

WESTERN  
DAKOTA  
  
TECH

**2021-2022  
Student Handbook**

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**MISSION**

Western Dakota Technical College prepares students to be highly-skilled professionals through accessible, career-focused programs to improve their lives, while adapting to community workforce needs and positively impacting our economy.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Western Dakota Tech is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), at 230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, IL 60604; <https://www.hlcommission.org/>.

The HLC has accredited Western Dakota Tech as a certificate-granting institution since 1983 and as an associate degree-granting institution since 1990.

To obtain more information about Western Dakota Tech's accreditation or approval relationships, contact the Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success, Kelly Oehlerking, at [Kelly.Oehlerking@wdt.edu](mailto:Kelly.Oehlerking@wdt.edu).

## **LIMITS OF HANDBOOK INFORMATION**

NOTE: Due to conditions beyond the control of Western Dakota Tech, it may be necessary to add, amend and/or delete statements appearing in this handbook without notice. Every reasonable effort has been made to include factual information herein, and no responsibility is assumed for any errors. For complete information, students need to refer to WDT policies, the WDT Student Handbook, and the WDT Catalog.

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## Section One: Services to Students

### **BOOKSTORE**

The WDT Bookstore, located in Dakota Hall, offers a wide variety of school supplies and WDT apparel in addition to required textbooks. Students are encouraged to keep their bookstore receipt for a variety of purposes, including tax preparation. The bookstore cannot issue duplicate receipts.

### **Required Course Material**

WDT complies with Section 133 of the Higher Education Opportunities Act (PLL110-315) by providing students with access to required course material. Students may obtain this information at <https://www.wdt.edu/student-life/bookstore>, at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/wdt-master-syllabi/>, and through their course instructors.

### **Textbook Return Policy**

Students may return textbooks to the bookstore under the following guidelines:

- During the official add period for a course, students may return textbooks, with a receipt, for a full refund.
- After the official add period and before the end of the official drop period for a course, students may return textbooks required for the dropped course. Textbooks must be returned within one week of dropping said course. No other refunds will be given.
- Textbooks must be in salable condition and must be accompanied by any workbook originally sold with the textbook.
- Textbooks sold with software may not be returned if opened.

### **Textbook Buy-Back Policy**

The WDT Bookstore offers a book buy-back period at the end of the fall and spring semesters. The bookstore buys back textbooks in the amount and the quantity shown on the current buy-back list. The WDT Bookstore buy-back is funded by Nebraska Book Company. Buy-backs and prices are determined by the Nebraska Book Company.

- Prices are quoted for relatively clean books with sound bindings.
- Textbooks with poor bindings or books that are worn or frayed may be purchased at lower prices.
- Paperback textbooks in poor condition have no value.
- Textbooks may be highlighted and underlined in the text. Very little ink pen writing is allowed. Pencil writing or marks must be erased.
- Textbooks previously purchased in new or used condition may qualify.
- Receipts are not required.
- Students funded by third-party funding agencies are responsible to know the policy of their funding agency in regard to textbook buy-back eligibility.

### **Laptops**

The Bookstore offers reliable business grade refurbished laptops for student purchase. These laptops are professionally refurbished by a Microsoft-registered refurbisher. The laptops meet or exceed Western Dakota Tech specifications for most programs. Please see the Bookstore for more information.

### **CAREER SERVICES**

The Career Services Office at WDT collaborates with academic and other support units to provide career development assistance to students seeking career and part-time employment opportunities. Prospective graduates seeking placement assistance can contact the Library & Disability Services Coordinator located in the Student Success Center or Director of Industry Relations and Grant Management in Corporate Education for help with resumes, interview skills, application preparation, and job search tools.

Maintaining a full academic schedule is a full-time job and should be each student's first priority. The Career Services Office assists students as much as possible in finding part-time after-school employment while attending

WDT when requested. Full-time and part-time employment opportunities for WDT students will be posted online through the 12Twenty platform. Access 12Twenty from MyWDT.

Western Dakota Tech does not guarantee placement to any student. WDT Career Services collects placement data from graduates. Placement data can be found online here: <https://www.wdt.edu/future-students/placement-report>.

### **COUNSELING SERVICES**

Counseling services are available to students through a third party. Please contact the Student Success Center for more information at 605-718-2955 or by email at [StudentSuccessCenter@wdt.edu](mailto:StudentSuccessCenter@wdt.edu).

### **DISABILITY SERVICES**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Western Dakota Tech to ensure that no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of, any program or activity operated by the college. Western Dakota Tech works to ensure campus accessibility for persons with disabilities, which include, but is not limited to, admissions, services, educational opportunities, programs, activities, employment practices, and facilities use/maintenance (except those that would result in fundamental alteration of programs, place undue financial and administrative burdens upon the college, and that can be provided without lowering academic and other essential standards).

#### **Transitioning**

Transition to higher education is a big step. As a student entering post-secondary education, you have new rights and responsibilities related to your disability. It is important to inform yourself, so you can fully engage in the educational opportunities available. These pamphlets, published by the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education, provide guidance and suggestions for students entering post-secondary education.

- <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/transition/products/postsecondary-transition-guide-may-2017.pdf>
- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/parent-20070316.pdf>

#### **Student Responsibility**

To be eligible for accommodation, the student must contact the Director of Student Success, Library & Disability Services Coordinator, or designee to submit required documentation and to complete the ADA Student Request for Services form. This contact should be made as early as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide medical or other diagnostic documentation of disability and limitations. If documentation is not available or is inadequate for determining academic needs, the student may be asked to participate in additional evaluation prior to receiving accommodations. The student will incur the cost of this testing. Once the need for ADA accommodations is verified, the student is responsible for talking with, and getting signatures from, instructors in classes where accommodations will be used.

Students with disabilities are not exempt from following WDT policies and procedures such as program attendance requirements and assignment due dates.

#### **Faculty and Staff Responsibility**

If a student discloses a disability to a staff or faculty member, the staff/faculty has the responsibility to direct the student to the Library & Disability Services Coordinator.

More information about the student, faculty, and staff responsibilities can be found in the Disability Services Handbook found here: <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/section-504ada-process>

#### **Academic Accommodations**

The Director of Student Success, Library & Disability Services Coordinator, or other designee will review the

documentation and conduct an interview with the student to determine appropriate accommodations. Instructional/classroom accommodations may include, but are not limited to:

- Oral tests
- Enlarged material
- Extended time on exams (up to 1.5 times)\*
- Reduced-distraction environment
- Note-taking assistance
- Digital textbooks, as available
- Recording devices
- Preferential seating
- Graphic organizers

\*Speaking English as a second language or being an English Language Learner is not considered a disability. Students in this situation seeking extended time will not qualify through the ADA accommodation process unless they also have a disability.

The Director of Student Success, Whitney Bischoff, who serves as the 504 Coordinator, can be reached at 605-718-2965, [whitney.bischoff@wdt.edu](mailto:whitney.bischoff@wdt.edu), or office D160A in the Student Success Center.

### **Section 504/ADA Grievance Procedure**

See Section Six of this handbook for the Student Grievance Procedure.

### **FOOD SERVICES**

The Commons is located in Wanbli Hall and is a gathering spot for WDT students. Food is available for purchase in the WDT Bookstore. Vending machines and microwaves are also available for student use. Students in need are encouraged to take items from the WDT Campus Food Pantry located just outside the Student Success Center.

### **HOUSING**

WDT does not provide housing. All students are expected to make their own living arrangements. A list of rental units is available upon request through the Student Success Center. Student Success Coaches can offer assistance with finding housing to meet your needs.

### **LIBRARY SERVICES**

The WDT library is located in Dakota Hall.

Library staff is available to assist students in conducting research tasks, transferring files, scanning documents, and printing materials along with providing basic technology troubleshooting. Materials, features, and services available to students include:

- Computer stations
- Non-fiction print materials aligned with WDT degree programs
- Leisure-reading collection in print and audiobook formats
- Online databases of encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers, journals, and e-books
- Testing rooms with HD cameras
- Study tables with power outlets and multimedia collaboration stations
- 24/7 outside return book drops
- Printing from the library computers is available.
  - More information on printing services from mobile devices can be found at: <https://www.wdt.edu/student-life/printing>.

The WDT Library charges fines for items returned after their due dates. The fine is 25 cents per day. Any book(s) not returned within 30 days of being overdue will have the replacement cost billed via Student Accounts.

Whether online or in person, the library staff is available to help. For more details, visit the Library page in MyWDT.

### **PRINTING/FAXING**

Western Dakota Tech Students have the ability to print from any compatible personal devices (phone, laptop, tablet) to any copier on campus. The cost of printing or making copies is \$.15 for black and white and \$.25 for color per each side of the paper. Students can purchase credit in the Western Dakota Tech Bookstore or Student Accounts office. Please be advised that this credit does not roll over from semester to semester. Fax services are not available for student use.

### **SERVICE ANIMALS – WDT Policy 4013**

WDT complies with federal, state, and local laws which allow a service animal to accompany any person with a disability on the WDT campus, except where noted in the policy. Prior to full campus access, students with a service animal must meet with the Library & Disability Services Coordinator, and WDT employees with a service animal must meet with the Director of Human Resources.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER**

The Student Success Center houses Student Success Coaches who help Western Dakota Tech students succeed. The Center provides an array of services including, but not limited to, free tutoring, ADA accommodations, academic coaching, community resources, and student success seminars. Students are encouraged to reach out to their Coach with any questions they may have. The Center may be reached via email at [StudentSuccessCenter@wdt.edu](mailto:StudentSuccessCenter@wdt.edu), through the online chat button on the WDT website, or by phone at 605-718-2955.

### **TUTORING SERVICES**

Students often require on-going assistance in specific classes. As time permits, instructors will provide extra attention to students having difficulties with course content. Students also have access to peer tutors through the Student Success Center. There is no cost to students for tutoring services. Students on academic probation or returning from academic suspension may be required to utilize tutoring services, if deemed necessary by their instructor, advisor, or Student Success Coach.

### **WIRELESS ACCESS**

WDT provides wireless access in all buildings. Students can access the wireless network using WDT-ACAD and their student ID number.



## **Section Two: Student Achievement and Registration Information**

### **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

Students are assigned an academic advisor to assist in completing educational programs successfully, to answer questions, and to discuss problems. All students are encouraged to confer with their assigned advisor regularly throughout the school year. Advisors will meet with students at least once each fall and spring semester during Midterm Advising Day to schedule classes, answer questions, and provide direction. Students are responsible for their own plan of study.

### **ACADEMIC AMNESTY**

Academic amnesty, when awarded, exempts courses on a student's transcript from being calculated into a student's cumulative GPA. A student can apply for and be granted academic amnesty one time during the student's entire enrollment period at WDT. A student may petition for academic amnesty based on one of the following:

1. **Change of Program**: A student who has attempted credits at WDT within the last year and who has been accepted into a new program may petition for amnesty for all credits not in the student's new program of study from being calculated into the cumulative grade point average.
2. **Interruption in Enrollment**: A student who has completed a minimum of one year of non-enrollment (three consecutive terms including fall, spring and summer) and who has been reaccepted into WDT may petition for amnesty for all credits accumulated previously that do not apply to the current program from being calculated into the cumulative grade point average.

- The student must petition for amnesty by completing the Academic Amnesty form.
- The Director of Institutional Research and Student Record's approval is required before amnesty will be granted.
- Students who were not making satisfactory academic progress during the most recent enrollment term will be required to complete a success plan with a Student Success Coach prior to registering for courses.
- Exempted courses will remain on the transcript but marked to indicate that hours and grades were not used in computing credit hours earned and cumulative grade point average.
- Exempted grades will be noted on the transcript with an asterisk (i.e. D\* or F\*), and a note will be placed on the transcript noting the date that academic amnesty was granted.
- Exempted courses will not be used to satisfy any graduation requirement.
- Financial aid officials will look at all credits attempted, including courses that have been exempted, for financial aid purposes.
- Other schools are not bound by WDT academic amnesty decisions.

### **ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES – WDT Policy 3001**

Student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis including the knowledge, skills, and behaviors for successful employment, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **ADDING/DROPPING COURSES**

Students may add a course to their original course schedule during the official add period for each course as stated on the WDT academic calendar found online at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/academic-calendar>, based on space availability. To add a course, the student must obtain the course Add/Drop/Withdraw form from the Registrar's Office or Student Success Center and complete it with all required signatures. Adding a course(s) after the official add period requires permission from the VP for Teaching and Learning.

In the event of late enrollment into a course, the student is responsible for all missed coursework and is subject to

any sanctions for late assignments or missed tests as stated on the course syllabus. An adjustment in tuition will be made, and payment or payment arrangements must be made at the time of enrollment in the course.

Students may drop a course from their original course schedule within the official drop period for each course on the WDT academic calendar found online at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/academic-calendar>. To drop a course, the student must obtain the course Add/Drop/Withdraw form from the Registrar's Office or Student Success Center and complete it with all required signatures. An adjustment in tuition and fees will be made and any refund due, if applicable, will be made after all processing is complete. These courses will not appear on the transcript.

Enrollment status changes during the add/drop period may result in the addition or cancellation of financial aid awards or the requirement for students to immediately repay a portion of their federal financial assistance.

The dates of the add/drop period are published on the academic calendar found on the WDT website at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/academic-calendar/>.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL DUE TO NON-ATTENDANCE**

Students who have a record of zero (0) attendance for twenty-one (21) calendar days will be administratively withdrawn from WDT and placed on academic suspension. Upon administrative withdrawal, all current course grades will be changed to a "WF" – Administrative Withdrawal with F's. Administrative withdrawals are final. Students will be notified of their administrative withdrawal via their student email account and U.S. mail at the address on file.

