Getting Started: An Orientation Advising and Preparation Guide

Summer 2019

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**This document does not replace the Undergraduate Catalog. This is an orientation document used to assist in planning for your first course advisement and registration session. The information and materials in this document are ONLY intended to introduce topics related to the orientation experience.**
Getting Started: An Orientation Advising and Registration Preparation Guide

Welcome to Minnesota State University, Mankato! The Orientation Advising and Registration Preparation Guide is designed to introduce you to some basic concepts of the advising and registration process during your orientation program. Read through the information in this guide and complete the Orientation Preparation Worksheet and Declaration of Major form prior to attending orientation, and you will be one step closer to registering for your first semester at college!

Preparing for Course Advisement: What to Expect at Orientation

There are two components to the academic experience at orientation. The first component is the Academic College Information Session. The second component is Course Advisement and Registration.

What information is shared at the Academic College Information Session?

- Student Relations Coordinators (SRCs) and/or Academic Advisors share important information about your specific academic college, General Education, and more. The definition of a SRC can be found in Important Terms to Know (pg. 4).
- This session includes both students and family members. Students must attend this session in order to participate in registration.
- Students should fill out the Declaration of Major form in this guide (pg. 8), and turn it in during this time. Declaration of Major forms are used to declare your major at orientation.
- The content of these sessions vary by academic college.

What happens during Course Advisement and Registration?

- Only students participate in Course Advisement and Registration. This time is for new students to learn how to navigate the course advisement and registration process. Make sure to discuss any input or thoughts from family members prior to this session.
- SRCs assist students with course advisement during this time. Many of the colleges utilize group advising during orientation.
- Orientation Peer Assistants and Registration Assistants help students with the online registration process.
- Course advisement and registration typically takes the full amount of time noted on the schedule.
- Be flexible with your first college schedule. Be open to trying new class times and taking suggestions and advice from the SRC. Expect that you may not get all the exact courses or times you hoped for, but the SRC will work with you to develop a full schedule.

Preparing for Course Advisement: Planning your First Class Schedule

Creating a successful schedule is more than just picking classes and registering for them each semester. Creating a schedule is about looking at many factors that impact your success in and out of the classroom.

What classes should I take my first semester of college?
The Student Relations Coordinator (SRC) and/or Academic Advisor at orientation will suggest various class options for the first semester of college. Although each major is different, here are some basic tips for selecting courses for your first semester!

- Start listing 100/200-level courses or pre-requisite courses required by your major or area of interest.
- Identify General Education courses that interest you or that are required by your major.
- List courses that interest you such as First Year Seminar, Band, Choir, English, etc. that you would enjoy taking, regardless of your major.

**How many credits should I take?**

That is an individual decision based on your personal study, work, and various other needs; however, a typical first year student takes **between 14-16 credits the first semester**. This means you are typically in class 14-16 hours a week. To be successful in the classroom, we suggest you **study three (3) hours for every hour you are in class**. This includes not only doing homework, but reading textbooks, reviewing notes, doing research, writing papers, and much more.

Some students need to consider financial aid, scholarship, and athletic eligibility in determining the minimum number of credits each semester. Overall, take the number of credits that you believe you will be successful in each semester.

**Did you know...**

- A student is considered fulltime if he/she is enrolled in 12 or more credits each semester.
- Most majors at Minnesota State Mankato require 120 credits to graduate; however, some majors require more than 120.

**Class Scheduling Tips**

- **Be flexible.** Take morning, afternoon, and night classes to figure out what works best for you!
- **Be realistic.** You may not get all the exact courses or times you hoped for, but SRCs will work with you to develop a full schedule.
- You can get to most places on campus in 10 minutes.
- M=Monday, T=Tuesday, W=Wednesday, TH=Thursday, and F=Friday. If a class is listed as TH, it indicates the class meets on both Tuesday and Thursday.
- Balance your schedule! For example, don’t take all the courses that are difficult for you “just to get them done with.” Take a mix of classes you enjoy, are good at, and classes that challenge you.
- If you are accepted into a Learning Community prior to orientation, your Learning Community courses will be listed on your schedule prior to course advisement and registration. At orientation, you will choose additional courses to complete your schedule.

**What should I do to be successful at college?**

You will experience a lot of transition in your first year of college. Start off on the right foot by developing strong classroom habits, study skills, and time management behaviors to help ease this transition.

