachers within the program are expected to attend the workshop on at least a three-year rotation. Although this is the requirement, it is highly recommended that teachers plan to attend every year for updates on policies, procedures, program expectations, networking opportunities, and professional development. Non-compliance with the workshop attendance policy can result in a teacher no longer teaching in the College Now program.

COURSE REQUEST PROCESS:

Course requests are submitted during the month of April by the high school liaison. Courses must be requested each year that you plan to offer the course in order for them to be created in our system. Courses should not be requested without an approved high school instructor. If an instructor is approved after April, a “Late Course Request” form can be submitted and we will add the course to our system at that time.

When completing course requests, please indicate if the course will be offered as a discrete class or a mixed class. A discrete class means that only students who are taking the course for college credit will be present in the classroom. A mixed course means that students taking the class for high school credit only will be in the same classroom as those taking it for college credit. SMSU does allow for a mixed classroom setting as long as at least 51% of the class is taking it for college credit. This is to ensure that the course rigor will remain at a collegiate level. For classes that fall below this requirement, please reach out to the Director of Concurrent Enrollment to discuss this situation further.

MENTOR ASSIGNMENTS:

Mentors are assigned to high school teachers over the summer. As a program, we attempt to pair previous teachers with their same mentors whenever possible; however, due to load issues and locations of high schools, there may be some variation from year-to-year. Mentors will contact high school teachers prior to the start of their course to discuss the required syllabus and any supporting materials the teacher may need throughout the class.

SYLLABI FOR COLLEGE NOW COURSES:

The SMSU faculty mentor must approve all syllabi for College Now courses. The faculty mentor may provide a specific syllabus for the course and other times, may allow teachers to use their own materials with approval from the mentor. Although additional items can be added to a syllabus for high school purposes, SMSU does have specific materials that are expected and required to be covered in each of the College Now courses. Syllabi should include the course information, the required textbook, a schedule of the course, an outline of grading procedures, drop/add/withdrawal information, course outcomes, and an academic dishonesty policy. You will want to review your syllabus with the mentoring professor prior to the start of your course. A final copy must be sent to the mentoring professor, as SMSU will keep a record of syllabi for each College Now course being offered.

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](#) 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](#) 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](#) page.

Below are the items needed to complete an appeal:

1. A completed, online Student Appeal form (found on the [Student Appeal](#) page)
2. A personal letter from the student
3. A [Student Appeal Reference Form](#) complete 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](#) 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 College Now 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](#).

Students will need access to their email account as part of the initial process to set up their StarID when first applying to a Minnstate institution. When creating a StarID, students enter their first and last name, their personal email address, and they create a password. The system will generate a message to that email account with their StarID and an additional link to continue with the application process. This email can take up to five minutes to appear in the student's inbox.

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.

Teachers should plan to set aside class time to go through the registration process as students will register themselves using E-Services. Teachers will verify their rosters prior to billing, but students should double check to ensure that the course appears on their schedule for the correct semester.

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](#).

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](#). This petition should be submitted prior to the start of any on-campus courses for the student. Petition approvals are not granted simply because a student can no longer drop an on-campus course.

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.

TROUBLE SHOOTING:

The College Now Office has put together a listing of the most common questions or issues that arise during the application and registration process. This list is available online on the [Troubleshooting Resource page](#) and is meant to act as a reference for students and teachers as they work through each of these processes.

However, please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or issues that come up. We are here to make things go smooth for everyone involved. When contacting the College Now Office, please include as much information as possible so we have documentation of the issue and we can quickly find a solution.

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, eight courses do have course pre-requisites:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Chemistry 232/232L | 3. Math 110 | 5. Math 135 | 7. Spanish 201 |
| 2. English 151 | 4. Math 125 | 6. Math 151 | 8. Spanish 202 |

SMSU Chemistry courses require the completion of Chemistry 231 and 231L.

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

SMSU MATH 110, 125, and 135 require a 2.8 high school GPA and approval from the high school counselor.

SMSU MATH 151 requires the completion of MATH 150.

SMSU Spanish courses require approval from the high school counselor.