Students who receive financial aid will have their financial aid status affected. Students should contact the Financial Aid Office as soon as possible to be advised on their Satisfactory Academic Progress status, future eligibility, and federal student loan repayment options, as applicable. Students who receive third-party funding need to contact that agency for details.

Students who plan to return to WDT in the future must meet with a Student Success Coach to complete a success plan.

Students are encouraged to contact WDT to properly withdraw from WDT before administrative withdrawal occurs. Withdrawing versus being administratively withdrawn may have less severe financial and academic consequences.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend all sessions of courses for which they are enrolled. Absences do not excuse the student from meeting course requirements. Each instructor will provide policies concerning course attendance and the ability to make up missed work on their course instructor syllabus or in a program-specific student handbook. It is the student's responsibility to know and understand the attendance requirements and make-up policies for each course.

Students subpoenaed to testify in court (in a case in which they are not a party) or summoned to serve on a jury panel are asked to speak to their instructors about meeting course requirements for the time they are required to be in court.

### **AUDIT**

Students may audit a class instead of taking it for credit. Audit students must pay all tuition and fees prior to being enrolled in the course. Audit students are also responsible for book, material, tool, and supply costs associated with the course. Audits are allowed on a space-available basis. Financial aid is not available for audit courses.

Students taking a course for Audit (AU) will not be able to transcribe the course for credit at a future date. Audit courses do not calculate in the student's overall WDT GPA, do not count toward graduation requirements, do not meet pre-requisite course requirements, and may not be dropped or withdrawn from after the official drop date for that course. The official drop date for each semester is listed on the academic calendar on the WDT website at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/academic-calendar/>.

### **CHANGE OF NAME/ADDRESS/EMAIL/PHONE**

All students must maintain current contact information in the event of an emergency. Current addresses, emails, and phone numbers are also important for job placement contacts. Students may update their information on the "How To" page in MyWDT or through Enrollment Services. Name changes require valid documentation and can be completed by contacting Enrollment Services.

### **CHANGING PROGRAMS**

Students need to visit with their Student Success Coach to request a change of program. Students must meet the admission's requirements of the program they seek to enter. Students are encouraged to speak to the Financial Aid Office to determine future aid eligibility as a result of changing programs. For current students, change of program forms are processed at the end of a term. Western Dakota Tech does not allow double majors unless the first program upstreams 100% into the second program, as is the case with embedded or stackable programs. See the Registrar's Office for a listing of embedded and stackable programs.

### **COURSE CHALLENGE**

Course challenges are offered for select courses. A standard fee shall be charged to students who request the course challenge opportunities. The fee must be paid prior to the selected course challenge dates. The Student Success Center sends an email to a student's WDT email account with upcoming course challenge opportunities, including dates and fees. Students may challenge a course either to remove a remedial requirement or to earn credit for a program requirement.

Students taking a course challenge to remove a remedial math or English requirement must obtain a score placing them into a higher-level math or English course. See the Registrar's Office for MATH 112 requirements.

Students taking a course challenge to earn credit for a course must earn a "B" or better to pass the exam (in accordance with general education/technical grading scales found in the "Grading System" section of the WDT Student Handbook). If a "B" or better is earned, the credit will be posted to the student's transcript and noted as "CE". Students are allowed two testing opportunities per testing window for the same course but must adhere to the registration and fee payment guidelines. If standards are not met, the student will be required to pay full tuition and take the course.

Course challenges are offered prior to the start of each semester for all students and just prior to the end of the fall and spring semesters for current students.

### **COURSE/SCHEDULE CHANGES, COURSE CAPACITY, AND COURSE CANCELLATIONS**

WDT reserves the right to change course times, days, and rooms. WDT reserves the right to set course capacity and cancel courses.

### **COURSE SUBSTITUTIONS**

Students requesting a course substitution to fulfill their plan of study requirements must work with their Program Director to complete a Course Substitution form through the Registrar's Office. The VP for Teaching and Learning will make final approval/denial of all requested course substitutions.

### **COURSE WITHDRAWAL**

Courses withdrawn from after the official add/drop period but prior to completion of 75% of the course will carry a "W" indicating withdrawal on the transcript. Students who withdraw from some, but not all, courses after the

official add/drop period will not be granted a refund and financial aid may be affected.

Students cannot withdraw from courses after completion of 75% of the course. The last day to withdraw from a course and receive a "W" is listed on the academic calendar for each term on the WDT website at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/academic-calendar/>.

Students who leave courses after the last day to withdraw from the course will receive grades earned and no refunds will be granted.

### **CREDIT TRANSFER – WDT Policy 3002**

Students requesting credit at WDT for post-secondary work completed at other schools must submit an official transcript from the school(s) previously attended. It is the student's responsibility to submit official transcripts and any required documentation before engaging in a course for which they think they may qualify for transfer credit. A transfer credit evaluation may take up to six weeks after an official transcript is received in the Registrar's Office.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

Students interested in transferring WDT credits to other institutions of higher learning should review the College's transfer agreements with those institutions. Articulation agreements can be found at <https://www.wdt.edu/future-students/transfer-of-credit>.

### **DEAN'S LIST**

The Dean's List is published at the end of the fall and spring semesters. The purpose of the Dean's List is to promote academic excellence and give recognition to students who, through their initiative and ability, have earned a 3.5 or higher GPA for a minimum of 12 credit hours in a given semester.

### **DUAL ENROLLMENT**

Dual Enrollment allows high school students to enroll in courses at WDT and earn credit for high school graduation as well as postsecondary credit from WDT. By enrolling in course(s) with WDT, Dual Enrollment students are subject to all rules and regulations spelled out in the WDT Student Handbook. Contact the WDT Admissions Office for details.

Per SB 142, students who receive a 'W', 'WF' or 'F' in a Dual Enrollment course lose eligibility for the SD Dual Enrollment Program. For more information or to appeal a Loss of Eligibility please complete the appeal paperwork found on our website at [www.wdt.edu/dual](http://www.wdt.edu/dual).

### **ENROLLMENT STATUS**

Individuals are considered students upon initial enrollment in courses at WDT. Enrollment ends upon graduation or withdrawal from WDT. For academic and financial aid purposes, in the fall and spring semesters (and summer for financial aid), students are considered full-time at 12 or more credits, three-quarter time at 9 to 11 credits, and half-time at 6 to 8 credits. For academic purposes, in the summer semester, students are considered full-time at 6 or more credits and half time at 3 to 5 credits. Third-party funding agencies may have different definitions for enrollment status.

### **GENERAL EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY**

General Education at Western Dakota Technical College provides a foundation for study in the academic programs imparting broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and developing skills and attitudes that Western Dakota Technical College believes every college-educated person should possess. Students gain knowledge in the areas of social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, communications, computers, as well as arts and humanities. Courses support the institutional learning outcomes of critical thinking, technical knowledge and skills, communication, and professionalism.

## **GRADE APPEAL PROCESS**

Should a situation arise in which a student believes he/she has not been treated fairly in the calculation of a particular course grade or individual grade within a course, the appeal process is as follows:

1. The student must attempt to meet/communicate with the respective instructor to review the reason for the grade within ten (10) calendar days after the grade has been posted. All reasonable efforts by both parties will be made to resolve the problem at this level.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of the matter at Step 1, the student needs to meet with the Director of Student Success within fifteen (15) calendar days after the grade has been posted to resolve the issue. The Director of Student Success will meet with both parties to determine a resolution.
3. If the student is not satisfied with the decision made at Step 2, the student may file a written appeal to the VP for Teaching and Learning within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of the Director of Student Success's decision.
4. Within five (5) working days, the VP for Teaching and Learning will issue a response. The decision will be communicated in writing to all parties and is final.

## **GRADE LEVELS**

A student in an Associates of Applied Science degree who has earned at least 30 credits in that degree will be considered a 2<sup>nd</sup> year student. A student in a program leading to a certificate or diploma is considered a 1<sup>st</sup> year student.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Western Dakota Tech uses a letter grading scale for recording student achievement. A grade or transcript code will be issued for each course and placed on the student's transcript denoting student achievement. The following grading system is used:

A	- Excellent .....	4.0 points
B	- Above Average .....	3.0 points
C	- Average .....	2.0 points
D	- Below Average.....	1.0 points
F	- Failing .....	0.0 points
I	- Incomplete.....	No points
IP	- In Progress .....	No points
W	- Withdrawal.....	No points
WF	- Administrative Withdrawal with Fs .....	0.0 points
AU	- Audit .....	No points

Other transcript codes include:

TC	- Transfer Credit .....	No points
CE	- Credit by Exam .....	No points
TF	- Transcription Fee.....	No points

## **Grade Point Average**

A student's earned grade point average is determined each term by adding grade points and dividing by the sum of all the credits with the exception of "no point" grades/codes noted above. The cumulative grade point is the same calculation for all terms enrolled combined.

Grades of I, IP, W, AU, TC, CE, and TF are not used in the calculation of grade point average. The designation "R" is used when a course is retaken. The highest grade of a repeated course (R) will be used to calculate the cumulative GPA, and the other grade(s) received will not be recognized in the calculation but will remain on the transcript. Please note that grades of Failing (F), Incomplete (I), In Progress (IP), Withdrawal (W), Administrative Withdrawal with F's (WF), and Audit (AU) grades are not counted as hours successfully completed.

## **Grading Scales**

General Education courses as listed in the WDT Catalog except CJUS 201 utilize the following scale:

- A – 90 to 100%
- B – 80 to 89%
- C – 70 to 79%
- D – 60 to 69%
- F – 0 to 59%

All other WDT courses, other than those stated above, utilize the following scale:

- A – 94 to 100%
- B – 87 to 93%
- C – 79 to 86%
- D – 73 to 78%
- F – 0 to 72%

## **GRADUATION**

Students should keep their plan of study current. It is wise to review this plan with an academic advisor at midterm and at the end of each semester to ensure that all required courses are taken in order to graduate. Students must apply for graduation at the start of their final semester.

All requests for transfer of credit from a higher education institution must be received and evaluated before a student qualifies for graduation.

In order to be eligible to receive a certificate, diploma, or an AAS degree students must:

1. Provide evidence of high school completion through an official high school transcript or a GED certificate.
2. Complete all program and institutional curriculum requirements in accordance with Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards. (Some programs have additional requirements that must be achieved. Students should check with their academic advisor.)
3. Attain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher.

In order for official transcripts and diploma(s) to be released, students must:

1. Fulfill all financial obligations to WDT.
2. Complete financial aid exit counseling, if applicable.

Students who have not met all certificate/diploma/degree requirements will not be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies. Exception: Students in programs that complete certificate/diploma/degree requirements in the summer may walk at the spring graduation ceremony if all course requirements other than the summer courses as listed in the academic catalog are met.

Degrees, diplomas, and certificates will be conferred once the Registrar's Office confirms all course requirements are met.

## **GRADUATION HONORS**

WDT awards honors to graduates of diplomas and Associate of Applied Science degrees who earn certain cumulative grade point averages. To receive an Honors Designation at graduation, students must earn the following cumulative grade point averages:

- Summa Cum Laude: equal to or greater than 3.9
- Magna Cum Laude: equal to or greater than 3.7 and less than 3.9
- Cum Laude: equal to or greater than 3.5 and less than 3.7

Students who achieve an honor designation will receive a gold (Summa Cum Laude), silver (Magna Cum Laude), or white (Cum Laude) cord to wear during commencement. WDT does not round cumulative grade point averages.

### **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

An incomplete grade is issued at the discretion of the instructor, with approval by the VP for Teaching and Learning, and is normally only granted based on individual student circumstances. Students on academic probation are not eligible to receive an incomplete in any course. Incomplete grades are not calculated in the grade point average until they are replaced with the grade earned. A student must complete an incomplete within two weeks following the grading period for which it was received. Incomplete grades are changed to an "F" if a student does not complete course requirements within two weeks.

Exceptions to this requirement may be granted with approval of the instructor and the VP for Teaching and Learning.

### **INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Normally, coursework is not taken as an independent study unless there are extenuating circumstances. In all cases, approval must be provided by the respective instructor, academic advisor, and the VP for Teaching and Learning. Students who have failed a course may not repeat it as an independent study.

### **LOCATION/RELOCATION WHILE ENROLLED IN A PROGRAM LEADING TO A CERTIFICATION OR LICENSURE**

Students (and graduates) who live in or relocate to a location in which their respective program is not currently authorized or if it is unknown if the program is currently authorized may not be able to obtain certification or licensure for the program in which they initially enrolled. Upon initial enrollment into a program leading to certification or licensure, WDT informs prospective and current students of the impact of location on professional licensure and certification requirements.

It is the student's responsibility to keep the address of their current location up-to-date in My.WDT at all times and to seek guidance from their advisor, program director, and VP for Teaching and Learning if the student lives in or plans to relocate to a location other than South Dakota as this may have an impact on the student's ability to obtain certification or licensure.

### **MAXIMUM CREDIT LOAD**

Students will not register for more than 18 credits in the fall/spring semester or 9 credits in the summer semester without the permission of the academic advisor, the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records, and the VP for Teaching and Learning unless they are following the course schematic listed in the catalog. Students requesting an overload must contact their advisor to start the overload request process.

### **MILITARY WITHDRAWAL DUE TO ACTIVATION AND READMISSION AFTER SERVICE**

Western Dakota Tech realizes students who are members of the U.S. armed forces may be called to active duty, specialized training, or as part of disaster relief efforts with little notice. Students who are activated and have attended classes for 75% of the semester (or 75% of module courses) during which they are called to active duty will be allowed to receive the grade they have earned and given full credit for the course, providing it is a C or higher. Students who are activated prior to 75% of the course or who have not earned a C or higher will receive a "W". This policy does not pertain to initial active duty training (i.e. basic training).

