

Satisfactory Academic Progress

PROCESS OVERVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Federal regulations require NCMC to establish and apply reasonable standards of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) for eligible students to receive financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the HEA. Students at NCMC who wish to be considered for Federal Student Aid must:

be in good standing at the College, and

maintain satisfactory academic progress as set forth in this policy.

NCMC's SAP policy can be found in the most recent [NCMC catalog](#) as well as the FAO's [website](#).

The FAO is the only office that performs financial aid SAP checks for students.

Note: The College has a separate academic SAP policy which is not reviewed and monitored by the FAO.

SAME AS OR STRICTER THEN POLICY

SAP is a Federal Student Aid eligibility requirement and is administered by the College in addition to the academic standards of performance required under the NCMC academic progress policy. The financial aid SAP is more stringent than the academic standard for GPA outlined in the most recent [NCMC catalog](#). Students must maintain a 2.0 Financial Aid cumulative GPA to be eligible for financial aid.

PROCEDURE

The College catalog houses all academic policies. The catalog is updated annually in July and is a collaborative effort among all departments. If policy changes are made, the FAO would know about them during the July catalog review. Most departments include the FAO in discussions about changes, prior to the change occurring, throughout the year.

The FAO is the sole creator of the financial aid SAP policy, and the policy is reviewed annually.

CATAGORIES OF STUDENTS

POLICY

NCMC does not have differing SAP standards for different categories of students. The financial aid SAP policy applies to all students attending the College and receiving Federal Student Aid.

PROCEDURE

Students who continue to meet financial aid SAP standards are not notified of their SAP status through an email communication from the FAO as there is no impact to their financial aid offer.

If there is a change in a student's SAP status, and it impacts their financial aid, the FAO will send an email to the student at the end of the term.

QUALITATIVE MEASURE

POLICY

The qualitative measure of financial aid SAP includes grade point average. Students must maintain a minimum qualitative measure of progress defined as the Financial Aid cumulative GPA. The Financial Aid cumulative GPA includes adjustments for remedial courses described in the Remedial Courses section of this policy.

Students must maintain a 2.0 Financial Aid cumulative GPA.

PROCEDURE

The FAO is notified by the Registrar's Office when grades are posted. Financial aid SAP checks are then completed.

A detailed calculation of GPA can be viewed on NCMC's [Am I Meeting SAP?](#) webpage.

Students who fail the GPA component of SAP are initially put on warning. For a second occurrence, students are suspended.

Students receiving Federal Student Aid who do not meet minimum GPA standards will be notified by the FAO through email at the end of the term.

QUANTITATIVE MEASURE

POLICY

The quantitative measure of financial aid SAP includes two parts:

- Maximum timeframe (MTF), and
- Pace

MTF refers to the length of time needed for completion of a degree program. A student must complete the program within 150% of the timeframe established by NCMC.

Pace specifies a standard at which students must progress through their program to ensure that they will graduate within the MTF.

To calculate the pace at which a student is progressing, the FAO divides the total number of hours the student has successfully completed by the total number they have attempted.

A student becomes ineligible (via the MTF element) when it becomes mathematically impossible for them to complete the program within 150% of its length.

PROCEDURE

A detailed calculation of the quantitative measure of SAP can be viewed on NCMC's [Am I Meeting SAP?](#) webpage.

In addition, the FAO will also run a report of all enrolled degree-seeking students and have the Advising Department review for remaining hours. If it's determined a student cannot complete their program within 150%, the student is suspended.

Students receiving Federal Student Aid who do not meet quantitative requirements will be notified by the FAO through email at the end of the term.

MAXIMUM TIMEFRAME

POLICY

Students must complete their degree program within 150 percent of the published credit hour requirements for the degree. Students who are unable to complete their degree program within the timeframe limitation will be suspended from Federal Student Aid.

For example, an associate degree is published as 60 credit hours. The MTF is $60 \times 150\% = 90$ credits.

