

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standard Graduate Students

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| Graduate Student | 3.0 | 50% of attempted credit hours | Graduate students must complete their educational programs within a time frame of no longer than 200 percent of the published length of the educational program, as measured by the credits attempted and including transfer credits. For example , a student must complete his or her program before attempting a maximum of 72 credits for a 36 credit program. |
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I. Introduction

- A. These guidelines have been developed in accordance with federal financial aid statutes and regulations governing student eligibility. Students who receive financial aid must demonstrate financial need and make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) as determined by University of North Carolina Wilmington pursuant to federal law.

- B. Financial aid recipients are required to be in good standing and to maintain satisfactory academic progress toward their degree requirements for each semester in which they are enrolled. In addition to meeting the academic standards outlined in UNCW Graduate Catalogue, financial aid recipients are required to meet the satisfactory academic progress standards outlined in this policy. Satisfactory academic progress for financial aid recipients enrolled in degree programs, as described below, is evaluated on a semester basis with a review conducted at the end of the fall, spring and summer terms. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress, as described below, will result in cancellation of financial aid awards, and the student may have to repay any funds already received.

II. **Minimum Standards for Graduate Students**

A. UNCW's institutional requirements for minimum satisfactory performance for graduate financial aid recipients are defined as follows:

1. **Minimum cumulative grade-point average (GPA).**

Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

2. **Completion Rate**

Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative completion rate of 50 percent as measured by comparing total completed credits to total attempted credits.

3. **Maximum timeframe to completion.**

Graduate students must complete their educational programs within a time frame of no longer than 200 percent of the published length of the educational program, as measured by credits attempted and including transfer credits. For example, a student must complete his or her program before attempting a maximum of 72 credits for a 36 credit program.

Federal regulations require that UNCW track the academic progress of financial aid recipients from the first date of enrollment in their current career at UNCW, whether or not financial aid was received. Students who do not earn their degree within the maximum timeframe to completion, outlined above, will be placed on Financial Aid Denied status. No financial aid will be disbursed for the student during subsequent semesters of enrollment unless the student has made an appeal of the Financial Aid Denied and the appeal is granted. Please note that readmission to the graduate program does not guarantee reinstatement of federal student financial aid.

Students who have graduated from one graduate program at UNCW and then enroll in a second eligible program should contact the Financial Aid Office to determine their SAP status under their new program of study.

III. Treatment of W, I, AU, F, S, P, U , No Grade Reported, Repeated Coursework and Transfer Credits

- A. Course withdrawals (W) after the drop/add period are not included in the GPA calculation, but are considered a non-completion of attempted coursework.
- B. Incomplete (I) grades are not included in the GPA calculation but are considered a non-completion of attempted coursework until the grade is replaced with a permanent grade and academic progress can be re-evaluated.
- C. Audit (AU) grades and preliminary coursework are not considered attempted coursework and are not included in completion rate determinations.
- D. Satisfactory grades (S) and Passing grades (P) are treated as attempted credits, which are earned but not included in calculation of the GPA.
- E. Unsatisfactory grades (U) will be treated as attempted credits that were not earned are not included in the GPA calculation, but are considered a non-completion of attempted coursework.
- F. Failure (F) grades will be treated as attempted credits that were not earned, and will be included both in the calculation of the GPA and minimum completion rate.
- G. Transfer credits will be counted as attempted and completed credits for the calculation of completion rate and maximum time-frame but will not affect the student's GPA calculation.
- H. The highest grade earned in a course that is repeated will count in the GPA computation.

IV. Financial Aid Denied Status

- A. Graduate students who fail to maintain the minimum completion rate of 50 percent and/or fail to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better will be placed on Financial Aid Denied status for subsequent semesters of enrollment. No financial aid will be disbursed during subsequent semesters of enrollment until the student is removed from Financial Aid denied status (See Reinstatement of Aid after Financial Aid Denied Status below).
- B. Graduate students who do not earn their degree within the maximum timeframe to completion will be placed in Financial Aid Denied status. No aid will be disbursed during subsequent semesters of enrollment unless the student has made an appeal and the appeal is granted for that semester.
- C. Students placed in Financial Aid Denied Status will be notified via e-mail.

IV. **Reinstatement of Aid After Financial Aid Denied Status:**

- A. Reinstatement of financial aid after a student is placed in Financial Aid Denied status is achieved in one of the following ways:
1. The student submits a written letter of appeal and the Financial Aid Appeals Committee grants the appeal. The student is placed on Financial Aid Probation for the next semester of enrollment. Financial aid probation means that the student who failed to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed has had eligibility for aid reinstated. At the end of that probationary semester their SAP status will be reevaluated. The student must meet all SAP requirements at the end of that semester or they will return to Financial Aid Denied status and must reestablish eligibility as described in item 2.
 2. The student attends UNCW, pays for tuition and fees without the help of student financial aid, and does well enough in the coursework to satisfy all the satisfactory academic progress standards. Students who are in Financial Aid Denied status for failure to graduate within the maximum timeframe to completion cannot regain eligibility this way. Students who are beyond the maximum timeframe to completion cannot regain financial aid eligibility except on a semester-by-semester basis through the appeal process.
 3. Students who Request Exceptions to the UNCW Withdrawal and Refund policies and are granted an exception will not have their Satisfactory Academic progress reevaluated until the end of the term, regardless of when the exception is granted.
- B. Appeal Process
1. The student must submit a written appeal of Financial Aid Denied status before the deadline to the Financial Aid Office. The appeal must include documentation of the circumstance that led to their not meeting SAP standards as well as a description as to how they will be able to meet SAP at the end of the next enrollment period. Circumstances which may be considered include death of a family member, unexpected injury or illness of the student or other special circumstances as supported with documentation.

2. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review the appeal and notify the student in writing of their decision via e-mail. Appeals will not be granted unless the student would be able to reestablish their progress under these standards in the upcoming semester.

Deadlines to submit an appeal: Fall: November 1, Spring April 1, Summer July 1

All decisions of the Financial Aid Committee are final.

Effective Date of Policy

This policy is effective 7/1/2014 and will be first calculated for all graduate students on or after 12/1/2014.

Note: Students who fail to enroll after an appeal has been granted may be suspended again and may be required to submit a new appeal before they will be eligible to receive financial aid.