

**Nashville State Community College  
Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**



Effective: *Fall 2021*

## Contents

Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) .....	3
Section 1: General Information .....	3
Section 2: Standards.....	3
Standard 1: Academic Status.....	3
Standard 2: Qualitative (GPA) .....	3
Standard 3: Quantitative/PACE of Completion (Overall Attempted vs. Overall Earned Hours).....	4
Standard 4: Maximum Time Frame (MTF) .....	4
Section 3: Additional Guidelines .....	4
Academic Fresh Start.....	4
Repeat Courses.....	5
Change of Major, Double Majors, Minors .....	5
Second Degree .....	5
Learning Support Limit .....	5
Grades of 'I' or 'NR' .....	5
Readmit Students .....	5
Transfer Students .....	6
Section 4: Review and Notification .....	6
Review for Continuing Students.....	6
Initial Review for Transfer Students .....	6
Warning Status .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Unsatisfactory Academic Progress (Suspension).....	6
Notification.....	6
Section 5: Reestablishing Eligibility .....	7
Section 6: Appeal Process .....	7
Section 7: Review of Appeals .....	8
Financial Aid Probation .....	8
Academic Plan .....	8
Denied Appeal .....	8

## Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Federal and State regulations require that students maintain adequate progress towards receiving a degree in order to continue eligibility for financial aid programs. The following standards are for financial aid purposes only and neither replace nor override the college's academic policies. A student is reviewed for eligibility no matter if the individual received aid during the period reviewed.

This policy shall apply to all State, Title IV or HEA approved programs requiring satisfactory academic progress. This policy will be administered by the Director of Student Financial Aid, who will develop, revise and enforce the procedures for aid retention.

The following standards are applicable to all students applying for and/or receiving assistance administered by the Financial Aid Office:

### Section 1: General Information

- To receive Federal student aid, eligible students must be enrolled at least half-time (6 hours), with the exception of Pell and (Federal Supplementary Educational Opportunity Grant) SEOG recipients. Recipients of Pell and SEOG who are enrolled less than full-time will receive a prorated award based on the number of hours enrolled. Only full-time enrolled students are eligible to receive a full Pell Grant.
- Special/non-degree students (as defined in the college catalog) will not be considered for aid.
- Students must meet both quantitative (Pace) and qualitative (GPA) standards to be eligible for aid.
- The entire academic record will be reviewed, to include courses that were part of a Fresh Start program(s) and transfer hours.

A student is in violation of maintaining satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes if the student meets a condition in Standard 1 or fails to meet any of the additional standards.

## Section 2: Standards

### Standard 1: Academic Status

- On academic probation or academic suspension

AND/OR

### Standard 2: Qualitative (GPA)

Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average based on the number of credit hours attempted at the college, in order to maintain satisfactory progress toward graduation. This includes college level, ESL, and learning support courses. This does not include transfer credit or credit by exam (AP credit). This is referred to as the cumulative attempted GPA hours.

AND/OR

### Standard 3: Quantitative/PACE of Completion (Overall Attempted vs. Overall Earned Hours)

Students must maintain at least a 67% overall class completion rate (PACE) of all classes attempted at the college and/or transfer courses accepted. Grades of W, I, X, F, WF, NR, FA, FN and AU do not count as completed courses for the student. Repeats of previously passed courses can cause a student's completion rate to decrease.

***To determine completion/PACE percentage:***

***Take the total number of overall combined earned hours divided by overall combined attempted hours. For example, a student attempted 45 hours and earned 25. The student would take the 25 earned hours and divide by the 45 hours attempted ( $25 / 45 = 55\%$ ). The completion rate is 55%, and the person is not eligible for financial aid because the rate is below the required 67% completion rate.***

***In this same scenario, a student should have earned at least 31 hours in order to remain eligible for financial aid. ( $31 / 45 = 68\%$ )***

AND/OR

### Standard 4: Maximum Time Frame (MTF)

Students must complete their program of study within 150% of the published length of the program.

For associate degree programs, students are allowed up to their first 90 hours attempted. Students enrolled in Title IV eligible certificate programs may receive aid up until 150% of the individual program length. The college will consider a student to have reached this limit at the end of the semester in which he or she reaches the maximum hours. Transfer credit and repeated coursework count toward the attempted hours. All college coursework and transfer coursework accepted is included in this measurement even if it does not apply to the student's current program of study. At any point, when it becomes mathematically impossible for a student to complete their program of study within the MTF, the student will become ineligible for all federal financial aid programs.

This timeframe limitation does not include remedial or developmental (Learning Support) courses for which the maximum federal limitation is thirty (30) attempted credit hours.

## Section 3: Additional Guidelines

### Academic Fresh Start

A student granted Academic Fresh Start remains accountable for all work on his or her record. The hours attempted will still be considered when evaluating for MTF. The forgiveness of previously completed coursework will result in a lowering of completion rate (PACE).

### Repeat Courses

Students should refer to the academic regulations within the undergraduate catalog to determine how course repeats are counted in the institutional GPA calculation.

In relation to this policy, all attempted college level credit hours (including repeated coursework credit hours) are included in the quantitative/pace and MTF measurements. Additionally, all attempted Learning Support (LS) coursework (including repeated LS credit hours) are included in the LS thirty (30) attempted credit hour limitation.

A student may repeat a failed course until passed (depending on eligibility). However, for a passed course, a student may only be paid federal financial aid one additional time. Passed courses are any course with A, B, C, D, or P grades. Repeats of a passed course can impact a student's completion rate (PACE), as a student may only earn hours for the course once.

### Change of Major, Double Majors, Minors

A student who changes his or her major or selects multiple majors/minors thus requiring additional hours to complete a degree, must still complete the program of study within the maximum timeframe allowed of 150%.

