



## Online Learning Handbook

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[www.nwciowa.edu](http://www.nwciowa.edu)

Northwestern College reserves the right to change academic requirements or policies, as stated in the catalog, at the beginning of each semester, with proper notification of such changes to be distributed to all students and faculty.

Information in the Online Learning Handbook has been taken in part from the Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook. Refer to those sources for more extensive information, including guidelines and policies.

Northwestern College's traditional, residential degree programs have specific curriculum requirements for which credit hours earned through Northwestern College online courses may or may not apply. If planning to attend Northwestern College and enroll as a traditional, residential degree-seeking student, contact the residential campus admissions office for further guidance. ([www.nwciowa.edu/apply](http://www.nwciowa.edu/apply))

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# About Northwestern College

## Mission Statement

Northwestern College is a Christian academic community engaging students in courageous and faithful learning and living that empowers them to follow Christ and pursue God's redeeming work in the world.

## Identity

Northwestern College is a Christian college in the Reformed tradition, founded in 1882 by the Reformed Church in America. We are committed to providing a Christian liberal arts education in an undergraduate, intercultural and residential environment. We offer bachelor's degrees in a variety of traditional and professional programs.

## Vision for Learning

Northwestern College is a community rooted in Scripture and the confessions of Reformed theology and thus shaped by a robust integrative and transformative vision of the Triune God who creates, redeems and sustains. This theological background supports a framework within which students, staff and faculty of various Christian traditions take up the task of loving, understanding and serving the world whose Savior and Lord is Jesus Christ. We see the pursuit of liberal arts education as worship experienced in community and offered to the glory of God. Embracing this calling with a freedom that arises from confidence in God's saving grace and sovereignty, we are committed to cultivating virtues of heart and mind that will enable us to live out our shared vocation as participants in God's redemptive work. We respond to God's call to proclaim the message of the gospel, be stewards of creation, serve Christ in all persons, and bring all things under his lordship.

In keeping with this commitment, we intend Northwestern graduates to be persons who:

Trust, love and worship God

- Understanding that God is the center of life, learning about God through careful and rigorous study, and aspiring to trust, love and worship God as the sovereign Lord of the universe.
- Recognizing that to love God is also to live joyfully as participants in a variety of communities, valuing the diversity of the human family, and seeking opportunities for learning, growth and transformation through intercultural relationships.

Engage ideas

- Demonstrating competence in navigating and contributing to the world of ideas and information, having learned to listen, read, question, evaluate, speak, write, create and perform with a disciplined imagination.
- Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical foundations, methods and products of the humanities, the social and natural sciences, and the fine arts.
- Pursuing truth faithfully in all aspects of life; developing, articulating and supporting their own beliefs; and seeking meaningful dialogue with those holding different convictions.
- Desiring to continue a life of learning and contemplation.

Connect knowledge and experience

- Completing academic majors that enable acquisition of the narrower but deeper knowledge and skills that serve as the basis for mastery of a particular discipline and as preparation for meaningful life and work.
- Exhibiting a broad understanding of the current and historical interplay of different realms of knowledge and experience.
- Seeking opportunities for growth and reflection that integrate faith, learning and living in community.
- Seeing beauty and finding joy in all pursuits.

Respond to God's call

- Discerning and developing their unique gifts in service to Christ, the church and the world Christ loves and redeems.
- Regarding all persons as made in the image of God and thus deserving of understanding, love and justice.
- Living a balanced and whole life in obedience to God.

## **Institutional Commitments**

We fulfill this vision through the following campus-wide commitments. We promote excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, performance and production. We encourage the development of a Christian community marked by personal devotion, caring interpersonal relationships, and respect for others' unique gifts and perspectives. We seek to create and maintain cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity among our students and staff and in our curricular and co-curricular programs. We make decisions in a participatory system of shared governance.

We provide an attractive and efficient campus plant that is aesthetically pleasing, promotes active stewardship of the environment, and is conducive to serious learning and Christian living. We provide educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities for students, faculty, staff and the surrounding communities that help us attain our *Vision for Learning*. We are committed to generating the financial resources necessary to provide educational excellence and maintain fiscal responsibility in all programs and operations.

## **Statement of Christian Identity**

As a Christian college, Northwestern identifies itself as Reformed, evangelical, and ecumenical. We view these Christian theological perspectives as complementary and draw from the strengths of each perspective in fulfilling our mission.

### **Reformed Commitment**

Northwestern College is affiliated with the Reformed Church in America. We accept the ultimate authority of God's written Word and are guided by the wisdom of the ecumenical creeds\* and our historic Reformed confessions\*\*. We proclaim the sovereignty and grace of God in every area of creation and human life, our sinfulness and natural inability to have faith in God, God's sovereign and gracious choosing of God's people in Christ based solely on God's good pleasure and will, the Holy Spirit's initiation of the new birth resulting in faith and repentance, the life-giving spiritual union between Christ and believers, and God's compassionate embrace that keeps believers from ever truly falling away from faith. We affirm God's broad redemptive purposes, and we embrace the Christian call to reform the church, reflect critically on worldviews that influence culture, and transform the world.