Students who withdraw completely from WDT will be eligible for refunds based on the criteria in the "Refund Policy and Procedure" section of the WDT Student Handbook. Students receiving scholarships or 3<sup>rd</sup> party funding must contact the respective funding agency to determine the impact of the withdrawal on future funding eligibility.

Service members called to military service for a period of more than 30 consecutive days under a call or order to active duty of more than 30 consecutive days shall be readmitted to WDT under the same academic status as the service member had when last attending or when was last accepted for admission to WDT. Military service is service in the armed forces, including service by a member of the National Guard or reserve on active duty, active

duty for training, or full-time National Guard duty under federal authority. It does not include military service under state authority.

Upon the student's return to WDT, the student must give written notification to the Registrar's Office stating the semester the student intends to re-enroll in classes at WDT. In order for the student to be eligible to receive the privileges stated within this section, the student must enroll in classes within three years after the completion of the military service. The Admissions Office will readmit the student to WDT into the next semester unless the service member requests a later date or unusual circumstances require WDT to admit the student at a later date. WDT will readmit the student with the same academic status, which means the same program to which the student was last admitted, at the same enrollment status, with the same number of credit hours previously completed, and with the same academic standing unless the student chooses a different program or enrollment status. If the student is readmitted to the same program, the student will be assessed the tuition and fee charges that the service member would have been assessed for the academic year the student left WDT.

The cumulative length of the absence for military service may not exceed five years.

### **PRIOR LEARNING – WDT Policy 3015**

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) describes learning gained outside a traditional academic environment. Western Dakota Tech may grant prior learning credit to students who have certifications, licensures, proof of military education or experience, or similar documentation that they meet required competencies for a particular course or program.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **PROGRAM OF STUDY DECLARATION**

A student must declare a program to be eligible to receive Title IV Federal Student Aid or VA benefits.

### **REGISTRATION**

Registration is the process of enrolling in courses each academic term. WDT will not automatically register a student in the next term without the student's affirmative consent or without allowing the student to cancel their registration before the student is assessed tuition and fees for that term. Students are encouraged to register for courses for the next semester during their midterm advising session with their academic advisor. Class sizes and sections are limited. Timely registration is essential for students to stay on schedule with their plan of study.

### **REPEATING COURSEWORK**

Any required course a student fails or withdraws from must be repeated. The student is required to pay full tuition and fees for a course being repeated. Any course may be repeated at the student's discretion; however, a student should contact the Financial Aid Office to determine eligibility for funding of repeat courses. Both the original and repeated grade will be reflected on the student's transcript. A repeated course will be designated with an R on the transcript.

### **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS – ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS – WDT Policy 4010**

Western Dakota Tech (WDT) requires that all students maintain satisfactory academic progress toward the completion of a degree, diploma, or certificate.

Good Academic Standing – Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 grading scale in order to remain in good academic standing and to graduate with a degree, diploma, or certificate. Students are responsible for their own academic standing and for seeking assistance when experiencing difficulty.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.



## **STUDENT ID CARDS AND ID NUMBERS**

WDT will issue every student a student ID card with their student ID number and their legal or preferred name. To ensure the safety of the WDT community, students are encouraged to carry their student ID card with them at all times. This ID card is the property of WDT. It can be used when printing from a network printer on campus or for requesting student information, such as passwords, email, or student records. Student ID cards are required to use the WDT library and to take advantage of the managed print solution provided by WDT. More information on printing services can be found at <https://www.wdt.edu/student-life/printing>. Student ID cards are also required to be shown to take advantage of student discounts that are offered at various businesses throughout the community.

All students are assigned a student ID number and temporary password. Once the student has this information, they are required to change their password using WDT's password self-service site available through the "Change Password" link on MyWDT. All passwords are required to be a minimum of fifteen characters in length, alpha/numeric, with at least one capital letter or symbol. Student ID numbers are assigned and may not be changed. Student ID numbers/passwords are used to access MyWDT and a student's email account.

## **STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM – MyWDT AND STUDENT EMAIL**

Students will have access to Western Dakota Tech's student information portal, MyWDT, through any device with Internet access. The MyWDT portal is available through a link on the WDT website, [www.wdt.edu](http://www.wdt.edu), or directly at <https://my.wdt.edu/ics>. Through MyWDT, students will have access to class schedules, grades, billing information, unofficial transcripts, advising, registration, financial aid awards, et cetera.

All student email communications will be sent through the student's official WDT student email account. Student email accounts will remain active for six months after a student exits WDT.

For assistance, please contact the Help Desk at (605) 394-5355.

## **STUDENT RECORDS AND FERPA**

Student cumulative files are kept for the benefit of the student and are retained by WDT as required by law. WDT defines a student as an individual who is enrolled at WDT. Each student's cumulative record includes the initial application, copies of transcripts from other schools attended, placement test results, immunization records, original grades, grade changes, WDT transcript, copies of correspondence, and other records per the WDT Student Records Retention Policy.

When a student leaves WDT, the student file is kept for three years. The WDT transcript, original grades, and grade changes are kept on file indefinitely. If a student does not report for courses after having made application, the record is retained for three years and then destroyed.

### **Release of Records/Transcripts**

Other than Directory Information, no information in a student's record will be released without written permission of the student. WDT requires a student to complete a release of information form to authorize WDT officials to release academic records to the respective 3<sup>rd</sup> party agency.

To request the release of a student's record or transcript, the student must sign a release form or submit a request in writing that includes the student's signature to the Registrar's Office. Requests may be made to WDT in person, via fax, or through US mail. This procedure must be followed each time the student wishes a record or transcript to be released. The student must state the name and address of the person or agency to receive the record and sign the form or request. No records will be released to or for any student who has not met all financial obligations to WDT. The Registrar's Office will not release official transcripts on behalf of a current student during a semester's open grading period. Western Dakota Tech does not have the authority to release transcripts provided to Western Dakota Tech from another higher education institution.

All students are mailed one (1) official copy of their completed transcript within 30 days of graduation. Additional copies are provided upon receipt of a signed written request and payment of a transcript fee. Students may also request a transcript through the National Student Clearinghouse online at <https://www.wdt.edu/foundation-alumni/request-transcripts>.

### **Access to Records in the Event of School Closure**

In the event of the closure of WDT, all permanent records of students and former students will be maintained by and available from South Dakota Board of Technical Education, 800 Governors Drive, Pierre, South Dakota 57501.

### **FERPA – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – WDT Policy 4004**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Western Dakota Tech (WDT) is committed to protecting the privacy of student education records. This policy details WDT's response to the provisions of this act.

To view the complete policy, including definitions, reporting procedures, and the process for the dissemination of policy and training, go to <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – WDT Policy 4007**

The submission of an application for admission to Western Dakota Tech (WDT) represents a voluntary decision of a prospective student to participate in the programs offered by WDT pursuant to its policies, rules, and regulations.

Enrollment in courses extends the privilege to join the WDT community and remain part of it as long as established standards for academics and conduct are met. The following rights for enrolled students are not intended to be complete or exclusive.

#### ***Student Rights***

- Academic and Administrative Policies: Students can expect an academic environment and administrative policies that support inquiry, learning, and growth.
- Access: Students with disabilities have the right to request reasonable accommodation ensuring access to courses, course content, programs, services, events, and facilities.
- Association: Students have the right to associate freely with other individuals, groups of individuals, and organizations for purposes that do not infringe on the rights of others.
- Discipline: In keeping with high expectations that WDT has established for students, students can expect discipline and sanctions for misconduct. Students accused of misconduct have the right to due process regarding the alleged misconduct, as described in the Student Handbook/Student Code of Conduct section.
- Education: WDT students have the right to a quality education that includes expert faculty, academic technology, library services, tutoring, and support resources necessary for learning.
- Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment: WDT will not tolerate racism, discrimination, harassment, exploitation or victimization of students, school employees, non-employees, or any person who is an invitee of WDT for any reason, including but not limited to race, color, ethnic background, national origin, pregnancy, marital status, religion, creed, age, sex, citizenship, political affiliation, mental and/or physical challenge, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, status as a veteran, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. WDT is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of discrimination for students, employees, non-employees and its invitees. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries or complaints

regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Institutional Research and Student Records.

- Freedom of Expression: Students are able to freely examine and exchange diverse ideas in a manner that does not violate the rights of others.
- Grievance Process: WDT students have the right to respectfully present concerns or complaints about the College to College officials, and to have their concerns and complaints addressed. See the Student Handbook for approved processes.
- Institutional Shared Governance: Students have the right to participate in the governance of WDT by serving as an officer in a student organization, completing student surveys, and volunteering for focus groups.
- Learning Outside the Classroom: Students have access to activities beyond the classroom that support intellectual and professional development.
- Safe Environment: Students have the right to learn within a safe campus community.
- Service to the Community: Students have the right to participate in service opportunities to both the WDT community and the community beyond.
- Student Information: Students have the right to access their student records and the right to control disclosure of personally identifiable information in accordance with the Family Education Rights Privacy Act.
- Timely Response from WDT Faculty and Staff: Students have the right to timely and professional responses from college employees.

### ***Student Responsibilities***

- Academic Progress: Students are responsible for their academic progress and planning, including selecting class schedule, meeting course requirements, completing requirements for graduation, reviewing grades and graded material, and seeking assistance in a timely fashion.
- Attendance: WDT is an attendance-required college. Students are responsible for attending and engaging in classes according to the attendance policies contained in the instructor's course syllabus and the Student Handbook.
- Class Work: Students are responsible for knowing all information contained in the syllabus. Students are responsible for meeting all course requirements and observing all deadlines, examination times, and course expectations and procedures.
- Communication: Students are responsible for checking their WDT email daily (excluding holidays and weekends) for communications from college faculty and staff. Students also have the responsibility to accurately complete all institutional forms accurately and submit them on time to the appropriate office. This also includes documents the student is having sent to the school by other organizations.
- General Conduct: Students attending WDT have the responsibility to be aware of and comply with the policies, expectations, and procedures in the Student Handbook, Academic Catalog, and, if applicable, program handbook.
- Online and Hybrid Course Expectations: Online and hybrid courses require a high degree of self-direction and time management skills. This includes being aware of and adhering to course due dates and communicating frequently with your instructor and peers. Please consult with your academic advisor or a

Student Success Coach to determine your readiness level for enrolling in online or hybrid courses.

Students must engage in an academic activity before the official last day to drop a course as published on the academic calendar, or the student may be withdrawn from the course. Students who fail to have regular and substantive participation throughout the course per the expectations and timelines communicated by the instructor risk administrative withdrawal from the course, which may impact a student's financial aid. (See "Administrative Withdrawal Due to Non-Attendance")

- Selection of Program: Students are responsible for reviewing and considering all information about a WDT program before enrolling. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to choose the program they will enroll in.
- Using MyWDT (Learning Management System): Students taking courses at WDT require high-speed Internet connectivity and may require the student to secure an approved proctor for exams. In order to be successful using MyWDT, students need a variety of computer and technology skills. These skills include but are not limited to:
  - Basic Skills: Navigate between two or more applications; minimize/maximize windows.
  - Email Skills: Create, send, open, reply to a message; enter a message subject; send an attachment; open and/or save an attachment; adhere to netiquette guidelines; utilize WDT student email address.
  - File Management Skills: Create, organize, save, copy, and locate files/folders.
  - Web Browser/MyWDT Skills: Go to a specific URL; follow a hypertext link; conduct basic search using search engine; download and install plug-ins, zip/unzip a file (Compress); update browser as needed, upload an assignment file; respond to a forum post.
  - Utilize new technology tools as assigned.

Students are expected to participate in course activities and communicate per the expectations and timelines provided by the instructor. Students' participation must be regular and substantive.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS – WDT POLICY 3010**

Western Dakota Tech is committed to supporting teaching, research, learning and nonacademic operations in the advancement of the college's educational mission. Intellectual, technological, and information resources and materials are provided for use by the entire College community and are to be used in accordance with the provisions of the United States Copyright Act of 1976 as amended, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998, and the Technology, Education and Copyright Harmonization Act of 2002, unless licenses or agreements exist which allow for exceptions.

All users of such resources and materials are expected to follow the standards outlined in the College's copyright policy found at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM WDT**

If a student desires to withdraw from WDT, the student needs to contact the Registrar's Office or a Student Success Coach as soon as the decision has been made. Upon contacting the Registrar's Office or a Student Success Coach, the student will be counseled on the academic and financial consequences of withdrawing.

Students who withdraw from all courses after the official add/drop period but prior to completion of 75% of the course(s) may be due a partial refund depending on the last day of attendance and financial aid may require adjustment. Any outstanding balance due or refund owed will be communicated to you via U.S. mail to the address on file. Student Accounts strives to have this information to you in 7-10 days. Current refund schedules are

available from Student Accounts and are published on the WDT website. The refund policy is subject to change.

Students cannot withdraw from WDT after completion of 75% of the course. Students who leave WDT after the last day to withdraw from a course will receive grades earned as of the end of the semester and no refunds will be granted.

The last day to withdraw from a course is listed on the academic calendar on the WDT website at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/academic-calendar>.

## **Section Three: Financial Aid, Third-Party Funding, and Student Accounts**

### **CHECK POLICY**

WDT will not accept personal checks from any person who has made a previous non-sufficient funds payment. This includes all departments on campus that accept personal checks as a form of payment. If a personal check payment made to a student's account is returned by the bank for any reason, the student agrees to repay the original amount of the payment plus the returned payment fee to the returned check collections company. Returned payments and/or failure to comply with the terms of any payment plan or agreement will result in a hold placed on the student's account. A Student Account Hold will halt registration for courses, release of student records, and any of the services offered by Western Dakota Tech until such accounts are paid in full.

