Sterling
ECOLOGICAL THINKING & ACTION

student handbook

Our mission is to advance ecological thinking and action through affordable experiential learning that prepares people to be knowledgeable, skilled, and responsible leaders in the communities in which they live.

Houston Kitchen

Laboratory - Teaching And Research

Laundry

Learning Center

Logging Shop

Lost And Found

Mail

        Craftsbury Campus Mail

        Outside Mail

        Forwarding Mail

Natural History Collection

Pride

Reuse Room

Roots

Student Center

Student Storage

Technology Help Desk

Wellness Center

Woodshop

WELLNESS RESOURCES

        Emergency:

        Medical Emergency:

        Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

        Buildings and Grounds Emergency:

        Mental Health Emergency:

            Phone Services:

            Text & Web Chat Services:

Lamoille Health Partners

Local Healthcare Options

        Vermont 988

        Vermont 211

        Primary Care

        Counseling & Mental Health

        Residential Mental Health Respite & Care

        Dental

        Pharmacies

        Domestic & Sexual Violence Support

        Military Veteran Resources

        Sexual Health & Reproductive Care

        Substance Abuse Services

        Alternative Medicine Resources

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Dear New and Returning Students:

Welcome to Sterling College, where ecological thinking and action are not just aspirations but a lived experience. Whether you are stepping onto our campus for the first time or returning as part of our thriving community, we extend a heartfelt welcome to a place where academics, community, and hard work converge.

Your membership in the Sterling College community is no mere coincidence. It reflects your demonstrated commitment, potential, and understanding of the importance of ecological thinking and action and environmental stewardship. It is a testament to the rigorous journey you've embarked upon and the hard work that has brought you here. You are now part of a unique institution dedicated to shaping leaders who will leave a lasting impact on our environment and communities worldwide.

Sterling's offerings extend far beyond its classrooms, forests, farm, and gardens. Our programs connect tightly with Vermont's people, place, and history – a backdrop that is simultaneously geographic, demographic, economic, and historical. Vermont has a long history of grassroots mobilization in our communities, a drive toward direct democracy seen in our Town Meeting Days, and local activism found in myriad community-based organizations. This activity forms the backdrop of Vermont's nationally pioneering public policies in health, social welfare, land use, and education based on informed anticipation and prevention of problems.

Sterling's mission goes beyond academics. It's about forming responsible, enlightened citizens who can adapt to the ever-changing environmental landscape and lead in a period of climate change that is challenging systems governing life on our planet. Our network of alums stands as evidence of this promise. They are spread across the globe, positively impacting the environment and their communities, large and small. Their success is a beacon, guiding your path and showcasing your potential and promise as a Sterling student.

As you begin or continue your journey at Sterling College, we encourage you to live each day with purpose. Embrace the challenges and rewards, seize opportunities for growth, and become an integral part of our community. Let your time here not only shape your future but contribute to our collective future where the environment is cherished and protected, communities are strengthened, and society is made more just and equitable.

Welcome to Sterling College; welcome to a place where your passion for the environment and learning translates into doing toward change for a more sustainable future.

With best wishes and gratitude,

Dr. Scott L. Thomas, President

MOTTO

Ecological Thinking and Action.

MISSION STATEMENT

Sterling College advances ecological thinking and action through affordable experiential learning that prepares people to be knowledgeable, skilled, and responsible leaders in the communities in which they live.

VISION STATEMENT

Sterling uses education as a force to address critical ecological problems caused by unlimited growth and consumption that is destroying the planet as we have known it, such as:

- Fossil fuel dependence and rapid climate change.
- Destruction of biodiversity and loss of wild places.
- Promotion of harmful agricultural practices that threaten human and natural communities.
- Persistence of structural oppression that impacts human and ecological wellbeing.
- Deterioration of civil society through estrangement from community, nature, and place.

COLLEGE-WIDE COMPETENCIES

Our vision is informed and guided by five college-wide competencies (see Appendix 1) gained through learning assessed by our faculty:

Ecological Fluency

Students develop a sophisticated understanding of, and practice personal engagement with, ecological systems. A student who has achieved competency in this area will be able to:

1. **Engagement Outdoors:** Directly engage with the natural world outdoors in a variety of environments, seasons, and conditions.
2. **Observation and Interpretation**: Observe, describe, and interpret ecosystems and natural and anthropogenic phenomena in the field in a detailed and accurate manner.
3. **Scientific Literacy**: Describe how the scientific method can develop an understanding of the world, apply the scientific method to answering questions, and critique information using a scientific lens.
4. **Ecological Literacy:** Describe the processes and relationships underpinning ecosystem function and the distribution of life on Earth on an ecological and evolutionary timescale.

Knowledge of Intersecting Social Contexts

Students gain an understanding of relationships, communities, societies, and cultures as dynamic, interdependent, and complex systems. A student who has achieved competency in this area will be able to:

1. **Socio-Economic Literacy**: Describe, discuss and engage with social, economic, political and ecological systems as dynamic and complex systems of relationships and interdependencies.
2. **Social & Environmental Justice**: Describe the intersecting dynamics of social, political, and economic structures and social & environmental justice.
3. **Cross-Cultural Understanding:** Demonstrate cross-cultural understanding in a range of fields including arts, education, literature, history, and relationships with the environment.

Critical Thinking & Communication

Students analyze concepts, experiences, and artifacts, and articulate ideas and share information clearly. A student who has achieved competency in this area will be able to:

1. **Information Literacy**: Examine critically, analyze, and synthesize information from a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, including academic literature.
2. **Mathematical Literacy:** Demonstrate basic competency in algebra, graphing, mathematical problem solving and computation.

3. **Research Skills & Methods:** Describe, practice, and critique qualitative and quantitative research methods.
4. **Voice**: Express their individual voice, perspectives, and creativity
5. **Communication:** Articulate ideas, represent theoretical concepts, and share information in a clear, informed, and engaging manner, using a variety of media, tools and approaches, and for a variety of audiences.
6. **Reasoning & Argument**: Present well-organized, reasoned, supported and rhetorically effective arguments.

Socio-Ecological Engagement and Practice

Students become effective environmental stewards and community members. A student who has achieved competency in this area will be able to:

1. **Ethics:** Articulate a personal ethical framework that informs decision-making and capacity for change.
2. **Connection, Interrelations and Systems**: Cultivate meaningful, trusting connections and recognise and depict interrelatedness and boundaries within human and ecological systems across time and place.
3. **Practical Skills**: Exhibit proficiency with a range of different types of technical skills and tools to support environmental stewardship, land-based livelihoods, and life in community.
4. **Challenge**: Develop comfort in the face of unfamiliar, arduous and challenging experiences, and practice skills that develop self-awareness, confidence and master self-efficacy in the world through exercising one's curiosity, creativity, and cooperation.
5. **Resilience and Well-being:** Integrate and apply interdisciplinary knowledge and skills to support the resilience and well-being of themselves, their communities and ecosystems.
6. **Problem-solving**: Apply informed, skillful, creative, and ethical problem solving to real-world situations and problems.
7. **Teaching & Learning:** Implement theory, practice and reflective strategies from the field of education into applied teaching, knowledge sharing, personal learning, and interpersonal development.
8. **Leadership:** Cultivate and practice leadership skills.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2023-2024

The Sterling College calendar can be found at: **Sterling College Academic Calendar**, with specific dates and deadlines for the semester found at: **Sterling College Academic Dates & Deadlines**.

COLLEGE EMAIL, DIRECTORY AND OFFICES

Sterling College Email

All students are given a Sterling College email address on depositing. Expectations and conditions around the use of this email addresses are **outlined here**. This email address is the primary channel for all official Sterling College correspondence. It is our expectation that students will receive and send information through this channel. Further details concerning email usage policies and etiquette can be **found below**.

Office Directory

The **Office Directory** is a list of key personnel in different offices of the College and their campus contact information. In addition, the **Faculty & Educators Directory** provides information about and contact details for all faculty at the college.

Academic Office

The Academic Office is located on the second floor of Kane Hall and comprises the Dean of Academics, Dean of Work-Learning, Associate Dean of Academics & Advising, and Assistant Dean of Academics & Registrar's offices. Students seeking information about Sterling's academic programs should first consult this Handbook which includes information on course registration, **waivers**, **withdrawals**, **transcripts**, and degree requirements; **support for learning challenges, disabilities, and accommodations**; clarification of **Sterling academic policies and processes**; if questions still remain, students are encouraged to contact their advisor, or a member of the Academic Office.

Students enrolled in coursework at additional instructional sites or off-campus locations may contact members of the Academic Office staff directly via email, phone, or video-conference.

Admission Office

The Admission Office is located on the first floor of Kane Hall and provides information on the educational opportunities available to prospective students at Sterling College and counsels incoming students through the admissions and matriculation process.

Advancement Office

The Advancement Office is located on the second floor of Simpson Hall. Advancement oversees fundraising for the College, marketing and external relations, social media, alumnx relations, Sterling swag (sweatshirts, t-shirts, etc.), and coordinates with the Board of Trustees, Board of Advisors, and the Alumnx Association Board.

Board Of Trustees

Overall control of the College is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The Board is charged with seeing that the College stays true to its mission and is operated in a responsible manner. Members of the Board volunteer their services and meet formally three times per year. Meetings are open to the Sterling Community unless otherwise noted. Board meeting materials are made available in the Brown Library and via Sterling's weekly Convener newsletter. The Board has officers including a chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer. Board members are listed on the website; they include alums, parents of alums, and friends of the College who have a particular interest in the school and its programs. The current profiles for members of the Board of Trustees [can be found here](#).

Business Office

The Business Office is located on the second floor of Mager Hall. This is the place to go to make a payment on your account in person. Credit card, check and cash payments are all accepted. Checks can be cashed in the Business Office, up to a maximum of $50, if there are no outstanding bills. The Business Office also issues parking permits. The Business Office will periodically bill students for outstanding library fines, room damages, parking tickets, guest meals, transportation fees, etc., and will collect payment for these bills. Please email studentbilling@sterlingcollege.edu for billing questions or a copy of your bill.

Marketing & Communications

Marketing & Communications is nested in the Advancement Office and can help students publicize Sterling events that are open to the general public and can provide guidance on production of marketing materials. Any communication about Sterling College events aimed beyond the current Sterling community, including the use of the logo, must be approved by the Associate Dean for Marketing & Communications. A publicly accessible brand and media kit - which includes fonts, logos, colors, writing style guide, photographs, video, social media policies, land acknowledgement, and inclusive marketing policies - [can be found here](#).

The Marketing & Communications office is located in the Second Floor of Simpson Hall.

Student Center and Dean of Community

The Student Center is located on the second floor of Dunbar. The Student Center houses the ReUse Room, as well as many art and crafting supplies, games, couches, computers, and a smart TV. The telehealth room is in the Student Center.

The Dean of Community is a student-focused, trauma-informed, and justice-oriented administrative role on our Craftsbury Common campus. The Dean supports an engaged, welcoming, and vibrant student community. The Dean provides leadership for all emergency and crisis responses of the College, and oversees Health and Wellness, Residential Life, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Belonging programming, Dining Services, Athletics, Restorative and Accountability procedures, and student leadership programs. The Dean leads community care initiatives and culture-building, co-coordinates new student orientation, and supports student activities and student groups.

The Dean of Community's office is located on the first floor of Mager Hall.

Financial Aid Office

The Director of Financial Aid is located on the first floor of Kane Hall and is available for application information, questions about aid awards, information about refunds, should you withdraw from the program, and specific questions about Sterling College's Financial Aid and Title IV Federal Financial Aid.

Facilities Department

The Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, Lori Collins-Hall (lcollinshall@sterlingcollege.edu), is responsible for the oversight of the Facilities Department. The Facilities Department is located in the garage attached to North House. The Facilities Department's responsibilities include general maintenance and repair of all campus facilities and grounds and providing support for special events, as required. To notify maintenance of any needs or problems, please email workorders@sterlingcollege.edu.

President's Office

The President's Office is responsible for providing leadership, oversight, and strategic planning for all areas of the College to advance our mission of ecological thinking and action. The President, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, and Vice President for Advancement, work collaboratively with the President's Cabinet to achieve the long-term goals of the College. The President's Office is located on the second floor of Mager Hall.

The Office of Continuing Education

The Office of Continuing Education offers workshops, courses, and certifications that inspire lifelong ecological thought and action for residential and non-residential adult students of all

ages. Continuing education units are offered for most of these short courses, and undergraduate credit may be available with additional assessment and faculty mentorship. Lifelong learning opportunities at Sterling span EcoGather, Surviving the Future, and a range of new offerings across environmental justice, movement building, ecology, education & the outdoors, and food & environmental writing. For more information, visit: https://www.ce.sterlingcollege.edu/.

GOVERNANCE OF THE COLLEGE

Sterling uses education as a force to advance ecological thinking and action through affordable experiential learning that prepares people to be knowledgeable, skilled, and responsible leaders in the communities in which they live.

LEADERSHIP COUNCILS (Vision & Direction)

Community Meeting

Community Meeting is an important weekly convening of students and employees to make announcements, share and discuss concerns, and express appreciation for each other and the work of the College. Community Meeting provides an open platform for communication from the President of the College and others and ideas, topics, and issues - both inside and outside of the Sterling College community - that might not otherwise have a venue in the work of the councils and committees. Attendance at Community Meeting is required of employees and a community expectation of students.

President's Cabinet

The President's Cabinet meets weekly to advise the President on all matters related to the wellbeing of the College. The meeting facilitates communication with and between the President and members of the senior leadership of the College. The Cabinet is chaired by the President, and its membership includes: the Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Vice President of Advancement, Dean of Academics, Dean of Admission & Financial Aid, and Dean of Community. Cabinet members play a critical role in communicating about the activities of the College with employees and students and encourage active community-wide commitment to the success of Sterling College. Importantly, the President's Cabinet also oversees institution-wide emergency response.

Faculty Council

Faculty Council has responsibility for and oversight of the credit-bearing academic curriculum, including learning outcomes from study and work. The Council provides vision and direction of the College's holistic approach to student advising from entry to life after Sterling. The Council meets weekly and convenes annual retreats to plan and to advise the Dean of Academics on all matters related to the academic program. The Council is chaired by the Dean of Academics. In the absence of the Dean, the Associate Dean serves as chair. Employees designated as faculty by the President and Dean of Academics are members of the Faculty Council; the Director of Library Services, and Deans of Community and Admission & Financial Aid are *ex officio* members.

OPERATIONAL COMMITTEES (TACTICS & IMPROVEMENT)

Community Council

The Community Council is open to all students, faculty, and staff. This gathering is held as needed and is requested by attendees of the weekly Community Meeting. Community Council is chaired by the Dean of Community with representation on a rotating basis from Student Leaders. The aim of this council is to promote community dialog and elicit input on campus life and College-wide issues. The Community Council serves as an advisory group to the President and President's Cabinet to support student success. Issues needing College approval are brought to the President's Cabinet for review, and decisions are made accordingly.

Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee is a committee of the Faculty Council and oversees approval of new courses and proposed changes to courses, review of student self-designed major proposals, and regular review of academic proposal and evaluation forms. The Committee meets on an as-needed basis, and is convened and chaired by the Dean of Academics. Its membership is made up of the Dean of Academics, Associate Dean of Academics, Registrar, full-time faculty appointed by the Dean of Academics to allow cross-disciplinary insight, up to two student representatives can also serve on this committee. Student representatives recuse themselves for the review of student proposals such as concentration area proposals.

Equity Committee

Sterling has made a commitment in its strategic initiative to become an anti-racist and anti-biased institution, and works to dismantle white supremacy culture, structural racism, and the persistence of oppression that impacts human and ecological well-being. The Equity Committee is responsive to change and reflection, and takes thoughtful actions that contribute to the empowerment and sense of authentic belonging of historically marginalized and excluded members of our communities.

The Equity Committee engages an institution-wide approach that supports a culture of inquiry and care, aimed at supporting the thriving of all our students. The Equity Committee also serves as an advisory group to the President and other councils to support Sterling's commitment to developing inclusive educational programming and to recruiting and retaining a diverse community of faculty, staff, and students. The Equity Committee is chaired by the Dean of Community.

Student Engagement Committee

The Student Engagement Committee is the body through which the College supports its holistic student success advising model. The Committee meets weekly through Fall and Spring semesters, and as needed, to review, assess, and make decisions and recommendations regarding individual and whole-institution student success, engagement, and enrollment across academics, work and community. Members of this Committee also conduct withdrawing and

graduating student interviews. This Committee is chaired by the Associate Dean of Academics and Advising, and membership comprises the Dean of Academics, Assistant Dean of Academics & Registrar, Dean of Work-Learning, Dean of Community, Dean of Admission & Financial Aid, Director of Financial Aid, and Director of Learning Support.

Risk Management Committee

The Risk Management Committee reviews, discusses and collects data that they then use to make recommendations to the President's Cabinet to ensure campus safety and functionality. The information they collect is gathered from incident reports and the daily operations of the College campus. The Committee membership is composed of a Chair from the employee body, and includes, but is not limited to, representatives from outdoor education, farm & forest, and student life. This Committee edits and updates the Emergency and Crisis Response Handbook. The Committee offers training related to risk management, such as: Incident Report Form training, college driver certification, and incident response training.

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY & INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEM SOLVING

Community Accountability

The guiding philosophy and approach to community and relationship at Sterling College is one that encourages compassion, care, and reflection, focusing on student development through individual growth and accountability for impact of behavior. We expect all members of the Sterling community to act with integrity, compassion, care, reflection, and accountability, irrespective of their role at the College.

Our goal is to support students as they become the people they want to be in the world. We are committed to providing the tools, resources, and support for students to make informed decisions about their lives and their interactions within the community. The processes for addressing violations of Community Behavioral Guidelines are designed to support student accountability and to balance the rights of the individual with that of the health and safety of the community.

The Dean of Community's Office will investigate accusations of violations of community behavior guidelines as reported through Community Accountability Reports and / or College Incident Reports. Interim measures may be taken for community safety following an incident and until a case can be heard.

Investigations may result in a variety of sanctions including a Community Review contract. These individualized contracts may include mediation, counseling, a fine, or service, and are reflective of the nature and severity of the incident. A student may choose not to honor the conditions of the Community Review contract, with the understanding they may be withdrawn from the College as a result. Additionally, a student who chooses to consistently or frequently disregard Community Guidelines may be dismissed from the College.

Students and administrators overseeing accountability processes may request and recommend additional engagement of a Council or Task Force if there are *questions of fact* in a particular case, or if the violations present a significant concern within the community as a whole.

A Community Care Task Force (CCTF) will convene at the request of the Dean of Community when it is determined that deeper conversations around violations of community behavior guidelines are necessary. The CCTF will:

- **Discuss the issue at hand** by asking: W*here is the harm? Who has been harmed? What are their needs? Whose obligations are these? What should be done to repair the harm? Which systems created or supported the environment that allowed or necessitated the behavior?*
- **Examine whether and how existing systems have caused or contributed to harm**,
- **Identify paths toward restoration, reparation, and transformation, and**
- **Submit a brief summary report to the Dean of Community.**

CCTFs exist to strengthen accountability procedures, establish educational opportunities, and to create and resource a culture of care, consent, connection, accountability, and transformative justice. This process allows all parties to express how they have been affected by the issue, and for the CCTF to hold itself accountable for the well-being, safety, and integrity of our community.

Issues of sexual assault, harassment, discrimination, and violations of Community Review contracts will not be brought to a Community Care Task Force. Instead, these reports should be directed immediately to the Title IX Coordinator. Reports of bias and discrimination should be made through a Community Accountability Report.

While students are enrolled in the College, they must inform the College of any occasion on which they are charged with a felony by state or federal authorities. Failure to do so may itself result in disciplinary action, including the potential for suspension or dismissal.

Guiding Principles: How to Approach Conflict

Conflict holds the potential to be transformative and generative, and can present opportunities to build trust and strengthen relationships.

We trust and expect members of our community to participate in decision making, disagreement, and struggle with the intention of building connection and making our community stronger. This includes a commitment to honesty, integrity, and to face-to-face communication, and a rejection of dishonesty, manipulation, and polarization.

We expect each person to take responsibility for their needs, feelings, and actions. We call on each person to discern the difference between a desire to be heard and a problem that must be solved. We acknowledge that conflicts cannot always be addressed immediately or in a way that satisfies everyone involved, yet we recognize the value in being able to voice concerns and have perspectives considered.

Institutional Problem-Solving Through Direct Communication

Sterling recognizes that occasionally a student may feel that they have been treated unfairly or that an error has been made in the interpretation or application of a policy. When this situation occurs, Sterling wants each student to be aware that the problem solving procedure described below is available to assist in reaching an equitable resolution between parties. There is a different process in place for complaints of sexual harassment or violence, which should be directed immediately to the Title IX Coordinator. Reports of bias and discrimination should be made through a Community Accountability Report.

It is assumed that most concerns or complaints can be resolved informally through direct communication between community members.

1) **Students should bring any concerns or complaints directly to the attention of the person in conflict to try to resolve the situation.** This should be done in a timely manner relative to the action or incident that is the basis for the complaint. If a student would like informal help with this action, they are encouraged to ask their Advisor, a Dean, or a Community Advisor for support.

2) Though most problems will be solved by informal discussions, a student who still feels dissatisfied may bring the concern to the attention of one of the Deans. The Dean should respond promptly to acknowledge the concern, typically within 3 business days. Employees should seek the support of their supervisor, member of the leadership team, or trusted colleague.

In a situation where the grievance does not concern a specific employee, the student should contact the College employee with administrative responsibility for the policy or procedure. Every reasonable effort should be made to resolve the matter informally.

In the event that the matter cannot be resolved informally (i.e, through direct communication or with the informal involvement of a Dean), the student should present a typed and signed grievance letter to the appropriate person (listed below). The following information should be included in a grievance letter:
a) The name and position of the party or parties against whom the grievance is filed;
b) The date of filing;
c) A concise statement of the nature of the grievance;
d) The stated rule, policy, procedure, or regulation which the College has allegedly misapplied or misinterpreted;
e) How it was misapplied or misinterpreted;
f) A summary of attempts to informally address the concern; and
f) The specific remedy or action being sought by the student.

The person to whom the grievance letter should be sent is dependent on the nature of the grievance, see list below:
- *Academics and Advising*: Complaints regarding academics and academic advising should be filed with the Dean of Academics.
- *Student Life and Community*: Complaints regarding general policies, procedures, governance, residence life, or any other functions of the Office of Student Life (dining services, wellness, athletics) should be filed with the Dean of Community.

- **Work Program**: Complaints pertaining to a student's work program position should be filed with the Dean of Work-Learning.
- **College staff, consultants, contractors, or part-time personnel**: Complaints regarding College staff, consultants, or part-time personnel should be filed with the [Director of Human Resources](#).
- **Admission and Financial Aid**: Complaints regarding admissions or financial aid should be filed with the Dean of Admission and Financial Aid.
- **Senior-level administrators**: Complaints regarding senior-level administrators (Vice Presidents and Deans) should be filed with the Office of the President, or through [this form](#). All decisions made by the President in the resolution of a grievance are final.
- **President**: Complaints regarding incidents directly involving the President should be filed with the Chair of the Board of Trustees using [this form](#).

All written complaints will receive a written acknowledgement of receipt within 3 business days and an initial meeting to outline next steps will be scheduled within 5 business days.

If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of steps that follow their written complaint, they may submit a written appeal within 5 business days to the President via email. The appeal email must contain a copy of the written complaint and a summary of the steps that followed. The President's decision on the appeal is final and binding.

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES & OPERATIONS

Athletics

At Sterling College, athletics are about connecting students with the world – as an individual, a team, and as part of a supportive community. Sterling's athletic programs are a natural complement to the College's ecologically-focused curriculum and community. These sports are a great way to celebrate the seasons in Craftsbury. Core athletic teams including Trail Running and Nordic Skiing are extra-curricular means of immersing students in the natural world, setting and striving for personal goals, and empowering Sterling community members to not only see themselves as active participants in the world on the roads, trails, and woods around Craftsbury, but also to engage in supportive competition with peers beyond Craftsbury Common.

Interest in other sports such as Orienteering, Ultimate Frisbee, Lumberjacking, Canoeing, and Spring Triathlon are a chance to enhance skills learned within the curriculum, take further advantage of Sterling's location, area resources, and partnerships to offer a wide diversity of opportunities for all Sterling students. Talk to the Director of Athletics, Adrian Owens (aowens@sterlingcollege.edu), about your ideas and interests.

The associations and leagues in which Sterling student-athletes participate are inclusive and supportive and offer students exceptional learning, networking, and social growth experiences that are difficult to replicate on campus. The College's partnership with the Craftsbury Outdoor Center offers Sterling students high quality facilities, equipment, coaching, and terrain for both Nordic and Running team practice and competition. Details of this year's partnership will be posted on campus.

Bouldering Gym

The Bouldering Gym is located next to the Outdoor Equipment Rental Center, behind Kane Hall. The gym is designed for both beginner and advanced climbers. It is open to the Sterling community for general use, unless otherwise noted. It is a student managed space, through the Work Program. Please read and follow all use guidelines posted in the gym. Further information about Bouldering Gym operation can be found in the Handbook of Outdoor Travel and Education.

Brown Library

The Sterling College Brown Library supports the educational goals of the College by providing information resources and services to the college community. Its goal is to develop and maintain an up-to-date collection of print, non-print, and electronic resources that supports and enriches the curricula, programs, and activities of the College. See **Library Resources and Policies** for further specific information.

Challenge Course

The challenge course is located adjacent to the Cedar Swamp and Climbing Wall. It consists of high elements with dynamic belay systems, and a variety of low elements. The challenge course is used in several classes, and trained Sterling College students facilitate group development programs on the course for middle school students and other groups. Further information about Climbing Wall operation can be found in the Handbook of Outdoor Travel and Education.

Climbing Wall

The Climbing Wall is located next to the Lower Dorms and Cedar Swamp, along with the Challenge Course. The wall has capacity for four ropes and a height of about 35 feet. The wall is used for a variety of classes. It is open to the Sterling community for general climbing by announcement. It can only be opened by approved students, staff, and faculty. Further information about Climbing Wall operation can be found in the Handbook of Outdoor Travel and Education.

Computing & Information Technology

Sterling College, Craftsbury Common VT, provides access to computers in several labs for student use within the curriculum. All computers are Microsoft Windows compatible. Two computers are located in the Brown Library (first floor level), two upstairs in Dunbar Hall (second floor level), and twelve computers in the GIS Computer Lab in Simpson Hall (basement level). Computers in the Library and Dunbar are available 24 hours per day, computers in the GIS Lab are only available on request to the Dean of Academics. Sterling's computers are for use by Sterling College students, faculty, and staff only, and are not for use by the general public. Internet is provided through wi-fi and ethernet connections. Students can seek assistance regarding computing and information technology at Sterling at the **Technology Help Desk**.

Craftsbury Outdoor Center

Sterling is privileged to have a close collaborative relationship with the Craftsbury Outdoor Center, located three miles from campus at 535 Lost Nation Road. Our relationship affords Sterling community members with a number of benefits. All matriculated Sterling students and employees are granted free annual memberships that grant users similar privileges as resident membership holders (the cost of a membership to the public is $50 for students and $75 for adults).

Benefits include:
- Free trail access (note not all winter trails are summer accessible, and vice versa).
- Free access to Tuesday night races, summer run/bike or winter ski.
- Discounted ski rentals (a discounted rate of $8 per day for a ski package).
- Discounted meals in the COC dining hall (when available, with advanced notice).

Unique Sterling College benefits include:
- Nordic and running team athletes can attend classes at no charge as part of their training with a coach's advanced permission. Registration required – See Athletic Director, Adrian Owens (aowens@sterlingcollege.edu) for this code to use at checkout to get class access for free.
- Students may make free use of the COC event shed gym during community/open gym hours. Gym pass required in addition to annual membership. Available here – use code [STERLINGGAINZ] at checkout to get the gym pass for free. (While registration is free, COC needs you to accept the waiver)

In order to access the above benefits, Sterling students and employees must first complete a membership application form using the coupon code ECOLOGICALTHINKING&ACTION at the checkout to access complimentary membership. As noted above, fitness classes and gym use have their own additional pass/waiver required as part of registration. Note that use of other facilities, including the waterfront and sauna are not included in this arrangement.

Dunbarn

The Dunbarn is located in Kane Hall. The Dunbarn serves as a **substance-free** student lounge and is open 24 hours per day. This space is created, maintained, and cleaned by the student body. Overnight sleeping is not permitted in the Dunbarn.

Dunbar Dining Hall

The mission for Food Service at Sterling College is as follows:

Manage the Sterling College food system as an integral part of our educational programs by demonstrating a live-what-we-teach philosophy:

- Develop the dining hall menu to make best use of Sterling-grown, sustainably sourced, organically grown and locally produced foods when available.
- Serve healthful nutritious foods that are pleasing to diners and provide a comfortable dining environment.

- Choose, prepare, serve and recycle food in an environmentally conscientious manner.
- Educate the students and other community members about the ingredients in meals and the effects of their food choices on the environment and nutrition.
- Run a cost efficient and environmentally sustainable operation.

Meal Times
Meals are served at the following times (summer meal times may be slightly different):

Breakfast: 7:30 AM – 8:30 AM *Monday through Friday*

Lunch: 11:45 AM – 1:00 PM *Monday through Friday*

Saturday and Sunday Brunch: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Dinner: 5:00 PM – 6:00 *Monday through Friday*

After hours snacks and beverages will be available on a regular, rotating schedule. The menu is shared weekly in the Convener and is also located on the website.

Dishware
Coffee or tea mugs, dinnerware and food are not to be taken out of the dining hall without permission of the kitchen staff. Promptly return all borrowed items to the kitchen. Failure to return borrowed dishware may result in disciplinary review and/or fines. Compostable serving and Tupperware are available on request from the kitchen staff.

Meal Plans
Meal plans are available for students both residential and off-campus students. Commuting students should contact the Business Office to discuss meal plan options. All commuting students must indicate their preferred meal plan to the Business Office no later than the end of the add/drop period for a given semester. If no meal plan is purchased, meals will be available at guest rates (see Guest Meals below). Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a charge on the student's account based on guest meal rates.

Please note that the Sterling College kitchen can only accommodate special diets and allergies for students who have purchased a meal plan and have submitted a completed Sterling College Dietary Preference Form.

All residential students are automatically enrolled in the full meal plan. Only students with a specific and documented medical need that can not be met by the kitchen may waive the meal plan.

Commuter Meal Plan Options
Individual Meals: $15.75
5 meals a week/full semester: $950
10 meals a week/full semester: $1900
20 meals a week/full semester: $2850

Guest Meals

Student guests and community members may eat in the dining hall. There is a charge for guest meals which is the student's responsibility as the host. Kitchen staff will monitor guest attendance at meals, and meal vouchers are available upon request in the kitchen. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in a charge on the student's account.

Guest Meal rates are $15.75 per meal.

Dietary and Allergy Restrictions

The Sterling Kitchen and Dunbar Dining Hall places an emphasis on dietary and cultural inclusivity, and strives to foster a healthy dining atmosphere. If you or a guest has a special dietary restriction or request, please submit a Dietary Preference form to the kitchen as soon as possible.

An alternate line of food will be made available at every meal. Please be mindful of cross-contamination when going through the service line. If you have an awareness or issue in respect to a dietary restriction or an ingredient in a specific dish – please alert the kitchen staff immediately. In order to maintain our commitment to inclusivity and safety, please keep the snack and coffee table clean when in service – the opportunity for allergen contamination is highest in this area.

Community Awareness

Due to state health codes, shoes and shirts must be worn at all times in Dunbar. Please do not enter the kitchen if you are wearing dirty barn boots. Wash your hands regularly, especially before meals. If you make a mess, please clean it up or alert the kitchen staff.

If you are unable to eat in the dining room because of illness or **approved accommodation**, the Dean of Community may arrange with the kitchen to have food taken to your residence.

Please respect the needs of the kitchen staff for a clear work space; do not walk in the kitchen area unless you are working in the kitchen or have received permission from kitchen staff. Please do not linger in the kitchen for longer than 15 minutes – the kitchen is a welcoming, safe space, but still an active, professional, work environment. Disrespectful behavior or language will not be tolerated in the kitchen or Dunbar Dining Hall.

Community members are asked to please remain out of the kitchen for one hour before meals are served: 6:30 AM - 7:30 AM, 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM and 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

The kitchen staff will turn on the dining hall lights when the meal is ready to be served. Please wait in the hallway until this time.

Several times each year, the kitchen staff may conduct meetings to provide an opportunity for all members of the community to make suggestions about the food service. If you have any suggestions or concerns, please leave them in the Suggestion Box - located in the snack and coffee area.

The Convener: Weekly eNews

Every week on Monday, except in the cases of holidays when it goes out on Tuesdays, the entire community gets the Convener, sent out by the Advancement Office. It contains notices, a job

[board](#), ride shares, items for sale/trade, events, reminders, the week's menu in Dunbar, and more. To put something in the Convener, please complete [this form](#)by Friday at noon.

The job board includes internships, part time, and full time work opportunities both locally and afar that are posted by our community friends and partners. Anyone is welcome to post a job.

Equipment Rentals

Rental of the college's outdoor equipment is encouraged, with guidelines outlined below:

Canoes
From May through October, if a student has successfully completed the *Flat-Water* or *White Water Canoeing* course or has otherwise demonstrated capability with canoes, they may sign out a canoe, personal flotation device, paddle, and foam roof racks for up to three days for flat-water trips. Curriculum needs may preclude the availability of canoes. Conditions for renting a canoe follow:

- The renter must inform a Faculty member in Outdoor Education, either John Mackinnon (jmackinnon@sterlingcollege.edu) or Adrian Owens (aowens@sterlingcollege.edu) of the itinerary via a written trip plan.
- Canoes will be inspected before they leave and again when they return to ensure that they are in safe working order. The renter assumes any repair or replacement costs.
- The renter must realize that canoeing is a potentially hazardous activity and assume all associated risks.
- The renter must complete sign out arrangements (rental fee, damage deposit, and inspections) with one of the Faculty members in Outdoor Education mentioned above.

Outdoor Recreation Equipment
Outdoor Recreation Equipment is available for rental to Sterling College students, faculty, and staff. Priority is reserved for class use. To rent equipment contact John MacKinnon or the current Adventure Coordinator; for current fee schedule see the **Sterling College Outdoor Gear Rental Prices 2023-2024.**

Snowshoes can be rented by the week or for the season. Limited cross-country ski rentals are available to students who have demonstrated basic competency with cross-country skiing, whether by taking a Sterling class or through prior experience, however, skis are not typically available when they are being used by the Nordic Skiing course. See Faculty in Outdoor Education, Adrian Owens (aowens@sterlingcollege.edu) for fees and rental times.

Late return of equipment will cost the same daily rental fee per item per day. There are also fees (full costs of replacement including time and shipping) for any damaged or lost equipment.

Farm (Sterling Farm: The Rian Fried Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems)

The Sterling College Farm in Craftsbury Common is a working educational farm that includes infrastructure (e.g., barns, hoophouse(s), greenhouse(s), fences, etc.), livestock (e.g., draft horses, draft oxen, sheep, pigs, cattle, etc.), pastures, agroforestry plantings (e.g., edible forest garden), and gardens (e.g., Abenaki Heritage Garden, lower gardens, etc). As a student, there are many different ways that you can engage with the farm, such as classes, independent studies, senior year research projects, and the work program. The farm is a shared campus resource and thus there are rules that govern the preservation of that resource, as well as safety for all visitors. These rules can be found in the **Farm & Land Resources and Policy** section.

Fiber Space

Within the Strong Hall there are several rooms dedicated to supporting the Fiber program at Sterling College including, a room for sewing and clothes and gear repair, a dye kitchen, weaving studio, and a general use classroom. Further usage details can be found in the **Fiber Space Resources and Policies** section.

Field Equipment Storage Room

Equipment used to facilitate observations in the field or for the collection of field data is stored in the Field Equipment Storage Room. Here, tools and equipment such as binoculars, trowels, GPS units, waders, moth traps *etc.* can be found. The Storage Room is kept locked at all times and can only be accessed alongside one of the Ecology faculty members: Laura Spence (lspence@sterlingcollege.edu), and Farley Brown (fbrown@sterlingcollege.edu). Students are permitted to borrow equipment to support classwork, or personal projects. To do so, they must follow the process outlined in the Field Science Equipment Borrowing Liability Form.

The Field Equipment Storage Room is located in the basement level of Simpson Hall.

Fitness Room

The Sterling College Fitness Room is a resource to support the wellbeing of the entire Sterling College community. The Fitness Room consists of a range of free weights, including barbells, dumbbells, and kettlebells and associated bars and equipment; a treadmill; two Concept2 Rowing Ergs; one Concept2 SkiErg; and a number of other pieces of equipment. Further usage details can be in the **Fitness Room Policies** section. Any questions regarding the Fitness Room space should be directed to Craig Wilson (cwilson@sterlingcollege.edu).

The Fitness Room is located in the basement level of Simpson Hall.

Forest, Trails, and Wetlands

Overview and General Principles of Usage

Sterling owns about 120 acres in Craftsbury (including the campus, farm, forest, and wetlands) and about 300 acres in Wolcott (Bear Swamp). Some neighboring landowners allow Sterling to use parts of their land under certain conditions (ask instructors for details). Likewise, Sterling allows public use of its trail system. Students are supplied with a hard-copy of the current Sterling College Trail Map (see Appendix) at the beginning of the Fall semester.

The Sterling forests are managed and used for multiple activities simultaneously, including: recreation, wildlife habitat, research, forest product harvest, and carbon storage. For further details, consult with the Forest Coordinator, Farley Brown (fbrown@sterlingcollege.edu), and see the Sterling College Forest Management Plan (see Appendix). While hiking or mountain biking on the trails you may see colored flagging tape and stakes denoting research plots or trees marked for cutting. Cutting of trees only occurs in supervised classes or work program projects. Fires should only be built in established fire rings and use only dead, down wood for fuel. **Follow Leave-No-Trace principles** in order to preserve the sense of beauty and peace that the forest can offer. Any pets should be leashed while on the trails or other parts of Sterling and neighbors land. Most of the trails start or end in the Farm so also read **Farm guidelines.**

Hunting and Fishing

Hunting, fishing, and trapping are allowed on Sterling College's Vermont lands, but not near the center of campus, during state-designated seasons. See Vermont State Hunting and Fishing Regulations for details on permitting and other rules. All students are encouraged to wear blaze orange hats, vests, or other clothing to make themselves visible to hunters during big game seasons, particularly in November and December. Firearms, bowguns, fireworks, explosives, projectile weapons, and ammunition are not permitted in residential halls, vehicles or anywhere on the Sterling College campus. Discovery of any of the above will result in the immediate ineligibility of the student to remain housed on campus, and may result in immediate termination from the College.

Bear Swamp

Set in the local biophysical region common to northern Vermont, Bear Swamp is quite remarkable as an example of a boreal forest more typical of regions 500 miles to the north. This 306 acre swamp (more accurately a fen) is eight miles away from Sterling College campus, and it is a unique field "classroom" used by faculty and students for both research, as well as field observations. See the latest Bear Swamp Forest Management Plan here. Naturalists and ecologists from organizations such as The Nature Conservancy and the State of Vermont continue to conduct research in Bear Swamp, which has provided Sterling students with opportunities to delve deeper into this unique natural world. Access to Bear Swamp is limited, and the trail system is not well marked making this wildland extra special. Students wishing to go into Bear Swamp should contact Sterling College Ecology faculty to learn more about accessibility.

Cedar Swamp

The Cedar Swamp is an example of a northern white cedar swamp and is used for both educational and recreational purposes. The Cedar Swamp trail is accessed from the path to the lower dorms, as well as the groomed ski trails of the Craftsbury Outdoor Center during the winter (one of the few trails where people are allowed to ski with their dogs). The swamp is part of a larger wetland complex and recognized by the State of Vermont as a fragile area. No cutting of timber should occur outside of classes, and fires are not permitted in the Cedar Swamp.

The Yurt
The Yurt on Sterling's campus serves as a meeting space and classroom for the Environmental Education Experiential Endeavor to host after school programs. The yurt is maintained by John MacKinnon and environmental education students at Sterling. It can be used by other groups with permission from John (jmackinnon@sterlingcollege.edu).

Lean-Tos
The three lean-tos are intended as recreational space for all students (see Trail Map in Appendix for locations). They are a great place for overnight camping or evening campfires. Make sure you clean up completely after use. There is a composting toilet structure just south of the "2nd" lean-to. It is primarily designed for solid waste, so please urinate in scattered locations in the forest if you are able. Toilet paper goes down the chute along with a handful of sawdust. The lean-tos are not intended as temporary residences or student storage. All Sterling College Handbook policies and Guidelines apply at the lean-tos.

Camping
Camping on College property, for short periods of time, is encouraged at the lean-tos. Our chief concerns about camping in other areas are the impact on our neighbors and the danger from fire. Vermont state law and common courtesy require that you have the landowner's permission to camp on private land. If you want to camp nearby, please consult with your advisor to ensure you are camping on Sterling College property. For safety reasons, it is important that you notify your Community Advisor when you will not be sleeping in your room.

Long-term (more than three nights) camping on Sterling College property is permitted only with approval from the Dean of Community, after consultation with your advisor. Your proposal should address:

- Dates you wish to camp.
- Which designated camping area you'd like to use.
- At least three learning objectives.

Things to know about long-term camping:

- Long-term camping is camping for more than three nights.
- Long-term camping is only permitted in designated areas (lean-tos).
- Long-term camping proposals will be accepted only from students currently enrolled in coursework at Sterling College.
- Your room and board charges are not affected by your decision to camp. Even if you propose to camp all semester, you will be assigned a bed inside. You may access your room, bathrooms, showers, laundry facilities, dining hall, and common areas while camping.
- Fires are only permitted in established fire pits.
- Food must be stored safely and appropriately.
- All camping areas must be kept neat and free of trash and waste.
- The outhouse and composting toilet must be used when not accessing indoor facilities.
- All College policies and community behavior guidelines must be followed while camping
- The visiting guest policies detailed above still apply.

Alfond Sugarbush & Woodlot

The Alfond sugarbush and woodlot is privately owned, and Sterling College has generously been allowed use. The Sterling College community must continue to recognize that this is not owned by the College, and any land use changes, big or small, must be approved by the appropriate governing body. The property, owned by alumna and former trustee Devorah Alfond, is an important resource for Sterling College students, faculty members, the Craftsbury Outdoor Center and the broader Craftsbury community: it is a classroom, a section of a broader cross country ski trail system, and a sanctuary for both wildlife and humans. The property consists of 39 acres, and it is a northern hardwood stand nestled within a larger landscape dominated by conifers and hardwoods, and the interrelated ecosystems are rich in biodiversity.

Ski Trails

Groomed ski trails that pass through the Sterling campus are maintained by the [Craftsbury Outdoor Center](#) (COC). Sterling students can ski on the trails for free but are encouraged to register for the free membership at COC. The grooming tries to achieve a predictable surface for the safety and enjoyment of users. Extra compaction or divots from people's shoes or farm animals on the trails can diminish the skiing experience. Please respect the grooming effort and don't walk or run on the trails in winter, except for sugaring work. Snowshoers should walk on the edge of the trail and avoid damaging the double track grooves for classic skiing. Permission from neighboring landowners for the ski trails to cross their land is only for the winter months and are not year-round right-of-ways.

Forge

Sterling's forge is at the top of the farm road and house in a building built by students in a previous year. The forge is powered by propane. In Academic Year 2023-4, the forge will be open occasionally for community use, facilitated by Sarah Keener (skeener@sterlingcollege.edu). Students cannot use the forge without direct permission from Sarah.

Health Insurance

Health insurance coverage is required of all full time students, whether it is a policy offered by Sterling College (through [Gallagher Student Insurance](#)) or a comparable policy provided by another vendor. All students are enrolled and billed for the College health insurance plan unless a health insurance waiver is completed by the annual deadline. Students who have their own health insurance and wish to waive the Gallagher insurance policy must log in to the [Gallagher Student Portal](#), click on "Student Waive/Enroll" under the Student Access heading, and follow the instructions for completing the waiver.

Houston Kitchen

Houston Kitchen in Craftsbury is an instructional kitchen facility used for regularly occurring and continuing education classes. This includes the kitchen space proper, and all of the appliances and food processing tools therein. Houston is also inclusive of the walk-in cooler and dish sanitizer in the adjacent rooms. The facility is managed by the Houston Kitchen Manager (Tiana Baca, tbaca@sterlingcollege.edu). Houston is not to be used for either experimental or casual food preparation or storage by students without the direct permission and supervision of the Houston Kitchen Manager and/or the faculty supervisor. More detailed protocols for the use of

the Houston Kitchen facility can be found in the **Houston House Kitchen Guidelines and Policies section.**

Laboratory - Teaching And Research

The Robert B. Annis Center for Ecology is the science laboratory at Sterling College, used for both research and teaching. The laboratory is located on the ground floor of Simpson Hall. It is used for scheduled classes, independent studies, senior year research projects and faculty research. The laboratory houses a variety of equipment, such as sensitive balances and pH meters, drying ovens, dissecting and compound microscopes, a fume hood for use of volatile chemicals, a PCR machine and other equipment to visualize DNA, an autoclave for sterilization, and a variety of chemicals and other general laboratory equipment. The equipment and the chemicals are to be used in the laboratory only. Field equipment can be found in the **field equipment storage room** in the basement level of Simpson Hall. To get access to use the laboratory for your own credit bearing activities you need to take the Lab Competency Test. This test is administered as part of NS254 *Biology* or NS247 *Soil, Plants & Microbes I*, or by contacting the Lab Coordinator (Laura Spence, lspence@sterlingcollege.edu). Any semester you may be using the laboratory for Senior Year Research Projects or independent studies, you should discuss access and time usage with the Lab Coordinator. Full details of policies and procedures in the lab can be found in the **Laboratory Usage Policies** section.

Laundry

Free washers and dryers are located in Kestrel, Merlin, North House, Houston House, South House, Alder and Birch. Clotheslines are available between Kestrel and Merlin and between Alder and Birch. Tampering with machines will result in disciplinary actions.

Learning Center

The Learning Center offers individual sessions for support with academic projects and study skills, as well as group study and review sessions. The Learning Center is staffed by trained student peer mentors, who hold regular hours and are often available by appointment. They also sponsor occasional special events and workshops, like Word Game Night or Resume Writing. The Learning Center space provides a location conducive to focused studying.

Logging Shop

The Logging Shop is a space used to store and maintain tools and equipment, including chainsaws, and is primarily used as a starting point for Woodlot and Forestry classes and work crews. The Logging Shop is locked when not in use, students get the combination to enter the shop when taking classes that happen there or if they are supervising work crews that use tools stored there. The tools stored in the shop are for use only by classes or work crews on approved projects. Shop files are used for maintaining shop tools. Wearing gloves is required when sharpening or using most of the tools. The chainsaws are only allowed to be used with supervision by approved supervisors. Further details can be found in the **Chainsaw Guidelines & Policies section** below.

The Logging Shop is also available for small student projects as long as everything is cleaned up before the next class or work session. Using the benches and vises is fine without supervision if students bring their own tools and wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Most commonly, students sharpen their axes to prepare for class and bring their own files and gloves.

Lost And Found

The Lost and Found is located under the package delivery table in Dunbar Foyer. Items located in the Lost and Found will be disposed of at the end of each semester. Items left around campus will also be removed at the end of each semester.

Mail

Craftsbury Campus Mail
Students are assigned a box in the Dunbar Foyer for campus mail. These boxes should be checked daily for returned assignments and notices. Any mail received here after a student leaves will be returned to the sender. Sterling College's USPS physical address is categorized as a *business address.* Due to USPS policies, mail is unable to forward from a business address.

Outside Mail
Students can choose to rent a PO box from the USPS in Craftsbury Village, next to the Craftsbury General Store, or receive mail to their campus mailbox in the Dunbar foyer. If you opt to use your campus mailbox, your mailing address during the school year is your name, Sterling College, PO Box 72, Craftsbury Common, VT 05827.

Forwarding Mail
Sterling College's address is registered as a business address. USPS does not allow individuals to forward mail from business addresses. For students leaving campus, forwarding your mail is NOT an option. Students must update / change their address with all vendors, family, and friends. Any mail received after a student has left will be returned to the sender.

Natural History Collection

The Natural History Collection includes an herbarium and zoological collection, which is managed by the Ecology faculty (Farley Brown, fbrown@sterlingcollege.edu, and Laura Spence, lspence@sterlingcollege.edu). Specimens from the collection are available for use in classes, as well as outside of class for credit-bearing activities with permission (with priority use for classes). Students, faculty, or staff interested in accessing specimens from the collection should contact the Ecology faculty. Natural history specimens, including those on display in classrooms and common areas, should not be touched without permission from the Ecology faculty.

Pride

The Pride group at Sterling College is a student-run group for all people in the LGBTQIA+ community that strives to provide a space for members to express themselves and receive support from fellow community members. The Pride group has a room dedicated for their use above Dunbarn.

Reuse Room

The ReUse Room is a space dedicated to the free exchange of material goods, it is located in the Student Center, upstairs above Dunbar dining hall, and is accessible 24/7 for browsing and donating. The purpose of the ReUse Room is to reduce the Sterling community's environmental footprint, while providing a source of free material goods for community members. The Reuse Room is available for students and employees. Families/guests of students and employees may also visit the space, but young children must be supervised. The ReUse Room is not open to the broader community beyond Sterling; however, the ReUse Room occasionally hosts a textile drive and fundraiser open to the broader community.

Donations to the Reuse Room may be placed in the donation bin inside the entrance. Acceptable donations include clean textiles of all kinds (clothing, shoes, linens, including items that are torn, stained, or threadbare), household items, arts & craft supplies, office supplies, outdoor/sports gear, and working electronics. The following items are NOT accepted: anything dirty, broken/damaged non-textile items, food, medicines, houseplants, or any other living organisms. Books should instead be donated to the "Take a book, leave a book" area in the Brown Library mudroom. Furniture or other bulky items will not fit in the space, and instead may be donated to [ReSource](#) in Hyde Park or posted on [Front Porch Forum](#) or other online exchange forums (Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, etc.).

The space is managed by a small Work Program crew, and mini-contract positions in the Reuse Room are sometimes available. Any questions may be directed to the ReUse Room Supervisor (Laura Spence, lspence@sterlingcollege.edu) or email address reuse-room@sterlingcollege.edu.

Roots

Roots is a student-led organization for students of color at Sterling College. Roots students have a dedicated space behind Common House in which to meet. Members of Roots:
- Meet regularly to plan and organize events to support students of color.
- Have a standing representative seat, and all Roots members may openly attend Equity Council Meetings and other community meetings, such as Community Council.
- Coordinate off-campus trips to cultural and educational events for students of color.
- Do outreach to organizations run by and for people of color to enhance support for students of color.

Student Center

The Dunbar Student Center at Sterling is located upstairs in Dunbar Hall. The Dunbar Student Center serves as a place where students can gather for meetings, workshops, student activities, and a quiet place to study 24 hours per day. The Student Center holds a private telehealth office, two large meeting rooms, and a designated art space. The ReUse Room is accessed through the Student Center.

Student Storage

On a small campus, storage is at a premium for everyone. Storage is available only for students living on campus. The storage area is located above the Maintenance Shop and is available for students to store belongings between semesters or over a semester while not on campus, or during the semester while living on campus. All items must be clearly labeled with a name and date. Storage in this area may not exceed a period longer than six months. This storage area is cleaned out on an annual basis and the College will dispose of any items that are not clearly labeled with a date and name and items that have exceeded the six month allotted time. Absolutely no food may be stored in the space.

On the lower campus, there is a bike shed where on-campus students can store personal bikes. This storage area is only for bikes, not skis or tires or other personal belongings. This area will be cleaned out on an annual basis and unclaimed items will be disposed of.

Technology Help Desk

Every Tuesday lunch, in Dunbar dining hall, through the Fall and Spring semesters, there is a Technology Help Desk available for drop-in queries. The Help Desk is staffed by some combination of the Dean of Academics, Assistant Dean of Academics & Registrar, and Librarian. The Help Desk can assist students and employees with questions, problems, and general assistance relating to printing, use of Blackbaud, Google Suite, Microsoft Suite, NEO learning management system, and Zoom. More complex queries will be passed along to the Director of Information Technology.

Wellness Center

The Wellness Center is located between Mager Hall and Merlin Hall. The Wellness Center is managed by the members of the student life team and the Dean of Community, who can assist students' minor medical needs and help students set up medical and mental health appointments, and help access student health insurance coverage.

Sterling College recognizes that it can be difficult for students to get to appointments given our rural location. The Wellness Center provides a telehealth office in Dunbar to students who need a private space to do telehealth visits with their health care providers, including mental health counseling. To utilize this office, students are advised to be in contact with the Dean of Community. If a student needs access to transportation for an appointment, they are encouraged to be in touch with the Dean of Community.

A comprehensive list of wellness resources can be found below in the **Wellness Resources** section.

Woodshop

Sterling College faculty and staff are permitted use of the woodshop in Strong Hall after having been checked off by an approved instructor, Adrian Owens (aowens@sterlingcollege.edu). This

includes hand tools, hand-held power tools, and stationary power tools in accordance with the individual's level of training and experience.

Enrolled Sterling students may use hand tools after completing AS195A *Fundamentals of Green Woodworking* or HM125 *Introduction to Woodworking*. Power tools are available to those students that have successfully completed HM125 *Introduction to Woodworking*. Students may not work alone in the woodshop and may only use power tools under the supervision of an approved shop monitor or instructor. Regardless of prior experience, no machine may be used or machine operation performed without first being checked off by an approved instructor. A project proposal sheet must be submitted and approved for all projects requiring access to the machine shop and expected to span more than one day.

An annual shop safety review will be held at the beginning of the fall semester. Attendance is required for all qualified students interested in working in the shop while not enrolled in any current woodworking course, and strongly recommended for staff and faculty interested in using the shop.

All protocols concerning safe use of the Woodshop can be found in the **Woodshop Resources and Policies section**.

NOTE: The Sterling Woodshop is a resource to be used only by currently enrolled students and employees of Sterling College.

WELLNESS RESOURCES

Emergency:
If someone needs immediate medical attention or there is immediate danger **CALL 911,** then call Sterling College's On-Call Emergency Pager at **802-290-9931**

For immediate mental health support, **CALL 988.**

Medical Emergency:
Copley Hospital & Emergency Room
528 Washington Hwy
Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-4231

Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

Buildings and Grounds Emergency:
On-call Farm & Livestock staff: Send an email to farm@sterlingcollege.edu

Mental Health Emergency:
If it is NOT a medical emergency, and the individual involved is considered "safe", please refer to the following resources.

Phone Services:

- Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: 988
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255 (TALK) TTY: 800-799-4889
- Trevor Lifeline: 866-488-7386 (A national 24 hour, toll free confidential suicide hotline for LGBTQ youth)
- AWARE: 802-472-6463 (Confidential Domestic & Sexual Violence Services Hotline based in Hardwick, VT)

Text & Web Chat Services:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Chat: https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/ (Connects individuals with counselors for emotional support and other services via web chat, free, 24/7)
- Crisis Text Line: Text "VT" TO 741741 Free, 24/7, confidential
- Steve Fund Crisis Text Line for People of Color: Text "STEVE" to 741741 A 24/7 text line for young people of color
- Trevor Text for LGBTQ Youth: Text "START" to 678678 A national 24 hour, text for LGBTQ youth to connect to a counselor

Lamoille Health Partners

Sterling College's partnership with Lamoille Health Partners guarantees the health insurance policies of all current students will be covered. Lamoille Health Partners also has a Financial Assistance Program that provides assistance towards a deductible for those who qualify. For more information about the Financial Assistance Program, please call: **802-851-8608**

Services covered by Lamoille Health Partners::

Morrisville Family Health Care 609 Washington Highway, Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-5639
Stowe Family Practice 1878 Mountain Road Stowe, VT 05672
Phone: 802-253-4853
Appleseed Pediatrics 609 Washington Highway Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-7337 (PEDS)
Behavioral Health & Wellness Center 607 Washington Highway, Morrisville VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-8320
The Neurology Clinic 609 Washington Highway, Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-5688
Community Dental Clinic 66 Morrisville Plaza, Suite 2, Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-7585
Community Health Pharmacy 158 Brentwood Drive Suite #7, Colchester, VT 054461
Phone: (888) 669-9017

Local Healthcare Options

Vermont 988
For immediate mental health support.

Vermont 211
Free statewide referral system available 24/7 for health & wellness resources. Referrals are personalized based on information and health insurance. Dial 211. vermont211.org

Primary Care
Morrisville Family Health Care
609 Washington Highway
Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-5639 (CHSLV Partner)

Stowe Family Practice
1878 Mountain Road
Stowe, VT 05672
Phone: 802-253-4853 (CHSLV Partner)

Hardwick Health Center
4 Slapp Hill Road
Hardwick, VT 05843
Phone: 802-472-3300

ExpressCare Berlin
1311 Barre-Montpelier Rd
Berlin, VT 05602
Phone: 802-371-4239
Hours: Mon-Sun: 9am-7pm

ExpressCare Waterbury
76 McNeil Rd
Waterbury Center, VT 05677
Phone: 802-241-1532
Hours: Mon- Sun: 9am-7pm

Stowe Natural Family Wellness (Stowe): 802-253-2340

Integrative Family Medicine (Montpelier): 802-223-4738

Mountain View Natural Medicine (South Burlington): 802.860.3366

Transgender Health Clinic (Burlington)
(Primary Care, Gender Transition Care, Sexual Health & Reproductive Care):
https://www.chcb.org/services/medical-care/transgender-lgbtq-health-clinics/

Counseling & Mental Health

988 for immediate mental health support.

Local In-Person Counseling:

Pablo Coddou, pablocoddou@gmail.com, Craftsbury Common, VT 802-917-8363
(Accepts Blue Cross Blue Shield, Medicaid) With a referral from the Dean of Community, Pablo
will also be available to meet with students in crisis regardless of their insurance coverage or
ability to pay. In these instances, students will have access to up to 5 one-hour counseling
sessions. For students with a strong need or desire to see Pablo or to access local mental health
services on an ongoing basis, we strongly recommend that you consider purchasing the
Gallagher Student Insurance offered by the College.

Behavioral Health and Wellness Center
65 Northgate Plz Ste 11
Morrisville, VT 05661
802-888-8320 (CHSLV Partner)

Wellspring Mental Health & Wellness Center
39 Church St
Hardwick, VT 05843 802-472-6694

Solidarity Healing
Vicki Garrison, LCMHC
http://solidarityhealing.com/

Outright Vermont Guide to LGBTQ-friendly Mental Health Resources:
http://www.outrightvt.org/mental-health-resource-guide/

Residential Mental Health Respite & Care
- Alyssum: (Residential Crisis Respite & Hospital Diversion Program):
  https://www.alyssum.org/
- Brattleboro Retreat: (Psychiatric & Addiction Treatment Hospital, LGBTQ in-patient
  program): https://www.brattlebororetreat.org/

Dental

Community Dental Clinic
66 Morrisville Plaza, Suite 2
Morrisville, VT 05661,
Phone: 802-888-7585 (CHSLV Partner)

North Counties Dental Center
151 N Main St.
Hardwick, VT 05843
Phone: 802-472-2260

Stowe Family Dentistry
1593 Pucker St.