\*The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed

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\*\*The Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, and the Belhar Confession

### **Evangelical Engagement**

As a Reformed institution, Northwestern stands within the broad tradition of evangelical Christianity. We affirm the divine inspiration, infallibility, authority, and sufficiency of Scripture in matters of faith and practice. We seek a warm, personal faith that is the product of conversion through an individual's trust in Christ as Savior and Lord and belief in Christ's redeeming and substitutionary work on the cross. We acknowledge that salvation comes solely through the unmerited, direct, and transforming gift of God's grace. We believe that Christians are called to live holy lives, to make disciples throughout the world by embodying in word and deed the good news of salvation, and to love all people through acts of justice and mercy in Christ's name.

### **Ecumenical Spirit**

As a Reformed institution, Northwestern College identifies with the ecumenical spirit that unites all Christians in every time and place. This spirit is embodied in the unified confession of the historic Church as expressed in the Apostles' Creed. We desire greater unity among the universal Christian family. We celebrate the unique traditions and gifts of other Christian communities. We seek new cooperative relationships with other Christians in our common witness to the gospel and our pursuit of justice for all creation. Our ecumenical spirit calls us to appreciate alternative perspectives in an ethos of peaceful dialogue.

### **Accreditation and Memberships**

Northwestern College is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association, located at 30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400, Chicago, Illinois 60602-2504 (Telephone 312- 263-0456). Individual programs are accredited by the Iowa Department of Education, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Education, the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education, the Council on Social Work Education and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The Nursing program is approved by the Iowa Board of Nursing. Accreditation documents are located in the Office of the President.

### **Academic Calendar**

Northwestern operates on an academic calendar of three terms. The fall 16-week academic term begins in August and the spring 16-week academic term in January. The summer academic term consists of two 8-week sessions beginning in May and June. Credits are reported according to earned term hours.

### **Catalog Information**

Northwestern reserves the right to change academic requirements or policies, as stated in this catalog, at the beginning of each term, with proper notification of such changes to be distributed to all students.

# Admissions

Northwestern College invites all applicants, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or handicap.

## Classification of Students

- Degree seeking student: A student who has fully met the requirements for admission to a degree program with Northwestern College and has enrolled in a course(s) to meet degree requirements.
- Non-degree seeking student: A student enrolled in a certificate or endorsement program, a student desiring to take a course(s) from Northwestern College for transfer to another institution, or for educational and personal growth.

## Admission Procedures

### For Online Degree-Seeking Students and Students Who Wish to Pursue a Degree, Endorsement or Certificate

The admissions process requires the following:

1. **Apply for admission.** You may do this online at <http://online.nwciowa.edu/apply>.
2. **Send all official college transcripts to the admissions office at:**  
Northwestern College  
Admissions Office  
101 7th Street SW  
Orange City, IA 51041
3. **Upon acceptance, register for your course(s).** Information about registering is provided below.
4. **Pay for your online course(s).** Tuition and fees are due prior to each term. Tuition information is found online at <http://online.nwciowa.edu/tuition>  
For payment options, visit: <http://www.nwciowa.edu/tuition/payment-options>  
For payment deadlines, visit: <http://www.nwciowa.edu/tuition/payment-deadlines>  
You may contact the Business Office by phone at (712) 707-7125 or by email [debw@nwciowa.edu](mailto:debw@nwciowa.edu) with questions.
5. **Access your course online by logging into MyNWC and clicking on the Blackboard link, or go directly to Blackboard at <http://nwciowa.blackboard.com>**

### FOR CURRENT ON-CAMPUS DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS

Current on-campus degree-seeking Northwestern students can register for one online course per term during the regular registration period. Students can find registration dates for Fall, Spring, and Summer courses on the Academic Calendars page online at <http://www.nwciowa.edu/registrar/academic-calendars>

## Registration, Drops and Withdrawals

Online courses at Northwestern College are offered during regular fall, spring, and summer terms but in a virtual format.

### Registering for an online course

Online registration can be completed by logging into MyNWC. Within MyNWC, click on the Academics tab and select Registration from the list at the left. You can also register by mail or in person at the Registrar's Office.

You may register for an online course at any time during the regular registration period, but registering quickly is advisable to ensure a place in the course. Refer to the Academic Calendar for "add" deadlines (<http://online.nwciowa.edu/calendar>). Students may add an online course through Day 1 of a summer term course, and Day 5 of a regular academic term course.

Due to their accelerated nature, students may enroll in a maximum of 8 credits of summer school, including online and on-site courses, regardless of term. Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher may enroll in a maximum of 12 credits.

### Alumni Audit Grant

Alumni of Northwestern College may be eligible to take one 4-credit undergraduate online course\* per term for no credit (audit), tuition free with an Alumni Audit Grant. To qualify for this grant and audit an online course at Northwestern College, the following criteria must be met:

- Prior approval from the instructor of the online course
- Student must be a graduate of Northwestern College of Iowa
- Student must be at least 25 years of age
- Student must pay any fees associated with the course prior to the start of the course, including but not limited to the technology fee and any fees for equipment or supplies.

