Northwest State Community College is required by federal law to establish, publish and apply standards for measuring satisfactory standards of academic progress (SAP). These standards are implemented to ensure students successfully complete coursework within a reasonable timeframe to earn their degree or certificate. All students receiving financial aid must meet SAP requirements to remain eligible for financial aid. Students’ SAP status will be determined by the NSCC Financial Aid Office at the end of each semester (including summer) and an electronic notification will be sent through their student email accounts at NSCC. This notification will be sent to all enrolled students, whether they are receiving financial aid. ***Regardless of whether the student received financial aid funds, ALL courses will be counted.*** Several factors are incorporated into SAP in order to determine eligibility for financial assistance.

These factors include:

* Qualitative Progress – GPA Requirement
* Quantitative Progress – Quantity of Work Completed
* Pace of Progress Towards Degree – Program Completion Requirement

These criteria evaluate: the quality and quantity of a student’s academic work, as well as their progress toward completing their program. The satisfactory academic progress requirements listed below is **minimum** standards.

## **Qualitative Progress – Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA for their academic standing that matches the program’s graduation requirement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Credits Attempted | Cumulative GPA |
| 1 – 15 | 1.4 |
| 16 – 30 | 1.6 |
| 31 – 45 | 1.8 |
| 46+ | 2.0 |

## **Quantitative Progress – Credit Hour Pace of Progression**

Students must successfully complete no less than 67% of all credit hours attempted cumulatively. All completed, incomplete, withdrawal, noncredit, repeated, transfer credit, and failed course grades are considered attempted courses. Successful completion of classes means passing grades must be earned. Grades of F, W, I, U, P, UC, WF, WM, WP, NP, and NR do not count towards successful completion. The percentage is calculated by taking the number of completed credits divided by the credits attempted.

## **Pace of Progress Towards Degree – Maximum Time Frame**

For each program of study, an institution may establish a maximum time frame in which a student is expected to complete their degree . The maximum “length of eligibility” a student is allowed is 150% of the actual credits required by their degree or certificate as stated in the Northwest State Academic Catalog.

***Examples*** are listed below:

### Practical Nursing, Certificate

Total Program Hours, 42 Hours x 150% = **63 Program Hours Allowed**

### Business Management, AAB

Total Program Hours, 60-61 Hours x 150% = **91.5 Program Hours Allowed**

\*Total program hours for each offered program can be found within the Northwest State Community College Academic Catalog, provided on our website.

# **Additional Satisfactory Academic Progress Information**

**Repeated Courses**

When a course, or its current equivalent, is repeated, the most recent grade will be included in the calculator of GPA. A course repeated will be considered as any other course (earned hours and attempted hours) for the calculation of pace of progression and maximum time frame. Refer to the Northwest State Community College Repeat Course Policy for additional information regarding aid eligibility for repeated courses.

**Transfer Credit**

Credit(s) transferred to NSCC will apply toward graduation, only if they satisfy requirements for a particular major. Transfer credit(s) not required by a particular major may be counted as additional hours completed. Transfer credit(s) are not included in the calculation of GPA; however, they are included in pace of progression and maximum time frame.

**Incomplete Grades**

Incomplete grades are factored into student’s SAP calculation for the term in which the grade is assigned. When an incomplete grade is changed to a final grade, the new grade will be factored into the student’s SAP calculation during the next formal evaluation period. The school cannot retroactively change the student’s SAP status when the grade of “I” becomes a final grade, since, at the time of the SAP evaluation, the grade of “I” was a valid grade.

**Withdrawals**

If a student withdrawals (W) from a course after the drop/add period for any given semester, the course is considered in “hours attempted” when calculating pace of progression and maximum time frame.

**Remedial Courses**

Remedial or developmental courses do not count toward the student’s degree requirements; however, they are counted as attempted and earned hours and are used to determine a student’s academic grade level or classification. Thus, developmental courses are calculated in the quantitative and maximum time frame measures.

* Reminder – financial aid may be awarded to cover up to 30 remedial course credits. Remedial course credits in excess of 30 cannot be calculated as enrolled hours for financial aid purposes. This rule is not related to SAP but is a general financial aid eligibility requirement.

**Changes of Major & Pursuit of Second Degree**

Prior credits and grades that do not count toward the new major will be included in the SAP determination of GPA, pace of progression, and maximum time frame. All periods of the student’s enrollment count when assessing satisfactory academic progress, even periods in which the student did not receive financial aid funds.

# **Satisfactory Academic Progress Standing Statuses**

**Good Standing** – Student is meeting the GPA, pace of progression, and maximum time frame requirements and is eligible to receive financial aid.

**Financial Aid Warning** – A student who fails to meet SAP at the end of an enrollment period. Financial aid warning enrollment periods allow students to receive federal financial aid even if they do not meet SAP standards. The student will be suspended from further financial aid if they do not meet SAP standards by the end of the warning period. Additional course enrollments after the warning period must be paid by the student through personal funds, or the student must appeal.

**Financial Aid Suspension** – Suspension is a status that is assigned to the student if they fail to meet the minimum SAP policy requirements. The student’s financial aid will be terminated or suspended until they meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress or have an approved appeal.