Stowe, VT 05672
Phone: 802-253-4157

Pharmacies

Rite Aid Pharmacy
82 VT-15
Hardwick, VT 05843
Phone: 802- 472-6961

Rite Aid Pharmacy
48 Congress St
Morrisville, VT, 05661
Phone: 802-888-2226

CVS Pharmacy
13 VT-15 E
Morrisville, VT 05661
Phone: 802-888-4239

Kinney Drugs
97 Morrisville Plaza
Morristown, VT
Phone: 802-888-5244

Domestic & Sexual Violence Support

- AWARE 802-472-6463 (Hardwick) / Confidential Domestic & Sexual Violence Services
- Clarina Howard Nichols Center 802-888-5256 (Morrisville) / 24hr Domestic violence & sexual assault hotline and advocacy
- Woven Collective **www.wovenvt.org** (Burlington)/ POC & LGBTQ-informed Therapeutic Support for Violence Survivors

Military Veteran Resources

- White River Junction VA Medical Center 802-295-9363
- Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs https://veterans.vermont.gov/
- Veterans Crisis Line https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/

Sexual Health & Reproductive Care

Copley Hospital Women's Center 802-888-8100 /Gynecology & Obstetrics, Birthing Center

Northern New England Planned Parenthoods 802-888-3077 /
https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-northern-new-england
Closest: St. Johnsbury Health Center, 501 Portland St, Saint Johnsbury, VT 05819
HIV testing, pregnancy testing and care, abortions and/or abortion referrals, transgender health clinics, STI testing and treatment, comprehensive health care for all genders *The following Planned Parenthood of Northern New England have abortion services: Burlington, Barre, Rutland, Williston, and White River Junction

Substance Abuse Services
- Alcoholic Anonymous: 802-334-1213, www.aavt.org
- Narcotics Anonymous: 802-773-5757
- Tri-County Substance Abuse Services: 802-334-5246 (Newport)
- Tri-County Substance Abuse Services: 802-748-1682 (St. Johnsbury)
- North Central Vermont Recovery Center: 802-851-8120 (Morrisville)

Alternative Medicine Resources
- Inner Rivers Oriental Medicine: 802-472-7153 (Hardwick)
- Roots of Wellness Apothecary: 144 South Main Street, Hardwick
- Hardwick Physical Therapy:802-472-6186
- Hardwick Chiropractic: http://hardwickchiropractic.com/
- Vermont Center for Integrative Herbalism https://vtherbcenter.org/
  Sliding-scale Professional Herbalism Clinic
- Grian Herbs (Montpelier): http://grianherbs.com/
- Montpelier Community Acupuncture
  https://www.integrativehealthvt.com/montpelier-community-acupuncture
  Sliding-scale Acupuncture Clinic
- Northeast Kingdom Human Services: https://nkhs.org/services-2/ Newport: 802-334-6744, St. Johnsbury: 802-748-8997

LGBTQIA+ Resources
- Local and National Resources (Pride Center):
  https://www.pridecentervt.org/lgbtq-resources/
- Outright VT: https://outrightvt.org/
- Legal Help and Resources for Transgender, Gender Non-Conforming and Intersex Vermonters: https://vtlawhelp.org/trans-resources
- Out In the Open: https://www.weareoutintheopen.org/

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Introduction

Sterling College is intentionally small, with an ecologically-focused and community-minded curriculum. As an ecological liberal arts college it positions itself at the intersection of experiential learning and field-based interdisciplinary research to provide unparalleled transdisciplinary experience in ecological thinking and action. All students work with advisors to chart a path towards either an **Associate of Arts** or **Bachelor of Arts degree** in Environmental Studies. Within the Bachelor of Arts degree, students can develop a **concentration area** that provides a particular focus within the broad field of Environmental Studies, for example, ecology, sustainable agriculture, environmental education, agroecology etc.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM STRUCTURE

This section describes the structure of curriculum delivery at Sterling, the different types of courses offered, an introduction to the BA and AA degrees in Environmental Studies, Major and Concentration Areas, and Commencement. It contains the following subsections:

- **Semester Structure: Intensives and Intermission Weeks**
- **Weekly Schedule During an Intensive**
- **Bridging Curriculum: Intensive Courses**
- **Experiential Endeavors**
- **Scaffolding Seminars**
- **Internships**
- **BA Degree in Environmental Studies**
- **Major Concentration Areas**
- **AA Degree in Environmental Studies**
- **Commencement**

Semester Structure: Intensives and Intermission Weeks

Fall and Spring semesters at Sterling each have 15 weeks that are broken into three distinct Intensive periods. In the Fall, these Intensives are named Fall Intensive I, II and III. In the Spring, the Intensives are called Winter Intensive, Spring Intensive, and May Intensive. The Intensives are typically separated by an **Intermission Week**, although in the Fall semester 2023 there is just one day separating Fall Intensive II and III due to a week-long Thanksgiving Break soon after the start of Fall Intensive III.

At the beginning of each semester there is a Welcome Week during which new students are oriented to the College and returning students participate in training and community building events. Welcome Week includes **All College Service Day** which is required for all students participating in the **Work Program** (except Commuter Students who opt-in for a 30-hr Experiential Endeavor contract only).

A general overview of the semester structure can be seen in Table 1 overleaf.

Table 1. Structure of a full semester at Sterling College

Welcome Week	Intensive I	Inter-mission I	Intensive II	Inter-mission II	Intensive III
Week 1	Weeks 2-5	Week 6	Week 7-10	Week 11	Week 12-15
New student orientation and returning student trainings occur. Includes All College Service Day	Students choose one of 5-6 intensive course options available (each 3-4 cr)	Rest, recuperation, catch-up, and community. Includes All College Work Day	Students choose one of 5-6 intensive course options available (each 3-4 cr)	Rest, recuperation, catch-up, and community.	Students choose one of 5-6 intensive course options available (each 3-4 cr)
	Experiential endeavor is started (4 cr)		Experiential endeavor continues		Completion of Experiential endeavor and Scaffolding Seminars
	Scaffolding Seminar begins (1 cr)		Scaffolding Seminar continues		Winter Expedition occurs

Weekly Schedule During an Intensive

An outline of the daily scheduling during an Intensive can be seen in **Table 2**. During an Intensive, **Bridging Curriculum Intensive courses** are scheduled in the mornings from 9-12, and **Experiential Endeavors** in the afternoons from 1-4. There are two exceptions to this as follows:

1. Wednesdays are a more flexible day. Many Wednesdays, students will not have any scheduled classes at all. However, sometimes full-day scheduling for either an Intensive course or Experiential Endeavor may occur. First and Third Wednesdays of a semester can be used by Intensive courses, and Second and Fourth Wednesdays of a semester can be used by Endeavors. In most situations, if a Wednesday is used by an instructor, two other half days will not be used in that week.
2. On Thursdays, Experiential Endeavors run from 1-3 pm, in order to accommodate the **Scaffolding Seminars** that run from 3.15-4.30 pm.

Typically, students who are enrolled in both an Intensive and an Endeavor will have two half days off per week. There may be some exceptions to this rule - for example, if a hybrid course has in-person time stacked for when the instructor is on campus (and then less time scheduled for online contact time), or when field trips are congregated together in time due to seasonal constraints.

Table 2. Typical Working Week During an Intensive

	M	Tu	W	Th	F
7.30–8	Breakfast				
7:45–8:45	Possible Work Block				
9–12	Five to six Bridging Curriculum course options available during each Intensive, up to three can be taken in one semester (4 cr)		Whole day reserved for educational activities including trips that require a full day or overnight. 1st and 3rd Weds of an Intensive can be scheduled for Intensive courses. 2nd and 4th Weds of an Intensive can be scheduled for Endeavor courses	Bridging Curriculum Course continues	
12–1	Lunch			Lunch	
1–4	Experiential Endeavors: one chosen for the whole semester (4 cr)			Experiential Endeavor continues On Thur, 3.15–4.30 pm is dedicated to Scaffolding seminars	
4:15–5:15	Possible Work Block (recognising that on Thurs, scaffolding seminars run to 4.30 pm)				
5–6	Dinner				

Intermission Weeks

Intermission Weeks at Sterling College are periods of time punctuating the Intensives during which the community engages in different types of activities and rests and refreshes before the next Intensive period. It is required for students to remain on campus during Intermission weeks as many of the activities are important for students to engage in. Students can petition to be absent for some or all of an Intermission week by writing a letter, with justification of circumstances, to the Deans of Academics (lspence@sterlingcollege.edu), Community (fellis@sterlingcollege.edu), and Work-Learning (jhelms@sterlingcollege.edu).

Intermission Weeks in Fall Semester
In the Fall semester there are two intermission weeks: 'Welcome Week' and 'Fall Intermission Week'. Welcome Week is the first week of the semester and includes orientation activities for new students, All College Meeting, All College Service Day, required training for students and staff, meetings with advisors, and extracurricular programming. Fall Intermission Week occurs between Fall Intensive I and Fall Intensive II and includes All College Work Day. Between Fall Intensive II and Fall Intensive III, there is only one 'intermission day' due to the fact that there is then a long weekend for Veteran's Day, and one week later a whole week of break for Thanksgiving.

Intermission Weeks in Spring Semester
In the Spring, there is Winter Welcome Week at the beginning of the semester, Winter Intermission Week between Winter Intensive and Spring Intensive, and Spring Intermission Days immediately following Spring Break and prior to May Intensive.

Bridging Curriculum: Intensive Courses

Overview

The Bridging Curriculum is a set of fifteen subject areas spread across three domains of understanding that are central to Sterling's mission and, taken together, provide a transdisciplinary well-rounded, liberal arts education that trains students to think and act ecologically in a range of applied situations.

The Bridging Curriculum Structure

The table below shows the arrangement of subject areas across the three domains.

Each domain has five subject areas, ranging from a Foundational, 100-level course (shaded green) that students take in their first year, to an upper-level course (shaded purple) that students will take as a Junior or Senior, often a 400-level seminar. In between the Foundational and Upper-level subject areas in each domain are three mid-level subject areas (shaded yellow).

Table 3. Arrangement of fifteen subject areas of the Bridging Curriculum into three domains.

Green shading indicates Foundational subject areas; yellow shading indicates intermediate subject areas; and purple shading indicates upper level subject areas.

Understanding the Natural World	Humans in the Environment	Creating Community
1. **Ecology** e.g. *Foundations of Ecology*	6. **Cultural History** e.g. *Foundations of Sust. Agriculture & Food Systems*	11. **Living in Community: Care, Commitment and Challenge** e.g. *A Sense of Place: Expedition I*
2. **Earth Systems: Geology, Water, Climate** e.g. *Geology*	7. **Arts & Creativity** e.g. *Intro. to Fiber Arts*	12. **Learning How We Learn** e.g. *Experiential Curriculum Design*
3. **Biodiversity** e.g. *Watershed Ecosystem Analysis*	8. **Writing, Literature and Culture** e.g. *Nature Writing*	13. **Economics and Wellbeing** e.g. *Wellbeing Economy*
4. **Research Methods** e.g. *Field Ecology*	9. **Living Within Limits** e.g. *Renewable Energy Analysis & Design*	14. **Civic Engagement: Voice, Participation & Policy** e.g. *Environmental Policy & Law*
5. **Communication: Data & Storytelling** e.g. *Landscape, Food & Culture*	10. **Environmental Philosophy & Ethics** e.g. *The Meaning of Things*	15. **Systems Thinking in Practice** e.g. *Agroecology*

Courses that Apply to each Bridging Curriculum Subject Area
The table provides an example course in each area, but it should be noted that a number of different courses serve to meet each subject area of the Bridging Curriculum, some that are taught in a regular rotating fashion, and others that may be pop-up **Special Topics courses**. In addition, some **Experiential Endeavors** may serve to meet one of these subject areas. All courses,including applicable endeavors, will be clearly labeled with Subject Area in the semesterly schedules and the online student portal at registration time. In addition, students can petition to have courses from another institution and transferred into Sterling apply to particular subject areas; this petitioning process is described in the **course waiver petition** section of this handbook.

Typically, every semester, Sterling will offer at least one course in each of the fifteen subject areas, although precise offerings will also be dependent on student need and demand. These courses run as 4-week intensives, and students will take just one at a time. All courses will be offered for 3 or 4-credits. In 4-credit courses, 1 credit can be constructed of 'student-directed, instructor supported, learning activities' that are described further in the **Flexible Credit** section below.

Flexible Credit
Some Bridging Curriculum intensive courses employ a 'Flexible Credit' policy. This means that of the 4 credits associated with the class, 1 credit is dedicated to student-directed learning activities that support, deepen, or broaden the understanding of, and engagement with, content in this course. The objective of this credit is for students to develop independence in their approach to learning and to engage in meaningful, thoughtful and productive individual or small-group experiences that thereby enrich the whole learning community. This credit is not optional, in order to be successful in the course and to meet its learning objectives and competencies, students must complete and document these learning activities.

In 100- and 200-level courses, there is a clear structure and options around the flexible credit. The instructor provides a table of potential activities at the beginning of the course and each student must select activities that provide 15 hours of engaged time outside of class. The learning activities suggested by instructors should span a range of options that give a student latitude to decide when, how, and what to engage in to enrich their learning experience in that course.

In 300- and 400-level courses, students are provided a **proposal form** at the beginning of the course in which they write 2-3 personal learning objectives and propose one or more activities and associated products and/or documentation that support them in meeting these objectives. This self-directed plan must be submitted to the instructor before the end of the first week of class.

Bridging Curriculum requirements
A student graduating with a **BA in Environmental Studies** will take (or petition to waive) at least one course from each of the 15 subject areas by graduation. A student graduating with an **AA in Environmental Studies** will take (or petition to waive) the foundational course within each of the domains, plus one course from at least one other subject area in each of the three domains.

Experiential Endeavors

Overview to Experiential Endeavors
Experiential Endeavors are a new component of the Sterling curriculum, introduced in Fall 2023. Endeavors are project-based learning experiences that span the whole semester, underpinned by the experiential learning cycle: an educative experience is followed by guided reflection, intentional experimentation and ongoing application. Most endeavors are centered on a core component of the Sterling campus operations such as the farm, kitchen, forest, or woodshop.

Scheduling
All Experiential Endeavors are 4 credits. Experiential Endeavors involve roughly 130-180 hours of combined instruction, practice, and reflection and are assessed via demonstration of competency. worth 4 credits. Students meet to engage in their Experiential Endeavors four afternoons per week (typically, three hours per afternoon) across the whole of the semester. Each endeavor spans 14 weeks of a semester, although included in this are typically two **intermission weeks** where no class meetings are scheduled unless specifically required for the purposes of the endeavor project e.g. regular delivery of an afterschool program, or serving the farm needs.

Classwork and Homework
During an Experiential Endeavor, students are usually working on a common project with particular goals for the College and/or a community partner. The work of an endeavor is encapsulated within the scheduled time, although students may wish to invest further time outside of class to solidify concepts or catch up on missed material.

Repeating an Experiential Endeavor
Students may take an Experiential Endeavor a second, or even third, time. Each time, the student participates at a higher level, working towards specific learning outcomes tailored to their starting place. They are likely to also play a role in supporting the instructor in course delivery and supporting and teaching their peers. Repeating an endeavor will only be permitted by instructor permission, and must be accompanied by either a 300-level **Course Assistantship** (CAT) proposal form or 400-level **College Teaching Experience** (CTE) proposal form in which the learning outcomes and assessment model is detailed. The CAT or CTE proposals must be approved by the instructor, and then Dean of Academics. Proposals must be submitted before the deadline as detailed in **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024.** If the Endeavor being repeated is on the farm, it may also be necessary for the student to provide an enhanced plan for the project due to the involvement of living beings on the farm - see sections on **Livestock Projects** or **Garden Projects** for more information.

Experiential Endeavor requirements
Successful completion of at least two Experiential Endeavors is a requirement of the **AA in Environmental Studies degree**, while students graduating with a **BA in Environmental Studies degree** are required to take four Endeavors during their degree. Students entering with 30-60 credits are waived from one endeavor, and students entering with 60+ credits are waived from two endeavors.

Experiential Endeavors and the Work Program
Students enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor will automatically participate in the Work Program, and complete a Job Voucher in the first week of the semester. Students will be paid for up to 30 hours of engaged time within the Experiential Endeavor due to their contributions towards some project or work activity embedded within the Endeavor. Full details of the connection between Experiential Endeavors and Work Program contracts can be **found here**.

Scaffolding Seminars

Scaffolding Seminars are 1 credit courses which support general education and academic, personal, and professional skill development in small group settings with faculty mentors. These seminars are multi-purpose: they establish learning communities, guide students in reflection, support development of academic skills, and place structure around degree and career planning. The seminars are designed to augment, not replace, the holistic academic advising model currently in place.

For students pursuing a BA or AA in Environmental Studies, certain scaffolding seminars are required at particular stages of their degree as seen in the table below:

Scaffolding Seminar	Required for AA students	Required for BA students
INT199 *First Year Seminar*	First semester	First semester if start with <30 credits
INT272C *Career Planning Skills*	Sophomore year	Sophomore year if start with <60 credits
INT339 *Capstone Year Workshop*	NA	Junior Year
Professional Portfolio	NA	Senior Year

For the Academic Year 2023-2024, scaffolding seminars are scheduled on Thursdays from 3.15-4.30 pm throughout the semester, with breaks during the Intermission Weeks.

Internships

Internships and the AA Internship requirement
Internships - placements within a short-term job designed to provide mentorship and opportunities for growth and skill acquisition - are a highly valuable way to apply learning in a work experience and to explore possible career paths. At Sterling, an internship is a required component of the **AA degree**. In addition, all students, regardless of the degree level they are pursuing, are encouraged to undertake one or more internships during their time at Sterling. Typically, students work with their advisors and the Dean of Work-Learning to seek and apply for meaningful internship opportunities related to their courses of study. Students are helped in this process by the required scaffolding seminar INT272C *Career Planning Skills*. A list of Sterling internships from 1981 - present can be found **here**.

Internships can be pursued either for-credit or not-for-credit, and details of each of these approaches are given below. Which of these options a student should choose can be determined by a number of factors, and students are encouraged to discuss their options with advisors to determine which is the most favorable approach for them.

For-credit internships

Students wishing to pursue an internship for-credit should enroll in SS300 *Practicum in Environmental Stewardship* (or in the case of a second internship for credit, SS301 *Practicum in Environmental Stewardship II*), a 4-6 variable credit course depending on length and scope of the experience. A 6 credit internship is associated with a student spending 10 weeks working for 40 or more hours per week, or the equivalent (for example, 20 weeks working 20 or more hours per week).

For-credit internships must be with an approved organization, and enrollment in the Practicum course is not complete until a **Statement of Agreement**, signed by the student, the internship supervisor, and the Dean of Work-Learning or Internship Coordinator, has been submitted to the Academic Office.

When pursuing a for-credit internship, students create individualized learning objectives and activities based on their job responsibilities and individual goals. Throughout the course, they will reflect on their learning and how they are meeting their objectives through bi-weekly reports, and they will also work on a problem-solving project for the host organization throughout the internship. Students are expected to work as active members of their host organization as well as serve as a representative of Sterling College. Feedback is given through regular meetings with a direct supervisor and periodically throughout the course of the internship by the Dean of Work-Learning or Internship Coordinator. Post-internship, students are encouraged to share their learning with the campus community through a public presentation.

Not-for-credit internships

Sterling students can also integrate internships into their educational experience without having them contribute towards academic credit. If an AA student wishes to have a not-for-credit internship count as their internship requirement on the checklist, they must petition to the Dean of Work-Learning. The petition should include documentation and evidence of successful internships of equivalent length and scope to a Practicum in Environmental Stewardship, as well as contact details for the internship supervisor.

On-farm internships at Sterling College

A limited number of on-farm internships are available on the Sterling College farm each year. These internships are a for-credit experience. Interns are directly supervised by one of the Sterling Farm Managers, with the Dean of Work-Learning serving as the intern advisor. These internship positions can be taken in a variety of foci such as Livestock Manager or CSA Manager. Applications for these positions are advertised early in the Spring semester.

BA Degree in Environmental Studies

Students starting at Sterling from Fall 2023 onwards will major in Environmental Studies, using the **Fall 2023 onwards BA Environmental Studies checklist**. The Environmental Studies major comprises around 46-56 major-specific credits, broken into 30-40 credits of Bridging Curriculum intensive courses, and 16 credits of Experiential Endeavors. Students are provided the option of proposing a **concentration area** to provide further focus to their major. Students wishing to pursue a BA degree should submit a **Degree & Concentration Declaration Form** to the Academic Office no later than the second semester of their sophomore year. Students will not be permitted to enroll in classes in their Senior Year without a degree declaration form on file. Further details of the Environmental Studies BA degree requirements can be **found here**.

Students who started at Sterling prior to Fall 2023 can refer back to the **Fall 2022 Student Handbook edition** for full details of their major options and associated policies and procedures.

Major Concentration Areas

Students have the option to propose a self-designed concentration area for their Environmental Studies major. A concentration is an area of focus, or specific field of study, within the broader span of the major as a whole. Concentration areas at Sterling College have a minimum of 20 credits (of which 8 credits must be at the upper-level, i.e. 300- or 400-level courses), connected through a common theme chosen by the student and relevant to the Environmental Studies major. They are typically proposed during a student's Junior Year, with the proposal process supported by a student's advisor.

If a concentration area is approved, and the student successfully completes all elements listed in their concentration checklist, the concentration area will be listed on a student's transcript below the Major.

Examples of concentration areas within Environmental Studies that can be supported by Sterling include, but are not limited to:
- Environmental Humanities
- Ecology
- Sustainable Agriculture
- Sustainable Food Systems
- Outdoor Education
- Environmental Education
- Agroecology

Declaring a concentration area within the Environmental Studies major
To declare a concentration area, students develop a proposal using this **linked form**. The proposal contains:
- A title (i.e. a name for the concentration area)
- A brief rationale of the concentration (2-3 sentences)
- A list of learning outcomes associated with the concentration area
- An annotated concentration checklist showing courses completed and still to complete, that are labeled with the semester and year completed or planned. Alongside each course listed should be a brief justification of the relevance of that particular component of the concentration area and how it contributes to one or more of the learning outcomes. If transfer credits are used, the transfer substitutions need to be submitted to the Registrar's Office before submission of the checklist.

Once completed and approved by the advisor, the student should submit their concentration area proposal to the Dean of Academics. The Dean will bring the proposal to the **Curriculum Committee** for review. Final approval of concentrations is granted by the Curriculum Committee, and the committee reserves the right to request major or minor revisions to proposals, or to reject a proposal. Such requests for revisions or rejections will typically be accompanied with the key points of reasoning that led to the committee's decision.

Concentration areas can be made up of any combination of Bridging Curriculum intensive courses, Experiential Endeavors, independent studies, internships, and scaffolding seminars.

Courses taken prior to Sterling, or during a semester away, can also be included in a concentration area. A **SYRP** can be included as long as it clearly aligns with the rationale and learning outcomes of the concentration.

AA degree in Environmental Studies

Students wishing to pursue a AA degree should submit a **Degree & Concentration Declaration Form** to the Academic Office no later than the second semester of their sophomore year. Students who started at Sterling prior to Fall 2023 are permitted to declare an AA degree using the form linked above. Upon submission of the declaration form, the Academic Office will complete a degree audit that allows the student to understand which of their courses prior to Fall 2023 will apply where in the AA degree checklist and which requirements still remain. Further details of the Environmental Studies AA degree requirements can be **found here**.

Commencement

Sterling College has one commencement ceremony each year in May. This ceremony celebrates the achievement of students who have met all of the requirements for either the BA degree or AA degree. All coursework must be satisfactorily completed preceding graduation. If a student has not completed all of their degree requirements, they may still request permission to walk at the commencement ceremony. This is done by writing a petition to walk to the Dean of Academics that should take the form of a letter explaining the rationale for wishing to participate in a Commencement ceremony before completing all the requirements, as well as a clear, specific, and achievement plan for completing any remaining requirements. Typically, petitions to walk are only approved if the student has no more than 6 credits left to complete and no more than one other outstanding requirement.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR BA IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Sterling College offers a single major at the Bachelors level: BA in Environmental Studies. The checklist for students entering Fall 2023 can be **found here**. In order to graduate with a BA in Environmental Studies, students must complete 120 credits (of which at least 30 must have been attained from Sterling); gain a satisfactory grade in their final semester enrolled in the **Work Program**; and successfully complete the following elements of the BA degree:
- **Foundational courses**
  - **A Sense of Place**
- **General Education requirements**, including:
  - **Distribution requirement**
  - **Mathematics competency**
  - **Writing Intensive requirement**
  - **Scaffolding Seminars requirement**
  - **Senior Seminar requirement**
- **Major-specific courses: Bridging Curriculum & Experiential Endeavors**
- **Capstone Learning Experience**
- **Professional Portfolio**

Students should be aware that they can petition to waive any requirement based on courses taken at other institutions, or prior work experience. The process surrounding course waiver petitions can be **found here**.

Foundational Courses

All students take three Foundational courses, typically in their first semester at Sterling and if not then in their first year. In addition to introducing students to college-level learning, these Foundational courses represent a broad introduction to the three domains of Sterling's Bridging Curriculum, providing different and complementary lenses with which to approach ecological thinking and action. The three domains and associated Foundational courses are as follows:

- Understanding the Natural World: NS107A *Foundations of Ecology*
- Humans and the Environment: HM107 *Foundations of Environmental Humanities* or INT107 *Foundations of Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems*
- Creating Community: **INT100** *A Sense of Place*;

Foundational courses give students an overview of the area of study by introducing: a. foundational concepts; b. central modes and discourses; c. an introduction to the history and context; and d. different cultural perspectives and approaches, as appropriate to the discipline, including issues of inclusion and representation. In addition, beyond their introduction to a field of study, Foundational courses introduce students to concepts and skills that serve as fundamental building blocks of college-level learning and a life of ecological thinking and action. As 100-level courses, these courses work to establish learning communities for first-year students, and introduce foundational skills, knowledge, and methodologies that will serve as stepping stones to 200- and 300-level courses in the curriculum.

Writing plays a central role in Foundational courses: as part of the content of the class and as a vehicle for students to engage with course material. Courses in the different domains have different approaches to developing writing skills. Within Foundations of Ecology, students are introduced to field journaling, scientific writing, and literature review. Within the Humans and the Environment domain, the Foundational course chosen will include at least two formal writing assignments, which go through a revision process with drafts and basic peer review. Writing skills covered here include developing a clear written voice, description and explanation, critical analysis, using examples to support ideas, paragraph structure and essay organization, introductory research skills, incorporating and responding to other voices and perspectives, and basic citation. Meanwhile, *A Sense of Place* has embedded a writing component called 'Writing for Your Life' that nurtures a generative creative writing practice engaging students in multiple writing exercises that explore memoir, poetry, personal narrative, and transformative storytelling.

Note that any *Foundations* course can potentially be waived if a student has had comparable coursework or other relevant experience. See the **Course waivers** section for more details on this process.

A Sense of Place (ASOP)

INT100 *A Sense of Place (ASOP)* is a set of 4-credit foundational courses in the "Creating Community" domain (Subject Area 11), with different versions being offered depending on the season. All versions focus on students developing a deeper familiarity with the landscape and culture of Craftsbury and northern Vermont, including community life at Sterling. Outdoor

experiential challenges, service work, readings, and discussion sessions build skills in communication, leadership, self-efficacy, and support of peers. In addition to writing and other traditional academic skills, all versions will involve some camping, map navigation, backcountry cooking and knot tying skill building. However, the different versions will differ in physicality, remoteness, and specific travel skills taught. The planned versions focus on backpacking, rock-climbing, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, or canoeing.

General Education Requirements

BA students are required to complete the following minimum general education requirements:

- Disciplinary distribution of credits that must include at least 6 credits of Humanities (HM); 6 credits of Natural Sciences (NS), and 6 credits of Social Sciences (SS)
- **Mathematics competency requirement**
- **Writing, Arts & Literature courses**
- **Further Writing Intensive course requirement**
- **Scaffolding Seminars requirement**
- **Senior Seminar requirement**

The disciplinary distribution requirement can be met by any courses taken at Sterling College, except **Foundational classes**, and courses counting towards these general education requirements *can* simultaneously meet other non-Foundational degree requirements. For example, a student could take one class (e.g. NS346 *Plant Science* WI) that could simultaneously contribute towards the Natural Science (NS) disciplinary distribution requirement, the Writing Intensive requirement, and act as a Major requirement by fulfilling Subject Area 4: Research Methods. These requirements can also be met by courses taken elsewhere and transferred to Sterling College for credit, provided they are not already being used to waive Foundational course requirements. In some cases, the Registrar will automatically apply a class transferred in towards a general education requirement, in other cases a student must **petition** to have a class they have taken previously apply.

Mathematics Competency

The Mathematics Competency topics are chosen to provide adequate preparation for the classes that happen at Sterling, so meeting the requirement early in a student's career is recommended. If a student is not waived from this competency based on prior course work, then they should take the Sterling College Math Competency Exam or enroll in the *Quantitative Skills* class (NS050) . Students may be waived from the Quantitative Skills requirement if they have earned a C or above in a college-level mathematics course at another institution. First-time students may be waived based on review of their high school transcripts; completion of a course such as Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, or AP mathematics with a grade above a C is sufficient for a waiver from Quantitative Skills. See the Quantitative Skills course instructor for information about the Math Competency Exam.

Writing, Arts & Literature Courses

All BA students must complete at least 4 credits of coursework designated as 'Arts & Creativity' (Subject Area 7, within the Humans and the Environment domain), and 4 credits of coursework

designated as 'Writing, Literature & Culture' (Subject Area 8, within the Humans and the Environment domain). All courses within the Writing, Literature & Culture subject area are **Writing Intensive** courses.

Either of these courses can be waived based on prior coursework. In the associated **petition**, students must make clear how their proposed substitution has allowed them to meet the same competencies as associated with that particular subject area. In addition, if a student is petitioning to waive the Writing, Literature & Culture subject area, they should make clear how their proposed substitution meets the requirements of a Writing Intensive class.

Further Writing Intensive (WI) Course

In order to support student proficiency in writing across the different disciplines, students are required to complete a further 4 credits of coursework that is designated as 'writing intensive'. Courses that serve to meet the Writing Intensive requirement are clearly labeled WI on semester schedules. These writing intensive courses build upon the initial foundation laid by the writing embedded within the three **Foundational courses** by integrating student writing throughout the semester, and having writing as an explicit part of the content of the course. Students will work with faculty and peers through the process of writing in order to emphasize appropriate writing skills both within and across specific disciplines.

Writing intensive courses in all disciplines share the following principles:

- The course builds upon writing skills introduced in earlier introductory courses and addresses skills fundamental to effective writing.
- Writing assignments are distributed across the semester (rather than being due at the end of the course).
- Instructional time is devoted to the writing process.
- Rough drafts of at least two formal writing assignments are written during the course of the semester, and these drafts are reviewed and commented on by the instructor.
- Drafts and revisions will be incorporated into the final grade for the course.
- Students' writing is shared with peers in the class (whether online, in class, or outside of class time).
- Students are strongly encouraged (or required if appropriate) to meet with a student Learning Center Mentor.
- Students develop strategies to appropriately engage in online research (if applicable).
- Students will develop an understanding of the conventions of writing in specific disciplines (including formulating research questions, citation, quoting, and paraphrasing).
- Students will be guided toward resources outside of class that can support their writing.
- Faculty participate in professional development conversations with other faculty teaching writing intensive courses at least once a semester.
- Faculty are encouraged to share a common textbook (for example, Graff & Birkenstein, They Say / I Say).

Students seeking to waive a 200- or 300/400-level writing intensive class based on prior coursework should address the above components of a writing intensive class in their **course waiver petition**.

Please also note that in addition to the Writing Intensive course requirement described here, there are also assumed common standards for written work at Sterling College, as detailed in the section below: **Written Work: Common Expectations**.

Scaffolding Seminars requirement

A sequence of four **scaffolding seminars** are required for the BA degree, one per year, designed to provide supportive structures most relevant to a student's developmental stage from first year to senior. All of the scaffolding seminars are 1 credit, and meet on a weekly basis throughout the semester. In their first semester, students take the INT199 *First Year Seminar* that introduces them to college-level learning, college resources, and adjusting to independent living etc. In the second year, the required scaffolding seminar is INT272C *Career Planning Skills*, a class supporting students in seeking and applying for jobs with a focus on internships, as well as identifying and planning trajectories of skill and experience building towards their career of choice. Juniors must take the INT339 *Capstone Planning Workshop* in which students design and propose their **Capstone Learning Experience** and may also propose a **concentration area**. The scaffolding seminar sequence concludes for Seniors with the **Professional Portfolio** Workshop in which students draw together a portfolio that displays their best work and showcases their skills to an external audience, supporting them in detailed reflection and articulation of the relevance of their transferable competencies to lines of work that interest them.

Students transferring in with 30 or more credits are automatically waived from First Year Seminar; those with 60 or more credits are also waived from Career Planning Skills.

Senior Seminar (400-level) courses

BA students must successfully complete two 400-level senior seminar classes. 400-level senior seminar classes are upper-level classes distinct from others in their possession of most or all of the following attributes:

- Time and energy is put towards solution of problems and/or creation of products whose outcome the instructor may not be able to predict;
- Students apply concepts and theories outside the classroom;
- Criticism and guidance as constructive feedback is given from both the instructor and from student colleagues;
- Global perspectives are engaged;
- There is a written product, project, community presentation, or a series of creative products which include process reflection;
- Work produced in the course reflects leading-edge and current thinking in the field;
- Each student has the opportunity to lead a group of peers and / or faculty in an inquiry-based project;
- Student participation in the field is professionalized and/or there is the opportunity for students to contribute their voices to current debates in the field;
- There is increased focus on inclusion of primary scholarship in the discipline as material for students to analyze, critique, and use constructively;

- There is an independent application of the standards of the discipline toward writing assignments, oral presentations, performances, etc.
- Students continue advanced research skills with an emphasis on discipline, including but not limited to:
  - Increase awareness of discipline specific resources
  - Distinguishing between different types of scholarly material, e.g., primary vs. secondary sources or original research vs. review articles
  - Use of advanced search strategies and tools in databases and web searching
  - Use of resources and databases that are discipline specific
  - Utilization of interlibrary loan services to request materials available beyond our library's resources
  - Understanding and application of formatting and documentation conventions within the discipline

Typically, students meet this Senior Seminar requirement automatically through the **Bridging Curriculum component of the Major specific courses** since courses within Subject Area 5 (Data & Storytelling), 10 (Environmental Philosophy & Ethics), and 15 (Systems Thinking & Practice) are all upper-level and predominantly 400-level. Students seeking to waive a 400-level senior seminar class based on prior coursework should address the above components of a seminar class in their **course waiver petition**. Courses from another institution will only be considered for a waiver petition if they were also 400-level.

Student Leaders & College Teaching Experiences (CTE)

Requirement
All students pursuing a BA must either:
- Serve one semester as a Student Leader in the **Work Program** - for example as a Farm Chores leader, or Community Advisor - and receive a Satisfactory grade. ; or
- Serve successfully as a Teaching Assistant (TA) in at least one course or experiential endeavor (at least 3 credits).

College Teaching Experience (CTE)
A College Teaching Experience (CTE) is an opportunity for advanced students who have proven their competency in an area to become Teaching Assistants. Teaching Assistants (TA) are typically Juniors or Seniors, and they may earn up to 4 credits for their work. The TA shares instruction, workload, and leadership responsibilities as delegated by the course instructor. A student wishing to undertake a CTE should schedule an in-person interview with the primary course instructor to discuss ideas prior to completing a proposal. Selection for these positions will be based on an applicant's knowledge, skills, experience, and maturity. Consideration will be given to the applicant's initiative, leadership ability, good judgment, communication skills, and familiarity with the course area and curriculum.

Proposal process
- Students develop a proposal in consultation with the primary course instructor.
- Students submit a proposal **using this online submission form** to the Office of Academics. Proposals must be submitted before the deadline as detailed in **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024.**
- The primary course instructor informs the Dean of Academics of their approval of the submitted proposal.

- The Dean of Academics reviews the proposal and provides feedback to the student and instructor that must be addressed before final approval.
- Upon final approval, the Registrar will enroll the student for the approved CTE in the student information system

Work Program degree requirement

It is a requirement for all degrees at Sterling that a student earn a Satisfactory grade in the Work Program in the latest semester in which they were enrolled in the Work Program in order to graduate. If a student does not participate in the Work Program in the final semester, then the most recent semester then they must have received a Satisfactory grade in the most recent semester in which they were participating in the Work Program. If the most recent grade was Unsatisfactory then the student must participate in the Work Program in their final semester and receive a Satisfactory grade before graduation, even if they are a commuter student. A student could technically graduate without having participated in the Work Program at all, but for this scenario they must have been a commuter, opting out of the Work PRogram, from their first semester enrolled at Sterling onwards.

Major Specific Courses: Bridging Curriculum & Experiential Endeavors

Bridging Curriculum Courses
Students graduating with a BA in Environmental Studies from Sterling will take one course that allows them to meet the competencies in each of the fifteen subject areas of the bridging curriculum. Of those fifteen subject areas, five have been covered above in the general education section:
- Three **Foundational courses** (subject areas 1, 5, 10)
- **Arts & Creativity (subject area 6)**
- **Writing, Literature & Culture (subject area 7)**

The remainder of the subject areas are major specific, and distributed across the three domains as follows:
- Understanding the Natural World: Earth Systems, Biodiversity, Research Methods
- Humans in the Environment: Living within Limits, Environmental Philosophy & Ethics
- Creating Community: Learning How We Learn, Economics & Wellbeing, Civic Engagement, Systems Thinking in Practice.

Experiential Endeavors
Successful completion of four **Endeavors** is required for students graduating with a BA in Environmental Studies during their degree. Students entering with 30-60 credits are waived from one endeavor, and students entering with 60+ credits are waived from two endeavors. Students can petition for one or more **internships** (SS300 *Practicum in Environmental Stewardship*) to replace one or more Experiential Endeavors. In the case of petitioning to waive Experiential Endeavors in this way, the **course waiver petition** must be approved by both the Dean of Academics and Dean of Work-Learning.

Capstone Learning Experience

All BA students must complete a Capstone Learning Experience (CLE), an upper-level focused course of study that typically takes the form of a 6- to 12-credit **Senior Year Research Project** (SYRP). For some students however, a **coursework-only** capstone learning experience could be more appropriate. More detail about both of these options are given below. Students are supported in planning, designing and proposing their Capstone Learning Experience (either a SYRP or a Coursework-Only Petition) through the INT339 *Capstone Year Workshop* scaffolding seminar. Students without an approved CLE will be barred from continuing their progression towards a degree until the Registrar receives an approved CLE. This delay could affect the typical credit-based order of priority that Seniors receive when registering for courses.

Senior Year Research Project (SYRP)

The Senior Year Research Project (SYRP) is a **capstone learning experience** that culminates a student's study in their BA degree by pursuing a particular question in significant depth. A SYRP is designed to allow students to explore an area of interest that will complement their major, their (optional) concentration area, and their personal strengths. Projects are expected to include a tangible product as well as a presentation, and are archived in the Sterling College **Brown Library**. The Project may have an applied component, and involve collaboration with an outside agency, but this is not required.

The Senior Year Research Project consists of the following components:

Proposal process
The SYRP proposal should be developed in the second semester Junior Year. Students work with their faculty advisor ("first reader") and a second faculty or staff member ("second reader") to develop their proposal; in some instances a first reader may be someone other than a student's advisor. Structure is provided within the required INT339 *Capstone Year Workshop* scaffolding seminar to support the development of this proposal. The deadline for the SYRP proposal is given in **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024** document. Once completed, and having garnered the approval of their first and second readers, a student's SYRP proposal is submitted to the Dean of Academics for approval using **this linked online form**. Once approved, the student will be enrolled in SYRP I for the subsequent semester. Note that the proposal is a significant endeavor and should be developed in discussion throughout the semester with the first and second readers.

SYRP readers
From the proposal process through until the final presentation, students are supported by two faculty members in pursuing their SYRP. Faculty members should be chosen with a combination of the following factors in mind: subject matter expertise and experience, complementarity, availability, and workload. In some cases, the second reader could be a non-faculty Sterling staff member, or a person from an outside organization; if this is the case, this choice should be determined by the expertise and complementarity the second reader brings to the SYRP and must always be approved by the Dean of Academics in advance of the proposal being developed and submitted.

Risk Management
Considering any risk management strategies appropriate for your research project is an important part of the proposal process, and should also be an ongoing topic for consideration with your SYRP readers as the project develops. The SYRP proposal form prompts students to

list any risk management concerns relating to their study, and what steps and procedures will be in place to manage these risks. Students engaging in activities for which we have documented policies in place must follow our published policies at all times when pursuing their SYRP. These policies are either found in this Student Handbook, or within the **Handbook for Outdoor Travel and Education**. This includes SYRP-related activities that do not occur on campus, and/or do not have another member of the Sterling community present. If Sterling College does not have a documented risk management policy for an activity that presents potential risks, the student will be invited to work with a representative of the **Risk Management Committee** to investigate best practices.

Scheduling time for SYRP work within a semester

SYRP I & II can each range from 3 to 6 credits. The number of credits for which a proposal is approved will depend upon both the required time investment and scope of project learning objectives. As a rule of thumb, 30-45 hours of engaged independent work time equates to 1 academic credit, therefore, a 3-credit SYRP must have at least 90-135 hours of engaged time. How a student schedules their time for a SYRP will depend on whether they choose to replace either an Intensive course or Experiential Endeavor with their SYRP work:

- If a student replaces an Intensive course with their SYRP, then they should expect to work on their SYRP for 18-27 hours per week during that Intensive and associated Intermission week.
- If a student replaces an Experiential Endeavor with their SYRP, then they should expect to work on their SYRP for an average of 6.5-9.5 hours per week across the 14 weeks of a semester.

Students will only be permitted to engage in a SYRP that is more than 4 credits if they have either two Intensive blocks free, or one Intensive block and the Experiential Endeavor time free.

Requirements for INT423 *Senior Year Research Project II* (*SYRP II*)

As the latter part of the student's culminating project, SYRPII should always include the following graded components:

- A presentation, which could be a presentation for the Sterling community, a presentation for a related class, or a workshop for an outside audience: this must contribute at least 10% of the final SYRP II grade.
- Archived documentation of the SYRP in the **Brown Library**: completion of this, as confirmed by the Librarian, must contribute at least 10% of the final SYRP II grade.

Significant changes to a SYRP

Significant changes to an approved SYRP proposal must be re-approved by the Dean of Academics. In the case of significant changes, a petition including a revised proposal and rationale for change should be submitted to the Dean as soon as possible. Significant changes may include, but are not limited to, a change in number of credits in either SYRP I or SYRP II; a substantial modification to the content and focus of the original proposal; or a change in SYRP advisor.

Budget

There is a budget of $150 per student to support costs associated with pursuing their SYRP. If access to these funds is desired, then an itemized budget with accompanying rationale must be provided in the proposal. Note that requests for purchase of books are typically not approved,

although the student can request a book needed to support their study for the library following the procedure **described here**.

After approval, students can access their SYRP funds in one of the following ways:

- Make the purchase themselves and, after the expenditure has occurred, submit a check request accompanied by receipts to the Dean of Academics for approval to allow the money to be reimbursed. Upon approval of an IS budget, the Dean of Academics provides a Google Drive Folder to students in which to gather their receipts; a payment request form for the student to complete can be found in this folder.
- Work with the Assistant Dean of Academics & Registrar (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu) to order the supplies necessary for the SYRP.

Additional funds from Sterling-offered scholarships can sometimes support student projects. For example, the Dick Smyth Ecology Grant (offered by Sterling) provides funding of up to $500 to a student pursuing research relating to ecology and the William Parkinson Scholarship (offered by Sterling) can support specific gear or professional development needs of Outdoor Education students. Students should work with their advisors and SYRP readers to explore the potential for different avenues of funding.

Coursework-Only Option Guidelines

A Coursework-Only Option for the **Capstone Learning Experience** is a substitute for the **SYRP** in which a series of at least four courses at the 300-400 level are taken in a student's final year, which either focus or broaden a student's perspective on their major or concentration area.

The coursework-only option is available by petition and must be approved by the student's advisor and the Dean of Academics. A petition must include both 1. a narrative of how the coursework-only option will serve as a capstone for the major, and 2. an annotated list of courses to be completed as part of the capstone experience.

The petition should use the following format:

- A list of at least four proposed 300-400 level courses, including:
  - Course titles, numbers, and semester.
  - Total credits in coursework-only option (a minimum of 12, more typically 16).
  - Annotation describing how each individual course contributes to a capstone learning experience (approx. 50 words each).
- A 1-page narrative of academic rationale for coursework-only option, which includes a description of how the courses work together to create a thematically connected course of study.

At least 6-8 credits of the proposed coursework must be beyond (or outside) the minimum expectations for completion of the major. Development of the petition is supported by the INT339 *Capstone Year Workshop*, and the petition must be submitted by the end of a student's junior year in order for a student to be allowed to register for Senior Year classes.

Professional Portfolio

All BA students must complete a Professional Portfolio in order to graduate. In a Professional Portfolio, a student collects, presents, and discusses evidence that demonstrates how they have met each of Sterling's **College-Wide Competencies**. Evidence might include: essays, presentation notes, photographs, audio recordings, videos, reflections on experiences, research notes, artwork, bibliographies, syllabi, maps, lab reports, journals, instructor feedback, Work Program evaluations, references, and more.

The process of developing a professional portfolio begins in a student's first year when portfolio development and curation is introduced in the First Year Seminar, subsequent scaffolding seminars and courses support this development. Students draw this together In the required *Professional Portfolio Workshop* course in their Senior Year, with attention being paid to developing confidence in the student's articulation of their range of competencies, with associated evidence, for an external audience such as a potential employer.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR AA IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

The degree requirements for an Associate of Arts (AA) in Environmental Studies at Sterling College are largely a subset of the requirements for a BA degree, as found on **the AA checklist**, and listed below. One key difference is that in the AA, students are required to complete an **Internship**.

The requirements gaining and AA in Environmental Studies from Sterling are as follows:
- 60 credits, of which at least 30 must be gained from Sterling College
- Cumulative GPA > 2.0
- Three **Foundational Courses** (**Bridging Curriculum** subject areas 1,5 and 10)
- Two **Scaffolding Seminars**: First Year Seminar, and Career Planning Skills
- **Mathematics Competency**
- One **Writing Intensive** Course
- An **Internship**
- Two **Experiential Endeavors**
- One further **Bridging Curriculum** course in each of the three domains
- Satisfactory completion of **Work Program** in final semester in which enrolled

Students should be aware that they can petition to waive any requirement based on courses taken at other institutions, or prior work experience. The process surrounding course waiver petitions can be **found here**.

Students wishing to pursue a AA degree should submit a **Degree & Concentration Declaration Form** to the Academic Office no later than the second semester of their sophomore year. Students who started at Sterling prior to Fall 2023 are permitted to declare an AA degree using the form linked above. Upon submission of the declaration form, the Academic Office will complete a degree audit that allows the student to understand which of their courses prior to Fall 2023 will apply where in the AA degree checklist and which requirements still remain.

FURTHER ACADEMIC RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024

Academic dates and deadlines for Fall 2022, Spring 2023 and Summer 2023 can be found in this **linked document**.

Online Student Portal: MyCampus

Sterling's MyCampus Portal gives students access to the master schedule, booklist, and this handbook. Students can also view their individual course schedule, updated unofficial transcript, and course grades and feedback through the portal. If a student needs support in navigating the online student portal, including help with passwords, they should contact the registrar, Laura Lea Berry (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu), or visit the **Technology Help Desk** on Tuesday lunchtimes during term-time in Dunbar Hall.

Academic Opportunities

There are a variety of different credit-bearing educational experiences students can undertake that can contribute towards their undergraduate degree. The following opportunities are each detailed below:

- **AVIC Exchange**
- **Course Assistantships (CATs)**
- **Dual Enrollment Courses**
- **Garden Project within Experiential Endeavor**
- **Independent Studies (ISs)**
- **Lifelong Learning Portfolio (LLPs)**
- **Livestock Project within Experiential Endeavor**
- **Minors**
- **NEO Learning Management System**
- **Online and Hybrid Courses**
- **Second B.A. Degree**
- **Special Topics & Topics Classes**
- **Tuition for Sterling Alumnx**

AVIC Exchange

Sterling College is a member of the Association of Vermont Independent Colleges. Our membership gives students access to the **AVIC Exchange program**, which gives students the opportunity to spend a semester at another member institution during their sophomore or junior year. Interested students must apply to the institution they wish to study at through the visiting student application, which can be obtained by request of the Sterling Registrar, Laura Berry, (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu). Students must also submit a letter of support from the Sterling

Registrar or their Advisor. The deadline for Fall applications is typically February 15th and the deadline for Spring applications is typically September 15th; however application processes and deadlines vary by school, so students wishing to pursue the exchange should begin the process as early as possible.

Students participating in the AVIC Exchange are granted financial aid and billed for tuition and fees by the home institution. Room and board fees are paid by the student directly to the visiting institution. Students may be able to cover these fees through loans, which should be discussed with the Director of Financial Aid, Barb Stuart (bstuart@sterlingcollege.edu).

Coursework completed through the AVIC Exchange will be added to a Sterling student's transcript upon receipt of an official transcript from the visiting institution. Grades earned at the visiting institution are included in the Sterling GPA calculation.

Course Assistantships (CATS)

Overview
A Course Assistantship is an opportunity for students to continue to improve their competency in an area in which they already have some experience, perhaps having taken the class previously. They are most usually applied to repeating an **Experiential Endeavor**. A course assistant (CAT) may earn up to the same number of credits as the course itself. No particular class standing is required. The CAT student is involved in class mainly as a participant, with higher level learning objectives than the standard course. These learning objectives should include some limited instruction and course support responsibilities as delegated by the course instructor. A student wishing to undertake a Course Assistantship should schedule an in-person interview with the primary course instructor to discuss ideas prior to completing a proposal. Selection for these positions will be based on an applicant's knowledge, skills, experience, maturity, and ability to be a good role model. Consideration will be given to the applicant's initiative, leadership ability, good judgment, communication skills, and familiarity with the course area and curriculum.

One example of this class is "SS311 *Course Assistant for Expedition II*" for 2 credits.

Proposal process
- Students develop a proposal in consultation with the primary course instructor.
- Students submit a proposal using this online submission form to the Dean of Academics. Proposals must be submitted before the deadline as detailed in **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024**.
- The primary course instructor informs the Dean of Academics of their approval of the submitted proposal.
- The Dean of Academics reviews the proposal and provides feedback to the student and instructor that must be addressed before final approval.
- Upon final approval, the Registrar will enroll the student for the approved Course Assistantship in the student information system

Dual Enrollment courses

The Dual Enrollment program allows junior and senior high school and home school students to earn credit for approved courses at both the high school and college level. All Dual Enrollment courses are reviewed and approved by the Degree Committee. Interested high school students should discuss dual enrollment options with their school's advising office, request a dual enrollment voucher through the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE), and submit a visiting student application to Sterling. Home school students should discuss their options with the Sterling Registrar, Laura Berry (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu).

Garden Project within Experiential Endeavor

Each semester there will be one **Experiential Endeavor** based in the gardens relating to vegetable production and/or perennial management, for example, INT204A *Crop Production & Planning* or NS372 *Agroforestry*. As indicated in the overview for Experiential Endeavors, students can repeat any particular Endeavor, by instructor permission, as a Course Assistant (**CATs**) or Teaching Assistant (**CTE**). Within the Course Assistantship model, students can propose an independent component of the Endeavor that relates to the overarching topic. If this independent component involves the keeping or manipulation of plants or fungi by the student, then the processes outlined in this section must be followed.

Process for Student-Owned or Managed Plants or Fungi on the Sterling College Garden

- All student-owned or managed plants or fungi on the Sterling College Farm must be embedded in coursework for academic credit, whether class project, SYRP, or independent component of an experiential endeavor.
- Permission to do an independent endeavor component involving the gardens must be granted from the Farm Managers (farm@sterlingcollege.edu).
- The following are prohibited for student projects:
    - Plants or fungi inoculated with diseases or pests that are not already present on the farm and therefore pose a risk to the farm operation
    - Species on the Federal Noxious Weeds List except if already present on farm
    - Plants or fungi that are illegal or unpermitted at either the state or federal level, e.g., invasives, mind-altering plants or endangered species
    - Crops requiring management equipment or methods which cannot be provided on-campus
- Independent Garden projects to be embedded within an Endeavor must be approved during the semester prior, with the deadline for proposals following that of SYRPs. Students should discuss their projects with an appropriate faculty member before submitting a formal proposal through **this form** to the Dean of Academics and Garden Manager.

Proposal process
Projects must be approved during the semester prior, with the deadline for proposals following that of multi-credit independent studies. Students should discuss their projects with an appropriate faculty member before submitting a formal proposal through **this form** to the Dean of Academics and Garden Manager.

Work with your advisor and the Garden Manager, Gwyneth Harris (gharris@sterlingcollege.edu) to develop your project proposal. Garden Projects involve a more extensive proposal than a typical independent study due to the extra responsibility and complexity surrounding the cultivation of crops on the Sterling campus.

Garden Project proposals require students to consider the following points:

- Projects that involve building structures or the use of shared land must be approved by the Garden Manager. Garden plans, location and management logistics need to be approved through a Farm Manager.
- Every day chores (even during breaks, minor illnesses, and finals), are your responsibility. Management decisions, input costs, and so on are also the student-owner's responsibility.
- All projects must include a budget. Students wishing to purchase soil, containers, wood, mulch, pest controls, fertilizer, or other items from Sterling's supplies will work with the Garden Manager to develop a budget, storage space allocation, and a procurement/delivery plan
- The College Farm provides a land base, but not labor, feed, or financial support. Student garden projects must be cared for by the student. Neither the Garden Manager, nor the Work Program Garden Crew, will care for plants involved in a Garden Project.
- Proposals must also include the plan for deconstruction, decommission, or 'cleaning up' of the project.

Independent Studies

Independent studies can only be undertaken at Sterling College by special permission of the Dean of Academics, Laura Spence (lspence@sterlingcollege.edu). Students interested in pursuing an independent study should first consider with their advisor if the content that they wish to cover, and the learning outcomes that they hope to achieve can be met through the **flexible credit** of **Bridging Curriculum Intensives**, repeating an **experiential endeavor**, pursuing an **internship**, or be embedded into their **Senior Year Research Project**. If a student has received permission from the Dean of Academics and the proposed faculty advisor to undertake an independent study, then the process for having a proposal approved is as follows:

Eligibility for Independent Study
- Students must have permission from the Dean of Academics and a faculty advisor to pursue an independent study. Faculty members are expected to advise ISs, SYRPs, CATs and CTEs as space in their workload dictates; therefore, they may decline supporting independent work once their limit is reached.
- Students may propose an independent study (IS) if they will have 60 or more credits before they undertake the study.
- In order to ensure the high quality of independent study content and oversight by advisors, there is a limit across the student body of 10 ISs per semester for Fall and Spring. Which studies fall within the limit is determined by which are proposed and approve the earliest.

Independent Study Proposal process
- Students develop a proposal in consultation with an independent study advisor (who must be a full-time faculty member or administrator with appropriate experience to oversee the content of the proposed study).

- Students submit a proposal **using this online submission form** to the Dean of Academics. Proposals must be submitted before the deadline as detailed in **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024**.
- The independent study advisor informs the Dean of Academics of their approval of the submitted proposal.
- The Dean of Academics reviews the proposal and provides feedback to the student and advisor that must be addressed before final approval.
- Upon final approval, the Registrar will enroll the student for the approved independent study in the student information system

Risk Management

Considering any risk management strategies appropriate for your research project is an important part of the proposal process, and should also be an ongoing topic for consideration with your IS advisor as the project develops. The IS proposal form prompts students to list any risk management concerns relating to their study, and what steps and procedures will be in place to manage these risks. Students engaging in activities for which we have documented policies in place must follow our published policies at all times when pursuing their IS. These policies are either found in this Student Handbook, or within the **Handbook for Outdoor Travel and Education**. This includes IS-related activities that do not occur on campus, and/or do not have another member of the Sterling community present. If Sterling College does not have a documented risk management policy for an activity that presents potential risks, the student will be invited to work with a representative of the **Risk Management Committee** to investigate best practices.

Budget

- There is a budget of $100 per student per academic year (from Fall-Summer) to support costs associated with pursuing independent studies of 2 credits or more. If access to these funds is desired, then an itemized budget with accompanying rationale must be provided in the proposal. No funds are available to support 1 credit independent studies.
- Additional funds from Sterling-offered scholarships can sometimes support student projects. For example, the Dick Smyth Ecology Grant (offered by Sterling) provides funding of up to $500 to a student pursuing research relating to ecology and the William Parkinson Scholarship (offered by Sterling) can support specific gear or professional development needs of Outdoor Education students.
- After approval, students can access their independent study funds in one of the following ways:
  - Make the purchase themselves and, after the expenditure has occurred, submit a check request accompanied by receipts to the Dean of Academics for approval to allow the money to be reimbursed. Upon approval of an IS budget, the Dean of Academics provides a Google Drive Folder to students in which to gather their receipts; a payment request form for the student to complete can be found in this folder. Work with the Assistant Dean of Academics & Registrar (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu) to order the supplies necessary for the independent study.
- Requests for purchase of books are typically not approved, although the student can **request a book** needed to support their study for the library.

Lifelong Learning Portfolios

Overview

To support non-traditional students, and recognise their relevant learning prior to college, Sterling College offers a Lifelong Learning Portfolio (LLP) review process allowing students to gain academic credit through reflecting on their prior experience with respect to Sterling's college-wide competencies. After enrolling at Sterling, students can meet with the Dean of Academics or the Associate Dean of Academics to propose a plan for one or more portfolio review courses. In these independent study courses, students work in concert with an advisor who is familiar with their area of interest to build a comprehensive portfolio of their lifelong learning experience.

This portfolio is intended to document a student's learning and can include, for example, written work, other narrative documentation, illustrations, photographs, a resumé, transcripts, certificates, digital artifacts, projects, publications, letters of reference, and personal reflection. Details of each LLP course will be outlined in a proposal to be completed by a student and his/her advisor, and must be approved by the Dean of Academics.

Eligibility

- Students must have been enrolled at Sterling College for a full semester before they can start a LLP course.
- Students must have completed at least (1) four years of professional experience before college or (2) during a hiatus of at least four years from enrollment in college courses.