Enrollment will be allowed on a space-available basis, determined one week prior to the start of the term. It is important to note that an audited course will not result in credit, it cannot be applied to a program of study, and cannot be transferred. Alumni interested in auditing an online course should complete the re-enrollment application, available at <https://www.nwciowa.edu/admissions/re-enrollment>. Students must also obtain the instructor's permission to audit the course by completing the Audit Request form, which is located at: <https://intranet.nwciowa.edu/registrar/Forms/auditRequestJICS.aspx>.

\*Not eligible for courses in some online programs, including the Analytics certificate and the RN to BSN degree completion program.

### Dropping an online course(s)

- On or before the first day of an online course, you may drop a course and receive a full tuition refund. There will be no transcribed entry on your academic record for the dropped course if you did not establish attendance. After the 5<sup>th</sup> day of classes, you must complete the "drop form for online courses" if you are dropping one or more courses, but remaining in others. If you are dropping all of your courses, you must complete the "online withdrawal" form. These forms are located in MyNWC, Academics tab, Student Forms link. Please contact the Registrar's Office if you have course questions or the Business Office for financial questions.
- For students who drop classes, but remain enrolled at least on a part-time basis, no refund will be provided and financial aid will not change after the fifth day of classes.

- You must drop a course prior to the designated drop deadline as noted in the academic calendar. Students who do not formally drop a course but stop attending will be awarded the grade of F.
- Students who do not establish attendance within the first 4 days of the beginning of the online course will be dropped by request of the instructor to the Office of the Registrar.

### **Withdrawal Procedure**

Withdrawal indicates an online student is dropping all of their online courses. If you are only taking one online course, you must use the withdrawal form, located on the Registrar's page in MyNWC to complete the withdrawal process.

You will be granted honorable dismissal and receive W's in your registered course(s) provided the withdrawal process is completed within the time limit for dropping courses (the 25th class day of the term for half semester and summer courses or the 50th class day for full semester courses).

For information regarding tuition refunds, please review the "Financial Information" section of this document, or the college catalog. The college catalog can be found at: <http://catalog.nwciowa.edu/>

### **Accessing Your Course(s)**

At the beginning of a term, you can access the course(s) you registered for by logging into MyNWC, or by going to <http://nwciowa.blackboard.com>. All coursework must be completed by the end of the academic term unless an incomplete has been agreed upon between you and the teacher.

### **Book Orders**

After registering for an online course, you may choose to order books through the Northwestern College bookstore online, or through the source of your choosing. Required books are found in the course list for the term, available online at <http://online.nwciowa.edu/courses>. The book list and orders are also available at the online bookstore: <http://www.ecampus.com/nwciowa>

### **Textbook Vouchers**

Federal regulations published in 34CFR 668.164 by the Department of Education require Northwestern College to provide a way (within the first seven calendar days of the term) for a student who is eligible for a Federal Pell Grant to obtain or purchase the books and supplies required for the term if the disbursement of those funds creates a federal student aid credit balance.

The amount Northwestern College must provide is the lesser of the credit balance or the amount Northwestern College determines the student needs to obtain their books and supplies.

Northwestern College provides a bookstore voucher (credit at the bookstore) as an option for students to obtain books and supplies. Students may request a bookstore voucher (credit at the bookstore) by completing the Online Bookstore Voucher found under Books and Supplies on the Billing Information tab of MyNWC. Students may opt out by not using the voucher.

# Financial

## Tuition and Fees

Detailed information about costs and related fees can be found at <http://online.nwciowa.edu/tuition>

Financial aid may be available for online learners in some programs. Please contact the financial aid office to discuss your specific circumstances:

[finaid@nwciowa.edu](mailto:finaid@nwciowa.edu)

(712) 707-7131

## Tuition Payment Options

Students may either pay each semester's tuition in full prior to the start of classes or sign up for a monthly payment plan. The payment plan spreads tuition payments over 10 months for the entire academic year, or over 5 months for one semester. Enrollment in the monthly payment plan costs \$25 per semester, and no interest is charged unless a payment is late.

If payment is not made on the date it's due, the entire balance becomes due and interest of 1% per month (12% per year) will be charged to the student's account. Students who fail to make payment may be denied access to classes (face-to-face and online), Blackboard, computer usage and campus facilities. Diplomas, transcripts and credentials will be withheld until all accounts are settled.

The application for the monthly payment plan is available through MyNWC.

## Institutional refund/repayment policy

The refund policy applies when a student fails to complete the enrollment period for which he/she has been charged. When a student withdraws, drops out or is dismissed for disciplinary or academic reasons, this policy will apply. Appeal procedures are governed by the student handbook in the "Academic affairs" section under "Required withdrawal".

