

DIN: 2075-1-01
Title of Policy: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid

Policy

Northwest Technical College and MnSCU Board Policy 2.9, in compliance with Federal and State regulation, requires that all learners maintain satisfactory academic progress toward the completion of a degree, diploma, or certificate in order to receive financial aid. Programs covered by this policy include Federal and State Work-Study, loans, grants and possibly scholarships. The standards used in this policy must include all periods of enrollment, whether or not a learner received financial aid.

NOTE: *The Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Financial Aid is different than Northwest Technical College’s Academic Policy for Satisfactory Progress (policy 3110-1-01). It is possible to be suspended from financial aid and not be suspended from the college. Learners are first and foremost responsible for their own academic progress and for seeking assistance when experiencing academic difficulty.*

I. GRADE POINT AVERAGE REQUIREMENT (Qualitative Measure)

Financial aid recipients are required to maintain a 2.0 (C) cumulative grade point average beginning with the first term of attendance. (Note: A 2.0 GPA is required to graduate). Grades of A, B, C, D, and F are included in the GPA calculation.

II. PERCENTAGE OF CREDITS COMPLETED AND MAXIMUM TIME FRAME REQUIREMENT (Quantitative Measure)

The college uses cumulative credits completed, divided by credits attempted, to measure completion percentage. To remain eligible for financial aid, a learner is required to progress toward the completion of an academic program by successfully completing 67% of all credits attempted. Courses for which a learner receives a letter grade of A, B, C, D, S, and P are included in the calculation of cumulative credit completion percentage as courses successfully completed. Courses for which a learner receives a letter grade of F, I, IP, N, NC, NP, NR, and W will be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed. Blank (“Z”) grades will be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed.

The maximum allowable time frame for a learner to complete an academic program is 150% of the published credit length of the program of record. For example, if your program is 65 credits in length, you would only be eligible to be paid financial aid for up to 98 attempted credits (65 X 1.5 = 97.50). All cumulative credits attempted will be counted toward the maximum allowable time frame, even though a period of time may have elapsed between enrollments.

NOTE: If at any point it is determined that a learner will not be able to finish the required courses to graduate from his or her program within the 150% time frame, financial aid eligibility will be terminated immediately.

III. EVALUATION PERIOD

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress will be evaluated three times each year--after Fall, Spring, and Summer Semester grades are recorded.

IV. FAILURE TO MEET STANDARDS

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Document Number:2075-1-01	Rev. 5-2-07, 11-27-07	Page 1 of 4	Level #1
Title: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid			Implementation Date: 8-27-07
Approved: Dr. Quistgaard	Date: 8-16-05	Check here if policy should appear in campus handbook:	X

A. Maximum Time Frame (150%) Requirement.

If a learner has reached a point when it is clear that he/she will not be able to graduate within the maximum time frame, he/she becomes ineligible for future aid.

B. Qualitative (GPA) or Quantitative (67% completion) Percentage.

1. A learner who fails to meet the cumulative GPA or percent completion measures at the time of evaluation will be placed on financial aid probation immediately. Learners will be eligible for financial aid during this probationary term.

2. A learner who fails to meet the qualitative or quantitative measures at the end of the probationary period will have financial aid eligibility suspended immediately.

3. At the end of the probationary period, a learner who meets the term GPA and percent completion measures, but has failed to meet the cumulative standards, will be placed on continued probation until such time as the learner has met the cumulative GPA and percent completion standards. Learners will be eligible for financial aid while on continued probationary status. If the learner fails to meet the institution's qualitative or quantitative standards for the courses in which he/she was enrolled during the probationary period, the institution shall suspend the learner from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the review. Also, if the institution determines that it is not possible for the learner to raise his/her GPA or percent completion to meet the institution's standards before the learner would reach the end of the program for which he/she is receiving financial aid, the institution shall suspend the learner from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

C. Suspension of Learners for Extraordinary Circumstances.

Any learner may be immediately suspended from financial aid eligibility in the event of extraordinary circumstances, including but not limited to previously suspended (and reinstated) learners whose academic performance falls below acceptable standards during a subsequent term of enrollment; learners who register for courses, receive financial aid, and do not attend any classes; and learners whose attendance patterns appear to abuse the receipt of financial aid.

V. NOTIFICATION

Learners will be notified in writing any time they are placed on probation or suspension status.