### **COLLECTIONS**

When a student registers for any class at Western Dakota Tech or receives any service from Western Dakota Tech, the student accepts full responsibility to pay all tuition, fees, and other associated costs assessed as a result of their registration and/or receipt of services. Students further understand and agree that their registration and acceptance of these terms constitutes a promissory note agreement (i.e., a financial obligation in the form of an educational loan as defined by the U.S. Bankruptcy Code at 11 U.S.C § 523(a)(8)) in which Western Dakota Tech is providing the student educational services, deterring some or all of their payment obligation for those services, and the student promises to pay for all assessed tuition, fees, and other associated costs by the published or assigned due date.

Balances on past due accounts may be turned over to an outside agency for collection. Students with delinquent accounts at collections will be responsible for all additional collection fees and will result in a hold placed on the student's account. A Student Account Hold will halt registration for courses, release of student records, and any of the services offered by Western Dakota Tech until such accounts are paid in full.

### **FINANCIAL AID**

The WDT Financial Aid Office is dedicated to administering the U.S. Department of Education's Title IV Financial Assistance Program in a fair, consistent, and efficient manner, and assisting students in seeking funding opportunities in order to fulfill their post-secondary educational goals by providing personalized assistance, accurate and meaningful interpretation of federal eligibility regulations, and guidance regarding long-term financial considerations and default management.

The Financial Aid Office at Western Dakota Tech provides financial assistance to students who, without such aid, would be unable to attend school. Financial Aid policies and procedures are found on the WDT website. If you have questions or would like a bulletin, please see the Financial Aid Office.

The following information is available regarding the rights and responsibilities of students who are applying for or receiving any financial assistance from Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, FWS, and Direct Student Loan Programs. The Financial Aid Office may be contacted for the student consumer information listed below.

- Continued eligibility for financial aid
- Satisfactory academic progress
- Methods and means of financial aid payment
- Responsibility of student repayment of loans and grants
- Terms and conditions of work-study employment
- Return to Title IV policy

There are many financial aid sites available on the Internet providing student financial aid assistance and

information for students and their families. The websites are maintained by a variety of institutions, professional organizations, and governmental agencies. Visit Western Dakota Tech's [Financial Aid website](#) for important links.

### **General Financial Aid Eligibility Requirements:**

All financial aid recipients must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be enrolled/accepted for enrollment in a degree, diploma or certificate program.
- Have a high school diploma or GED.
- Be a citizen or eligible noncitizen.
- Maintain [satisfactory academic progress](#).
- Cannot be in default on Perkins Loans or any Direct Loan at any institution.
- Cannot owe an overpayment of Pell or SEOG.
- If required, must register with the Selective Service.
- Cannot have borrowed in excess of loan limits.
- Have need, as defined by individual program requirements (except for unsubsidized Stafford Loans and PLUS Loans).
- Meet any other program-specific criteria.

### **Financial Aid Application Process:**

The Financial Aid process can take 3-4 weeks to complete depending on additional information needed. Students are encouraged to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the academic year they plan to enroll as soon as possible.

- Before filling out your FAFSA, you will need to create your [FSA ID](#). Your FSA ID gives you access to the [studentaid.gov](#) and can also act as your legal signature.
- Complete the [FAFSA](#). The FAFSA application will determine your eligibility for Federal Student aid. WDT Financial Aid Office uses your FAFSA results to determine what federal financial aid you are eligible for: federal grants, federal work study, federal loans, or a combination of these.
- Western Dakota Tech's school code is 010170
- You will need your tax information; you will use your prior-prior year tax information. For example, you will use your 2019 tax return when applying for aid for the 2021-2022 academic year
- Be sure to use your name exactly as it appears on your Social Security Card

If you plan to accept all or a portion of the loans, you must complete Loan Entrance Counseling and the Direct Master Promissory Note (MPN). To complete these steps, you would log on to [studentaid.gov](#) using your FSA ID and select "Complete Aid Process". Entrance Counseling ensures you understand your rights and responsibilities to repay your federal student loans and the MPN is the contract you sign agreeing to the terms of the loan.

The Financial Aid Office will verify all applications that have been selected by the Department of Education. If there is conflicting information in the file, the conflict must be resolved even if the application is not selected by the Department of Education for verification. The conflict may be resolved without being chosen for total verification. Western Dakota Tech reserves the right to institutionally select student files on a case-by-case basis if there is reason to believe that data in the file or on the application is inaccurate.

There are different verification groups. If chosen for Verification, the student will be notified, by email, on how to complete the verification process. All verification groups will require a verification worksheet that coincides with the verification group. Students have 14 days from receipt of notification to submit documentation. Students who submit verification documentation after the time requested will be awarded aid on an availability basis.

The Western Dakota Tech Financial Aid Office cannot provide a Financial Aid Offer until all required documentation has been received and reviewed. Your FAFSA may be selected for the process of verification. For more information about the verification process, please go to [Verification](#).

Next, you will receive a Financial Aid Offer to your personal email address from Western Dakota Tech. This will outline the types of funding you are eligible to receive for your enrollment at Western Dakota Tech. Types of funding you may be eligible to receive includes: federal grants, federal work study, federal student loans, or a combination of these. Western Dakota Tech automatically accepts your financial aid funds for you. If there are any financial aid funds you wish to decline, you will need to complete the decline form: [Financial Aid | Next Steps | WDT](#).

Read your Financial Aid Offer carefully and contact the WDT Financial Aid Office if you wish to decline any or part of the aid listed. If the WDT Financial Aid Office does not receive a communication from the student, the WDT Financial Aid Office assumes you are accepting all aid offered and that you understand and accept the rules and conditions affecting your financial aid. Report any changes in your name, and/or address to the WDT Financial Aid Office.

If you have a source of educational funding that is not listed on the Financial Aid Offer, inform the WDT Financial Aid Office either via email at [finaid@wdt.edu](mailto:finaid@wdt.edu) or in writing. Examples of additional funding that must be reported includes Vocational Rehabilitation, Veteran's Benefits, WIOA, TAA, Tribal grants or loans, all scholarships, stipends, and grants. If you learn about additional funding after you have received your Financial Aid Offer, you are required to notify the WDT Financial Aid Office in writing as soon as possible and a Revised Financial Offer will be issued.

**Financial Aid Summer Session:** If planning to attend a Summer term, please contact the WDT Financial Aid Office at [finaid@wdt.edu](mailto:finaid@wdt.edu) or 605-718-2988 to determine which FAFSA(s) to complete.

### **Financial Aid Responsibility:**

The Financial Aid Office is responsible for processing your aid application and administering your award in a timely manner. You have the right to expect equitable treatment in the consideration of your application for financial aid assistance. Each student's file is evaluated on an individual basis and financial aid is awarded according to eligibility and packaging guidelines.

The staff reviews files in the order they are completed. Students who provide information to complete their files during peak business times (July, August & September) may experience a delay due to the high volume of files being processed. If you apply or complete your file late, please be prepared to pay with your own funds until your file is reviewed and awarded. Students who are in good standing and have submitted all requirements and are waiting for the financial aid office to review their file, may inquire with the Financial Aid Office staff to determine if they may be eligible to charge their textbooks to their Student Account.

### **Confidentiality Statement:**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law that protects the confidentiality of a student's education record, specify that the College may not release information from a student's record to anyone outside of the College without the express written consent of the student. This means that Western Dakota Tech must withhold information about a student's grades, financial obligations, or standing with the College from parents and others who believe their relationship with the student entitles them to have the information. Please understand that because of these laws, Western Dakota Tech cannot release this information without the express written consent of the student. If the student wishes to give consent to non-College employees, they must complete an Authorization to Release Financial Information form.



Please refer to the Western Dakota Tech [FERPA Policy](#) and related resources for details. Students may sign a release form, kept on file electronically, granting access to certain records by designated parties. The form needs to either be signed/witnessed by a College Employee or by a notary public.

### **Financial Aid Disbursement:**

Financial aid (grants, fee waivers, scholarships, and Direct Student Loans) are credited to the student's account and applied toward their institutional tuition and fees, provided they are enrolled for the correct number of credits, their financial aid file is complete, and all admissions requirements are met. If a student has a credit balance after all of their institutional charges have been paid, a disbursement through U.S. Bank's Payee Choice will be made for the remaining amount. Credit balances become available to returning students the third week of fall and spring semester and the second week during summer semester. If a student is a first-time Direct Loan borrower, credit balance disbursements will be available after the student has been enrolled for 30 days. All credit balances are disbursed through U.S. Bank's Payee Choice. Students will receive notification from U.S. Bank when their disbursement is available and will need to create an account. Once the student creates an account, they will choose whether the disbursement will be a direct deposit to their bank account, a Zelle payment, or a check mailed to the student's address on file. If an account is not created within 7 days of notification, a check will automatically be processed and mailed to the student's address on file. Please be sure to keep the address on file current.

All fees and other institutional charges are due prior to the start of each semester. If tuition and fees are not paid in full or other payment arrangements have not been made with the Student Accounts Office, the student will be unenrolled from their courses due to non-payment and their charges will be reversed on their student account. It is the student's responsibility to pay any remaining balance on their account not covered by other funding sources prior to the beginning of each semester. The student is responsible for all fees and institutional charges when due, even if they expect to receive financial aid.

Bookstore charges may be available one week prior to classes starting, if all Financial Aid paperwork is complete, or written authorization has been received from Third Party agencies. Vouchers will be provided through the Student Accounts Office.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

If your enrollment plans change, you must notify the Financial Aid Office because your eligibility for financial aid may be affected.

If you receive any educational funding, such as Veteran's Benefits, Vocational Rehabilitation, and/or Employer Assistance, or if you are awarded a scholarship, grant, or stipend, you must report this information to the Financial Aid Office in writing as soon as possible. A Financial Aid Administrator will re-evaluate your eligibility. If you are no longer eligible for part of the aid you have been offered, we will work with you to resolve any over-award as painlessly as possible. If it is necessary that you repay a portion of your financial aid, you will have to repay it before you are eligible for further aid.

After you leave school, you must stay current with your loan payments to the college or lender. If the Financial Aid Office learns that you are delinquent or in default on a loan from another school, your current award could be canceled.

Western Dakota Tech students who utilized Direct Student Loans and cease enrollment or graduate are required to complete [Exit Counseling](#) on the Federal Student Aid website.

### **Professional Judgement Review:**

The WDT Financial Aid Office has the authority under the law (section 479A of the Higher Education Act) to make

adjustments, on the basis of adequate documentation, and on a case-by-case basis, to address circumstances not reflected in a student's original Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

When exercising professional judgment, the WDT Financial Aid Office will be mindful of statutory limitations and only address special circumstances, which are conditional that differentiate an individual student from a class of students. The purpose of a professional judgment is to determine an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) that reflect the student's family's current financial situation or educational cost of attendance.

Some examples of special circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Loss of employment;
- Unusual family medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance;
- Tuition expenses at an elementary or secondary school for the student's siblings or dependents;
- Extraordinary dependent care expenses;
- Divorce of a dependent student's parent or of an independent student; or
- Death of a dependent student's parent or of an independent student's spouse.

Each professional judgment request will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will require specific documentation for each case along with the Professional Judgment form. To request a Professional Judgment review please contact the WDT Financial Aid Office at (605) 718-2988 or [finaid@wdt.edu](mailto:finaid@wdt.edu). All documentation must be received before a final decision can be determined.

Once a decision is made the student will be notified of the determination along with any changes that are reflected in the financial aid offer for the year.

### **Financial Aid Programs and Award Guidelines:**

The following sections describe the various financial assistance programs available at Western Dakota Tech. These descriptions are summaries and do not contain all of the rules and regulations that apply. In addition, all of the aid described below is distributed based upon financial need. For more information, contact the [Financial Aid Team](#).

### **Federal Pell Grants**

Federal Pell Grants are free grants that do not have to be paid back. They are awarded to students who have a particular level of need determined by the federal government, have not received their first bachelor's degree and have not already reached their Pell Lifetime Eligibility Limit.

### **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)**

FSEOG is a free grant and does not have to be paid back. The federal government allocates monies to institutions to award FSEOG grants to exceptionally needy students. Priority must be given to Pell Grant recipients. Since the funds are limited, students may also be required to meet the preference deadline of April 1 to be considered for the FSEOG.

### **Federal Direct Subsidized Loan**

The Federal Subsidized Loan is a need-based loan made to students by the U.S. Department of Education. Interest is covered while the student is enrolled in school with at least half-time enrollment status. Repayment begins six months after the borrower completes his/her education or ceases to be at least a half-time student. Contact the financial aid office for current year information about the Federal Direct Subsidized Loan's annual award amounts and current interest rates.

### **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan**

The Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan is a non-need-based loan made to students by the U.S. Department of Education. Interest accrues immediately, which the student can choose to pay quarterly or let capitalize. Principal payments do not begin until six months after the borrower completes his/her education or ceases to be at least a half-time student. If a parent is denied a Federal PLUS, a dependent student may be awarded additional funds under the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan Program. Contact the financial aid office for current year information about the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan's annual award amounts and current interest rates.

### **Federal Direct Parent Loan to Undergraduate Students (PLUS)**

The Federal Direct PLUS enables parents with a good credit history to borrow money from the U.S. Department of Education to pay the education expenses of their dependent undergraduate student(s). If a parent is denied the Federal Direct PLUS, a dependent student may be awarded additional funds under the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan program. Federal Direct PLUS eligibility is not based on need. Repayment begins 60 days after the full disbursement of the loan; however, the parent may contact the servicer of this loan and ask about in-school deferments. The yearly limit on a Federal Direct PLUS is equal to the cost of attendance minus all other financial aid received by students. Contact the financial aid office for current year information and about the application procedures.

### **Federal Work-Study Program (FWS)**

Federal Work Study provides jobs for undergraduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay educational expenses. Limited funding for FWS is provided through the federal government with additional contributions from Western Dakota Tech.

### **Defaulted Student Loans and/or Repayments:**

Any student who is in default on a Student Loan will not receive payment for Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, FWS, and Federal Student Loans. If a student owes a repayment on a grant, no further payments of financial aid funds can be made to that student until the repayment has been made.