Proposal Process

- Students will first discuss their intention with the Dean of Academics or Associate Dean of Academics to determine their eligibility.
- Eligible students work with their academic advisors to design and propose LLP courses with an advisor.
- Students may propose a 1-credit LLP course each semester for up to 2 semesters of their Sterling tenure. Each LLP course gives students the opportunity to complete a portfolio to document and reflect upon between 3 to 15 credits of lifelong learning, depending on the scope and depth of the prior learning documented by the portfolio. Thus, students may earn up to a total of up to 30 credits over their tenure at Sterling (equivalent to approximately 2 semesters of full-time coursework).
- The proposal must be submitted using the **independent study online form**, and include the following components:
    - A brief description of the student's professional experience (200 words)
    - A rationale for proposing the LLP
    - Name of advisor supporting the LLP process
    - An approximate number of credits being sought
    - An overview of types of documentation that can be included in the portfolio
    - Describe how the LLP connects to a student's intended studies (200 words)
    - The product of the study (i.e., what will the portfolio contain? How will it be formatted? Will it be digital or printed? etc.)
    - A methodology for assessment of the completed portfolio
    - A timeline for completing the work
- Proposals for LLP courses are reviewed by the LLP advisor and the Dean of Academics. The determination of whether the student may pursue the LLP portfolio is based in part

on whether this experience relates to a student's degree plan and Sterling's college-wide outcomes.
- Proposal deadlines follow the same timeline as multi-credit independent studies.
- Following the Dean's approval, a student will work with their advisor to complete the portfolio within one semester.
- Students earn and are charged for credit during the semester in which they are pursuing an LLP. There is a fee of $130 per credit earned through an LLP.

Livestock Projects within Experiential Endeavors

Each semester there will be one **Experiential Endeavor** based on the farm relating to livestock management, for example, INT203 *Holistic Livestock Husbandry* or NS222 *Animal Science*. As indicated in the overview for Experiential Endeavors, students can repeat any particular Endeavor, by instructor permission, as a Course Assistant (**CATs**) or Teaching Assistant (**CTE**). Within the Course Assistantship model, students can propose an independent component of the Endeavor that relates to the overarching topic. If this independent component involves the keeping of livestock by the student, then the processes outlined in this section must be followed.

Process for Student-Owned Livestock being integrated into Sterling College Farm

- All student-owned livestock at the Sterling College Farm must be embedded in coursework for academic credit, whether class project, SYRP, or independent component of an experiential endeavor.
- Permission to do an independent endeavor component involving Livestock on the farm must be granted from the Farm Managers (farm@sterlingcollege.edu).
- For students taking a livestock Endeavor for the second time, animals could be fiber animals, poultry, rabbits, or a livestock group already existing on the farm. For students taking a livestock Endeavor for the third time, the animals could be large livestock, lactating livestock, breeding livestock, and livestock due to give birth during the study.
- The following are prohibited for student projects:
    - Intact male large livestock
    - Diseased animals
    - Animals that pose a danger to students or visitors
    - Illegal animals
    - Animals that require systems that are not provided by the Sterling campus.
- Independent Livestock projects to be embedded within an Endeavor must be approved during the semester prior, with the deadline for proposals following that of SYRPs. Students should discuss their projects with an appropriate faculty member before submitting a formal proposal through **this form** to the Dean of Academics and Livestock Manager.

Work with your advisor and the Livestock Manager, Azsa Greiner (agreiner@sterlingcollege.edu) to develop your project proposal. Livestock Projects involve a more extensive proposal due to the significant responsibility and complexity surrounding the housing and care of animals on campus and the health and safety of the Sterling community. Livestock Project proposals require students to consider the following points:
- Why should this project be linked to receiving learning credit within an Endeavor? State your goal, back it up with at least three objectives, and list specific learning activities for

each objective. Your evaluation will be based primarily on your commitment to the husbandry of your project, and secondarily on your progress towards your goal.

- What animal(s) will your project involve? List breed and species, age, gender, identification, ownership, health records, production and management goals.
- Where will the animal(s) come from? List contact information for the breeder/farm/hatchery. Describe the transportation you will use to get your project here and to remove it. Are any permits, vaccinations, or health inspections necessary to transport this livestock?
- Where will animals be housed on the farm? Make sure you take into account the placement of other animals on the farm and movement of your animal as your project progresses through the semester.
- When will the animal(s) arrive and depart?
- Who is your designated back-up person for animal care, and who is your advisor for this project? The College Farm provides a land base and basic shelter but not labor, feed, or financial support. Student-owned animals must be cared for by their owners with a level of commitment that mimics "real farming." Twice-a-day every day chores (even during breaks, minor illnesses, and finals), are your responsibility. Management decisions, feed and vet bills, and so on are also the student-owner's responsibility. Barn use and plans for housing location and logistics need to be approved through the Livestock Manager.
- How will you manage your project? Summarize your management plan, including health, nutrition, housing and manure, budget, and life-cycle. How will you be responsible for your project during academic breaks?
- How does the project meet the criteria for health and welfare of animals on the Sterling Farm? A health plan, including the following elements, is required: Rabies vaccination (all mammals over 3 months, and within one year), shipping fever and 5-way vaccination (cattle), Coggins test and EWT vaccination (horses), CD&T vaccination (sheep and goats), documentation of basic health and soundness (all livestock), including testing for common human health risks & degenerative/progressive diseases, such as TB, OPP, CAE, etc. See the Livestock Manager for specifics for each type of livestock.
- All projects must include a budget. Students wishing to purchase feed and bedding from Sterling's supplies will work with the Livestock Manager to develop a budget, storage space allocation, and a procurement/delivery plan. Students will also pre-pay the Business Office at the beginning of each semester. Any balance must be settled at the end of each semester, or the end of the project, whichever comes first, and prior to a grade being awarded.

Minors

Minors are not offered at Sterling College, however, students pursuing a BA could consider proposing a **concentration area** to their **Major in Environmental Studies**. Students enrolled at Sterling prior to Fall 2023 can opt into one of the Minors previously offered and should consult the **Fall 2022 edition of the Student Handbook** for more details.

NEO Learning Management System

Sterling is in the process of fully implementing Cypher Learning's NEO Learning Management System to support delivery of all courses. During the 2022-23 Academic Year, Sterling faculty will use NEO for at least one of their Fall or Spring courses. By the following Academic Year (2023-24), all Sterling classes, regardless of modality or format, will have a companion NEO

course site. Using NEO allows instructors to enhance accessibility, incorporate Universal Design principles, and readily share course resources in multiple formats. It is intended to reduce process-learning barriers for students by providing a streamlined online portal through which students can, at a minimum, find their course syllabi, schedules, resources, and assignment instructions. Sterling also uses NEO to store and share some of its professional development resources and staff training materials, as well as to deliver its online and hybrid continuing education courses.

Our learning management platform is accessible at: https://www.learn.sterlingcollege.edu. All Sterling students, as well as faculty and staff, are issued a NEO account. The NEO platform is fairly intuitive and user friendly. New students receive group orientation to NEO. Tutorials are available in an introductory video, How to Navigate NEO LMS as a Student, and the written NEO Getting Started Guide for Students. For additional support or troubleshooting, students can contact: lms@sterlingcollege.edu. The College's **Online Code of Conduct** applies when using NEO.

Online and Hybrid Courses

A small number of courses at Sterling College are conducted using a hybrid format. Such courses may include synchronous or asynchronous elements. Students are required to have computer access and a strong internet connection in order to enroll in an online course. In addition, students must adhere to the policies outlined in the **Online Course Policies, Etiquette and Best Practices** section.

Sterling College is a participant in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA), which is a nonprofit organization that helps expand students' access to educational opportunities and ensure more efficient, consistent, and effective regulation of distance education programs.

NC-SARA reviews complaints resulting from distance education courses, activities and operations provided by SARA-participating institutions to students in other SARA states come under the coverage of SARA. Complaints about a SARA institution's in-state operations are to be resolved under the state's normal provisions, not those of SARA. More information is available **here**.

Second B.A. Degree

Sterling College accepts applications from students seeking a second Bachelor's Degree. Accepted students must complete a minimum of 30 credits at Sterling. These 30 credits should include major requirements and any courses required as prerequisites if similar coursework has not been completed. Additionally, all Sterling College students must complete **A Sense of Place**, the **mathematics competency requirement, capstone requirement** and all other **general education requirements**.

Special Topics and Topics courses

Courses marked (ST) or (T) are Special Topics or Topics courses, respectively. Special Topics and Topics courses include courses that address a current or timely topic, that are in a "pilot" phase before being offered on an ongoing basis, or that are known to be one-time offerings. Special Topics and Topics course offerings can vary from term to term. The difference between Special Topics and Topic assignations are that Special Topics are either 300- or 400-level courses, while Topics are 200-level courses.

Tuition for Sterling Alumnx

Sterling College is committed to lifelong ecological thinking and action and to crafting leading edge learning experiences that are relevant to the important work of our community members. It is with this commitment in mind that Sterling College offers free or reduced tuition for its alumnx. See two options below:

For Sterling College and Sterling School graduates
Sterling offers free tuition to all Sterling College and Sterling School graduates interested in enrolling in up to one 4-credit course offered at Sterling College each calendar year. Alumnx can contact the Registrar (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu) to request to enroll in a course as long as the following criteria are met:

- Sterling B.A. or A.A. degree or Sterling School diploma in hand
- Good standing with the College
- Space availability
- Approval from Dean of Academics

Also note that participants are responsible for additional course fees including, but not limited to, lab fees, travel fees, books & materials.

For former students seeking to complete their B.A. degree
Students with no more than 30 outstanding credits can request to enroll in up to one 4-credit course offered at Sterling College each semester at a reduced per-credit fee of $300. Criteria for enrollment are as follows:

- A minimum of 3 years since a student's most recent enrollment at Sterling
- Good standing with the College
- Space availability
- Approval from Dean of Academics

Also note that participants are responsible for additional course fees including, but not limited to, lab fees, travel fees, books & materials.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

This section includes details of policies concerning the following areas:

- **Academic Honesty**
- **Academic Review**

- **Adding & Dropping Courses**
- **Administrative Withdrawal**
- **Attendance, Tardiness, & Late Work**
- **Auditing Courses**
- **Cancellation of Courses**
- **Course Waiver Petitions**
- **Evaluation of Student Performance**
- **Incomplete Courses**
- **Leave of Absence and Exiting the College**
- **Online Code of Conduct, Etiquette, and Best Practices**
- **Religious Holidays**
- **Plagiarism**
- **Re-taking Courses**
- **Responsible Conduct & Course Safety**
- **Degree Completion Following Hiatus**
- **Right to Challenge Incorrect Information**
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress**
- **Standard Course-load, Overload & Part-Time Status**
- **Student Records**
- **Transcripts**
- **Transfer Credits, Advanced Placement Courses, International Baccalaureate, and A-Levels**
- **Withdrawal From One or More Courses**
- **Written Work: Common Expectations**

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential standard in an educational institution. A student shall neither give nor receive unauthorized aid. Such unauthorized aid includes cooperation on classwork unless such cooperation is specifically approved by the instructor. A student shall neither copy another's work and represent it as their own, nor fabricate data for laboratory or fieldwork. If you are unsure about specifics, please ask a faculty member. In addition, any materials taken from published sources must be specifically acknowledged. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. See **Plagiarism** section below for more information.

Violations of an academic honesty guideline will result in a penalty ranging from receiving no credit for that portion of the course, to **Academic Review**, to dismissal from Sterling. The penalty will be determined by the Dean of Academics in consultation with the course faculty and will be communicated by letter to the student along with full details of the incident. A copy of this letter will also be held within the student file for a full year. The determination of the Dean may be appealed to the President; any appeal should be made in writing within one week of notification of the Dean's decision.

Academic Review

If a student demonstrates a need for support based on specific challenges with coursework or other academic aspects of their college experience and/or is making **unsatisfactory progress** toward a Sterling degree, they may be placed on Academic Review by the Dean of Academics. Evidence of unsatisfactory progress might include:

- QPA (Quality Point Average) of below 2.0 for a given semester
- Repeated absences from class
- Late or incomplete assignments
- Repeatedly missing appointments with an advisor or faculty member
- Violations of academic honesty policy
- Failure to meet other course or academic expectations

Students are given Academic Review status primarily as a means to recognize that extra support may be needed in their endeavor to achieve academic success. Thus, students on Academic Review are required to meet regularly with their advisor and the Director of Learning Support with whom they will develop and execute a plan for academic success. A student will be removed from Academic Review status by the Dean of Academics once satisfactory progress has been demonstrated: typically the completion of a semester with a QPA above 2.0. A student who does not show satisfactory progress in the semester following being placed on Academic Review, will be dismissed from the College. Students are typically notified at the mid-term point of a semester if their mid-term grades indicate the possibility of unsatisfactory academic progress that semester. This gives the students an opportunity to seek appropriate learning assistance to rectify their situation before the end of a semester. In some cases, students may be allowed to petition their dismissal; if this is the case, the option will be made clear in the academic dismissal letter received by the student, and petitions must be received within two weeks of letter receipt.

After dismissal, a student may petition to regain eligibility to enroll. To do so, a student must a) demonstrate academic progress by completing coursework at another accredited college or university with a semester GPA of 2.0 or greater, and b) send a letter to the Dean of Academics explaining how and why the student is now prepared to complete a degree. Petitions must be received no later than six weeks prior to the semester of intended enrollment and are considered on a case-by-case basis.

A Sense of Place (ASOP): Expedition I (INT100A) serves as an opportunity to identify students who may need increased learning and community support. As such, all students receiving a C- or lower for ASOP will be placed on Academic Review immediately following the Intensive, notified with a letter from the Dean of Academics. Students in this situation will then meet with their advisor, or the Director of Learning Support weekly until mid-term to develop supports, review progress, and celebrate successes. The student's support team will communicate regularly to provide the advisor with attendance and performance information. If progress is negligible by the end of the semester, and the student remains on academic review, the Dean of Academics may choose one of the following options:
- the student may be asked to withdraw from the college immediately, or at the end of the semester.
- the student may be invited to return the next semester, with an enhanced learning plan and community accountability plan developed in conjunction with the designated Deans, student's advisor and any other personnel as appropriate
- the student may be asked to successfully complete a semester at another accredited college or university before returning to Sterling.

Adding & Dropping Courses

During the add/drop period of each term, with the signed approval of their advisor and course faculty, students may, in most cases, alter their course selection. Completed **add/drop/withdraw** forms must be submitted to the Registrar, Laura Berry (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu) before the end of the add/drop period. The add/drop periods are clearly specified in **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024** and are typically equivalent to 10% of any given course length. Dropped courses will not be included on the permanent transcript. Throughout the add/drop period, the Registrar reserves the right to change each student's schedule.

If a student wishes to exit a course after the add/drop period, then the policy for **withdrawing students** applies.

Students may petition the Dean of Academics, by letter, to enroll in a course after the add/drop period with permission of the instructor. If the schedule, the size of existing classes, and the nature of the material already covered permit, the request may be granted.

Students should recognise that adding or dropping an Experiential Endeavor may have implications for their Work Program contract, as detailed in **this linked section**.

Administrative Withdrawal

At Sterling College, students are expected to demonstrate commitment to their courses, to their Work Program obligations, and to living in community. The Dean of Academics, Dean of Community, and Dean of Work-Learning retain the prerogative to administratively withdraw a student from a course, multiple courses, or the College, and to revoke that student's registration at any time during the semester for failure to comply with academic, Work Program, or community standards, guidelines and requirements as outlined in this Handbook. Students who are placed on review in more than one area of college work and life (i.e. Academic Review, Work Review, or Community Review) face an increased likelihood of being administratively withdrawn from the College

Administrative withdrawals may affect a student's financial aid awards, residential status, and/or student visa status when the withdrawal results in a full-time student losing full-time status or a residential student losing residential status. Students who are administratively withdrawn from a single course, all courses, the work program in a semester/term, or from the College:

- are responsible for all debts and other charges related to the course
- are not eligible for a tuition refund for the course
- receive an "AW" grade notation. The "AW" grade does not affect a student's grade point average.
- may lose their eligibility for residential status, break privileges, or ability to participate in Sterling College Athletics if the withdrawal drops them below half-time status.
- may experience changes in financial aid eligibility as a result of the withdrawal. Because financial aid eligibility is based on many factors, financial aid changes related

to a withdrawal will vary. Students are responsible to know the effects their academic engagement may have on their financial aid eligibility and status.
- will be removed from the College email listserv and therefore is responsible for communicating with the College through a personal email address. The College will utilize contact information listed in its communication systems to continue communication after an Administrative Withdrawal.

Students will be informed, in a timely fashion, by letter of the Administrative Withdrawal notice. To appeal a decision, a student must submit, within one week of receiving the Administrative Withdrawal notice, a letter to the Dean of Academics and/or the Dean of Community and Dean of Work-Learning requesting a review of the student's circumstances and the decision.

Attendance, Tardiness, & Late Work

Bridging Curriculum Intensives & Scaffolding Seminars Attendance Policies
Attendance at all scheduled course activities is expected of students, and individual course faculty will communicate their approach to class attendance and timeliness at the beginning of each course. Many Sterling courses build on skills which progress day-by-day and week-by-week, and missing one class in a sequence could jeopardize student performance in the rest of that course. In the unlikely event that a student needs to miss a class, they should either make arrangements in advance with their course faculty or see a physician/nurse for a written medical excuse, if applicable.

If a student must miss a class, they should meet with the course faculty immediately following to see if it is possible to make up the work. Make-up work is accepted at the discretion of course faculty; it may not always be possible to make up missed quizzes and exams. Class attendance is reported daily to the Registrar by course faculty. Late attendances and absences are likely to affect a student's final grade. When classes are traveling in Sterling vehicles, the vehicles will leave as scheduled and will not wait for late students.

Students are expected to complete all assignments and submit them on or before the due date. Each individual faculty member has their own late work policy that will be clearly communicated on the course syllabus. Late work is likely to affect a student's final evaluations and grade and may cause a student to earn a failing grade in a course. Students should meet with their course instructor and their faculty advisor early if they are having problems.

Experiential Endeavor Attendance Policies
Attendance is required at all sessions of an Experiential Endeavor, as indicated on the schedule. This policy is common to all Experiential Endeavors as their design and objectives include showing up for work needed in the community; showing up to be part of the shared learning community of the Endeavor; learning, practicing, and honing hands-on skills; and managing risk for oneself and others. Attendance, participation, and professionalism are an important part of how students are assessed in Endeavors.

Factors beyond a student's control may lead to them missing one or more scheduled Endeavor sessions. A student can excuse such an absence through documentation of the extenuating circumstances (e.g. a doctor's note or note from Dean). In such a circumstance the participation component will be waived for that session and the student is expected to work with the instructor to make up missed content during a following endeavor session. However, students

missing more than 22 hours of scheduled time in the semester for any reason will be unable to pass an endeavor and will also receive an unsatisfactory in the Work Program.

Auditing Courses

Matriculated students may audit courses with the permission of the course faculty and their academic advisor. Non-matriculated students may audit with permission of the Dean of Academics at a reduced cost of $450 per credit hour. Auditing entitles a student to attend all class meetings. An audited course will appear on the transcript but will not receive a grade or credit.

Cancellation of Courses

The Dean of Academics reserves the right to cancel courses due to insufficient enrollment or other unforeseen circumstances at any time. In such circumstances, the Registrar will communicate the cancellation to the students it affects and their advisors as soon as possible and assist them in registering for a different course.

Course Waiver Petitions

Students may petition to waive any course or requirement, be it a **Foundations course**, a **general education requirement**, or a course required on a **Major** checklist. The decision to waive a course should be discussed with the student's advisor and determined based on prior learning (meaning that the student has already met the competencies of that course or requirement). Prior learning most usually is from a college course completed at a different institution; however, it can also come from **AP classes, A-levels, International Baccalaureates,** work experience, internships, or non-credit-bearing academic experiences.

Process for initial assessment of transfer students prior learning
Students transferring in a number of credits should work with their advisor to decide which degree requirements, including specific subject areas of the Bridging Curriculum, their previous coursework have competency overlap with. The students should complete this [Course Substitution/Waiver Request form](#), and along with all associated evidence, submit it to their Advisor for their signature, and then to the Dean of Academics (lspence@sterlingcollege.edu). The **Curriculum Committee** will review each form and decide on the validity of each requested substitution or waiver. The same form can be used for multiple course waiver requests simultaneously.

It is important to note that if the approved waiver of major-specific requirements substitutes a non-credit bearing experience for checklist requirements, then a student must still make up a total of 50 credits in their major area through other courses. For example, if a student waives the Field School in Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems based on competencies gained on a not-for-credit farm-based internship, they must still complete a further 12 cr of approved agriculture and food systems coursework in order to meet 50 cr total for their major. This planning should be completed in consultation with a student's advisor, and approval of substitute courses is completed by the instructional team.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Course faculty are responsible for evaluating student work and determining final grades (A-F), as well as providing narrative feedback on each student's performance at the mid- and end-semester points. Course syllabi must include the criteria used for determining grades and be distributed and discussed with students at the beginning of each semester. Faculty are encouraged to use course and assignment-specific rubrics to aid in making the grading process clear and consistent. At midterm, instructors submit progress grades through Blackbaud to the Registrar for all students listed in **foundational courses** and any students whose progress grade is below a C for all courses.

Evaluation for college credit in all courses is on the basis of an A through F grading system, using the numerical equivalents below. The exception to this is NS050 which is evaluated on a Pass/Fail (P/F) basis.

A = 95 – 100	A⁻ = 90 – 94	B⁺ =87 – 89	B = 84 – 86	B⁻ =80 – 83
C⁺ =77 – 79	C =74 – 76	C⁻ =70 – 73	D⁺ =67 – 69	D =64 – 66
D⁻ =60 - 63	F =Below 60 (no credit earned)			

I = **Incomplete**
IP = In Progress
P = Pass for any course evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis
PI = Permanent incomplete (excluded from grade point calculations)
R = **Repeat course**
S = Satisfactory completion (relating to work program position and excluded from grade point calculations)
T = Transfer credit approved from another institution (not included in grade point calculation)
W = **Withdraw** (excluded from grade point calculations)
U = Unsatisfactory (relating to work program position and excluded from grade point calculations)
AU= **Audit**
AW = **Administrative Withdrawal**

Sterling College uses a weighted grade point average system (quality point average, QPA) calculated according to the following formula:

Quality Point Average = Total Quality Points/number of credits attempted.

Quality points are determined by multiplying the numerical grade values listed below by the number of credits attempted in each course where a grade was earned.

A = 4.0; A- = 3.75; B+ = 3.25; B = 3.0; B- = 2.75; C+ = 2.25;
C = 2.0; C- = 1.75; D+ = 1.25; D = 1.0; D- = 0.75; F = 0

Incomplete Courses

A student may apply for a temporary incomplete in a course when extenuating circumstances prevent completion of course requirements by the last day of final exams (see **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024**). Extenuating circumstances are factors beyond a person's control, such as death of a loved one, or a serious illness (a 'medical incomplete'). An incomplete may be granted if such factors prevent a student from completing required coursework. A request for incomplete status must be submitted to the course instructor by the last day of the semester, and should include an explanation and documentation of the extenuating circumstances, and present a timeline for when unfinished work is to be completed. Using this information, the course instructor will complete an Incomplete Course Form and supply a copy to the student and the Registrar (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu). This form will be kept on file until such time as the course is completed by the student, at which point the grade is entered on the transcript. If a student fails to complete required work according to the proposed timeline, the incomplete on the transcript will be changed to the current grade listed on the form.

The Dean of Academics will review all outstanding Incompletes held on file at the end of every Fall and Spring semester and make a decision concerning their status. A student who, because of extenuating circumstances such as extended sickness or injury, is unable to attend required course meetings covering material that cannot be made up at other times may receive a permanent incomplete for that course. Permanent incompletes (PI) are not included in the QPA calculation. No credit is granted in such cases.

Leave of Absence and Exiting the College

Students who wish to interrupt their studies for a period not to exceed one calendar year may request a leave of absence by completing the **Leave of Absence Form**. Students granted a leave of absence do not need to reapply to resume their studies at the College. The leave is not official until the Registrar and Dean of Academics approve the request - as indicated by their signature on the form linked above.

A student voluntarily exiting from the College must do so formally and in writing by completing a **Student Exit Notification Form**. A Leave of Absence will automatically convert to a withdrawal after one calendar year if the student has not re-enrolled for classes.

In either case - a leave of absence, or an exit - students are strongly encouraged to complete an Exit Interview either in person with a staff member, or in writing, either prior to or immediately after leaving. Contact the Dean of Academics or Assistant Dean of Academics & Registrar (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu) for details.

If a student who is not registered for classes in the forthcoming semester does not complete a Leave of Absence Form indicating their intention of taking a Leave of Absence, their status will be converted to Withdrawn once the new semester starts. In this situation, the student will have to re-apply to return to study at Sterling College. Students will be informed in writing by the Assistant Dean of Academics that this change in status has been implemented.

A student who has withdrawn from the College can reapply to Admission if they wish to resume their studies at the College. Should the student be readmitted, they must meet the degree requirements and follow the major checklist current at the time of readmittance.

Online Code of Conduct, Etiquette and Best Practices

The use of the Internet is a privilege. The Sterling College administration is delegated the authority to determine appropriate use and, consequently, may deny access to a user at any time based upon its determination of inappropriate use.

Network Etiquette, Legal Considerations and Security
All users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette and legal considerations. These include, but may not be limited to, the following:
- Do not violate software license agreements by copying Sterling College software or adding any software to Sterling College computers.
- Do not knowingly perform an act that will interfere with the normal operation of computer resources. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, additions, alterations, or deletions of software installed on Sterling College computers. This also includes downloading personal programs and/or games.
- Be polite. Do not intimidate, abuse, or harass in your messages to others. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- Do not engage in activities that are prohibited under state or federal law, or that violate Sterling Community Guidelines.
- Protect your personal information. Do not reveal your personal address or phone number, or those of students or colleagues.
- Note that electronic mail (e-mail) cannot be guaranteed to be private.
- All communications accessible via the computer should be assumed to be private property, and therefore, require permission from the author before copying to use in a public presentation.
- It is illegal to post or send sexually explicit, obscene, profane, defamatory, threatening, racially offensive, or other illegal material within, to, or from Sterling College computers.
- Do not post anonymous messages.
- Do not SPAM. Sending unsolicited mail can result in Sterling losing Internet service.
- Degrading or disrupting equipment, software, or system performance is prohibited.
- Misuse of the Sterling network, technology, or email will result in revocation of privileges and access to these resources.

Email Etiquette
- Email use must follow all community agreements and guidelines.
  - Emails should not cause harm.
  - Emails should not contain harmful or offensive language.
  - Bullying and harassing statements and content will not be tolerated.
- Mass emails are discouraged. Mass emails are often distracting, disruptive, and unnecessarily wide-reaching. Emails should be sent to individuals and relevant groups only.
  - Community members should share announcements and awarenesses through the Convener, on bulletin boards, and in Community Meetings and Councils.
  - Concerns and attempts to **problem-solve should be brought directly to the appropriate parties and councils**.

Above all, we seek to create an environment in which everyone is treated with respect. When in doubt, choose kindness, and resist the urge to copy or reply all.

Community members who violate email etiquette will, at minimum, lose their ability to email groups to which they do not belong.

Emergencies should be reported to the 24/7 Emergency Pager: 802-290-9931

Social Media Etiquette

Confidentiality
Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Sterling College, or Sterling employees, students, affiliates, or alumnx that would violate such persons' rights to privacy under applicable federal and state laws and regulations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) and university policies.

Privacy
Do not post anything to an official social media channel that should not be shared publicly. In particular, do not discuss a situation involving named, tagged, or pictured individuals on a social media site without their knowledge or permission. Keep in mind that for reasons of privacy or security some students may not want it publicly known that they attend Sterling College. Never share Social Security numbers, addresses or other private information. Remember that whatever you share may be public for an indefinite period of time, even if you attempt to modify or delete it.

Responsibility
Use of social media on an official Sterling College channel must be managed responsibly because it reflects on the College, its faculty, its students, its alumnx, and its employees.

Student groups may have different interests, attitudes, and opinions than official Sterling College social media accounts. Before retweeting or sharing content posted by student groups on official Sterling channels, be careful that such content is accurate and reflects the College's position.

Fake Accounts: Employees should never create fake social media accounts (i.e., an account that seems to be the work of a third party) or share false or misleading information through a Sterling account.

Correcting Information: If you unintentionally post something online that is incorrect, correct it visibly and publicly as quickly as possible. Doing so will earn you respect in the online community.

Copyright Infringement
All intellectual property, including photos and videos, posted online should either be your own original work or approved for use by the owner and properly credited.

Photos posted online should be your property, in the public domain, or posted with permission by and credit to the photographer.

Using copyrighted music without permission in videos or other online materials is not permitted — infringement of copyrights can mean significant fines for the College.

Authorized Channels
Before creating any official social media account at Sterling College, you must contact the social media manager to discuss social media policies at the College as well as strategy, goals, messaging, and best practices. You should only post on behalf of Sterling or its

affiliates in an official capacity where you have been explicitly authorized to do so. You should only create an account in the name of a recognized Sterling College entity if you are authorized to represent that entity.

Student Organizations

Student clubs and organizations are considered "unofficial" social media pages and should not use the Sterling College name or logo. These sites are also encouraged to post a statement in their profile announcing that they are not an officially recognized Sterling College social media page, and all postings reflect their own personal opinions or their organization's opinions. An example of this statement is provided below:

The views expressed on this (Facebook page, Twitter feed, etc.) are those of the (Insert Club Name) and are not endorsed by Sterling College nor do they constitute any official communication from Sterling College.

Vandalism

Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, modify, or destroy the computer hardware, data of another user, the Internet, or other network that is connected to the Sterling College computer system. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses and damaging computers or computer systems.

Procedures

All users have the same right to use the equipment. Therefore, users shall not play games or use the computer resources for other non-academic activities when other users require the system for academic purposes. In addition, users shall not waste nor take supplies, such as paper and ink cartridges that are provided by Sterling College. All users must talk softly and work in ways that will not disturb other users in the labs.

Consequences/Penalties for Improper Use

Infractions of the provisions set forth in this document may result in the suspension or termination of access privileges and/or appropriate disciplinary action. Activities in violation of state and federal statutes will be subject to prosecution by those authorities. Disciplinary action may be taken by Sterling College as appropriate.

Video-Conferencing Best Practices

In addition to the online etiquette provided above, the following practices will help you and other participants get the most out of online learning experiences that feature synchronous video interaction. Some of these practices can also help you record higher quality video content to post into forums.

- *Log in a few minutes before class (if possible)*
  - Remote learning will invariably involve tech hiccups. To avoid missing out on class or burning time with a long arrival period, please click the class Zoom link 3-5 minutes before the official class start time.

- *Be mindful of background noise*
  - To help keep background noise to a minimum, you should generally mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
  - When your microphone is not muted, avoid activities that could create additional noise, such as shuffling papers, typing unnecessarily, or moving around.

- ○ Press and hold your spacebar to temporarily unmute. This can be a quick way to pipe up if you get called on, but it only works if your Zoom window is the active one.

- *Show your face! (most of the time)*
  - ○ Using video makes us all feel more engaged because we can glimpse each other's reactions and get a better sense for resonance, dissonance, and levels of engagement. This has the effect of immediately *humanizing* the virtual space.
  - ○ Without video, the instructor cannot tell if dead silence is due to a tech issue, a lack of attention, exasperation, or agreement. Facial expressions go a long way toward enabling responsive remote teaching.
  - ○ To help us foster a more closely connected learning community, students are strongly encouraged to keep their videos on during class. At the same time, instructors recognize that a student may need to go video-off from time to time to avoid creating a distraction, tend to a personal matter, or manage a poor connection.
  - ○ If the video-on default expectation creates a participation barrier or causes negative emotions to arise, please let your instructor know. Without requiring you to delve into the sources of your discomfort, your instructor can support you in identifying inclusive work-arounds, such as limited video-on time, active participation in the chat, or alternative sharing of recorded (audio or video) or written content generated by the student.

- *Position your camera properly*
  - ○ When using a web camera, be sure it is in a stable position and aligned at eye level. If possible, align your camera with the screen you are most often looking at. Doing so helps create a more direct sense of engagement with other participants.

- *Check your background*
  - ○ Many students will be joining class from makeshift workspaces in the midst of what may otherwise be private, residential areas. Make sure that you've looked behind yourself to confirm that the image you are broadcasting into class is one you are comfortable with and which is not likely to be distracting or disturbing to others in the class.
  - ○ If you are not comfortable showing your background to others you can use the [Virtual Background feature in Zoom](#).

- *Limit distractions & conserve bandwidth*
  - ○ You can make it easier to focus during synchronous sessions by turning off notifications, closing or minimizing running apps, muting your smartphone and keeping it out of arm's reach.
  - ○ Your instructor may decide to enable or disable group or private chat features during synchronous sessions to facilitate additional interaction. Use chat tools judiciously to support your learning; avoid them if they distract you.

- *Avoid multitasking*
  - ○ You will retain the discussion better if you refrain from replying to emails or text messages during class and wait to work on other things until after class ends. Imagine you are in a small face-to-face seminar and behave accordingly.
  - ○ If the prospect of staring at a screen for over an hour is stultifying, consider a single distraction. Some people do better if they sit on an exercise ball, doodle, knit, etc.

while in class. If these things help you focus, go for it.

- *Prepare materials in advance*
  - If you will be sharing content during class, make sure you have the files and/or links ready to go before class begins.

- *Class session recording*
  - Please be aware that, in many cases, class sessions will be recorded to make sure that learners can access class content even when they are not able to participate synchronously. Please do not let this discourage you from engaging in open discourse and making frank contributions. The recordings will only be used for educational purposes.

  - With respect to student contributions, all participants are expected to abide by this confidentiality commitment — take the lessons, leave the specifics and identifying information. In other words, do not attribute classmates' in-class comments to them outside of class without permission or for purposes of gossip, derision, or passing judgment.

Reporting Concerns Relating to the Online Environment
We cannot capture or anticipate every possible online interaction. Accordingly, we encourage course participants to check in with their instructor in moments of uncertainty to address any concerns or confusion. Alternatively, you may share any concerns that you have about another program participant, or about the learning and social platforms with the Instructor or the Director of Continuing Education Services.

To share any concerns that you have about the instructor or facilitator, you should contact the Dean of Academics for undergraduate programs or the Director of Continuing Education Services for continuing education programs.

Religious Holidays

Course instructors shall make reasonable effort to accommodate all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or other required attendance, provided they notify you well in advance of the scheduled conflict. Whenever possible, students should notify faculty by the add/drop deadline to request special accommodation. If an exam is scheduled on a religious holiday, the faculty member must provide a suitable option for the affected students. Examples of suitable accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- Creating a course policy in which all students are allowed to drop an exam or assignment score for any accepted reason, specifically including religious holiday observance as one of those reasons;
- Providing the opportunity for a makeup exam or an equivalent assignment;
- Allowing extra-credit assignments to substitute for missed class work;
- Arranging for an increased flexibility in assignment due dates, etc.

Other reasonable and appropriate accommodations may be made by the course instructor. If class attendance is required, classes missed to observe a religious holiday should not be counted as an absence. The specific accommodations employed may vary from course to course

depending upon factors such as the size of the class, nature of the course content, and mode of instruction. All faculty in all courses are expected to create a class-specific accommodation policy which strives to maintain a climate of essential fairness to all members of the class.

In the event that students are somewhat tardy in informing faculty of their religious observance obligations, faculty should try to accommodate them where practical. Please announce the specifics of your class policy to students, and include it as part of the course syllabus so that they can notify you of any conflicts as soon as possible.

If the student and the course instructor cannot agree on an accommodation, the student may bring the matter to the Dean of Academics for a decision.

Plagiarism

To represent another person's words or ideas as your own is called plagiarism and is a violation of the College's Policy on **Academic Honesty**. Whenever you write a research paper using direct quotes or paraphrased ideas from another source, including artificial intelligence, you must always give credit. In all circumstances, ask yourself whether the concept or word you are using is wholly your own or taken from elsewhere. If borrowed or copied from any source, whether electronic, print, recorded, or spoken word, the original source must be acknowledged.

Styles for citing sources vary across academic disciplines. Scholars writing about literature, art, history, and cultural studies often follow format recommendations of the Modern Languages Association (MLA), while social scientists and many natural scientists may follow those of the American Psychological Association (APA). All students are expected to be familiar with both MLA and APA guidelines, and use them as appropriate. Faculty will alert students which format is required for a given assignment.

For more information on citation, please visit the **Sterling College Brown Library** or the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL).

Re-taking Courses

Students need to inform the Registrar (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu) if they are enrolled in a class as a re-take. Students can re-take up to 30 semester hours. Students should specify which course(s) they wish to repeat and explain the benefits to be derived from repeating them. In any course repeated, the second grade will be included in the QPA, and it will be noted that the course has been repeated. To take a course a third time a petition must be submitted to the Dean of Academics two weeks prior to the start of the semester of enrollment. The first grades will remain on the transcript, but will not be included in the QPA. In no case will credit be awarded more than once for a given course. Students will pay full tuition costs for any repeated course(s).

The policy and process above relates only to the situation where a student chooses to retake a course due to previously failing it, or attempting to gain a higher grade. Students interested in repeating an Experiential Endeavor to work on personalized higher level learning objectives in that area should read **this section on repeating endeavors**.

Responsible Conduct & Course Safety

The faculty are responsible for the safety and security of all participants in College programs and will communicate safety procedures associated with a particular course or individual class clearly in person and in writing. Students who are unwilling or unable to comply with safety procedures create an unacceptable risk for the College. A student who fails to live up to specific written guidelines for college courses or activities may be barred from further participation in activities which involve the assumption of risks, including any student who may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. During a class, if it becomes apparent that a student is not able to safely participate in a course activity, they will be asked to observe that activity rather than participate in it. If a student's actions or capabilities appear to seriously compromise their own or others' learning experience or safety in more than a single activity, the student may be asked to drop or withdraw from the course.

Degree Completion Following Hiatus

Students unable to complete their degree requirements in four years may have the option to earn their degree by earning additional credits after full-time enrollment at Sterling has ceased. Former students may earn a Sterling degree by transferring credits from other institutions or by returning to take additional part-time credits at Sterling. Generally, such students will not be eligible for financial aid. The Dean of Academics must approve all such special arrangements.

Right to Challenge Incorrect Information

Students may challenge the content of the records maintained by Sterling. They must be provided an opportunity to correct or delete any inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate information contained, and to insert into such records a written explanation concerning their contents. It is hoped that any such difficulty can be resolved in an informal manner between the student and the appropriate Sterling official. If no informal agreement can be reached, the student may request that the matter be resolved by a Board of Three—one representative appointed by the student, one by the President of Sterling, and one by the Sterling official involved. The Board of Three will adopt its own rules, will render a written decision, and its decision will be final.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Sterling follows Federal Financial Aid policy, which defines satisfactory academic progress as follows:

- To achieve second-year status, a student must earn 27 credits with a minimum QPA of 1.7.
- To achieve third-year status, a student must earn 60 credits with a minimum QPA of 2.0.
- To achieve fourth-year status, a student must earn 90 credits with a minimum QPA of 2.0.
- In order to graduate with a B.A. degree from Sterling, students must earn 120 credits with a minimum QPA of 2.0.

Students may take up to six years of full-time enrollment (defined as at least 12 credits per semester and two or three semesters per year), or the equivalent in part-time enrollment, to earn a B.A. degree. Students must make reasonable progress towards their degree according to federal guidelines otherwise they may become ineligible to receive financial aid. This means that candidates for the B.A. degree must achieve third year status no later than the end of their fourth year of full-time study.

Standard Course-load, Overload & Part-Time Status

The standard course load, including Foundations, major requirements, and electives, is between 14 and 16 credits per semester. Students wishing to take either fewer or more credits than a standard load should consult with their advisor. A student is considered full-time if they are enrolled in 12 or more credits for a semester; three-quarter time if they are enrolled in 9-11 credits for a semester; and half-time if they are enrolled in 6-8 credits for a semester.

 Students should be aware that a reduced course load may require additional semesters of study, and thus additional cost, to earn their degree. Students may take up to 18 credits per semester without additional charge. Those who wish to take courses beyond this 18 credit limit must seek the permission of the Dean of Academics and will be charged additional tuition at the rate of $1,400 per credit above 18.

A student may only enroll at less than half-time (fewer than 6 credits per semester) if they are non-residential, and receive the permission of the Dean of Academics. Please see **Sterling College Tuition and Fees** for associated costs.

Student Records

The use of the term "student/parent" in the following refers to the person who controls the individual student records. This person is the student, if 18 years of age or older, or the parent or other legal guardian if the student is not yet of age. The age at the time of the request is the determining age.

Categories of Information Contained in Student Records

Directory Information: This is information that is known to be available from a variety of sources and is considered public information. It includes: name, home address, telephone number, date and place of birth, dates of attendance at Sterling, degrees or certificates earned, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.

Restricted Information: This is information directly concerned with a student's relationship with Sterling. It includes: courses taken, grades earned, credits earned, academic and disciplinary actions taken by Sterling, financial arrangements between the student and Sterling, and letters of recommendation.

Confidential Information: This is information of several types that has been collected under a promise of no disclosure or in the context of a confidential relationship. It includes:

- records held by Sterling educational personnel which are in the sole possession of the author and which are not available to be revealed to any other person except a substitute
- financial information of the student and/or parents contained in the FAFSA, SAR's, or income tax returns.
- all records created by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other professional which are maintained only for use in connection with the treatment of a student.
- letter of recommendation when a student has waived any right of access.

Access to and Release of Student Records
- Directory information may be released unless the student/parent has indicated otherwise, in writing, to the Registrar (lberry@sterlingcollege.edu).
- As per federal regulations, Sterling College is obligated to release directory information only to any branch of the military upon request.
- Prior consent in writing for disclosure of restricted information is not required when records are released to:
  - other Sterling officials with legitimate educational interests.
  - an educational agency in which the student seeks or intends to enroll when such transfer is initiated by the student/parent.
  - authorized representatives of Controller General, Secretary of Education, or state educational authorities.
  - in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied (limited disclosure permitted).
  - accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
  - parents of dependent students.
  - appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency if the information is necessary to protect health or safety of the student.

Confidential information may be kept confidential by the author and may be released only upon written request of the student/parent and with the consent of the Sterling official having custody of such information.

Transcripts

Official transcripts must be sent directly to a receiving institution and must be requested in writing by filling out a **transcript request form**. All official transcripts are sent by mail; unofficial transcripts may be sent by email to a receiving institution at a student's request. Official and unofficial transcript requests will be processed within 7 business days. Transcripts are free to currently enrolled students; the charge for graduates and former students is $10 per transcript (or $40 per transcript for an expedited service).

Transfer credits, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and A-Levels

Sterling accepts transfer credits from all accredited institutions of higher education. Transfer credit is awarded for most courses in which a student earns a grade of C or better. We also accept credit for advanced placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), A-Level Exams, and College Level Examination Programme (CLEP) courses, contingent on a student's score on the

exam. We typically grant 3 credits for AP courses in which a student earns a 4 or 5 on the exam, 3 credits for IB courses if a student receives a 5, 6, or 7 on the higher-level exam. Credit is granted for A-Level Exams on which students earn A*, A, and B; each A-level is equivalent to 6 credits. Evaluation of transfer credit is completed by the Office of Academics. There is no fee for credits transferred in as part of the initial Admission process. Matriculated students who choose to take coursework elsewhere and transfer those credits back to Sterling will be charged $130 per credit.

In addition, note that the College has articulation agreements with Community College of Vermont (CCV), Greenfield Community College (GCC), Kroka Expeditions, National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunities (SOLO), and Yestermorrow Design/Build School. Academic credit can be gained from these institutions and organizations and count towards a Sterling degree.

Withdrawal From One or More Courses

A student may withdraw from a course after the add/drop deadline has passed, and prior to the midpoint of that course, by submitting an **add/drop/withdraw form**. The course instructor(s) as well as the advisor must sign this form, and the effective withdrawal date will be the date on which the Registrar receives the form. Thereafter, the course(s) will be listed on the permanent transcript with a grade of W. A course a student exits before the midpoint of any term will not count as credits attempted, and will not affect the QPA.

After the midpoint of a course, students will receive an appropriate letter grade and the grade will be included in the QPA calculation. For course mid-points, please consult the **Academic Dates & Deadlines 2023-2024**. Withdrawing from one or more courses may have financial implications, please consult the Director of Financial Aid for further information.

If students withdraw from all courses once a semester is underway, this will affect their ability to remain resident on campus, and may affect their ability to be enrolled at Sterling College in subsequent semesters. Under certain circumstances, students may be eligible for medical withdrawal. Students can seek to medically withdraw from individual classes with proper documentation (such as a letter from a medical professional) at any point in the semester. Students granted a medical withdrawal will receive a 'W' on their transcript, will not receive credit for their courses, and will need to take the entire course again in the future if they wish to receive credit. Students who have medically withdrawn from a semester are invited to petition, in the form of a letter, to the Dean of Academics and the Dean of Community in order to re-enroll. Petitions should describe a student's readiness to re-enroll, and any appropriate strategies for support (as needed), and medical documentation as relevant must be received no later than six weeks prior to the semester of intended enrollment and are considered on a case-by-case basis. Students who take a **Medical Withdrawal or Medical Incomplete** from the Work Program may be approved by the Work Program staff to complete unfinished hours in future semesters.

Written Work: Common Expectations

Please use the following guidelines when submitting writing assignments for a Sterling class, unless specified otherwise by your instructor.

Format

Submission: Your instructor will specify whether your papers are expected to be submitted electronically or printed. If electronic, send or share a pdf or a Google doc. (Not everyone can access files in other formats like Pages or Word.) When sharing, it is helpful to include an introductory message. If printed, double-sided printing or printing on the blank side of used paper are encouraged.

Name: Always include your name and the submission date on any work you submit, including (especially!) electronic documents.

Title: Be sure to title your work.

Margins: 1" on all sides for the body of the text.

Spacing: Double spacing with no extra spaces between paragraphs. (If your word processing program does this automatically, change the paragraph default settings.)

Font: 12-point font. Use a standard font like Times New Roman.

Length: Be sure that your paper is the appropriate length, as specified by your instructor.

Stapling: If printed, papers should be stapled in the upper left-hand corner.

Style

Follow APA or MLA style guidelines, as specified by your instructor. The expected style will determine how you will format your paper, including the first page (whether or not you have a separate title page, for example), pagination, and citations. An excellent resource for how to use APA and MLA format is the [Purdue University Online Writing Lab](#) (OWL).

These models illustrate what your paper should look like, with helpful hints:
[Sample Essay in MLA Style](#)
[Sample Essay in APA Style](#)

Editing Hints

Central idea: Is this clear? Be sure to check. Although expectations differ across fields, it is essential that you say something in your paper. If you are writing a thesis-driven essay, your thesis should be clearly stated at the beginning (and used to structure your essay). Even if you are not forwarding a specific argument, your central idea should generally be made clear early and referred to, as appropriate, throughout the paper.

Organization: Be sure also to check your organization: Does each paragraph have one clear central idea? Are there examples of and evidence for this idea? Are there appropriate transitions between ideas/paragraphs?

Introduction and conclusion: Does the introduction state clearly the paper's focus and (if appropriate) your thesis? Does the conclusion address the "so what?" of your paper?

Word choice: Be sure that each word "does work"—and the work you want it to do. Choose the exact word, and don't use extra words. In general, you want to be as direct and concise as possible. (Of course, this is true for sentences too.)

Proofreading: Always proofread your papers carefully before submitting them. Reread carefully (or read aloud), checking spelling, punctuation, diction, and grammar. Spell-check programs, while valuable, should not substitute for careful proofreading.

If you are writing an experimental lab report, be sure to follow the expected structure. Here is a helpful resource for writing lab reports.

Preventing Plagiarism
Academic ethics demand that we acknowledge our intellectual debts and credit the source of ideas, information, opinions, and words that are not our own (and not "common knowledge," generally considered information you can find undocumented in at least five credible sources). Plagiarism is when this is intentionally ignored. A good definition of plagiarism is found on the Writing Program Administrators website: "In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or online, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers." Misuse or careless use of sources is also a serious problem. See the Sterling College **Academic Honesty Policy** for more information. If you are ever unsure about when and how to cite another's ideas or words, ask your instructor.

Resources: Online
•The Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL): http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
•Grammar Girl: http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl
•Harvard College Writing Center, Writing Resources:
http://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/resources
•UW-Madison Writing Center, The Writer's Handbook:
http://www.writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/index.html
•Amherst College Writing Center, Online Resources for Writers:
https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/support/writingcenter/resourcesforwriters

Resources: Books
Various writing resources are available in the Brown Library. Here are two recommended books:
•Gerald Graff & Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*
•Catherine Prendergast, *Can I Use I? Because I Hate, Hate, Hate College Writing*

Other resources include your course instructors and the Learning Center mentor team.

Please ask your instructors if you have questions about their expectations for your written work!

ADVISING

Advising is at the heart of a student's educational experience at the College; advisors help students navigate the curriculum, and this relationship helps ensure coherence of the program for students. Advising is integral to the teaching and learning process for faculty and students alike. Advising at Sterling is focused on supporting students as they explore and address their academic, social, and developmental goals, and aims to be responsive, compassionate, and reliable. Consistent and individualized advising is an important tool in building relationships and community.

From the very first days and weeks of the semester, each entering student is invited to work closely with a faculty advisor to help build a solid foundation for a rewarding learning and living experience at Sterling College. Students typically meet regularly with advisors, who work with Sterling's Deans in order to best support a student's individual goals, needs, and expectations in the community, in coursework, and throughout their Sterling experience. Advisors assist students with course selection and meeting program requirements, including developing a long-term study plan. All faculty and staff members are available as resources to students.

Incoming students are paired with an advisor but may switch advisors at any point in their tenure at Sterling, according to their academic interests and learning goals. For example, upper-class students may find that advisors more closely associated with their Senior Year Research Project or major might serve them more effectively.

The principal goal of all Sterling faculty advisors is to provide resilient and responsive learning and community support to help students achieve high levels of success and engagement throughout their college experience. If a student is doing below-average college level work, both the course instructor and the student's advisor will be in contact with the student to develop a plan for success.

ACCESSIBILITY, DISABILITY, AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Overview & Purpose
Variation is natural and vital to the development of dynamic human communities. Sterling College recognizes the spectrum of ability as a valued aspect of diversity that is integral to the campus community and society. Within the context of our mission of ecological thinking and action, our rustic and rural settings, experiential educational programs, and with a limited resource base, we aim to continually improve the design and condition of our built environments and enhance ways to safely navigate farm, field, and wild nature. The College strives to support welcoming, accessible, and inclusive conditions for our community members and visitors alike.

Importantly, Sterling College assists qualified, currently enrolled students with obtaining reasonable academic, work, and housing accommodations, including service and assistance animals. Reasonable accommodations are available to all currently enrolled students who have a documented disability that substantially limits them in one or more major life activities. Such accommodations are put in place to ensure equal access, not to guarantee success. Students with disabilities will be held to the same standard of achievement in academics and the work program as all other students.

Sterling College follows all the applicable provisions of state and federal law which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, marital status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, place of birth, age, disability, HIV status, (as well as laws that prohibit retaliation against any person who exercises rights under these laws, such as complaining of discrimination) in the administration of its educational, admissions, financial aid, and employment policies and programs. Sterling College reiterates its specific commitment to:
- Ensuring students and employees are not subjected to discrimination or harassment due to a disability;

- Ensuring students and employees are not subjected to a hostile environment relating to a disability; and
- Providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities as required by law.

This policy explains the process for documenting a disability and requesting reasonable accommodation(s), describes the standard for review of such requests, and explains the role of Sterling's Accommodation & Accessibility Team (AAT) in both reviewing accommodation requests and working toward broader accessibility goals. Any questions about disability-related issues and accommodations that are not addressed in the policy below should be directed to the College's 504 Coordinator, who is identified below.

ADA/Section 504 Coordinator
Sterling College's ADA/Section 504 coordinator and compliance officer (the "504 Coordinator") has responsibility for issues related to Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sterling College's Section 504 Coordinator is:
Craig Wilson
Director of Learning Support
cwilson@sterlingcollege.edu
802-586-7711 ext. 157

A detailed description of the 504 Coordinator's role and responsibilities can be found in the related document **Section 504 Coordinator: Role, Responsibilities, and Training Requirements**.

About The Accommodation & Accessibility Team

The Sterling College Accommodation & Accessibility Team (AAT) – a sub-committee of the College's Student Engagement Committee – is composed of the Dean of Community, the Dean of Work-Learning (or another member of the faculty with involvement in both Academics and Work Program) and the Director of Learning Support. The AAT reviews requests from currently enrolled students with disabilities for reasonable accommodations. The AAT is chaired by the Director of Learning Support. All requests for accommodations, appeals to appeal requests, concerns for discrimination based on disabilities, denials of services/accommodation or policy grievances should be directed to the attention of the Director of Learning Support at the above contact information.

The AAT meets in closed session at the start of each semester and as needed thereafter to evaluate and act upon students' documented requests for accommodation. This team meets during inter-semester breaks to process accommodation requests for the upcoming term.

The AAT also meets at least twice per semester in open session to advance aspirations, review and enact plans to enhance the accessibility and inclusiveness of the Sterling community, campus and instructional sites, and culture for all individuals with disabilities. All members of the College community, including students, are welcome and encouraged to participate in these open meetings, which are noticed in the Convener, announced in Community Meeting, and published on the Sterling Calendar.

Shared Responsibility for Enhancing General Accessibility & Living Into Our Inclusivity Aspirations at Sterling College

Creating and maintaining usable, equitable, and inclusive learning environments is a shared responsibility of the entire campus community. To this end:

- Sterling provides certain testing, assessment, and classroom accommodations to support students with some learning differences that do not rise to the level of a documented disability.

- Sterling employees have undertaken and/or been provided access to professional development resources focused on better understanding the history and experiences of disability and neurodivergence in higher education, supporting neurodivergent students and others with executive function challenges (with support from Landmark College).

- Faculty have begun implementing universal design for learning strategies in in-person courses and through the use of educational technology.

Nevertheless, due to the nature of Sterling's locations and programs, creating and maintaining barrier-free environments can prove difficult – and recognizing that some barriers to access, particularly in wild nature, agricultural spaces, and outdoor spaces used for learning, work, and recreation, can be challenging to adapt or may not be readily removed – the Accommodation & Accessibility Team focuses on prioritizing working one-on-one with students to determine reasonable accommodations.

Disability Documentation & Determination

In accordance with the [Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)](#) of 1990 (as amended in 2008), an individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as breathing, eating, sleeping, walking, talking, manual tasks, etc. Pursuant to the ADA, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other applicable state laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability, students with a documented disability have a right to receive reasonable accommodations (defined below). In most cases, medical documentation will be required to identify a disability-related need for accommodations.

Building and using a toolkit for success in academics, work and community that includes self-advocacy skills, resources, and various study strategies is an important part of college learning for all students. Sterling neither imposes accommodations on its students nor preempts their responsibilities, as legal and social adults, to document their disabilities, request accommodations, and engage in a structured interactive process with the College to achieve accessibility.

Student Responsibilities

Students seeking reasonable accommodation for disabilities have the following responsibilities:

1. Submit a confidential [Disability Disclosure Form](#) to the AAT.

2. Provide appropriate disability documentation (detailed below) to support any requested reasonable accommodations;

3. Cooperate and correspond in a timely manner with the AAT by responding to requests for additional information from the student or their healthcare provider(s), which may be needed to determine eligibility for accommodations.

4. Receive, read, and understand the written eligibility/denial determination letter from the AAT. Students who need assistance understanding this letter may consult with their advisor.

5. At the start of each term, provide a copy of their determination letter to the faculty member(s) instructing each course in which the student requires accommodation

Appropriate Documentation
Disability documentation must adequately verify the nature and extent of the disability in accordance with current professional standards and it must clearly show the need for each of the requested accommodations. Documentation must be from a qualified professional who is licensed or certified to diagnose the disability in question. All tests used to document eligibility must be technically sound, and all documentation should be recent enough to reflect the student's current level of functioning.

Documentation is expected to contain the following:

1. A specific diagnostic statement identifying the disability including severity and date of current diagnostic evaluation;

2. Specific findings which support this diagnosis including relevant history, tests administered, test results, and interpretation of those test results;

3. Length of condition(s) and expected duration;

4. Information concerning the impact of the disability on the educational setting including a description of the physical and/or cognitive functional limitations due to the disability;

5. Recommended accommodations or services to address the functional impact(s) of the disability; and

6. Any other helpful information for working with the student.

The documentation must be on letterhead, dated, and signed. It must also include the evaluator's name, address, telephone number and professional credentials. Alternatively, the student may ask their healthcare provider/qualified evaluator to fill out Sterling's Disability Documentation Form.

If the documentation submitted is incomplete or inadequate to determine the extent of the disability or reasonable accommodation, the AAT may, at its discretion, require additional documentation.

The student is responsible for any costs related to obtaining initial documentation and any additional documentation requested.

Timing
Students who are disclosing and documenting their disability for the first time at Sterling should allow at least 4 weeks for documentation review and issuance of a determination.

Confidentiality
Disability documentation will be treated confidentially. Limited information, when needed for legitimate educational interest, is released and/or discussed on a need-to-know basis and is subject to FERPA guidelines. Except as permitted by FERPA, no information will be released and/or discussed without consent from the student in question.

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, or activity that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to attain the same level of achievement or enjoy the same benefits and privileges that are available to similarly-situated students without disabilities. The College has a legal obligation to provide accommodation(s) only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified student with a documented disability (see above) and only to the extent that the requested accommodation meets the legal standard for reasonableness in a higher education context (as described further below).

Reasonable accommodations are determined by Sterling's Accommodation & Accessibility Team (AAT). Whenever a student with a documented disability makes a timely request for a reasonable accommodation, the AAT examines, as appropriate on a case-by-case basis:

- The barriers resulting from the interaction between the impact of the documented disability and the campus environment;
- The possible accommodations that might ameliorate or remove the barriers;
- Whether or not the student has access to the course, program, service or activity without an accommodation; and/or
- Whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity or facility are compromised by the accommodations.

To determine reasonable accommodations, the AAT may seek information from appropriate College personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services, and activities (including but not limited to learning objectives, competencies, minimum requirements and prerequisites, safety and risk management standards, and assessments).

In reviewing reasonable accommodation requests, the following analysis is used:

- Does the student have a documented disability?
- Is the student "otherwise qualified?"
- Is the request reasonable?

To be considered a "reasonable" accommodation, the requested accommodation must not:

- **fundamentally alter the nature of the program or activity;**
- **alter or remove essential requirements;**
- **lower academic standards;**
- **present an undue financial or administrative burden on the College; or**
- **pose a direct threat to the safety of others or the public.**

Sterling is <u>not</u> required to provide any requested accommodations that have any of the above-listed effects, as such requests do not meet the legal definition of a "reasonable accommodation."