The effective date used to calculate the student's refund or repayment is documented on the student's official college withdrawal form. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the completion of the appropriate withdrawal form:

- Complete the online withdrawal form if you are enrolled in all online courses or if you are attending summer school on-campus or online.
- Complete the withdrawal form available in the Student Development office if you are a residential student taking all on-campus courses or a combination of on-campus/online courses.

Upon receipt of the completed withdrawal form, the business office will calculate the refund/repayment in a timely manner.

This policy does not apply to students who drop classes but remain enrolled at least on a part-time basis at Northwestern. For these students, no refund will be provided, and financial aid will not change after the fifth day of the Fall and Spring semesters and after the fifth day of each summer session.

Tuition, room and board is refundable on a prorated basis if the student withdraws prior to

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completing 60% of the enrollment period. After 60% of the enrollment period has been completed, no refund is given. A 100% refund is given on or before the first day of classes. All fees are nonrefundable. Private or institutional student financial assistance programs will follow the same percentages when returning aid as calculated for tuition, room and board. The percentage of the enrollment period completed represents the percentage of charges owed and aid earned by the student. This percentage is determined by dividing the number of days enrolled by the number of calendar days in the enrollment period. Weekends and holidays are included in the number of days, but breaks of five or more consecutive days are excluded.

## **Return of Title IV funds policy**

Title IV funds are federal financial assistance in the form of Stafford Loans, Perkins Loans, Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), and TEACH Grants. Federal regulations require the following treatment of Title IV funds when a student withdraws from an institution. The federal formula requires a return of the Title IV aid if the student received federal financial assistance as noted above and withdrew on or before completing 60 percent of the enrollment period. The percentage of Title IV aid to be returned is equal to the number of days remaining in the enrollment period divided by the number of calendar days in the enrollment period. Scheduled breaks of five or more consecutive days are excluded. If 60 percent or more of the enrollment period has been completed by the student, no Title IV aid needs to be returned.

Aid that must be refunded or repaid will be restored to the various financial assistance programs in the following order to the extent of the aid from each source:

1. Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans
2. Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans
3. Federal Perkins Loans
4. Federal PLUS Loans
5. Federal Pell Grants
6. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG)
7. TEACH Grants
8. Other Title IV Aid

Please note that any other federal and state student financial assistance programs will follow the same percentages when returning aid as calculated for the Title IV programs.

## **Technology**

MyNorthwestern (MyNWC) is the portal that provides students a single point of access to their online courses, as well as an extensive number of administrative, communications, web and community building services. Access is available 24/7 at <https://my.nwciowa.edu/ics/> by entering your **username** and **password**. Your username is listed in the acceptance letter, and will generally be your first name, followed by a period, followed by your last name. For example, Robert Johnsen's username would be robert.johnsen. Your password is your Northwestern ID. Once logged into **MyNorthwestern**, your password can and should be changed. Passwords should be treated as an ATM pin number—information not shared with anyone else.

## E-mail

You can access your email through the MyNWC site. Your email address is your username, followed by @nwciowa.edu. For example, Robert Johnsen's email would be; robert.johnsen@nwciowa.edu. Please check your Northwestern email regularly, as this is the email that will be used to communicate with you.

## Technical Assistance

Technology and computing support is available within your online course(s) by selecting "Help Desk" from the menu at the left of your online course. If you have technical problems, please use the "Live Help" option before asking your instructor for assistance; most instructors are not qualified to troubleshoot technical problems.

## Technology Requirements

Any computer purchased in the last five years should work on Northwestern's network. Obviously, the newer the computer, the more capable it will be and more likely to integrate well with the network. We recommend your computer has Windows 7, Windows Vista, Windows XP or OS X. The computer should have an Ethernet connection.

**Software Required: Microsoft Office Suite** version '97 or newer. You can purchase various Microsoft products at the student rate through the FCCC website:

<https://collegebuys.foundationccc.org/Default.aspx>

You must use the Office suite. If you do not, your instructor will not be able to open your work and therefore will not be able to award you credit for it.

Northwestern requires you to have an anti-virus program as well as the latest patches installed on your computer and to have both updated regularly. The current virus programs that are supported can be found by logging into MyNWC and selecting the "Help Desk" link at the top of the screen. (Notice this is different than the Help option within your online course)

**Browser** (program that allows computer to connect to the World Wide Web) recommended: Firefox or Google Chrome

**Plug Ins** (auxiliary software programs that are based on a main program, like an Acrobat reader that enables computer to use a pdf file produced by Adobe Acrobat). Recommended:

- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- QuickTime
- Adobe Flash Player
- iTunes (<http://www.apple.com/itunes/>)
- Java (<http://java.com/en/>)
- Other plug ins may be required for specific courses.

## Academics

### Academic Support

Academic support is developing for online students. Online students may take advantage of the Peer Learning Center on the Northwestern Campus, or contact the Center to inquire about peer support online.

<http://www.nwciowa.edu/academic-support>

### Course Expectations

#### Attendance

A student in an online course must engage within the course regularly. Students who do not establish attendance within the first 5 days of their online course during the spring and fall term, or within the first 3 days during the summer term, will be dropped. Activities that constitute attendance include submitting an assignment, taking a test, participating in a discussion thread or wiki and asking the instructor a question within the online classroom. Simply logging into the online course without active participation as defined above will not be considered for attendance purposes.