### **Post-Withdrawal Disbursements:**

An eligible student who withdraws before receiving a Title IV disbursement may be eligible to receive a post-withdrawal disbursement. However, any post-withdrawal disbursement due to the student will be applied to the student's account (when applicable and permissible) before the student receives any funds. A student must make satisfactory arrangements to pay their student account, if a balance is outstanding. Failure to make satisfactory arrangements may result in turning the account over to a collection agency for processing, which may result in additional fees to the student.

### **Student Consumer Information:**

Prospective students, current students and community members are encouraged to review [Consumer Information](#), which provides a comprehensive overview of Western Dakota Tech and its practices, including crime statistics, privacy, financial aid, and other important policies.

### **Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress – [WDT Policy 4011](#)**

Whether or not a student has or will receive financial aid, federal regulations require Western Dakota Tech to establish and implement a policy to measure if a student is making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree. Federal student aid funds include but are not limited to: Unsubsidized Direct Loan, Subsidized Direct Loan, Parent PLUS Loan, Federal Pell grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) and work-study.

Other federal, state, and private agencies may require students to maintain satisfactory academic progress for their aid programs as well. The academic record of all students will be monitored to ensure compliance with the requirements specified below. Therefore, even the academic record of those who have not received federal

student aid in the past may impact future eligibility. Satisfactory Academic Progress is measured at the end of each term (fall, spring and summer).

Failure to meet any of the three following standards will result in a warning or termination of eligibility for federal student aid.

**1. Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (Qualitative measure)**

Federal regulations require a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher for undergraduate students. The cumulative GPA is calculated on all Western Dakota Tech courses excluding credit by exam, transfer credit, and audited coursework.

**2. Pace of progression for cumulative credits attempted and completed (Quantitative measure)**

All students must successfully complete 67% of cumulative attempted credit hours. Attempted credit hours include all hours that would appear on a student's academic transcript at the end of any given term, including withdrawals, incompletes, repeated courses, remedial coursework, credit by exam, and transfer credit. Audited coursework is not included. Credit hours that may have been part of a successful academic amnesty appeal will be included. WDT uses normal rounding rules for calculation of Pace.

Successfully completed hours include grades of A, B, C, D, CE (Credit by Exam), TC (Transfer Credit), TF (Transcript Fee), and S (Satisfactory). All other grades would not be considered successful completion such as F (failure), I (incomplete), IP (in progress), WF (withdraw failing) and W (withdraw).

**3. Maximum Attempted Credit Hours**

There is a limit on the number of credit hours a student can attempt and remain eligible for federal student aid. All credits attempted (except audited coursework) are included. This limit is based on 150% of the credit hours needed to complete the certificate, degree, or diploma that the student is pursuing.

Example:

Associate of Applied Science in Surgical Technology = 90 maximum credit hours attempted (based on a 60-credit hour program).

**Incompletes:**

If a student is unable to complete all requirements, due to special circumstances approved by the instructor, an incomplete may be issued. The incomplete will not be calculated into the grade point average. If the student does not complete the work within the specified time frame, a grade of an F will be assigned. The student will receive the letter grade when all work has been successfully completed. Incomplete grades will be monitored by the Registrar's Office and documentation of the grade change will be provided to the Financial Aid Office. The final grade can affect both GPA and completion requirements. Incompletes are calculated as attempted credits but not successfully earned credits.

**Repeated Courses:**

In certain circumstances, students may receive financial aid for repeated courses. Repeated courses will be used in the calculation of a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress status. Each repetition will count towards the attempted credit hours (quantitative) and the highest grade will be counted in the cumulative GPA calculation (qualitative) for SAP. Federal aid regulations may limit the number of times a course can be repeated and eligible for aid.

**Progression/Repeating a Course:**

Students may choose to repeat courses for which credit has been granted only once to improve a grade. When students repeat such courses, the highest grade received is calculated in the grade point average; the earlier grade(s) received are indicated on the official transcript, but a notation is made that the course has been

repeated. For Satisfactory Academic Progress calculations, both grades are included. All repeated courses are calculated towards cumulative GPA, pace, and maximum timeframe.

### **Remedial Courses:**

Remedial courses are considered in the credit hours attempted and credit hours completed for the quantitative calculation of Satisfactory Academic Progress even though the hours do not count towards graduation requirements. Remedial courses are considered eligible courses for financial aid purposes and enrollment status.

### **Withdraw from a Course:**

Courses that a student withdraws from are included in credit hours attempted but not credit hours completed when calculating pace and maximum time frame. Withdrawn courses are given the grade of a 'W' or 'WF'. Students will receive a 'W' anytime they withdraw after the drop period as outlined on the academic calendar. Students will receive a 'WF' if they are administratively withdrawn from the College.

### **Transfer Credits:**

Transfer credits that have been accepted by Western Dakota Tech toward a current degree are subject to the Satisfactory Academic Progress maximum attempted credit hour calculation. Transfer credits are included in the 150% calculation at which a student is progressing.

### **Change of Program:**

The student is eligible to receive aid for no more than 150% of all the credit hours required to complete the new program of study. The 150% limit is applied to all credit hours earned by the student while enrolled at Western Dakota Tech and includes all transferred credits accepted from previously attended institutions that apply to the current degree. A degree audit will be completed by the Registrar's office and provided to the Financial Aid office.

### **Pursuit of 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree:**

The Registrar's Office will provide a degree audit to the Financial Aid Office for students pursuing a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree from Western Dakota Tech. The student is eligible to receive financial aid for no more than 150% of the credit hours required to complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> program of study. The 150% limit is applied to all hours earned by the student while enrolled at Western Dakota Tech and includes transferred credits accepted from previously attended institutions for current degree. Credits earned for a degree already awarded by Western Dakota Tech are not included in the 150% of the new degree program, unless it applies to the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree.

### **Financial Aid SAP Terminology:**

#### Financial Aid Warning

Students who achieve a cumulative GPA below 2.0 or who have not successfully completed at least 67% of credits attempted at Western Dakota Tech at the end of a semester will be placed on financial aid warning. Students are eligible to receive aid during the financial aid warning semester. Students are expected to achieve a 2.0 cumulative GPA and have a completion rate of at least 67% at the end of the financial aid warning semester to return to good standing. Students are notified at the end of the term via email and U.S. mail if they are on Financial Aid Warning. A student can have more than one warning period, but it cannot be consecutive semesters.

#### Financial Aid Termination of Eligibility

Failure to achieve a 2.0 cumulative GPA or completion of at least 67% of credits attempted at the completion of the warning semester will result in financial aid termination of eligibility. Financial aid termination of eligibility may also be assigned to students who are unable to demonstrate that they can complete their program within the 150% maximum timeframe. Students on financial aid termination are not eligible to receive federal or state financial aid. Students are notified at the end of the term via email and U.S. mail if they are on Financial Aid Termination.

#### Financial Aid Probation

Students on financial aid termination who successfully appeal the financial aid termination will be reinstated for financial aid on a probationary status. During probation, which lasts one term, students are expected to successfully meet the terms of probation as outlined in their Academic Plan. Academic Plans are completed and monitored by a Student Success Coach. Students may continue to receive aid for subsequent semesters if they continue to meet their Academic Plan. Students will return to good standing upon achieving a 2.0 cumulative GPA and successfully completing at least 67% of credits attempted.

#### Academic Plan

Students on financial aid probation that successfully complete their academic plan but have not fully returned to good status will remain on an academic plan. Students may continue to receive aid for subsequent semester if they continue to meet their academic plan. Students will return to good standing upon achieving a 2.0 cumulative GPA and successfully completing at least 67% of credits attempted.

#### **Appealing Financial Aid Termination of Eligibility:**

Students who are placed on financial aid termination may complete a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form to explain circumstances that adversely affected their ability to be academically successful at Western Dakota Tech. Students are advised to carefully read the procedures for submitting an appeal listed on the appeal form and submit the requested documentation with their appeal. Each appeal will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis; therefore, each appeal is evaluated on its own merits or lack thereof. As a result, no appeal is guaranteed to be approved by the SAP Committee.

Reason for appeal may include: personal illness or illness of immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, change of program, or other special circumstances that prevented the student from being successful. Appeals cannot be approved for unresolved situations without solid evidence that the situation will not affect your academic performance.

To ensure a timely review, appeals must be received by the published deadline for the semester you wish to enroll. All appeals are reviewed by the SAP Committee. You will be notified of the result of your appeal by text and email.

If your appeal is approved, financial aid will be reinstated for one term and you will be notified via text and email. Based upon the circumstances of an approved appeal, the Appeals Committee reserves the right to stipulate conditions the student must meet to be considered for financial aid on a probationary basis for subsequent semesters. Conditions of your specific appeal will be outlined in your academic plan. A student may go beyond 150% max timeframe if it is approved with a successful appeal and an implemented Academic Plan. An example of a condition may include a requirement to complete 100% of all courses attempted with no withdrawals or failures with a 2.0 term GPA.

#### **Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility:**

If the committee does not approve your appeal, you will be notified via text and email. The student must then come into compliance on their own without use of the federal aid programs. Students who have lost their Financial Aid eligibility but have subsequently met the qualitative and/or quantitative standards as stated above, will have their aid eligibility reinstated effective the next academic semester.

#### **Return to Title IV:**

The U.S. Department of Education requires institutions to apply the Return to Title IV Funds policy for students withdrawing from a College who receive Title IV financial aid. The Title IV programs at Western Dakota Tech include: Federal Pell Grants, Direct Loans, Direct PLUS Loans, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), and Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant.

The requirements for return to Title IV program funds when you withdraw are separate from the WDT refund policy – [Policy 6007](#) and [Procedure 6007.001](#). Therefore, you may still owe funds to the school to cover unpaid institutional charges. Western Dakota Tech will charge the student for any Title IV program funds that Western Dakota Tech is required to return.

A student who withdraws after the 60% point of a semester is entitled to retain all Title IV aid for that semester. However, if the student withdraws prior to the 60% point of the term, unearned Title IV funds as determined by the federal policy must be returned to the various programs. These funds must be returned even if the College provides no refund to the student. This means the student could owe Western Dakota Tech and/or the U.S. Department of Education a significant amount of money.

### **Withdrawal Process:**

The Return of Title IV funds policy is applied to any student who cancels enrollment, withdraws, drops to zero hours, takes a leave of absence, or is dismissed. This policy is applied to students who discontinue enrollment in all classes on or after the first day of the term. When you withdraw, two separate calculations must take place:

1. A refund of tuition and fees from WDT must be calculated by the Bursar's Office (Student Accounts)
2. A return to Title IV must be calculated by the Financial Aid Office

If you cancel your registration prior to the first date of classes, this policy will not apply to you. Also, if you drop some but not all of your classes, these policies will not apply; however, you should notify the Financial Aid Office as your continued financial aid eligibility may be affected. Contact the Registrar's Office for information on withdrawing.

Attendance is taken in all courses at Western Dakota Tech. The student's withdrawal date is the last date of attendance or engagement, which is referred to as LDA, in a course based on attendance records and verified by the Registrar's Office. The Financial Aid Office will use the LDA to calculate the return of funds.

### **Unofficial Withdraw:**

If a student has not attended all enrolled courses for 8 consecutive days, the Student Success Coach attempts to contact the student. If the student has 14 days of non-attendance and has not begun the official withdrawal process, an official letter and email is sent to the student notifying the student of the attendance policy and the options to withdraw or risk of administrative withdrawal. Western Dakota Tech is an attendance taking school and must be able to make this determination within 14 days if not sooner.

The Financial Aid Office will receive administrative withdrawal paperwork from the Registrar's Office and will complete the Return of Title IV calculation. The deadline to refund Title IV to the Department of Education is 45 days from the date the school determined the student withdrew.

### **Refund of Tuition and Fees:**

Based upon the date you discontinue enrollment, you may receive a refund of your tuition and fees. See WDT [Policy 6007](#) and [Procedure 6007.001](#) for details.

### **Determining Earned Aid:**

Though your aid is posted to your account at the start of each semester, you earn the funds as you complete the semester. Title IV financial aid is earned by the calendar day, not class day. This includes weekends, holidays, and breaks of less than five consecutive days. Western Dakota Tech is required to determine the amount of Title IV aid the withdrawing student has earned and then either disburse any additional funds the student may be entitled to up to the amount earned, or return funds in excess of the amount earned which the student has already received.

If you withdraw during your enrollment period, the amount of Title IV program assistance that you have earned up to that point is determined by a specific formula. If you received (or your school or parent received on your

behalf) less assistance than the amount that you earned, you may be able to receive those funds. If you received more assistance than you earned, the excess funds must be returned by Western Dakota Tech to Title IV.

When a student receiving Federal Title IV financial aid withdraws from Western Dakota Tech during the enrollment period, the amount of the Title IV funds (not including Federal Work Study) that the student earned during the enrollment period is calculated as of the student's withdrawal date.

Title IV funds are earned at a fixed rate on a per day basis up to the 60% point in the enrollment period. Title IV funds are 100% earned if the withdrawal date is after the 60% point in that period.

If the date a student withdraws from Western Dakota Tech is prior to or on the 60% point of the semester, Western Dakota Tech is required to determine the portion of the aid disbursed that was "earned" by the student before the withdrawal date. The "unearned" Title IV funds must be returned to the respective federal aid programs within 45 days after Western Dakota Tech determines student withdrew. Unearned aid is the amount of disbursed Title IV aid that exceeds the amount of Title IV aid earned based on attendance in the enrollment period.

For example: If \$1000 in federal aid is disbursed, and the student withdraws at the 30% point of the term, \$700 of the aid is unearned and needs to be returned to the identified aid program.