The College reserves the right to recommend accommodations that differ from the specific approaches suggested by the student or individuals documenting the student's disability, so long as the accommodations proposed by the AAT achieve the objective of program accessibility as required by law.

If a student perceives a need for additional accommodations or for the modification of existing accommodations, the student must request, in writing, a revision of the accommodation plan. Such requests should be addressed to the AAT via the Director of Learning Support (contact information in Section II).

When to Request Accommodations
Advance notice is required to review accommodation requests and coordinate accommodations. Students with disabilities are advised to document their disability and begin the accommodation request process well in advance of a semester's start, with no less than 4 weeks' notice. While the AAT will make a good faith effort to accommodate students as quickly as possible, students should be aware that it takes time to document disabilities, consider accommodation requests, determine feasibility and reasonableness, and implement accommodation measures. Some types of accommodation requests require more lead time to process and coordinate than others. As a very small college with limited personnel, many of whom fill numerous roles, processing time is especially important. Even more time may also be required if additional information is required after review.

Students who request accommodations *after* the start of a term should not expect immediate accommodation. Also, in fairness to students who suddenly find themselves grappling with a new disability or temporary impairment mid-semester, requests related to conditions that emerged during the semester will be prioritized over mid-semester requests to address long-standing disabilities for which accommodation could have been sought earlier.

Accommodation in the Work Program
Sterling offers a range of work program positions suited to a wide range of abilities, interests, and professional development goals. Students should review job vouchers carefully during the process of preferencing and signing up for work program positions. Job vouchers include a representative outline of duties and qualifications. Reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities are available in the Work Program. Students should only apply for jobs that they can perform with or without reasonable accommodation.

Students requesting disability accommodation in the Work Program, inclusive of chores and work crew positions, should follow the processes outlined above for documenting disability and requesting accommodation before the start of semester. If reasonable accommodations cannot

be identified, a different, more suitably accessible type of work position or chore will be assigned.

Accommodation in Some Experiential Endeavors and Field Programs
Conditions in some signature Sterling College programming, including but not limited to experiential endeavors, intensive field programs, and outdoor oriented course such as A Sense of Place are necessarily different than you would find on a typical college campus. Such studies offered through Sterling College are immersive learning experiences that can involve:

- travel by multiple forms of transportation across long distances;
- hiking, biking, paddling and other forms of human-powered movement through varied environments, over uneven terrain, and on moving water;
- extended periods of time in the unsheltered outdoors;
- limited, sporadic or no access to running water, flush toilets, showers, laundry and other facilities for hygiene;
- extended periods of time during day and night without access to electricity;
- no or limited access to electronic technologies, including cellular phones, internet, and similar communication devices and platforms;
- navigation of unfamiliar environments and variable itineraries;
- limited ability to accommodate some dietary restrictions and preferences;
- intensive interaction with only a small group of peers and faculty;
- close proximity to livestock, draft animals, and/or wildlife; and
- sustained challenge.

In other words, such programs can be as physically, mentally, and emotionally taxing as they are rewarding. As such, some Sterling programs may have minimum physical and health requirements. Opportunities for accommodation within some Sterling Experiential Endeavors and Field Programs tend to be more limited than in classes or programs based on-campus or at a regular instructional site. Students with disabilities who are interested in participating in a program that may have the above-listed characteristics and/or has published minimum physical and health requirements should contact the faculty member leading the field program to learn more about its particular demands and are encouraged to confer with the Director of Learning Support about whether their requested accommodations may be feasible in these programs.

Minimum Requirements for Winter Expedition
Students interested in participating in *Sterling's Expedition II: Winter Outdoor Challenge* (colloquially known as 'Winter Expedition') should be aware that in order to meet the learning objectives of this course the class will engage in field-based experiences in a wide range of weather conditions: temperatures in December can dip as low as -20 F, but also can be above freezing and raining. At times, the class will be walking up to 8 miles per day, mostly off-trail, over steep and uneven terrain, through deep snow, all while carrying a backpack that weighs about 40 lbs. Winter Expedition entails sleeping outside for 3 nights in a sleeping bag and tarp shelter that you build yourself, and all cooking is done on fires. Fires are made from firewood that you have to find, carry to your campsite, saw into lengths, and split; the campfire environment is usually smoky which can irritate your eyes and lungs.

Accommodation in Internship Placements & Other Off-Campus Work-Learning Experiences
Sterling College supports students with disabilities and encourages their robust participation in internships and other off-campus work-learning experiences ("Field Placements") that may be required as part of a student's academic program.

Field Placement accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis and require coordination with third-parties. As such, if a student requires accommodations during a field placement, it is the student's responsibility to request accommodations as far in advance as possible – ideally when setting up the Field Placement, and with a minimum of 4 weeks' notice before the student is scheduled to begin work-learning at an off-campus site. The Director of Learning Support will work with the student's advisor, instructor of record, and Field Placement personnel to develop an appropriate accommodation plan.

Students are responsible for carefully vetting a proposed Field Placement before committing to work-learning in that setting. Students should engage Field Placement personnel in detailed conversation about the nature of the field placement and site, the work involved, and the accommodation possibilities. The Director of Learning Support is available to support students in such exploratory conversations, upon request, and will serve as the primary liaison between the College, the student with a documented disability, and field placement personnel when the student requests accommodations in a field placement.

When considering a field placement:
- Students should work with their advisor(s) to identify the most critical factor(s) in determining appropriate Field Placement(s) that advance their personal learning goals, suit their learning styles, and can reasonably accommodate their documented disabilities.
- Students are not required to use accommodations during their Field Placement(s). However, there can be no retroactive adjustments to grades or for performance.
- It is the student's responsibility to find transportation to the Field Placement site unless transportation is being provided for all students.
- Students with disabilities are also strongly encouraged to our potential Field Placement sites before committing to work-learning in a particular setting or program.

Accommodation Exploration During the Admissions Process
Sterling College does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in their admissions process. Disability disclosure is not required during the admissions process; disclosure of a disability is always voluntary. Nevertheless, some applicants may wish to explore the accommodation options ahead of matriculation. Sterling will work with applicants as needed to make sure that our programs are the right fit and that desired accommodations are possible. Applicants with disabilities also have the right to have reasonable accommodations in the admissions process, upon a request and demonstration of a relationship between their disability and the need for accommodation.

Temporary Impairment
While not required by applicable law, the AAT may be able to arrange limited assistance for students who are experiencing a temporary impairment. Temporary impairments such as short-term medical conditions, infections, injuries, surgeries, or acute illnesses can happen at any time and seriously affect a student's ability to participate in, or complete, a course. These situations are highly variable in nature and effect, so the specific course of action followed will be tailored on a case-by-case basis. When the College voluntarily arranges or provides support for a student with a temporary impairment, such support does not mean the temporarily impaired student qualifies or is certified as an individual with a disability under applicable law. It does, however, represent the College attempting to support students through periods of unexpected, emergent or short-lead scheduled impairments or treatments.

Broadly speaking there are four scenarios:

A. *Unplanned Temporary Impairment Requiring More than Two Weeks or 20% Absence:* If an unplanned temporary impairment occurs that will require more than two weeks (in the case of full long block courses) or 20% (in the case of intensive or shorter courses) absence from classes, then it is recommended that a student **withdraw from classes for that semester**.

B. *Unplanned Temporary Impairment Requiring Less than Two Weeks Absence:* If a temporary impairment was unplanned, but is foreseen to be resolved within two weeks, the general sequence of events would be as follows:

1. As soon as is safely possible, obtain a dated letter from your medical provider describing your condition, including the expected duration and limitations of your condition. Share this with the Director of Learning Support or who will communicate essentials only to those people who will need to know (e.g. academic advisor, instructors, student life, etc).

2. Discuss your situation with the course instructor who will work with you to make suitable accommodations which might include, but are not limited to:

   - Dropping an exam or assignment score;
   - Providing the opportunity for a makeup exam or an equivalent assignment;
   - Allowing extra-credit assignments to substitute for missed class work; and
   - Arranging for an increased flexibility in assignment due dates, etc.

If an unplanned temporary impairment arises less than two weeks before the end of the semester, it may be an option to take an **Incomplete** in that class, to be completed as soon as possible after the temporary impairment has been ameliorated.

C. *Planned Temporary Impairment Requiring More than Two Weeks Absence:* If a temporary impairment can be foreseen and will require more than two weeks absence from classes (e.g. significant scheduled surgery), it is recommended that a student take a **Leave of Absence** from the college for the semester in which that temporary impairment falls. However, alternative options do exist, for example, a student could enroll in a combination of options that are easily fitted around this temporary impairment - for example, taking an Intensive plus one independent study. Students who foresee this situation should initiate a planning conversation with their advisor and the Director of Learning Support as early as possible in the planning process. They are also encouraged to reach out to the Dean of Academics and Assistant Dean of Academics & Registrar for further support in the academic planning process, the Associate Dean of Work-Learning for support in identifying impacts to the Work Program, and the Dean of Community for any support relating to campus and residential accessibility.

D. *Planned Temporary Impairment Requiring Less than Two Weeks Absence:* If a temporary impairment can be foreseen and will require less than two weeks absence from classes (e.g. scheduled surgery), the general sequence of events would be as follows:

1. As far ahead as possible, but at least two weeks in advance, obtain a dated letter from your medical provider describing your scheduled condition, including the duration and limitations of your condition. Share this with the Director of Learning Support who will communicate essentials only to those people who will need to know (e.g. this could include one or more of the following: academic advisor, instructors, student life staff, etc).

2. Discuss your situation with the course instructor who will work with you to make suitable accommodations which might include, but are not limited to:
    - Dropping an exam or assignment score;
    - Providing the opportunity for a makeup exam or an equivalent assignment;
    - Allowing extra-credit assignments to substitute for missed class work; or
    - Arranging for an increased flexibility in assignment due dates, etc.

In some cases, both planned and unplanned temporary impairment can allow a student to continue participating in a class but with some element of reduced capacity. In such a situation, it is recommended that students meet with the Director of Learning Support to generate temporary accommodations that allow the student to get the most out of the classroom experience. Temporary accommodations might include, but are not limited to:
- Reduced or no screen time
- Voice to text software
- Classmate(s) providing notes to student
- Alternative assignments
- Increased time on quizzes and exams
- Remote attendance being permitted.

On-Campus Housing Accommodations

Students requesting accommodations in housing should do so at least one month before the start of the semester. Requests may require documentation from a medical provider. Opportunities to request accommodation are found in the New Student Housing Application and Returning Student Housing Preference Survey, and may also be made in writing to the Dean of Community. Accommodations could include, for example:
- First-floor room
- Access to single-use bathroom
- Single room
- Assistance or Service Animal (see full policy below)

Pets, Service & Assistance Animals
Students are not allowed to have animals on campus (that is, pets), including but not limited to: in classrooms, residence halls, Dunbarn, any kitchens, in College vehicles, or at College-sponsored events. Exceptions to this policy are listed below.

Service Animals and Assistance Animals
Sterling College recognizes that Service Animals and Assistance Animals can play an important role in facilitating the independence and successful college experience of some individuals with certain types of disabilities. Service Animals and Assistance Animals that meet the criteria described below will be exempt from the pet provision above.

The health and safety of Sterling College students, faculty, staff, and the Service Animal or Assistance Animal is an important concern. College community members who have questions about the presence of Service Animals or Assistance Animals on campus should direct those questions to the Office of the Dean of Community.

Service Animals
A Service Animal is defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as any dog (or in

some cases, a miniature horse) that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The work or task must be directly related to the person's disability. The provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship does not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition (see "Assistance Animals," below). The ADA and US Department of Justice state that service animals in training are not considered service animals, however some state or local laws may cover animals that are still in training.

Service Animals in training who are with a member of the College community who has a disability, and with whom the animal will be working as a Service Animal, are provided the same rights as Service Animals under this policy.

Students with Service Animals are permitted generally to bring their Service Animals in all areas of a place of public accommodation, such as classrooms, residence halls (including the private residence assigned to the student), activities and events, and dining facilities. However, Service Animals are not permitted if they pose a direct threat to health or safety, if their presence constitutes a fundamental alteration to the nature of a program, service or physical space, if they cannot effectively be controlled, or if they are not housebroken.

Students planning to bring a Service Animal to campus should work closely with the Office of the Dean of Community, before arriving on campus. Students intending to keep a Service Animal in a residence hall should submit a request to the Office of the Dean of Community at least 30 days in advance. The Office of the Dean of Community may ask the student if the animal is required because of a disability, and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform, but will not ask about the nature of the student's disability for this purpose.

Students are encouraged to provide identification (e.g., harness, backpack) that the animal is a Service Animal so that others are aware it is a working animal, however identification is not required.

See below for a description of the student's responsibilities and the reasons for removal of Service Animals.

Assistance Animals
An Assistance Animal provides emotional support, comfort, companionship or therapeutic benefits. A person qualifies for reasonable accommodation involving an Assistance Animal under the Fair Housing Act if:

1. the person has a documented disability;

2. the animal is necessary to afford the person with a disability an equal opportunity to use and enjoy the residence halls; and

3. there is an identifiable relationship between the disability and the assistance the animal provides.

Assistance Animals are allowed generally within designated residence halls, but not in other College buildings or college vehicles. Assistance animals may not accompany students to classes or on field trips. The College will not, however, permit Assistance Animals in residence halls if they pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others; would cause substantial physical damage to the property of others; would pose an undue financial and administrative burden; or would fundamentally alter the nature of the College's operations.

Students planning to bring an Assistance Animal to campus must obtain approval from the Office of the Dean of Community by submitting a request at least 4 weeks in advance of arriving on campus. The College requires the Dean of Community to ask for the following documentation:

- a letter from a licensed medical provider certifying that you have been diagnosed with a disability, and that the symptoms of your disability will be mitigated by the use of this assistance animal;

- documentation from a veterinarian that your animal is up-to-date on vaccinations, is in good health, and can be appropriately and safely housed indoors;
- a budget, prepared by you, indicating how you will financially provide for the needs of your animal. The budget can be a statement included in the personal statement stating that the student's guardian will ensure the animal's financial needs (food, vet bills, grooming) will be met; and
- a personal statement written by you as to how the assistance animal will help you be successful at Sterling.

See below for a description of the student's responsibilities and the reasons for removal of Assistance Animals.

Animal Care
Requirements for service animals, assistance animals and their owners include:

- The owner of the animal must be in full control of the animal at all times.
- All animals must be leashed while outside on campus.
- Animals may not be left outside unattended, even while leashed.
- Animals must be licensed in accordance with local regulations and, if appropriate, must wear a valid vaccination tag.
- Animals must wear identification at all times.
- Animals must be in good health. Any service/assistance animals occupying college housing must have an annual clean bill of health from a licensed veterinarian. Documentation must be submitted to the Dean of Community.
- Students are encouraged to provide identification that the animal is a service animal so that others are aware it is a working animal, but service animals are not required to wear a vest, identification tag, or specific harness. Students will provide documentation of the continuing need for the assistance animal on an annual basis.
- The owner is responsible for appropriate waste clean-up and overall cleanliness of the animal.
- The owner is responsible for the appropriate management of their animal in all College facilities.
- Disruptive and/or aggressive behavior on the part of the animal may result in the owner being asked to remove the animal from College facilities immediately and permanently.
- The owner is responsible for any property damage or personal injury caused by the animal, or pest control (e.g., flea treatment) required because of the animal.
- Any animal left unattended or abandoned will be removed from campus.
- In the event that the owner leaves the College for any amount of time greater than 8 hours (dog) or 24 hours (cat), the owner must bring the animal with them or communicate to the Dean of Community the plan for the animal's care.

Removal of an Animal

Sterling College maintains the right to remove an animal under certain circumstances if:

- the animal is out of control of the handler,
- it is not vaccinated or licensed,
- it causes disturbances such as noise or excessive odors,
- it poses a direct threat to any member of the Sterling community,
- the service/assistance animal is left unattended without care, or
- the animal displays disruptive and/or aggressive behavior, which may result in the owner being asked or required to remove the animal from College facilities immediately and permanently.

Etiquette with Service Animals and Assistance Animals

To support safe, respectful, and harmonious relations with service and assistance animals in the Sterling Community:

- Do not pet a Service Animal or Assistance Animal without permission of the owner; petting a Service Animal when the animal is working distracts the animal from the task at hand. Service dogs typically wear a leather harness, scarf or sign to indicate they are working animals.
- Do not feed a Service Animal or Assistance Animal. The animal may have specific dietary requirements.
- Do not deliberately startle a Service Animal or Assistance Animal.
- Do not separate or attempt to separate an owner from her or his Service Animal or Assistance Animal.
- Allow a service animal to accompany the owner at all times and everywhere on campus except where service animals are specifically prohibited. Students with assistance animals are not afforded this right, and may only be present in the student's housing if approved by the Dean of Community Office.

Problem Solving & Direct Communication Around Disability Accommodation

Clear communication between students, faculty/staff, and the AAT is vital to reducing barriers for and providing equal opportunity to students with disabilities.

When possible, students are encouraged to first address concerns about disability accommodation directly with the individuals involved in the situation such as:
- the Director of Learning Support regarding eligibility for accommodations and specific accommodations;
- the individual faculty or staff member, in the cases of implementation or lack of approved accommodations;
- If a student is unable to discuss an issue with the Director of Learning Support, or if the complaint is about the Director of Learning Support, the student should contact the Dean of Community.

It is often possible that a simple misunderstanding can be cleared up via direct and respectful communication. If a student is hesitant about engaging in direct communication, they may

reach out to the Director of Learning Support, the Dean of Community or their faculty advisor for support in preparing for or engaging in the direct communication and arriving at clarity.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to first address concerns about disability accommodation directly with their supervisor and/or the Section 504 Coordinator.

Appealing an Accommodation Determination
All students who submit documentation of disability and request accommodation will receive a written eligibility/denial determination letter from the AAT. Students who do not agree with the determination letter (in whole or part) may choose to engage in informal problem solving and direct communication with the Director of Learning Support and/or the Accessibility and Accommodations team. Students are not required to participate in informal problem-solving and may move directly to a formal appeal as outlined in Section XI, below. To be clear, the College makes this informal resolution option available, but parties are under no obligation to participate in informal resolution and can instead pursue the complaint process outlined below.

Because Sterling is such a small institution, we do not have a formal appeal process with a separate review panel for accommodation determinations. Instead, students who disagree with a decision made with respect to a requested accommodation may submit a written request for reconsideration to the Director of Learning Support and the AAT within five business days after receiving the written notice of the determination. The written request for reconsideration may be submitted via email to the 504 Coordinator/Director of Learning Support (contact information in Section II). It should include the specific aspects of the decision being challenged and supporting arguments and/or evidence.

All requests for reconsideration will be taken up as soon as possible and a determination will typically be issued within five business days of the AAT's receipt of all information pertinent to the reconsideration request. The AAT may extend this time period, if necessary. If an extension of time is required, the 504 Coordinator/Director of Learning Support will provide an email acknowledgement that the review is in process and a request for additional information or time required for the review, in writing to the student's official college email. It is incumbent upon the student to attend to their email for these communications and to respond to all AAT requests in a timely manner.

Faculty and staff who would like formal review of a disability-related decision may pursue the Section 504 Grievance Procedures outlined immediately below.

Section 504 Grievance Procedures
Sterling College is committed to promoting equal access to its programs, services, and activities. Sterling determines accommodations through an interactive process involving the student, the AAT, and appropriate community members. However, at times, a faculty or staff member or a student may disagree with a decision made with respect to a requested accommodation or other matter pertaining to disability, or be concerned about perceived discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability.

In addition to the above-stated *optional* problem-solving process and the opportunity for reconsideration of accommodation decisions, faculty or staff members or students who feel that they have been inappropriately denied accommodations, harassed or discriminated against on the basis of their disability by anyone affiliated with the College (inclusive of employees, other students, or third-party affiliates) in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,

the ADA, or other applicable law, are encouraged to file a complaint under Sterling's **Section 504 Grievance Procedures**, detailed below.

1. While the College will address complaints when they are raised, to best facilitate timely resolution of disability-related grievances, complaints be submitted to the 504 Coordinator within 30 days of the date upon which the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action.
2. If the grievance in question involves the 504 Coordinator/Director of Learning Support, the written grievance may be submitted to the Dean of Academic Affairs, who will work with the President to identify an appropriate person to review the complaint.
3. Grievances must be submitted in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The written grievance must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
4. The 504 Coordinator (or their designee) shall conduct an investigation of the grievance. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to present witnesses and/or suggest that certain individuals be interviewed, and submit relevant evidence. The 504 Coordinator will maintain the files and records of Sterling College relating to such grievances.
5. The Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the written grievance within 48 business hours of receipt and seek additional information within the next 21 business days, unless extenuating circumstances (e.g., party and witness availability, college breaks) require a longer investigation period. Parties will be informed of any delay and the reasons for the delay.
6. The Section 504 Coordinator will typically issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 28 business days after its filing; if, however, extenuating circumstances (e.g., witness availability, college breaks) make it difficult to render a decision in this time period, the Section 504 Coordinator will, at a minimum, provide a written update within the first 28 business days and detail any additional steps that will be taken to reach a resolution within a timeframe that is reasonable under the circumstances. Written notice will be shared with the person who filed the grievance, any person(s) accused of participating in or enabling discrimination or harassment, and the President of the College. Parties will receive notice of the outcome of a complaint and the basis for the decision.
7. If the written decision contains a finding that discrimination or harassment occurred, the College will take steps to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent recurrence, and remedy discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, as necessary and appropriate.
8. The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the 504 Coordinator (or designee) by writing to the President of the College (or their designee) within 15 days of receiving the Section 504 Coordinator's decision. The President of the College shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after its filing.
9. The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights.
10. Sterling College will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided other accommodations, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of material for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Section 504 Coordinator will be responsible for such arrangements.

Sterling College does not retaliate against anyone because they have filed a grievance or cooperated in the investigation of a grievance.

Additional Support for Students with Learning Differences
Sterling endeavors to provide an inclusive learning environment and may be able to offer support for some learning differences that do not rise to the level of a documented disability. Such students are encouraged to avail themselves of the learning support structures and programming at Sterling College. The following types of limited learning supports may be available to support academic success without moving through the full disability documentation process:

- extended time on tests;
- quiet space for testing;
- spelling-related accommodation;
- use of a calculator;
- use of music or noise-canceling headphones during testing; and
- use of manipulatives (e.g., fidget spinners, tactile apparatuses, or knitting) in class.

If provided without the student's being recognized by the AAT as a student with a disability, such supports are being provided at the discretion of the College, and not because they are required by law, and accordingly they may be modified or discontinued as deemed appropriate by the College.

The Director of Learning Support is available to work with individual returning and newly admitted students each semester to assess and support learning and development including coordination and development and implementation of individualized academic support plans for students. Students should schedule an appointment with the Director of Learning Support whenever they are curious about available support, at the recommendation of an advisor, or as soon as an academic struggle or the need for support becomes apparent.

Students with a history of learning differences and hindrances that affect learning are encouraged to forward their current and comprehensive documentation to the Director of Learning Support during the months before the beginning of their first semester. Students with learning differences are then asked to meet with the Director of Learning Support at the start of the academic semester in order to discuss course planning and strategies for success.

Of course, any student who wishes to seek reasonable accommodations on the basis of a documented disability are welcome and encouraged to submit in the AAT documentation and accommodation process detailed above. Students may do so at any time, without regard to whether they have received such supports without doing so in the past.

FARM & LAND RESOURCES AND POLICIES

General Farm Ground Rules

The following are general farm ground rules that should be followed by all students, staff, and visitors on all of the Sterling College Farms and any farms visited during a Sterling College class.

- Close all doors & gates behind you.
- Do not touch fences — they could be electrified!
- Do not pet or feed the animals, unless it is required for class, or you are under the supervision of a farm employee. Improper feeding & handling of animals can be harmful or dangerous.
- Do not enter any pasture, stall, or pen containing draft animals or livestock.
- No smoking or open flames anywhere on the farm.
- All pets must be leashed at all times on the farm.
- Do not bring any dogs (even on a leash) into any barn or pasture, stall, or pen containing draft animals or livestock.
- Do not borrow any equipment in or around any barn without permission from either the Draft Animal, Garden or Livestock Manager.
- Do not harvest any food items for your own personal use unless otherwise given permission by the Garden Manager or The Farm Between Manager.
- Do not sleep or engage in any unauthorized activity in the barns.
- Wash your hands when you leave the farm, move from livestock to garden activities, before using the bathroom, using tobacco products, or eating.
- Shoes must be worn on the farm at all times.
- Public visiting hours are from 8am-6pm daily.
- No alcohol or drug use permitted anywhere on the farm.
- Please respect any signage that restricts access to certain areas of the farm.
- To avoid disease transmission, please wear clean (non-farm) footwear, or use a pair of plastic booties, if you have visited another farm recently.
- If you see something out of place (animals in distress, fences down, etc.), notify the Draft Animal Manager, Garden Manager, or Livestock Manager. At the weekend, contact the weekend "On Call" contact listed for the farm, found on the Academic & Work noticeboard in the Dunbar Foyer.

Farm Crew Rules and Expectations

1. Come prepared to work:
   a. Ready to be outside in any condition (rain gear, layers, warm clothes, hat, sunscreen, boots, gloves, water, etc.)
   b. Mentally, emotionally, and physically able (no impairment, adequate rest, good attitude.)
2. Communication is essential to your job. You must contact a supervisor if you are late, will miss a shift, or need to make a scheduling change. You must also check and respond to e-mail communications regularly (at least twice per day during the week, or if you are on-call for the farm, at the weekend too), unless you have made other arrangements with your crew and/or supervisor.
3. It is the worker's responsibility to track and report work hours on a weekly basis.
4. If you do not complete your work requirements, you will be placed on Work Review. This includes missing chores shifts.
5. Arrive on time. If you will be late — please let a supervisor know ahead of time. More than 15 minutes late for chores counts as missing a shift.
6. Closed toed shoes must be worn at all times at the barns and for all farm (livestock, draft, tractor, or garden) work.
7. Wear the appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) for a given task. Eye and ear protection, gloves, dust mask, etc. If you don't know how to safely use a tool or piece of equipment, please ask for instruction.

8. No ear buds/headphones allowed during group work situations, or when working around/with livestock, power tools, or equipment, due to impaired hearing.
9. Replace all tools in the proper place immediately after use.
10. Only approved operators (students or employees) may use the tractor. For certification process on the Craftsbury campus, please ask a farm manager (farm@sterlingcollege.edu) about the next available workshop.
    a. Riders are never permitted on a tractor, unless it is specifically equipped with an enclosed cab and second seat.
    b. Seat belt and ROPS should be employed at all times, unless you have received specific permission, from a supervisor, to disable them.
    c. Bystanders/co-workers must stay clear of the tractor while in operation. Observers or co-workers must:
        i. Never pass under a raised bucket;
        ii. Stay out of the path of travel;
        iii. Maintain a safe distance from implements and potential projectiles;
        iv. Be aware of the operator's visibility & hearing limitations.
    d. Tractor use needs should be submitted to the campus Google Calendar, to avoid conflicts. Only certified Faculty and Staff have editing access to this calendar.
    e. *Failure to follow these rules will result in immediate tractor privilege revocation.*
11. Wash hands well after farm work — especially before eating, using tobacco (any type), chewing gum, using the bathroom, or switching between livestock and garden work. This is to prevent cross contamination and the possible introduction of disease onto the farm.
12. No tobacco, alcohol, or drug use permitted on the farm/in the gardens at any time. This includes chewing tobacco and vaping. Please use approved break/smoking areas.
13. Any student or other worker suspected of being impaired or under the influence of any substance (including prescribed medications that impact alertness), will be asked not to participate in work. Evaluation immediately reverts to the student's advisor, work program supervisor, and/or Director of Work Learning.
14. Music played during a work session needs to be approved by the group & supervisor.
15. No pets while working, unless approved by a supervisor. No dogs in barns. Animals should be leashed, other than animals working with livestock in an approved setting.
16. If you notice anything strange (extreme weather events, unknown people or animals, strange smells, animals in distress, fences down, predators, etc.) please let a supervisor know immediately.
17. Take time to ask questions if you are unsure about anything or want to know more.
18. Please work to create and share a culture of inclusivity, respect, stewardship, and accountability when interacting with the farm in any capacity.

Safely Coexisting with Wild Animals on Sterling Campus and Grounds

The Sterling College campus and landscape is home to a variety of wildlife, and in order to coexist with wild animals safely and respectfully, we have specific policies in place for addressing wildlife encounters.

Sick, injured, and orphaned wildlife
If you encounter a seemingly sick, injured, or orphaned animal, please follow the [guidelines of the VT Fish & Wildlife Department](#). Here are some key points to remember:

- Do not approach a young animal that appears to be hiding; it's probably waiting for the return of its parents and does not need to be rescued.
- Do not touch skunks, raccoons, foxes or bats, regardless of their apparent condition. These animals are rabies vectors, and rabies is extremely dangerous (always fatal without prompt, costly, and uncomfortable treatment). Call the Rabies Hotline at 1-800-4-RABIES for guidance, and do not attempt to touch the animal until after contacting the hotline.
- Taking a wild animal into captivity is illegal. A sick, injured, or orphaned animal should be taken to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator as quickly as possible, and a rehabilitator should be contacted immediately for guidance on handling and transport. Currently licensed VT wildlife rehabilitators are listed [here.](#)

Dead Wildlife

Collecting dead birds or their parts (including feathers, nests, and eggs) is a violation of the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and collecting dead endangered wildlife or their parts is a violation of the Endangered Species Act. Collecting dead game animals (see species list [here](#)) is considered illegal poaching unless you obtain a tag from the local game warden (find current contact info [here](#)). Collecting dead vertebrate animals other than those mentioned previously requires a special collection permit from the VT Fish & Wildlife Department. Sterling College has such a permit, as well as a migratory bird collection permit (for all but endangered species). These permits allow us to collect dead wildlife and their parts for our zoological collection, which we use for official educational purposes. If you encounter a dead animal or part that is in good condition and that may be a valuable addition to our zoological collection, please contact Farley Brown (fbrown@sterlingcollege.edu) or Laura Spence (lspence@sterlingcollege.edu). Do not drop off specimens without express permission and instructions from Farley or Lauar.

Bear Encounters

Black bears inhabit our area and occasionally show up on campus. These animals are shy and generally avoid interacting with us unless provoked, either intentionally or unintentionally. There are specific actions we can take to coexist with them safely and peacefully. First and foremost, remember the saying that "a fed bear is a dead bear." (Note: this also applies to raccoons and skunks). Bears and other scavengers are attracted by food left out by humans. If human food sources are available, individual animals may learn to associate humans with food and become a nuisance — that is, they can become aggressive toward humans and pose a threat, which is not their typical behavior. Typically, these animals cannot be relocated safely and must be euthanized by VT Fish and Wildlife. On Sterling campus, we ask for everyone's cooperation in preventing wildlife-human conflicts on our campus by keeping the compost buckets and carts clean, feeding pets indoors and keeping them on leash, keeping food securely stored indoors, and observing animal visitors from a safe distance.

What to do if you encounter a bear: VT Fish & Wildlife has some excellent information on their website about bear encounters, available [here](#).

Nuisance Animals on the Farm and on Campus

Scavenging animals (skunks, raccoons, bears, coyotes, etc.) are attracted to food left out by humans. On Sterling campus, we ask for everyone's cooperation in preventing wildlife-human conflicts on our campus by keeping the compost buckets and carts clean, feeding pets indoors and keeping them on leash, keeping food securely stored indoors, and observing animal visitors from a safe distance. Nuisance animals on the farm – specifically predating on livestock, or posing health concerns – will be trapped and euthanized based on guidelines by the state. (This does not include the skunks which visit the compost pile unless they pose a risk). Reach out to

the Livestock Manager, Azsa Greiner (agreiner@sterlingcollege.edu), with questions or concerns regarding nuisance animals on the farm.

LIBRARY RESOURCES AND POLICIES

Brown Library

This section includes details concerning the Brown Library and its policies:
- **Audio-Visual Resources**
- **Borrowing Privileges**
- **Checkout of Books**
- **Copyright Guidelines**
- **Course Reserves**
- **Donations**
- **Journal Databases**
- **Interlibrary Loan**
- **Library Catalog**
- **Requests for Purchase of Library Materials**
- **Research Assistance**

Audio-Visual Resources
A video streaming service (Kanopy) is available on the **library's website**. DVDs and CDs are located in the librarian's office and can be requested for pickup.

Borrowing Privileges
The loan period for books is 30 days for students, with the option to renew. DVDs and other audio-visuals can be borrowed for seven days. Automated overdue notices are sent to Sterling email accounts. There are no late fees; however, there will be a replacement charge for lost or long-overdue library items.

Checkout of Books
There is a self-checkout station at the front desk. Log in with your library account, scan the Sterling College barcode on the back of the book, click Finish when you are done, stamp the due date in the back of the book. If you experience a problem with logging in, please sign the books out on the clipboard.

Alternatively, you can use the following remote method to check out books:
Log in to [the library catalog](#) and click the PLACE HOLD button for any items that you would like. Once they are checked out to you, they will be left on the seed catalog cabinet behind the library circulation desk, in a package with your initials on it. An email notification will be sent when they're ready for pickup. The book return box has also been placed out behind the library. Login instructions are provided at the self checkout kiosk, and there is a password reset link beneath the online catalog login. Please contact the librarian for further assistance.

Copyright Guidelines
Any use or reproduction of copyrighted materials will be done either with the written permission of the copyright holder or within the bounds of "Fair Use" guidelines provided in the Copyright Act of 1978; otherwise, the individual responsible for use or reproduction may be liable for infringing the copyright under existing laws. See **Strategies for Fair Use** for further details.

Course Reserves
Books and other materials that are set aside for the class to share are available on the shelves of the course reserves room. These are to be used in the library only and returned to the class's shelf when finished. Books are returned to the regular shelves once the semester is over.

Donations
Donations of books will be considered following the guidelines of the library's policy on gifts.

Journal Databases
The library has subscriptions to several **databases** which provide journal articles for research. Online resources, including the databases, e-books, video streaming and more can be found on the Online Resources page of the library website. Note that when you are trying to access one of our subscription databases from off-campus locations (including the lower dorms) a login box will appear. If you have trouble logging in, there are login instructions in the Online Resources section of the website. You can also contact the librarian for assistance.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)
The library is able to request books, online journal articles, and sometimes DVDs from other libraries. Please fill out the **interlibrary loan form** found on the library's web page. ILLs should be requested at least two weeks in advance of the date needed, although the turnover for online resources may be faster. It is important to return books on or before the due date indicated on the front cover.

Library Catalog
Please use the **library's catalog** to find books, periodicals, and DVDs. Though it is not necessary for searching, logging in with your library account allows you to access more features, such as seeing what you have checked out, renewing items, and placing a hold on items. New students will receive login information from the library at the beginning of the semester. Login information can be reset via the library website login or by contacting the librarian.

Requests for Purchase of Library Materials
You are welcome to suggest purchases of books to add to the library collection, either **using this form** or emailing the librarian directly.

Research Assistance
An orientation is held for all students at the beginning of the semester. In addition, professors may include a class session on conducting research for a paper or project. Students planning a Senior Year Research Project are encouraged to schedule a library meeting as part of their proposal process. Please **contact the librarian** if you would like a one-to-one session to help with your research.

CHAINSAW GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Chainsaw Usage Policies

- All chainsaw use must be conducted with direct oversight of a Chainsaw Supervisor, whether for class or work. Consult with the Dean of Academics, Assistant Dean of Academics, or Dean of Work-Learning to learn who is currently trained as a Chainsaw Supervisor.
- Student Chainsaw Supervisors may assist in supervision of other students using a chainsaw, but only with a faculty or staff Chainsaw Supervisor present.
- Sterling chainsaw use, with Sterling College saws or on Sterling College property, must always have at least two people present. This policy applies to all people, including Chainsaw Supervisors.
- Chainsaw use requires personal protective equipment being worn at all times:
    - protective chaps or pants
    - sturdy boots
    - eye, ear, and head protection
- Sterling's chainsaws may not be borrowed for personal use.
- There is a four step procedure to become a Student Chainsaw Supervisor:
    - Take and pass the Woodlot Practices class
    - Work/Teach as a **Teaching Assistant** in AS105 *Woodlot Practices* or similar Work Program position (showing responsible behavior)
    - Be designated a Chainsaw Supervisor by a faculty Chainsaw Supervisor with whom you TA'd.
    - First Aid training minimum: 16 hour Wilderness First Aid certification

Practices: General Procedures for Chainsaw Use

- Chainsaw training starts with a classroom session, including: when to use the chain brake, proper grip of the saw, stance, throttle control, reactive forces, and kickback awareness.
- Required PPE: Protective chaps or chainsaw pants, hard-hat with hearing and eye protection, and sturdy boots are worn at all times when the saw is being started or running. The same PPE is required of people working near the saw (within 20 feet). Hearing protection is required within 50 ft. (less with electric saw)
- Before every use the Chainsaw is checked for proper sharpness, chain tension and direction, bar nut tightness, proper assembly, chain catch present, chain brake function, and that the bar oil tank is full.
- Any gasoline added must be certain to be mixed with engine oil at the proper ratio. All gas tanks should be stored outside the shop.
- The chain brake must always be on (to stop the chain from turning) when: the saw is being started, whenever less than two hands are holding the saw, when taking three or more steps while holding the saw, or if the saw is stuck and you are trying to pull it free.
- Gas saws: Pull start the saw either with it on the ground or with a leg-hold position. No drop starts.
- Electric saws: Remove the battery before doing any maintenance on the cutting assembly as an extra precaution.

- When finished cutting, return the saw to the shop, sharpen the chain, and clean the cutting assembly and air filter.

FIBER SPACE RESOURCES AND POLICIES

Sterling College faculty and staff are permitted use of the Fiber Arts Space in Strong Hall after having been checked off by an approved instructor. Students must complete the appropriate course before using associated tools (i.e., looms can be used by students who have been trained to use them in HM325 *Introduction to Weaving*; drum carders can be used by students who have been trained to use them in HM230A *Introduction to Fiber Arts* etc.).

The Fiber Arts Space will be available during open studio hours to students who need the studios for current classes; independent studies; or personal projects. Students currently enrolled in associated classes will have priority. Any use of the studios outside of fiber arts and gear repair classes or supervised open sewing hours must first be approved by Prin van Gulden. A project proposal with a proposed timeline must be submitted and approved by van Gulden for all projects, if they will span more than one day.

Open studio hours will be held to make the space available, and everyone is expected to clean up thoroughly, put all tools and materials away appropriately, etc. by the end of open studio hours. If projects need drying time, they should be left on the drying racks in the dye studio, labeled with name and date, and removed promptly when dry. Students currently enrolled in a fiber arts class will have designated cubbies to store ongoing class projects. No other projects, personal items, may be left in the studios outside of open studio hours.

FITNESS ROOM POLICIES

The Fitness Room is a shared community space and needs to be kept clean and tidy. When you are using the room, please keep in mind the room is in a classroom building which may be in use. Also, when leaving the room, please remember to:

- Close windows
- Wipe down machines
- Turn off lights
- Put away weights
- Sweep up any chalk

HOUSTON KITCHEN RESOURCES AND POLICIES

Houston Kitchen is an instructional kitchen facility used for regularly occurring and continuing education classes. This includes the kitchen space proper and all of the appliances and food processing tools therein. Houston is also inclusive of the walk-in cooler and dish sanitizer in the adjacent rooms. The facility is managed by the Houston Kitchen Manager. This is a classroom laboratory space, and the space is used and cared for like a commercial kitchen. Houston is not to be used for either experimental or casual food preparation or storage by students without the

direct permission and supervision of the Houston Kitchen Manager and/or the faculty supervisor.

Guidelines for Houston Kitchen Usage

- Use the check off sheet each time you use the kitchen.
- The extractor fan should be turned on when using the oven. Turn the oven off and fan off when finished.
- All food left in the walk-in fridge must be labeled. Labels should clearly state the responsible person's name and the date. Food should be removed from the walk-in one week after the date labeled, unless labeled clearly otherwise.
- Get compost bucket, dish towels and aprons from the kitchen. Return them when you are done.
- Users must clean up after every use of the space. This means:
  - Washing all dishes, waiting for them to dry and putting them away.
  - Disposing of all compost and trash generated.
  - Sweeping and mopping the floor.
  - Cleaning all counter tops including the top of the oven, counter spaces at low levels.
  - Cleaning all cutting boards. Be sure cutting boards are dried or left out to dry.

Guidelines for Safe Kitchen Working Conditions

- Wash Your Hands! Before, during and after! Use the hand washing sink.
- Wear Personal Protective Clothing including:
  - Aprons: must be worn at all times – to protect your clothes and the food from your clothes! Be sure it is clean. Remove your apron when you leave the work area.
  - Gloves: Should be worn if you will be mixing food with your hands.
  - Shoes: Full-toed and sturdy
  - Long hair: tied back
- Take the following precautions to avoid personal injury:
  - Walk in the kitchen
  - Wipe up spills immediately
  - Wear slip resistant shoes
  - Always close cabinet drawers and doors
- Knife usage:
  - Use knives for their intended purpose only
  - Cut away from your body
  - Carry it down at your side with the blade tip pointed toward the floor and the sharp edge facing behind you.
  - Do not try to grab a knife as it falls
  - Keep knives sharp
  - Use a cutting board (put cloth under it)
  - Wash sharp tools separately. Never leave them soaking in the sink.
- Burn avoidance:
  - Tilt pot lids away from your body to let steam escape
  - Use dry pot holders or oven mitts
  - Turn pot handles away from front of range
  - Step aside when you open an oven door to avoid the rush of heat

- ○ Keep paper, plastic and other flammable materials away from hot cooking areas.

LABORATORY USAGE POLICIES

Sterling College's Science Laboratory, located on the ground floor of Simpson Hall, is used for a variety of classes and research projects. Activities frequently undertaken in the Lab include the processing of collected invertebrates, animal dissections, plant, algal, and fungal growth experiments, water testing, root staining for mycorrhizal fungi, cell microscopy, and much more. These activities can pose risks to individuals using the lab unless proper lab safety protocols are followed. For this reason, all students entering the lab for a class are oriented to the Lab Safety Protocols given below and are expected to observe them at all times when in the Lab for any reason.

Lab Safety Protocols

General Safety Regulations
1. No food, drink or chewing material is permitted in the lab. Keep pens, pencils, fingers and other objects out of your mouth and eyes.
2. Leave bags and coats outside the lab on the hooks provided.
3. Closed-toe shoes must be worn at all times in the lab.
4. Familiarize yourself with the location of the fire extinguishers, safety shower, and eye-wash station.
5. Never run in the lab.
6. Report any personal injury or hazardous spill to your instructor immediately.
7. Wear gloves, safety glasses, and lab coats whenever working with hazardous chemicals.
8. Before leaving the lab, wash your hands well with soap and warm water and wipe dry with a paper towel.

Waste Disposal
Discard disposable materials as follows:
1. Any broken glass or other sharp object (e.g. broken plastic, used razor blades, scalpel blades, used syringes etc) should be disposed of in the sharps bucket.
2. Some chemicals should not be poured down the sink in the lab, consult with your instructor as to the disposal method of chemicals used.

Procedure before leaving the lab
1. Make sure all tubes, plates or cultures to be stored are properly labeled. Labels should include name, date, and class.
2. Discard any disposable materials as indicated above.
3. Store your microscope in clean condition in the cabinets.
4. Put away all general equipment and materials.
5. Wipe surfaces where you were working.
6. Always wash your hands immediately before you leave the lab.

Access to Laboratory Outside of Class Time

Students are only allowed to access the Sterling Lab outside of class-time with permission from the Lab Coordinator. Before being permitted to work in the Lab on a personal project linked to a

course or experiential endeavor, or their Senior Year Research Project, students must take and pass the Lab Safety Test, administered by the Lab Coordinator, Laura Spence (lspence@sterlingcollege.edu). Students who have not passed a Lab Safety test are not allowed in the Lab without an instructor or student Lab Assistant present.

WOODSHOP RESOURCES AND POLICIES

Use of the Strong Hall Woodshop

Sterling College's Strong Hall Wood Shop in Craftsbury Common, VT, is primarily used for woodworking classes, but there are multiple users, including: maintenance staff, segments of other classes, outside of class projects by faculty and students. Woodworking classes have priority for use of the space and tools. Other uses must be arranged with the instructor or shop supervisor. Reducing the risk of injury in the shop is the goal of many of these guidelines.

Safety Rules Summary

This is an overview of the safety rules, with fuller details provided below.
- An approved shop monitor or instructor must be present for work in the machine room.
- No one may work alone in the shop.
- Individuals in the wood shop must be completely sober.
- Wear appropriate apparel:
  - No loose clothing, scarves, jewelry, or dangling headphone wires.
  - No open toed shoes.
  - Long hair must be pulled back.
- Eye protection is required in the machine room.
- Ear protection is required when power tools are in use.
- No radios, headphones or earbuds are allowed in the machine room.
- Clean up after yourself. A clean shop is safer. Return tools to their proper spots.
- If an injury occurs, treat with first aid and then decide if 911 should be called.
- Report all injuries and near misses to the shop supervisor/instructor.

See the full Handbook binder for more details about use of specific tools.

Wood Shop Guidelines

- Individuals in the wood shop must be completely sober.
  - If you believe your judgment or coordination to be impaired, please alert the supervisor and excuse yourself from the shop.
  - If you are suspected of being impaired by any substance, you will be asked to leave the shop immediately and not return until at least 24 hrs have elapsed, and having talked with the instructor/supervisor. If you are a student, then you will be referred to the Dean of Community. A second offense will result in being banned from the wood shop.
- No one may work alone in the woodshop due to the risk of severe cuts from sharp tools. Bring a partner. This applies to hand tools in the bench room as well as power tools.
- Only use tools that you are trained to use and that appear to be in good condition. If you notice a tool in questionable condition, do not use it. Inform your instructor/supervisor.

- Sharpen tools that you have been trained to sharpen.
- Any borrowing of tools must be approved by the shop supervisor/instructor and signed out on the proper form. The borrower is responsible for any costs for repair or replacement.
- Tools and materials in the cubby room or instructor room are personal property and should only be used by the owner, or with special permission.
- Hand-held power tools that are stored in the hand tool room should be used in the power tools room, with eye and ear protection.
- Before leaving at the end of class or a work session:
  - Return all tools, clamps, and jigs to their proper spots.
  - Dispose of scraps properly: almost all scraps can be reused in some way if they are separated.
    - "Usable" scraps must exceed 12" x 3"
    - "Burnable" scraps should be cut up to fit in that container
    - Clean shavings should be in a separate bag from dirty floor sweepings
  - Put away your project wood to make space for others.
  - Sweep the floor in your area.
  - Let the shop supervisor know if you notice scrap or sawdust containers getting full.
- Finishes are generally not to be used in the bench room. Talk with your instructor about the current finishing space and ventilation guidelines.
- Any oil, varnish, paint, solvents, etc., should be stored in the flammables cabinet.
- Oily rags must be stored safely to prevent combustion.
  - Air out rags singly to dry for 48 hours after use.
  - If rags are saved for re-use, they should be kept in a covered metal container which is either stored outdoors, or isolated on a concrete floor.
- Gluing should only be done on the glue table, not the smaller benches. Use paper or cardboard to catch the drips. Clean any glue residue off of clamps.

Bench Room Guidelines

All whole shop rules provided above apply plus the following rules:
- Tools assigned to a bench are to be used only at that bench.
- Tools in the hand tool room are available for in shop use by approved people.
- Return tools to their spot promptly when you are done using them; as a matter of respect for other users and to prevent tools from falling onto the floor.
- Gluing must only be done on the glue table, not on your personal bench
- You are are expected to work at your assigned bench:
  - It is your responsibility to work out scheduling with students who share your bench in other class sections.
  - Store parts and in-process projects neatly out of the way.
  - Personal lumber and tools must be clearly labeled and stored appropriately.

Machine Room Guidelines

All whole shop rules provided above apply, plus the following rules:
- Safety glasses are required to be worn at all times when in the machine room. Hearing protection is required when power tools are running.
- Radios, headphones, or earbuds are not allowed in the machine room

- You must receive instruction on each power tool and each new power tool operation before using/performing it on your own. In class, passing a written and practical test may be required before use is allowed.
- Do not operate machines when overtired, stressed or otherwise having trouble focusing. You must be able to give your full attention to any operation performed in the machine room.
- All apparel must be appropriate for working around power tools. Loose items could be caught by the tool and pull the wearer into the tool very quickly.
    - No loose clothing, loose jewelry, scarves, dangling strings, or headphone cords.
    - Closed toed shoes are required.
    - Long hair must be tied back.
- Machine use etiquette:
    - If you are not actively using a machine, you should not be in the machine room. If you would like to be "in line" to use a machine, alert the instructor and the current user.
    - Do not attempt to turn on any machine until the main power breaker is turned on.
    - Before checking or changing settings of a machine, be sure the machine is completely off and the blade has stopped moving. . If your body parts will be near the blade, also unplug the machine to be sure it is not turned on accidentally.
    - Check machine settings before turning on the machine.
    - Remove scraps and offcuts.
    - Sweep up, if necessary,
    - Clean blades, if necessary.
    - Return machine to stock setting (standard blade, blades/fence squared, lowered and/or covered by guards)

Outside of Class Shop Use

Outside of class use of the woodshop is allowed when a shop supervisor has time allotted, however, this is not anticipated in the 2023-24 academic year. All the rules above apply when using the woodshop outside of class. Sterling College faculty and staff are permitted use of the woodshop after having been checked off by the shop supervisor or approved instructor. This includes hand tools, hand-held power tools, and stationary power tools in accordance with the individual's level of training and experience.

Use of hand tools
Enrolled Sterling students may use hand tools after completing one of the introductory classes (AS195A *Fundamentals of Green Woodworking*, or HM125A *Introduction to Woodworking*). Both hand and power tools may be used by students after completing HM215A *Reverence for Wood*. As stated in the safety rules above; no one may work alone in the Woodshop, and power tools use must be supervised by an approved shop monitor or instructor.

Use of new machines
Regardless of prior experience, no new machine may be used without additional training and approval. For outside of class projects taking more than one day, a written project proposal must be submitted and approved. Approval is contingent on available space and time.

Woodshop safety refresher course
A shop safety refresher session will be held near the beginning of each semester. Attendance is required for all students interested in outside of class use of the shop, while not enrolled in a woodworking class. It is strongly recommended for faculty and staff users.

Becoming a Student Woodshop Monitor

The process for a student to become shop monitor is as follows:
- The student must take and pass HM215A *Reverence for Wood* class.
- The student must successfully complete a **Teaching Assistantship** in one of the woodworking classes and show maturity and good risk management.
- The student must be approved by the shop supervisor to work as a shop monitor.

WORK PROGRAM

Introduction: The Federal Work College Model

Sterling College is a federally-recognized, federally-funded Work College and one of nine members of the national Work Colleges Consortium. Federal legislation defines a Work College as a special type of degree-granting institution where a "comprehensive work-learning-service program" is "an integral and stated part of the institution's educational philosophy and program", a "valuable educational approach" and a "part of a financial aid plan that decreases reliance on grants and loans and encourages students to participate in community service activities".

The Work College model is designed to offer students a rich experience in which work, learning, and service are integrated for the duration of their undergraduate careers, as well as an avenue for students to earn money toward the cost of college. Each Work College is distinct and different in their mission and application of this model, but all are structured by key shared values and federal regulations. Through the Sterling Work Program, students earn money in the form of tuition credit, build a resume of meaningful work experience, and learn critical professional skills for their future careers in ecological thinking and action. In addition, the Sterling community depends on this student labor, and the campus is a laboratory for gaining insight into the responsibility of the individual in maintaining the health and daily functions of the community.

Sterling College's Work policies and procedures must be in compliance with federal regulations. See the **Federal Compliance** section below for further details. Students who may require reasonable accommodation for a documented disability to participate fully in the Work Program, inclusive of Work Crew positions, Experiential Endeavors, and All College Work and Service Days, should follow the processes outlined in the **Accessibility, Disability, and Reasonable Accommodation** policy.

Sterling College Work Program Statement of Purpose

The Work Program at Sterling College offers students meaningful experiential opportunities to explore, examine, and celebrate the value of work in the context of a holistic educational experience. The Work Program is intrinsic to the Sterling curriculum as a whole, supporting students as they:

- Earn money in the form of Work Program tuition credits to offset part of the cost of their education.
- Staff the essential labor needs of the College.
- Participate in experiential working-learning opportunities that help to fulfill and enhance the educational mission of the College.
- Cultivate a positive work ethic, respect for the dignity and value of all labor, and an appreciation for serving others.
- Experience on a daily basis what it means to be a productive and valued member of an active community.
- Develop and strengthen competencies, advanced skills, and personal vision as they make informed choices for their lives and work.
- Receive regular evaluation of their work and opportunities for authentic reflection on the meaning and value of their labor and participation in community.

Work-Learning Competencies

Through experiences and responsibilities in the Work Program, students will make progress in developing a range of Sterling's **College Wide Competencies**. In addition, the following skills, attributes, and good work habits will actively be developed through the Work Program:

- Managing time efficiently and effectively
- Recognizing and using effective verbal communication skills
- Developing a sense of responsibility and accountability
- Understanding work objectives
- Appreciating the value and dignity of work
- Building self-confidence
- Being prompt and prepared
- Safe use and care of tools and equipment
- Defining and solving problems
- Working with others, with or without supervision
- Working cooperatively in groups and as a team member
- Developing and using effective leadership skills
- Managing conflict appropriately
- Providing suggestions to improve workplace quality

Work Program Participation Requirements and Contract Options for Residential vs. Commuter students

Residential Students

All residential students, regardless of number of credits enrolled in, or number of weeks living on campus, are required to participate in the Work Program. Most residential students will have a contract for 80+ hours for the semester, which is broken down as follows:

Residential students enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor:
- 80+ hour contract
    - Experiential Endeavor (30 hrs)
    - Work Crew (44+ hrs)
    - All College Work Day (6 hrs)
    - All College Service Day participation

Residential students *not* enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor:
- 80+ hour contract
    - Work Crew (74+ hrs)
    - All College Work Day (6 hrs)
    - All College Service Day participation

However, if a residential student is not enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor, and is not present on campus for all three Intensive periods then their contract will be pro rated as follows:
- One Intensive only: 30 hour contract
- Two Intensives only: 50 hour contract

Students resident for only part of a semester can request a larger contract. For some positions, work may also be able to be completed remotely. Work Supervisors and the Dean of Work-Learning together ascertain whether remote work is appropriate for any particular job.

Commuter Students
Participation in the Work Program is optional for commuter students, although at least a 30-hour contract is required for those commuter students enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor.

Commuter students enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor have the following Work Program contract options:
- 30-hour contract:
    - Experiential Endeavor only
- 50-hour contract
    - Experiential Endeavor (30 hrs)
    - Work Crew position (14 hrs)
    - All College Work Day (6 hrs)
    - All College Service Day participation
- 80-hour contract
    - Experiential Endeavor (30 hrs)
    - Work Crew position (44 hrs)
    - All College Work Day (6 hrs)
    - All College Service Day participation

Commuter students *not* enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor have the following Work Program contract options:
- 50-hour contract
    - Work Crew position (44 hrs)
    - All College Work Day (6 hrs)
    - All College Service Day participation
- 80-hour contract
    - Work Crew position (74 hrs)

- All College Work Day (6 hrs)
- All College Service Day participation

Commuter students should express their intent to opt-in to the Work Program when Work Program job preference surveys are distributed or they can contact the Dean of Work-Learning directly.

Moving on campus after a semester has started
In the event that a commuter student moves onto campus after a semester has started, their status switches to residential student. If they become residential before the **Experiential Endeavor Withdrawal deadline**, they are required to do a pro-rated residential length contract. If they become residential after the Academic Withdrawal deadline, they will continue on the commuter contract they started on.

Moving off campus after a semester has started
In the event that a residential student moves off campus after a semester has started, they must complete the contract signed at the beginning of the semester.

Work Program Grades and Graduation Requirement

Grading
Students receive a grade of S (Satisfactory) or a U (Unsatisfactory) every semester they participate in the Work Program. This grade is reflected on the student's academic transcript for that semester.

In order to receive an S (Satisfactory) grade, students need to meet all of the following requirements every semester:
- Complete the overall total number of contracted hours as stated on their position description (plus or minus five hours).
- Meet the basic expectations of their work position as determined by their Work Supervisor.

These requirements must be documented by the student via submission of accurate timesheets, all of which must be turned in by the final day of their work program contract to be counted for Work Program grade credit. See **Work Program Tuition Credits & Timesheet Requirements** below for more information.

Graduation Requirement
All students must earn a Satisfactory grade in the Work Program in the latest semester in which they were enrolled in the Work Program in order to graduate. If a student has not participated in the Work Program for one or more semesters due to opting out as a commuter student, then in the last time that they did participate the grade must be Satisfactory. If it was Unsatisfactory then the student must participate in the Work Program and receive a Satisfactory grade before graduation, even if they are a commuter student.

Work Program Supervisors as Instructors

The Work Program Supervisor is the practical instructor within Sterling's Work Program. The Work Program Supervisor facilitates student learning of overall work-learning competencies as well as

the specific learning outcomes of each position, introduces the skills and knowledge needed for the work area, manages risk, and evaluates student performance.

Supervisors are responsible for consistently providing honest, direct, and constructive feedback on student work performance. The purpose of this feedback is to allow the student to examine their work habits and skill and learning progression. In this way, students build on their strengths and address their challenges. Supervisors also deliver a mid-point and final evaluation of the student's performance during the semester.

At the end of each semester, students reflect on their work experience by completing an evaluation of their work assignment. Copies of these evaluations are kept electronically and shared, as appropriate, to improve the quality of work and supervision.

The supervisor is also responsible for the certification of the time the student has worked by reviewing all timesheets for accuracy before signing them, and for documenting tardiness or missed shifts.

Medical Incompletes

Injuries or emergent medical conditions may limit a student's ability to complete their work program contract within the semester. In these circumstances, the student should submit a **Work Program Medical Incomplete form** to the Dean of Work-Learning before the last day of the semester. If the Dean of Work-Learning approves the Medical Incomplete, the student will work with the Dean to write a new contract that allows the student to earn the full tuition credit for that semester. This may include completing work in a different area of campus, completing work remotely, or completing work in a subsequent semester. In some circumstances, the student may choose not to complete additional work and instead receive a prorated tuition credit based on partial work completed. In this case, they would still earn a Satisfactory grade on their academic transcript. Students who take a Medical Withdrawal or Medical Incomplete from the Work Program may be approved by the Work Program staff to complete unfinished hours in future semesters. Further details can be found in the **temporary impairment** section.