#### Assignments, Deadlines, and Expectations

A syllabus will be provided in every online course, and will act as the ruling document within the course. The course syllabus provides specific information including how to contact their instructor, assignment deadlines, and other course expectations. Students are provided details about how many assignments they will be required to complete each week and when deadlines fall. At the beginning of the online course, students should read carefully the syllabus and course expectations.

#### Participation

Interaction between you and your instructor, and you with your classmates, is an expectation for all of Northwestern's online courses. Your instructor will provide specific information regarding how your participation grade will be calculated. Faculty will keep clear records of how many posts you make, and how many of those posts are "substantial." It is in your best interest to engage in the discussion within your course(s) as it will enrich your experience, and will result in improved understanding and an improved grade.

#### Course Access

At no time should you provide anyone else with access information to your online course(s), including your username or password. No other person should log in to the course in place of you, representing you, or pretending to be you for any reason, including submitting work, communicating with the instructor, participating, or for any other reason. If you have an emergency and need someone to contact your instructor, provide them your instructor's email or phone number; they should not enter the online course.

### Grading and Progress

#### Grading System

The following grades and quality points are assigned to Northwestern College students enrolled in online courses for calculating the grade point average (GPA):

Grade Meaning		Quality Points
A	Superior	4.00
A-		3.70
B+		3.30
B	Good	3.00
B-		2.70
C+		2.30
C	Average	2.00
C-		1.70
D+		1.30
D	Below Average	1.00
D-		0.70
F	Failing	0.00
P /NP	Pass (C- or above)/No Pass (C- and below)	0.00
WP	Withdrawn	0.00

Incomplete: Given when some portion of the work is unfinished. "I" is to be given only when there are circumstances beyond the control of the student, such as serious illness or family affliction. If you need to take an incomplete in a course, you and your instructor must agree to the incomplete prior to the last day of the course. An incomplete must be removed within six weeks after the end of the course. After the six-week period, the grade will automatically become an "F" if the course work has not been made up.

The unit of credit is the semester hour. Grade point average is calculated by dividing quality points by GPA hours. Grade point hours include only Northwestern College courses taken for a grade.

### **Grade Change Policy**

It is the student's responsibility to bring any error in grades to the instructor within 30 days following the issuance of grades. Grade changes are only allowable for computational or recording errors. Only in a case of an incomplete may a student change a grade by submitting work after the end of the course.

A grade change form must be completed by the instructor and submitted to the dean of the faculty within 30 days following the issuance of grades. If approved, the registrar will change the student's permanent record and notify the student and faculty adviser of this grade change.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress – Degree-Seeking Students Only**

A student's progress is based on the number of credits attempted at Northwestern College and if applicable, any credits transferred in, and the cumulative grade point average. Students must earn at least a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of a 2.00 and successfully complete a minimum of 124 earned credit hours in order to graduate and earn a degree from Northwestern College. This SAP policy is the same for all students, regardless of whether they receive Title IV assistance, and whether they are full or part-time. Satisfactory academic progress is reviewed at the end of each academic semester. A student is making satisfactory academic progress toward graduation if he or she has completed the attempted credits and earned the necessary cumulative grade point average as explained below.

Federal regulations require that students who receive federal financial aid must make satisfactory academic progress towards degree completion. Satisfactory academic progress is defined by the federal government using both qualitative and quantitative measures:

**Qualitative measure-Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Average Progress Chart			
		Cumulative Grade Point	
	Attempted Hours	Placed on probation* when minimum cumulative GPA is below	Suspended when cumulative GPA is below:
Freshman	0-23.99	1.75	1.00
Sophomore	24-54.99	1.90	1.50
Junior/Senior	55 and up	2.00	1.70

**Quantitative measure-Ratio of total earned to attempted credits**

In order to maintain satisfactory progress towards degree completion at Northwestern College, students must successfully complete 67% of the cumulative credit hours attempted at all times. Withdrawing from school, earning NP (No Pass) grades, and/or failing coursework may result in not meeting the 67% satisfactory completion rate in order to graduate in the time period allowed. Students who successfully complete 67% of their attempted credits meet the quantitative measure for monitoring satisfactory academic progress. Students failing to complete 67% of their attempted credits will be placed on financial aid warning.

**Library Services**

The staff at Ramaker Library take pride in providing a high level of library services to both on-campus and online students. The staff is ready and willing to serve on-campus and online students according to the form and format that best suit their situation. Online students have remote computer access to all of the library’s electronic holdings by proxy login with their NWC network login (accessible from <http://library.nwciowa.edu>). Online resources include:

- Electronic databases
- Electronic journals (e-journals)
- Electronic books (e-books)
- Reference instruction and reference help via Instant Chat, telephone, and email
- Northwestern electronic records such as digitized archival materials (<http://library.nwciowa.edu/collections/archives/>)

For journal articles not in Ramaker’s print and electronic collections, students may make use of Ramaker’s Inter Library Loan (ILL) service to receive PDF copies of articles free of charge. Students can monitor their library activity and access ILL resources by first logging into their library accounts at <http://library.nwciowa.edu/account/>. After creating an ILLIAD account, online students can then use Worldcat, available on the library’s homepage beneath the search box, to search for holdings both in and outside of Ramaker’s e-journals and full-text databases. For journal articles outside of the collection, use the “Find It @ Ramaker Library” linked option

on the item record inside Worldcat.