### Second Degree

A second-degree student is defined as a student with a previous degree at the same classification. A student who completed a previous degree and is seeking a second degree may violate the 150% maximum timeframe rule.

A student in a fail status due to seeking a second degree may appeal the decision, if they have extenuating circumstances. See appeal section.

### Learning Support Limit

Students can receive aid for up to 30 attempted hours of remedial or learning support courses. Transfer credits of learning support courses will be included in the total hours for eligibility. Federal aid for students exceeding this maximum is based on college level courses only. This limit cannot be appealed.

### Grades of 'I' or 'NR'

In cases where a student is assigned a grade of 'I' or 'NR', the student will be evaluated accordingly. These grades do not impact GPA. These grades also do not count as completed or earned hours. If the grade is subsequently changed, the student's SAP status will be re-evaluated at the end of their next term of enrollment.

### Readmit Students

Readmit students will be evaluated and brought in under the current SAP policy. All academic transcripts must be received and evaluated prior to determining the student's SAP status.

## Transfer Students

Transfer students will be evaluated and brought in under the current SAP policy. All academic transcripts must be received and evaluated prior to determining the student's SAP status. Transcripts submitted with in-progress grades are not considered to be final transcripts.

## Section 4: Review and Notification

### Review for Continuing Students

A review of academic progress will be conducted at the end of each semester (fall, spring, and summer).

### Initial Review for Transfer Students

Transfer students' satisfactory academic progress standings are evaluated upon admission once all transcripts are received and reviewed. Eligibility will be calculated based on previously described standards. If a transcript has not been evaluated, aid will not be awarded until the evaluation is done and SAP standing determined. If ineligible for financial aid, an appeal may be submitted.

### Warning Status

Current students who initially fail the qualitative or quantitative standards will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. Students in this status may continue to receive aid for one additional semester. At the end of that semester if they do not move into good standing, they will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. Students who fail the MTF measurement or are deemed to not be mathematically capable of completing within the MTF are not eligible for a Financial Aid Warning period and immediately become ineligible for aid.

### Unsatisfactory Academic Progress (Suspension)

Students in the suspension status are ineligible to receive any financial aid (including loans) and must take classes at their own expense until they are again in good standing. Students who fail the MTF measurement or are deemed to not be mathematically capable of completing within the MTF are not eligible for a Financial Aid Warning period and immediately become ineligible for aid. Appeals are accepted for students who fail MTF. See appeals section.

### Notification

Students are notified of their satisfactory academic progress standing by email and on their student portal. It is a student's responsibility to check his or her email and student portal frequently. Notifications are not sent to students in good standing because no action is required.

## Section 5: Reestablishing Eligibility

If a student's appeal is denied, he or she may regain eligibility for financial aid by taking the following actions:

- Earn the number of deficient credit hours (quantitative/pace standards)
- Earn the required GPA (qualitative standard)

A student must notify the Financial Aid Office when the deficient hours and GPA meet the compliance standards.

If an academic review reveals a student will violate MTF prior to degree completion, the student will need to file an appeal to re-establish his or her eligibility. The student may not regain eligibility unless a change in program or degree results in the student's ability to graduate within the maximum timeframe when considering attempted courses versus earned courses relevant to the new program.

Students may be required to complete a specific number of credits or enroll for a certain number of academic periods without receiving financial aid. However, neither paying for classes nor a period of non-enrollment re-establishes eligibility. Should students decide to pay fees out-of-pocket, there is no guarantee an appeal will be approved. If an appeal is approved, financial aid will be awarded based on eligibility, but retroactive financial aid payments will not be granted.

## Section 6: Appeal Process

Students can file a Financial Aid appeal to regain eligibility if there were extenuating circumstances that warrant a student to continue receiving Title IV and/or State aid. To successfully appeal the student must:

1. **Complete and submit** a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form. Access the appeal by clicking on the SAP requirement in the student's MyNSCC portal under their Financial Aid requirements. This will take them to the online form.
2. **They will be prompted to type in a statement** outlining:
  - the extenuating circumstances that resulted in unsatisfactory progress during the semesters required standards were not met; **and**
  - explaining what circumstances have changed that make it possible for the student to be academically successful during future terms.
3. **Attach appropriate documentation** to support the circumstances outlined in the appeal. Documentation may include, but are not limited to, a physician's signed statement on official letterhead, copy of death certificate, accident report, and medical reports/records. *Appeals submitted without appropriate documentation will be denied.* Documents may be uploaded into the online form.

Federal regulations permit appeal approvals under the following conditions for students with extenuating circumstances:

- It has been determined that the student will be able to meet SAP standards after the subsequent term.
- An academic plan is developed for the student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time.

## Section 7: Review of Appeals

The appeal review is conducted by a financial aid appeals committee. The committee makes every effort to review appeals in a timely manner. The decision of the committee is final. Notification of appeal outcomes will be sent via email and noted on the student portal.

### Financial Aid Probation

Approved status is assigned to a student who fails to meet satisfactory academic progress guidelines, submitted an appeal, and the appeal was approved. A student may receive aid for one semester/term while on this status. An approved appeal does not allow retroactive financial aid payments.

### Academic Plan

When a student's appeal is approved, but it is mathematically impossible to meet satisfactory academic progress standards within one semester, the student is placed on an academic plan with specific requirements. This status is also used in situations where MTF appeals are approved and the number of hours for degree completion extends beyond one term.

The plan may include a higher GPA standard, a higher completion rate, or other requirement that helps ensure the student can either return to good standing within a specific time period or graduate.

### Denied Appeal

A student whose appeal was reviewed and denied remains on financial aid suspension and is not eligible to receive financial aid. A reason for denial will be provided, and the student may refer to this policy for regaining eligibility.