

## ***Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy***

Effective Date: July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014

**This policy will be used to determine eligibility for aid for the 2018-2019 Academic Year.**

Federal regulations mandate that all students make satisfactory, measurable academic progress toward completion of a degree in order to receive federal assistance through Title IV federal grant, work, and loan programs.

First time freshman, new transfer students, new post-baccalaureate, new graduate, and new law students are automatically considered to be making satisfactory academic progress during their first academic year. These students will be subject to the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress at the end of their first academic year and thereafter. An academic year is defined as August to May.

- 1.NKU's SAP standards comply with the requirements of the U.S. Department of Education.
- 2.These are financial aid standards and do not replace or override NKU academic policies.
- 3.Your academic progress will be reviewed at the end of each spring semester. For current students, Satisfactory Academic progress is usually determined in early June. Students who are not meeting academic progress requirements will be notified by mail.
- 4.The academic progress of financial aid applicants will be reviewed as NKU receives FAFSA data.
- 5.It is your responsibility to stay informed of the University's SAP standards and policy.

**The academic progress of students will be reviewed for**

- 1.Qualitative Progress (grade point average),**
- 2.Quantitative Progress (Pace of completion), and**
- 3.Maximum Time Frame for Degree Completion.**

*\*You must maintain satisfactory progress in all three areas whether or not you have received financial aid in the past.*

1. Qualitative Progress (GPA)
  - a. Students whose academic standing status is Academic Warning, Academic Probation, or Suspension are not considered to be meeting the qualitative (GPA) standards of academic progress.
  - b. The following chart summarizes the minimum GPA required to be considered to be in good academic standing:

<u>Degree Program</u>	<u>Minimum Acceptable Cumulative GPA</u>
Undergraduate student with 0-15 quality hours	1.66
Undergraduate Students	2.0
Graduate Students	3.0
First Year Law Students	1.6
Upper Level Law Students	2.0
Doctoral Students	3.0

## 2. Quantitative Progress (Pace of Completion)

**Students must earn at least 67% of the total number of cumulative credit hours that they have attempted. This includes all NKU coursework, remedial courses and transfer credits. Examples below:**

Student #1:    Total Official Attempted Credit Hours:    84  
                   Total Official Earned Credit Hours:        39  
                    $39 / 84 = 46\%$

\*This student has failed the quantitative (pace of completion) standard.

Student #2:    Total Official Attempted Credit Hours:    54  
                   Total Official Earned Credit Hours:        42  
                    $42 / 54 = 77\%$

\*This student has passed the quantitative (pace of completion) standard.

***\*Percentages are not rounded up. For example, a student who has earned 66.66% of their hours attempted is not considered to be meeting the quantitative (pace of completion) standard of academic progress.***

## 3. Maximum Time Frame for Degree Completion

- a. You are expected to earn a bachelor degree before
  - i. You have attempted 180 credit hours
  - ii. You exceed 150% of the hours required for completion, if your degree requires considerably more than 120 hours to complete, as described in the catalog
- b. Graduate students have a maximum number of 6 years to complete their programs, doctoral students 8 years and law students 7 years.

- c. The allowed time frame does not increase if you change your major, pursue double majors, or pursue an additional degree. However, students may appeal if they have experienced unusual or mitigating circumstances that prohibited them from meeting these standards.
  - d. You are expected to earn an Associate degree before
    - i. you have attempted 90 credit hours.
    - ii. You exceed 150% of the hours required for completion, if your degree requires considerably more than 60 hours to complete, as described in the catalog.
4. Important Notes
- a. Classes for which students receive grades of “T” (audit), “F”, “NR” (grade not reported) or “W” (withdrawal) are not counted as earned hours. Incomplete coursework and deferred grades will not be considered as hours earned for an academic year until a grade is received.
  - b. Remedial courses are counted as hours attempted and earned but are not factored in to the GPA component of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Therefore they are subject only to the quantitative (pace of completion) measure of SAP.
  - c. English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are counted as hours attempted and earned as well as factored into the GPA component of SAP. Therefore they are subject to both quantitative (hours earned) and qualitative (GPA) measures of SAP.
  - d. Change of major and students who work towards an additional degree are subject to both the qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (hours earned) measures of SAP.
  - e. Transfer hours are counted as both hours attempted and hours earned.
  - f. Bankrupted hours are counted as attempted hours.
5. Course repetitions
- a. When a student repeats a course, the last grade prevails and the original grade is removed from the GPA computation.
  - b. A repeated course may only count towards enrollment status if the student is receiving credit for that course. If it does not count towards enrollment status, the student will not receive financial aid for that course.
  - c. For financial aid purposes, a student may only repeat a course once if he/she has previously passed the course. If a student repeats a course more than once that he/she has previously passed, the student cannot receive aid for that course.
6. Re-establishing Financial Aid Eligibility
- a. A student ineligible to receive financial aid for failure to meet the standards of satisfactory academic progress may re-establish his/her eligibility by enrolling at his or her own expense in a subsequent term and meeting the standards according to the qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (pace of completion) measures.

