



Policy Name:	Satisfactory Academic Progress
Effective Date:	September 10, 2015
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Last Review Date:	December 9, 2021
Approving Authority:	Northwest Leadership Team
Responsible Office:	Director of Financial Assistance
Category:	Academics and Enrollment

**Purpose**

To be eligible to receive federal, state, and some private financial aid, students must be maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward earning a degree or certificate.

**Requirements**

Federal law requires that the University monitor both qualitative and quantitative academic progress of its students. Students must be in compliance with the University’s written standards to maintain eligibility for any type of federal, state, or institutional financial aid. The Office of Scholarships and Financial Assistance will monitor SAP at the end of each trimester.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Qualitative progress requires students to earn a predetermined Northwest cumulative grade point average. To be considered making satisfactory qualitative progress, undergraduate students must have the following minimum Northwest cumulative grade point averages:

Freshman (0-29 hours earned)	1.75
Sophomore (30-59 hours earned)	2.00
Junior (60-89 hours earned)	2.00
Senior (90 or more hours earned)	2.00

To be considered making satisfactory qualitative progress, graduate students must have the following minimum Northwest cumulative grade point averages:

Master’s	3.00
Specialist	3.25

**Completion Rate**

Quantitative progress requires students to successfully complete a certain percentage of attempted courses. Final quantitative progress will be determined at the end of each trimester. To be considered making satisfactory quantitative progress, undergraduate and graduate students must pass at least 67% of the cumulative credit hours they have attempted.

A credit completion rate is the ratio of a student's total credits successfully completed to the student's total attempted credits. Attempted credits include successfully completed courses, courses dropped after the drop/add period, failed courses, repeated courses, course withdrawals and transfer credits that have been accepted by the University. Courses in which a student receives delayed/incomplete grades will be counted as hours attempted but will not be counted as successfully completed until a final passing grade is officially posted to the student's permanent record.

Students are not eligible to receive federal financial aid for courses audited. Courses audited will not be included when determining the number of credit hours a student has attempted or completed.

### **Maximum Timeframe**

Students must complete a degree program in no more than 150% of the credit hours required by the program. Undergraduate students will not be eligible for financial aid if they have attempted more than 150% of the credit hours required to receive their first undergraduate degree. A change of major does not extend the number of allowable attempted credit hours. This results in 186 maximum allowable hours attempted for undergraduate financial aid eligibility. Graduate students will not be eligible for financial aid if they have attempted more than the following number of credit hours:

Master's	67 hours
Specialist	96 hours

If a student does not meet the maximum timeframe requirement, their eligibility for aid will be suspended and an automatic warning period is not provided to extend eligibility beyond the 150% threshold.

During the SAP evaluation process, the Office of Scholarships and Financial Assistance identifies students who are approaching their maximum timeframe and requires those students to schedule an appointment with a Financial Assistance Counselor and their Academic Advisor. The Academic Advisor will provide information indicating whether the student is able to complete their program of study within the allowable 150% timeframe. In the event the University is not able to document that a student is able to complete their program of study within the allowable 150% timeframe, their eligibility is suspended.

### **SAP Status**

#### **Financial Aid Warning**

When a student does not meet the qualitative or quantitative academic progress standard they will be placed on Financial Aid Warning for the next term of attendance. Students remain eligible to receive aid during the warning period and their record will be reviewed for compliance again following their next term of enrollment.

Students who are placed on Financial Aid Warning will be sent email notification to their University email account.

#### **Financial Aid Suspension**

A student who is placed on Financial Aid Warning and does not meet the qualitative and quantitative academic progress standards at the conclusion of the warning period will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. This suspension status results in the loss of eligibility for all types of financial aid until all SAP standards are met.

Students who are placed on Financial Aid Suspension will be sent email notification to their University email account. Students are responsible for being aware of the Satisfactory Academic Progress policies and will remain ineligible, even if the University's notification is not received.

### **Appeal Process**

A student who fails to make Satisfactory Academic Progress after being on Financial Aid Warning may appeal, in writing, the loss of eligibility. The appeal must be based on documented mitigating circumstances that were clearly beyond the student's control. Types of required documentation may include doctor and hospital reports, legal documents, and

written confirmation from a parent or other official sources as deemed appropriate by the Financial Review Committee. Written appeals and all supporting documentation must be submitted to the Office of Scholarships and Financial Assistance. Student are encouraged to submit their written appeal and supporting documentation as soon as possible. This will allow the appeal to be reviewed in a timely manner and will allow the student sufficient time for financial planning for their upcoming term of enrollment. The petition form will be considered incomplete if all three areas below are not separately and specifically addressed. Supporting documentation is highly recommended. The completion of a petition form requires a written statement addressing the following areas:

- Explain what happened that caused you to not meet financial aid academic progress standards. Attach supporting documents that you have to verify your situation (medical bills, doctor's note, etc.).
- Explain what has changed that will now allow you to be successful and meet academic progress standards in future terms.
- Explain what you plan to do academically to meet academic progress standards.

The Financial Review Committee will review the written appeal, supporting documentation and notify the student by email of the appeal decision. To appeal the decision of the Financial Review Committee, the student must contact the Provost Office after receiving the committee's response. The decision of the Office of the Provost is final.

If a student's appeal is successful, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and will regain eligibility for the subsequent term of enrollment. Minimum SAP standards must be met by the end of

the term of enrollment when the student is on Financial Aid Probation. Some students who are placed on Financial Aid Probation may be required to complete an Academic Plan. If a student achieves the minimum SAP standards during his or her probationary term, the student will return to good standing. If the SAP standards are not met following the probationary period, the student will no longer qualify for financial aid.

### **Regaining Eligibility**

After an unsuccessful warning period, an unsuccessful probationary period, or an unsuccessful appeal, a student must achieve both the qualitative and quantitative standards to regain financial aid eligibility. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Scholarships and Financial Assistance once these requirements have been met and to reapply for financial aid.