- Expect college to be different and more difficult than high school. You will need to spend more time studying, reading, preparing and doing homework.
• **GO TO CLASS!** Some instructors may not take attendance, but how can you learn the material if you aren’t in class to hear it?
  • Keep a planner or calendar to track assignments, exams, projects, and study time.
  • Schedule time to study each day. You should be studying at least three (3) hours for every hour you are in class.
  • Get to know your instructors. It is easier to ask questions, get help, and succeed when you know your instructor.
  • Use tutoring resources in the Center for Academic Success, the Math Tutoring Center, and the Writing Center.
  • **ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT!** Instructors, advisors, and staff can’t help if we don’t know you are struggling.
  • Get involved in at least one organization or activity!

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### Preparing for Course Advisement: An Introduction to General Education, Diverse Cultures, and Writing Intensive Requirements

All students need to complete General Education, Diverse Cultures, and Writing Intensive Requirements at Minnesota State Mankato. This section will provide a brief overview of General Education.

#### What is General Education?

General Education is a program that integrates a broad foundation of knowledge and skills to prepare students for the study of contemporary concerns. All students will complete components of General Education prior to graduation.

- A total of 44 credits must be completed to satisfy General Education.
- At Minnesota State Mankato, there are 13 General Education goal areas. Of those 13 goal areas, 10 must be satisfied for graduation.
- In goal areas where two courses are required, students must take those courses from different disciplines or subject areas.
- Courses can satisfy multiple goal areas; however, the credits will only be counted once.
- **Some majors have different General Education requirements than what is listed above.** For specific General Education requirements or classes needed for your major, please consult the [Undergraduate Catalog](#).

For an in-depth overview, additional guidelines, information on General Education and MN Transfer Curriculum, and major specific requirements, please consult the [Undergraduate Catalog](#).

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#### What is the Diverse Cultures Graduation Requirement?

Diversity at Minnesota State Mankato is a commitment to create an understanding and appreciation of diverse peoples and diverse perspectives; a commitment to create an academic, cultural, workplace environment, and community that develops mutual respect for all. Students must complete the following to meet the Diverse Cultures Graduation Requirement:

- One (1) Purple AND one (1) Gold Course OR two (2) Purple Courses (6 credits or more)

Purple courses are content based courses to help student better understand diversity. Gold courses are considered experiential and reflective. These courses MUST be from different disciplines/subject areas.

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#### What is the Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement?

This requirement is intended to improve and strengthen the writing skills of students prior to graduation. Students must complete the following to meet the Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement:

- Two (2) courses (6 credits or more) that are designated as Writing Intensive
Both the Diverse Cultures and Writing Intensive Graduation Requirement can differ for students based on the number of credits being transferred to the institution or by the type of degree a student is seeking (i.e. Baccalaureate vs. Associate of Arts at MNSU). To see a complete list of courses that satisfy each requirement and specific rules related the requirements please review the Undergraduate Catalog.

Preparing for Course Advisement: Important Terms to Know

Academic Advisor: An academic advisor is a faculty member or a professional staff member that can assist you in navigating your program of study. You will be assigned an academic advisor (or Advising Center) prior to beginning classes in August.

Academic College: Every major or minor belongs to a larger group called an academic college. Many advising processes are different based on the academic college you belong to. During orientation, the academic information, advising, and registration processes are divided by academic colleges. Undecided students work with the Office of New Student and Family Programs.

Academic Policies, Procedures, Student Rights and Responsibilities: Students are responsible for reviewing and upholding various academic and university policies at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

- Academic Policies and Procedures can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog.
- The remaining university policies can be found in The Basic Stuff Student Handbook.

Major: The subject or area of study you decide to emphasize in while in college (i.e. Communication Studies). Students can declare a major at any time. To view a list of majors go to the Undergraduate Programs website.

Minor: A secondary area of study (i.e. Business Administration). Minors typically require fewer credits than a major. Some majors require a minor. To view a list of minors go to the Undergraduate Programs website.

Satisfactory Academic Progress: Students at Minnesota State University, Mankato must maintain satisfactory academic progress to remain a student. There are two components to remain in good standing.

1. Achieving a MSU cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher. Transfer credits are not included in calculating satisfactory GPA.

AND

2. Maintaining a cumulative credit completion rate of at least 67%. Transfer credits are included in calculating satisfactory credit completion rate.

Student Relations Coordinator: A Student Relations Coordinator (SRC) is a professional advisor in each academic college, including the undecided major. All new students will meet the SRC for their college at orientation. The SRC coordinates the first course advisement and registration experience for new students at Minnesota State University, Mankato. After orientation, the SRC assists students with general advising questions and coordinates the academic warning and probation process in their college.

Undergraduate Catalog: The Undergraduate Catalog is a general catalog of information regarding major, degree, and program requirements; academic policy and procedures; and other information important to your academic progress as a student. The Catalog is also referred to as the Academic Catalog.
Orientation Advising Preparation Worksheet

Please fill out this sheet as accurately as possible. Bring this sheet with you to both the Academic Information Session and the Course Advisement and Registration Session at orientation.