PROCEDURE

MTF is checked at the end of each term once grades are posted and financial aid SAP is reviewed. The data is integrated from PowerCampus into custom data fields in PowerFAIDS, from which the FAO runs its SAP Process (refer to FAO Desk Reference for detailed process).

The enrollment report (see 12.5) is also reviewed to determine remaining hours.

Students who fail the MTF component of SAP are suspended. The detailed MTF calculation can be found [here](#).

PACE

POLICY

Students must maintain minimum incremental progress by completing a percentage of all credit hours attempted. Students must successfully complete a minimum of 67 percent of all cumulative credits attempted to ensure the student will complete the program within the maximum time frame.

PROCEDURE

Pace is monitored and checked in the same manner as checking GPA and MTF. See the SAP Process and subsections 12.4 and 12.5 above.

Students who fail the pace component of SAP are suspended. The detailed pace calculation can be found [here](#).

EVALUATION PERIODS

POLICY

All students are expected to be making satisfactory progress toward degree completion. Therefore, students seeking aid will have their progress monitored at various points in the year.

Students are evaluated at the end of every term/payment period for SAP. Students are evaluated on all three standards: grade point average (i.e., qualitative measure), credit hour completion ratio (i.e., quantitative measure), and maximum timeframe (i.e., MTF).

To maintain eligibility under SAP, students must meet all three standards: 2.0 cumulative GPA, 67% pace, and not exceed 150% of the published length of the program. All periods of enrollment at NCMC are calculated in SAP, including periods of enrollment during which a student did not receive Federal Student Aid.

PROCEDURE

At the end of each term, NCMC will check and monitor a student's progress against its financial aid SAP policy.

The FAO performs SAP checks in accordance with its SAP Process, hyperlinked previously, and explained above in subsections 12.4 and 12.5.

FINANCIAL AID WARNING

POLICY

Students who do not maintain the qualitative and/or quantitative (pace) measures of SAP under this policy will manually be placed on financial aid warning and will be notified of their status.

While on financial aid warning, a student may continue to receive Federal Student Aid for one payment period. Students who do not meet all conditions of SAP at the completion of their next period of enrollment will be suspended from Federal Student Aid and will remain ineligible until regaining eligibility by meeting the school's financial aid SAP standards.

PROCEDURE

Students receiving Federal Student Aid who do not meet minimum SAP requirements will receive an email notification from the FAO at the end of the term. The student's SAP status is also documented in PowerFAIDS.

FINANCIAL AID PROBATION

POLICY

Students who have lost Federal Student Aid eligibility, due to failing one of NCMC's financial aid SAP measures, and successfully appeal, will be placed on financial aid probation for one payment period.

The approved appeal may include specific requirements or conditions the student must comply with or complete during their next period of enrollment. If the student fails to meet SAP and any additional requirements from an approved appeal at the end of the established timeframe, they will be suspended from financial aid.

In some instances, such as those that will require more than one payment period to meet the minimum SAP standards, the appeals committee will approve an academic plan for the student that extends beyond one period of enrollment. In these cases, the student will continue with a good status if they meet the requirements specified in the approved academic plan.

PROCEDURE

Students are notified via email of their SAP results and any appeal decision. In most instances there are also appeal conditions, such as maintaining a grade of "C" or better and not allowing the student to withdrawal from courses.

Final decisions and statuses are also documented in the student's electronic financial aid record.

APPEALS

POLICY

Students may appeal their financial aid suspension if they were unable to maintain SAP as a direct result of hardship or special circumstances, as provided by federal regulations. Circumstances under which an appeal may be granted include, but are not limited to personal illness, injury, or accident; serious illness or death of a close family member; unforeseen, undue hardship; documented change of program of study or pursuing a second degree; demonstrated academic improvement; excess transfer hours.

Circumstances under which an appeal may *not* be granted include but are not limited to encountering a situation that could have been anticipated; dissatisfaction with course material, instructor, instructional method, or class intensity; lack of motivation or interest; participation in extracurricular activities; academic overload; inability to problem-solve issues including loss of internet service, repeated weather absences, and car repairs.