Work Program Tuition Credits & Timesheet Requirements

Three Tiers of Compensation
Sterling students are compensated for their Work Program labor in the form of tuition credits that are applied directly to their student accounts. Wages are set in three tiers at the beginning of each semester, dependent on the amount of federal funding available that year. Tier 1 is the base pay that all students receive. Tier 2 is for student leaders without leadership experience or positions that require some prior acquisition of skill but are not student leader positions, and Tier 3 is for experienced student leaders. Students are paid an hourly wage for their work as stated on their job vouchers. Wages for the completed hours are credited to student accounts by the Business Office at the end of the semester.

Timesheet Requirement
Students can only receive financial credit for their work after signed timesheets are submitted to the Work Program Office with a signature from the appropriate supervisor. The Work Program office cannot accept timesheets which have incorrect dates, incomplete information, or are missing a supervisor's signature. The Work Program office will return incomplete timesheets to

the student for revision. If a timesheet is submitted with errors, a student must submit a Timesheet Correction Form, signed by their work program supervisor, directly to the Dean of Work-Learning.

Timesheets will be accepted for Work Program grade consideration until the final day of their work program contract. Timesheets turned in after that date will be processed for compensation (including the Work Program match) but will not count toward a student's Work Program grade. The Work Program office is responsible for communicating the last date that time cards are accepted each semester in 1) each job contract and 2) via general email reminder.

Missing scheduled work assignments, All College Work Day, or other Work Program training or assignments means loss of monetary and/or program credit. Students are financially responsible for all hours not completed, and the College cannot guarantee opportunities for making up missed work.

Students for whom an Experiential Endeavor is part of their contract will receive 3 hours compensation for every 12 hours of scheduled Endeavor time that they attend, up to a maximum of 30 hours compensation.

Students are not compensated for All College Service Day; however, timesheets are still completed and signed by the Service Project crew leader. Students must have completed six hours of service in order to gain a Satisfactory grade in the Work Program for that semester.

Working Hours Beyond Agreed Contract

Students will not receive tuition credit for any work in excess of the amount of their work contract that has not first been approved by the Dean of Work-Learning prior to the completion of the excess work. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they are tracking their hours and not working beyond their contract.

Regardless of the source of funding for a student's wages, they remain students, with all of the associated rights, restrictions, and responsibilities. All student work is completed under the supervision of an employee or designee of the College.

Work Crew Position Placement

Students are encouraged to explore the varied Work Crew opportunities the Work Program has to offer in order to find a job that suits their aptitudes and interests. From the Admission Office to the Forestry Crew, every job at Sterling directly supports the College's mission of building ecological thinkers and actors who become leaders in the communities in which they live.

Work Crew position assignments at Sterling are determined based on a variety of factors; just as getting a job in the wider world may involve various considerations. Experience, seniority, flexibility, suitability, and timeliness all figure in securing a Work Crew position. Some jobs require particular skills or prior training; applicants may have to demonstrate their suitability before being hired, and some jobs require an interview. Regardless of informal commitments, students who have formally applied for a given position will be prioritized for consideration, and all job assignments will be contracted through the Work Program office.

All students must complete a job application for their top three job choices when prompted to do so by communication from the Work Program Office. The Work Program will assign positions for

any students who do not apply by the stated deadline, and for students who enroll at Sterling within a month of the start of the semester.

Work Program staff and crew supervisors will collaborate to decide placement. Final position assignment decisions ultimately rest with the Work Program staff due to their responsibility to ensure that position assignments provide a rich and rewarding learning experience for all students as well as adequate staffing for the essential functions of campus. Not all available jobs or jobs for which students have applied will be filled each semester.

Experiential Endeavors and the Work Program

Students enrolled in an Experiential Endeavor will review and sign a Job Voucher in the first week of their Endeavor. The work component of an Endeavor is embedded in a variety of different ways into class time depending on the Endeavor. For this reason, students are credited three hours of work per week in which they attended all Endeavor sessions for the first ten weeks of the Endeavor. Attendance at fewer than all sessions in a week will result in prorated hours, to the nearest 15 minutes. For example:
- Missing a Monday afternoon, 3 hr Endeavor session, will result in 2 hrs 15 mins Work Program hours logged for that week;
- Missing a Thursday afternoon, 2 hr Endeavor session, will result in 2 hrs 45 mins Work Program hours logged for that week;
- Missing an all-day Wednesday Endeavor session, will result in 1 hr 15 mins Work Program hours logged for that week, etc.

In the final two weeks of the endeavor, students have the potential to gain any hours they missed earlier in the semester - with up to three hours per week granted for each week fully attended. Students who have already completed 30 hours of work in the Endeavor do not get any further hours of work credited in these final two weeks of the semester.

Adding or Dropping an Endeavor: Work Program Implications
If a student drops the Endeavor before the **Add/Drop deadline**, then the Job Voucher is made void. If the student then adds a different Endeavor, they will sign a new Job Voucher and proceed as normal. Hours of attendance at the first Endeavor before dropping it will count towards credited Work Program hours as detailed above.

If a student drops an Endeavor before the Add/Drop deadline, and does not add a different Endeavor, then the response depends on their Residential status. Residential students and Commuter students on either a 50- or 80-hour contract will have 30 hours added to their Work Crew contract. Commuter students who had enrolled in an Endeavor-contract only will have no further Work Program commitments.

Withdrawing from an Endeavor: Work Program Implications
If a student withdraws from an Endeavor, using the **course withdrawal process**, then any hours not completed of their Endeavor contract can be earned instead through their Work Crew position. If a commuter student on a 30 hour contract withdraws from an Endeavor they will have the option to sign up for a limited Work Crew position in order to make up the hours.

All College Work Days

Sterling College dedicates one day each semester to an All College Work Day. All students participating in the Work Program (except commuter students on an Endeavor-only contract) are required to work a minimum of six hours on selected tasks for the day, which could include farm or woodland projects, campus cleaning, landscaping jobs, facilities care, or an off-campus project that serves the broader community. Full participation in All College Work Day is required to earn a satisfactory grade in the Work Program each semester.

All College Service Days

Sterling College also dedicates one day each semester to an All College Service Day. All students participating in the Work Program (except commuter students on an Endeavor-only contract) are required to work a minimum of six hours on selected tasks for the day, which are either on- or off-campus project that serve the broader community. Organizations which Sterling students have helped in this capacity include the Craftsbury Public Library, Craftsbury Saplings Daycare, The Civic Standard, Center for an Agricultural Economy, Salvation Farms, the Town of Craftsbury, the Craftsbury Community Care Center, Heartbeet Lifesharing and more!
Full participation in All College Service Day is required to earn a satisfactory grade in the Work Program each semester. Students are not paid for their hours in the All College Service Day, but a timesheet is submitted to indicate their participation.

Work Program Conduct and Accountability Policies

Failure to Meet Basic Expectations
If a student misses a scheduled work assignment shift without adequate prior communication, or a student is late or leaves early, or a student fails to meet the basic expectations of work on the job site, then the crew supervisor or Work Advisor is required to notify the Dean of Work-Learning within 24 hours, *and* provide verbal or email communication to the student of this action, and the consequences of further failure to meet basic expectations.

If a student fails to meet basic expectations a second time (i.e., misses a work shift, arrives late or leaves early, or fails to meet the basic expectations of work required), the crew supervisor or Work Advisor must again notify the Work Program staff within 24 hours. The Dean of Work-Learning will then send out a letter to the student in question who will be required to meet with their Advisor to discuss support strategies for meeting their commitments to the Work Program. The student may be asked to begin attending weekly support meetings with their Advisor, and may also be required to engage in a Performance Contract drawn up with their Work Supervisor and Work Program staff, which outlines detailed expectations for the rest of their semester in the Work Program and support systems they have available to them.

If a student fails to meet basic expectations a third time, the crew supervisor or Work Advisor must again notify the Dean of Work-Learning within 24 hours, the Dean may take one of the following actions: dismiss the student from their chore commitments, move a student to an alternative Work Program position, demote the student from the role of Work Advisor to regular crew member, or dismiss the student from the Work Program position entirely. This may result in an Unsatisfactory (U) grade for the Work Program and loss of the opportunity to continue earning tuition credit through the Work Program.

Students may not be dismissed arbitrarily, and dismissal will only be considered when the Work Program office has received documentation of failure to meet basic expectations, or other misconduct, and, when appropriate, the student has received opportunities for increased support and improvement. Dismissals are determined by the Work Program staff.

Federal legislation requires that consequences for failure to meet the expectations of the Work Program be similar to consequences for failure to meet expectations in the rest of the academic program. Missing scheduled work assignments, All College Work Day, or other Work Program training, or failing to meet basic expectations on the job site means loss of monetary and/or program credit. Students are financially responsible for all hours not completed, and the College cannot guarantee opportunities for making up missed work or time cards that were not submitted appropriately and in a timely manner.

Workplace Conduct

Student workers are expected to demonstrate professional work behavior at all times, fostering respect for themselves, their community, and the environment in which we live and work. Student workers are expected to adhere to all Sterling College student conduct policies while engaged in Work Program work.

Supervisors, Work Advisors, as well as all other students participating in the Work Program, are expected to hold each other accountable to high standards of conduct. Incidents of misconduct should be reported to the Work Program staff, and documented through the Incident & Student Conduct Form and/or the Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Report, within 24 hrs of their occurrence.

In a case of serious misconduct, a student could be moved to an alternative Work Program position, demoted, or dismissed from the Work Program position entirely.

Work Review

Students who are significantly struggling to complete their Work Program commitments will be placed on Work Review. The Dean of Work-Learning may place students on Work Review who:

- Fail to meet basic expectations.
- Have completed less than 15% of their Work Program work by the semester mid-term.
- Receive an overall Unsatisfactory grade in the Work Program with seven or more incomplete hours.
- Engaged in one or more serious workplace misconduct incidents.
- Did not participate in All College Work Day.
- Did not participate in All College Service Day.

Work Review, like **Academic Review**, serves to provide extra support for students in their journey to develop excellent work habits. Thus, students on Work Review are required to meet regularly with their advisor and/or the Dean of Work-Learning with whom they will develop and execute a plan for success.

Students will be taken off Work Review if and when they earn a Satisfactory grade in the Work Program or earlier at the discretion of the Dean of Work-Learning. A student who does not show satisfactory progress in the semester following being placed on Work Review, will be dismissed from the College. Students are typically notified at the mid-term point of a semester if their work performance indicates the possibility of unsatisfactory progress that semester. This gives the

student an opportunity to seek appropriate learning support to rectify their situation before the end of a semester.

After dismissal, a student may petition to regain eligibility to enroll. To do so, a student must send a letter to the Dean of Work-Learning explaining how and why the student is now prepared to complete a degree. Petitions must be received no later than six weeks prior to the semester of intended enrollment and are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Student Work Breaks & Meal Time-Outs

A paid fifteen (15) minute break is required for students working four (4) consecutive hours, and an unpaid thirty (30) minute meal break is required for students working at or beyond five (5) consecutive hours a day. Students are expected to clock out when taking the 30 minute meal break. Students are expected to solely engage in assigned duties during labor hours. Federal regulations require students to be actively engaged in Work Program work while on the clock.

Dress, Safety Gear, and Hygiene

Some Work Program positions may require mandatory use and wearing of appropriate safety protection (e.g., hard hats, safety shoes, chaps, goggles, etc.), hygiene materials (e.g., gloves, hair nets, etc.), and/or other work-specific items. The department is responsible for supplying their student workers with adequate gear if the use of safety protection, hygiene, and/or other work-specific items are required.

Departments such as Admission and Advancement that actively engage the public may establish reasonable standards of appearance, and those standards should be made clear to students during the position orientation and to upperclassmen during the interview and hiring process. To avoid issues, it is a good idea to review the policy with all students each term.

All students are expected to maintain a basic standard of hygiene and cleanliness, regardless of their position or department.

Mini-Contracts

Mini-contracts are small extra contracts that eligible students can apply for during a semester. These are pop-up jobs, supervised by an employee of the college, that serve to meet a need of the college at that particular moment. Mini-contracts range from 1-10 hours in scope. Unlike Work Program positions, students receive a paycheque upon successful completion of a mini-contract and the submission of a signed timelog. The rate of pay for mini-contracts is Vermont state minimum wage, currently $13.18/hr, although some skilled, such as certified driving, may have a bonus pay associated with them. Payroll processing occurs every fortnight.

Eligibility for a mini-contract
Students on Work, Community, or Academic Review, and first-time first year students will not be able to sign up for a Mini-Contract until their main 80-hr contract has been completed. Students can only engage in one mini-contract at a time. Once a student has successfully completed a mini-contract and submitted the signed timelog, they are immediately eligible to apply for another one.

Applying for a mini-contract:
Mini-contract jobs are posted on the Work Program bulletin board. They will remain posted until filled. Students should check this board regularly as new jobs are posted when they become available at any point in the semester. Students interested in a posted position should email the Dean of Work-Learning and express their interest and suitability for the job. The Dean of Work-Learning then gives the supervisor permission to move to the next step which is the completion of a mini-contract job voucher that must be signed by student and supervisor and submitted to the Work Program mailbox. Once the Dean of Work-Learning acknowledges the receipt of this job voucher in an email to student and supervisor, then the work can commence.

Mini-Contract Policy Overview
- Students on Work Review or any other Review and students in their first semester will not be able to sign up for a Mini-Contract until their main 80-hr contract has been completed.
- Students can only do one Mini-Contract at a time, that must be completed successfully before signing onto another one.
- Mini-Contracts are capped at 25 hours per student.
- Not completing a 25 hr contract will not result in a student being placed on work review; however, strikes can still be issued for these jobs for not showing up for shifts, or other work area issues, as usual. Those strikes will be placed on top of those received in the main 80-hr contract for the semester and thus could result in a student being placed on Work Review.
- Students may not begin work until a Mini-Contract Job Voucher is completed and approval to begin work has been given to the student and the supervisor by the Associate Dean of Work-Experiential Learning
- Students who become Sterling Driver Certified in order to fulfill Mini-Contract work, are eligible to be paid for up to 3 hours for completing the driver certification process. They become eligible after completion of their first Mini-Contract that was for driving.

Federal Compliance

Appropriate Use of Student Labor
All students working in the Sterling College Work Program or through Work-Study are provided a position description that outlines specific duties and learning opportunities. All positions retain a degree of flexibility to meet changing needs with each crew and the College. However, it is inappropriate and against College guidelines and Federal regulations to utilize student labor for personal/non-College-related gain (e.g., babysitting, errands, housekeeping, home maintenance, or other strictly non-work-related endeavors). Students can only be paid for work they were contracted to perform.

Work Colleges and Federal Work-Study Program - Federal Guidelines
The Higher Education Amendments of 1992 authorized the Work Colleges Program. Schools that satisfy the definition of "work-college" may apply with the U.S. Department of Education to participate in the program. A work-college may transfer funds from its allocation for the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program and/or Federal Perkins Loan Program to fund the school's Work Colleges Program.

The Work Colleges Program recognizes, encourages, and promotes the use of comprehensive work-learning programs as a valuable educational approach when used as an integral part of the

school's educational program and as a part of a financial plan that decreases reliance on grants and loans. The program also encourages students to participate in community service activities. The term 'Work College' is defined as an eligible institution that:
- Is a public or private nonprofit school with a commitment to community service.
- Has operated a comprehensive work-learning program for at least two years.
- Provides students participating in the comprehensive work-learning program with the opportunity to contribute to their education and to the welfare of the community as a whole.
- Requires all students who reside on campus to participate in a comprehensive work-learning program.
- Requires providing services as an integral part of the school's educational program and as part of the school's educational philosophy.

A "comprehensive work-learning program" is defined as a student work/service program that:
- Is an integral and stated part of the institution's educational philosophy and program.
- Requires participation of all resident students for enrollment, participation, and graduation.
- Includes learning objectives, evaluation*, and a record of work performance as part of the student's college record.
- Provides programmatic leadership by college personnel at levels comparable to traditional academic programs.
- Recognize the educational role of work-learning supervisors.
- Includes consequences for nonperformance or failure in the work-learning program similar to the consequences for failure in the regular academic program.

Job Descriptions
Each Work Program job must have a position description that includes the following:
- The purpose of the student's job.
- The student's duties and responsibilities.
- The required job qualifications.
- The job's wage rate or range.
- The length of the student's employment beginning and ending dates.
- The name of the student's supervisor.

The job description has several purposes:
- It provides the information needed to explain the position to a student and help them select the type of employment most closely related to their education or career objectives.
- It helps the student understand their rate of compensation and total possible earnings for the specified time period.
- It helps the student and the crew supervisor determine the number of hours of work per week required for the student to successfully pass the Work Program and meet the needs of the crew and position.
- It establishes a written record, for both student and employer, of the job's duties and responsibilities so that there will be no misunderstanding.

If a student is employed with an agency or organization that provides community services, the school should, as with any other Work Program or FWS position, have a job description that includes the duties and responsibilities for the position. Schools should use the position

description to verify that the job meets the definition of community services in the FWS regulations.

Federal Work-Study Employment During Periods of Non-Attendance

A student may be employed under FWS during a period of nonattendance, such as a summer or equivalent vacation period or the full-time work period of a cooperative education program. To be eligible for this employment, a student must be planning to enroll (or to re-enroll) for the next regular session. The student's earnings during this period of nonattendance (earning minus taxes and job related costs) must be used to pay his/her cost of attendance for the next period of enrollment.

A student whose eligibility for summer FWS employment was based on anticipated enrollment in the subsequent term may fail to register or may decide to attend another school. When a student fails to register for the subsequent term, the school that employed the student must be able to demonstrate that the student was eligible for employment and that the school had reason to believe the student intended to study at that school in the next term. At minimum, the school that employed the student must keep a written record in its files showing that the student had accepted the school's offer of admittance in the upcoming session.

A student in an eligible program of study abroad may be employed during the summer preceding the study abroad if they will be continuously enrolled in his/her American school while abroad and if the student's study is part of the American school's own program. In such a case, a student may be employed in a qualified position in the United States, at the American school's branch campus in a foreign country, at a U.S. government facility abroad, or in an American company abroad.

Payroll Records

In school records, schools must distinguish expenditures for FWS compensation from other institutional expenditures. Program and fiscal records must include:
- A payroll voucher containing sufficient information to support all payroll disbursements.
- A non-cash contribution record to document any payment of the school's share of the student's earnings in the form of services and equipment.
- A certification by the student's supervisor, an official of the school (or off-campus agency) that each student has worked and earned the amount being paid. If students are paid on an hourly basis, the certification must include or be supported by a time record showing the hours each student worked in clock time sequence, or the total hours worked per day.

Employment Conditions and Limitations

The following provisions apply to all Work Program and Work Study work, whether on or off campus.

Federal work study (FWS) employment must not displace workers (including those on strike) or impair existing service contracts. Also, if the school has an employment agreement with an organization in the private sector, the organization's workers must not be replaced with FWS students. Replacement is interpreted as displacement.

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as amended, prohibits employers (including schools) from accepting voluntary services from any paid worker. Any student employed under FWS must be paid for all hours worked.

A student may earn academic credit as well as compensation for FWS job. Such jobs include, but are not limited to, internships, practicums, or assistantships (e.g., research or teaching assistantships). However, a student employed in a FWS job and receiving academic credit for that job may not be:

- Paid less than they would be if no academic credit were given.
- Paid for receiving instruction in a classroom, laboratory, or other academic setting (e.g., enrolled in and serving as a TA for the same class).
- Paid unless the employer would normally pay the person for the same job.

Work Policies for International Students (F-1 Status)

On Campus Work
Work, during the academic year, is limited to no more than 20 hours per week. Students may work full-time (40 hours per week) during vacation periods as long as they have maintained status and have registered for the following academic term. To apply, talk to the Dean of Work-Learning. The Dean will provide a copy of your job voucher to the PDSO (SEVIS Primary Designated School Official) . You will need your job voucher and a letter from a DSO to apply for a Social Security Number (SSN). All international students who wish to receive direct payment for their work must apply for a Social Security Number.

Work During Breaks and Summer
The College recognizes that it is often critical for international students to work during break periods and during the summer to maintain enrollment status and to supplement regular earnings. While we send early notification of vacancies and offer to assist students in locating on-campus work positions, it is ultimately the individual's responsibility to avail themselves of these resources and begin seeking on-campus work opportunities as soon as possible. Opportunities are limited, and the College does not guarantee work during these periods.

Off-Campus Work
All F-1 international students arrive at Sterling College having agreed to certain non-negotiable conditions imposed by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security, Student and Exchange Visitor Program. Among the restrictions associated with enrollment is that F-1 students must not work off-campus without prior authorization. While there are some opportunities for international students to work off-campus while enrolled, unless that work qualifies under the clearly articulated rubrics of Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT), participation places a student out of F-1 visa status which is a serious violation and means they can no longer remain enrolled and should leave the United States immediately. Both processes for legal work authorization are simple and straightforward for the student to follow.

Note: It is not permissible to compensate international students for casual jobs such as house cleaning, babysitting, yard work, tutoring, etc. These are specific examples of the sort of off-campus work that violates the conditions of enrollment for international students.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT)
An F– 1 student may be authorized by the Sterling College PDSO to participate in a curricular practical training program that is an integral part of an established curriculum after they have completed one year (two full time semesters) of study. Curricular practical training is defined to be alternative work/study, internship, cooperative education, or any other type of required internship or practicum that is offered by sponsoring employers through cooperative agreements with the school. Students who have received one year or more of full-time curricular practical training are ineligible for post-completion academic training. Exceptions to the one academic year requirement are provided for students enrolled in graduate studies that require immediate participation in curricular practical training. A request for authorization for curricular practical training must be made to the PDSO or DSP. A student may begin curricular practical training only after receiving their Form I–20 with the DSO endorsement.

Optional Practical Training (OPT)
A student may apply for authorization for temporary employment for optional practical training directly related to the student's major area of study. The student may not begin optional practical training until the date indicated on their employment authorization document, Form I–766 or Form 688B. A student may submit an application for authorization to engage in optional practical training up to 90 days prior to being enrolled for one full academic year, provided that the period of employment will not begin until after the completion of the full academic year, as indicated by the International Student Advisor.

A student may be granted authorization to engage in temporary employment for optional practical training:

● During the student's annual vacation and at other times when school is not in session, if the student is currently enrolled, and is eligible for registration and intends to register for the next term or session;
● While school is in session, provided that practical training does not exceed 20 hours a week while school is in session; or
● After completion of the course of study, or, for a student in a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree program, after completion of all course requirements for the degree (excluding thesis or equivalent). Continued enrollment, for the school's administrative purposes, after all requirements for the degree have been met does not preclude eligibility for optional practical training. However, optional practical training must be requested prior to the completion of all course requirements for the degree or prior to the completion of the course of study.

COMMUNITY & STUDENT LIFE

Introduction
Among the most powerful examples of experiential learning is living in community. Together we care for our campus and each other. We provide for the College's collective needs with the expectation that through the intentional expression of our values we sustain our community and provide a compelling learning experience. The shared commitment to ecological thinking and

action among students, faculty, and staff engenders a sense of belonging from the start. This bond also provides a sense of daily purpose in our studies, work, and in how individuals relate.

Student Activities Committee

The Student Activities Committees seek to provide a high standard of quality for student life at Sterling by supporting and sponsoring events, activities, and entertainment for the community.

The Assistant Dean of Community advises Student Activities Coordinators. All students are encouraged to participate in the Student Activities Committee. The Student Activities Committee is a sub-committee of the Student Life Council and when functioning, meets weekly to discuss financial requests from students who wish to utilize the Student Activities Fund. The Coordinator establishes meeting times and location, and sets the agenda. Meetings generally keep to the following agenda:

- Budget update
- Past activities/events debrief
- Upcoming activities/events
- Financial requests
- General brainstorm

Student Activities Fee

The current Student Activities Fee is $100 per semester per student. This is the budget for the Student Activities Committee and is spent in the following ways:

- Entertainment/Performers (musical acts, storytellers, etc.)
- Games/Toys/Equipment (pool cues, sleds, board games)
- Van/Gas Money to cover transportation costs for off-campus events
- Local Events cost sharing for approved events
- Student Conferences/Events Scholarships (see description below)
- Senior trip
- Student yearbook

The Student Activities budget is meant to support activities for the entire Sterling community. This budget is not meant to fund trips for academic courses, local events in which the entire student body is not invited, or projects for individual use.

In order to make a request for funds, students must complete a Student Activities Financial Request Form in its entirety by 5 p.m. the night before the Student Activities meeting. The request will then be voted on by the Committee members present at the meeting. If the request is approved with a majority vote (considering thoughtful discussion), Student Activities funds will be released for use. If necessary, the faculty/staff advisor has the ability to make a final decision or revoke a final decision. Requests in excess of $500 must be announced at a Community Meeting prior to being voted on at a Student Activities meeting. Student activities funds not used by the end of the fiscal year will be returned to the Student Life budget, to be used to support student emergency and medical needs.

Health & Wellness

The Office of Student Life works to ensure a safe, welcoming and vibrant community by providing services that assist students in identifying, clarifying, and achieving their personal,

wellness, and educational goals. In addition to direct assistance to students, the Office of Student Life develops programs that improve the quality of life and learning in our community. Health and wellness programming promotes and sustains diversity of culture, history, and lifestyle, fosters respect for the campus environment and ecological systems, and facilitates a productive and transformative exchange of ideas.

If you cannot attend class due to illness, contact your faculty as soon as possible. Talk to the instructor of any classes you miss to see about making up work. Contact the Dean of Community if you need assistance.

Community & Student Life Policies

This section includes details of policies concerning the following areas:

- **Community Behavioral Guidelines**
- **Campus Safety**
- **Firearms and Other Weapons**
- **Community Accountability and Transformative Justice**
- **College Vans**
- **Off Campus Conduct**
- **Retaliation Policy**
- **Drug and Alcohol Policy**
- **Immunization Policy**
- **Appropriate Attire Standard**
- **Communication**
- **Computers**
- **Parking**
- **Smoking**

Community Behavioral Guidelines

Each student at Sterling deserves to have a positive learning and living experience while at Sterling. We consider two guidelines to be critical to our functioning as an educational community. Students who do not abide by these guidelines will experience consequences that may include dismissal from the College.

1. Behavior that threatens or compromises the physical or mental health, security, privacy, property or learning experience of self or other members of the community will not be tolerated.
2. Students must abide by all College Policies.

These touchstones are offered as tools to refer to during difficult or challenging moments and conversations, and as guide to support us as we live together in community:

- We believe in caring - for ourselves, for each other, for this place, for other living beings, and for the planet.
- We understand we are collectively growing and learning and healing.
- We honor the sacredness of our space and all members of our community. We do not accept behaviors that cause harm.
- We listen to understand.
- We curiously engage with our growing edges. Discomfort is often part of our growth.
- We speak our truths: we are honest with ourselves and each other.

- We commit to being accountable for the impact of our actions. We recognize that at times we will make mistakes and ask our community to call on and support us as we step into accountability.
- We make every effort to address disagreements and hurt feelings as soon as we are able.
- We practice informed consent in all things. We recognize body autonomy while also prioritizing the health and safety of all members of our community.
- We value confidentiality. We build trust and relationships by honoring each other's stories.
- We turn toward connection and wonder.
- We endeavor to bring our healthiest self to all we do.
- We value laughter, play, and rest, alongside our work and learning.

Campus Safety

We are all encouraged to take responsibility for the safety of the community and its members and of our personal and College property. Although we work hard to maintain a safe campus environment, Sterling College cannot guarantee the safety of your possessions. Be prepared to lock up your bicycle and bring a lock box to store other valuables for security in your room. Do not leave valuable items unattended or unlocked. Please raise awareness of safety concerns by submitting a Community Accountability Report or Incident Report.

Firearms and Other Weapons

Firearms, bowguns, fireworks, explosives, biological agents, projectile weapons, and ammunition are not permitted in residential halls, classrooms, administrative buildings, vehicles, or anywhere on the Sterling College campus, including leased properties – as they pose a substantial danger to the safety of the College community. The use of implements or substances not commonly used as a weapon may be a violation of this policy if used as a weapon.

Discovery of any of the above will result in the immediate ineligibility of the student to remain housed on campus, and may result in immediate termination from the College.

Community Accountability and Transformative Justice

Transformative Justice is a radical community response to harm that is rooted in indigenous ways of being, which teach us that we are interconnected, that everyone belongs, and that when harm happens it's because there is something that needs to be repaired, as opposed to something or someone that needs to be extracted from the community. It recognizes that norms are best set by and upheld within the community, and that every individual's innate capacity for growth and change is supported by accountability, community, and care. Transformative Justice elevates continued connection over isolation, compassion over punishment.

At its most basic, Transformative Justice seeks to respond to harm without creating more of the same, and by transforming the conditions which help to create acts of violence or make them possible. Often this includes transforming harmful oppressive dynamics, our relationships to each other, and our communities at large. Transformative Justice acknowledges that we must work to end conditions such as capitalism, poverty, trauma, isolation, heterosexism, cis-sexism,

white supremacy, misogyny, ableism, and gender oppression if we are truly going to end cycles of violence and harm.[1]

Transformative Justice responses and interventions:
1. Do not rely on the state (e.g. police, prisons, the criminal legal system, I.C.E., or the foster care system, which often cause harm rather than nurture repair).
2. Do involve support systems such as mutual aid, mental health, medical intervention, or social services such as housing, food, and respite.
3. Do not reinforce or perpetuate violence such as oppressive norms, shaming, forced isolation, or vigilantism.
4. Actively cultivate healing, accountability, resilience, and safety for all involved.

How is Transformative Justice Practiced at Sterling?

Sterling College is a small community with shared values that center the care of individuals within and the health of the community as a whole. Our community is stronger when individuals are actively and authentically involved, feel securely attached, and are empowered to speak the truth about their experiences. Recognizing that many western practices of care and punishment are rooted in oppressive and violent systems that have caused harm and fomented distrust, Sterling actively interrogates dynamics of power and privilege in our relationships and policies. Supporting our ongoing efforts to foster more just and accountable ways of being, the community openly engages in the elevation of transparency and radical honesty and supports open conversation around harm, care, and trust. These values are built into our culture-building orientations, community guidelines, and academic policies, and are modified as the needs within the community change.

Transformative Justice is not the absence of harm and violence, but a framework where community care, mutual aid, and the health and wellness of the whole community are prioritized. One of the ways Sterling College strengthens a culture of Transformative Justice is through our weekly Community and Community Council meetings. Students, staff, faculty, and administrators are invited to come together to elevate, celebrate, and address issues within the community. These spaces serve to remind each other of our shared values, dedication, and personal accountability to each other. The Sterling community proactively practices meaningful boundaries, curiosity, compassion, and self- and community-care. We support the expressions of anger and grief through radical vulnerability and belonging, while incorporating opportunities for healing into the foundation of our daily lives. These core experiences are meant to build the trust, skills, and capacity to thoughtfully address harm when it occurs.

Another way in which Sterling College practices Transformative Justice is the internal reaction to acts of harm and conflict on our campus. Sterling has made an intentional investment in teaching, modeling, and building the capacity for change and resilience in our community. When issues arise, the impacts of behaviors are discussed and the pathways to repairing harm are surfaced in consensual collaboration between all participants. Accountability to self and others in the context of community and relationship is elevated and explored as preferable at all times to punishment, isolation, and shame. We work to develop the skills of genuine apology and forgiveness, when appropriate. The goals of Transformative Justice at Sterling are to support an authentic return to a kind, vibrant, and welcoming living and learning environment where

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[1] says:, C. W., says:, J., says:, C., & says:, S. (2021, March 1). *Transformative justice: A brief description*. Transform Harm. Retrieved February 8, 2022, from https://transformharm.org/transformative-justice-a-brief-description/

individuals' voices are heard, respected, and supported through resolution, while also responding to and dismantling systems and practices of bias, oppression, and harm within our own community.

Transformations Justice is a radical expression of love.

Any behavior that may threaten the well-being of Sterling College students or employees will be addressed in a sensitive and appropriate manner, using the tools of restorative and transformative justice. When a student's behavior constitutes a serious disruption or danger to the living, working, or learning environment that the College seeks to create, the College may respond in a number of ways, ranging from providing mental health support to separating the student from the institution, if necessary, or if the student chooses not to participate in good faith in the processes in place to address harm.

College Vans

College vans may be used by qualified students for the purpose of a course-related trip, a Work College/service trip, and possibly a Student Activities-related trip.

Conditions for Student Use of a College Van
Curriculum needs may preclude the availability of the vehicles. Conditions for using a van include:

- Curricular needs are given precedence over other types of van usage
- Only currently certified van drivers may drive a van at any time
- Trip must be scheduled and approved in advance through the Dean of Community, or designee. The Dean of Community will reserve a vehicle on the Van Reservation Calendar.
- The College reserves the right to call off a trip due to weather, adverse conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances.
- Upon return, vehicles must be emptied of all trash and personal belongings.

Driver Selection
1) Students are eligible to apply for approval to drive Sterling vehicles only after successful completion of 12-credits, typically one semester, at the College.
2) Applicants to become a student driver must be 19 years or older and have no less than 3 years of driving experience.
3) Applicants must have an "acceptable" Driving Record in accordance with the Motor Vehicle Grading Criteria chart.
4) Applicants must be in good standing in the community and not be on community review.
5) Student applications are reviewed by the Assistant Dean of Academics. The Dean Community makes the final determination on eligibility.

Motor Vehicle Record Policy
It is a Sterling College policy and requirement for employment that every employee position with potential driving duties require a motor vehicle record (**MVR**) that meets the grading requirements stated below. This MVR policy applies to all drivers of Sterling College owned and leased and rented vehicles.

MVRs will be examined prior to the start of employment and annually thereafter. Any job offer made to an employee-candidate for a position with driving duties shall be contingent upon an MVR meeting the required standards; continued employment in a position with driving duties also requires an MVR meeting the standards outlined below.

The standards for MVRs are as follows:
- All operators must have had a valid driver's license for at least 3 years.
- No Sterling College employee or student will be allowed to drive who has a borderline or poor MVR.
- Driving records must remain acceptable or clear as outlined in the Sterling College Driver Handbook
- There should not be any DUI, DWI, or similar alcohol or drug-related offenses within the past five years.
- There will not be any exceptions for drivers who operate student occupied vehicles.

See *Sterling College Driver Handbook* for further policies and procedures.

Off Campus Conduct

The College reserves the right to take action against Sterling College students who are involved in any off-campus incidents of criminal activity or otherwise inappropriate noncriminal behavior, particularly when such incidents have implications for campus safety or affect the reputation or operation of the College. Sterling College works in collaboration with the State Police and will share information regarding student violations of local, state, and federal law.

Retaliation Policy

Retaliation includes adverse action taken by any person over whom the College has some measure of control (e.g., faculty, staff, students, and covered third parties) against a person because they have made a good faith report of Prohibited Conduct and/or because they have participated in any proceeding under this Policy. Adverse action includes conduct that threatens, intimidates, harasses, coerces or in any other way seeks to discourage a reasonable person from engaging in activity protected under this Policy. Retaliation can be committed by or against any individual or group of individuals, not just a respondent or complainant. Retaliation does not include good faith actions lawfully pursued in response to a report indicating a violation of the Community Guidelines.

The College will take immediate and responsive action to address any report of covered retaliation and will pursue disciplinary action as appropriate. An individual whose good faith activities as described in this Handbook result in their being protected from retaliation under this policy is entitled to such protection even if the reported conduct is ultimately not found to be in violation.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

By enrolling in Sterling College, or by accepting employment, individuals agree to abide by college substance abuse standards and certify awareness of this policy.

Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs (including alcohol for those younger than 21 years of age) is prohibited on the Sterling College campus. This policy includes being under the influence of such substances while on campus or participating in college-sponsored activities (such as classes, meetings, presentations, social events, etc.). Abuse of legal substances (including alcohol and cigarettes for those 21 years and older and marijuana use) which results in destructive behaviors will be addressed by the Dean of Community as a violation of the first guideline for Community Behavior. Supplying underage drinkers with alcohol is considered a serious offense by the State of Vermont and by Sterling College.

Marijuana and marijuana use in any form is not permitted in campus buildings.

Sterling College faculty and staff reserve the right to excuse students from class or other college-sponsored activities who appear, or may appear, to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. A Community Accountability report will be filled out by the faculty or staff, and further discussion and potential disciplinary action may take place between the student and faculty/staff member and may involve the Dean of Community.

Employee Responsibilities
If any employee is aware of an infraction of the drug and alcohol policy, the employee should confront the student and ask them to report the incident to the Dean of Community. If the student does not follow through, the employee should complete an incident report and submit it to the Dean of Community.

Good Samaritan Statement
Good Samaritan Statement: In the interest of protecting Sterling College students from serious injury due to impairment caused by alcohol or drugs, students should be aware that in all cases where safety is at risk, the proper agencies must be contacted for assistance. These agencies include: a Community Advisor (student CA), a member of the Student Life team, the person carrying the on call emergency pager (802-290-9931), emergency services (911), if on the Vermont campus the State Police in Derby, VT (802-334-8881).

In cases where the proper calls are made for assistance, both the impaired student and the student assisting may not be subject to formal disciplinary action for being impaired or for providing alcohol or drugs. Students involved in these incidents will participate in a meeting with the Office of Student Life and may be referred for assessment/counseling. Families may be notified, but there will not be punitive sanctions. This resolution is available for isolated incidents and does not excuse or protect those who repeatedly violate College Policy or who are threatening the health or safety of self or others. It is our belief that we all have a responsibility to help those in need by seeking the proper medical assistance when necessary.

Immunization Policy

Vermont state law requires that all full-time and part-time students born after 1956 who are enrolled in post-secondary schools are required to have all of the following immunizations. Proof of these immunizations must be kept on file at the College:
- Tdap or Td booster within the last 10 years
- MMR (2 doses with a minimum of four weeks between doses and the first dose give after the 1st birthday or positive titers)

- Meningococcal (1 dose for students living in campus-based housing after the 16th birthday, or a booster after the 16th birthday if the first dose(s) were received prior to age 16)
- Varicella (2 doses of varicella vaccine with a minimum of 4 weeks between doses if the vaccine was received at age 13 years or older or 12 weeks between doses if the vaccine was received under age 13 years or history of disease documented on a Vermont Health Department form and signed by student or parent or positive titer;)
- Hepatitis B (3 doses with a minimum of 4 weeks between doses 1 and 2 and a minimum of 8 weeks between doses 2 and 3; the 3rd dose must be at least 16 weeks from the 1st dose or positive titer;.)

Failure to provide proof of these immunizations or an approved notice of medical or religious exemption, will result in students being unable to register for classes, and *residential students will not be assigned a residential room assignment.*

Sterling College strongly encourages all members of its community to obtain the COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters.

Appropriate Attire Standard

Given the nature of the College curriculum, safe and situationally appropriate attire is expected of all members of the College community. This includes safe and appropriate attire while on and around the campus in the classroom, at a field experience, and throughout the campus during non academic hours. Supervisors on-campus and off-campus, faculty members, and employers may require standards of dress and behavior relevant to classes, College-sponsored activities or places of employment. Please note that shoes, shirts, and bottoms are required in the Dining Hall.

Communication

Emails
All students are given a Sterling College email address upon enrolling. Your Sterling College email is used for all official Sterling College correspondence and is the primary channel for communication. It is our expectation that students receive and send information through their assigned account, and review their emails daily and respond to requested information within a 48 hour time frame of the email being sent.

Currently enrolled students are automatically added to the students@sterlingcollege.edu email list. If a student takes a **Leave of Absence**, they retain their Sterling College email account, but are removed from the student email list. If a student withdraws from the College, they lose access to their Sterling College email account. Alumni of the College may retain their email accounts indefinitely but are not able to email whole groups at the College.

Computers

Sterling College provides access to computers in several labs for student use within the curriculum. All computers are Microsoft Windows compatible. These computers are located in the Brown Library (first floor), upstairs in Dunbar Hall, and the GIS Computer Lab in Simpson Hall (basement level).

General use student computers
Computers in the Library and upstairs in Dunbar Hall are available 24 hours per day. Sterling's computers are for use by Sterling College students, faculty, and staff only, and are not for use by the general public. Computers in the GIS Lab are available only for use during class time or for permitted students pursuing GIS-related projects.

Software
Sterling computers provide access to a virtual desktop on a Windows server and a standard set of productivity applications, including Microsoft Office. If you have files prepared using software that isn't available on our computers, please contact the Technology Office (ithelpdesk@sterlingcollege.edu), or visit the **Technology Help Desk** during term-time. It may be possible to convert your files to a compatible format. You are not permitted to install your own software on Sterling's computers.

Internet
All computers are set up for access to the Internet. These connections are intended for student research. Please be considerate; if you are using the Internet for reasons unrelated to academics, please yield to students who need access for academic projects. Instructions and policies are posted near the computers.

Internet Access
The purpose of the Internet is to facilitate communication in support of research and education by providing access to unique resources and an opportunity for collaborative work. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States laws, including copyright protection, or the transmission of pornography is prohibited. Use for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political lobbying is also prohibited.

Privilege
The use of the Internet is a privilege. The Sterling College administration is delegated the authority to determine appropriate use and, consequently, may deny access to a user at any time based upon its determination of inappropriate use.

Network Etiquette, Legal Considerations and Security
All users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette and legal considerations. These include, but may not be limited to, the following:
- Do not violate software license agreements by copying Sterling College software or adding any software to Sterling College computers.
- Do not knowingly perform an act that will interfere with the normal operation of computer resources. This specifically includes, but is not limited to, additions, alterations, or deletions of software installed on Sterling College computers. This also includes downloading personal programs and/or games.
- Be polite. Do not intimidate, abuse, or harass in your messages to others. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- Do not engage in activities that are prohibited under state or federal law.

- Protect your personal information. Do not reveal your personal address or phone number or those of students or colleagues.
- Note that electronic mail (e-mail) cannot be guaranteed to be private.
- All communications and information accessible via the computer should be assumed to be private property, and therefore, require permission from the author before copying to use in a public presentation.
- It is illegal to post or send sexually explicit, obscene, profane, defamatory, threatening, racially offensive, or other illegal material within or from Sterling College computers.
- Do not post anonymous messages.
- Do not SPAM. Sending unsolicited mail can result in Sterling College losing Internet service.
- Degrading or disrupting equipment, software, or system performance is prohibited.

Vandalism
Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, modify, or destroy the computer hardware, data of another user, the Internet, or other network that is connected to the Sterling College computer system. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses and damaging computers or computer systems.

Procedures
All users have the same right to use the equipment. Therefore, users shall not play games or use the computer resources for other non-academic activities when other users require the system for academic purposes. In addition, users shall not waste nor take supplies, such as paper and ink cartridges that are provided by Sterling College. All users must talk softly and work in ways that will not disturb other users in the labs.

Consequences/Penalties for Improper Use
Infractions of the provisions set forth in this document may result in the suspension or termination of access privileges and/or appropriate disciplinary action. Activities in violation of state and federal statutes will be subject to prosecution by those authorities. Disciplinary action may be taken by Sterling College as appropriate.

Storage
All students are encouraged to save their work on Sterling's student server. This server is backed up weekly, so should a user accidentally delete their work, it is easily retrievable. Sterling assumes no responsibility for the safety of student files. All users are encouraged to save to Google Drive or a USB flash drive.

Conservation
Proofread carefully and take full advantage of Print Preview to preview the appearance of your work. College laser printers are for final printouts only. If you need multiple copies of a finished work, print out only one copy on the laser printer, and use the copy machine to make the rest. College policy regarding free and open access to laser printers may come under review if evidence shows that a great deal of paper and energy are being wasted, so please be conservative in your use of the laser printers. When printing from the Internet, select only the pages needed. If you're printing a draft, please use scrap paper.

Laws
Sterling College takes U.S. copyright law and issues of software piracy and licensing very seriously and will not permit the college to be exposed to potential liabilities by the actions of students, faculty, or staff with Sterling-owned computers.

Assistance
If something goes wrong, do not try to fix it. Please contact the IT helpdesk at ithelpdesk@sterlingcollege.edu.

Parking

To keep a vehicle on campus (Craftsbury Common campus), all students (residential and commuter) must register the vehicle on Opening Day with the Business Office, pay an annual $60 fee or a $25 semester fee, and display a Sterling College parking sticker. This fee is non-refundable. The vehicle fee pays for maintenance of student parking areas, including snow plowing. Only legally registered vehicles (per home state regulations) may register to park on campus. Student vehicles are to be parked only in their assigned student parking areas. Violating this parking policy will result in a fine of $100.

Auld Lang Syne
- Commuter students
- Guests of students
- Kestrel residents
- Merlin residents
- North House residents

Lower Dorms
- Alder residents only
- Birch residents only

Houston House Parking
- Houston residents only
- South House residents, as space allows

Employee Parking
- Employees only
- Students with mobility concerns, with permission from Dean of Community

Handicap Parking
- Drivers with valid handicap placard or sticker

South House Parking
- One South House resident only

Visitor Parking
- Visitors Only

Out of respect for residents of the town of Craftsbury, students should not park in the public spots around the Common or along the side of the street. If a student has friends visiting for the

day or for a few days, they must park in the Auld Lang Syne student parking lot. **The owners of vehicles parked in inappropriate spots will be fined $100.** Tickets are payable in the Business Office. This policy also applies to students living off campus. It must be understood that parking is at one's own risk; Sterling is not responsible for providing a secure parking lot. Students are responsible for the safe and environmentally sound disposal of any automotive fluids or parts such as motor oil, antifreeze, tires or batteries. Abandoned vehicles left on the Sterling College campus are subject to towing and off-campus storage at the owner's expense.

There is a limited number of parking spots available near the dorms. The number of available parking spots dramatically decreases in winter months. In the event the demand for spots is greater than the lots can accommodate, parking privileges will be determined based on medical need, credits, and seniority. Overflow parking is in the Auld Lang Syne lot.

Students leaving campus for more than 24 hours without their car are expected to park their car in the Auld Lang Syne lot. Abandoned vehicles left on the Sterling College campus are subject to towing and off-campus storage at the owner's expense. Vehicles that interfere with the College's ability to maintain plowed and safe lots and roadways will be towed at the owner's expense.

Parking tickets are $100, payable to the Business Office. A third offense will result in the car being towed at the owner's expense.

Parking is at one's own risk; Sterling is not responsible for providing a secure parking lot.

Smoking

Indoor smoking (including all plants and herbs, vaping, and prescriptions) is banned in all College buildings. There is a designated smoking area behind Kestrel and Merlin, and at the lower dorms' fire pit.
- There is no smoking within 25 feet of any door or window.
- There is no smoking in front of Kestrel, Dunbar, Kane, Mager, or the visitors' parking area.
- There is no smoking on any sidewalks or paths.
- Smokers are expected to dispose of waste properly and responsibly and are responsible for emptying the butt receptacles.

This policy applies to all forms of smoking and use of any nicotine delivery device that has not been approved by the Federal Drug Administration (this includes E-cigarettes). Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to a written warning, fine ($25 or higher) or risking your status as a student.

RESIDENTIAL LIFE

Introduction

There are seven residences on the Craftsbury Common campus. Apart from Houston House, North House, and South House, which house 5-12 students each, each residence hall is home to approximately 20 students. These residences are set up in classic dormitory style, with shared bathrooms on each floor. All houses are gender-neutral, and each student's self-identified gender is respected.

Students must be enrolled in at least 4 credits at all times to be eligible to live on campus.

Housing assignments are prioritized by:
- Documented medical need (need for a private bathroom, first floor housing, service or assistance animal)
- Seniority at the College / number of credits obtained
- Number of credits pursued in the semester (full-time students vs part-time students)
- Family status
- Veteran status

There are one to three Community Advisors assigned to each residence hall. Community Advisors are a source of information from the broader community to the residents. At the start of each semester, housemates establish their own community norms and culture. Residents share responsibility for the cleaning and care of their houses. This section describes the policies, guidelines, and procedures.

Community Advisors

Community Advisors and House Advisors
The positions of the Community Advisor (CA) and House Advisor (HA) are unique and demanding, requiring the ability to balance many complex roles and responsibilities. The Community and House Advisors are held to high standards of behavior and integrity. They must role-model and enforce campus rules and regulations, serve as advocates and guides, and thoughtfully liaise between students and the many communities we inhabit. The Community Advisors and House Advisors work closely with the Dean of Community to ensure safety, equity, and accountability, and to nurture a culture of care, consent, and compassion. The Community and House Advisors foster a culture in which all students have the opportunity to thrive in their academic, work, and personal lives.

Community and House Advisors
- Model and grow community competencies: empathy, compassion, resilience, honesty, integrity, healthy boundaries, vulnerability, and self care.
- Serve as a liaison between students and Administration.
- Are on-call 2-3 weeks per month, and support the Office of Student Life in emergencies.
- Enforce and role model the College's policies.

- Advise and advocate for students with questions and problems.
- Open, close and lead cleaning parties to help maintain the cleanliness of the hall.
- Maintain community norms, rules and regulations set by residents and the College.
- Support the mission of the College.

Community Advisors become involved in a complex net of interpersonal relationships with residents, staff colleagues, supervisors, and the broader community. This demands sophisticated communication skills, the ability to exercise good judgment, confidentiality as needed, and the gathering, integration and dissemination of information as appropriate. The CA is expected to continue as a residential student and to serve as a role model for students.

At the start of every semester, Community and House Advisors lead a meeting to determine house agreements:
- Quiet hours
- Respectful hours
- Cleaning Party Schedule
- Communication expectations
- Personal commitment to living with and within a larger group
- Problem solving
- Substance Free Agreement (if applicable)
- Service and Wellness Animal Etiquette (if applicable)

All residents are expected to follow all house agreements at all times. Students who choose not to follow house agreements may face disciplinary action including, but not limited to: being placed on Community Review, forfeiting their housing deposit, becoming ineligible for continued residential status.

Residential Guidelines and Policies

The following guidelines ensure the safety of residents and protect the College's property:
- **Balconies**
- **Bicycles**
- **Cleaning and Room Inspections**
- **Damages**
- **Green Bikes**
- **Fire Safety in Residence Halls**
- **Food**
- **Furniture**
- **Guest Privileges**
- **Housing Students Under the Age of 18**
- **Meal Plan**
- **Parties**
- **Recycling**
- **Roofs**
- **Room Assignments**
- **Room Change Requests**
- **Room Use Agreement**
- **Roommates**
- **Study and Quiet Hours**
- **Theft**

Balconies

All balconies must be kept neat, uncluttered, and safe. Items on balconies must be wholly contained within the balcony.

The following items are the only items permitted on balconies:
- All-weather furniture
- Plants
- Outdoor string lights
- College furniture may not be left unattended on balconies.

Students who share responsibility for a balcony are encouraged to communicate with one another about items placed on the balcony area. If violations are not corrected within 24 hours, fines or judicial action may occur.

Throwing, tossing, or lowering objects, humans, or animals from balconies is strictly prohibited.

Bicycles

All student bikes need to be registered at the beginning of each semester during arrival day. Registering your bike with the Green Bike Program will allow Green Bike staff to know if bikes are abandoned or need repairs and will help to organize bike storage on campus. Outdoor bike racks are available in multiple locations. Bicycles may not be stored in hallways, near fire escapes or in any manner that might obstruct access to or egress from any room. All bikes should be taken home at the end of the spring semester. Bicycles that are not removed from bike storage areas at the end of the spring semester will be considered abandoned property and will be disposed of per Sterling College's discretion. The College assumes no liability for the loss of or damage to students' personal property if property has been abandoned.

Cleaning and Room Inspections

Students are responsible for cleaning their own rooms, bathrooms, and house common spaces. To maintain standards of health and cleanliness, sheets and mattress protectors must be used on all College beds. Trash and recycling, including bottles and cans, must be removed from individual rooms and common spaces weekly. Compost must be removed from dorms per the compost pick up schedule, and at least weekly.

The College reserves the right to inspect a room or house at any time, reserves the right to immediately remove all health or safety hazards, and reserves the right to take any actions determined at its discretion as are necessary to further the College's Mission, Community Guidelines, policies and/or student compliance with applicable law. The College staff conducts maintenance and safety inspections of students' rooms in an effort to discover and repair maintenance problems in their initial stages and to prevent hazards from developing. Potential Standard of Conduct or legal violations discovered in the course of maintenance and safety inspections will be referred to the Dean of Community.

All rooms and common spaces must be cleaned at the close of each semester. Any student leaving campus without cleaning their room and checking out with a Community Advisor will be charged $500. Any common areas left uncleaned at the close of the semester will be the responsibility of all house residents, and all will lose their housing deposit.

Damages

Students will be charged for damages to residence hall furnishings and buildings beyond what is considered normal wear and tear. When specific responsible parties cannot be identified, any assessment of damages to common areas, such as halls, bathrooms and living rooms, will be apportioned among all floor residents or all hall residents. Similarly, when damages occur within a room, the person responsible will be billed accordingly. In the event that responsibility cannot be placed on a particular individual, the cost of repair will be shared by all residents of the room, floor, or building.

Fees

The following residence hall fees may be charged.

- *Housing Fee:* A $500 fee will be charged to any residential student who cancels their residential enrollment for any cause within the 30 days before their designated move-in date.
- *Damage Fee:* Students are expected to take an active role in providing a clean, positive living environment. At the end of each semester, the Dean of Community, Student Leaders, and Director of Facilities will inspect the common areas of the residence and the rooms of departing students, and assessments are made for repairs or cleaning. Students will be charged for removal of extraneous furniture that has been left behind. Students are expected to return the room to the condition it was found in. No nails or tacks are to be driven into walls, beams, furniture, etc. Only freestanding shelves and racks should be used. Construction of any kind in the rooms must be done by the Director of Facilities. Students failing to check out with a Community Advisor will automatically be charged a $500 fee. This applies to moving/changing rooms, departure from campus, and/or end of the semester departure.
- *Room Key Fee*: $100 fee will be charged for lost and/or unreturned room keys.

Important note: Residential students must petition the Dean of Community at least 30 days prior to the start of the semester of their intention to live off campus. Students who do not petition, or petition less than 30 days before the start of the semester, will be billed $500. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to the petition deadlines.

Green Bikes at Sterling Craftsbury Campus

The Green Bike Program provides bicycles and technical support for the Sterling College community, promoting the ideas of human-powered transportation; thereby reducing the need for non-renewable based modes of transportation. Program goals:

- To provide the Sterling College community with a fleet of functional and safe bicycles for use around campus.
- To promote the idea of human-powered transportation, thereby reducing the need for non-renewable based transportation (cars).
- To assist Sterling College community members with maintenance of personal bicycles.

Fire Safety in Residence Halls

The College reserves the right to inspect a room at any time, and reserves the right to immediately remove all health or safety hazards.

- Candles and incense are not permitted in any residence.

- Cooking is not permitted in the residence halls outside of designated kitchen areas. Cooking appliances in student's rooms constitute a fire hazard and, if found, will be removed by the staff. This includes all types of coffeemakers.
- Grills are not permitted at any residence hall except at College approved outdoor events.
- Students may decorate their rooms and residence halls. Lights may not be hung from fire safety equipment, and they may not be used anywhere near fabric or paper decorations. The College reserves the right to remove any decorations that present a fire hazard. Extra furniture that presents a safety hazard may be removed by the College.
- All exits are to be kept free of obstructions.
- All fire escapes, extinguishers, alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are for use in emergencies and in supervised fire drills only. Their use for other purposes is a serious violation of College regulations.
- No drapes, flags, tapestries, or other flammable materials may be hung from walls or ceilings in such a way as to interfere with egress from the room or the operation of a light fixture, sprinkler head, or smoke detector.
- Torches and all types of lighters that emit a continuous flame are prohibited.

Students will be fined $100 if they fail to correct any violation of these regulations within 24 hours and/or for continual violations.

Students will be fined $100 for any unnecessary discharge of a fire extinguisher or tampering with pull stations, smoke or heat detectors, emergency exits, carbon monoxide detectors or any life-safety device.

Violation of these regulations may also be a violation of the College's Community Guidelines and policies and will be handled under the College's accountability procedures.

Fire drills in residence halls must be conducted once per semester with most students participating. Student Leaders and the Office of Student Life will conduct a fall training session for all students in each residence hall. The procedure for running a fire drill is as follows:

- Each semester, Community Advisors and the Office of Student Life will conduct one unannounced fire drill in every residence hall that will be timed by staff. The goal is for all students to exit the building within two minutes of the alarm sounding. Because students are not to know of the drill prior to its happening, the procedure is as follows: The Office of Student Life will notify the local fire department of the drill, then proceed to the dorm, notify the Student Leaders of the drill, and then immediately activate a pull station to start the alarm.
- In the event of an alarm, please note the following:
  - Everyone must evacuate the building immediately. No one may reenter the building for any reason.
  - The Community Advisor(s) should account for all residents at the designated waiting area. The Office of Student Life and/or local fire department representative should be immediately notified if an occupant remains unaccounted for.
  - Only after the local fire department establishes the safety of the building may residents re enter the residence hall.

Food
Any food kept in student rooms must be stored in tightly sealed containers. Food and beverages may be consumed in the lounge areas. Food and food containers left unattended will be

disposed of at hall cleaning parties and at the end of each semester. Fermenting food must be monitored and disposed of properly.

Furniture
Furniture in common areas has been arranged by the College to provide the best setup both for the residents and for College functions. Furniture in common areas is not to be used in students' rooms or to be placed outside or relocated to another building. If you have an idea to make common areas better gathering places you may do so, provided that it does not create a safety or fire hazard. Any furniture brought into the common space or room MUST be removed at the end of the semester. Failure to remove the added furniture at the end of the spring semester will result in the College removing and disposing of the furniture as the College deems fit, and may result in a charge added to students' bills. Students may not make structural changes to their rooms or any rooms in their halls.

Guest Privileges
In all cases, students and their guests are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not intrude on the rights of privacy or significantly interfere with the normal residential lives of others. Students may be held responsible for the actions of their guests; to the extent such actions implicate students' responsibilities under the College's Community Guidelines and policies.

Overnight guests are permitted for no more than three nights and only with the permission of housemates. Students are required to notify Community or House Advisors whenever overnight guests will be present in the building. Please remind your guests of the following:
- Guests must be visiting a particular person in a residence hall. The person who is the host in the residence hall is responsible for the behavior of that guest and must be present in the room for the duration of the guests visit. Guests are not allowed to stay anywhere on campus without their student host.
- Sleeping in the common areas of residence halls is prohibited.
- The College may refuse entry to nonresidents or require them to leave the premises, at the College's sole discretion.
- No one may live in a residence hall unless they are registered to live there through Sterling College. At the discretion of the Student Leader and support from the Dean of Community, guests staying more than three nights in any one semester may be barred from further visitation in College residence halls.
- Reminder – a student is eligible to live in College housing if that student is enrolled in a minimum of four credits and is only eligible to live in College housing during the time the course is being taught. Students are not eligible to live in College housing over breaks or summers because they were enrolled during a previous semester or are enrolled in a future semester.

