

SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

POLICY

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS STANDARDS**

The intent of this policy is to make Southwest Minnesota State University students aware when they are not making satisfactory academic progress toward earning a degree.

1. The minimum acceptable cumulative grade point average (GPA) is:

Undergraduate Students:

- 1.6 for 1 – 29 attempted semester credits
- 1.8 for 30 – 59 attempted semester credits
- 2.0 for 60 or more attempted semester credits

Graduate Students: Graduate students must have a 3.0 cumulative minimum grade point average.

Undergraduate and Graduate students: Courses which receive a letter grade of A, B, C, D, F, or N are included in the computation of the GPA.

2. The minimum completion rate for attempted credits is:
Undergraduate and Graduate students: Students must complete a minimum of 66.67% of cumulative credits attempted.

Undergraduate and Graduate students: Courses receiving grades of A, B, C, D, F, I, IP, N, CR, and NC, and W are considered to be credits attempted for the purposes of this progress standard.

3. Additional Information.
 - a. Audited courses will not count as credits attempted or passed.
 - b. Consortium and Common Market program credits will be included in all satisfactory academic standards.
 - c. Developmental courses will be included in all satisfactory academic standards.
 - d. When a student repeats a course, the last grade obtained and credits earned will be counted in the grade point average, but the credits are considered to be credits attempted each time the course is taken.
 - e. Transfer credits are not counted as credits attempted for calculating the completion rate or cumulative GPA.
 - f. Withdrawn credits are considered credits attempted (but not completed) for the purposes of calculating the completion rate, but are not used in the GPA computation.
4. Review of the cumulative grade point average and completion rate will be evaluated at the end of each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer).

5. Probation. Students who do not meet the minimum cumulative grade point average and/or fail to meet the minimum completion rate will be placed on academic probation. If, at the end of the following semester, the **minimum cumulative standards have been met**, the student is off probation.
6. Continue on Probation. If, at the end of the following semester the **minimum cumulative standards have not been met** but the student has met the minimum semester standards, the student will continue on probation. A student is eligible to continue on probation each semester the minimum semester standards are met, until the minimum cumulative standards have been achieved, at which time the student will be off probation.
7. Suspension. A student will be placed on suspension the first semester after being placed on probation when neither the minimum cumulative nor semester standards have been met. The student will be notified in writing that he/she is suspended for two semesters. Students may appeal their suspended status to the Academic Standing Committee for reinstatement. A student who is reinstated after suspension will return to the University under Probation status (see 5 above).
8. Students who remain out of school for two semesters may return to the University upon filing a readmit form with the Office of Admissions. A student who remains out of school for two semesters after suspension and returns to the University will be in Probation status (see 5 above).

FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS STANDARDS

Statutes specified in the Higher Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-329), as amended in 2002 [Part G, Section 484 (c)], require that all financial aid recipients maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. Failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress results in ineligibility for all Federal and State financial aid programs. This policy is effective January 2006.

The intent of this policy (and the underlying law and regulation) is to encourage all recipients to advance steadily toward the completion of their degrees. To receive aid, students must meet the minimum requirements as outlined below. The academic standards required to receive financial aid apply to all academic work attempted at Southwest Minnesota State University whether or not financial aid was received at that time. Only Southwest Minnesota State University and approved consortium/Common Market courses/credits are used in monitoring the Grade Point Average (GPA) and completion rate components of Satisfactory Academic Progress. Transfer credits and SMSU/consortium/Common Market courses are used in monitoring the maximum timeframe component (see “Transfer Students/Courses” under Additional Information).

MINIMUM SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS STANDARDS

1. Grade Point Average (GPA)/ Qualitative Measurements
 - A. Undergraduate Students:
Undergraduate students must have a cumulative minimum grade point average of:
 - 1.60 for anyone having attempted 1-29 semester credits
 - 1.80 for anyone having attempted 30-59 semester credits
 - 2.00 for anyone having attempted 60 or more semester credits
 - B. Graduate Students:
Graduate students must have a cumulative minimum grade point average of 3.0.

- C. For all students:
Courses that receive a letter grade of A, B, C, D, F or N are included in the computation of the GPA.
2. Completion of Attempted Credits/ Quantitative Measurements
- A. All students (undergraduate and graduate) must complete a minimum of 66.67% of **cumulative** credits attempted. Courses receiving grades of A, B, C, D, F, I, IP, N, R, NC and W are considered to be credits attempted for the purposes of this progress standard.
- B. Maximum Timeframe: All students must complete their degree requirements within a maximum timeframe, not to exceed 150% of the normal length expected to attain the degree objective. For example, students attempting more than 192 credits towards their first Baccalaureate Degree will be ineligible to receive funding (128 credits x 150% = 192). Note: An additional 64 credits will be funded for students obtaining a second Baccalaureate Degree. Graduate students attempting more than 54 credits towards their Master's degree will be ineligible for funding (36 credits x 150% = 54).

