

## 3. Finances and Accounting



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### 3.1 FINANCES

The Northwestern offices of Financial Aid and Accounting Services are available to assist with the financial questions and needs of Northwestern Students. Email them at: [financialaid.unwsp.edu](mailto:financialaid.unwsp.edu).

#### 3.1.1 FINANCIAL AID

Students are urged to consult the financial aid office for information on receiving financial aid. Students may qualify for grants, discounts, scholarships, or loans.

#### 3.1.2 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Northwestern standard undergraduate academic year consists of fall and spring. The minimum credit load to be considered full time is 12 credits per semester. Fall and spring semesters are fourteen weeks of study and one week of final exams. This constitutes a 30-week academic year which is consistent with the standard academic year for federal and state assistance.

#### 3.1.3 SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Federal and state regulations require all universities to establish standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for students receiving financial aid. The intent of the law is to encourage students receiving financial aid to make satisfactory progress towards their degrees.

- All federal, state, and institutional aid is governed by this policy.
- All Northwestern schools are governed by Satisfactory Academic Progress policies: Traditional Undergraduate, Undergraduate Pathways (UP), FOCUS, and the Graduate Program.
- Satisfactory Academic Progress is reviewed annually for all students.
- Students taking a combination of classes in different Northwestern schools must meet the same SAP standards.

This policy covers the Traditional Undergraduate program SAP policy. Graduate and Continue Education programs (Undergraduate Pathways (UP), Focus, and Graduate Program) have a separate SAP policy located in the GCE Catalog.

To be making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), all students **must declare a program of study**, so their progress can be measured. They must also meet these two minimum requirements to receive financial assistance: Qualitative and Quantitative.

### Qualitative

Halfway through the student's declared program, a student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00. Failure to accomplish this requirement will result in the denial of assistance until a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or better has been reestablished. Good Standing is based on the university grade scale set below.

Credits Attempted Required for Good Standing	Cumulative Semester Minimum Cum GPA
0-15	1.600
16-29	1.700
30-44	1.800
45-59	1.900
60+	2.000

### Quantitative

A student must progress from year to year, earning a minimal number of credits per year to be eligible for financial aid. Students must earn a minimum of 2/3 (67%) of credits attempted (Table 1).

Example of Typical Credits Completed Progression per Year.

Years of enrollment completed	1	2	3	4	5
Typical credits completed per year	30	60	90	120	150

Table 1 - **Minimum** Credit Completion Requirements for Financial Aid Eligibility by Program:  
Years of Enrollment Completed

Minimum Credit Requirement by Program	1	2	3	4	5	6
BA/BS		20	40	61	81	102
Associate	20	40	60	*	*	
Certificate	20	30	*	*		

Just as there is a minimum credit completion requirement per year, we also have guidelines for a maximum time frame for the completion of a program (Table 2). Once the maximum completion time has passed, students will no longer be eligible for financial assistance.

Table 2 - **Maximum** Time Frame for students receiving aid in a program:

Program	Expected Completion Time	Max. Completion Time for Financial Aid Eligibility	Percent of Time Allowed
BA/BS	4 years	6 year	150%
Associate	2 years	3 years	150%
Certificate	1 year	1 ½ years	150%

A student who fails to satisfy the stated minimum credit completion requirements will be denied future financial aid, unless through \*appeal, is placed on \*\*financial aid probation for one semester, during which he/she will continue to receive aid. At the end of the probationary semester, the student must meet the minimum credit completion requirements or financial aid will be cancelled for subsequent semesters until Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is reestablished.

After a student's financial aid has been denied/cancelled, it may be reinstated when the student's cumulative credits completed and cumulative GPA meet the minimum requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress.

### 3.1.4 STUDENT APPEALS

At the time a student is denied assistance, in the event of mitigating circumstances, a student may \*appeal for continuation of financial assistance. A student may submit a written appeal for continuation of financial assistance with the appropriate information below included.

Students must specify:

- The conditions under which they are appealing
- Why they failed to make SAP
- What has changed that will allow them to make SAP by the next evaluation.

If the student is put on \*\*financial aid probation, he/she must set up a plan for recovery of the deficiency in credits or cumulative GPA. Students may appeal once, and if SAP is made, they will continue to receive financial aid.

*\*Appeal - is a process by which a student petitions the institution for reconsideration of eligibility for Title IV, HEA program assistance.*

*\*\*Financial aid probation - is a status assigned by an institution to a student who has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated.*

### 3.1.5 SUSPENSION

If a student is suspended due to academic standing, no financial aid will be offered at any of the university venues. Example: a suspended Traditional Undergraduate student may continue to take Undergraduate Pathways (UP) or FOCUS courses, but they will not be eligible for aid until they meet the minimum requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

Not attending Northwestern for a semester or more is not grounds to allow reinstatement of financial aid. A student may be allowed to attend the university at their own expense until they improve their qualitative and quantitative measures. At the point they meet the expected minimum requirements for SAP, they may be re-instated for financial aid eligibility.

### 3.1.6 GRADE EVALUATIONS

- **Traditional Day: F, W, I, AU** - Courses for which the grade received is F (fail), W (withdrawal), or AU (audit) do not count toward minimum credit requirements for SAP.
- **Audited** - courses are not counted in the qualitative or quantitative review due to there being no financial aid allowed for these courses.
- **Incompletes** - must be completed before final grades are applied, but they are attempted credits. Grades of I (incomplete) must be removed within ten calendar weeks, from the end of the semester or summer session. The final grade received is used to monitor SAP.
- **Courses assigned an "F" grade** - because they have been attempted and completed, will be receive no earned credit. A student that is assigned an "F" grade and doesn't do any work in the course will be evaluated and may lose financial aid during that period immediately at the end of the term.
- **"W" courses** - have been attempted, but are not included in the qualitative measure. "F" and "W" courses must be included in the maximum time frame of the quantitative requirements.