## **Students with Learning Disabilities**

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, NWC will provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have a documented disability that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact both their instructor and the college disability service provider to discuss their individual needs and accommodations.

John Menning, College Disability Service Provider  
[john.menning@nwciowa.edu](mailto:john.menning@nwciowa.edu)  
(712) 707-7454

## **General Academic Policies**

### **Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism**

Northwestern College is a Christian academic community committed to integrity and honesty in all intellectual and academic matters. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to follow the highest standards of honesty and ethical behavior. In addition, as members of the Northwestern community (on campus and online) all students, faculty, and staff have a responsibility to help other members of the community to demonstrate integrity in their actions.

Behavior that violates academic integrity can take a variety of forms, including, but not limited to, cheating on tests, quizzes, papers, and projects; plagiarism or the encouragement and/or provision of materials for the expressed purpose of such acts; using unauthorized material; and the willful misrepresentation of evidence and arguments.

### **Rationale for Preventing Academic Dishonesty**

Because Northwestern College is a Christian community, it is necessary to obey God's commandment to respect and acknowledge the ownership of intellectual as well as material property. This formal policy is an expression of Northwestern College's commitment to integrity and honesty in all intellectual and academic matters.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism defined**

Cheating is the unauthorized use of sources or materials on exams, the use of forbidden material for assignments, or any attempt to deceive an instructor concerning assignments or activities which affect an assignment or course grade. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following:

- use of, or clear attempt to use, unauthorized materials for an examination or use of materials for completion of an assignment which the instructor has forbidden the students to use.
- providing assistance to, or receiving assistance from, another person on an assignment where an instructor has clearly forbidden such assistance.
- resubmission of work previously or simultaneously submitted in another course, without the explicit permission of the instructor.
- falsifying data or other information for a course assignment.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas or work as one's own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The unacknowledged use of words, ideas, or data from any published or unpublished source, including Internet sources and other students. Any ideas or information a student obtains from a source, whether or not directly quoted, must be appropriately acknowledged.
- Improperly quoting a source. Any phrase directly taken from a source must be placed in quotation marks and cited. Any failure to indicate a direct quotation is considered plagiarism, even if the source is cited. Any paraphrase (restatement of an idea in one's own words) must be cited.

### **Procedures for dealing with Academic Dishonesty**

1. If an instructor suspects that cheating or plagiarism has occurred, the instructor will consult with the department chair (or another faculty member). In the case of plagiarism, the instructor will consult with the department chair or another colleague using a blind copy of the paper. If the violation is verified, or if the instructor believes that a student has cheated, the instructor shall confront the student with the charge. The student shall have an opportunity to confirm or deny the allegation. If the instructor is not able to confront the student, the instructor shall notify the student of the intent to take disciplinary action.
  - a. If the student confesses to the charge of academic dishonesty, the instructor shall assess the case, determine the penalty, **and file an academic dishonesty report with the Provost**; the student shall retain the right to appeal the penalty.
  - b. If the student denies the charge, but the instructor remains convinced of the accuracy of the charge, the instructor may yet enforce the penalty; the student shall have the right to appeal either the charge or the penalty.
  - c. If after confronting the student, the faculty member believes that academic dishonesty has occurred; the faculty member will inform the student of the details of the appeal process and file an academic dishonesty report with the Provost.
  - d. The ordinary penalty for a first offense shall be a failing grade for the assignment, test, or quiz in which the academic dishonesty occurred. The usual penalty may be modified, at the discretion of the instructor, to allow for greater or lesser penalties, ranging from a lower grade on the assignment to a failing grade in the course.
2. If the case of academic dishonesty represents a second offense for a student in his/her college career, the Provost, after the challenge period is over or after all challenges have run their course, will contact the student to discuss the penalty for a second offense. The penalty will normally result in a suspension from Northwestern College for the remainder of the semester and the entire following semester. However the penalty may be as severe as a permanent expulsion from the College. The student shall have the right to appeal the penalty to the President of the college.
3. A written record of all cases of academic dishonesty shall be maintained in the office of the Provost for the duration of the student's academic career at Northwestern College.
4. If a student is suspended for academic dishonesty, the transcript will permanently record that the student has been academically suspended and the effective date. After five years the student may request in writing to the Provost for Academic Forgiveness to be noted on the transcript. If approved, the Academic Forgiveness notation will be listed on the transcript, along with the Academic Suspension notation, and the date that

forgiveness was granted.