The following formula is used to determine the percentage of unearned aid that has to be returned to the federal government:

- The percent earned is equal to the number of calendar days completed up to the withdrawal date, divided by the total calendar days in the payment period (less any scheduled breaks that are at least 5 days long).
- The payment period is the entire semester. For students enrolled in modules (courses which are not scheduled for the entire semester or term), the payment period only includes those days for the modules(s) in which the student is registered.
- The percent unearned is equal to 100% minus the percent earned.

### **Calculating Return of Title IV Aid Amount**

Once the earned and unearned aid percentages are determined, the next step is to calculate the dollar amount of unearned aid that must be returned to the financial aid programs. The return amount is determined by multiplying the unearned aid percentages by the total of all Title IV aid received.

### **School Portion of the Return**

The amount of unearned aid that must be returned by Western Dakota Tech is a percentage of the institutional charges (tuition and fees) for the term. Once the dollar amount of the school portion of the return is determined, it is compared to the total amount of all unearned aid. If a school's portion is less than the total unearned aid, then Western Dakota Tech must return the amount of the school portion. If the calculated school portion exceeds the total unearned aid, then Western Dakota Tech must return the amount of the total unearned aid. After the school returns the correct amount of financial aid, any amount of the total unearned aid that remains becomes the student portion of the return. The student portion of the return is calculated by subtracting the amount of the school return from the total unearned aid.

### **Order of Aid to be Returned:**

Financial Aid will be returned to the aid program from which it came. If returned to a loan program, your outstanding balance will be reduced by the amount of the return. Financial Aid will be returned in the following order:

1. Unsubsidized Direct Loan
2. Subsidized Direct Loan



3. Direct PLUS Loan
4. Federal Pell Grant
5. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
6. Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant

The school must return the amount of Title IV funds for which it is responsible no later than 45 days after the date of determination.

**Grant Overpayment:**

Any amount of unearned grant funds that the student must return is called an overpayment. The maximum amount of a grant overpayment the student must repay is half the grant funds that were received or scheduled to receive. The student does not have to repay a grant overpayment if the original amount of the overpayment is \$50 or less. Arrangements must be made with Western Dakota Tech or the Department of Education to return the unearned grant funds. The student will be notified of any grant overpayment within 30 days of the date the school determined the student withdrew.

**Late or Post-Withdraw Disbursement:**

If the student did not receive all of the funds that were earned prior to withdrawing, a post-withdrawal disbursement may be due. If the post-withdrawal disbursement includes loan funds, the student must give permission before the funds can be disbursed. Western Dakota Tech may automatically use all or a portion of the post-withdrawal disbursement of grant funds for tuition and fees. Permission is required to use the post-withdrawal grant disbursement for all other school charges. Students will be notified in writing of post-withdrawal disbursement eligibility for Federal Direct Loans within 30 days of the date of withdrawal determination to offer them the opportunity to accept all or part of their disbursement for Title IV loans.

**Notification to Student:**

Once the Return to Title IV Funds calculation has occurred, the Financial Aid Office will notify the student of the results of the calculation and the aid that was returned. The Student Accounts Office will notify the student of any outstanding balance now due to the institution as a result.

**Sample of Return to Title IV Calculations:**

1. A student withdraws from Western Dakota Tech after completing 34.9% of the total semester.
  - The semester began on January 8<sup>th</sup> and ended on May 11<sup>th</sup>
  - The student completely withdraws on February 14<sup>th</sup>
  - This is the 38<sup>th</sup> day of the semester that is 109 days long (or 34.9%)

Type of Aid	Financial Aid Disbursed	Total Aid Earned (student keeps)	Total Aid Unearned (returned to program)
Unsubsidized Direct Loan	\$2,969	\$776	\$2,193
Subsidized Direct Loan	\$1,732	\$1,732	\$0
Direct Plus Loan	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Pell Grant	\$2,960	\$2,960	\$0
FSEOG	\$250	\$250	\$0

2. Federal law states that the student has earned 34.9% of federal aid disbursed
3. 65.1% has been determined to be unearned aid. The unearned aid is returned as follows:
  - Unsubsidized Direct Loan – \$2,193 (returned by Western Dakota Tech)
  - Subsidized Direct Loan – \$2,508 (student’s responsibility to repay in accordance with the terms of the borrower’s promissory note)

### **REFUND POLICY AND PROCEDURE – WDT Policy 6007**

Students who withdraw completely from WDT will be eligible for refunds (excluding non-refundable fees) based on the last date of attendance (LDA) at WDT.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

To help make education more assessable and affordable to new and current WDT students, scholarships are made available through the Western Dakota Tech Foundation by the generosity of our donors.

Scholarships are listed on the WDT website's scholarship page along with instruction on how to apply, Build Dakota Scholarship information, and scholarships offered by other local and national organizations. Students can see these opportunities at <https://www.wdt.edu/paying-for-school/scholarships/>.

For more inquires or assistance with applying for scholarships, please contact the Assistant Director of Scholarships at 605-718-3061 or [Jennie.Best@wdt.edu](mailto:Jennie.Best@wdt.edu) or the Scholarship Coordinator at 605-718-3064 or [Andrew.Kapelewski@wdt.edu](mailto:Andrew.Kapelewski@wdt.edu).

### **TUITION AND FEES**

All tuition and fees billed to the student's account must be paid in full or a payment plan must be in place 30 days prior to the start of the semester that the student is enrolled or upon enrollment between 30 days prior to the start of the semester and the end of the add period as identified in the academic calendar found at <https://www.wdt.edu/current-students/academic-calendar>. Student schedules will be removed for all students who have not paid their bill in full, completed a payment plan, submitted third party authorization, or completed financial aid requirements. Additionally, students will be withdrawn from all courses prior to or during a semester if payment agreements are not met.

## **Section Four: General Campus Policies**

### **ABANDONED PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students must refrain from leaving personal property at Western Dakota Tech. WDT is not responsible for any lost or stolen property.

Personal property found on campus should be turned into the Lost and Found in the designated program area or to Enrollment Services. Any personal property left on campus or in the Lost and Found without indication of ownership will be considered abandoned property after thirty (30) days. In the event WDT has information indicating the ownership of the personal property, WDT will send notice to the student at his/her last known email or physical address, advising the student to collect and remove the personal property left at WDT within thirty (30) days or the property will be considered legally abandoned and will become the property of WDT. In its' discretion, WDT may dispose of the abandoned property as it sees fit. In the event WDT sells the abandoned property, the sale proceeds will not be credited to the student's account.

### **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Western Dakota Tech does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs, activities, services, enrollment practices, or in any aspect of their operation.

This notice meets the requirements of the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and/or laws:

Debbie Toms, Title IX Coordinator; 800 Mickelson Drive, Office D116 or D225C, Rapid City, SD, 57703; 605-718-2958; [Deborah.Toms@wdt.edu](mailto:Deborah.Toms@wdt.edu)

Western Dakota Tech is an open-admissions institution offering career-focused diploma, certificate, and associate of applied science programs in a variety of fields. Please view our programs for more information.

### **ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS**

Western Dakota Tech (WDT) believes that the illegal use of drugs and alcohol presents a serious health and safety hazard to the College community and interferes with educational and occupational success. A person needs to feel secure to perform at a maximum level. Therefore, campus safety and security must be a concern of every student and employee at WDT. Furthermore, drug use and alcohol abuse affect the entire campus community in increased drop-out rates, academic failure, disciplinary problems, and progression into addiction.

The College fully complies with the Drug Free School and Communities Act of 1989 to prohibit the illegal possession, consumption, and distribution of drugs and alcohol on College property, during classes and at activities officially sponsored by the College. Students and employees 21 years of age or older may not consume alcoholic beverages on College property, during classes, or in connection with activities officially sponsored by the College except by permission of the local Board or designee.

Furthermore, students are prohibited from being on campus property while in an intoxicated state. Additionally, possession of empty alcohol beverage containers and drug paraphernalia is also prohibited. No student organization may sponsor any student-related activity at which alcoholic beverages are to be consumed.

WDT supports all federal, state, and local ordinances pertaining to alcohol and drugs and will fully cooperate with law enforcement authorities to protect the students and employees of the College from the illegal possession, purchase, sale, and manufacture of controlled substances and alcohol.

For the purpose of this policy, drug includes all controlled substances, illegal or controlled mood-altering chemicals, all look-alike drugs, all chemicals that release toxic vapors, and any prescription or patent drugs except those medications prescribed by and under the supervision of a licensed physician in a manner consistent with WDT policy.

Although some forms of marijuana may be legal at the state level, marijuana is considered a Schedule I drug under federal law, even when recommended by a certified physician. Accordingly, students, employees, visitors, and guests, including those with a medical card, are prohibited from possessing, distributing, using, or being under the influence of marijuana on college property and in connection with its programs and activities off campus. Those caught in possession, using, or being under the influence of cannabis are subject to disciplinary action and possible legal action.

As part of the effort to create a drug-free campus, WDT believes the college community should be educated about the physical and emotional health hazards the misuse of drugs and alcohol presents. WDT provides information and educational programs on substance abuse throughout the year to students and employees. Listed below are some of the health risks associated with using/abusing alcohol and various drugs. (Please note that the dangers associated with substance abuse are not limited to only the conditions listed below.)

- Alcohol - Heart and liver damage; brain damage; death from overdose and accidents
- Marijuana/Hashish - Impaired memory perception, interference with psychological maturation, possible damage to lungs and heart, psychological dependence
- Cocaine - Intense psychological dependence, sleeplessness and anxiety, nasal passage damage, lung damage, hearth damage/heart attack, and death from overdose
- Stimulants - Loss of appetite, hallucinations, paranoia, convulsions, brain damage, cancers of the lung, throat, mouth, death from overdose
- Depressants - Infection, addiction, loss of appetite, death from overdose, nausea, and has severe interaction with alcohol
- Narcotics - Addiction with severe withdrawal symptoms, loss of appetite, death from overdose
- Hallucinogens - Anxiety, depression, impaired memory, emotional breakdown, death from overdose
- Inhalants - Drastic weight loss, brain damage, liver and bone marrow damage, high risk of sudden death

Students are encouraged to contact the Student Success Coaches for assistance with drug and alcohol concerns. Community resources and confidential third-party counseling services are available.

Violations of this policy will be responded to in accordance with the seriousness and frequency of the offense. Any student displaying intoxicated behavior will immediately be referred to the Director of Student Success or VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success. Students found in violation of any of these policies will be subject to the following consequences:

1. The first offense will result in:
  - The student being removed from class and given options for transportation.
  - The student meeting with their Student Success Coach to discuss available campus and community resources.
  - If under 21, the student being required to attend at least one session, but up to three sessions, at Behavior Management Systems at WDT's expense.
2. The second offense will result in:
  - The student being required to attend at least one session, but up to three sessions, at Behavior Management Systems at WDT's expense.
  - The student being placed on conduct probation for the earlier of two full semesters or until graduation.
3. The third offense will result in:
  - The student being suspended (conduct suspension) from WDT for one full semester (fall/spring).
4. The fourth offense will result in:
  - The student being expelled (conduct expulsion) from WDT.

Additionally, drug-related convictions may disqualify a student from receiving Federal Student Aid. United States Department of Education Federal Student Aid Regulations indicate that a federal or state drug conviction can disqualify a student for Federal Student Aid funds (i.e., grants, loans, federal work-study, federal campus-based aid). Students who are convicted of such drug offenses after submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must notify the financial aid office immediately.

For more information on Western Dakota Tech's Drug Free Workplace Policy 2012, which includes information relevant to both employees and students who are not employed by WDT, please visit <https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/about/policies/2012.pdf>.

### **CHILDREN OF STUDENTS**

Children of students may not accompany their parent(s) to class or wait without parental supervision in other areas of the campus, including the Student Success Center and common areas.

### **COMPUTER/EMAIL/INTERNET/NETWORK**

All students are required to have a PC-compatible (not Chromebook or Apple product) laptop computer with wireless connectivity. Laptop requirements vary by program and can be found at <http://www.wdt.edu/student-life/tech-support/>. Technical support for laptops/tablets will be limited to WDT software and network connectivity issues. Students may seek additional support through their vendor or a commercial computer support service.

WDT Policy 6018 – Network Use Policy contains information pertaining to proper network use. You can view the complete policy at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **DRESS CODE**

All students are required to dress in a manner consistent with their instructional area. Uniforms or garments needed for occupational areas are to be worn by all students when appropriate or as required by instructors. Apparel that displays foul or vulgar language, inappropriate images, or is significantly revealing will not be tolerated. Reasonable personal cleanliness and frequent laundering of uniforms is expected and is the responsibility of the student. WDT staff reserve the right to determine what is considered appropriate attire.

### **GUN- AND WEAPON-FREE CAMPUS – WDT Policy 6011**

WDT believes students, faculty, staff, visitors, and contractors must be able to learn and work in a safe environment. WDT is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is free from threatening and violent behavior. To accomplish this, WDT prohibits the carry, exhibit, or display of weapons, including guns, explosives, knives, dangerous chemicals, or any other weapon capable of producing bodily harm. Such activity is prohibited on any property owned or operated by WDT or at any College-sponsored activity at any location.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website's policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION**

Students must furnish their own transportation to and from school, including transportation to and from field trips, internships, clinicals, or any other locations of course instruction. WDT students may park in areas designated as student parking. Improperly parked vehicles will be towed at the owner's expense.

The following areas are designated and labeled as student parking:

- Parking areas on the north and west side of the Mickelson building.
- Parking area on the south side of Badlands Hall.
- Handicapped parking designated near each entrance.