Housing Students Under the Age of 18
We strongly encourage parents or legal guardians to have candid discussions with their students about understanding and following the policies and procedures of the College, local, state, and federal laws, and the need to make good decisions about being successful at college. Sterling College does not assume *in loco parentis* responsibility for students. Information about the Vermont age of consent laws can be found at
https://www.ageofconsent.net/states/vermont.

Information about the Vermont underage drinking laws can be found at **https://alcoholpolicy.niaaa.nih.gov/underage-drinking/state-profiles/vermont/97**.

These discussions are even more important when minors are involved. Any minor needing emergency medical treatment will be transported to the nearest facility, and will not be released without their parent or legal guardian present. Any minor choosing to engage in any type of criminal activity, including underage alcohol violations, may be placed in police custody and their parent or legal guardian will need to be present for their release. The College does not assume custody for the release of a minor. Demonstrated awareness of such considerations by the minor student, parents and legal guardians may be relevant to the College's decision with regard to appropriate housing options for the student.

Sterling residence halls provide an environment for resident students to live, work, and study. Each residence is supported by a team of Community Advisors, who are students trained in CPR & first aid, and basic conflict resolution. Additionally, an administrator is on call for emergencies 24/7.

While living in the residence halls, individual students have a limited level of supervision, regardless of age. Students are expected to use good judgment at all times by following all Community Guidelines, Community Care Agreements, and local, state, and federal laws. Students may come and go from their residence hall, visit students in other residence halls, and make decisions about which and when guests visit them in their rooms. All residence halls (including bathrooms and shower facilities) are gender-neutral, and may house students of all ages. Sterling does not have a curfew; however, individual houses may agree on a shared understanding of quiet hours.

Meal Plan
All residential students are required to participate in the full meal plan and are charged accordingly. Bringing the community together for meals is a fundamental and essential part of life at Sterling College. The College believes that breaking bread together fosters friendships, supports Sterling culture, and supports the academic curriculum. Students with a documented medical need that can not be accommodated by the kitchen may choose to petition the Dean of Community to modify their participation in the meal plan.

Parties
Large parties may not be held in the residences. Instead:
- On the Vermont campus, the College makes the Dunbarn and Dunbar Hall available during evening hours for social functions. Dunbarn and Dunbar Hall are both substance free facilities. To coordinate events in these facilities please contact the Dean of Community and the student activities group.
  - All parties within earshot of neighbors must be quieted by 10pm.

Recycling
There are recycling receptacles available in all residential halls. Residents are responsible for taking their own recycling to one of the designated receptacles located on campus. Items should be reasonably clean. For full details on what can be recycled in Vermont on the Craftsbury Commons campus, go to https://www.casella.com/services/recycling/. Recycling of these items is the responsibility of residents as well as the responsibility of all faculty and staff. Returnable bottles and cans may not be gathered in lounge areas or in the hallways.

Roofs
Students are not permitted on roofs because of the danger of falling and because of the damage this can cause to the roofs. Additionally, students are prohibited from climbing or rappelling from any College owned or operated buildings or structures other than the Bouldering Room and Climbing Tower.

Room Assignments
Incoming students are encouraged to submit housing and/or roommate preferences via the Housing Survey form available to admitted students on the College website. All returning residential students should complete the Housing Survey by the posted deadlines to ensure consideration of preferences. Priority housing assignments are determined based on documented medical need, veteran status, seniority, age, number of credits earned and number of credits pursued each semester.

Single rooms are prioritized for students with documented medical needs that prescribe a single room. If you have a prescription for housing accommodation by a medical professional (primary care provider/mental health counselor), please provide your prescription to the Office of Student Life at least 30 days prior to the start of the semester.

As supply and demand dictates, Sterling may be able to accommodate affinity houses, e.g.,: Students of Color housing, LGBTQIA+ housing, Substance Free housing.

Students may occupy housing assignments in accordance with the opening and closing dates of residence halls, which follow the academic calendar. Students are expected to remove all personal belongings from their assigned living area and associated common areas on the date their housing assignment ends, whether it is due to a room change, required relocation to another residential space, termination of student housing, or withdrawal from the College. All items remaining in student rooms and associated common areas at the end of their contract period or when the student leaves an assigned space will be considered abandoned property. It will be disposed of, the student will be issued a fine per Sterling College's discretion, and the fine will be deducted from the student's room deposit. The College assumes no liability for loss or damage to students' personal property if property has been abandoned.

The College reserves the right to reassign, restrict or terminate student housing where that decision will serve a compelling community interest or as deemed appropriate. The Dean of Community team is responsible for room reassignments.

Room Change Requests
At Sterling College, we believe strongly in the educational benefits of learning to live with others and practicing collaboration and compromise. All residential students will complete living agreements with their roommates in the first few weeks of the semester. House Advisors will work with students to help mediate and resolve conflict. Steps towards resolution of conflict could include revisiting the living agreement or participation in discussion and mediation with support from a Community Advisor, or from the Office of Student Life. If it is determined that the best resolution for all parties is a room reassignment, students will be reassigned. Students may request room changes by filling out a Room Change Request Form.

The College reserves the right to reassign, restrict or terminate student housing where that decision will serve a compelling community interest or as deemed appropriate. The Dean of Community Office is responsible for room reassignments.

Room Use Agreement
Students will be required to read and sign a room use agreement during Arrival Day which details their responsibilities as temporary residents in campus housing and documents the condition of the room upon move in. On move out day, students will review the agreement and damage deposits will either be refunded in full or damages will be deducted as determined by the House Advisor and the Dean of Community Office.

Roommates
Part of community living is learning how to live with others. Conflicts will arise between roommates. Our intention is to have students learn by resolving conflicts. If there are conflicts, seek out the help of Community Advisors or the Dean of Community or Assistant Dean of Community. If the conflict cannot be resolved through formal mediation a request to change rooms or swap roommates may be made with the Dean of Community Office to determine whether a change is possible. Room changes that are mutually agreed upon by the individuals involved must complete a Room Change Request Form.

Study and Quiet Hours
When you are living in a community with other students, it is important to remain respectful of others at all hours of the day and night. It is expected that electronic devices will be operated at a reasonable, considerate volume at all times. Speakers or amplifiers may not be placed on windows or outside at any time. Quiet hours differ in each residential hall and are determined collectively by the residents during the first House Meeting at the beginning of the semester.

Theft
Suspected thefts should be reported immediately to the Office of Student Life. It is your responsibility to carry theft insurance on your property; the College does not assume responsibility for any personal possessions that are lost or stolen.

Vacations and Break Policies
Students are notified prior to the beginning of each school year the dates that the College will close for breaks. Students are expected to adhere to these dates and vacate their residence hall on time. Exceptions will only be made if requested by the posted deadline and in cases of extenuating circumstances.

In order to remain on campus during any break over which campus is closed (November break, Winter break, Spring break, and Summer break(s)) a student must:
- Petition the Dean of Community in writing, including the requested dates and length of their stay at least seven days, or by the posted deadline before the break begins;
- Be free of Community and Work Review;
- Sign a break agreement and schedule two hours of break work per night on campus with an approved Work Program supervisor

All break work must be recorded and submitted via a Work Program time card to the Work Program office. All hours unaccounted for on a time card will be billed to the student's account.

Availability of Work Study work cannot be guaranteed for any break. Community Advisors and student leaders are exempt from the work/pay requirement as indicated by their Work Program contract.

Students failing to vacate on time will be subject to consequences that may include fines, suspension, or dismissal. All possessions must be removed from rooms and common spaces at the end of the academic year or when the student is no longer enrolled at the College.

All students are expected to leave campus during November Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Break, and any time not enrolled in courses.

Summers

All students are expected to leave campus when they are not enrolled in summer courses. If a student needs to stay on campus between courses (up to two weeks), they will petition the Dean of Community seven days before their intensive course ends. Students on Work Review or Community Review are not eligible to stay on campus when not enrolled in courses. All students approved to stay on campus between courses will sign a break agreement with the Dean of Community and follow the guidelines outlined in this agreement. If a student chooses not to abide by the agreement for any reason, they will be required to leave campus. Additionally, they will be charged for the room for the extent of their stay, and will not be permitted to stay on campus during future breaks, or in between intensive courses.

All students approved to stay on campus during a break will work two hours a day, in exchange for their room. The Work Program office will assign jobs based on skill, experience, and the needs of the community.

Windows

Windows may not be used for entry or non-emergency exits. Students are encouraged to keep windows closed and locked when not present in the room. Screens should not be removed from the windows.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND STALKING POLICY, RESOURCES, AND PROCEDURES

Introduction and Notice of Non-Discrimination

Sterling is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex and gender in all educational programs and activities sponsored by the College and in its employment practices. It is the policy of Sterling College ("Sterling" or the "College") to maintain an environment for students, faculty, administrators, staff, and visitors that is free of all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual misconduct. The College has enacted this Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking Policy (the "Policy") to reflect and maintain its institutional values and community expectations, to provide for fair and equitable

procedures for determining when this Policy has been violated, and to provide recourse for individuals and the community in response to violations of this Policy.

This Policy prohibits sexual or gender-based discrimination, harassment, and misconduct, including sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, and sexual exploitation, as defined in this document. It also prohibits intimate partner violence and stalking, as defined in this document. The Policy also prohibits retaliation against a person because they have reported, complained about, or participated in good faith in an investigation of conduct covered by this Policy. All of the foregoing conduct shall be referred to collectively as "Prohibited Conduct."

Sterling does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational, extracurricular, athletic, or other programs or in the context of employment. Sex discrimination is prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, a federal law that provides:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Sexual harassment is also prohibited under Title IX, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes. This Policy prohibits sexual harassment against Sterling community members of any sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity in the context of education or employment. This Policy also prohibits gender-based harassment that does not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

The College strongly encourages all members of our community to take action to maintain and facilitate a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment on campus. In particular, the College expects that all Sterling community members will take reasonable and prudent actions to prevent or stop Prohibited Conduct. The College strongly supports bystander intervention and supports individuals who choose to take such action and will protect such individuals from retaliation.

Upon receipt of a report, the College will take equitable action to eliminate the Prohibited Conduct (if any), prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. In addition, the College will fulfill its obligations under the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 ("VAWA") amendments to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act ("Clery Act") in response to reported Prohibited Conduct. The College's process for investigating and responding to reported Prohibited Conduct is outlined in the following sections. Students or employees who are found to have violated this Policy may face disciplinary action up to and including dismissal (students) or termination of employment (faculty or staff).

Sterling also prohibits other forms of discrimination and harassment, including discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religious belief, marital status, physical or mental disability, medical condition, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

Scope of Policy

In accordance with 2020 federal Title IX regulations and guidance, the College uses different policies and procedures to address alleged incidents of sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence and stalking, depending on when the incidents allegedly occurred.

For incidents that allegedly occurred **before August 14, 2020**, the College will use the policies and procedures provided in the SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND STALKING POLICY, RESOURCES, AND PROCEDURES as set forth in the College's August, 2020 Sterling College Student Handbook regardless of when the alleged incidents are reported.

For incidents that allegedly occurred on or after August 14, 2020 (that is, the date on which certain 2020 federal Title IX regulations became effective), the College will use the policies and procedures provided immediately below.

When used in this Policy, "complainant" refers to the individual who is identified as the subject of Prohibited Conduct. "Respondent" refers to the individual alleged to have engaged in Prohibited Conduct. A "Third-Party" refers to any other participant in the process, including a witness or an individual who makes a report on behalf of a complainant.

Persons Covered
This Policy applies to all Sterling community members, including students, faculty, administrators, staff, volunteers, vendors, contractors, visitors, and individuals regularly or temporarily employed, conducting business, studying, living, visiting, or having any official capacity with the College or on its property.

The College strongly encourages reports of Prohibited Conduct regardless of who engaged in the conduct. Even if the College does not have jurisdiction over the respondent, the College will take action, to the extent that it is reasonably able to do so, to provide for the safety and well-being of the complainant and the broader campus community.

Locations Covered
This Policy applies to Sterling College's campuses. This Policy also applies to all on-campus conduct, all field experiences and some off-campus conduct, as described below. The College strongly encourages reports of Prohibited Conduct regardless of location. Even if the Policy does not apply to the conduct because of its location, the College will take action, to the extent that it is reasonably able to do so, to provide for the safety and well-being of the complainant and the broader campus community. Students participating in Exchanges or third party study abroad or experiences will be subject to the guidelines established by the host institution and may, if deemed appropriate by Sterling College, also be subject to investigation and/or sanction under this Policy and/or other Sterling College policies as well.
- On-Campus Conduct. This Policy applies to conduct that occurs on-campus in all of Sterling College's campuses, including conduct which occurs on property owned or managed by the College.
- College Programs. This Policy applies to conduct that occurs in the context of College employment or education programs or activities regardless of campus, site or field experience.
- Off-Campus Conduct. This Policy also applies to conduct that occurs off campus and has continuing adverse effects on, or creates a hostile environment for, any member of the Sterling community on-campus or in any College employment or education program or activity.

Days

Unless otherwise expressly stated, all references in this procedure to "days" are to business days, excluding holidays when the College is closed. Any deadline that falls on a weekend or other day when the College is closed, shall be extended to the next business day.

Prohibited Conduct and Definitions

Some sexual misconduct falls within the scope of Title IX, the federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education programs or activities that receive federal funds, and other sexual misconduct may violate College policy even if it does not fall within the scope of Title IX's definition of sexual harassment.

Title IX Sexual Harassment (i.e., Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Severe, Pervasive and Objectively Offensive Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, and Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and sex-based Stalking within the scope of Title IX) is defined below for purposes of this Policy.

Title IX Sexual Harassment is a subset of Prohibited Conduct. Under Department of Education regulations (see 34 C.F.R., Part 106) issued in May 2020 ("May 2020 Title IX regulations") to implement Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., the College is required to prohibit certain forms of sexual harassment as defined in those regulations. Title IX Sexual Harassment is Prohibited Conduct of the following types committed by or against students and/or employees in an education program or activity of the College, in the United States. Further, in order for the College to consider a Formal Complaint of such misconduct as falling within its Title IX Sexual Harassment policy and procedures, the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in a College program or activity at the time the complaint is filed.

Conduct takes place within the College's "programs and activities" when that conduct occurs: (1) in a location, at an event, or in a circumstance where the College exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the conduct occurs; or (2) in any building owned or controlled by a student organization recognized by the College. Conduct that occurs off campus in locations or at events with no connection to the College is unlikely to have occurred in a program or activity of the College.

Conduct that does not meet this strict definition for Title IX Sexual Harassment is still prohibited by this Policy if it otherwise constitutes Prohibited Conduct within the definition of Non-Title IX Misconduct as provided below.

Title IX Sexual Harassment
The following Prohibited Conduct definitions apply for purposes of the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment:

a. Title IX Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment

Quid pro quo sexual harassment for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of the College in the

United States by which an employee of the College conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the College on a student's or employee's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.

b. Title IX Severe, Pervasive and Objectively Offensive Sexual Harassment

Severe, pervasive and objectively offensive sexual harassment for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of the College in the United States that constitutes unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a student or employee equal access to a the College education program or activity.

c. Title IX Sexual Assault

As required by the May 2020 Title IX regulations, the College's definition of Title IX Sexual Assault incorporates the definitions of the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (NIBRS) program, and is as follows:
- Rape:[2]
  - The carnal knowledge of a person (i.e., penile-vaginal penetration), without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (it should be noted that either females or males could be complainants under this definition);
  - Oral or anal sexual intercourse (i.e., penile penetration) with another person, without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity;
  - To use an object or instrument (e.g., an inanimate object or body part other than a penis) to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity;

- Fondling: The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of that person, including instances where the person is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (for purposes of this definition, "private body parts" includes breasts, buttocks, or genitals, whether over or under clothing);

- Incest: Sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law; or

- Statutory Rape: Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.

Sexual assault can be committed by any person against any other person, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or past or current relationship status.

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[2] Both completed rape and attempted rape are prohibited by this policy.

d. Title IX Dating Violence

Title IX Dating Violence for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of the College in the United States that constitutes violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the complainant. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

For the purposes of this definition— (A) Dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. (B) Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

e. Title IX Domestic Violence

Title IX Domestic Violence for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of the College in the United States that constitutes a felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed:

- By a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;
- By a person with whom the victim shares a child in common;
- By a person who is cohabiting with, or has cohabited with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
- By a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred; or
- By any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.

f. Title IX Stalking

Title IX Stalking for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition is conduct on the basis of sex committed in an education program or activity of the College in the United States that constitutes engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:
- Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or
- Suffer substantial emotional distress. For purposes of this definition:

Course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person's property.

Reasonable person means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.

Substantial emotional distress means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

Examples of stalking behaviors or activities include, but are not limited to the following, if they occur in the context of stalking as defined above (i.e., the behaviors or activities would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or to suffer substantial emotional distress):

- non-consensual communication, including face-to-face communication, telephone calls, voice messages, e-mails, text messages, written letters, gifts, or any other communications that are unwelcome;
- use of online, electronic or digital technologies, such as posting pictures or text in chat rooms or on websites, sending unwanted or unsolicited e-mail or talk requests, posting private or public messages on Internet sites, social networks, and/or school bulletin boards, installing spyware on a person's computer, or
- using Global Positioning Systems (GPS) or similar technology to monitor a person;
- pursuing, following, waiting for, or showing up uninvited at or near a residence, workplace, classroom, or other places frequented by the person;
- surveillance or other types of observation, including staring and voyeurism;
- trespassing;
- vandalism;
- non-consensual touching;
- direct verbal or physical threats against a person or a person's family member, pet or personal property;
- gathering information about a person from friends, family, or co-workers;
- accessing private information through unauthorized means;
- threats to harm self or others;
- defamation and/or lying to others about the person; and
- using a third party or parties to accomplish any of the above.

Non-Title IX Misconduct

g. *Non-consensual Sexual Contact*

Non-consensual contact includes: (1) acts that would constitute "fondling" as defined in the Clery Act (that is, the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent (as defined below) of the other person, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity), that does not fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment; (2) causing an individual to touch their own private body parts, touching another individual's body with a private body part, touching another individual's private body part with any object, or disrobing or exposure of another without permission, that does not fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment.

h. *Non-Title IX Sexual Harassment*

Non-Title IX Sexual Harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, physical, graphic, or otherwise, that does not fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment.

"Harassment" is conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile working or learning environment or that unreasonably interferes with work or academic performance based on a person's protected status, including sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. All such conduct is unlawful.

"Sexual Harassment" is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, physical, graphic, or otherwise.

"Hostile Environment." A hostile environment exists when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent that it unreasonably interferes with, limits, or deprives an individual from participating in or benefiting from the College's education or employment programs and/or activities. Whether conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent is determined both from a subjective and objective perspective.

Harassing conduct can take many forms. The determination of whether an environment is hostile is based on the totality of the circumstances, including but not limited to:
- the frequency of the conduct;
- the nature and severity of the conduct;
- whether the conduct was physically threatening;
- the effect of the conduct on the complainant's mental or emotional state, with consideration of whether the conduct unreasonably interfered with the complainant's educational or work performance and/or College programs or activities;
- whether the conduct was directed at more than one person; and
- whether the conduct arose in the context of other discriminatory conduct.

A single isolated incident may create a hostile environment if the incident is sufficiently severe, particularly if the conduct is physical. In contrast, the perceived offensiveness of a single verbal or written expression is typically not sufficient to constitute a hostile environment.

Sexual Harassment:
- May be blatant and intentional and involve an overt action, a threat or reprisal, or may be subtle and indirect, with a coercive aspect that is unstated.
- May be committed by anyone, regardless of gender, age, position or authority. While there is often a power differential between two persons, perhaps due to differences in age, social, educational or employment relationships, harassment can occur in any context.
- May be committed by a stranger, an acquaintance, or someone with whom the complainant has an intimate or sexual relationship.
- May be committed by or against an individual or may be a result of the actions of an organization or group.
- May occur by or against an individual of any sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- May occur in the classroom, in the workplace, in residential settings, or in any other setting.
- May be a one-time event or can be part of a pattern of behavior.
- May be committed in the presence of others or when the Parties are alone.
- May affect the complainant and/or Third Parties who witness or observe harassment and are affected by it.

Examples of conduct that may constitute Sexual Harassment as defined above may include a severe, persistent or pervasive pattern of unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that includes but is not limited to one or more of the following:

- Physical conduct, including unwelcome touching, sexual/physical assault, impeding, restraining, or blocking movements, or unwanted sexual advances;
- Verbal conduct, including making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs or humor; verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations; or objectively offensive comments of a sexual nature, including persistent or pervasive sexually explicit statements, questions, jokes, or anecdotes;
- Visual conduct, including leering, making sexual gestures, displaying suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters in a public space or forum; or severe, persistent, or pervasive visual displays of suggestive, erotic, or degrading sexually oriented images that are not pedagogically appropriate;
- Written conduct, including letters, notes or electronic communications containing comments, words, or images described above.

i. *Sexual Exploitation*

Sexual Exploitation occurs when a person takes sexual advantage of another person for the benefit of anyone other than that other person without that other person's consent. Examples of behavior that could constitute sexual exploitation include but are not limited to the following:
A. intentional non-consensual contact with the private body parts of a person that does not meet the definition of behaviors prohibited under the definition of "sexual assault" found above;
B. prostituting another person;
C. recording or capturing through any means images (e.g., video and photographs) or audio of another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts, or nudity without that person's consent;
D. distributing images (e.g., video or photographs) or audio of another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts or nudity if the individual distributing the images or audio knows or should have known that the person(s) depicted in the images or audio did not consent to such disclosure and object(s) or would object to such disclosure; and,
E. viewing another person's sexual activity, intimate body parts or nudity in a place where that person had a reasonable expectation of privacy, without that person's consent, if the individual viewing the other person(s) sexual activity, intimate body parts, or nudity in such a place knows or should have known that the person(s) being viewed would object to that.
F. Exception: Sterling College's prohibition of sexual exploitation is not intended to prohibit the use of sexually explicit materials that are reasonably related to Sterling College's academic mission. Specifically this section is not intended to proscribe or inhibit the use of sexually explicit materials in or out of the classroom, when in the judgment of a "reasonable person" they arise appropriately to promote genuine discourse, free inquiry and learning.

j. Non-Title IX Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and/or Stalking

Non-Title IX Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and/or Stalking are defined as above, but are forms of misconduct that do not fall within the definitions of Title IX Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, or Stalking because while they fall within the scope of this policy, they do not involve allegations of conduct in a College program or activity in the United States.

Sexual Misconduct & Intimate Partner Violence: Definitions of Key Terms; Other Considerations

To provide clarity to all individuals as to the kinds of behavior which constitute Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence and/or Stalking, the College further defines key terms, which the College will use in evaluating whether Prohibited Conduct has occurred.

For the purpose of this policy "consent" is defined as follows:

Consent
"Consent" means the affirmative, unambiguous, and voluntary agreement to engage in a sexual act, which can be revoked at any time. No person subject to this policy shall engage in a sexual act with another person:
- without the consent of the other person; or
- by threatening, coercing, forcing or intimidating the other person (also see the definitions of coercion, force and intimidation in this policy, which are incorporated by reference); or
- by placing the other person in fear that any person will suffer imminent bodily injury; or
- when the person knows or reasonably should know that the other person is asleep, unconscious, or otherwise unaware that the sexual act is occurring.

No person subject to this policy shall administer any alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicants to another person without the person's knowledge or against the person's will and, while the person is impaired by the alcohol, drugs, or intoxicants, engage in a sexual act with that person. No person subject to this policy shall engage in a sexual act with another person when the other person is incapable of consenting to the sexual act due to substantial impairment by alcohol, drugs, or other intoxicants and that condition is known or reasonably should be known by the person.
- "Incapable of consenting" as used in this policy means the other person:
  - is incapable of understanding the nature of the conduct at issue;
  - is physically incapable of resisting, declining participation in, or communicating unwillingness to engage in the conduct at issue; or
  - lacks the mental ability to make or communicate a decision about whether to engage in the conduct at issue.
- A person may be incapable of consenting due to the effects of alcohol, drugs or other intoxicants, or due to a physical, mental or other condition.

Lack of consent may be shown without proof of resistance, and submission resulting from the use of force, threat of force, or placing another person in fear does not constitute consent. Past consent does not imply future consent. Silence or an absence of resistance does not imply consent. Consent to engage in one activity with one person does not imply consent to engage in sexual activity with another person. Consent to engage in one sexual activity with one person

does not imply consent to engage in a different type of sexual activity. Again, consent can be withdrawn at any time.

It is the responsibility of those who initiate and/or engage in sexual activity to be clear that consent as defined in this policy is given before proceeding with further sexual activity. It should be noted that ignorance of the policy noted above, or the intoxication of the respondent, will in no way be considered an excuse for violating the policy. Determinations regarding whether a person is responsible for violating this policy will be made by considering whether the person knew, or a reasonable, unimpaired person in their circumstances should have known, that the other person was not consenting to or was incapable of consenting to the sexual conduct at issue or was asleep, unconscious, or otherwise unaware that the sexual act was occurring. Any incident falling within the definition of sexual assault provided in this policy is prohibited.

Retaliation

Retaliation is Prohibited Conduct under this Policy, and will be investigated and addressed through the procedures for Non-Title IX Misconduct referenced below. Retaliation means intimidating, threatening, coercing, or discriminating against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or its implementing regulations or this Policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing regarding Prohibited Conduct (including both Title IX Sexual Harassment and Non-Title IX misconduct). Retaliation is strictly prohibited. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or its implementing regulations, constitute retaliation, as do any adverse action taken against a person because they have made a good faith report of Prohibited Conduct or participated in any proceeding under this Policy. Retaliation may include intimidation, threats, coercion, harassment, or adverse employment or educational actions that would discourage a reasonable person from engaging in activity protected under this policy. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance process under this Policy does not constitute prohibited retaliation, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility is not alone sufficient to establish that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

The College will not engage in and will take immediate and responsive action to address any report of covered retaliation and will pursue disciplinary action as appropriate. An individual whose good faith activity as described above will be protected from retaliation under this policy, even if the reported conduct is ultimately not found to be a violation of this Policy.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The College is committed to protecting the privacy of all individuals involved in the investigation and resolution of reports under this Policy. The College also is committed to assisting students, employees, and third parties in making informed choices. With respect to any report under this Policy, the College will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of participants, in

accordance with applicable state and federal law, while balancing the need to gather information to take steps to eliminate Prohibited Conduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. Privacy and confidentiality have distinct meanings under this Policy.

Privacy

"Privacy" generally means that information related to a report of Prohibited Conduct will only be shared with a limited circle of individuals who "need to know" in order to assist in the assessment, investigation, or resolution of the report. While not bound by confidentiality, these individuals will be discreet and respect the privacy of all individuals involved in the process.

Confidentiality

"Confidentiality" generally means that information shared by an individual with designated campus or community professionals cannot be revealed to any other individual without the express permission of the individual.

The confidentiality of information shared by an individual with designated campus or community professionals generally is governed by Vermont law, including Vermont evidence rules and restrictions on the disclosure of privileged information by mental health providers, health care providers, ordained clergy, rape crisis counselors, and attorneys, all of whom have legally protected confidentiality. These individuals are generally prohibited from breaking confidentiality unless there is an imminent threat of harm to self or others.

An individual who seeks confidential assistance may do so by speaking with professionals who have legally protected confidentiality.

Responsible Employees and Requests for Confidentiality

A "Responsible Employee" includes any employee who: (1) has the authority to take action to redress the harassment or any other misconduct by students or employees; (2) has the duty to report to appropriate school officials sexual harassment or any other misconduct by students or employees; or (3) a student could reasonably believe has the authority or responsibility to take action. All College employees who do not have legally protected confidentiality are considered Responsible Employees. This includes all employees with supervisory or leadership responsibilities on campus, including, but not limited to, faculty, administrators, staff members and Community Advisors. The College requires that all Responsible Employees share a report of misconduct with the Title IX Coordinator or Delegates. The purpose of this requirement is to permit the College to take immediate and corrective action to respond to allegations of Prohibited Conduct.

A student may desire to report Prohibited Conduct to the College but to maintain confidentiality; if so, the Title IX Coordinator will evaluate such requests. Where a complainant requests that the complainant's name or other identifiable information not be shared with the respondent or that no formal action be taken, the Title IX Coordinator will balance the complainant's request with its obligation to provide a safe and non-discriminatory environment for all College community members. In making this determination, the College may consider, among other things, the seriousness of the conduct, the respective ages and roles of the complainant and respondent, whether there have been other complaints or reports of harassment or misconduct against the respondent, and the rights of the respondent to receive notice and relevant information before disciplinary action is sought.

The College will take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to a complaint consistent with the request for confidentiality or request not to pursue an investigation, but its ability to do so may be limited based on the nature of the request by the complainant. Where the College is unable to take action consistent with the request of the complainant, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the complainant about the chosen course of action, which may include the College seeking disciplinary action against a respondent. Alternatively, the course of action may also include steps to limit the effects of the alleged harassment or other misconduct by students or employees and prevent its recurrence that do not involve formal disciplinary action against a respondent or revealing the identity of the complainant.

STERLING COLLEGE'S TITLE IX COORDINATOR AND DELEGATES

Notice of Designated Title IX Coordinator and Delegates

The College designates a Title IX Coordinator each year. The Title IX Coordinator can be contacted by email, or in person during regular office hours:

Tiana Baca
Title IX Coordinator
Faculty
tbaca@sterlingcollege.edu
802-586-7711 x 105

Role of the Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator monitors the College's overall compliance with Title IX, ensures appropriate training and education, and oversees the College's investigation, response, and resolution of reports made under this Policy. Upon receiving reports of Prohibited Conduct, the Title IX Coordinator ensures that appropriate action is taken to eliminate that conduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects. The Title IX Coordinator is available to advise all individuals – including individuals who have experienced misconduct, individuals who are alleged to be responsible for misconduct, and third parties – on this Policy and the related Investigation Processes. Title IX coordination functions may also be carried out by the Title IX Delegates and other designated individuals as necessary and appropriate.

Reporting

The College strongly encourages all individuals to seek assistance from a medical provider and/or law enforcement immediately after an incident of sexual or other violence. This is the best option to ensure preservation of evidence and to begin a timely investigative and helpful response.

The College also strongly encourages all individuals to make a report to the College and to law enforcement, although neither is required. These reporting options are not mutually exclusive. Both internal and criminal reports may be made simultaneously.

The College has a strong interest in investigating and responding as appropriate to sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence and strongly encourages all individuals or third party witnesses to report any incident to the College.

Making a report means telling a Responsible Employee what happened-in person, by telephone, in writing, or by email. At the time a report is made, a complainant does not have to request any particular course of action, nor does a complainant need to know how to label what happened. Choosing to make a report, and deciding how to proceed after making the report, can be a process that unfolds over time.

The College provides support that can assist each individual in making these important decisions, and will respect an individual's autonomy in deciding how to proceed to the extent possible. In this process, the College will balance the individual's interest with its obligation to provide a safe and non-discriminatory environment for all members of the College community.

In response to all reports of Prohibited Conduct, the College will make an immediate assessment of any risk of harm to the complainant, respondent, or to the broader campus community and will take steps necessary to address those risks. These steps may include interim measures to provide for the safety of the individual and the campus community.

If You Have Experienced Sexual Assault
- Find a safe environment away from your attacker (it need only be temporary). When possible, ask a trusted person to stay with you and assist you with getting help.
- To obtain immediate medical care or to contact the police, phone 911 for emergency services. (To provide proof of a criminal offense, evidence must be preserved. Do not use the toilet, bathe, brush your teeth, wash bedding, douche, or change clothing prior to a medical/legal exam.)
- Contact at least one of the following people:
  - Emergency Pager: (802) 290-9931
  - Favor Ellis, Dean of Community: 802-586-7711 x127

A member(s) of this team or designee will coordinate immediate assistance with safety issues such as relocation to a safe place, and will support you throughout the emergency situation. They may go with you or meet you at the hospital, stay with you during the interview process, and assist you in contacting other support persons. This team will also coordinate support beyond the emergency situation, including supporting you in advocating for your needs, assisting you with filing complaints (if desired), and connecting you with health care and counseling resources. Obtaining these services is voluntary.

Emergency and External Reporting Options

Complainants have the right to notify or decline to notify law enforcement. The College strongly encourages all individuals to seek assistance from law enforcement immediately after an incident of Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence, or any other Prohibited Conduct. This

is the best option to ensure preservation of evidence and to begin a timely investigative and helpful response. Police have unique legal authority, including the power to seek and execute search warrants, collect forensic evidence, make arrests, and assist in seeking emergency protective orders. The College will help any Sterling community member to get to a safe place and will provide transportation to the hospital, coordination with law enforcement, and information about on- and off-campus resources and options for resolution.

Vermont State Police Headquarters
45 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671-1300
M - F / 8am - 4pm
Telephone - 802-244-8727

Unit for Special Investigations (CUSI)
50 Cherry Street, Suite 102
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: (802) 652-6800
Fax: (802) 652 – 4167

Copley Hospital Emergency Services
528 Washington Highway
Morrisville, VT 05661
Call 9-1-1 in an emergency
Hours: 24 hours, 7 days a week
Hospital's Main Entrance; the Emergency Room is to your left immediately after the main entrance

AWARE 802- 472-6463 (Hardwick)
Confidential Domestic & Sexual Violence Services

Clarina Howard Nichols Center 802-888-5256 (Morrisville)
24hr Domestic violence & sexual assault hotline and advocacy

Woven Collective www.wovenvt.org (Burlington)
POC & LGBTQ-informed Therapeutic Support for Violence Survivors

Campus Reporting Options

The College strongly encourages all individuals to report misconduct to any College employee. The College recommends that individuals report Prohibited Conduct to any of the following offices or individuals:

The Title IX Coordinator, Title IX Delegates, and/or other designees handle(s) complaints of Prohibited Conduct against any individual, and works with other offices on campus to provide reasonable accommodations for housing, academic flexibility, and No Contact letters. Their contact information is:

Tiana Baca
Title IX Coordinator
Faculty

tbaca@sterlingcollege.edu
802-586-7711 x 105

Reporting To External Agencies

In addition to reporting to law enforcement or the College, students, faculty, and staff should be aware of the following external governmental agencies that investigate and prosecute complaints of prohibited discrimination and harassment:

Employees may contact:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
John F. Kennedy Federal Office Building
475 Government Center,
Boston, MA 02203
(1-800-669-4000/VOICE or 1-800-669-6820/TDD)
www.eeoc.gov

Vermont Attorney General's Office, Civil Rights Unit,
109 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05609-1001
(802-828-3171/VOICE/TDD)

Students may contact:

United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
J.W. McCormack, Post Office Court House Building, Room 701
Boston, MA 02109-4557
617-289-0111OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Vermont Human Rights Commission
135 State Street, 2nd Floor, Drawer 33
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(802-828-2480/VOICE/TDD or 800-416-2010/VOICE)

Other Reporting Considerations

Timeliness and Location of Incident
Complainants and third-party witnesses are encouraged to report Prohibited Conduct as soon as possible in order to maximize the College's ability to respond promptly and effectively. The College does not, however, limit the time frame for reporting. If the respondent is not a member of the Sterling community, the College will still seek to meet its responsibilities by taking steps to end the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects, but its ability to take disciplinary action against the respondent will, of course, be limited.

An incident does not have to occur on campus to be reported to the College. Off-campus conduct that is likely to have a substantial effect on the complainant's on-campus life and activities or that may pose a threat or danger to members of the Sterling community may also be addressed under this Policy.

Amnesty for Alcohol or Other Drug Use or Other Conduct Violations
The College strongly encourages the reporting of Prohibited Conduct under this Policy. It is in the best interest of this community that as many individuals as possible choose to report to college officials and that participants in the Investigation process are forthright in sharing information. To guard against discouraging reporting or participation, a student who reports Prohibited Conduct or participates in the Investigation process, either as a complainant, respondent, or a third-party witness, will not be subject to disciplinary action by the College for personal consumption of alcohol or drugs or other violations of the conduct policy (not including this Policy) at or near the time of the incident, provided that any such violations did not and do not place the health or safety of any other person at risk and do not involve plagiarism, cheating, or academic dishonesty. The College may, however, initiate an educational discussion or pursue other educational remedies with the student regarding alcohol or other drugs. Being intoxicated by drugs or alcohol is no defense to any violation of this Policy and does not diminish one's responsibility to obtain consent.

Coordination with Law Enforcement
The College strongly encourages complainants to pursue criminal action for incidents of Prohibited Conduct that may also be crimes under Vermont law. The College will assist a complainant in making a criminal report and cooperate with law enforcement agencies if a complainant decides to pursue the criminal process to the extent permitted by law.

The College's Policy, definitions, and standard of proof differ from state criminal law. A complainant may seek recourse under this Policy and/or pursue criminal action. Neither law enforcement's determination whether or not to prosecute a respondent, nor the outcome of any criminal prosecution, are determinative of whether a violation of this Policy has occurred. Proceedings under this Policy may be carried out prior to, simultaneously with, or following civil or criminal proceedings off campus.

The College will not delay conducting its own investigation unless that is specifically requested by law enforcement (e.g., State Police,). In the event of such a specific request, the College will defer its investigation only during the time that the law enforcement agency is gathering evidence. The College will nevertheless communicate with the complainant and respondent (if appropriate) regarding Title IX rights, procedural options, and the implementation of interim measures to provide safety and well-being. The College will promptly initiate or resume its investigation as soon as it is informed that law enforcement has completed its initial investigation.

False Reports
The College takes the accuracy of information very seriously, as a report of Prohibited Conduct may have severe consequences. A good faith complaint that results in a finding of not responsible is not considered a false or fabricated report of Prohibited Conduct. However, when a complainant or third party witness is found to have fabricated allegations or given false information with malicious intent or in bad faith, the complainant or individual may be subject to disciplinary action. It is a violation of Sterling's Community Guidelines to make an intentionally false report of any Policy violation, and it may also violate state criminal statutes and civil defamation laws.

Take Back the Night and Other Public Awareness Events
Public awareness events such as "Take Back the Night," the Clothesline Project, candlelight vigils, protests, or other forums in which community members disclose incidents of Prohibited

Conduct do not initiate the College's Title IX obligations, including its obligation to investigate reports of sexual harassment or sexual assault. Such events may, however, inform the need for campus-wide educational and prevention efforts, and the College may implement broad community initiatives in response to such events where appropriate.

Reports Involving Minors or Suspected Child Abuse
Under Vermont law, certain covered individuals must make a mandatory report of suspected child abuse and neglect, including sexual assault, when such individuals, in their professional capacity or within the scope of their employment, have knowledge of, or observe a minor (as defined by the relevant state authority) whom the individuals know or reasonably suspect has been subject to child abuse or neglect.

All College employees are required to immediately report any suspected child abuse and neglect to the Title IX Coordinator and/or a Title IX Delegate. The source of abuse does not need to be known in order to file a report.

The College will report suspected child abuse and neglect as required by Vermont law. The College must act quickly regarding all reasonable suspicions of sexual or physical abuse. It is not the responsibility of any employee, student, or volunteer to investigate suspected child abuse. This is the role of appropriate authorities.

In addition to notifying the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator, any individual may make a direct report as follows:
- If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- If there is no immediate danger, contact the Child Protection Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at (800) 540-4000.

Supportive Measures

Overview
Upon receipt of a report, the College will provide reasonable and appropriate supportive measures designed to eliminate the alleged hostile environment and protect the parties involved. The College will make reasonable efforts to communicate with the parties to ensure that all safety, emotional and physical well-being concerns are being addressed. Supportive measures may be imposed regardless of whether formal disciplinary action is sought by the complainant or the College, and regardless of whether a crime is reported to the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator or law enforcement.

A complainant or respondent may request a No Contact Order or other protection, or the College may choose to provide supportive measures at its discretion to promote the safety of all parties, the broader College community, and/or the integrity of the process.

The College will maintain the privacy of any remedial and protective measures provided under this Policy to the extent practicable and will promptly address any violation of the protective measures. All individuals are encouraged to report concerns about failure of another individual to abide by any restrictions imposed by an interim measure. The College will take immediate and responsive action to enforce a previously implemented restriction if such restriction was violated.

Range of Measures

Supportive measures will be implemented at the discretion of the College, when requested and reasonably available. Supportive measures may include but are not limited to:

- Access to counseling services and assistance in setting up initial appointment, both on and off campus;
- Implementation of campus "No Contact Orders". These can be administered to meet the individual needs of students involved;
- Rescheduling of exams and assignments (in consultation with appropriate faculty and deans as necessary);
- Providing alternative course completion options (with the agreement of the appropriate faculty and dean);
- Change in class schedule, including the ability to take an "incomplete," drop a course without penalty or transfer sections (with the agreement of the appropriate faculty and dean);
- Change in work schedule or job assignment;
- Change in on-campus housing;
- Arranging to dissolve a housing contract and pro-rating a refund in accordance with campus housing policies;
- Assistance from College support staff in completing housing relocation;
- Limiting an individual or organization's access to certain College facilities or activities pending resolution of the matter;
- Voluntary leave of absence;
- Providing an escort to ensure safe movement between classes and activities;
- Providing medical services;
- Providing academic support services, such as tutoring;
- Interim suspension or College-imposed leave:
- Medical leave;
- Any other remedy that can be tailored to the involved individuals to reasonably achieve the goals of this Policy.

Interim Suspension or Administrative Leave

Emergency Removal of Students or Employees in Title IX Sexual Harassment Cases

When the College determines that there is an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from reported conduct that falls within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment in this policy, the College can remove a respondent from its education program or activity (which may include removing an employee respondent from their employment at College) and issue any necessary related no-trespass and no-contact orders. The College will make the decision to remove a respondent from its education program or activity based on an individualized assessment and risk analysis.

If the College makes such a decision, the respondent will be provided with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. Specifically, the respondent shall have forty-eight hours in which to submit a letter to or appear personally or virtually before the Director of Campus Public Safety or designee to contest the emergency removal (though a meeting could be scheduled sooner if requested by the respondent, if practicable).

Administrative Leave in Title IX Sexual Harassment Cases

The College always maintains the discretion to place non-student employee respondents on paid administrative leave during the pendency of an investigation and resolution process as outlined below. The College may also place a non-student employee respondent on unpaid administrative leave during the pendency of an investigation and resolution process.

The College may place student-employee respondents on administrative leave from their employment during the pendency of an investigation and resolution process where deemed appropriate as a supportive measure, under circumstances where it can do so without unreasonably burdening the student-employee respondent.

Emergency or Interim Suspension, Administrative Leaves and Other Actions in Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct Cases

In cases that involve allegations of Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct (that is, Prohibited Conduct as defined by this Policy that does not fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment), the College may at its discretion initiate emergency and/or interim suspensions of students and suspension or dismissal of employees in accordance with the College's other policies, procedures and practices, which include but are not limited to the College's employment at will policy.

Care and Support Resources

The College is committed to treating all members of the community with dignity, care, and respect. Any student who experiences or is affected by conduct prohibited under this Policy, whether as a complainant, a respondent, or a Third Party, will have equal access to support through the College.

The College strongly encourages individuals to report Prohibited Conduct. The College recognizes, however, that the decision to report Prohibited Conduct (to the College and/or law enforcement) can be difficult. The College strongly encourages individuals who are considering whether to report Prohibited Conduct to seek the support from campus and community resources. The Title IX Coordinator or designee can provide guidance in making decisions, information about available resources and procedural options, and assistance to either party in the event that a report and/or resolution under this Policy is pursued. These resources are available regardless of when or where the incident occurred.

There are many resources available on campus and in the surrounding community. As detailed below, there are Confidential Resources which by law cannot share information without the consent of the individual seeking assistance (in most circumstances). There are also a variety of College resources that will be discreet and private but are not considered confidential. These resources will maintain the privacy of an individual's information within the limited circle of those involved in the resolution of a complaint under this Policy.

Confidential Resources

The College strongly encourages all community members to make a report of any incident of Prohibited Conduct to the College and law enforcement. For individuals who are not prepared to make a report, or who may be unsure how to proceed, but are still seeking information and support, there are several legally-protected confidential resources available as designated below. These confidential resources will not share information with the College or anyone else without the individual's permission.

Copley Hospital
528 Washington Highway
Morrisville, VT 05661
802-888-8888
https://www.copleyvt.org/

Behavioral Health & Wellness Center
607 Washington Highway
Morrisville VT 05661
802-888-8320
https://chslv.org/our-services/behavioral/

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233
1-800-787-3224 (TTY)
www.thehotline.org

Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse
1-800-228-7395

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN)
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
www.rainn.org

Students, faculty and staff may also access resources located in the local community in addition to those confidential resources above. These organizations can provide crisis intervention services, counseling, medical attention and assistance in dealing with the criminal justice system. It may be helpful for survivors to have someone who can help them explore their off-campus options and guide them through legal processes; an advocate can provide assistance in this area.

Confidential Medical Resources

A medical provider can provide emergency and/or follow-up medical services. The medical exam has two goals: first, to diagnose and treat the full extent of any injury or physical effect (including prevention of sexually transmitted illnesses and pregnancy) and second, to properly collect and preserve evidence. There is a limited window of time following an incident of sexual assault to preserve physical and other forms of evidence, although it may be possible to obtain evidence from towels, sheets, clothes, and other items for longer periods of time. It is best to gather evidence prior to washing a person's body or changing clothing. If clothes have been changed, the clothes worn at the time of the incident should be brought to the examination in a clean, sanitary container such as a paper grocery bag or wrapped in a clean sheet (plastic containers do not breathe and may render evidence useless). A change of clothing should also be brought to the hospital, as the clothes worn at the time of the incident will likely be kept as evidence. The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) is available at a hospital's Emergency Room. If you are seeking follow up medical services, you may request a SANE nurse.

Taking the steps to gather evidence immediately does not commit an individual to any particular course of action. The decision to seek timely medical attention and gather any evidence,

however, will preserve the full range of options to seek resolution under this Policy or through the pursuit of criminal prosecution, and may be helpful in obtaining protective orders.

Investigation Process

This section outlines the procedures the College will follow in resolving allegations that a person has been subjected to Prohibited Conduct ("complainant") by a student, employee or other College community member who reportedly engaged in Prohibited Conduct ("respondent") in violation of the College's Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking Policy. Complainant and respondent will be referred to collectively as the "Parties."

Overview of Steps:
1. Initial Report
2. Initial Assessment and Intake Meeting
3. Filling a Formal Complaint
4. Determinations of Applicable Procedures, Dismissals, Transfers, and Appeals of Such Determinations
5. Notice
6. Consolidation of Formal Complaints
7. Initial Meeting with Respondent
8. Investigation
9. Preliminary Investigative Report
10. Review and Response to Preliminary Investigative Report
11. Final Investigative Report
12. Decision-Making Processes

Detailed Description of each Step:

1. Initial Report

An individual who wishes to report an act of Prohibited Conduct (including, but not limited to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation) is encouraged to report directly to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. A report can be made in-person or by video meeting, telephone, in writing, by email, or by submitting an electronic Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Report Form.

The Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator will coordinate the investigation of all reports of Prohibited Conduct defined in this Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking Policy. The Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator (or designee) will conduct an initial intake assessment in all instances where a Complainant reports Prohibited Conduct, as described below.

Both Parties will have the opportunity to object to the designee appointed to the intake meeting on the grounds of bias or conflict of interest. If either of the Parties objects, the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, or other appropriate College administrator who is not the subject of the objection, will evaluate whether or not to accept the objection. The Parties will be notified in writing of that determination. If the Intake meeting designee is found to have a bias or conflict of interest as to either Party, that person will be removed and replaced by another designee. The parties will be provided with an opportunity to object to the replacement as well. The College may decide to appoint other designees from within or outside of the College

community to serve in the role if that is deemed advisable or necessary in a particular case. The Investigation Process will resume upon the final appointment of an Intake meeting designee.

In cases where the named respondent is not another Sterling student, but is a faculty member, or an employee or affiliate of the College, the Title IX Coordinator will consult with the appropriate departments.

2. Initial Assessment & Intake Meeting

Upon receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator (or designee) will conduct the Intake Meeting with a complainant as soon as possible after receiving a complaint. At that meeting, the following topics will be addressed, as appropriate:

1. Address immediate physical safety and emotional well-being needs;
2. Notify the complainant of the right to contact law enforcement and seek medical treatment (and the right to decline to do so), and the importance of preservation of evidence;
3. Notify the complainant of the right to be assisted by individuals at the College in contacting law enforcement;
4. Notify the complainant of confidential and non-confidential reporting options on and off campus;
5. Provide the complainant with information about:
   a. On and off campus resources that may be available to the extent applicable, including counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance (including visa and immigration assistance), student financial aid, and other available services;
   b. The range of supportive measures and remedies that may be available to the extent applicable, including changes to academic, living, transportation, and/or working situations, or other protective measures, which are available to the complainant regardless of whether the complainant files a formal complaint with the College, or local law enforcement;
6. Provide an overview of the procedural options and process;
7. Explain the right to object to the assignment of an investigator or investigators based on bias or conflict of interest;
8. Explain that the complainant has a right to an advisor of their choice during the process and the role of the advisor;
9. Assess for pattern evidence or other similar conduct if possible;
   a. Explain the Good Samaritan Statement
   b. Explain the College's policy prohibiting retaliation;
10. Explain that if the complaint involves a Clery crime, the need to notify The Dean of Community to assess the need to:
   a. enter the report into the College's daily crime log; and
   b. issue a timely warning as defined by the Clery Act, and assure the complainant that any such reports will not include the complainant's personally identifying information.

Following or at the intake meeting, the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator or designee will provide the complainant with the above-listed information.

The complainant has the right to request that the College share or not share the complainant's name (or other identifiable information) with the respondent, or that the College take no formal action in response to the report. If the complainant makes such a request, the Title IX Coordinator will balance the request with its obligation to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all College community members.

The Title IX Coordinator will consider factors that may include but are not limited to whether there are circumstances suggesting there is a risk of the alleged respondent committing additional acts of Prohibited Conduct involving the complainant or others in the campus community, whether the College has received similar complaints regarding the alleged respondent, whether the alleged respondent has a history of arrests or records from a prior school indicating a history of violence, whether the alleged respondent threatened or appears to pose a risk of further Prohibited Conduct against the complainant or others, whether Prohibited Conduct was allegedly committed by multiple respondents, whether a pattern of perpetration (e.g. more than one report involving a particular location or group) appears to be present, whether violence was perpetrated with or without a weapon, and whether the College possesses other means to obtain relevant evidence.

Absent a request for confidentiality as described above, the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator or designee will ask the complainant general questions to get a basic understanding of the reported Prohibited Conduct. The interview will include questions to understand the key facts upon which the complainant bases the report to appropriately assess how to proceed.

3. Filing a Formal Complaint

A complainant who would like the College to pursue the formal investigation and resolution process must submit a formal complaint, signed physically or electronically by the complainant, to the Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Deputy Coordinator. The formal complaint must state the allegations and request that the College initiate an investigation. A formal complaint may be submitted prior to or at any point after the intake meeting.

4. Determinations of Applicable Procedures, Dismissals, Transfers, and Appeals of Such Determinations

When a complainant requests an investigation, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will promptly upon receipt of a formal complaint:
1. Determine whether the conduct alleged would, if proved, constitute Title IX Sexual Harassment (i.e., Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Severe, Pervasive and Objectively Offensive Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, or Domestic Violence, Dating Violence or sex-based Stalking) as defined in the Title IX Sexual Harassment definition stated above;
2. Determine whether the conduct allegedly occurred in the College's education program or activity;
3. Determine whether the conduct allegedly occurred in the United States; and
4. Determine whether at the time the formal complaint was made, the complainant was participating or attempting to participate in a College program or activity.

If a formal complaint of conduct that would, if proved, satisfy all four of these elements and constitute Title IX Sexual Harassment as defined in this policy is filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator, it will be investigated and resolved through the procedures applicable to Title IX Sexual Harassment matters as outlined below. The College will, as noted above,

investigate alleged Title IX Sexual Harassment when a complainant submits a formal complaint to the Title IX Coordinator and requests an investigation. The Title IX Coordinator may also choose at their discretion to sign a formal complaint and initiate an investigation, even if the complainant chooses not to do so. In cases where the complainant does not wish to submit a formal complaint but the Title IX Coordinator decides in their discretion to sign a complaint and initiate an investigation and resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator will not be a complainant or otherwise a party to the matter.

If some but not all of the allegations in the complaint satisfy all four of these elements and a formal complaint is received from a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator, the College has the discretion to address the entire matter through the procedures applicable to Title IX Sexual Harassment matters as outlined below, including a live hearing (that is, the College will as required by the May 2020 Title IX regulations follow Title IX Sexual Harassment procedures to address the alleged Title IX Sexual Harassment, and it may choose, to promote efficiency, to follow Title IX Sexual Harassment procedures to address Non-Title IX Prohibited Conduct and other non-Title IX alleged misconduct in such mixed cases, so that all related misconduct may be addressed through one investigation and resolution process). The College will make such decisions in the exercise of its best judgment to promote efficiency, and in accordance with applicable law, regulation and U.S. Department of Education guidance.

If it appears based upon initial review or upon information gathered during an investigation that the matter does not satisfy and/or no longer satisfies all four of these elements, the College will, as required by the May 2020 Title IX regulations, dismiss the matter for purposes of the Title IX Sexual Harassment process, but will transfer it for investigation under the procedures outlined in this section, and/or for resolution under resolution processes as referenced below or otherwise in College procedures, as deemed appropriate by the College. Investigation and resolution of a matter that does not fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment may be pursued, dismissed altogether, or transferred to another College process, as deemed appropriate in the College's discretion and/or as appropriate under applicable law.

- Even if the initial allegations of a matter fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment, the College may (but is not required to) dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if at any time during the investigation or resolution process:
  - A complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
  - The respondent is no longer enrolled at or employed by the College; or
  - Specific circumstances prevent the College from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

If a formal complaint is dismissed by the College under the circumstances described above, the College will simultaneously provide to the parties written notice (by electronic or other means) of the dismissal and the reasons for the dismissal, and notice of the parties' opportunity to appeal such dismissal through the Title IX Sexual Harassment appeal procedures outlined below.

If the respondent is a student and an employee, the Title IX Coordinator will determine which procedures will apply based upon the facts and circumstances, such as whether the respondent's status as a student or an employee predominates in the context of the Prohibited Conduct. If a student-employee is found to have engaged in alleged Prohibited Conduct, the student-employee may be subject to sanctions both in connection with their employment, and in connection with their student status, as appropriate.

5. Notice

If the College initiates an investigation of Prohibited Conduct it will provide to the parties a written notice (by electronic or other means) that includes:

- Information about the College's formal and informal resolution processes;
- A statement of the allegations of behavior potentially constituting Prohibited Conduct, including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial post-intake interview. Sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting Prohibited Conduct, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known;
- A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
- Information regarding the College's presumption of good faith reporting and a summary of the College's false information policy;
- Notification that parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney;
- Notification of existing counseling, health and mental health services available on campus and/or in the community;
- Notification that taking any retaliatory action (directly or through others) against any person because they are involved in the investigation is prohibited and will be considered a separate violation of College policy;
- Notification that the parties may inspect and review evidence during the investigation and resolution process, as provided below;
- The name of the investigator(s), as well as the right to file a written objection within two business days to the investigator(s) based on the grounds of actual bias for or against complainants or respondents generally, actual bias for or against a particular complainant or respondent, or conflict of interest;
- The right to file a written objection within two business days to the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, or designee based on the grounds of actual bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or for or against a particular complainant or respondent, or conflict of interest;
- The right to suggest witnesses and provide evidence to the investigator(s); and
- The right to request accommodations related to the Investigation Process through the Office of Accessibility.

If in the course of an investigation the College decides to investigate allegations about any party that are not included in the notice described above, it will provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

6. Consolidation of Formal Complaints

The College may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of Prohibited Conduct against more than one respondent, or by more than one complainant against one or more respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of such Prohibited Conduct arise out of the same facts or circumstances. Where a grievance process involves more than one complainant or more than one respondent, references in this section to the singular "party," "complainant," or "respondent" include the plural, as applicable.

7. Initial Meeting with Respondent

The respondent will also receive an invitation to meet with the Title IX Coordinator or designee to review the process, resources and the role of the advisor. If the respondent does not respond to the meeting request or is unable to meet within three (3) days, the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator or designee will provide the following information in writing:

- On and off campus resources that may be available to the extent applicable, including counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance (including visa and immigration assistance), student financial aid, and other available services;
- The range of Supportive Measures that may be available to the extent applicable, including changes to academic, living, transportation, and/or working situations, and other Supportive Measures described in this policy;
- An overview of the procedural options and processes; and
- The College's policy prohibiting retaliation.
- The right to request accommodations related to the Investigation Process through the Office of Accessibility.

8. Investigation

The Title IX Coordinator or designee will select an investigator or investigators (referred to here as "investigator" for ease of reference), who will conduct the investigation. The parties will be given notice of the identity of the investigator and an opportunity to object to their appointment, as noted above.

The investigator will conduct an appropriate investigation which may include interviews with the complainant, the respondent, and other persons with information. These interviews may be recorded. As required by the Clery Act, individuals conducting investigations and determination proceedings will receive training annually on the issues related to sexual assault, harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, and how to conduct an investigation and/or determination process that protects the safety of complainants and promotes accountability.

The complainant and respondent will be afforded the same rights and opportunities throughout the investigation and adjudication process, including the opportunity to recommend witnesses and submit evidence. However, investigation logistics, including but not limited to the sequence of interviews, the decision to interview particular witnesses, and the decision to allow or consider evidence offered by the parties, are within the discretion of the investigator.

The complainant and respondent will be asked to identify, preserve and submit all evidence pertaining to the matter under investigation, and to identify witnesses they believe may have relevant information to share. The investigator is not required to consider the evidence submitted or interview any particular witness, even if identified by one of the parties. However, in determining whether to interview witnesses or review evidence, the investigator should consider such factors as equity, fairness, thoroughness, and impartial treatment of both parties.

Complainants and respondents are entitled to the same opportunities to have an advisor of their choice present at any interviews, meetings, or proceedings that they are attending related to the investigation process under this policy. The advisor may advise the complainant or respondent privately, but cannot act as a speaking advocate at a meeting. An investigator or other College representative may terminate meetings, and/or proceed with the investigation based on

otherwise-available information, if an advisor is disruptive or otherwise refuses to comply with the requirements of this policy.

While each party may have an advisor of choice, they may not compel any specific person to serve as their advisor. The College's faculty and/or staff may be available to serve as advisors, but none are required to do so.

The parties' equal opportunity to present witnesses may include evidence from fact and expert witnesses. Parties are not restricted in their ability to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence. Parties whose participation is invited or expected will receive written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all hearings, investigative interviews, or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate.

9. Preliminary Investigative Report

Once the investigator has gathered all of the information that they determine should be gathered as an initial matter, they will prepare a preliminary investigative report. The preliminary investigative report will summarize relevant evidence but will not contain any recommendations regarding whether the respondent violated this policy or any other College policy at issue.