## **Appeals**

1. The student shall have five school days to submit a written appeal of a faculty member's decision to the Provost. The Appeal's Committee will be convened within *five school* days of the receipt of the appeal.
2. The Appeals Committee shall consist of three faculty members from the Academic Affairs Committee, and at least one student member from the Academic Affairs Committee.
3. The committee shall review both the charges of academic dishonesty and the penalty imposed.
4. The committee shall hear testimony from the student and the instructor.
5. The committee shall vote on whether to sustain or dismiss the charge of academic dishonesty
6. and whether to sustain, modify, or dismiss the penalty. The committee has 24 hours after the hearing of the appeal to make a decision.
7. The student or faculty member shall have the right to appeal the decision by the Appeal's Committee if done so in writing to the President of the college within five school days of the decision.
8. A student may appeal the Provost's decision if done so in writing within five school days. The Appeal's Committee will have the same makeup as above and will abide by the same deadlines. In case of an appeal, the Appeal's Committee will hear from both the student and the Provost. Either the student or the Provost may appeal the committee's decision to the President if done within five school days of the decision.

## **Academic Probation/Suspension**

- Any student whose cumulative GPA is below the minimum standard, based on the total number of credits attempted, shall be placed on academic probation for the following term.
- Any student who would be on academic probation for a second consecutive term shall be suspended. An exception will be granted if the student's term GPA during the term on probation is above 2.00. In this case, the student shall be granted a second term on probation, and would be placed on financial aid probation (see Financial Aid Warning and Probation). A student may be granted this exception only one time.
- If the student (on probation) enrolls in summer school classes at Northwestern and earns a summer GPA below 2.0, the student will be suspended. If the student enrolls in summer school classes and earns a summer GPA of 2.0 or above, the new cumulative GPA will determine whether the student is back in good standing or whether the fall semester counts as a second term of probation.
- Any student who would be on probation for a third term, whether or not any are consecutive, shall be suspended.
- Academic suspension means a student is suspended for a minimum of one semester. Students wishing to return after one semester must follow the reinstatement process (see below).

## **Reinstatement Procedure for Academically Suspended Students**

- A student is suspended for a minimum of one semester. Students wishing to return after one semester must submit a Reinstatement Application to the Registrar. Application deadline information is available from the Office of the Registrar.
- The Registrar shall provide a copy of the Reinstatement Application to the Director of Admissions, the Director of Residence Life, the Director of Academic Support and the Director of Financial Aid, who will provide immediate feedback concerning any specific issues that would prevent the student from being issued a Reinstatement Eligibility Contract.
- The student will complete a Reinstatement Eligibility Contract, which will specify the following:
  1. The student will provide the name of the institution, the course numbers, the course titles and the number of credits for each course. At a minimum, the student must take at least 12 credits (concurrently) at a regionally accredited college and attain at least a 3.0 grade point average in those courses. Type and level of difficulty of each course will also be factors.
  2. The student will provide a verifiable plan to reverse past academic and personal patterns that hindered the student's success at Northwestern College.
  3. The Registrar will provide various academic scenarios showing what courses and grades are needed at Northwestern College to attain good academic standing, should the student be readmitted.
- All reinstatement application materials (Reinstatement Application, Reinstatement Eligibility Contract, and any academic transcripts) should be in the hands of the Registrar by the appropriate deadline.
- Upon receipt of ALL reinstatement materials, the Registrar shall notify the chair of the Academic Appeals Work Group, who will schedule a meeting. The student has the option of meeting with the committee prior to its deliberation, but must request this option on the Reinstatement Application. The committee will make a decision within one week after the deadline. The committee decision is final.
- The student shall be promptly notified by a member of the Academic Appeals Work Group of its decision, which includes a phone call and an official letter providing details of the grounds for the group's judgment.

## **Financial Aid Warning and Probation**

A student is placed on financial aid warning for failing to make the qualitative and/or quantitative measure of SAP, as outlined by the SAP guidelines above. If a student is placed on financial aid warning, the student may continue to receive Title IV assistance for one additional term despite the fact that they failed to make SAP. No appeal is granted or required.

If a student on financial aid warning fails to make SAP at the end of the term (or payment period), and if the student is not academically suspended, the student loses Title IV aid the following term unless they appeal (see Financial Aid Appeal Process below) to be placed on financial aid probation, or, to receive an individual academic plan. An individual academic plan could be established to assist a student who cannot meet SAP in one semester. Progress in the plan will be evaluated at the end of each payment period. Failure to meet the terms of the academic plan will result in a loss of Title IV aid until SAP is re-established. A student on financial aid probation may receive Title IV funds for one payment period. At that point, the student must meet SAP or the requirements of an established individual academic plan in order to maintain Title IV eligibility.