Students are not allowed to park in the following areas:

- fire lanes;
- south parking lot designated for WDT staff and visitors;

- along the shop entrances on the north side of the Mickelson building;
- under the library drive-up canopy;
- under the Medical Simulation Center canopy;
- driving lanes within parking lots;
- sidewalks or areas blocking sidewalks, driveways, ramps, or loading zones;
- handicapped spaces without a state-issued handicapped placard or license plate;
- spaces marked as “reserved”;
- spaces reserved or blocked with a cone, sign, or other indicator signifying the space is not available for use; or
- other designated areas.

### **STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW**

Western Dakota Tech will make available upon request the completion/graduation rates and transfer-out rates of certificate, diploma, or degree seeking students.

### **TITLE IX RIGHTS OF PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS – WDT Policy 4003**

Western Dakota Tech is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all individuals enjoy freedom from discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of sex, as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX). Sex discrimination, which can include discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status, is prohibited and illegal in admissions, educational programs and activities, hiring, leave policies, employment policies, and health insurance coverage. Western Dakota Tech hereby establishes a policy and associated procedures for ensuring the protection and equal treatment of pregnant individuals, persons with pregnancy-related conditions, and new parents.

Students requesting pregnancy-related accommodations need to contact the Student Success Center.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website’s policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **TOBACCO AND SMOKE-FREE CAMPUS – WDT Policy 4002**

Western Dakota Tech is committed to providing a healthy and comfortable learning environment that is conducive to the physical and mental well-being of the campus community. To enrich and support this atmosphere, WDT is a tobacco and smoke free campus. This policy applies to all employees, students, visitors, and contractors. Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco or vapor products are prohibited anywhere in WDT buildings or on any college-owned property with the exception of within the confines of personal vehicles. In addition, giveaways, sponsorship of campus activities, advertising, and promotions from tobacco companies are prohibited on the WDT campus or at WDT-sponsored events. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Information regarding a tobacco cessation program or other options is available through the South Dakota QuitLine website: <https://www.sdquitline.com>.

The complete policy is located on the WDT website’s policy page at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

### **WDT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Western Dakota Tech (WDT) respects the uniqueness of every individual who works at, attends, or visits WDT and is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We know and acknowledge all of us have different strengths and backgrounds that contribute to the success of us as individuals and WDT as a whole. We believe everyone should have equitable access to technical education and the professional career pathways it provides. Thus, WDT strives to provide a supportive and inclusive environment for all employees and students, regardless of areas of difference, so individuals can find both personal and professional success at WDT.

### **WDT Policies**

Students are responsible to abide by WDT policies and procedures that are posted on the Western Dakota website at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/policies-and-procedures>.

## Section Five: Campus Safety

### **CAMPUS ALERT SYSTEM**

The Western Dakota Tech Alert System is a mass notification system used to effectively communicate physical, environmental, and weather-related threats to students and employees of Western Dakota Tech. An alert will be sent to inform students and employees of an imminent emergency, such as a fire, tornado, threat of violence, or chemical hazard, and of other significant events such as a school closing, snow emergency, or power emergency. When activated, the WDT CampusCast Alert System may send a text message (if available) and email (to WDT accounts) to all employees and students. Messages will also be posted on the Western Dakota Tech website as well as on the WDT Facebook and Twitter pages. Some alerts will be issued via the campus intercom system.

### **CAMPUS SAFETY AND SECURITY HANDBOOK AND EMERGENCY PLAN**

Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Campus Safety and Security Handbook and Emergency Plan. The Campus Safety and Security Handbook contains important information about alcohol and other drugs, crime, safety and security, and sexual harassment prevention and response. The Campus Safety and Security Handbook is located on the WDT website at <https://www.wdt.edu/about/student-consumer-information>. The Emergency Plan contains information on timely warnings, responses to emergency situations, and evacuation procedures. Students can access the Emergency Plan from the How To tab on the MyWDT portal in the Resources section.

### **CRIME AWARENESS AND CAMPUS SECURITY – ACCURATE AND PROMPT REPORTING OF CRIMES**

Community members, students, faculty, staff, and guests are encouraged to report all crimes and public safety related incidents in a timely manner. Western Dakota Tech does not have campus police or security personnel. To report a crime or an emergency, dial 911. Crimes also should be reported in a timely manner to the Director of Student Success to ensure, if required, inclusion in the annual crime statistics and to aid in providing timely warning notices to the community, where appropriate.

### **Reporting Clery Crimes and Voluntary, Confidential Crime Reporting**

Western Dakota Tech encourages the campus community to immediately report Clery crimes or suspicious activity to Campus Security Authorities to help maintain the safest possible environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. A report from a victim who does not want to pursue action through Western Dakota Tech or the criminal justice system can be filed that maintains the confidentiality of the reporting individual. The college can document the report without revealing the victim's identity. This allows Western Dakota Tech to track the incident, compare it to other incidents, and take actions to keep further incidents from occurring.

"Campus Security Authority" is a Clery specific term that encompasses certain Western Dakota Tech employees who have a duty to report crimes they become aware of, as defined by the Clery Act. A Campus Security Authority is defined as an employee of an institution who has significant responsibility for student and campus activities or an employee who meets the definition of "any official... who has authority to institute corrective measures" for Title IX purposes under 34 CFR 106.30(a).

Western Dakota Tech identifies employees in the following roles as Campus Security Authorities:

- WDT President
- Vice President for Finance and Operations
- Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success
- Vice President for Teaching and Learning
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Institutional Research and Student Records/Title IX Coordinator
- Director of Student Success
- Student Success Center Staff
- Club Advisor

Clery-reportable crimes and a description of each Clery crime is located in the Annual Security Report which is located at <https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/consumer-information/securityreport.pdf>. Individuals unable to obtain a hard copy from the college's website of the college's Annual Security Report that includes crime statistics may request one from Western Dakota Tech at: Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success, Western Dakota Technical College, 800 Mickelson Drive, Rapid City SD 57703.

### **EMERGENCY REMOVAL FROM CAMPUS**

WDT is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is free from threatening and violent behavior. WDT prohibits violent or threatening behavior by any person, including faculty, students, staff, visitors or contractors, on the College premises or at WDT sponsored activities.

Violent behavior includes any behavior, whether intentional or reckless, which results in bodily injury to one's self, another person and/or damage to property.

Threatening behavior includes any behavior, whether intentional or reckless, that by its nature would be interpreted by a reasonable person as an intent to harm one's self, another person or damage property belonging to another. Threats may be oral, written, or communicated through conventional mail, electronic, fax, or telephonic means and may be direct or implied.

Any person who engages in violent or threatening behavior while on WDT owned or controlled property, or while engaged in official WDT business, may be removed and/or barred from the premises pending the outcome of an investigation.

Individuals found in violation may be removed from campus, arrested, and be subject to legal action. WDT employees and students who violate this policy may also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

### **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF BUILDING**

Fire drills will be held periodically during the academic year. WDT employees will inform the students of the exit or exits to be used in emergency evacuations. Whenever the alarm is sounded, everyone is to leave the building immediately in an orderly manner. Students are to move away from the building so that others may also get out. A signal will be given to return to the building.

### **ILLNESS, ACCIDENT, OR INJURY**

In the event a student incurs an injury or becomes ill while on campus, the following procedure will be implemented: If the student is conscious and able to respond, and the injury or illness is not perceived to be life threatening or potentially life threatening, the student will be asked regarding desired medical treatment and/or an individual to transport him/her home or to medical assistance. If the student is unconscious, unable to respond, or the injury or illness is perceived to be of a life threatening or potentially life-threatening nature, Emergency Response Services (911) will be called. Students are responsible for the cost of transport and treatment for any incidence of accident or illness. In all cases, an injury or accident must be reported to the instructor or, in the instructor's absence, to the Director of Student Success or Director of Human Resources immediately.

A student who receives a work-related injury while on clinical or internship is required to contact the Western Dakota Tech Human Resources Office at 605-718-2407 within 24 hours.

WDT neither accepts nor recognizes any liability for injury to students on WDT property while participating in WDT activities, for travel to and from job sites or other areas required as part of the program of study, or for travel to and from campus. Students are encouraged to have appropriate insurance.

WDT recommends that students carry health insurance. Some programs require students to have a health insurance policy prior to starting certain portions of their coursework. Please check with program instructors for more information.



### **INCLEMENT WEATHER CAMPUS CLOSINGS**

In the event of weather-related closures, the following procedures will be followed:

1. In cases of class postponement or cancellation, a message will be sent via the Western Dakota Tech Text Alert System and Western Dakota Tech email. Local news media outlets will be notified. In addition, a message will be posted on the Western Dakota Tech website and Facebook and Twitter pages.
2. The decision to close campus will be made as early as possible. An announcement will normally be made by 6 a.m. for daytime classes and by 3 p.m. for evening classes.
3. Students not in attendance because of bad weather, in instances where classes have not been cancelled or campus has not been closed, will be counted absent. Exceptions will be made for individuals who live in and commute from another town to Western Dakota Tech, where roads required to travel on are under a no-travel advisory issued by local law enforcement agencies.

NOTE: Traveling conditions can vary considerably from one location to the next. This places considerable responsibility on the individual for making an independent decision and arrangements with instructors. No student is encouraged to travel when conditions make traveling dangerous.

### **PERSONAL PROTECTION ORDER, NO CONTACT ORDER, OR RESTRAINING ORDER**

WDT is committed to ensuring that orders of protection issued by courts are fully enforced on College property. Therefore, if a student obtains a Personal Protection Order, No Contact Order, or Restraining Order, he or she should promptly inform the Director of Student Success and provide the Director of Student Success with a copy of that order, so that the College can enforce it.

### **RISK OF EXPOSURE TO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

Due to the nature of WDT's educational programs, materials or objects of a hazardous nature or ones that could cause someone to experience an allergic reaction are present in WDT buildings and on the WDT property. These hazards could include, but are not limited to, liquids or gasses used in some of our trades programs, beehives/bees, agriculture animals, latex, and possible food allergens.

All questions about hazardous materials or objects on the WDT campus can be directed to the Director of Student Success.

### **SAFETY**

All students will adhere to all safety regulations pertaining to their instructional program area as well as those throughout the campus. Students in violation of safety regulations may be subject to conduct suspension. Unsafe conditions in the building should be reported to the appropriate faculty, staff, or the VP for Finance and Operations.

Safety methods and procedures are taught in all programs where special emphasis on safety is a necessity. Much of the school's equipment, if improperly handled, could result in serious or fatal injury to students. Safety glasses must be worn in all shop areas. The school assumes no liability for any injury.

Speed limits of 15 miles per hour must be observed at all campus locations. Students are reminded to enter the highway near campus entrances with caution.

### **THEFT/VANDALISM**

Vandalism or theft of tools, supplies, or other property belonging to WDT or to other students may result in immediate dismissal from school. In addition, students will be required to pay for any WDT property they may damage or lose. Matters of this nature will be reported to the Director of Student Success. WDT assumes no liability for theft of personal property. Many insurance companies offer low-rate coverage for theft. Check with your agent for further details.

**VISITORS**

Visitors to WDT must check in with a WDT employee upon arrival. Under no circumstances are visitors allowed to enter classroom areas without prior approval from the instructor and/or WDT administration. Any person not registered as a student may be subject to removal from campus.

## **Section Six: Discrimination and Harassment – Protected Classes**

Western Dakota Tech is committed to excellence and recognizes that not all policies, procedures, and processes work for every individual or circumstance. Students and the community deserve the opportunity to have their concerns addressed in a fair manner and the college deserves the opportunity to address circumstances and to improve.

For all complaints, the first course of action must be to try to resolve the complaint directly with Western Dakota Tech through the established processes. A list of established complaint processes can be found at <https://www.wdt.edu/student-life/file-a-complaint>.

The following process will be used to address allegations of discrimination and harassment based on a protected class.

All employees, non-employees, and students have a responsibility to maintain a positive learning, work and school activity environment by reporting all incidents or suspected incidents of discrimination and/or harassment involving themselves or others.

The Title IX Coordinator determines if the incident or suspected incident falls within the scope of WDT policy 2001/4001 – Sexual Harassment – Title IX. If so, policy 2001/4001 and procedure 2001/4001.Procedure.001, known as Process A and which includes a grievance procedure, is used.

If the incident or suspected incident does not fall within the scope of Policy 2001/4001, the matter may fall under 2005/4005 – Discrimination and Harassment. The Student Grievance Procedure, located later in this section, can be used when a student grievance of discrimination or harassment is reported that falls within the scope of Policy 2005/4005 – Discrimination and Harassment.

The Title IX Coordinator may designate the Director of Student Success/504 Coordinator to handle allegations of discrimination and harassment based on protected class involving students. The Director of Student Success/504 Coordinator can be reached at [whitney.bischoff@wdt.edu](mailto:whitney.bischoff@wdt.edu), 605-718-2965, or office D160A in the Student Success Center.

### **DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

- WDT Policy 2001/4001 – Sexual Harassment – Title IX
- WDT Policy 2005/4005 – Discrimination and Harassment

#### **Notice of Non-Discrimination:**

WDT will not tolerate racism, discrimination, harassment, exploitation or victimization of students, school employees, non-employees, or any person who is an invitee of WDT for any reason, including but not limited to race, color, ethnic background, national origin, pregnancy, marital status, religion, creed, age, sex, citizenship, political affiliation, mental and/or physical challenge, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, status as a veteran, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state or local law. WDT is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of discrimination for students, employees, non-employees and its invitees. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Institutional Research and Student Records who serves as the Title IX Coordinator.

#### **Title IX at Western Dakota Tech:**

Title IX of the U.S. Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") is a federal civil rights law that prohibits

discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. Western Dakota Tech (WDT) does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities that it operates including admissions and employment.

Under Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex can also include sexual harassment which is defined as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee of the College conditioning the provision of education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo); or
2. Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the institution's education program or activity; or
3. Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the WDT Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the WDT Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the telephone number, electronic mail address, or by mail to the office address listed for the WDT Title IX Coordinator. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and/or laws: Debbie Toms, Title IX Coordinator; 800 Mickelson Drive, Office D116 or D225C, Rapid City, SD, 57703; 605-718-2958; [Deborah.Toms@wdt.edu](mailto:Deborah.Toms@wdt.edu).