The College will provide each party with an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised, including the evidence upon which College does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and/or which the investigator does not deem relevant, and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source, so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to conclusion of the investigation. Such evidence will not include un-redacted privileged records or information that may have been gathered or received during the investigation, absent written consent from the party holding the privilege.

Given the sensitive nature of the information provided, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will provide the information for review in a secure manner (e.g., by providing digital copies of the materials through a protected, "read-only" web portal). Neither the Parties nor their advisors may copy, remove, photograph, print, image, videotape, record, or in any manner otherwise duplicate, share, or remove the information provided, and they will be required to execute an agreement confirming that they will not do so. This agreement will cover the final investigative report and final compilation of evidence described below, which will be covered by the same restrictions. An advisor who fails to abide by this policy may be subject to discipline to the extent applicable and/or may be excluded from further participation in the process

10. Review and Response to Preliminary Investigative Report

The parties may respond to the Preliminary Report; the Parties must submit any response within ten (10) business days of being notified of their opportunity to review the report. The parties may respond in one or both of the following ways:
- The parties may provide a written response to the Preliminary Investigative Report, or any portion of it. The investigator will consider any written response provided by the parties in preparing the Final Investigative Report.
- The parties may submit a written request for additional investigation. Such requests may include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) request(s) for follow-up interview(s) with

existing witnesses or the other party to clarify or provide additional information, including suggesting questions to the investigator(s) to pose to witnesses or the other party; (2) request(s) for interviews with new witnesses; or (3) request(s) to consider new evidence. Any request for additional investigation shall explain the reason for the request.

- If neither of the parties requests additional investigation, the investigator will prepare the Final Investigative Report. If either (or both) parties request additional investigation, the investigator will review the request(s) in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator or designee. The investigator will conduct the requested additional investigation if the investigator, in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator or designee, determines that the request(s) will assist the investigator in completing the investigation. The investigator and Title IX Coordinator or designee will assess whether investigation of the additional information requires a substantial deviation from the recommended timeframe for completion of the investigation; if so, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will notify the parties in writing with an anticipated revised time frame.

If the investigator conducts additional investigation, the investigator will prepare an Addendum to the Preliminary Report ("Addendum"). The Addendum will include: (1) a summary of the additional investigation; (2) a statement as to whether the additional investigation changed any finding in the Preliminary Report (and, if it did, the investigator will identify which finding(s) changed); and (3) additional exhibits, to the extent the additional investigation resulted in additional documentary evidence. The investigator will submit the Addendum to the Title IX Coordinator or designee. The Title IX Coordinator or designee may require the investigator to conduct additional investigation before the Addendum is deemed complete.

Once the Title IX Coordinator or designee has agreed that the Addendum is complete, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will provide the Preliminary Investigative Report, any Addendum, and any exhibits to the parties and their advisors for review, through a secure information-sharing process, and subject to the same restrictions on duplication, re-distribution, etc., as are outlined above. The investigator will then work to prepare the Final Investigative Report, as described below.

11. Final Investigative Report

I. After considering and addressing as deemed appropriate any written response submitted by either party and/or any additional information addressed in an Addendum, if applicable, or after the 10 business day comment period has lapsed without receiving a written response or responses to the Preliminary Investigative Report, the investigator will prepare a Final Investigative Report. The Final Investigative Report will include the investigator's non-binding recommendation as to whether the respondent should be found responsible for violating the policy provisions at issue. The investigator's recommendation will be reached by applying the preponderance of evidence standard, i.e., whether it is more likely than not that the policy was violated. The Final Investigative Report will be reviewed by the Title IX Coordinator before it is issued.

II. The Final Investigative Report will be made available to each party and their advisor. Each party will have a period of 10 days from when the Final Investigative Report is made available to prepare and submit to the Title IX Coordinator a written response to the Final Investigative Report, if they choose to do so. The Title IX Coordinator will make any such comments available to the appropriate decision-maker under the applicable Formal Post-Investigation Process as provided below for consideration by such decision-maker, and to the other party.

FORMAL POST-INVESTIGATION PROCESS ALTERNATIVES

Once the investigation has been completed, the matter will move to resolution through one of three formal alternative resolution processes, as follows:

1. If any allegations of Prohibited Conduct raised in the matter fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment, the resolution process will be overseen by the Title IX Coordinator or designee and will proceed to a live hearing and, if applicable, sanctioning and appeal process as described immediately below.

   a. As noted above, if some but not all of the allegations in a complaint satisfy all four of the elements of a Title IX Sexual Harassment matter and a formal complaint is received from a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator, the College has the discretion to address the entire matter through the procedures applicable to Title IX Sexual Harassment matters as outlined immediately below, including a live hearing (that is, the College will as required by the May 2020 Title IX regulations follow Title IX Sexual Harassment procedures to address the alleged Title IX Sexual Harassment, and it may choose, to promote efficiency, to follow Title IX Sexual Harassment procedures to address non-Title IX Prohibited Conduct and other non-Title IX alleged misconduct in such mixed cases, so that all related misconduct may be addressed through one investigation and resolution process). The College will make such decisions in the exercise of its best judgment to promote efficiency, and in accordance with applicable law, regulation and U.S. Department of Education guidance.

2. If all of the allegations of Prohibited Conduct fall outside of the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment and the respondent is a student, the post-investigation resolution process will be overseen by the Dean of Community. The Dean or their designee will review the Final Investigative Report and all related evidence and issue a written determination. If appropriate, the Dean or their designee will issue written sanctions. In such cases, these post-investigation procedures will apply exclusively, and the Title IX Sexual Harassment post-investigation hearing, sanction and appeal process described immediately below will not apply.

3. If all of the allegations of Prohibited Conduct fall outside of the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment and the respondent is an employee, the post-investigation resolution process will be overseen by the Dean of Community, or their designee(s), who will review the Final Investigative Report and all related evidence, and issue a written determination. If appropriate, sanctions will be written. In such cases, these post-investigation procedures will apply exclusively, and the Title IX Sexual Harassment post-investigation hearing, sanction, and appeal process described immediately below will not apply.

   a. As noted above, if the respondent is a student and an employee, the Title IX Coordinator will determine which procedures will apply based upon the facts and circumstances, such as whether the respondent's status as a student or an employee predominates in the context of the alleged Prohibited Conduct. If a student-employee is found to have engaged in Prohibited Conduct, the student-employee may be subject to sanctions both in connection with their employment, and in connection with their student status, as appropriate.

HEARING PROCESS IN CASES INVOLVING TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT ALLEGATIONS

The following hearing procedures will apply only in cases that fall within the definition of Title IX Sexual Harassment (i.e., Title IX misconduct as defined above, that allegedly occurred in a College education program or activity in the United States, and about which the College receives a formal complaint).

1. Hearing Officers

Hearings will be presided over by a hearing officer, who will make the decision as to whether or not the respondent violated the Policy provisions at issue. This decision will be made using the preponderance of the evidence standard, which means that a Policy violation will only be found if the evidence establishes that it is more likely than not that the violation occurred. The hearing officer has broad authority to determine the process, timing and conduct of a hearing. For example, the hearing officer will determine the order of presentation, timing and overall duration of the hearing, what information and evidence will be heard, what information and questions are relevant to the determination of the matter, and what cross-examination questions will or will not be permitted.

Hearing officers will be appointed by the Title IX Coordinator. Hearing officers may be College employees or may be retained by the College to serve in the hearing officer role in particular cases, as deemed appropriate by the College. In selecting a hearing officer for a particular matter, the Title IX Coordinator will take care to select an individual who does not have a conflict of interest or actual bias against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. The College will notify the parties of the identity of the hearing officer in advance of the hearing, and parties may, within 3 business days of such notice, object to the service of the hearing officer by providing a written statement (which may be transmitted electronically) as to why the party believes that the hearing officer has a conflict of interest or bias. The Title IX Coordinator or designee will make decisions regarding such objections and the appointment of an alternate hearing officer, as necessary.

2. Advisors

Each party may have an advisor of their choice present at a hearing for the limited purpose of conducting cross-examination on behalf of that party. Advisors may be, but are not required to be, attorneys. If a party does not have an advisor of their choice present at a hearing, the College will without fee or charge to the party provide an advisor of the College's choice, again for the limited purpose of conducting cross-examination on behalf of that party. No later than 10 business days before the hearing, parties should inform the Title IX Coordinator of the identity of any advisor of choice who will accompany them to the hearing, so that the College will know whether or not it needs to arrange for the presence of a College-provided advisor.

At a time and manner deemed appropriate by the hearing officer, the advisor for each party will be permitted to ask the other party and any witnesses all relevant cross-examination questions and follow-up questions, including those challenging credibility. Except for that limited role, advisors may not participate actively in the hearing and may not speak or otherwise communicate on the part of the party that the advisor is advising. However, the advisor may consult privately in a non-disruptive manner with their advisee during and/or at a recess in the hearing. Scheduling accommodations generally will not be made for advisors if they unduly delay the process. The College reserves the right to take appropriate action regarding any advisor who disrupts the process, or who does not abide by the restrictions on their participation as determined in the sole discretion of the hearing officer, which may include exclusion of the advisor from the hearing and the appointment of an alternate College-provided advisor.

3. Requests for Appearance of Witnesses

If a party wishes to have an individual appear at the hearing as a witness, they must provide notice of the identity of the proposed witness and a brief description of the subject matter of the witnesses' testimony to the Title IX Coordinator or designee at least ten (10) business days before the date of the hearing. The Title IX Coordinator or designee, in consultation with the hearing officer as necessary, will determine whether the witness is likely to have information that is relevant to the hearing, and if it is determined that the witness is likely to have relevant information, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will inform the witness that their presence at the hearing is requested. Witnesses are not required to attend the hearing.

4. Conduct of Hearings and Relevance

At or before the hearing, the hearing officer will receive a copy of the Final Investigative Report, any attachments thereto, and copies of the parties' written responses to the Final Investigative Report, if any, which will be part of the information of record to be considered by the hearing officer. The recommendation regarding responsibility made by the investigator in the Final Investigative Report is only advisory and is not binding on the hearing officer; the hearing officer will make an independent determination regarding responsibility based upon the investigative report, evidence admitted at the hearing, and the testimony and cross-examination of parties and witnesses at the hearing, as applicable.

Ordinarily, new evidence may not be introduced during the hearing. If there is a request to introduce new evidence, the hearing officer will determine in their discretion (considering factors such as, but not limited to, whether the evidence was reasonably available to the party during the investigation, the apparent materiality and relevance of the evidence, and prejudice to the other party and delay that could follow from introduction of the new evidence), and whether to allow the evidence to be introduced, to exclude the new evidence, or to suspend the hearing and require further investigation regarding the new evidence.

Subject to the discretion of the hearing officer, hearings will ordinarily begin with introductory remarks by the hearing officer, followed by opening statements from any party who wishes to provide one, followed by the hearing officers asking relevant initial questions of the parties as deemed appropriate by the hearing officer. During this portion of the hearing, advisors may confer privately and in a non-disruptive manner with their advisee, but they are not allowed to make opening statements or otherwise address the hearing officer or anyone else present at the hearing.

After the hearing officer has asked their initial questions of the parties, the hearing officer will permit each party's advisor to ask the other party all relevant questions and follow-up questions, including those challenging credibility.

Subject to the discretion of the hearing officer, questioning of witnesses will generally follow a similar process, whereby the hearing officer will pose relevant questions to each witness, then the parties' advisors will be permitted to ask relevant questions of witnesses.

In accordance with May 2020 Title IX regulations, such cross-examination by advisors will be conducted directly, orally, and in real time by the party's advisor of choice and never by a party personally.

Only relevant cross-examination and other questions may be asked of a party or witness. Before a complainant, respondent, or witness answers a cross-examination or other question, the

hearing officer will first determine whether the question is relevant and explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant. Advisors are not permitted to object to hearing officer decisions regarding relevance during a hearing.

Regarding the evidence subject to inspection and review that was provided to the parties and their advisors under the investigation procedures outlined above, a copy of such evidence will be made available at the hearing, and each party and/or their advisor(as applicable) will have an equal opportunity to refer to such evidence during the hearing, including for purposes of cross-examination.

Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.

Information protected under a legally recognized privilege (such as, for example,privileged communications between a party and their physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in a treatment capacity, or privileged communications between a party and their attorney), is not relevant unless the person holding the privilege has waived the privilege.

At the request of either party, the College will provide for the hearing to occur with the parties located in separate rooms with technology enabling the hearing officer and parties to simultaneously see and hear the party or the witness answering questions. Live hearings may be conducted with all parties physically present in the same geographic location or, at the College's discretion, any or all parties, witnesses, and other participants may appear at the live hearing virtually, with technology enabling participants simultaneously to see and hear each other.

If a party or witness does not submit to cross-examination at the live hearing, the hearing officer will only consider any statement of that party or witness in reaching a determination regarding responsibility to the extent permitted by the law, Title IX regulations and/or U.S. Department of Education guidance that apply or applies as of the time of the hearing. The hearing officer will not draw an inference about the determination regarding responsibility based solely on a party's or witness's absence from the live hearing or refusal to answer cross-examination or other questions.

5. Record of Hearings
The College will create an audio or audiovisual recording and/or transcript, of any live hearing, and will make it available to the parties for inspection and review.

6. Determinations Regarding Responsibility
Within ten (10) business days after the hearing, the hearing officer (and if necessary the sanctioning officer, as provided below) will prepare and issue a written determination regarding responsibility and sanctions. In determining responsibility, the hearing officer will apply the preponderance of the evidence standard. The written determination will include:
- Identification of the section(s) of the College's Title IX Sexual Harassment policy alleged to have been violated;

- A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the complaint through the determination, including but not limited to, as applicable, any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits,methods used to gather other evidence, and hearings held;
- Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- Conclusions regarding the application of definitions of sexual harassment in the College's Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy to the facts;
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility and, where necessary and in collaboration with the sanctioning officer, a statement regarding any sanctions and therationale therefor; and
- Identification of the College's procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal (as outlined below).

The determination regarding responsibility becomes final either on the date that the College provides the parties with the written determination of the appeal, if an appeal is filed, or if an appeal is not filed, the date on which the appeal would no longer be considered timely.

The determination will also notify the parties whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the College's education program or activity will be provided by the College to the complainant, but will not provide details about any such remedies.

If sanctions are necessary, they will be assigned in accordance with the Sanctions section below. The parties will receive notice simultaneously of the written determination regarding responsibility and, if necessary, any sanctions as determined through the procedures outlined below.

SANCTIONS

If the respondent is found responsible for one or more violations of this Policy (and/orother College policies, in mixed Title IX Sexual Harassment/other policy violationcases), the College will issue sanctions commensurate with the violation(s).

In cases where the respondent is a student, Favor Ellis, Dean of Community, will issue final sanctions. In cases where the respondent is a faculty member, Laura Spence, Dean of Academics, will issue final sanctions. In cases where the respondent is an employee, Favor Ellis, Dean of Community, will issue final sanctions.

Remedies or sanctions for violations of the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy may include but are not limited to:
- Verbal or written warning;
- training;
- counseling;
- probation;
- No Contact Order;
- No Trespass Order;
- suspension of a student's enrollment (with or without case-specific conditions on re-enrollment), or suspension of an employee without pay;
- dismissal from employment;
- dismissal from the College;
- temporary or permanent transfer to a different position;

- class or academic re-assignment;
- reassignment of work or academic work;
- referral to another College process as necessary to determine employment status-related issues; or
- alteration of living or work environment.

The responsible office may consider the cumulative disciplinary history of the respondent, if any, when making sanctioning decisions.

As noted above, the College's decision on any sanctions and an explanation of the rationale therefore will be documented in the written determination. Thus, in cases where the hearing officer determines that the respondent is responsible for a policy violation, the hearing officer and the sanctioning officer will work together to prepare a single written determination document that will contain all of the information listed above, as applicable. Such written determination will be provided simultaneously to both parties.

Supportive Measures

Non-disciplinary supportive measures such as no-contact orders may be enacted or continued even in cases in which the respondent is not found responsible for a policy violation.

APPEALS IN CASES INVOLVING ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Both parties have the right to appeal decisions made through the process outlined above. All appeals must be made in writing and sent to the Title IX Coordinator. An appeal of any decision must be received within ten (10) business days after the parties have been informed of the decision. Appeals are heard by an appeal officer.

Parties may appeal either:
1. The Title IX Coordinator's dismissal of a formal complaint for Title IX purposes, or
2. A determination regarding responsibility and/or sanctions, if applicable, on the grounds that:
   a. there was a procedural error that unfairly affected the outcome;
   b. there is new information that was not reasonably available during the investigation and resolution process that would have affected the outcome;
   c. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or actual bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter; or
   d. the sanctions imposed are disproportionate to the nature and severity of the offense.

The role of the appeal officer is limited. Appeals are not intended to be a full rehearing of the reported conduct. Appeals are confined to a review of the record on the grounds stated above. The individual appealing carries the burden to demonstrate that either the alleged procedural error, the proposed new evidence, or the alleged bias/conflict of interest affected the outcome of the proceeding, or that the sanctions imposed are disproportionate to the nature and severity of the offense.

The party who submits the written appeal will be the "appellant," and the other party will be the "appellee." The appellee will have five (5) business days to submit a response to the written

appeal. At the conclusion of these time periods, the Title IX Coordinator will refer the written appeal, the Final Investigative Report, any exhibits admitted at the hearing, a recording of the live hearing, and the written determination (the "Appeal Record"), to an appeal officer.

The Title IX Coordinator or designee will appoint the appeal officer and will notify both parties of that appointment. Both parties will have two (2) business days to object to the appeal officer's selection on the basis of actual bias for or against complainants' correspondents generally or a particular complainant or respondent, or conflict of interest. If the Title IX Coordinator determines that an appeal officer may have actual bias or conflict of interest, the Title IX Coordinator will remove the appeal officer and designated new appeal officer. This process can be repeated as necessary.

The appeal officer will determine whether any grounds for the appeal are substantiated.If the appeal officer determines that none of the grounds are substantiated, the appeal officer will share that determination with the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IXCoordinator or designee will notify both parties of that outcome. If the appeal officer determines that one or more grounds for the appeal is/are substantiated, the appeal officer will take appropriate action as indicated below.

Procedural Error: If it is determined that a procedural error affected the outcome, the appeal officer may return the matter to the investigator or the hearing officer with instructions to correct the error, and to reconsider the findings as appropriate, or to take other action as deemed appropriate.

New Information: If the appeal officer determines that new information should be considered, the matter will be returned to the investigator if additional investigation is needed. The investigator(s) will prepare an Addendum to the Final Investigative Report, and provide the parties with an opportunity to respond to the Addendum consistent with the opportunity to do so in accordance with the procedures outlined above. An additional hearing will be conducted as deemed necessary, focused on the new information only.

Bias or Conflict of Interest: If the appeal officer determines that there was actual bias or conflict of interest on the part of the investigator that affected the outcome, the appeal officer may order a new investigation with a new investigator, and a new resolution process or live hearing as appropriate. If the Appeal Officer determines that there was actual bias or conflict of interest on the part of the hearing officer that affected the outcome, the appeal officer may order a new resolution process or live hearing as appropriate.

Sanctions: If the appeal officer determines the sanctions imposed are disproportionate to the nature and severity of the offense, the appeal officer in conjunction with the appropriate Officer may modify the sanctions.

Notification of Appeal Outcome

The appellant and the appellee will be notified simultaneously in writing of the outcome of the appeal. The appeal officer's decisions are final and are not subject to appeal.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS REGARDING FORMAL RESOLUTION OF ALLEGATIONS OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT

Additional Charges
The College reserves the right to charge parties with additional violations of the Sexual Misconduct Policy as appropriate based on new information that is provided during the course of the investigation.

Training
The College provides training to all individuals within the community who are involved in responding to, investigating, or resolving reports of Prohibited Conduct. Applicable Training materials will be posted on the College's web site as required by May 2020 TitleIX regulations. If the College retains an individual outside the community to respond to, investigate, or resolve reports of Prohibited Conduct, the College requires that the retained individual has received adequate training consistent with the College's Standards.

Notifications
The Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, or designee will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the complainant and the respondent simultaneously are notified of the status of the investigation and resolution process, consistent with the processes described herein. Both Parties may, at any time, request a status update from the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator or designee.

Modification of Investigation and Resolution Process
The College will follow the investigation Process described herein barring exceptional circumstances. In exceptional circumstances, however, the College may be required to adapt or modify the investigation and resolution process (including timelines) to ensure an equitable resolution of a report of Prohibited Conduct. The College reserves this right. In such instances, the College will notify both Parties of the modification of the process and, if appropriate, the exceptional circumstances requiring the College to adapt or modify the process.

Alcohol and Substance Use
As noted above, the purpose of this investigation and resolution process is to resolve reports of Prohibited Conduct. It is not the purpose of this investigation and resolution process to subject individuals to disciplinary action for their own personal consumption of alcohol or drugs. Consistent with the purpose of this process, the College will not subject individuals who participate in the process to disciplinary action for information revealed in the course of the process, provided that the individual's behavior did not, and does not, place the health and safety of others at risk. In all instances, the College may pursue educational initiatives or remedies related to an individual's consumption of alcohol or drugs. The use of alcohol or other drugs will never function as a defense for engaging in Prohibited Conduct.

Past Sexual History
In general, a complainant's prior sexual history is not relevant and will not be provided to the Investigator(s) by the College. Where there is a current or ongoing relationship between the complainant and the respondent, and the respondent alleges consent, the prior sexual history between the Parties may be relevant to assess the manner and nature of communications between the Parties. However, the mere fact of a current or previous dating or sexual relationship, by itself, is not sufficient to constitute consent.

Respondent's Prior Conduct History
Where there is evidence of pattern of conduct similar in nature by the respondent, either prior to or subsequent to the conduct in question, regardless of whether there has been a finding of responsibility, this information may be deemed relevant and probative to the Investigator(s)'s determination of responsibility, and/or the sanctioning official's determination of sanction. The Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator or designee will make a determination of relevance based on an assessment of whether the previous incident was substantially similar to the conduct cited in the report and indicates a pattern of behavior and substantial conformity with that pattern by the respondent.

The College, in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator, may choose to provide this information to the Investigator(s), with appropriate notice to the Parties. Alternatively, a party may request in writing that information under this section be admitted. A request to admit such information must be submitted to the Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The Deputy Title IX Coordinator in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator will assess the relevance of this information and determine if it is appropriate for inclusion in the investigation report and or shared with investigators as appropriate.

Consolidation of Investigations
The Deputy Title IX Coordinator or designee, in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator has the discretion to consolidate into one investigation and resolution process multiple reports against a respondent, cross-complaints between a complainant and a respondent, and/or reports that the respondent may have violated College conduct standards that fall outside the scope of the Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking Policy, if the evidence related to each incident would be relevant and probative in reaching a determination on the other incident, or doing so is otherwise deemed appropriate under the circumstances. Matters may be consolidated where they involve multiple complainants, multiple respondents, or related conduct that violates the College Behavior Guidelines.

Failure of Advisor to Comply with Investigation and Disciplinary Process
If an Advisor fails to comply with the procedures set forth here, including through a material breach of confidentiality about the investigation and resolution process, the College reserves the right to exclude the Advisor from further participation in the process. Advisors may not speak for, or on behalf of, Parties.

Integrity of Proceeding
These procedures are entirely administrative in nature and are not considered legal proceedings, but rather procedures designed to address College policy violations. Neither party may audio or video record the proceedings.

Withdrawal from the Institution with Charge Pending
If a student makes the decision to withdraw from Sterling College after a notice of investigation is communicated to the student but before findings and a determination of responsibility are made, the College will suspend the disciplinary process at the time of withdrawal. The College will however gather information as it deems appropriate in order to facilitate the College's consideration of the matter if the student seeks readmission at a later time. The student's conduct file will reflect that the charge(s) is/are pending and were suspended because of the withdrawal. The investigation and resolution process will resume if and when the student seeks readmission or re-enrollment.

Records

The Title IX Coordinator or a member of the Title IX Team will retain records of all reports and complaints, regardless of whether the matter is resolved by means of Initial Assessment or the investigation and resolution process. Complaints resolved by means of an Initial Assessment are not part of a student's conduct file or academic record.

Findings of responsibility in matters resolved through the investigation and resolution process are part of a student's and employee's conduct record. Such records shall be used in reviewing any further conduct, or developing sanctions, and shall remain a part of a student's conduct record.

In addition to records kept by the Title IX team, the conduct files of students who have been suspended or dismissed from the College are maintained by the College indefinitely. Conduct files of students who have not been suspended or dismissed are maintained in the Office of the Dean of Students for no fewer than seven years from the date of the incident. Records pertaining to cases involving faculty respondents will be maintained by the Office for the Dean of Academics and the Dean of Community Office, and records pertaining to cases involving non-faculty employees and contractors will be maintained by the Office of Personnel and the Dean of Community Office.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

1. Informal Resolution of Matters That Involve Allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment

Informal resolution is a voluntary resolution option that does not involve formal hearing-based resolution procedures. Informal resolution may be used in Title IX Sexual Harassment matters in which a formal complaint has been filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator, or other matters that fall within the scope of this Policy.

At any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the College may facilitate an informal resolution process (e.g., mediation or restorative justice) where requested by a party and agreed to by both parties. If a party requests the initiation of an informal resolution process and the Title IX Coordinator agrees that the matter is appropriate for informal resolution, the College will provide to each party a written notice that discloses:

1. The allegations;
2. The requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations;
   a. As noted below, the College generally permits parties to withdraw from the informal resolution process and initiate or re-initiate a formal investigation and hearing process at any time before the informal resolution process is completed and any informal resolution is agreed to in writing by the parties; and
3. Any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.

All parties and the Title IX Coordinator must agree to informal resolution for this option to be used. The Title IX Coordinator will assess the request for informal resolution in light of factors such as, but not limited to, the severity of the alleged violation and the potential risks to campus community members posed by the reported misconduct. The College will only proceed with an

informal resolution process if both parties provide their voluntary, written consent to having the matter resolved through the informal resolution process.

The matter will be deemed resolved if and when the parties expressly agree in writing to an outcome that is acceptable to them and which is approved by the Title IX Coordinator (in consultation with other College administrators as deemed necessary). A party may withdraw from the informal resolution process at any time prior to their execution of a written informal resolution agreement. After an informal resolution is agreed to in writing between the parties, neither party may initiate a formal resolution process regarding the same factual allegations.

At any time before a matter is resolved through informal resolution, the Title IX Coordinator may terminate an informal resolution process and initiate or re-initiate a formal investigation and resolution process, as they deem appropriate in their discretion.

2. Informal Resolution of Non-Title IX Prohibited Conduct and Other Cases

Informal resolution may also be used in non-Title IX Prohibited Conduct cases that do not involve allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment and/or other alleged policy violations, whether or not a formal complaint has been filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator, as deemed appropriate by the Title IX Coordinator, The procedures for such informal resolutions will be determined at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator with agreement of the parties, as appropriate.

The College will not offer to facilitate, and will not utilize, an informal resolution process in any case involving allegations that a College employee sexually harassed a student.

Mandatory Reporting Policy

All students are encouraged, and all employees are required, to report sexual misconduct, domestic and dating violence and misconduct, and stalking incidents to the College, (via the Title IX Coordinator or Dean of Community), and/or to law enforcement agencies. Sterling will offer, and upon request provide, assistance to those who wish to contact law enforcement agencies.

Title IX Reporting
Title IX is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. All faculty, employees, and students in supervisory positions are expected to report acts of sexual and gender discrimination-including sexual violence and harassment- involving any member(s) of the campus community, guests, or visitors to the Title IX Coordinator without delay.

Discrimination and Harassment
Sterling College is committed to maintaining a diverse and inclusive campus environment where bigotry and intolerance are unacceptable. Discrimination and harassment, including related retaliation, as defined by applicable law and the corresponding terms of this policy, are antithetical to Sterling's mission. Racial misconduct, including hate speech, or inappropriate conduct toward any individual based on a person's skin color, ethnicity, or national origin, is prohibited.

Sterling strictly prohibits conduct that constitutes unlawful discrimination and harassment, including racial misconduct as well as related retaliation, as defined below. Sterling will take reasonable and appropriate remedial action to prevent unlawful discrimination, harassment, and related retaliation, eliminate any hostile environment, prevent its recurrence, and correct its discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if applicable. (Except as otherwise specified herein,) This Anti-Harassment/ Discrimination Policy applies to faculty, staff, and students, as well as to others who participate in all Sterling programs and activities, including but not limited to the campus undergraduate programs, Field Studies and Field Semester programs, Continuing Education programs, and the School for the New American Farmstead programs.

Sterling does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 as amended ("Title IX"), as well as applicable state law, requires that it not discriminate in such a manner. Prohibited sex discrimination includes sexual harassment and sexual misconduct (which includes sexual assault and inappropriate sexual conduct) as defined by Sterling's policies. The Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinator are responsible for coordinating Sterling's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX. The Title IX Coordinator's responsibilities include overseeing all Title IX complaints and identifying and addressing any patterns or systemic problems that arise during the review of such complaints. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator or to the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

All members of the Sterling community (faculty, staff, employees, and students) have the right to pursue discrimination and harassment complaints, including racial misconduct, and related retaliation, beyond Sterling, utilizing local, state, or federal enforcement agencies, including local and state police agencies, as appropriate, regardless of whether they choose to file a complaint under this policy. These agencies can conduct impartial investigations, and facilitate conciliation, and if an agency finds that there is probable cause or reasonable grounds to believe that unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation has occurred, it may take the case to court. There are certain time deadlines for the filing of complaints with state and federal agencies and/or state or federal court. Therefore, individuals who choose to pursue harassment, discrimination, or retaliation charges beyond Sterling's procedures should contact these agencies or their attorney for further assistance. There are many resources available to individuals who are involved in some way with an incident of discrimination, retaliation, or harassment. Faculty, staff or students found to have violated this Anti-Harassment/ Discrimination Policy may be subject to the full range of disciplinary actions, as applicable, up to and including termination of employment, suspension, or expulsion.

Reported conduct that falls within the scope of the College's Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence and Stalking Policy will be handled under the procedures outlined in that Policy, rather than the procedures outlined in this Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy.

Defining Harassment:
Harassment constitutes a form of discrimination that is defined as verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual's race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital or civil union status, veteran status or qualified disability, which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the individual's employment or

educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Examples of Harassment:

Examples of kinds of conduct that may be harassment are unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, including but not limited to:

- Pervasive harassment: Threats of intimidation or contact which is not freely agreed upon by both parties; unwelcome touching, patting, pinching or leering; sexually graphic comments about a person's body; sexual advances, stalking; persistent, offensive verbal abuses including propositions, insulting or degrading comments or behavior, jokes, slurs, mimicking, gestures, innuendos, vulgar language; obscene posters, notes or graffiti, telephone or e-mail messages; harassment in work assignments.
- Threats that a person's employment status, conditions of employment, promotional opportunities, status in class, grades, financial aid, enrollment, access to housing, choice in job placement, status of academic or community proposals, may be adversely affected by addressing or resisting racism and other forms of discrimination, as well as addressing or resisting unwanted sexual advances.
- Teaching practices or communications that are demeaning, hostile, or alienating (while the College has a policy supporting academic freedom, behavior that focuses attention on discriminatory characteristics in a context that is irrelevant to the course constitutes a serious violation of the College's Harassment Policy);
- Inappropriate personal attention by an instructor or College official who is in a position to determine a student's grade or otherwise affect the student's academic performance or professional future.
- Microaggressions, which are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. In many cases, these hidden messages may invalidate the group identity or experiential reality of target persons, demean them on a personal or group level, communicate they are lesser human beings, suggest they do not belong with the majority group, threaten and intimidate, or relegate them to inferior status and treatment. (Psychology Today)
- Hate speech, which is speech that encourages bias, threatens or insults groups based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other traits.

Specific Types of Harassment:

In addition to the forms of harassment listed above, other examples of specific types of harassment might include, but are not limited to:

Disability harassment: Verbal or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of an individual's disabling condition such as manner of speaking, manner of movement or necessary equipment.

National Origin harassment: Verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual's national origin such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking or customs.

Racial harassment: Verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual's race such as words emphasizing stereotypes, comments on manner of speaking and negative references to racial customs. Such racial misconduct includes but is not limited to inappropriate racial comments,

slurs, jokes, pictures, objects, threats, physical assaults, intimidation, unequal application of policies, and unequal or biased grading. This encompasses everything from microaggressions to overt racism.

Religious harassment: Verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual's religion such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, religious tradition and religious clothing.

Sexual Orientation harassment: Verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual's sexual orientation, such as negative name-calling and imitating mannerisms.

Gender harassment: Verbal or physical conduct directed at an individual's gender, gender identity, or perceived gender identity, such as negative name-calling, imitating mannerisms, consistently and/or intentionally misgendering, consistently and/or intentionally using incorrect gender pronouns, or creating a hostile environment in gender-specific spaces such as bathrooms.

The Discrimination & Harassment Policy applies to all administrators, employees, admissions or employment applicants, students, members of the Board of Trustees, agents of the College and volunteers involved in College-related activities. The policy also applies to those who do business with the College in their interactions with members of the College community. Compliance with this policy is a term and condition of student enrollment and employment at the College. An individual who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Depending on the seriousness, sanctions for involvement in harassment or discriminatory activities could include verbal or written reprimand, required participation in community projects, loss of privileges, suspension (with or without pay), probation, requirement to participate in counseling, or dismissal from housing, school or employment.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

Student Accounts are managed by the Business Office and related questions or concerns should be directed to studentbilling@sterlingcollege.edu.

Billing Policy

Sterling College students are billed for the costs of their education separately for each of the academic semesters for which they are enrolled. Billings occurs at the completion of registration and after enrollment is confirmed. Payment for each semester is due on the earlier of 30 days from the date of invoice or the of the term. Students who fail to pay their accounts in full by the first day of the term will not be permitted to attend classes or participate in internships until payment is made, or a suitable payment plan has been approved.

Financial aid that has been awarded and anticipated proceeds from student and parent loans that have been certified by the College are considered when determining the student account balance outstanding and delinquent. However, students who have not submitted required financial aid documentation by applicable deadlines and have therefore not received a financial aid award are not permitted to delay payment. Students are encouraged to check their financial aid status to make certain that all financial aid requirements have been received.

Accounts will be considered delinquent if not paid in full, or if an approved and documented payment plan is not on file by the due date. Accounts will be considered delinquent and no payment plan will be allowed if a student has not upheld the terms of a previous payment plan.

To the extent permitted by applicable law, any legal fees or other costs incurred by the College to collect a past due account will be added to the amount due.

Students who do not complete their required financial aid documentation and whoes do not maintain accounts are not in good standing or who do have an approved payment plan will be asked to leave campus until payment is received or an approved plan is put in place. Transcripts, diplomas, and recommendations will be withheld, and students will not be permitted to enroll for future classes until the student's entire account (including but not limited to payment of tuition, library fines, guest meals, parking tickets, etc.) is paid in full.

Refund Policy

The amount of any refund takes into account the portion of the term that the student was enrolled at the College, unamortized recruitment, administrative costs incurred by the College and the fact that the College is unlikely to be able to enroll a new student to replace the withdrawing student after the start of the classes for that term.

Students who voluntarily withdraw from the College after beginning classes or are dismissed from the College for non-disciplinary reasons, may be entitled to a refund of tuition, room and board. Students must notify the Academic Dean in writing of their intention to withdraw from the College. The Academic Dean in consultation with the Dean of Community will determine the student's official termination date for purposes of determining any refund due.

Refunds of tuition, room and board will be made based on the following schedule:

Credit/Refund Schedule

If Enrollment Ceases…	Percent Refunded
on or before the 1st day of classes	100%
2nd through the 10th calendar day	90%
11th through 20th calendar day	75%
21st through 30th calendar day	50%
31st through 50th calendar day	25%
after 50th day	0%

Notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary contained elsewhere in this document, fees and other amounts paid by students will not be refunded or reduced.

The amount due to/due from the student at termination is calculated as follows:

(1) Add together the gross amount of tuition, room, board, fees and other charges otherwise owed by the student, (2) subtract an amount equal to the tuition, room and board multiplied by the applicable refund percentage to determine the adjusted gross amount owed by the student, (3) subtract the earned portion of any Sterling Grants and awards, (4) subtract the earned portion of any state and federal financial aid, (5) subtract the amount of any earned work program credits, and (6) subtract any payments previously received from the student.

Financial aid refund policies are largely determined by state and Federal law and involve very specific definitions and calculation procedures. Students should to contact the Financial Aid Office if they have questions regarding the calculation of refunds and the settling of their accounts. Under current federal regulations, when a recipient of Title IV (federal) grant or loan assistance withdraws or takes a leave of absence from the college during the semester, the college must determine the amount of federal aid that the student may retain as of the withdrawal date. Any federal aid the student is not eligible to keep according to the federal refund policy must be returned to the federal government. Through the first 60% of the semester, the amount of federal funds retained is based on the number of days the student was enrolled in the semester. After the 60% point in time of the semester, a student is eligible to keep all of their federal aid for that semester. For purposes of the refund calculation set forth above, the amount of Sterling Grants and other awards earned by the student are calculated in accordance with the federal rules and regulations.

If a student is considering dropping a course or withdrawing from the College, it is important that the student have a conversation with the Director of Financial Aid and assure they fully understand the impact their decision may have on the federal financial aid awards and loan obligations.

Without in any way limiting the foregoing provisions, Sterling College may in its sole discretion grant a larger refund than the student would otherwise be entitled to based on the specific circumstances surrounding that student's withdrawal, and withdrawing or dismissed students are entitled to petition the College for such consideration.

Appeals

Any appeal of the payment or refund policy must be addressed in writing to Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Business Office, Sterling College, Craftsbury Common, Vermont 05827. In the event of a conflict with Veterans Administration policy concerning enrolled veterans receiving V.A . benefits, the V.A. policy will prevail.

Explanation of Important Fees

The Commuter Fee supports on-campus services and resources that are accessible to students living off campus. In Vermont, on-campus services and resources include without limitation: Campus maintenance, library access, mailbox, computers, printers and Wifi services, work program support, campus drinks and snacks.

The Student Activities Fee supports on campus entertainment, trips, workshops and other activities as determined by the students' and approved by the Dean of Community Office.

For residential students, a Room Fee will be charged to residential students who fail to complete the entire term on campus. This fee is in addition to the full cost of Housing for the term.

A Room Damage Fee will be charged to residential students who are determined to have damaged their room during the term.

Colmery Act: A special note for Veteran students

Any covered individual is permitted to attend or participate in the course of education during the period beginning on the date on which the individual provides Sterling College a certificate of eligibility for entitlement to educational assistance under Chapter 31 or 33 (a "certificate of eligibility" can also include a "Statement of Benefits" obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) website – eBenefits, or a VAF 28-1905 form for Chapter 31 authorization purposes) and ending on the earlier of the following dates:
- The date on which payment from VA is made to the institution.
- The date that is 90 days after the date the institution certified tuition and fees following the receipt of the certificate of eligibility.
- Sterling College will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual's inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under Chapter 31 or 33.

Gear Rental Fees

Sterling College Outdoor Gear Rental Prices 2023-2024	
Item	**Price per day**
Camping	
2 or 3-person tent	$5.00
4-person tent	$6.00
Trekking poles	$1.00
Backpack	$2.00
Stove	$4.00
Cookset	$2.00
Fry-bake	$2.00
Nylon tarp 10X12'	$2.00
Drom (water bag)	$2.00
Sleeping bag 20	$2.00

Sleeping bag 0/below	$3.00
Sleeping pad	$1.00
Rain coat	$1.00
Rain pants	$1.00
Lined winter boots	$2.00
Snowshoes	$2.00
Compass	$1.00
Bear bag sack	$1.00
Head lamp	$2.00
Flat Water Paddling	
Canoe, paddles, PFD*	10.00
Dry bag	$2.00
Dry bag backpack	$3.00
Climbing	
Climbing shoes	$1.00
Chalk bag	$1.00
Crash pad	$2.00
Mountaineering boots	$5.00
Ice tools	$5.00
Mountaineering ax	$4.00
Crampons	$5.00
Skiing (Limited Availability)	
Nordic Skis*	$10.00/week

* Contact Adrian Owens (aowens@sterlingcollege.edu) for these rental items. John MacKinnon (jmackinnon@sterlingcollege.edu) or students trained on gear rentals can assist with all other rentals.

Gear Room Membership Information

Starting in Fall of 2023 students will be able to choose between renting items "a la carte" off the gear rental list or purchasing a year-long membership to the gear room for $25. Students can rent items for any Sterling course or personal use at no additional cost if they purchase a year-long membership. It is also possible to purchase a semester-long membership for $15.

Notes about the yearly gear room membership:

Students can rent gear all year long for a one-time membership fee of $25 provided they continue to meet the following criteria throughout each semester. There will be no refunds of the membership fee if a student loses their rental privileges. Violation of the following rules may result in loss of rental privileges with no refund:

1. Students need to take care of their rental gear and report all damages. They are responsible for all lost gear and for all damages beyond normal wear and tear. Students who repeatedly bring back damaged gear or lose gear will no longer be allowed to rent gear.
2. Students must return gear by the date it is due or pay a late fee. Late fees are 1$/day/item regardless of the item. If a student wants to keep a piece of gear for an extended time they need to check it back in by its original due date and re-check it back out. No exceptions!
3. Gear must be returned in a timely fashion. Students who are repeatedly late (>3 times/semester) in returning their gear will not be allowed to continue to rent gear.
4. The membership is for the person who purchased it. Please do not rent gear for your friends on your membership. They can purchase their own membership or rent an item "a la carte" as needed.

Release of Information

A written record of the release of any financial information should be placed in the student file in the Business Office including to whom records were released, what interest they have in the records, date, and who released the records. The exceptions are only:
- when the release is of Directory information only
- when Sterling has written request from student/parent
- when the release is to the student/parent
- when the release is within Sterling

No disclosures will be made for commercial purposes.

Sterling College Trails
Craftsbury Common, Vermont
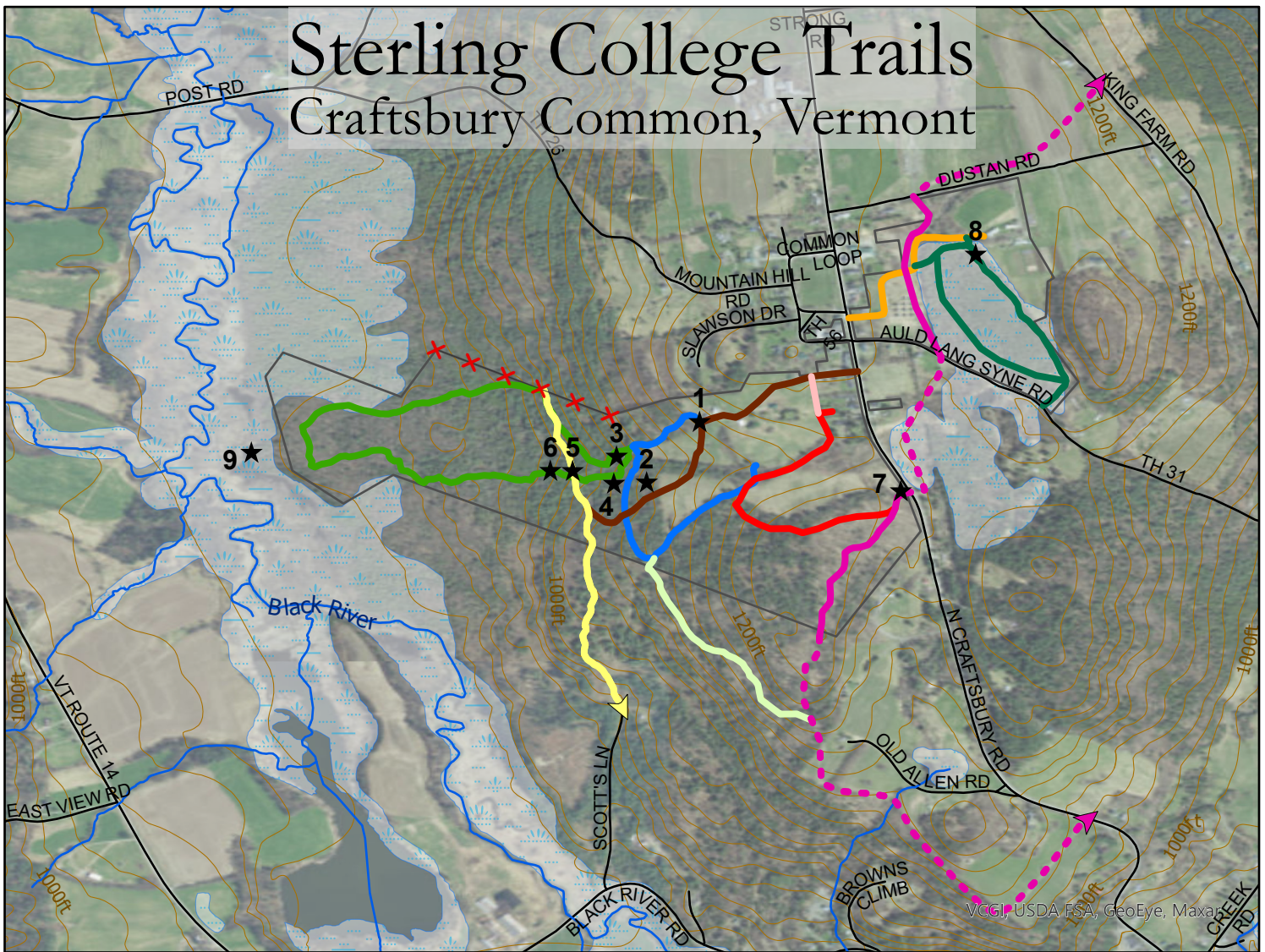
Sterling College Parcel Boundaries

× — × **No trespassing beyond boundary**

—— **Roads**

—— **Contour Lines (20ft)**

—— **Streams**

Wetlands

★ **Points of Interest (numbered below)**

1. McCarthy Barns
2. Lean-To 1
3. Coyote Kids Camp
4. Lean-To 2
5. Log Bridge
6. Lean-To 3
7. Log Landing
8. Challenge Course
9. Beaver Wetlands

Trails

—— **Green Trail**

—— **Blue Trail**

—— **Red Trail**

—— **Common Hill Trail**

—— **Farm Road**

—— **Farm Road to Houston Path**

—— **Four Scorpios Trail**

—— **Lowers Path**

—— **Cedar Swamp Loop**

—— **Grand Tour (Sterling section; public access year-round)**

‑ ‑ ‑ **Grand Tour (public access only when groomed for skiing)**

Miles
0   0.13   0.25   0.5

Map Scale: 1:18,000

*Grand Tour trail taken from EmergencyE911_TRAILS (from VCGI) and edited by Ashlyn Talley to align with imagery from ESRI basemap. All other trails gathered using Garmin Oregon 450 GPS unit.

Authors: Ashlyn Talley & Emily Brodsky
Last updated January 2021

FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN
VERMONT
LANDOWNER AND FORESTER SIGNATURE PAGE

I (we) certify that my (our) forest land is under active long-term forest management for the purpose of growing and harvesting repeated forest crops in accordance with minimum acceptable standards for forest management in the VT Current Use Program. These management standards include following the practices outlined in the most current State of VT water quality regulation, also known as Acceptable Management Practices (AMP's). These are used to control stream siltation and erosion.

By signing below, I understand I am signing my Forest Management Plan and by doing so I agree to manage according to the current approved plan.

PREPARATION:

Prepared By: Pelland Forestland Management, LLC

_____   **Date: 6-25-2021**
BY: Tyler W. Pelland **(Forester)**   148.0128956   **(VT License #)**

APPROVAL:
Owner's Approval and Acceptance of the Forest Management Plan and UVA Standards:

_____   **Date:_____**
Owner:

_____   **Date:_____**
Owner:

ALL DEEDED OWNERS MUST SIGN

County Forester's Approval and Acceptance of this UVA Forest Management Plan Standards:

County Forester:_____   **Date:_____**
VT Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation

Forest Management Plan

Sterling College

Craftsbury, Vermont
April 1, 2021

Prepared by:
Pelland Forestland Management, LLC
1071 S. Albany Rd
Craftsbury, VT 05826

Tyler W. Pelland, CF
Vermont License #: 148.0128956

Table of Contents

This +/- 92 grand-listed-acre parcel located in the town of Craftsbury can be found on both the east and west side Craftsbury Common of the North Craftsbury Road (see map). This acreage includes the recent addition of the adjoining Presidents House purchased in 2017 by Sterling College, adding 10 +/- acres as found in the Parcels data info (SPAN # 168-053-10535). Portions of the ownership are enrolled in the VT Use Value Appraisal program, and this is a ten-year plan and map update for those acres (see forest type map).

Situated within the Northern Green Mountain Bio-physical region, this land is part of the Black River Watershed Basin. Water drains west off the property via a centrally located intermittent stream, which eventually feeds the Black River just west of the parcel boundary. The Black River is a tributary to Lake Memphremagog. The terrain ranges from steep hill side to flat poorly drained forested wetlands. Current agricultural influence is found on the property and throughout the local region including dairy operations, vegetable farms, commercial meat production, and many small gentlemen farms. A portion of these acres like much of VT were once cleared for agricultural use. Many of the less desirable AG acres since the 1950's has reverted to forest and managed as such. These are acres with poor drainage and steep slope for crops/pasture, along with distance from the main farm operation being another variable.

Research done by Sterling faculty shows the primary use of this parcel under farm and forest management producing maple sap and butter along with timber likely to supply many of the local mills. This information gathered from faculty is from historical AG census and deeds.

The UVA **pro-rated** parcel acreage is comprised of 45.8 acres of forest land, 5.5 acres open/idle, and 40.71 acres excluded around multiple college buildings, dwellings, and barns. This plan is outlined, prioritized and summarized for the next ten-year period. See the following UVA Schedule.

State of Vermont District/Representative Contact Information

Orleans County Forester: Jared Nunery, jared.nunery@vermont.gov

Wildlife Management Unit and Game Warden: D1, Warden: Russ Shopland, badge # 943

Wildlife District: District 5, St. Johnsbury, VT

Fisheries District: District 5

Forest Management Consideration

Species Diversity: Prescribed management will encourage maintenance and recruitment of all species currently present that best suite site conditions and natural communities (see prescription/long term management).

Wildlife Habitat: All prescribed management will consider all local wildlife/amphibian species. Following VT AMP guidelines will protect any wooded seeps, vernal pools, rivers, ponds, and streams used by wildlife and amphibians. Regenerative type silviculture will provide nesting and edge habitat along with browse and young forest for many local and migratory species. Retention of bear clawed beech and butternut trees if identified will maintain hard mast for wildlife. Standing dead snags and large diameter "legacy" trees will be retained for current and future habitat/structure. Decaying softwood snags are important feeding sites for various bird species. Necro Mass will be encourage for nutrient recycling and ground level habitat.

Invasive Exotic Species (plant and insect): Invasive plants and insects are an increasing concern for landowners and forest management professionals within this region as different species continue to be identified in new locations. Spread can be observed by different means depending on the species. Some examples of spread are human transport (infested firewood, forestry equipment, etc.), birds (seed dispersal), climate change (soil chemistry and growing season length). Some common named invasives species found locally are shrub honeysuckle, common and glossy buckthorn, Japanese barberry, Japanese knotweed, garlic mustard, wall lettuce, hogweed, emerald ash borer, and many more. Continuous monitoring through observation when landowners and managers are walking their woods is a critical first step in control. Control requires an integrated pest management system/plan to help reduce the spread which is typically a combination of biological, chemical, and mechanical intervention. The earlier that invasives are detected, the easier it is to control them allowing natural vegetation to develop.

Climate Change: As climate change becomes more evident with changing weather patterns and their related stresses of more intense storms, more frequent droughts, and shorter and lower snow depth winters, forest landowners and managers will potentially observe increased negative impacts on forest growth and sustainability. Forest managers and landowners will need to carefully monitor forest conditions and changes to plan accordingly. All management decisions related to trees and forest infrastructure, must be focused on the implementation of management strategies designed to build resilience into our forests. The key to resilience is maintaining biological rich forests that have the natural capacity to survive changes in climate, the invasion of pests and most critically the impacts on tree health, vigor and growth that will reduce forest health and potentially lead to serious negative consequences for forested stands. Healthy soil, less damage and the maintenance of stands stocked with healthy stems at higher stocking levels is considered crucially important to building and maintaining resilience. Forestry is a long-term investment and implementing the most current forest science is crucial to the maintenance of viable forests that support all the forest's biological and economic benefits for future generations.

Residual Stand Damage: It is important for any tree extraction method to be careful of damaging the residual stand. A good threshold for monitoring as follows; trees showing more than 20% crown damage from harvest will **not** be considered acceptable growing stock along with root damage to trees near trail edge and bumper trees with wounds higher than 4'.

Forest Soils and Roads: Apply all VT AMP guidelines before, during and after and harvest activity.

Forest Management: The key to successful forest resource management is implementing realistic and appropriate silvicultural treatments that meet the goals and objectives of the landowner. The interests of the landowner will drive this process. Understanding the current resource value (timber and non-timber) allows owners to use a thoughtful approach to making decisions that impact the land through their stewardship of the forest and its associated ecosystem functions. These goals can be as varied as the forest. Examples of common management objectives are forest health, wildlife, economics, recreation, and aesthetics.

The following recommendations in this plan reflect the desires of the owner, while understanding the resource present on the site to be managed within rules and regulations of the VT Use Value Appraisal program. It is important to remember that multiple use sustained yield management allows for mutually inclusive management, not mutually exclusive considerations. In other words, one can plan to regenerate a forest stand for sustained timber production while simultaneously preparing the forest for improved wildlife habitat or maintaining deer winter cover by perpetuating softwood cover and browse where the site allows.

Although short-term activities, such as thinning or harvesting mature stands, generate income and are the most common or familiar management activities carried out, long-term values and considerations should be the underlying factor in all management decisions using peered reviewed science. With proper planning, landowner input, reasoned timing and careful implementation, the owners can achieve their objectives for a productive and healthy woodlot.

Landowner Objectives

The Landowner desires to achieve multiple goals through the practice of active forest management utilizing sound silvicultural treatments, as well as complying with the rules and regulations of the VT UVA program. Those goals are listed below, and all are of equal importance:

1: To be good stewards of the forest and maintain/protect all the forest's ecological functions (clean water, clean air, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, species diversity)

2: To maintain a working forest as an outdoor classroom and education tool for faculty and students to have a "hands on" experience with ecological forest management.

3: Maintain a productive forest that will produce periodic revenues and positively impact the local forest economy from the sale of timber products and serve to offset carrying costs such as taxes, pre-commercial forestry work and periodic management fees. These revenues will be variable over the long term (rotation age and cutting intervals) depending on the prescribed silviculture that best fits stand conditions and landowner objectives.

4: Utilize the most appropriate silviculture on a per acre basis to maximize value of the timber asset/health, as well as ecosystem functions and natural communities.

5: Maintain compliance with the VT Current Use Program to assure full tax reduction benefit is realized.

6: Maintain water quality and prevent soil erosion by following all current VT AMP guidelines.

7: Maintain a high level of aesthetics and recreational opportunities (skiing, walking, snow shoeing, and overall outdoor enjoyment.)

Data Summary	
Prepared for:	Sterling College
Mailing Address:	PO Box 72
Town Where Property is Located:	Craftsbury, VT 05827
Grand List Acreage:	92.00
SPAN:	168-053-10572, 168-053-10535
Orthophoto(s):	509239 (2018)
Sampling Method:	Variable Plot Sampling - 15 BAF prism
Inventory Date(s):	6/16/2021, 6/23/21

General Description

Forest History & Condition:	This parcel was originally purchased by Sterling College from Stirling Carpenter who acquired the land from Mary Ross in the 1960's. Most of these acres were part of the Wheeler Farm prior to the Carpenter and Ross ownership. Since the original purchase of land by Sterling College some acres have been periodically sold and acquired. For instance, in 1989 the college sold land to Virginia Russell and in 2010 Sterling College purchased the old Inn on the Common adding 2.09 acres. The most recent acquisition was the presidents house with 10 acres in 2017. Harvesting has occurred over the last 25 years mostly at a small scale by college students with horses. Small patch cuts in stand 2 were described in the previous plan. Marked trees for removal are still found as it tends to be an ongoing treatment.
Invasive Species:	Invasive plants have been a problem on the Sterling College property for oner fifteen years as documented in the last management plan. Most locations where canopy disturbance has occurred via windthrow or logging, invasives are found. Invasive species identified during the 2021 inventory were shrub honeysuckle, glossy buckthorn, Japanese Knotweed, false spiraea, and wall lettuce were observed in variable amounts depending on location within both forest interior and field edges; other invasive plants and insects to monitor for are as follows: hemlock wooly adelgid, emerald ash borer, Japanese barberry, and Asiatic bittersweet. The species are spreading rapidly, and continuous monitoring for these and other invasive species should be conducted. The earlier that infestations are detected, the easier it is to control them allowing natural vegetation to develop. See individual stand information for ID and control measures.
Access:	Legal access to the property is gained from North Craftsbury Rd, Auld Lang Syne Rd and Dustan Rd (see map). Western portions of forest nearing the Black River are best accessed from the William and Penny Strong Property to the north.
Boundary Lines:	Boundary lines consist of old painted/blazed lines and some old fence. Most corner monuments are identifiable. It is important to periodically paint the boundary as to not loose evidence. Boundary surveys are expensive and unnecessary if proper maintenance is utilized. When updating boundary lines preserve any old evidence and when re-blazing go above or below the existing blaze, not over it.
Topography:	The terrain of the property is comprised mostly of flat forested wetlands to west facing sloping hill side. Stand three has the most elevation change. Elevations range from 1,260' to 880' above sea level.
Water Resources:	One intermittent stream drains west through the middle of the property starting from the forested wetland identified as ESTA stand # 1 (See map).

Property Overview

Soil Resources:	Soils found on this property are of outwash and glacial till material depending on location. The soils are of low to high fertility and range from Site Class I-III (avg.). Below is a list of the major forest soil series found on the property: Cabot Silt loam (stand 1) Vershire Glover complex (stand 2, 3 and 6) Buckland loam (stand 2) Nicholeville very fine sandy loam (stand 4) Roundabout silt loam (stand 7) Adams loamy sand (stand 5) For more detailed soils descriptions and attributes, refer to the specific soil's fact sheet link in Appendix A. All Vermont regulatory Acceptable Management Practices (AMPs) for the protection of soil and water quality will be followed, including but not limited to proper location of skid trails and landings, water barring of skid trails, proper siting and installation of stream crossings, and stabilizing exposed soil. The use and compliance with the AMPs are a mandatory requirement for all parcels enrolled in UVA.
Recreation & Aesthetics, Cultural and Historic Resources:	Recreational opportunities on the property currently consist of hiking, birding, snow shoeing, skiing, and overall outdoor enjoyment, AKA "Forest Bathing". All forestry activity on the property will strive to protect historical sites such as foundations, cellar holes, rock walls, etc. with buffers sufficient enough to assure they are not damaged. Aesthetical consideration will be a priority of management considering things such as visual impact from public roads and or trails. Brush management and stump height requirements are also tailored into logging contracts along with post-harvest cleanup of landing debris and trails. Brush mowing of open areas/landings and maintaining apple trees and unique habitats may also be utilized.
Wildlife Habitat:	The overall mix of tree species, size, and age classes creates vertical and horizontal structure at the forest level. Increasing the mix of vegetative and structural diversity through active management will provide habitat for a wide variety of local wildlife, including deer, black bear, moose, ruffed grouse, woodcock, turkey, songbirds, and various predators (fisher, coyote, fox, ermine, bobcat, etc.). The association of the softwood forest type, forested wetlands and mixedwood type provides great edge habitat and travel corridors for all the local species.