Full Name: ____________________________________________________________

StarID: ___________________________ Major or Interest Area: ____________________________

ACT Scores

My Math ACT subscore is ______________. My English ACT subscore is ______________.

Minnesota State Mankato requires that students meet ACT subscore or Accuplacer Placement Test scores to take Math and/or English.

- Students who have a Math ACT subscore lower than 22 or the ACT score is older than 2 years old, are advised to take the Math Placement Test at orientation.
- Students who have an English ACT subscore lower than 18 are advised to take the English Placement Test at orientation.
- To find what ACT or Accuplacer Placement Test scores are need for various Math or English courses, visit the Center for Academic Success website at http://www.mnsu.edu/success/placement/.
- Placement Testing does occur at orientation. Please review your orientation reminder information carefully so you arrive early enough to take this test, if needed.

College Credit Earned

I have earned college credit while in high school.  □ No  □ Yes (List college courses/credits below.)

List all courses taken for college level credit. *If your college credit was earned through College in the Schools or Concurrent Enrollment, please list the college or university that you received the credit from, not the high school course information.* Please be as accurate as possible. For information on how credits transfer to MNSU, visit http://www.mnsu.edu/admissions/transfer.html.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Course Name</th>
<th>Number of Credits</th>
<th>College/University Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Example: BIOL 1007</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Normandale Community College</td>
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Reminder: You must send official final transcripts from the college(s) in which you have earned college credit to Minnesota State Mankato.
Orientation Advising Preparation Worksheet (cont.)

**AP, CLEP, or IB Credit**

I have AP, CLEP or IB credit. □ No □ Yes (List AP, CLEP or IB credits below.)

List all Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams you have taken for college level credit. Please be as accurate as possible. For more information on how AP, CLEP or IB courses transfer to MNSU credit, visit the AP, CLEP and IB Transfer Credit website at [http://www.mnsu.edu/admissions/transfer/transfer/ib-clep.html](http://www.mnsu.edu/admissions/transfer/transfer/ib-clep.html).

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<tr>
<th>Type of Credit</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Notes:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Example: AP</td>
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Reminder: You must send original score reports to Minnesota State Mankato to have these credits evaluated.

**Additional College Credits Earned**

List any additional college credits earned such as military, Project Lead the Way, etc. you have taken.

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**Are you enrolled in a Learning Community at Minnesota State Mankato?** □ Yes □ No

- If so, which Learning Community? _______________________________________________________
- For more information or to enroll in a Learning Community visit [http://www.mnsu.edu/learningcommunities/](http://www.mnsu.edu/learningcommunities/)

**How many credits would you like to take your first semester?** __________

- Most first year students take between 14-16 credits (4-5 classes) the first year; however, fulltime status begins at 12 credits.

**Do you plan on having a job your first semester?** □ Yes □ No

- If so, how many hours do you plan on working each week? ________________
- It is recommended that fulltime students work no more than 20 hours a week.

**What questions do you have for your Student Relations Coordinator/advisor at orientation?**
Orientation Advising Preparation Worksheet (cont.)

Full Name: ____________________________________________________________

StarID: __________________________ Major or Interest Area: __________________________

This worksheet below can be used at orientation to list classes and map out classes during course advisement and registration.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th># of Credits</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ex. SOC 101</td>
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<td>GE Goal Areas 5,8 and Diverse Cultures</td>
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DECLARATION of MAJOR at ORIENTATION
===========================================================================================

Each new student at Minnesota State University, Mankato is assigned to an Academic Advisor or Advising Center. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

Date: ___________________________ Tech ID: ___________________________ (Required)

Name: ___________________________ Date of birth: ___________
First Middle Name Last

Cell phone number: ___________________________

Please check all that apply:

☐ I want to declare a major in: ________________________________________________

☐ I have transfer courses from (list institution(s)/courses below):
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

☐ I plan to pursue a pre-professional track in: __________________________________

☐ I have not decided on a major.

Please list any majors of interest below:
________________________________________________
________________________________________________
________________________________________________

☐ I am a Minnesota State Transfer Pathways student in the following academic program:____________________________

☐ Project Lead the Way

Return this form when requested during your advising session at orientation.

For Office Use Only

Admit Term: _____________

Advisor Name: ___________________________

Office Location: ___________________________ Phone: (____) __________________

Tech ID: ___________________________ Department: ___________________________

A member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System. Minnesota State University, Mankato is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity University. This document is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling New Student and Family Programs at (507) 389-5498 (V), or (800) 627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY).

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