VI. APPEALS PROCESS

A learner who fails to meet the satisfactory academic progress standards may appeal to re-establish eligibility by completing a Petition for Reinstatement of Financial Aid. This form is available from the Financial Aid Office. The petition may be based on undue hardship, death of a relative, injury or illness, or extenuating circumstances as determined by the institution. Petitions must be supported with appropriate documentation and verification and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

When considering a petition, a learner's prior academic history, test scores, and potential for successful completion of the academic program will be considered. The Director of Financial Aid or a designee will approve or deny appeals as they are submitted. Results of an appeal will be sent to the learner in writing. Any learner whose petition is denied may appeal the denial to the Financial Aid Review Committee.

VII. REINSTATEMENT OF FINANCIAL AID

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Document Number:2075-1-01	Rev. 5-2-07, 11-27-07	Page 2 of 4	Level #1
Title: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid			Implementation Date: 8-27-07
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The approval of a Petition for Reinstatement of Financial Aid places a learner on a trial semester with the Financial Aid Office. An approved petition will state the terms of the trial semester and the specific conditions that apply. During this trial semester a learner is eligible to receive financial aid. At the conclusion of the trial semester, if the learner has not met cumulative satisfactory academic progress minimum standards but has met the conditions of the approved petition, the learner will automatically have the trial semester extended for the next term of enrollment. However, suspension of financial aid eligibility will occur immediately if NTC determines that it is not possible for a learner to raise his/her GPA or course completion percentage to meet the institution's standards before reaching the maximum time frame allowed in the program for which the learner is receiving financial aid.

Neither paying for their own classes nor sitting out a period of time is sufficient in and of itself to re-establish a learner's financial aid eligibility. Learners may have their financial aid eligibility reinstated by again meeting the cumulative GPA and percent completion requirements. If a learner who is not meeting satisfactory academic progress has a late grade recorded or receives a grade change at any time during the academic term, the learner should contact the Financial Aid Office to check his/her financial aid eligibility.

VIII. ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS

A. Treatment of grades: Courses for which a learner receives a letter grade of A, B, C, D, S or P are included in the calculation of cumulative credit completion percentage as courses successfully completed. Courses for which a learner receives a letter grade of F, I, IP, N, NC, NP, NR, W, or Z will be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed.

B. GPA Adjustment for Returning Learners/Academic Amnesty: Academic amnesty and Grade Point Average (GPA) Adjustment are not available for financial aid recipients. All attempted credits are counted in financial aid satisfactory academic progress.

C. Audited Courses: Audited courses will not be funded by financial aid and are not included in any financial aid satisfactory academic progress measurements.

D. Consortium Credits: Credits for which financial aid is received under a consortium agreement will be included in cumulative GPA, completion percentage, and maximum time frame calculations.

E. College Readiness/Remedial/Developmental Credits: All College Readiness/ remedial/ developmental credits are included when determining satisfactory academic progress for GAP and percent completion. Up to 30 such credits shall be omitted when determining maximum time frame.

F. Repeated Credits: Upon submission of the repeat from to the Registrar, only the highest repeated grade will be counted toward the cumulative GPA measurement. According to NTC Academic Policy, "program accreditation requirements may impose limits on the number of times a course may be repeated." All credits, original and repeated, are included in determining the 67% completion requirement and maximum time frame.

G. Transfer Credits: Transfer credits accepted by the institution and applied toward a learner's degree, diploma, or certificate requirements to graduate will count toward the maximum time frame calculation.

H. Withdrawals: Credits for which a grade of "W" is received are considered attempted credits but not successfully completed credits. A grade of "W" does not impact GPA but does negatively impact the cumulative completion percentage and counts toward the maximum time frame.

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Document Number:2075-1-01	Rev. 5-2-07, 11-27-07	Page 3 of 4	Level #1
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Purpose

To comply with federal regulations and MnSCU policy and procedure.

Responsibility

The table below describes responsibilities for this policy:

Group/Individual	Responsibility
Financial Aid Director	Enforce policy
Financial Aid Coordinator	Ensure that learners are knowledgeable of this policy and the consequences for lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress in terms of financial aid. Monitor learner performance, notifying learners of change in academic status regarding financial aid under this policy. Notify Registrar of this change in status.
Registrar	Place any necessary holds on learner registration status as a result of change in status.
Counselor	Assist learner in filing appeal upon request

Supporting References

Listed below are college document(s) that support this policy:

Compliance References:

Listed below are references to compliance requirements (e.g. MnSCU policy, federal regulations).

[MnSCU Policy 2.9](#) and [Procedure 2.9.1](#)

Federal Financial Aid Regulations

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