WDT Policies 2001/4001, 2001/4001.Procedure.001 and 2001/4001.Procedure.002 provide information on WDT's grievance procedures and grievance processes, including how to report or file a complaint of sex discrimination, how to report or file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and how WDT will respond.

*Policy - <https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/about/policies/4001.pdf>*

*Procedure. 001 <https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/about/policies/4001procedure001.pdf>*

*Procedure. 002 <https://www.wdt.edu/assets/docs/uploads/about/policies/4001procedure002.pdf>*

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the WDT Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary, or to both. The Assistant Secretary contact information is Office of Postsecondary Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington DC 20202, Main Telephone: 202-453-6914

### **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Western Dakota Tech does not discriminate on the basis of any protected classes in its education-related programs and activities, providing equal educational opportunities to all persons. The College has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. The College's Title IX Coordinator has been designated to receive and review reports of discrimination or harassment.

The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of any of the protected classes with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division: One Petticoat Lane; 1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320 Kansas City, MO 64106; (816)268-0550; [OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov)

WDT will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that persons requiring accommodations are provided those accommodations, as needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for hearing impaired, providing recordings of material for visually impaired,

or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Director of Institutional Research and Student Records is responsible for such arrangements.

It is against the law for WDT to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance.

**Level 1 (Grievance):** Grievances should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than twenty-five (25) calendar days after the alleged act of discrimination or harassment. A grievance must be submitted to the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records, Western Dakota Tech, 800 Mickelson Drive, Office D116 or D225C, Rapid City, South Dakota 57703. In the event the grievance is against an action taken by the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records, the complainant may file his/her grievance with the WDT President, Western Dakota Tech, 800 Mickelson Drive, Rapid City, South Dakota 57703; 1-605-718-2402.

A grievance must be in writing and contain the following:

- The name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number of the individual filing the grievance;
- A full description of the problem; and
- A statement of the remedy or relief requested.

Alternative options for filing complaints, such as personal interviews or audio/visual recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.

The Director of Institutional Research and Student Records, or his/her designee, shall conduct an investigation which is to be completed expeditiously, normally within thirty (30) calendar days.. An investigation may be informal, but must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the grievance. The Director of Institutional Research and Student Records, at his or her sole discretion, may gather additional information necessary to consideration of the grievance, including, but not limited to, interviewing individuals who may possess relevant information. The Director of Institutional Research and Student Records will maintain the files and records relating to such grievances. Grievances will remain confidential, except to the extent necessary to conduct a review of facts and as authorized by law.

Within fifteen (15) calendar days after the conclusion of the investigation, the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records will communicate a decision for resolution to the complainant via the student's WDT email account with a follow-up letter sent to the permanent address on file in a format accessible to the person filing the complaint. This deadline may be extended for good cause, as determined by the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records or by written agreement of the parties. The Director of Institutional Research and Student Records' written decision shall also include notice of the complainant's right to appeal the decision.

**Level 2 (Appeal):** If the complainant disputes the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records' decision, the complainant may appeal the Level 1 decision to the VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt of the Level 1 decision. The appeal must be submitted to the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records.

The appeal must be in writing and contain the following:

- The name, mailing address, e-mail address, and phone number of the individual filing the grievance.
- The specific factual and/or procedural basis for the appeal or disagreement with the Level 1 decision.

An appeal must be directed only to issues raised in the original grievance and cannot raise new issues. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Director of Institutional Research and Student Records shall submit the appeal and the materials prepared at the Level 1 grievance (including the results of the Level 1 investigation) to the VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success.

The VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success shall review the written appeal and investigative materials. The VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success, at his or her sole discretion, may request additional information necessary for consideration of the appeal. Within thirty (30) calendar days of the appeal filing date, the VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success shall issue a written decision. This deadline may be extended by the VP for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success for good cause. All appeal decisions are final.

## Section Seven: Student Complaints

Western Dakota Tech is committed to excellence and recognizes that not all policies, procedures, and processes work for every individual or circumstance. Students and the community deserve the opportunity to have their concerns addressed in a fair manner and the college deserves the opportunity to address circumstances and to improve.

For all complaints, the first course of action must be to try to resolve the complaint directly with Western Dakota Tech through the established processes. A list of established complaint processes can be found at <https://www.wdt.edu/student-life/file-a-complaint>.

The following process will be used to address complaints brought forth by a student against a member of the WDT community, not including discrimination or harassment based on a protected class or complaints by one student against another student(s) that falls under the Student Code of Conduct in Section Eight.

### STUDENT COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS

WDT is committed to providing a safe environment that promotes intellectual growth and personal development. Students should be afforded the right to an environment free of unfair or improper action by any other member of the WDT academic community as described in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section. To that end, WDT provides the following process for resolving any alleged violation of a student's rights.

WDT works to protect the rights of all students. It should be noted that students hold a responsibility for complying with all WDT policies and procedures and the requirements of individual courses as outlined on the course syllabus provided by each instructor.

#### **Informal Resolution**

WDT faculty and staff strive to resolve complaints at the lowest possible level, as appropriate. Any WDT student who feels their rights have been violated should first attempt to resolve the matter with the individual involved. The student may contact a Student Success Coach or their academic advisor for assistance with informal resolution and meeting facilitation.

If the student feels that the complaint has not been resolved at the informal level, the student may file for a formal resolution.

#### **Formal Resolution**

1. Within 10 working days of the completion of the informal resolution process, the student must submit a formal grievance to the Director of Student Success or designated representative.
2. The Director of Student Success or designated representative will work with the appropriate Vice President, within 10 working days of receiving the formal grievance, to request a response from the person with whom the grievance is made. That person should respond within 10 working days. Failure to respond will not stop the resolution process.
3. The appropriate Vice President will review all submitted material and, within 10 working days, communicate a decision for resolution to the parties involved via the student's WDT email account with a follow-up letter sent to the permanent address on file.

#### **Appeal**

Should the student feel the resolution reached by the Vice President to be unsatisfactory, the student must submit a written appeal within 10 working days of the formal resolution to the Director of Student Success to deliver to a VP who was not involved in the formal resolution process. That VP will conduct an investigation and, if necessary, appoint a committee to review the appeal. The VP will issue a decision within 10 working

days of the appeal. All appeal decisions are final.

**Retaliation**

Any action by a member of the WDT community to penalize, intimidate, harass, take adverse action against a person who reports a complaint, or participates in an investigation is prohibited. Retaliation may be found even when the underlying report does not constitute a complaint.



## Section Eight: Student Code of Conduct

The following will be used to address Student Code of Conduct concerns, not including discrimination and harassment based on a protected class, brought against a student by any member of the WDT community for conduct that is outside the established standards for academic and personal conduct. Discrimination and harassment based on a protected class will be addressed with Policy 2001/4001 and Policy 2005/4005 and the associated procedures.

### STUDENT CONDUCT – WDT Policy 4014 (pending WDT Policy, Cabinet, President, and Board of Trustees approval)

Western Dakota Tech has a responsibility to protect its mission and the members of the College community. The College has established reasonable standards for academic and personal conduct that allows others to learn, study, work, and relax in a safe and orderly environment. The following Code of Conduct, while not all inclusive, identifies conduct that infringes upon those expectations, disrupts the learning environment, and possibly exposes students and staff to injury. Such conduct will result in disciplinary action. Any student, group of students, or student organizations found in violation of the WDT Student Code of Conduct is subject to the disciplinary sanctions. Violations of the Code of Conduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Inappropriate behavior defined as conduct that disrupts the educational process and impedes the learning environment.
2. Physical or verbal abuse or detention of any person or persons on school property or at WDT activities.
3. Endangerment of the health and safety of oneself or others, or infringement upon the rights of others.
4. Theft or damage to WDT property or property of any member of the WDT community or campus.
5. Unauthorized entry to or use of WDT facilities or property.
6. Use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of alcohol, narcotics, illegal drugs, or other controlled substances, firearms, items commonly considered weapons, explosives, or dangerous chemicals on school-controlled property or during WDT sponsored activities.
7. Dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the school.
8. Reckless use of a vehicle on WDT property.
9. Failure, after due notice, to pay fees or other school financial obligations, i.e. Bookstore, Parts Store, damage, non-sufficient funds or no-account personal checks, department supply charges, et cetera.
10. Harassment or hazing of fellow students or staff members.
11. Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco or vapor products on WDT property other than within the confines of personal vehicles.
12. Failure to report to the WDT Administration Office or local sheriff and/or police agencies any knowledge of criminal activity on campus: i.e., murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, arson, vandalism, consumption of alcohol, or use of controlled or illegal substances or motor vehicle theft. Such a report must be provided in a manner that is timely and that will aid in the prevention of similar occurrences.
13. Illegal, improper, or unethical use of computer systems.
14. Copyright infringement.
15. Disruptive behavior that detracts from maintaining classroom discipline, unnecessarily draws attention to the students involved and away from classroom activity and prevents those students and/or other students from their pursuit of learning.
16. Failure to comply with the directives of a WDT employee.

### Jurisdiction of WDT

The Student Code of Conduct shall apply to conduct that occurs on WDT premises and at off-site locations or events where WDT exercises substantial control. Each student shall be responsible for his/her conduct. The Student Code of Conduct shall apply to a student's conduct even if the student withdraws from or drops out of school while a disciplinary matter is pending.

## **Allegations and Notice**

The following due process will be used to address alleged student code of conduct violations including non sex-based stalking and any other non-sex based VAWA offenses.

1. Student Code of Conduct allegations may be filed against any student by any member of the WDT community.
  - a. Allegations of academic misconduct shall be directed to the VP for Teaching and Learning or designated representative.
  - b. Allegations other than academic misconduct shall be directed to the VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success or designated representative.
  - c. The complaint shall state the specific facts that form the basis for the allegation, as well as the identities of any other witnesses and the location of any physical evidence of the misconduct. Allegations must be signed by the Reporter. Any allegation should be submitted as soon as possible after the event takes place or after the Reporter discovers the identity of the alleged Respondent.
2. The VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success shall make an initial determination as to whether the allegations were timely, taking into account the seriousness of the incident and the degree to which delay may have impaired access to evidence. The VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success shall determine if the allegations have merit and whether the incident sufficiently affects WDT interest to warrant further proceedings.
3. Once the VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success determines that a violation may have occurred and that an investigation shall commence, the VP for Teaching and Learning, VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success or designee shall provide the charged student with a written notice of the alleged violation. This notice shall be sent through campus email or, in matters of serious allegations, shall be sent to the student via registered mail. The notice shall include:
  - a. statement of the charge(s);
  - b. the date, time, and place of the informal resolution hearing;
  - c. and a copy of, or link to, the due process and disciplinary procedures in effect at that time.

## **Disciplinary Hearings**

### **Informal Resolution**

1. If the VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success determines that the allegations have merit,
  - a. the VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success will set a meeting to review the nature and circumstances of the alleged offense(s) with the student
  - b. The VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for institutional Effectiveness & Student Success shall next determine whether the allegations can be resolved by mutual consent of the parties involved on a basis acceptable to the VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success.
  - c. If mutual consent is agreed upon then the Informal Resolution shall be final and there shall be no subsequent proceedings.
2. If the allegations cannot be resolved informally, the formal resolution procedure will be implemented.

### **Formal Resolution**

Within fifteen working days of the final informal resolution attempt, the VP for Teaching and Learning or VP for Institutional Effectiveness & Student Success shall present all allegations and recommended sanctions to the student charged in written form and shall identify with specificity each section of the conduct code under which allegations are brought. A time shall be set for a hearing between the student and the Hearing Officer (the VP not involved in the informal resolution), not less than five nor more than fifteen calendar days after the student has been officially notified by school email or written letter in U.S. mail. The minimum time limits may be waived by the party charged. Maximum time limits for scheduling of hearings may be extended at the discretion of the

Hearing Officer. Hearings shall be conducted by the Hearing Officer according to the following guidelines:

- a. The Hearing Officer shall have the power to exclude from the hearing any person whose conduct interferes with the hearing.
- b. In hearings involving more than one accused student, the Hearing Officer may permit the hearings concerning each student to be conducted separately.
- c. Pertinent records, exhibits, and written statements may be accepted as evidence for consideration by the Hearing Officer.
- d. At the hearing, the Hearing Officer shall determine whether the student has violated each section of the Code of Conduct which the student is charged with violating.
- e. The fact that a student acted while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or an illegal controlled substance shall not be considered a mitigating factor.
- f. There shall be a single written record of all formal evidentiary hearings before the Hearing Officer. The record shall be the property of WDT.
- g. The record and its contents shall be held in confidence. Any person who unnecessarily discloses the contents of the record to parties not involved in the appeal shall be subject to discipline.
- h. Except as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, WDT shall not be required to change the form in which the record is maintained.
- i. Except in the case of a student charged with failing to obey the summons of the Hearing Officer or WDT official, no student may be found to have violated the Code of Conduct solely because the student failed to appear before the Hearing Officer. In all cases, the evidence in support of the allegations shall be presented and considered.

### **Sanctions**

In each case in which the Hearing Officer determines that there is a preponderance of evidence that a student has violated the WDT Code of Conduct, the Hearing Officer shall uphold or modify the recommended sanction(s) based on the principle of "like sanctions for like violations" and the principle of a sanction being commensurate with the violation.

In the case of a drug or alcohol violation, the sanction imposed will reflect what is stated in the Alcohol and Other Drugs section of the Student Handbook.

Following the hearing, the Director of Student Success or designated representative shall provide a written summary of the findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations, if any, reached by the Hearing Officer and of the sanction(s) imposed, if any, to the parties involved.