

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students

Purpose and Scope

Federal regulations mandate that a student receiving financial assistance under Title IV programs must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in his or her course of study regardless of whether or not Financial Aid is awarded each semester. Western New Mexico University's (WNMU's) Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students must be applied consistently to all Financial Aid recipients within identifiable categories of students (such as full-time or part-time).

Students pursuing Certificates, Associate's, or Bachelor's degrees are responsible for understanding and adhering to the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress for Undergraduate Students is measured with the following standards as mandated by Federal Regulations:

- Qualitative (Cumulative Grade Point Average)
- Quantitative (Maximum Time Frame for Completion)
- Quantitative Percentage (Attempted Hours/Earned Hours)

Qualitative Standard

Students will be expected to maintain the minimum academic standards as outlined in the Academic Standing section of the WNMU Catalog. WNMU uses a 4-point scale for grade point average (G.P.A.) and requires students to maintain a minimum cumulative G.P.A., depending upon the number of credits attempted.

Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average	
Attempted Hours	Cumulative GPA
0-32	1.65
33-48	1.75
49-59	1.90
60 + Hours	2.0

Quantitative Standard

The quantitative standard is used to accurately measure a student's progress in a program. There are two components of the quantitative standard:

1. Quantitative Percentage: Minimum 67% Completion Rate Requirement
2. Quantitative: Maximum Time Frame
Maximum Time Frame is measured by dividing the number of credit hours that the student has attempted by the number of credit hours that are required to complete the student's program of study. If the student reaches 150 percent, then he or she has reached the Maximum Time Frame

Maximum Time Frame Rule (Required Graduation Hours x Maximum Time Frame %)		
Graduation Requirement Hours	Maximum Time Frame Percentage	Attempted Hours Permitted
120 Credit Hours	150%	180

3. In the example, the program of study requires 120 credit hours to graduate. Therefore, 180 credit hours would be 150%; when the student reaches 180 credit hours attempted in that program, he or she will have reached his or her Maximum Time Frame.

Students who reach the Maximum Time Frame allowed for a program of study will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension

4. Maximum Time Frame Adjustment for Change of Major

Students who change their majors will not have credits attempted and grades earned excluded from the Maximum Time Frame calculation.

Students who graduate and return to WNMU for a 2nd degree

If a student graduates from WNMU and re-enrolls at WNMU to pursue another program, all developmental/remedial courses and academic courses where the student earned grades of "F", "W," or "I" will not be excluded from the Maximum Time Frame calculation.

How my grades are evaluated under the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy?

- The student's cumulative G.P.A. must be a 2.0 or higher to satisfy the requirements of the qualitative standard of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students.
- Grades of "A", "B", "C", "D," "F," "P", and transfer credit will be considered credit hours attempted and earned.
- Grades of "W", "NF," or "I" will not be considered as credit hours earned for the 67% Completion Rate Requirement and Maximum Time Frame Rule but will be considered as credit hours attempted for the semester.
- Students who withdraw from the college must still maintain Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress for Undergraduate Students for the 67% Completion Rate Requirement and Maximum Time Frame Rule.

What happens if I fail to meet the standards of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy?

1. Following the first semester in which a student does not meet the standards of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning Status for the next semester of enrollment. Students may be allowed to receive Financial Aid funds while on Financial Aid Warning Status as long as they are otherwise eligible.
2. A student who is on Financial Aid Warning Status and who improves his or her academic performance as defined by the qualitative and quantitative standards will be placed in good standing and may be eligible to continue to receive Financial Aid for following semesters.
3. A student who is on Financial Aid Warning Status who fails to meet the standards of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension and denied further funding until he or she meets the qualitative and quantitative standards.
4. Appeals Process
 - The appeal process is designed to ensure that students granted an appeal:
 - Understand in what way they are failing to meet the minimum standards for Satisfactory Academic Performance., and the consequences to achieving their goal to graduate.
 - Have explained and documented the extenuating circumstances that have led to their failure to meet standards.

- Understand the academic choices available to help them bring their performance up to the minimum standards.
- Develop a realistic plan, including a timeline and specific levels of performance goals necessary to regain satisfactory academic progress in a reasonable period of time while working toward the completion of their degree.

Students who successfully appeal their financial aid suspension, including developing and agreeing to an acceptable academic plan to achieve reinstatement, will have their financial aid eligibility reinstated on a probationary basis. This probationary status will be reviewed at the end of each subsequent semester

- Students who meet the minimum cumulative standards at the end of any semester will have their probation ended and be fully reinstated.
- Students who, after a semester review of their probation, fall below the minimum cumulative standards, but have met the expectations outlined in their academic plan will be continued on a probationary level while following the plan to regain satisfactory academic performance status.
- Students who, after a semester review of their probation, fall below the minimum cumulative standards, and have also failed to meet the expectations outlined in their agreed upon academic plan will be suspended from financial aid eligibility.

Students, who are suspended from Financial Aid eligibility and therefore not eligible to receive financial aid funds, whether before or after probation, can regain eligibility by bringing their cumulative GPA as well as cumulative completion to the minimum levels defined above without the benefit of financial aid funding. Simply enrolling in a future semester, paying out of pocket, and doing well, will not result in a reinstatement of eligibility, unless all three SAP elements are brought up to the cumulative minimum.

Note: Any student who can demonstrate a realistic ability to complete their degree within one semester, may substitute this for the comprehensive academic plan.

Additional Information

Complete Withdrawals and the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students

Students who completely withdraw must still maintain the standards of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students. A complete withdrawal will always have a negative effect on a student's standing under this policy. If a student completely withdraws during the semester and follows the appropriate procedures and deadlines, his or her grades for the semester will be all "W"s. These grades are not passing; therefore, the student did not meet the 67% Completion Rate Requirement and will be placed either on Financial Aid Warning, Financial Aid Probation, or Financial Aid Suspension depending on what his or her status was before the semester began.

Academic Probation and Suspension

Students on Academic Probation or Academic Suspension will automatically be placed on Financial Aid Warning or Financial Aid Suspension, respectively. If a student successfully appeals his or her Academic Probation or Academic Suspension, that appeal has no effect on his or her standing with the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students; he or she will still be on Financial Aid Warning or Suspension. Please reference the Financial Aid Appeals Process section of this document for more information.

Notification of Status under the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Students placed on Financial Aid Probation or Financial Aid Suspension will be notified by university e-mail of their status after grades are available.

The effect of dropping or withdrawing from a course

Students who reduce their course load by dropping or withdrawing from a course after the semester has begun risk non-compliance with the 67% Completion Rate Requirement. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid.

The effect of Financial Aid Suspension on Financial Aid Awards

Title IV federal aid for undergraduate students consists of grants, loans, and student employment; therefore, all grants, loans, and student employment awards will be cancelled (or discontinued in the case of student employment) if a student is on Financial Aid Suspension.

Consortium Agreements and the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students

When WNMU has a Consortium Agreement with a participating institution, the student must meet the standards of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students of the institution that is awarding aid.

The effect of repeating courses

There is no specific limitation on the number of times a student may attempt a course under the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students. All course attempts, even repeated courses, will count when assessing whether a student meets the 67% Completion Rate Requirement and/or Maximum Time Frame limit.

The effect of Incomplete grades

Courses in which a student receives an incomplete ("I") at the end of the semester will count as attempted credit hours and as a non-passing grade when assessing if a student meets the 67% Completion Rate Requirement and/or Maximum Time Frame limit.

Renewal of Aid

No Financial Aid award is automatically renewed. Applications for continuation of aid must be made each year. Minimum requirements for continuation of Financial Aid include maintaining satisfactory progress toward a degree.