Property Overview

Forest Inventory: In the early summer of 2021 Point sampling was used with a 15-factor prism by Pelland Forestland Management, LLC. Sample points were laid out on an even spacing square grid across each forest stand to accurately assess the forest resource and develop stand level recommendations using sound data. Points were identified with blue flagging at point center and hung above from a branch. Avenza maps App was utilized for navigation. Tree dbh was measured with calipers and 1/1000th acre regeneration plots tallied commercial stems and invasive species less than 4.5" dbh.

Rare, Threatened & Endangered Species (RTES), and Critical Habitats Stands One and Seven are identified as class II wetlands. No others identified via check of the VT Natural Heritage ANR database.

Open Land: Open land will mostly be managed for farming endeavors, mostly pasturing. Some portions of open land where poorer drainage exists will be left to revert into forest via natural succession. Some small sections may be periodically brush mowed to maintain the old field habitat for nesting birds and possible fawning of white-tailed deer.

Ecologically Sensitive Treatment Areas (ESTA) The UVA ESTA category is being used for a riparian buffer (stand 6) and forested wetlands (stands 1 and 7, cedar/black ash swamp).

Schedule of Management Activities[1]

Stand	Forest Type	Mapped Acreage	Activity[2][3]	Year(s)	Reference[4]
1	Cedar swamp (ESTA)	18.98	No Activity/re-examine next FMP update	2031	NRS-98
2A,B	Mixedwoods	15.77	Invasive species Control	Annually	NE-603
3A,B	Softwood	10.68	Invasive species Control/Irregular group shelterwood	Annually /2028	NE-41
4A,B	Mixedwoods	15.65	Invasive species Control	Annually	NE-603
5	Mixedwoods	19.37	Irregular /CTR	2028	NE-603
6	Softwood (Riparian ESTA)	5.9	No Activity/re-examine next FMP update	2031	NRS-98
7	Cedar swamp (ESTA)	4.23	No Activity/re-examine next FMP update	2031	NRS-98
Total		**90.58**			

[1] This schedule outlines a series of management recommendations specific to this ownership and forms the basis for conforming to Use Value Appraisal regulations. Modifications to the schedule are permitted but must be approved by the appropriate County Forester prior to implementing the rescheduled activity.

The activities prescribed above may be implemented within a seven (7) year window and may be carried out within three years, before and after the recommended date. The dates in this schedule were chosen to maximize flexibility. Scheduling flexibility allows management to plan treatments with good markets and utilize quality contractors. If an activity is prescribed for implementation over a period of years (e.g. firewood thinning over a number of years), this is an indication that management is best achieved through continual action over an extended period of time.

All actions and modifications to the schedule should be noted on the Forest Management Activity Report by February 1st of the year following year in which activity occurs.

NE-603 Leak,et al. Silvicultural Guide for Northern Hardwood Types in the Northeast (revised)
NE-41 (white Pine)
NE-6 Frank and Bjorkbom. A Silvicultural Guide for Spruce-Fir in the Northeast
NRS-98 USDA Northern Research Station, Silvicultural Guide for Northern White Cedar
NA-TP-19-93 Crop Tree Release
Smith, David M. The Practice of Silviculture, 8th Edition

Note: Invasive plant control needs to occur before harvesting to prevent faster spread, especially into areas where infestations are currently low. Invasive treatments are prescribed annually, but due to the large acreage to be covered it is likely not to occur annually within every stand. Treatment of Invasives will be a multi -year endeavor which will require annual budgeting, NRCS assistance, and a comprehensive invasive treatment plan within the general guidance of this 10-year forest management plan.

Stand Analysis & Management Recommendations

	Stand 1 (cedar and brown ash swamp ESTA)
	History & Description:
	This two-aged cedar and brown ash swamp has had no commercial harvest activity since establishment as determined by field evidence. A few old cut stumps near the stand edge were observed, likely for onsite use. Raised root systems, "buttress roots", indicate shallow soils with poor drainage and possible tree development on old windthrow tip-ups and downed "nurse" logs/stumps. It is possible that this area was once pastured long ago.
	Foot trails were noticed during the inventory.
	Stem Quality and Size:
	Overall, the acceptable basal area is low, typical of these poorly drained swamps although scattered quality log material was noted. Scattered sawtimber white spruce are also of great quality and are found as canopy emergents.
	Site Characteristics and understory plants:
	The growing site is mostly flat and poorly drained. The forest floor is mostly covered with softwood blowdown, common for these forested wetland types and an important part of its ecosystem.
	Water:
	No defined water courses observed (see map).
	Forest Health, Insect, Disease, Browse damage and Invasive Species:
	Woodpecker holes in some cedar indicate internal rot issues but that would be expected given the poor growing site. Balsam fir snags are likely trees that succumbed to balsam wooly adelgid and or butt rot fungi.
	Operability:
	Operability is challenging due to poorly drained soils.

Attribute Summary

Map Unit/Stand No: 1 ESTA   *Acreage:* 18.98   *UVA Forest Type:* Cedar   *Map Type:* S34B   *Points:* 4

Primary Species: Northern white cedar (61% BA) balsam fir (17% BA) yellow birch (10% BA)

Secondary Species: White spruce (3% BA) black ash (4% BA) red maple (2% BA) paper birch (1% BA) white pine (1% BA) hemlock (1 % BA)

Age Structure: Two-aged

Age (yrs): 60+

Size Class: Large pole/small sawtimber

Current QMSD (in): 8"

Stocking Level: Adequate, B (spruce/fir stocking guide)

Acc. BA (sqft/ac): 75

Total BA (sqft/ac): 143 (4.51" + DBH)

Snags (trees/ac.): 18 (10"dbh +)

UVA Site Class: III

Site Index (by soils): 54 (BF) web soil survey , Cabot silt loam

Aspect: Westerly

Slope percent: 0-2%

Soils: Cabot silt loam

Forest Health: Balsam wooly adelgid, blowdown, softwood bole rot

Invasive Species: Buckthorn and shrub honeysuckle around stand edges

Regeneration Summary (stems less than 4" dbh)

Stocking Level: Variable, (seedlings/saplings) 0-5,000 commercial stems per acre

Primary spp.: Black ash, balsam fir, cedar

Secondary spp.: Red maple, yellow birch

Regeneration Factors: Pockets of windthrow has allowed partial light in some areas to promote advanced regeneration. Cedar regeneration is found in the form of layering and seed germination on "nurse logs".

Recommendations: Allow stand to succeed naturally. Silvicultural intervention is possible during the perfect winter conditions, but the landowner has chosen to not risk potential soil degradation by forestry equipment. Precommercial work may be acceptable in the future if desired.

Management Recommendations	
Long Term Silvicultural Objectives:	Allow stand to succeed naturally without silvicultural intervention. Maintain soil integrity and productivity while periodically monitoring growth and species diversity, both wildlife and plants. Monitor for invasive species.
Stand Age (yrs.):	Even-aged 60+
Rotation age (yrs.):	
Cutting interval (yrs.):	-
Silvicultural System:	-
Type of Treatment:	None
Residual QMSD (in):	-
Residual BA (ft²/ac):	-
Species Favored / Crop Trees / Seed Trees:	All acceptable stocking.
Diameter Objectives:	-
Silvicultural Reference:	NRS-98
Recommendations:	**2031**: Re-examine next planning period. Silvicultural intervention could be justifiable during the perfect frozen winter conditions, but the landowner has chosen to not risk potential soil/water degradation by forestry equipment. Precommercial work may be acceptable in the future along with invasive control as necessary.
Marking Guidelines:	Not applicable.

Stand Analysis & Management Recommendations

Stand 2A,B

History & Description:

Previously mapped as stand 3 and 2. This two-aged softwood dominating mixedwood stand likely originated from pasture abandonment 70+ years ago. This area has seen the most recent forestry activity with documented small patch cuts and periodic improvement thinning conducted by Sterling College students.

Post-harvest approximately 20 years ago invasive species started a strong hold of the forest floor. Mechanical and pasturing attempts have been made but without much success.

Hardwood stems will likely become a greater component as succession occurs given the high-quality soils.

Stem Quality and Size:

Overall, quality is variable amongst the two dominating cohorts with good sawtimber/growing stock found amongst the largest white pine and hardwood poles. Basal areas are also variable with old patch cuts having the lowest and untreated inclusions having the highest. The acceptable basal area is somewhat low, slightly below c line for mixedwood, but over time ingrowth of the quality small pole wood will increase the AGS.

Site Characteristics and understory plants:

The growing site is moderately west sloping terrain. The soil is relatively well drained. Unfortunately, invasive species with some local ferns dominate the understory shrub layer. The occasional elderberry shrub was noted.

Water:

A stream crossing through stand 6 is necessary to access sub-unit stand 2B, but no other surface water was identified.

Forest Health, Insect, Disease, Browse damage and Invasive Species:

Variable. Many soon to be and already dead standing white spruce were identified, possibly the results of overstocked forest conditions and old hoof compaction prior to stand establishment.

The primary problem with this stand is the high level of invasive species present. Buckthorn, wall lettuce, false spiraea and honeysuckle were all identified in high quantities.

Operability:

Operability is good with relatively short skids. Soils can support summer logging during dry conditions. This management unit is the most accessible and best used for educational purposes for Sterling College students to implement management if desired.

Attribute Summary

Map Unit/Stand No:	2A,B	Acreage:	15.77	UVA Forest Type: Mixedwood	Map Type: SH34A	Points: 6

Primary Species: White pine (31% BA) w. spruce (19% BA) r. maple (17% BA) b. cherry (12% BA) N.W cedar (8%BA) red pine (6% BA)

Secondary Species: Aspen (2% BA) balsam fir (1% BA) yellow birch (1% BA) white ash (1% BA)

Age Structure: Even-aged (two-aged)

Age (yrs): 80+ (overstory)

Size Class: small pole/ sawtimber

Current QMSD (in): 11"

Stocking Level: A (mixedwood guide)

Acc. BA (sqft/ac): 85

Total BA (sqft/ac): 143 (4.51" + DBH)

Snags (trees/ac.): 3 (12"dbh +) *mostly white spruce

UVA Site Class: I

Site Index (by soils): 65 (SM) web soil survey

Aspect: West

Slope percent: 15-35%

Soils: Vershire Glover Complex

Forest Health: White pine blister rust, white pine canker

Invasive Species: Buckthorn, honeysuckle, false spiraea, wall lettuce (high)

Regeneration Summary (trees less than 4" DBH)

Stocking Level: Variable, (saplings/seedlings)

Primary spp.: Invasive species

Secondary spp.: Balsam fir, white ash, pin cherry, black cherry * a **northern red oak** seedling was observed during the inventory in subunit 2B.

Regeneration Factors: Proximity to the Open area/Pasture likely hosts greater bird diversity meaning more invasive plant seed dispersal. Past logging created some patch openings that were invaded by invasive species. Other areas have undergone improvement thinning in the last ten years.
Pasturing in the woods was tried for invasive control, but not thorough enough to achieve desired results.

Recommendations: Manage invasive species.

Management Recommendations	
Long Term Silvicultural Objectives:	Continue transitioning to Multi-age management to produce quality sawtimber and pulpwood.
Stand Age (yrs.):	Even aged (35/80)
Rotation age (yrs.):	-
Cutting interval (yrs.):	20
Silvicultural System:	-
Type of Treatment:	Invasive species control
Residual QMSD (in):	-
Residual BA (ft^2/ac):	-
Species Favored / Crop Trees / Seed Trees:	-
Diameter Objectives:	-
Silvicultural Reference:	NE 603
Recommendations:	**Annually**: Invasive species control. Utilize a licensed pesticide applicator if choosing to apply herbicide. See NRCS guides for more detailed control options. Note: Portions of this stand would be the only suitable area to utilize pasturing of farm animals in the woods to control invasives. A Silvio-pasture grazing plan with timeline is necessary prior to conducting the work.
Marking Guidelines:	Locate individual plants in areas of low infestation and flag treatment zones in areas of high infestation.

Stand Analysis & Management Recommendations

	Stand 3 A, B
	History & Description: This two-aged softwood stand is found mid slope as the terrain slopes west towards the Black River. The Overstory is dominated with large sawtimber white pine, and the mid-story is mostly white cedar. No commercial treatment has occurred in the last 40 years as judged by field evidence. Given the very productive soil type, this stand will likely host more hardwood species in the future if invasive species can be controlled. **Stem Quality and Size:** Overall, quality is good. **Site Characteristics and understory plants:** The growing site is on somewhat steep sloping terrain. Most areas are well drained, although as western portions of the stand transition into stand 4 (west of the strong trail) soils become more sensitive. **Water:** No surface water was identified during the inventory. **Forest Health, Insect, Disease, Browse damage and Invasive Species:** Invasive species such as wall lettuce and buckthorn were identified in variable amounts (low-moderate). **Operability:** Operability is average with significant uphill skidding required. This stand would be best accessed via the neighboring Strong property to the north.

Attribute Summary

Map Unit/Stand No: 3A,B **Acreage:** 10.68 **UVA Forest Type:** Softwood-wp **Map Type:** S4A **Points:** 2

Primary Species:	N. W. cedar (52% BA) white pine (41% BA)
Secondary Species:	White spruce (4% BA) balsam fir (2% BA)
Age Structure:	Even-aged
Age (yrs):	80+ (overstory)
Size Class:	Sawtimber
Current QMSD (in):	12"
Stocking Level:	A (white pine)
Acc. BA (sqft/ac):	155
Total BA (sqft/ac):	250
Snags (trees/ac.):	15 (12"dbh +)
UVA Site Class:	I
Site Index (by soils):	65 (SM) web soil survey
Aspect:	West
Slope percent:	35-50%
Soils:	Vershire Glover complex
Forest Health:	Butt rot fungi
Invasive Species:	Buckthorn (low) wall lettuce (high) false spiraea (low)

Regeneration Summary (trees less than 4" DBH)

Stocking Level:	Variable, (saplings/seedlings)
Primary spp.:	Balsam fir, Buckthorn, Wall Lettuce, false spiraea
Secondary spp.:	
Regeneration Factors:	A mostly closed canopy has only promoted shade tolerant species near stand edges. Wall lettuce is found throughout.
Recommendations:	Manage the invasives.

Management Recommendations	
Long Term Silvicultural Objectives:	Transition to Multi-age management to produce quality sawtimber and pulpwood.
Stand Age (yrs.):	Even aged (80+ overstory)
Rotation age (yrs.):	
Cutting interval (yrs.):	20
Silvicultural System:	Multi Ag
Type of Treatment:	Irregular group shelterwood
Residual QMSD (in):	Increase or maintain
Residual BA (ft^2/ac):	150 (between canopy gaps)
Species Favored / Crop Trees / Seed Trees:	All acceptable stocking.
Diameter Objectives:	-
Silvicultural Reference:	NE-41, NE-603

Recommendations:	**Annually**:
	Invasive species control.
	Utilize a licensed pesticide applicator if choosing to apply herbicide.
	See NRCS guides for more detailed control options.
	2028:
	Apply irregular group shelterwood harvest.
	Group Establishment: approximately 20% of the stand acres will be in small groups ranging from single tree up to ¼ acre in size. Group spacing/location will be somewhat variable. Locate groups in areas of highly concentrated low quality, high risk and diseased stems (mostly midstory cedar clumps and high-risk low quality white pine).
	Tending: Approx. 60% of the stand area will be marked for light tending, occurring between groups. Tending removals will focus on low quality white pine and cedar stems to stimulate growth and crown health of the best representative overstory stems (mostly white pine). Approx. residual BA in tending areas will be 150+/- sq. ft.
	No Treatment: Approx. 20 % of the stand will not be entered as these are areas optimally stocked with pole wood that are not ready for thinning.
	The intent of this prescription is to increase structural diversity while capturing value in declining stems. This treatment will also increase the AG ratio for future quality sawtimber production. Establishing a third cohort will increase site diversity and resiliency to future uncertainties such as things associated with climate change.
	NOTE: this treatment cannot occur until Invasive species have been controlled. Invasive treatment will also need to follow harvesting to assure native regeneration can become established.
Marking Guidelines:	Locate individual invasive plants in areas of low infestation and flag treatment zones in areas of high infestation.
	Locate group edges and mark trees for removal in between. Flag primary skid trails to the back of the stand.

Stand Analysis & Management Recommendations

	Stand 4 A,B *History & Description:* This management unit has not seen any commercial logging in the last 40 years as judged by field evidence. Many overmature balsam fir have died likely due to a combination of stress (balsam wooly adelgid, butt rot fungi, environmental conditions). Windthrow is significant in many sections, where cedar and balsam fir "matchstick" the forest floor. This may have occurred over time or during a few significant weather events. The overstory in variably stocked from dense inclusions of cedar to fully regenerated blowdown canopy gaps. *Stem Quality and Size:* Overall, the acceptable basal area is good. *Site Characteristics and understory plants:* The growing site is variable with areas of moderately well drained soil and others being low lying seeps. Sensitive fern and elderberry were most notable. *Water:* A couple small ephemeral streams were noted (see map). *Forest Health, Insect, Disease, Browse damage and Invasive Species:* Overall Fair. Invasive buckthorn can be found nearing the edges of stand 3. On a positive note, most of the disturbed canopy areas have a fair number of commercial stems established without invasive competition. *Operability:* Operability is challenging, with relatively long uphill skids to the nearest landing site. Access is best from the neighboring Strong property to the north. (See map)

Map Unit/Stand No:	4 A,B ***Acreage:*** 15.65 ***UVA Forest Type:*** Mixedwood ***Map Type:*** SH34BA ***Points:*** 5

Primary Species:	N.W cedar (44% BA) y. birch (25% BA) b. fir (12% BA) white pine (6% BA) red maple (6% BA)
Secondary Species:	Aspen (4% BA) eastern hemlock (2% BA)
Age Structure:	Two-aged
Age (yrs):	80 + overstory
Size Class:	pole/sawtimber
Current QMSD (in):	10"
Stocking Level:	Adequate, BA (mixedwood guide)
Acc. BA (sqft/ac):	99
Total BA (sqft/ac):	133 (4.51" + DBH)
Snags (trees/ac.):	14 (12"dbh +)
UVA Site Class:	I-II
Site Index (by soils):	65 (SM) web soil survey
Aspect:	westerly
Slope percent:	5-10%
Soils:	Nicholville very fine sandy loam
Forest Health:	Blowdown
Invasive Species:	Buckthorn (low)

Regeneration Summary (stems less than 4" dbh)

Stocking Level:	Good, (seedlings/saplings)
Primary spp.:	Balsam fir, cedar
Secondary spp.:	Black ash, buckthorn
Regeneration Factors:	Patchy blowdown has occurred over the past ten years releasing advanced shade tolerant regeneration. Mostly dead balsam fir and cedar is what has blown over. Invasive spread is likely from birds carrying seed from upslope sources.
Recommendations:	Manage invasives.

Management Recommendations

Long Term Silvicultural Objectives:	Transition to multi-age management to produce quality sawtimber and pulpwood. Utilize Area Regulation for Deer Wintering Area Management
Stand Age (yrs.):	Two-aged (80$_{+\ overstory}$)
Rotation age (yrs.):	
Cutting interval (yrs.):	20
Silvicultural System:	-
Type of Treatment:	-
Residual QMSD (in):	-
Residual BA (ft^2/ac):	-
Species Favored / Crop Trees / Seed Trees:	All acceptable stocking.
Crop Tree Diameter Objectives:	
Silvicultural Reference:	NE 603
Recommendations:	**Annually**: Invasive species control. Utilize a licensed pesticide applicator if choosing to apply herbicide. See NRCS guides for more detailed control options. Note: treatment will be around edges of blowdown where the canopy is still intact.
Marking Guidelines:	Locate individual plants where accessible.

Stand 5

History & Description*:*
This two-aged mixedwood stand was previously lumped into stand 4. It is found on a plateau/terrace sitting above poorly drained swamp land as terrain slopes west towards the Black River. There was no evidence noted of commercial logging within the last forty years. Hardwood dominates the species composition. A foot trail with green markers loops through the stand (see map).

Stem Quality and Size:
Overall, quality is good mostly amongst the youngest cohort (poles). The acceptable basal is somewhat low, slightly below c line for mixedwood, but over time ingrowth of the quality small pole wood will increase the AGS. The high percentage of UGs is due to the high density of overmature red maple and declining balsam fir.

Site Characteristics and understory plants:
The growing site is on flat to rolling terrain. Most areas are well drained with small seepy sections near drainage edge (see map). Blue cohosh and elderberry were noted along with various native ferns.

Water:
A couple small ephemerals drain west through the stand.

Forest Health, Insect, Disease, Browse damage and Invasive Species:
Overall good. Many soon to be and already dead standing balsam firs were identified, likely the results of a balsam wooly adelgid outbreak a few years ago. No invasives noted but could be present.

Operability:
Operability is challenging with relatively long skids. Soils within the stands could support summer logging during dry conditions but traversing through stand 4 requires frozen winter trails.

Attribute Summary

Map Unit/Stand No: 5	**Acreage:** 19.37 **UVA Forest Type:** Mixedwood **Map Type:** HS34AB **Points:** 4

Primary Species:	Red maple (31% BA) yellow birch (19% BA) b. fir (17% BA) hemlock (12% BA)
Secondary Species:	Red spruce (2% BA) black cherry (1% BA)
Age Structure:	Even-aged (two-aged)
Age (yrs):	80+ (overstory)
Size Class:	Pole/ sawtimber
Current QMSD (in):	13"
Stocking Level:	AB (mixedwood guide)
Acc. BA (sqft/ac):	71
Total BA (sqft/ac):	135 (4.51" + DBH)
Snags (trees/ac.):	11 (12"dbh +)
UVA Site Class:	I-II
Site Index (by soils):	64 (RM) web soil survey
Aspect:	Westerly
Slope percent:	8-15%
Soils:	Adams loamy sand
Forest Health:	Balsam wooly adelgid, butt rot fungi
Invasive Species:	None observed

Regeneration Summary (trees less than 4" DBH)

Stocking Level:	Low, (saplings/seedlings)
Primary spp.:	Balsam fir
Secondary spp.:	-
Regeneration Factors:	Mostly closed canopy has only allowed some small insignificant pockets of shade tolerant balsam fir to establish, but very stagnant.
Recommendations:	Create small canopy gaps mimicking a natural disturbance to establish shade tolerant and mid tolerant species found on site.

Management Recommendations	
Long Term Silvicultural Objectives:	Transition to Multi-age management to produce quality sawtimber and pulpwood.
Stand Age (yrs.):	Two aged (35/80)
Rotation age (yrs.):	-
Cutting interval (yrs.):	20
Silvicultural System:	Multi aged
Type of Treatment:	Irregular group shelterwood
Residual QMSD (in):	Increase or maintain between groups
Residual BA (ft^2/ac):	110 (between groups)
Species Favored / Crop Trees / Seed Trees:	All acceptable stocking.
Diameter Objectives:	-
Silvicultural Reference:	NE 603, Raymond et al.
Recommendations:	**2028**: Apply irregular group shelterwood harvest. **Group Establishment**: approximately 20% of the stand acres will be in small groups ranging from single tree up to ¼ acre in size. Group spacing/location will be somewhat variable. Locate groups in areas of highly concentrated low quality, high risk and diseased stems (mostly red maple and balsam fir). **Tending:** Approx. 50% of the stand area will be light tending occurring between groups. Tending removals will focus on low quality fir and commercially sized hardwood stems. Approx. residual BA in tending Areas will be 110+/- sq. ft. **No Treatment**: Approx. 30 % of the stand will not be entered as these are areas optimally stocked with pole wood that are not ready for thinning. The intent of this prescription is to increase structural diversity while capturing value in declining stems. This treatment will also increase the AG ratio for future quality sawtimber production. Establishing a third cohort will increase site diversity and resiliency to future uncertainties such as things associated with climate change.
Marking Guidelines:	Locate group edges and mark trees for removal in between. Flag primary skid trails to the back of the stand.

Stand Analysis & Management Recommendations

	Stand 6 (Riparian ESTA) *History & Description*: This even/two-aged softwood stand occupies the riparian buffer zone for the primary stream that flows west through the center of the property (approximately 50' each side of the stream bank). A foot path travels much on the southern side of the stream and utilizes wood pole bridges to cross in a few places (see map). Wet sections have utilized board walks. *Stem Quality and Size:* Overall, quality is variable depending on location, nicer upslope on the better drained soils. *Site Characteristics and understory plants:* The growing site is existing in two conditions, one being well drained and sloping, with the other being somewhat poorly drained and seepy. *Water:* In western portions of the stand some ephemeral streams/seeps feed into the stand. *Forest Health, Insect, Disease, Browse damage and Invasive Species:* Overall good. Many soon to be and already dead standing balsam firs were identified, likely the results of a balsam wooly adelgid outbreak a few years ago. *Operability:* Operability is challenging as VT AMP regulations require no equipment within 25' of the streams edge unless at a designated crossing. Felling would be challenging on some stems to not drop trees into or across the stream, which would add a significant number of limbs to the water course especially with white pine. Managing this area increases the probability of erosion.

Attribute Summary

Map Unit/Stand No:	6 ESTA	Acreage:	15.77	UVA Forest Type:	Softwood	Map Type:	S34AB	Points:	2

Primary Species:	N.W Cedar (53% BA) white pine (32% BA) white spruce (8% BA)
Secondary Species:	Balsam fir (4% BA) hemlock (2% BA) red maple (1% BA) red spruce (1% BA)
Age Structure:	Even-aged (two-aged)
Age (yrs):	80+ (overstory)
Size Class:	Pole/ sawtimber
Current QMSD (in):	11"
Stocking Level:	B (spruce/fir stocking guide)
Acc. BA (sqft/ac):	83
Total BA (sqft/ac):	150 (4.51" + DBH)
Snags (trees/ac.):	23 (12"dbh +)
UVA Site Class:	I-II
Site Index (by soils):	65 (SM) web soil survey
Aspect:	Westerly
Slope percent:	15-35%
Soils:	Vershire Glover Complex, Nicholville very fine sandy loam
Forest Health:	Blowdown, butt rot fungi, balsan wooly adelgid
Invasive Species:	Buckthorn, honeysuckle, wall lettuce (moderate)

Regeneration Summary (trees less than 4" DBH)

Stocking Level:	Variable, (saplings/seedlings)
Primary spp.:	Balsam fir, buckthorn, honeysuckle, wall lettuce
Secondary spp.:	-
Regeneration Factors:	Advanced regeneration is occurring where blowdowns have occurred.
Recommendations:	Manage invasive species.

Management Recommendations	
Long Term Silvicultural Objectives:	Control invasive species.
	Allow stand to succeed naturally without silvicultural intervention. Maintain soil integrity and productivity while periodically monitoring growth and species diversity, both wildlife and plants.
Stand Age (yrs.):	Even aged (35/80)
Rotation age (yrs.):	-
Cutting interval (yrs.):	-
Silvicultural System:	-
Type of Treatment:	Invasive species control
Residual QMSD (in):	-
Residual BA (ft^2/ac):	-
Species Favored / Crop Trees / Seed Trees:	All acceptable stocking.
Diameter Objectives:	-
Silvicultural Reference:	NRS 98, NE -41
Recommendations:	**Annually**:
	Invasive species control.
	Utilize a licensed pesticide applicator if choosing to apply herbicide.
	See NRCS guides for more detailed control options.
	Silvicultural intervention could be justifiable during the perfect frozen winter conditions, but the landowner has chosen to not risk potential soil/water degradation by forestry equipment. Precommercial work may be acceptable in the future along with invasive control as necessary.
Marking Guidelines:	Locate sub sections for treatment realizing that entire stand cannot be treated in one years' time.

Stand 7 ESTA (cedar and brown ash swamp)

History & Description:

This two-aged cedar and black ash swamp has had no commercial harvest activity since establishment as determined by field evidence. An unusual amount of poison ivy was noted carpeting the understory in spots.

This area is the beginning edge of a large Riparian area along the Black River to the west. These acres are classified as Class II forested wetlands by the state of VT.

Stem Quality and Size:

Overall, the acceptable basal area is great with quality log material noted throughout. Scattered sawtimber white spruce are also of great quality and are found as canopy emergents. Periodic wind events have acted as early thinning in spots allowing for growing space of some nice cedar stems.

Site Characteristics and understory plants:

The growing site is mostly flat and poorly drained. The forest floor is mostly covered with softwood blowdown, common for these forested wetland types and an important part of its ecosystem.

Water:

No defined water courses observed (see map) although very wet to foot.

Forest Health, Insect, Disease, Browse damage and Invasive Species:

Woodpecker holes in some cedar indicate internal rot issues but that would be expected given the poor growing site.

Operability:

Operability is challenging due to poorly drained soils combined with long uphill skidding to the closest access point.

Attribute Summary

Map Unit/Stand No: 7 ESTA **Acreage:** 4.23 **UVA Forest Type:** cedar	**Map Type:** S34A **Points:** 1

Primary Species:	N.W Cedar (68% BA) w. spruce (18% BA) black ash (10% BA)
Secondary Species:	Aspen (2% BA) balsam fir (1% BA) yellow birch (1% BA) white ash (1% BA)
Age Structure:	Even-aged (two-aged)
Age (yrs):	80+ (overstory)
Size Class:	Pole/ sawtimber
Current QMSD (in):	9"
Stocking Level:	A (S/F stocking guide)
Acc. BA (sqft/ac):	195
Total BA (sqft/ac):	225 (4.51" + DBH)
Snags (trees/ac.):	12 (12"dbh +)
UVA Site Class:	III
Site Index (by soils):	54 (BF) web soil survey
Aspect:	Westerly
Slope percent:	0-2%
Soils:	Roundabout silt loam
Forest Health:	Blowdown (moderate)
Invasive Species:	Poison Ivy

Regeneration Summary (trees less than 4" DBH)

Stocking Level:	Variable, (saplings/seedlings)
Primary spp.:	Balsam fir, cedar
Secondary spp.:	Black ash, poison ivy
Regeneration Factors:	Advanced understory growth is occurring where sunlight is reaching the floor following blowdown.
Recommendations:	Allow stand to succeed naturally. Silvicultural intervention is possible during the perfect winter conditions, but the landowner has chosen to not risk potential soil degradation by forestry equipment. Precommercial work may be acceptable in the future

Management Recommendations	
Long Term Silvicultural Objectives:	Allow stand to succeed naturally without silvicultural intervention. Maintain soil integrity and productivity while periodically monitoring growth and species diversity, both wildlife and plants. Monitor for invasive species
Stand Age (yrs.):	Even aged (60+ overstory)
Rotation age (yrs.):	-
Cutting interval (yrs.):	-
Silvicultural System:	-
Type of Treatment:	None
Residual QMSD (in):	-
Residual BA (ft^2/ac):	-
Species Favored / Crop Trees / Seed Trees:	
Diameter Objectives:	-
Silvicultural Reference:	NRS-98
Recommendations:	**2031**: Re-examine next planning period. Silvicultural intervention could be justifiable during the perfect frozen winter conditions, but the landowner has chosen to not risk potential soil/water degradation by forestry equipment. Precommercial work may be acceptable in the future along with invasive control as necessary.
Marking Guidelines:	Not applicable.

Forest Health

Insects and Diseases:

Butt-rots: Softwoods on stressful sites or individuals that are stagnating are often inflicted with a series of fungi that affect the butt of the bole and damage the root system. These problems can be found in spruces as well as balsam fir and hemlock. Loss of fiber, weakening of the bole, and the loss of the stem to breakage or death are the ultimate results of this stress-disease complex. Saw timber volumes are drastically reduced by these rots. The subsequent loss of volume most often occurs in unmanaged stands that have exceeded biological maturity. Evidence of the presence of butt rots include: 1) Woodpeckers feeding on insects by excavating cavities in the lower bole and stump area. The birds are after insects that are living and feeding on decaying wood. 2) Excessive resin flow from the stems of fir and spruce. This appears as white or yellowish pitch exiting the surface bark of the afflicted stem. 3) Standing live or dead trees exhibiting cracks in the stem. 4) Poor branch angle, especially on fir, when branches are growing or drooping at an angle of less than 90 degrees from the main bole. 5) If a tree or two, especially fir stems, are broken off and the trunk is either partially hollow or comprised of soft punky wood. If any or all these symptoms are present, then a thorough assessment should be made to determine the extent of the loss. Quite often, this will lead to a quick harvest entry into the stand to reduce further losses in volume and grade. The establishment of new spruce-fir seedlings is also a goal on these sites. ***Control:*** To control the occurrence of butt rots, rotation age needs to be tailored to the ability of the soli and site to sustain vigorous growth. This can be determined through increment coring. When the age and/or growth rate is determined where the rots become evident, this becomes the maximum age for the rotation for the site in question. In general, fir more than 60 years old and 10-12 inches dbh are risky as residual stems on average sites with good drainage. Sites that are poorly drained or have a shallow hardpan that will restrict root growth, a 40–60-year-old tree with a 10–12-inch dbh. is more likely the rotation goal. Maintaining proper stocking levels that reflect on tree age, basal area, mean stand diameter, and the productivity of the site are also factors in reducing losses to the butt rot complex. A vigorous tree that is not under undue stress is much less likely to be attacked by this complex of pathogens.

Eutypella Canker: This canker is caused by the fungus *Eutypella parasitica*. The fungus usually attacks pole timber to small sawtimber trees. All maples are affected, with Sugar maple being the most common host. Once infected, the pathogen can remain in the tree for many years. As the tree grows, the fungus can expand affecting more of the tree. The canker severely deforms the tree, lowering its value as a sawlog. The area of infection is also a weak point where breakage can occur. The canker looks like a callused area on the main stem, with dry, flinty bark adhering to the surface. Its form is generally concentric and more often is found on the main bole of the tree. ***Control:*** The most effective control measure at this time is to remove the infected stems to limit spread of the fungus. As is the case with most other disease and insect concerns, maintaining overall stand vigor is a great deterrent to the loss of trees to this disease.

Shoestring Root Rot: The causal fungus is Armillariella mellea. The fungus often kills trees that have been previously stressed by other factors. The fungus affects both hardwood and softwood trees. Symptoms include thin crowns, yellowing of leaves or needles. Conifers often produce resin at their bases. Hardwoods often appear healthy except for a splitting of the bark near ground line. Signs of the fungus include black stringy rhizomorphs which the common name is derived from. White fans of fungal tissue are produced under the bark. The fruiting body is a honey-colored mushroom produced at the base of the tree in the fall. The fungus can germinate on dead tissue and remain in the soil in the form of rhizomorphs for many years. ***Control:*** The fungus is, in most cases, a secondary pathogen, infecting after the tree is weakened from other causes. Therefore, the best control

measure is to keep the trees in the stand healthy and vigorous. This may mean shortening the rotation in some cases. The stand stocking should be kept closer to the B-line on the stocking guide. This will keep the stand at an optimum stocking for growth. Fast growth in trees maintains vigor which in turn aids the trees chemical defenses against attacking pathogens.

Logging operations can often be the cause of the spread of Armillariella if excessive residual stand damage occurs. Butt wounds and root damage should be kept to a minimum to reduce the spread and incidence of this disease.

Beech Bark Disease: The disease is an insect-fungal association. The beech is first infected with the scale insect *Cryptococcus fagisuga*. The insect is small and hard to see with the naked eye, but it exudes a white waxy substance that covers the insect that is visible.   In 3-5 years, the fungus *Nectria coccinea* enters the tree through the feeding wounds created by the insect. The fungus is not carried by the insect and the exact relationship between the insect and fungus has not been determined. The small red fruiting bodies of the fungus are found in clusters. They mature in the fall and can best be seen at that time. A pock marked appearance may be observed on the tree where callus tissue has walled off the point of infection. Some trees are killed within a year, while others survive for several. Characteristics of a high-risk area are stands with a predominant number of large diameter trees, steep slopes, and high basal areas. Extreme cold will kill the scale insect and stands of disease-free beech can be found in cold pockets. ***Control:*** There is no control measure applicable currently. Management of the disease consists of salvage and keeping the rotation age for beech lower, resulting in smaller diameter trees at harvest. Beech that shows resistance to the disease, i.e., beech with smooth bark and healthy crowns, should be retained. Also, retain beech with signs of bear use, including claw marks and "bear nests" (areas of broken branches in the crown of the tree, where bears have broken off branches and gathered them to feed on the nuts).

Sugar Maple Borer: The sugar maple borer, *Glycobious speciosus* is an insect which seems to infect pole timber-size trees that have been stressed by suppression of the dominant overstory. Damage is caused by the larvae of this insect which feed under the bark throughout the two-growing seasons that constitute the insect's two-year life cycle. The tree reacts to the feeding by forming ridges or raised bark to close off the wound made by the beetle. This can severely deform the tree, decreasing its value as a sawlog. The point of attack is also a weak point where the tree has a greater potential for wind breakage. ***Control***: Removing the attacked trees will improve the quality of the stand. Keeping the stocking levels at the optimum level will lessen stress in the understory, which will minimize attack by the beetle. This insect problem is more of a symptom than it is a real concern. The losses are not often great and generally once stands are under sound forest management, the likelihood of an infestation is quite low.

Hemlock Wooly Adelgid (HWA): HWA is an invasive aphid like insect that kills eastern hemlock trees. They can be identified by white "wooly" like coatings on the underside of the needles where they feed. The spread of these insects occurs by wind and animals. ***Control:*** Increasing species and size class diversity can increase the resiliency of the stand if infected and limit the severity of infestation as compared to pure hemlock stands.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB): EAB is an invasive insect that kills ash trees within 3-5 years upon infestation. Larvae overwinters under the bark feeding on the inner layers. The spread occurs mostly by human transport of infested firewood. EAB has been identified throughout the state and can cause widespread ash mortality once infestation begins. Identifying EAB can be difficult in early stages as it typically starts high in tree. There is also aa native ash borer that is not invasive and can be easily mistaken for EAB. Common signs are epicormic branching in the crown, blonding and pealing of the bark, 1/8th inch "D" shaped exit holes in the bark and "S" shaped larvae feeding galleries in the cambium layer. ***Control:*** Maintaining high species and age class diversity, along

with removing declining ash can lessen the aesthetical impact when EAB finds the area. Retain a portion of male and female ash exhibiting good health in hopes there may be some EAB resistant trees. These may be the long-term seed source to reproduce ash after the EAB has established and the ecosystem learns to co-exist. Control the spread by only transporting firwood locally during the dormant months of winter. Ideally ash firewood would be utilized on site.

Wildlife Habitat Resources

Habitat Considerations:

White Tail Deer: The summer home range is not a critical factor in Vermont deer management. The winter range is the limiting factor in deer herd size and health. Vermont is near the northern limit of white-tail deer range in North America. The winter range must meet specific criteria. A deer yard is a softwood stand with 70 percent or greater crown closure. This density limits the accumulation of snow, increases daily mean temperature, reduces wind speed and increases humidity. This necessary cover is useless unless adequate food supplies are available within the deer's reach (within 6 feet of the ground and 3-5 chains (1 chain = 66 feet) from the cover if snow depth exceeds 25-30 inches. Late summer and fall foods are important to the winter survival of northern deer. Abundant food sources in the fall allow deer to accumulate more fat going into winter, increasing their chances of survival. Fall foods consist of herbaceous material, leaves of woody plants, and mast such as beechnuts and apples. Winter food sources consist mainly of woody browse. High quality browse includes sugar maple, hobblebush, hemlock, and northern white cedar

Snags: Standing dead trees called snags are an important component of the forested habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species. Holes or cavities created in rotting wood by insects, and secondary feeding by woodpeckers and other excavators, are used for feeding, nesting, or denning and perching or roosting sites. Generally, the bigger the snag, the greater its value. Large snags provide more area for excavating and feeding often providing cavities for several species simultaneously. The best snags are often over 100 years old, rotten in the center with sound sapwood on the outside, and a few persistent limbs or live branches. Also high in demand are living trees with holes, because they are particularly resistant to predators and weather.

Riparian Zones: Riparian zones (lands adjacent to streams, rivers, ponds lakes, and other water bodies) and wetlands are important features of the Vermont landscape for a number of reasons. They contain plant species not found on drier uplands, which reduce erosion and sedimentation, mitigate flooding during and after major precipitation events and provide cover for fish and other aquatic organisms.

The value of riparian zones and wetlands for wildlife is varied. Many deer yards are in riparian conifer stands. Various wildlife species use riparian zones as travel corridors both in the zone itself and, in winter, on the adjacent frozen waterway where cover is nearby, and travel is easier because of reduced snow depth. Young birds and mammals use riparian zones during dispersal from their birth place. Migrating birds often use riparian zones and wetlands as resting areas. The wildlife trees found are used extensively for nest sites and perches. Some wildlife species, such as waterfowl, wading birds, muskrat, beaver, and of course fish, require water as part of their habitat. Others, such as bald eagles and osprey, are dependent on water for their food and often nest nearby. Great blue heron rookeries are often located in wooded swamps and marshes containing large trees suitable for nest sites. Riparian zones and wetlands also serve as links between different types of habitat, providing dispersal and travel routes for species that would not otherwise cross large openings or cuts.

Glossary

The following is a list of definitions for terms commonly used throughout your Forest Management Plan. It is our hope that these will aid you in more fully understanding the descriptions of your forest and the management recommendations made for your land. All definitions cited (in part or entirely) from Forest Terminology published by the Society of American Foresters, 1958. Definitions designated by an asterisk are our own and/or generally accepted within the profession.

ADVANCED REGENERATION* – Seedlings of commercially desirable species between two and four feet tall which will survive and respond to release. These seedlings will form the next stand of trees and indicate a sustainable forest condition if properly released.

AGE CLASS – One of the intervals into which the range of ages of vegetation is divided for classification and use.

ALL-AGED – Applied to a stand in which, theoretically, trees of all ages, up to and including those of felling age, are found.

ALLOWABLE CUT – Volume of timber that may be cut from a forest under optimum sustained yield management. Over time leads to the cutting of periodic growth, but never more than the level of potential growth.

ANNUAL RING – Ring of wood added each year by a growing tree; that is, the line indicating the growth for the period of one year. From the annual rings, the age of the tree may be determined.

BASAL AREA – Cross-sectional area of the stem of a tree at 4 1/2 feet (DBH). The basal area of a stand is the summation of all the trees or specified classes of trees per unit area of land, such as basal area/acre. Is directly related to stand volume and stand density.

BOLE – Stem or trunk of a tree, usually the lower, useable or merchantable portion of the tree trunk.

BLOWDOWN* – Trees that have been uprooted by wind; usually occurs where soils are either wet and/or shallow. The causes are poor root systems due to these site conditions or stagnation brought on by overstocking. Care must be taken in cutting stands on these soil types or where prolonged overstocking has weakened trees to prevent this type of loss.

BURL – Hard woody growth on a tree trunk, roots, or branches, more or less rounded in form. It is usually the result of the entwined growth of a cluster of buds. In lumber, a burl produces a distorted and unusual (but often attractive) grain. It is often considered a defect by the mill purchasing the logs.

*BUT*T – Base of a tree or lower end of a log. Usually the most valuable portion of a tree.

CLEAR-CUTTING – Method of cutting that removes all merchantable trees in one cut. A silvicultural clear cut removes all trees and when used properly, in a limited fashion, is a very effective forest management tool.

CORE – Slender cylinder of wood taken from a tree using an increment borer. Growth rings are counted on such cores to determine the rate of tree growth. Cores assist foresters in determining growth rates and stem/stand vigor.

CROP TREES* – Trees that are designated to comprise the final or rotation age timber crop. These are trees of good form, vigor, and quality. These stems would be graded as acceptable growing stock with sawlog potential.

CROWN – Upper part of a tree, including the branches and their foliage.

CROWN DENSITY – Compactness of the crown cover of the forest, dependent upon (a) the distance apart, and (b) the compactness of the individual crowns. A loose term combining the meanings of crown closure and shade density.

CRUISE – Survey of forest lands to locate and estimate volumes and grades of standing timber; also, the estimate obtained in such a survey. The field work associated with the development of a forest management plan.

Glossary

CULL – Tree or log of merchantable size rendered unmerchantable because of poor form, excessive limbs, rot, or other defects. These stems are often most valuable as wildlife snag trees.

CUTTING CYCLE – Planned interval between major felling (harvest/ thinning) operations in the same stand.

DBH – Diameter (of a tree) at breast height, approximately 4 1/2 feet above the ground or above stump height.

DEER WINTERING AREA – Softwood stands that are used in winter by deer for cover and food. Dense crowns keep snow depth down to allow easier movement. Usually found with a south or west aspect for maximum solar radiation. In northern areas spruce, balsam fir, eastern hemlock, and northern white cedar are the dominant species.

DEFECT – Any irregularity or imperfection in tree, log, piece product, or lumber that reduces the volume of sound wood or lowers its durability, strength, or utility value.

DEFOLIATION* – Loss of foliage from the crown of the tree due to insects or disease.

DOMINANT TREES – Trees in the forest that are the tallest, largest, and generally most valuable.

EDGE – Areas in a forest that represent where openings grow into mature timber. Represented in these edges are trees and brush of all heights. These edges are excellent wildlife habitat because they provide a variety of niches (habitats) for a wide diversity of species. An example is the area of an old field where it has started to regrow adjacent to a forested area.

EVEN-AGED – Term applied to a stand in which relatively small age differences exist between individual trees. The maximum difference in age permitted in an even-aged stand is usually 10 - 20 years.

FINANCIAL MATURITY* – Age or diameter where a tree no longer will grow fast enough to justify leaving it for another cutting cycle in the terms of timber value and return on investment. In other words, the tree will not gain in value and could begin to decline in value if not harvested.

FOREST TYPE – Descriptive term used to group stands of similar character as regards composition and development due to certain ecological factors, by which they may be differentiated from other groups of stands.

FREE THINNING – Modification of traditional silviculture applied in stands that for many reasons have not been regulated through proper forest management, but instead are very much irregular in stand structure and composition. A forester's skill on a tree-by-tree decision basis while marking is key to the success in regulated these stands.

GROWING STOCK – Sum (in number and volume) of all trees in a forest or stand. The timber that currently occupies the site in question. Often used as a subset of the total standing timber to represent pole timber of pulpwood size, yet of potential log quality.

HABITAT – Unit area of environment, practically synonymous with site; the kind of place in which a plant or animal lives. Habitats can be specific to a species, or unique or general in nature for a complex of species.

HEART ROT – Decay characteristically confined to the heartwood; it usually originates in the living tree.

HIGH GRADING – Removal from the stand of only the best trees. This is a very poor management practice and was typical of logging operations in the past. Still occurring today on logger choice harvests.

IMPROVEMENT CUTTING – Cutting made in a stand past the sapling stage for the purpose of improving its composition and character by removing trees of less desirable species, form, and condition in the main canopy.

INGROWTH* – Trees that are currently of non-merchantable size that will grow enough over the course of the management period to be tallied or utilized as merchantable stems.

INTERMEDIATE TREES – Trees that are currently either partially or completely overtopped, but of sufficient size and/or vigor to respond well to release if competing stems are removed.

Glossary

INTOLERANCE – Incapacity of a tree to develop and grow in the shade of and in competition with other trees. Aspen, white birch and raspberries are examples of intolerant species.

LIVE CROWN RATIO* – Ratio of the height of the crown (branches with foliage present) to the total height of the tree. Ideally, the live crown ratio should be kept from 30 to 40 percent to assure good growth rates and stem quality.

LOGGING CHANCE – Combination of factors that determine how easily the timber growing in a particular stand or woodlot can be harvested. A good logging chance leads to higher stumpage values and conversely a poor chance to lower stumpage due to increased harvesting costs. Factors: slope, soil type, timber quality, and skidding distance.

MARKING TIMBER – Selecting and indicating, usually by a paint spot at breast height and a paint spot on the stump, trees to be cut or retained in a cutting operation; spotting.

MATURITY – Approximate age (for a given species or stand), beyond which growth declines or decay begins to increase at a rate likely to assume economic proportions.

MBF – Abbreviation for Thousand Board Feet.

MEAN STAND DIAMETER (MSD)* – Average size in diameter at DBH in trees over 4 inches for a stand.

MERCHANTABLE – Trees or stands of a size and quality suitable for marketing and utilization for any or all products, including veneer, saw timber, pulpwood, and chipwood.

MORTALITY – Standing dead timber. Death can be caused by a wide variety of causes.

OVERSTORY – Upper crown canopy of the forest.

POLETIMBER – Tree of 4 to 10 inches DBH. Timber stands in which the trees of pole timber size make up most of the volume. These are generally middle-aged stands of pulpwood sized growing stock.

PRE-COMMERCIAL THINNING* – Treatments carried out in a stand to improve growth potential that do not generate merchantable products and therefore are funded by out of pocket funds (a capital investment). Treatment such a release by herbicides, spacing saw, or chainsaw thinning in sapling sized stands.

RELEASE CUTTING – Cutting of larger individual trees that are overtopping young trees, for freeing the young trees to permit them to increase their growth rates and remain vigorous.

REPRODUCTION – Process by which a forest or range is renewed, including (1) artificial: renewal by direct seeding or planting (reforestation); and (2) natural: renewal by self-sown seeds, sprouts, rhizomes, etc. (regeneration). Also seedlings or saplings of any origin (young growth), the result of reproduction.

ROTATION AGE – Age at which the stand is considered ready for harvesting under the adopted management plan.

SALVAGE HARVEST* – Liquidation of a stand of timber that is at or near mortality. The key is that you are salvaging what remains of the merchantable value in a stand that is rapidly losing value. Causes are usually insect or disease damage, or an over mature even-aged stand.

SAPLING – Young tree 1 to 3.9 inches DBH. Generally of non-merchantable size and considered growing stock.

SAWTIMBER – Tree measuring greater than 10" DBH. Stands in which trees of sawlog size account for most of the volume.

SCARIFY – Disturb the duff layer of the soil by disking or skidding to expose bare mineral soil as well as destroy competing vegetation to improve conditions for the germination, establishment, and growth of commercial seedlings.

SEEDLING – Tree grown from seed. Trees smaller than 1"DBH The youngest class of trees found.

SEED TREE – Trees reserved in a cutting operation to supply seed to regenerate the stand. A specific silvicultural system for regenerating even-aged stands.

Glossary

SELECTION SYSTEM – Removal of selected mature, large or diseased trees as single (individual tree selection), scattered trees in small groups (group selection). Young trees start in openings thus made; the result of this type of cutting is an uneven-aged forest. Not to be confused with logger's choice selective cutting.

SHAKE – Lengthwise separation of wood that usually occurs between and parallel to the growth layers (rings). Very typical in eastern hemlock.

SILVICS – The life history and general characteristics of forest trees and stands, with particular reference to environmental factors, also known as forest ecology.

SILVICULTURE – The art of producing and tending a forest; the application of the knowledge of silvics in the treatment of a forest; the theory and practice of controlling forest establishment, composition, and growth.

SITE INDEX* – System of classifying the potential of a site to produce forest crops. The two factors are height and age. By measuring these two data and comparing the figures to curves created for each species, the site index can be determined. The base is 50 years ago. A good site will produce trees of most species that are 50 feet tall at 50 years old. A site index of 65 would mean 65 feet tall at 50 years old.

SLASH – Branches, bark, tops, chunks, cull logs, uprooted stumps, and broken and uprooted trees left on the ground after logging. A properly harvested woodlot will have a minimum amount of slash present after completing the harvest.

SNAG – Standing dead tree from which the leaves and most of the branches have fallen, or a standing section of the stem of a tree broken off at a height of 20 feet or more. If less than 20 feet tall it is properly termed a stub. The maintenance of two to four snags per acre is considered appropriate for wildlife habitat enhancement.

STAND – Aggregation of trees or other growth occupying a specific area and sufficiently uniform in composition (species), age, arrangement, and conditions as to be distinguishable from the forest or other growth on adjoining areas.

STOCKING LEVEL* – Basal area of a stand. The number of trees present on a particular site as calculated by the diameter, number, and species.

SUCCESSION – Progressive development of vegetation toward its highest ecological expression, the climax. The replacement of one plant community with another. Example: old field abandoned and then reverting to woods with intolerant species first, then over time the development of a more tolerant composition as a climax forest is achieved.

SUPPRESSED TREES – Trees that are currently overtopped by individuals that are more vigorous. They have been overtopped for a long enough periods so that their health has been sufficiently damaged so that they will most likely not respond to release and often are in serious stages of decline.

SUSTAINED YIELD – As applied to a policy, method, or plan of forest management, the term implies continuous production, with the aim of achieving, at the earliest practicable time, an approximate balance between net growth and harvest, either by annual or somewhat longer periods. Often associated with uneven-aged management.

THINNING – Cutting in an immature stand to increase its rate of growth, to foster quality growth, to improve composition, to promote sanitation, to aid in litter decomposition, to obtain greater total yield, and to recover and use material that would otherwise be lost.

TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT (TSI) – Usually applied to an intermediate cutting. Generally pre-commercial in nature.

TOLERANT – Ability of a tree to grow in the shade of other trees. Sugar maple, eastern hemlock, and balsam fir are examples of tolerant species.

UNDERSTORY – Portion of trees in a forest below the overstory.

UNEVEN-AGED – Term applied to a stand in which there are considerable differences in age of trees and in which three or more age classes are represented. Age, not size differentiation is the key, size differences do not always accurately reflect on age.

WEED TREE – Tree of a species of little or no commercial value.

WOLF TREE – Tree occupying more space than its silvicultural value warrants, curtailing better neighbors. A term usually applied to broad crowned, large limbed, short stemmed trees.

YARD, LOG- OR LANDING – The location where logs are skidded by skidders, crawlers, or horses where they can be loaded on a truck for shipment to a mill.

Appendix A

Soils Series Forestry Info

Data/ratings from: casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu

Linked from the VT ANR web atlas.

Vershire Glover Complex:

https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/soil_web/ssurgo.php?action=explain_component&mukey=283551&cokey=20127127

Cabot Silt Loam

https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/soil_web/ssurgo.php?action=explain_component&mukey=2409963&cokey=20078136

Roundabout silt loam:

https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/soil_web/ssurgo.php?action=explain_component&mukey=283540&cokey=20127502

Nicholville very fine sandy loam:

https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/soil_web/ssurgo.php?action=explain_component&mukey=283507&cokey=20126950

Buckland Loam

https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/soil_web/ssurgo.php?action=explain_component&mukey=283408&cokey=20127378

Appendix B

Invasive Species Fact Sheets

JS314-Buckthorns.pdf

JS314-Honeysuckle.pdf

2014_Wall-Lettuce-Fact-Sheet_201405010712574010.pdf

Appendix C

USE VALUE APPRAISAL PARCEL DATA ENTRY FORM ☐ new ☒ update[1] ☐
amendment[2] ☐ change of ownership

FP&R COUNTY FORESTER USE ONLY

Parcel ID For Data Entry (by state) # __ __ __ __ __, __ __ __ __ __ — __ __ __   Year of Entry

__ __

Year of Plan _____   Year of Last Inspection

_____

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1) Landowner Name (last name, first name) Sterling College

2) Landowner Address (Street, PO Box) PO box 72

   (Town) Craftsbury Common (State) VT   (Zip Code) 05827

   Phone Number _____   Email Address

3) Town That Parcel Is In: Craftsbury 4) Total Forestry Acres in Parcel 45.8 (Grand list acreage, minus active agricultural and open land and exclusions)

5) Plan Preparer (last name, first name) Pelland, Tyler, (Pelland Forestland Management, LLC) 6) Previous Owner (last name, first name) _____

7) SPAN 168-053-10572

8) Stand information (this information is for data entry only and does not override what is in actual plan):

Stand #	Acres	Even-aged Uneven-aged (existing)	Predominant Site Class (I, II, III or IV)	Stand Type	Quadratic M.S.D.	Total BA	AGS BA	Management Activities	Treatment Year
1	9.6	E	III	13	8	143	75	12	-
2A,B	8	E	I	11	11	143	85	15	annually
3A,B	5.4	E	I	12	12	250	155	03/15	Annually/2028
4A,B	7.9	E	I-II	11	10	133	99	15	annually
5	9.8	E	I-II	11	13	135	71	03/14	2028
6	3	E	I-II	13	11	150	83	12	-
7	2.1	E	III	13	9	225	195	12	-

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[1] Update of an existing plan that includes all new stand descriptive data required every 10 years at minimum.

[2] Change to an approved existing plan does not change the 10-year cycle of the existing plan. If this form is filed with an amendment, indicate the amended information in the appropriate stand, and write an explanation in section 12. Amendments must be signed by the landowner(s).

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9) No activity – (identify stand # and reasons) <u>Stand 1,6 and 7 (ESTA).</u>

10) Management Activities – other (identify stand #) _____

11) Stand Types – other (identify stand #) <u>Stand 3A,B: White Pine overstory with white cedar mid story</u>

12) Amended prescriptions – (identify stand #) _____

STAND TYPES	CODE #
aspen and/or white birch	01
white pine, red oak	02
white pine	03
hemlock	04
sugar maple	05
beech, birch, sugar maple	06
beech, red maple	07
spruce	08
spruce/fir	09
pioneer species	10
mixed wood (25%-65% softwood)	11
other (identify other in section 11)	12
ESTA	13
open	14
significant wildlife habitat	15
special places and sensitive sites	16
miscellaneous	17

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY CODES (if one of the following choices reasonably describes the planned management activity, use it. If not, use #13 <u>other</u> and describe the management activity in Section 10. Note these descriptions are for choosing codes only; they are not the silvicultural standards).

1. <u>Non-commercial forest stand improvement</u>

EVEN-AGED MANAGEMENT
2. <u>Intermediate thinning</u>
3. <u>Shelterwood cut</u>
4. <u>Overstory removal cut</u>
5. <u>Clearcut</u>
6. <u>Progressive clearcutting</u>

UNEVEN-AGED MANAGEMENT
7. <u>Single Tree Selection</u>
8. <u>Group Selection</u>

MISCELLANEOUS CHOICES
9. <u>Salvage cut</u>
10. <u>Sugarbush management</u>
11. <u>Species conversion</u>
12. <u>No Activity</u>
13. <u>Other</u>
14. <u>Crop Tree Release</u>
15. <u>Invasive Species Control</u>

Rev. 11/9/09