Students seeking to appeal their suspended status should submit a completed appeal along with all required documentation to the FAO by the priority date listed in the Financial Aid SAP Policy. The Financial Aid SAP appeal form link is available on the NCMC [website](#) and will be emailed to students with the suspension notification letter. The priority deadline is two Fridays before the start of classes for the applicable semester, except for the spring semester which is the day staff return from winter break. Students must meet the priority deadline to ensure a decision is made prior to the add/drop deadline for the enrollment period. Students may not request reinstatement for a semester which has already ended. Students will be limited to a maximum of three approved appeals (exceptions may apply). Students may not appeal the same circumstance(s) twice.

Deadlines for the 2023-2024 Academic Year:

FALL 2023	August 11, 2023
SPRING 2024	January 2, 2024
SUMMER 2024	May 24, 2024

The typed appeal must include an explanation for failing to meet SAP standards and a detailed plan to resolve the deficiency to ensure progress towards meeting SAP. If the appeal is approved, a student will have a probationary period for their next period(s) of enrollment and may include conditions determined by the appeal committee during which he or she will receive federal student aid and reestablish eligibility under SAP.

PROCEDURE

The Director of Financial Aid will submit completed SAP appeals to the Financial Aid SAP Appeal Committee for review. The Committee will make the final determination on all financial aid appeals and forward all decisions to the Director for action. The Director will notify students of their appeal results through an emailed letter.

The maximum timeframe limit may be reevaluated, on a case-by-case basis, by the NCMC Financial Aid SAP Appeal Committee, if there are program changes that can eliminate prior courses that do not apply toward the current degree program.

DOCUMENTATION

POLICY

As with any use of professional judgment, adequate documentation is critical. A student who appeals must submit information explaining why he or she failed to meet SAP standards and what has changed in his or her situation which will allow them to be meeting SAP by the next evaluation period.

Examples of documentation include, but are not limited to obituaries, accident reports, medical bills/statements, death certificates, or letters from third parties (therapist, doctor, supervisor at work, etc.).

PROCEDURE

The SAP appeal form and any supporting documentation is stored electronically in the student's file in Etrieve Content. Information such as SAP status, appeal decision, and conditions are also stored in PowerFAIDS.

ACADEMIC PLANS

POLICY

If the student's academic record suggests one semester won't place the student in good standing, an academic plan is created for the student. It is the student's responsibility to work with the academic advisor to enroll in classes that will help support degree completion and at a minimum meet the SAP plan.

PROCEDURE

Students are typically put on an academic plan when it is determined that a student cannot achieve SAP after one semester. An academic plan is only created for those students who successfully appeal.

A student is placed on suspension when/if the requirements in the academic plan are not met.

Students lose Title IV eligibility when/if they do not appeal the suspension, or the appeal is denied. More information on academic plans can be found in [Volume 1, Chapter 1](#) of the FSA Handbook.

REGAINING ELIGIBILITY

POLICY

Once a student fails the progress requirements, they have lost eligibility for aid, including any undisbursed or future aid offered.

If students successfully appeal, they may not receive the same award as before. The FAO will award the funds that are currently available.

PROCEDURE

A student may be reinstated for Federal Student Aid by successfully meeting all the conditions of the financial aid SAP policy for good standing. Students who are granted an appeal will be reinstated on probation.

TREATMENT OF NON-PUNITIVE GRADES, REPEATED COURSES, AUDITED COURSES, PASS/FAIL COURSES, WITHDRAWALS, AND INCOMPLETES POLICY

The following course grades are factored into NCMC's Financial Aid SAP evaluations as described below:

Repeated Courses: Students receiving Federal Student Aid may repeat a course, as allowed under NCMC academic policy. Repeated courses will count toward the quantitative progress requirement of SAP. They will also count towards the maximum time frame for eligibility. The last grade received is used in calculating GPA. Per federal guidelines, federal student aid will only pay for a repeated course once, if the student previously received a passing grade.