- b. If a student was denied financial aid because he/she did not meet the minimum GPA standard but has taken courses to bring his/her GPA up to the minimum, the student should contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance to have his/her aid reinstated.
  - c. If a student was denied financial aid because he/she did not earn at least 67% of the total hours attempted due to incomplete grades, and now grades have been recorded for those hours to meet the quantitative (pace of completion) progress standard, the student should contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance to have his/her aid reinstated.
  - d. If a student initially failed to meet the Standards of Academic Progress but is now meeting the standards due to grade changes or the granting of academic renewal, the student should contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance to have his/her aid reinstated.
7. Appeals
- a. If a student was denied their financial aid for failure to meet the academic progress standards, he/she may submit a written appeal if the student's extraordinary circumstances have been resolved. Students should not and may not base their appeal on their need for financial aid or their lack of knowledge that their financial aid was in jeopardy.
  - b. Students may appeal once per academic year.
  - c. The appeal decision by the committee is final.
  - d. If it is mathematically impossible for a student to achieve a cumulative pace of completion of 67% after one academic year, a student's appeal will not be reviewed by the academic progress appeals committee and the appeal will be unable to be approved.
    - i. This determination will be made based on attempting and earning 24 credit hours for the academic year for undergraduates.
  - e. If it is mathematically impossible for a student to achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 1.8 after one semester, a student's appeal will be unable to be reviewed by the academic progress appeals committee and will be unable to be approved.
    - i. This determination will be made based on the assumption of full time enrollment (12 hours) and a 4.0 term GPA for one semester for undergraduates.

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- f. The Student Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review appeal requests and may grant approval for the following reasons:
- i. The death of a relative of the student.
  - ii. The personal injury or illness of the student.
  - iii. Special circumstances as determined by the institution.
- g. The committee meets twice a month during June, July, and August and at least once a month during September, December, and January.
- h. Appeals must include
- i. A letter written by the student which clearly states the extraordinary circumstances which may have adversely impacted the student's academic performance. The appeal must indicate why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress and what has changed that will allow the student to make satisfactory progress at the next evaluation. Supporting documentation is also required.
  - ii. Attach documentation to support all extenuating and/or unusual circumstance detailed in your letter. Note that documentation will not be returned: keep a copy for your records. NKU will not contact anyone to obtain information for your appeal.
  - iii. If you are filing your appeal based on medical circumstances, you **must** provide documentation issued by a physician or hospital. All documentation must be printed on the physician's or hospital's official letterhead and it must be signed by the physician. This documentation should include:
    - A brief summary of the illness
    - A specific diagnosis
    - The date of onset of the illness
    - The date you sought treatment for this illness
    - A description of the impact that the medical condition had on the student's ability to attend classes or perform class requirements and why it was medically necessary to discontinue studies as a result of medical circumstances.
    - Medical documentation must satisfy all of the above requirements. The committee *will not* accept or consider copies of insurance forms, bills, explanation of benefits (EOB) forms, hospital records or physician's medical

records. Appeals will not be reviewed if the required information is not submitted.

- iv. A student may submit a statement from his/her academic advisor, Dean, or Department Chair, if the student feels it is appropriate.
- v. If a student is appealing due to maximum timeframe, the student must include the following documents with their appeal
  - 1. Request for appeal should contain the expected date of graduation.
  - 2. Maximum Timeframe Academic Plan Worksheet (available on our webpage)
- i. Appeals may be approved or denied. Students will be notified of the results of their appeal. If a student's appeal is approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation and will be required to follow an academic plan for the academic year (2 semesters) based on the following:
  - i. If the student failed to make academic progress because he/she did not meet the minimum GPA, the student must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 after completing 2 semesters. A student who does not have a cumulative GPA of at least 1.8 at the end of the first semester of financial aid probation cannot receive aid for the second semester.
  - ii. If a student failed to make academic progress because he/she did not meet the quantitative (pace of completion) standard, the student will be required to earn 67% of their hours attempted for each of the 2 semesters. If a student does not earn 67% of the credit hours attempted during the first semester of financial aid probation, he/s he cannot receive aid for the second semester. **Percentages are not rounded up.**
  - iii. If a student failed to make academic progress because he/she exceeded the maximum timeframe, the student will be required to follow the academic plan as outlined on the maximum timeframe Academic Plan worksheet. If the student does not complete what is outlined in the Academic Plan each semester he/she cannot continue to receive aid.
  - iv. If a student fails more than one standard and his/her appeal is approved the student will need to meet the academic plan requirements of each standard that he/she failed in order to receive aid for the second semester.
  - v. Appeals must be received and reviewed before or during the term for which the student is requesting aid. Any appeal received after the last day of the term will

be considered for the next term for which the student enrolls. Appeal decisions are not retroactive.

- vi. Appeals decisions are applicable for one academic year only and **do not** carry over to a future academic year if the student does not enroll during the academic year for which their appeal was reviewed.

## 8. Summer Sessions

- a. Financial aid recipients have a conditional period of the summer session after the spring semester. This allows the student a chance to bring up their grade point average or to meet the quantitative (pace of completion) progress standard. If a student previously not meeting the academic progress standards meets the academic progress standards after completing courses during the summer session, the student's financial aid may be reinstated. Students should contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance to have his/her aid reinstated.
- b. If a student submits an appeal for the summer session and their appeal is approved, the student must then be meeting the standards of academic progress at the conclusion of the summer session in order to be eligible for aid for future years. Students who appeal for the summer session are not able to be placed on an academic plan.