## **Financial Aid Probation Appeal Process**

Students who fail SAP may appeal based on any circumstances the student deems as difficult circumstances, such as family difficulties, illness/injury, roommate or dating issues, loss of balance between responsibilities, death in the family or financial struggles. The financial aid appeal (for students on financial aid warning who again fail to make SAP but are not academically suspended) will be handled in the same manner as academic suspension appeals. The student's appeal must be in written (letter) form and state why they failed to meet SAP as well as what will change to demonstrate SAP at the end of the next term. Students will be notified of the appeal decision via email and/or a letter in the mail. If an appeal is granted by the Financial Aid Director (who decides the appeal in consult with the Academic Support Director and the Registrar), the student will be placed on financial aid probation and allowed to receive Title IV funds for one additional term. If making SAP is not realistic in one term, the academic appeal committee may develop an academic plan in lieu of probation that, if followed, will ensure the student is able to meet SAP standards at a specified point in time. If the appeal is not granted, the student may not receive Title IV funds until they regain eligibility by taking actions that bring them back into SAP. These actions may include filing an appeal after attending classes at another institution or by taking classes at NWC without the assistance of Title IV aid.

For a returning student seeking re-instatement from a prior academic suspension, or for any re-registering student who does not meet SAP, if the academic appeal for re-instatement is granted, the student will re-enter on financial aid probation or an established academic plan.

## **Appeal Procedure for Students Who Have Been Academically Suspended**

Students may appeal their academic suspension only in cases of extenuating circumstances. An extenuating circumstance is defined as a disruptive, unavoidable circumstance beyond the student's control (e.g. chronic illness, medical emergency, family crisis, physical attack). Students may not appeal using the concept of academic amnesty, whereby only certain courses are excluded from GPA calculations.

Students wishing to appeal their academic suspension must submit, either by mail, fax or email attachment, a one-page typed letter, signed and dated, to the Registrar or to the Director of Academic Support within two weeks of the last day of final exams. The letter should outline 1) the extenuating circumstances that affected the student, 2) actions the student has taken to address those circumstances so that they will not influence future academic endeavors, and 3) whether or not the student wishes to attend the appeal meeting. Letters written by outside persons supporting the appeal must be sent to the Registrar or to the Director of Academic Support at this time.

Once the student has filed an appeal, the Registrar will notify the chair of the Academic Appeals Work Group, who will arrange a meeting as soon as possible. The student who is appealing may choose to be present when the committee considers the appeal; a request for an outside party to be present at the meeting must be approved by the committee prior to the meeting. If the Academic Appeals Work Group determines the appeal warrants review, committee will convene to consider the appeal. After the appeal meeting, the student will be notified of the committee's decision.

## **Academic Exceptions**

Requests for exceptions to academic policy may be made in writing (along with all pertinent

information) to the Dean of the Faculty.

## **Change of Name or Address**

It is the responsibility of a student to keep Northwestern College informed of any change in name, address, phone or e-mail address. The change form is available within MyNWC.

## **Code of Conduct for Online Students**

Northwestern College serves guest and degree-seeking students. The information contained in the Academic Policies apply to both groups unless specifically marked as applying to only one group or the other. All students of Northwestern College are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, whether attending a class on campus or participating in a distance-learning course. The following standards of conduct are expectations of members in this learning community.

- At no time should you provide another person your username or password, request that another log into your account to perform any action in your stead, or pose as you in MyNWC or your online course.
- Discrimination against others on the basis of race, national origin, sex, or disability is not acceptable.
- The language that we use says a lot about who we are and where our priorities lie. Therefore, it is imperative that as we communicate as a community we do so in a manner congruent with our stated mission and beliefs.
  - Profanity, vulgarity, and all other inappropriate language will not be tolerated within the learning community.
  - Any kind of demeaning gesture or word, or threat of violence directed toward another student will not be tolerated. Vandalism of property, including computer viruses and sabotage, is also unacceptable.
  - Students may not post, transmit, communicate, or distribute material or content that is harmful, abusive, vulgar, sexually explicit, or otherwise offensive.
  - Students are subject to discipline for blatant disregard of these standards.
    - Disciplinary action includes, but not limited to, course failure, dismissal, or suspension. Students unable to complete a course because of such action are not eligible for tuition refunds.
- Students are expected to give proper credit to sources.
- Students may not post, transmit, or distribute content that violates copyright or other protected intellectual property rights.
- Respect other student's privacy; don't share personal information online without permission.
- Students must exercise academic integrity and only submit work that is one's own.

## **Transcripts**

Transcripts are processed in the Office of the Registrar. In accordance with federal law, transcripts cannot be released without the written consent of the student.

There is no fee for graduates and current students of Northwestern College; all others are assessed a \$5 fee. Transcripts should be sent directly to another college or university or to an official of an organization. All transcripts released to the student will be stamped "issued to student." This advises a third party that the student had personal possession of the transcript.

Because this transcript bears the Northwestern seal, it is still considered an official document. No transcript (or diploma) will be released until all financial obligations to the college have been met. Requests can be made online at <http://www.nwciowa.edu/registrar/transcript-request>

Transcripts or credits earned at high school or other colleges are not available for distribution by Northwestern College. These transcripts must be requested from the school awarding the credit.

For information on ACT or SAT scores, students should inquire at their high school.