Withdrawn Courses: Withdrawn courses will be included when calculating the Quantitative Measure and the 150 percent maximum time frame. Withdrawn courses are not included in the Qualitative Measure.

Incomplete Grades: Students receiving federal student aid may receive incomplete grades, as allowed under NCMC academic policy. Incomplete grades will count toward the Quantitative Measure and the 150 percent maximum time frame elements of SAP. As provided by NCMC academic policy, students who do not complete course requirements after an incomplete grade is assigned will receive F. Incomplete grades are not counted in the GPA calculation until a final grade is assigned.

Audited Courses: These courses are not included in financial aid SAP evaluations.

PROCEDURE

All the course outcomes listed above are programmed into PowerFAIDS and/or included in the SAP Process (refer to FAO Desk Reference for detailed process) to ensure they're accounted for accurately when the FAO runs SAP checks.

TREATMENT OF REMEDIAL, ENRICHMENT, AND ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE COURSES

POLICY

The following course grades are factored into NCMC's Financial Aid SAP evaluations as described below:

Remedial Courses: Remedial courses will be included when calculating the Qualitative Measure, Quantitative Measure, and the 150 percent maximum time frame. Remedial courses are included in the GPA calculation for purposes of Financial Aid cumulative GPA only. A grade of passing (P) will receive the equivalent of 2.5 and a grade of failing (X) will receive 0 for the Financial Aid cumulative GPA calculation. Repeated remedial courses will also be included when calculating the Qualitative Measure, Quantitative Measure, and the 150 percent maximum time frame in accordance with the repeated coursework section of this policy in subsection 12.9.

NCMC does not offer enrichment or ESL courses.

PROCEDURE

All the course outcomes listed above are programmed into PowerFAIDS and/or included in the SAP Process (refer to FAO Desk Reference for detailed process) to ensure they're accounted for accurately when the FAO runs SAP checks.

TREATMENT OF CONSORTIUM, CHANGE OF MAJOR, SECOND DEGREE, AND SECOND MAJOR COURSES

POLICY

The following course conditions are factored into NCMC's Financial Aid SAP evaluations as described below:

Double Majors: The 150 percent maximum time frame for students enrolled in two degree programs will be calculated based on the degree program with a primary flag on the student's record in PowerCampus.

Transfer Credits: Transfer credits accepted will be included when calculating the Quantitative Measure and the 150 percent maximum time frame. Transfer credits are not included in the GPA calculation.

Change of Major: NCMC takes this into consideration for the maximum timeframe only.

Consortium Agreements: When NCMC is the home institution, the FAO will check SAP during its normal process as described in previous subsections.

PROCEDURE

All the course conditions listed above are programmed into PowerFAIDS and/or included in the SAP Process (refer to FAO Desk Reference for detailed process) to ensure they're accounted for accurately when the FAO runs SAP checks.

COMPLETION OF DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

POLICY

Students are expected to graduate when all their requirements of their degree program are completed. When the requirements are met, students are no longer eligible for Federal Student Aid for their specified degree.

Students that may be in this category are found by the College using the Non-Aid Credits report. In this way the FAO ensures that these students do not receive Federal Student Aid for non-required courses.

PROCEDURE

Completion of degree requirements is monitored on a semester basis. If a student were to be enrolled in additional credits, after degree requirements have been met, this would be identified through a collaborative effort between the FAO, Advising, Registrar, and Student Accounts.

NOTICES

POLICY

Students are notified of the SAP policy in the College catalog and the FAO website as described in subsection 12.1, above. At least annually, the Director of Financial Aid reviews the policy to ensure

compliance with ED's regulations. If revisions are made, the revised policy is provided to the Registrar's Office for the annual academic catalog publication. Website updates will be handled directly between the FAO and IT.

PROCEDURE

NCMC makes its SAP policy available to current and prospective students as part of its [Consumer Information](#) webpage. All consumer information is available at any time to anyone. An annual consumer information notice is also sent to enrolled students each semester.

The FAO oversees the SAP information posted on the consumer information webpage. Consumer information is disseminated to students each semester by the Student Affairs division.