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

ROSTER VERIFICATION PROCESS:

Teachers are expected to complete a roster verification for each of their College Now courses after students have completed the registration process. To do this, teachers will need to log into their E-Services account. Below are the steps teachers will need to follow in order to complete their verification:

1. Go to our main university website at: www.smsu.edu
2. Click on "Menu" and drop to "E-services."
3. Log in using activated StarID and password
4. Once logged in, click on "Switch to Employee e-Services" link in top right corner
5. Click on "Faculty" in the top left corner menu
6. Choose "Class Lists"
7. Select the blue link under the "Course ID" column
8. Roster should appear

Only teachers can see the rosters for a course. It is not something that high school liaison will have access to view. It is good practice for teachers to print off a copy of their course roster and submit it to their liaison/guidance counselor to verify the roster matches with who is eligible for the course. If changes need to be made, please inform the College Now Office prior to billing. Again, it is the high school's responsibility to verify that all students meet course pre-requisites.

BILLING PROCEDURES:

Once the verification process is complete, SMSU will send out billings for the College Now courses. Typically, this will happen towards the end of October for all fall semester and full year courses, and then the first part of March for spring semester classes. Along with the invoice for the course, our Business Office will send a copy of the course roster at the time of billing. Schools should review the enclosed roster to make sure it is correct.

If there are changes that need to be made, the school should contact the College Now Office immediately. If a student does not appear on the roster after billings are sent out, the student may still be able to be added to the roster, but there will be a \$50 late fee charged to the high school for the addition of that student. Generally, students are only allowed to register within the registration period. Late additions would depend upon the individual circumstances and reason for why they did not get registered. Students cannot be added to classes after the semester is complete.

Here is a link to our current tuition rates: [College Now Tuition Rates](#).

Reimbursement funding is available for concurrent enrollment courses through the MN Department of Education (MDE). Districts should check with MDE to learn more about this process.

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](#) 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 towards their college GPA. It does however, count towards their overall completion rates. The high school will still be responsible for the tuition of this student when billings are sent.

A "W" on a transcript should not be an issue for students unless they have several "W"s or "F"s on their transcript when they become a full-time college student. At that time, it can play a factor on their financial aid status. Students need to maintain a two-thirds completion rate in order to remain eligible for financial aid. If a student should fall below that two-thirds completion rate, they can be placed on academic warning and will need to get their grades up for the following semester. If grades do not improve, the student will be put on academic suspension.

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.

GRADING PROCESS:

College Now does allow for grades to vary from high school to college. Although most schools find it easier to have one grade for both levels, some choose to offer a separate grading scale to allow for an alternate grade at the high school level. This information should be shared with the mentoring professor for the course, needs to be addressed with the students at the start of the class, and should be documented on the course syllabi.

Final grades need to be submitted to the mentoring professor within one week of the course ending at the high school. The mentoring professor will then have an additional two weeks to review the grades and enter them into the system. Grades should be submitted securely. Talk with the faculty mentor to determine the best process for grade submission.

Once entered, the grades should be visible using E-Services. Teachers and students are expected to double-check submitted grades to ensure they have been entered correctly. 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. If a teacher has a question or feels there is a discrepancy with the grade that appears, their first contact would be with the faculty mentor.

The grade listed is the final grade for the course and 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 a course. This includes grades ranging from an A thru F in any course.

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](#).

Students going outside of the MN State Colleges and Universities system may find the [Transferology](#) 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 or 507-537-6390.

TRANSCRIPT REQUEST PROCESS:

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.

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 or 507-537-6207.

STARID INFORMATION:

StarIDs are a username assigned to individuals for logging into system-based programs. It is unique across the MN State College and University system (MinnState), so individuals should only have one StarID throughout all MinnState institutions. Both high school teachers and students are assigned a StarID upon applying.

Teachers and students can use the [StarID Self Service](#) page if they should forget either their StarID or the password. To use this site, individuals will complete the following steps:

- 1.) Go to the [StarID Self Service](#) page (<https://starid.minnstate.edu/> and choose StarID Self Service)
- 2.) Choose the appropriate option for the situation
- 3.) Select the “Personal Email Address” option under Students
- 4.) Enter a valid email address that can be accessed immediately and hit “Continue”
- 5.) Retrieve that email, copy the verification code, and paste it into the Verification code box. Then type in your last name in the last name/email box.
- 6.) At this point, individuals will be able to reset their StarID password. The passwords are case sensitive, must be at least eight characters long, and requires the use of three of the following four items: upper case letters, lower case letters, numbers, and special characters. Please also choose a preferred email address, and check the acknowledgement check box. Then click “Continue”.
- 7.) The password has been reset and the StarID will appear on the screen.