EVALUATION PERIOD

Review of the grade point average, completion rate, and maximum timeframe standards will be evaluated at the end of each semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer). The University further reserves the right to terminate financial aid at any time it becomes apparent that it would be impossible for the student to raise his/her academic record to the minimum requirements by the end of the semester.

FAILURE TO MEET THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

Students whose cumulative credits exceed the maximum timeframe will be suspended from financial aid. Students who do not maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average and/or fail to complete and earn a minimum of 66.67% of attempted credits will be placed on financial aid probation for one semester. A student on financial aid probation is allowed until the end of the next enrolled semester to bring his/her academic status up to or beyond the minimum standards outlined above. If, at the end of the probation term, the minimum satisfactory academic progress standards have not been met, financial aid will be suspended. Aid will remain suspended until the student once again meets the minimum standards or is approved on appeal (see below).

NOTIFICATION

Students who fall below the minimum standards will be notified in writing if they are placed on financial aid probation or if they are no longer eligible to receive aid. Upon suspension of aid eligibility, no further processing of the students financial aid application will take place. Any aid that has been awarded for the subsequent term(s) will be canceled. Any costs already incurred will be the responsibility of the student and arrangements must be made with Business Services.

APPEALING FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION

An appeal process is available to students that have been placed on financial aid suspension due to academic deficiencies. A student who has experienced extraordinary circumstances, which directly affected their ability to maintain satisfactory academic progress, may have their progress reviewed by Financial Aid Office personnel for possible reinstatement of aid. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include, but are not limited to the death of a relative or close friend, illness, hospitalization, or injury to the student, etc. The appeal must include the student's written statement and supporting documentation from a third party. The appeal committee will review each complete appeal submitted and will notify the student in writing of the decision within 2 weeks. Appeals will not be considered if they are received more than one month into the term for which the student is requesting reinstatement of aid. Appeal forms are available in the Financial Aid Office and at:

<http://www.southwestmsu.edu/CampusLife/FinancialAid/Index.cfm?Id=418>

REINSTATEMENT

A student is eligible for reinstatement of their financial aid when they have either, met minimum standards (2.0 CGPA and 67% Completion Percentage) or have a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal approved (see above).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- A. TREATMENT OF GRADES: Grades of A, B, C, D, F, or NC are included in the computation of the GPA (qualitative measurements). Grades of A, B, C, D, F, I, IP, N, CR, NC and W are considered to be credits attempted for purposes of calculating the percentage completion rate and the maximum timeframe (quantitative measurements). Grades of F, I, IP, N, NC, and W are not completed/passed credits and, therefore, will count against the student when calculating the percentage completion rate. Grades of A, B, C and D are included in the calculation of cumulative credit completion percentage as courses successfully completed.
- B. AUDITED COURSES: Any courses being audited will not count as credits attempted or credits passed. Audited credits will not be funded by Title IV or Minnesota State aid.
- C. CONSORTIUM PROGRAMS AND COMMON MARKET: These programs are University supported and are included in all (qualitative and quantitative) satisfactory academic standards.
- D. REMEDIAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES (050 OR BELOW): These courses will be included in all (qualitative and quantitative) satisfactory academic standards. To include lower level courses in the determination of financial aid, the Financial Aid Office must have written documentation from the student's advisor or Learning Resources as to the reason the student is taking this course. SMSU can exclude up to 30 remedial credits from the maximum timeframe calculation.
- E. REPEATED COURSES: When a student repeats a course, only the last grade obtained and credits earned will be counted in the grade point average, but the credits are considered to be credits attempted each time the course is taken.
- F. TRANSFER STUDENTS/COURSES: Transfer credits are not counted as credits attempted for calculating the completion rate or the cumulative GPA. However, transfer credits are used for tracking the maximum timeframe standard (192 credits towards first Baccalaureate, 54 credits towards Master's degree.)
- G. WITHDRAWALS: Withdrawn credits are considered credits attempted (but not passed) for the purposes of calculating the completion rate, but are not used in the GPA computation.

For more information call the Financial Aid Office at 800-642-0684 or 507-537-6281.