# **Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal**

Students that are placed on financial aid suspension may be granted an exception to this policy if they complete the **Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form**. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate all appeals. Reinstatement of financial aid is also subject to availability of funds.

*Students awaiting reinstatement of their financial aid eligibility are required to submit all applications* ***15 business days*** *before the end of the term or payment period for which reinstatement is desired.*

The steps to appeal are as follows:

1. Complete the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form on MyNSCC or the Financial Aid Office has a paper version.
2. Include ***third party documentation*** (if applicable) to support the reasons stated in the appeal by sending attached documentation to finaid@northweststate.edu.
3. Make an appointment to meet with an advisor to create a ***Plan of Study.***
   1. The plan of study **MUST** be entered in DegreeWorks by your academic advisor and must include every class that is needed to meet all satisfactory academic progress requirements.

The Financial Aid Office will review the financial aid appeal with all documentation, including the student’s academic history, to determine whether the circumstances warrant approval. The student must explain in the appeal how the documented circumstances will not prevent him/her from maintaining satisfactory progress in the future.

If the appeal is approved, the student will be allowed to restore satisfactory standing based on the plan of study and meeting the conditions of the appeal. A student, whose financial aid has been reinstated through the appeal process, may have adjustments made to their original awards, including loans, as a condition of an approval.

**The student must earn C’s or better in each course without withdrawing from any classes.** If the student goes back onto suspension, a second appeal will not be allowed.

If the student will need more than the allowed maximum “length of eligibility” for his/her program, a financial aid appeal for an extension must be submitted. The appeal must document circumstances responsible for the extended time needed. The student must be making satisfactory academic progress at the time of the request. The signed plan of study must include every semester needed to complete his/her degree or certificate.

If the appeal is NOT approved it is the students’ responsibility to either make payment arrangements with the Business Office or go online and drop the courses that he/she is registered for; otherwise the student is responsible for any outstanding balance.

# **Satisfactory Academic Progress Plan of Study**

Occasionally, it may be mathematically impossible for a student to achieve minimum SAP standards at the conclusion of one term. The objective of the plan of study should be to assist the student in academic success at each of the stipulated checkpoints and milestones of the plan. The long-term goal of a plan of study should be to restore the student to proper SAP standards at a specified future point in time. Students who meet the conditions of an academic plan can work with the school to change the plan terms without appealing.

A plan of study will be voided by the financial aid office for the following reasons:

* When a student changes their major, the previous plan is void since it pertaining to the major at the time of the appeal.
* If a student violates the academic plan as defined.
* If a student does not enroll in the term the study plan was designed for.

The Financial Aid Office may specify in a plan of study the terms and conditions under which the student will be required to take a reduced course load. This may include enrolling in specific courses.

# **The Re-Establishment of Financial Aid Eligibility**

The Financial Aid Office will decide regarding the approval or denial of the appeal. Listed below are the possible decisions and their meanings:

**Probation Appeal Approved** – Student did not meet satisfactory academic progress requirements and was placed on Suspension. He/she submitted an appeal describing the special circumstance that caused them to be unsuccessful in their classes and how that situation has since been resolved. The students appeal was approved for ***ONE*** additional semester of probation. Student must meet ALL satisfactory academic progress requirements during this semester or their financial aid eligibility will be suspended. Students are only considered one time for a probation appeal approved status.

**Probation Plan of Study** – Student did not meet satisfactory academic progress requirements and was place on Suspension. He/she submitted an appeal describing the special circumstance that caused them to be unsuccessful in their classes and how the situation has been resolved. The students appeal was approved for the number of semesters that have been outlined by the student’s academic advisor. The plan of study must include every class needed in order to get the student back on track with meeting all satisfactory academic progress requirements. Student may not fail or withdraw from any future classes and must pass each course listed on their plan of study with ‘C’ or higher. If the student fails to meet the conditions of their approved appeal they will go back on Suspension and will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid funds.

**Plan of study for Maximum Time Frame (1, 2, 3, or 4 more semesters)** –Student has previously reached the maximum time frame and submitted an appeal for an extension of financial aid eligibility to complete their degree or certificate or to work on another degree program. Student must meet satisfactory academic progress requirement throughout each additional semester he/she has been granted. Student may not fail or withdraw from any future classes and must pass each course listed on their plan of study with ‘C’ or higher. If the student fails to meet the conditions of their approved appeal they will go back on Suspension and will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid funds.

**Appeal Denied** – The appeal has been denied and the student is not eligible to receive financial aid funds (including student loans). There are multiple reasons why an appeal may be denied, listed below are a few examples of those reasons:

* Did not have an extenuating circumstance that caused them to be unsuccessful in classes.
* The number of hours needed to raise Pace of Progression/GPA to required levels exceeds the maximum number of hours allowed for their program of study.
* Did not meet conditions of a previously approved appeal.

Students will be notified via their NSCC student email account regarding the decision of their appeal within 15 business days of receipt of the appeal. If you have questions regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy or the steps to appeal, please contact the Financial Aid Office at 419-267-1333 or email at finaid@northweststate.edu.

Students who do not wish to complete the appeal may also choose to pay for courses on their own until they once again meet satisfactory academic progress requirement.