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.

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](#) 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.

There is a discipline-specific survey for English 151 that we ask students to complete at the end of that course. This is in addition to the Student Satisfaction survey.

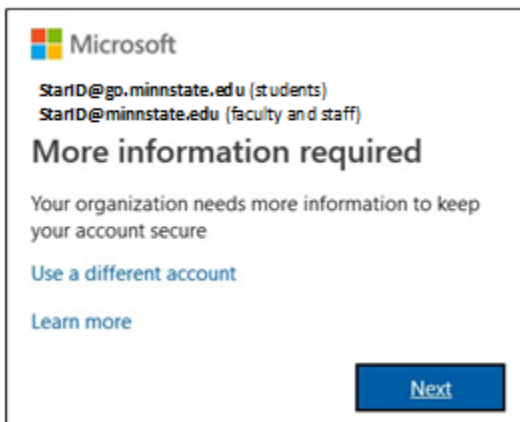
Two other student surveys that we conduct include both a one-year and four-year out alumni survey of past participants in the College Now program. From these surveys, we look to gain an understanding of how our credits transferred to other institutions and what our past students experienced in their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

In addition to the above student surveys, we ask our high school instructors, counselors, and principals to complete an evaluation survey once every three years. The results from these surveys are used to improve our College Now program.

MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION PROCESS:

Starting this 25-26 academic year, students and instructors will need to complete the multi-factor authentication process in order to access different software systems such as D2L Brightspace, Zoom, and Kaltura Mediaspace.

1. Go to the SMSU email website at: <https://www.smsu.edu/email>
2. Select the "Account Login" button
3. Log in with your **StarID@go.minnstate.edu** and StarID password
 - a. (Example: **ab1234cd@go.minnstate.edu**)
4. You will then be prompted by the system letting you know there is additional information needed – this starts MFA verification when you click "Next."



Depending on which ways you want MFA to validate your login, the system will prompt how it is contacting you to verify it's really you logging in.

There are several options for using MFA, and multiple authentication methods can be implemented at the same time for the same account holder.

1. Mobile Devices

Apple iPhones and iPads, Android phones and tablets, and Chromebooks are considered mobile devices. Depending on the capabilities of your particular device, some or all of the methods below can be used.

- a. Microsoft (MS) Authenticator App - **Recommended**
- b. Text message receiving MFA code
- c. Third party authentication app, such as Google or Lastpass
- d. Voice call saying MFA code*

2. Voice-Capable Devices*

Any device that can receive a phone call and answered in real-time is considered a voice-capable device. Examples are:

- a. Any physical phone connected to telephone line or internet connection for voice calls.
- b. A non-physical "softphone," such as software installed on your computer, an app on your mobile device, or through a web browser, can be used.

As long as the incoming call can be answered "live," you can use voice calling as a method. You should NOT use a "shared" phone that can be accessible by several people, such as a department's main phone number.

For additional help with the MinnState MFA process, please utilize the [MinnState Service Portal](#) or contact the SMSU IT Department at 507-537-6111.

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 their 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 come 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](#).

Here is a link to the site: [SMSU E-Services](#)

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 that 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 account until the day after they have successfully registered for the course. In addition, teachers will not see a student listed on their 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](#).

For additional information about this resource, please refer to the [D2L Brightspace Student Support page](#).

SMSU Library:

College Now students have access to our library both physically and online at 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](#) page or contact the College Now Office.

Writing Center:

The [SMSU Writing Center](#) 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](#).

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](#).

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](#). 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](#).

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](#).

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: [Student 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 or by contacting the Higher Learning Commission at 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 a concurrent enrollment student 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 student themselves.

For additional information please see the US Department of Education website at: <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa>.

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](#).

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

[Academic Catalog](#)

[Campus Map](#)

[Financial Aid](#)

[Residence Life](#)

COLLEGE NOW OFFICE STAFF:

Jessica Mensink

Director of Concurrent Enrollment

BA 264

(507) 537-6390

Jessica.Mensink@SMSU.edu

Ellie Ahmann

Assistant Director of College Now

BA 266

(507) 537-6138

Ellie.Ahmann@smsu.edu