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 (GPA) and requires students to maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA or better.

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: 67% Completion Rate Requirement

Students must complete 67% of the course load for which they register each semester. The chart below shows credit hour totals and the number of credits that must be completed to meet this requirement. Developmental/remedial course work will be counted in the 67% calculation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attempted Semester Credit Hours</th>
<th>67% Completion Rate Requirement</th>
<th>Earned Semester Credit Hours must be more than or equal to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>12 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>11 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>11 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>10 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>9 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>9 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>8 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>7 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>7 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Credit Hours</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>6 Credit Hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.  **Note:** Federal regulations mandate that students receiving financial assistance under Title IV will have a total of twelve (12) semesters to complete a program of study regardless of whether they reach their Maximum Time Frame.

The graph below contains three examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation Requirement Hours</th>
<th>Maximum Time Frame Percentage</th>
<th>Attempted Hours Permitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>128 Credit Hours</td>
<td>150%</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 Credit Hours</td>
<td>150%</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Credit Hours</td>
<td>150%</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the first example, the program of study requires 128 credit hours to graduate. Therefore, 192 credit hours would be 150%; when the student reaches 192 credit hours attempted in that program, he or she will have reached his or her Maximum Time Frame. In the second example, the program of study requires 64 credit hours to graduate. Therefore, 96 credit hours would be 150%; when the student reaches 96 credit hours attempted in that program, he or she will have reached his or her Maximum Time Frame. In the third example, the program of study requires 32 credit hours to graduate. Therefore, 48 credit hours would be 150%; when the student reaches 48 credit hours attempted in that program, he or she will have reached his or her Maximum Time Frame.

If a student’s program of study exceeds 128 credit hours to complete, the Maximum Time Frame Rule still applies. For example, if a program of study requires 134 hours to graduate, 201 credit hours would be 150%. When the student reaches 201 credit hours attempted in the 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 for which there is no appeal. However, students may complete their program of study but must pay their own expenses, such as tuition, fees, books, supplies, etc.

**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,” “WF,” 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 for Undergraduate Students?

- The student’s cumulative GPA 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,” “WF,” “P”, and transfer credit will be considered credit hours attempted and earned.
- Grades of “W,” “MI,” “MW,” 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 for Undergraduate Students?

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: A student who fails to meet the standards of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduate Students because of unusual circumstances beyond the student’s control, such as illness, death in the family, or an accident, has the right to appeal. Throughout the appeal process the student must be prepared to pay his or her own expenses, such as tuition, fees, books, supplies, etc. Please follow the procedure below to appeal a Financial Aid Suspension.

   - A Financial Aid Appeal form must be obtained from and submitted to the WNMU Office of Financial Aid.
   - Documentation supporting the extenuating circumstances must be available for review.
   - It is the student’s responsibility to follow up with the Office of Financial Aid after submitting a complete appeal form with all of the required documentation to determine the status of his or her appeal.
   - Appeals will be approved or disapproved by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.

   If a Financial Aid Appeal is approved, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and will be eligible to receive Title IV aid. The student’s record is reviewed after the first semester of Financial Aid Probation. If the student has brought his or her term GPA up to a 2.0 and has also successfully completed 67% of the total number of credits attempted during the probation semester, he or she will be placed in good standing. If the student has completed 67% of the total number of credits but did not bring his or her cumulative GPA up to a 2.0 and the term GPA is a 2.0 or better, the student is eligible for one additional semester of probation. If the term GPA is less than a 2.0, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. A student who is on Financial Aid Probation will be notified by university email of his or her status and what he or she must do to continue to receive financial aid.

   If a Financial Aid Appeal is disapproved, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension and denied further funding until he or she meets the qualitative and quantitative standards. If otherwise eligible, a student may complete his or her program of study but must pay his or her own expenses, such as tuition, fees, books, supplies, etc.

   All decisions made by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee are final.
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 for Undergraduates; he or she will still be on Financial Aid Warning or Suspension. Please reference 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 Warning or Financial Aid Suspension will be notified by the Financial Aid Office by 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 Financial Aid Office.

The effect of Financial Aid Suspension on Financial Aid Awards: Title IV federal aid for graduate students consists of loans; therefore, all loan awards will be cancelled if a student is on Financial Aid Suspension.

Consortium Agreements and the Financial Aid Satisfactory Aid Awards: 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 Undergraduates 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.

The effect of Incomplete grades: Courses in which the 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.