

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Mesabi Range Community and Technical College requires that students make satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate to remain in good standing. Additionally, federal and state law requires that a recipient of financial aid make satisfactory academic progress towards a degree or certificate to remain eligible for aid. The Satisfactory Progress Standards shall be the same as, or stricter, than the college's academic standards for a student enrolled in the same educational program who is not receiving financial assistance.

Students bear primary responsibility for their own academic progress and for seeking assistance when experiencing academic difficulty. However, the college does provide tutoring, testing, and other related services that may be able to assist the student with improving their academic standing. To that end, the advisors and counseling staff are available to assist students in developing a course of action to improve their academic standing. Students are encouraged to keep a file of their grades and transcripts, and seek assistance.

Requirements:

1. Qualitative Measure:

A. Students are expected to meet the minimum cumulative GPA levels on the chart below. Grades of A, B, C, D, and F will be included in the GPA calculation.

Cumulative Registered Credits	Minimum Required GPA
0 – 5	0.00
6 +	2.00

2. Quantitative Measure:

A. Required completion percentage:

All students who have attempted more than five credits are required to maintain a minimum of 67% of all cumulative registered credits, including remedial non-credit courses as indicated in the chart below:

Cumulative Registered Credits	Cumulative Completion Rate
0 – 5	0%
6 +	67%

Courses for which a student receives a letter grade of A, B, C, D, F, S, and P are included in the calculation of cumulative credit completion percentage as courses successfully completed. Courses for which a student receives a letter grade of N, NC W, and I will be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed. Blank (Z) grades will be treated, as credits attempted but not successfully completed. Audited courses (AU) are not counted.

All attempted credits are counted, including transfer credits and consortium, whether or not financial aid was received, or the course work was successfully completed.

B. Maximum Time Frame for Credits:

All students are expected to complete their degree/certificate within an acceptable period of time. The maximum time frame of credits for financial aid recipients is 150% of the published credit length of the program. Non-credit remedial courses, ESL, and transfer credits will count toward the maximum time frame completion.

As an example, the Associate of Arts Degree requires the completion of 64 credits. Maximum time frame for financial aid purposes allows the student to take 96 credits (150%). At that point, the student would be placed on maximum-time frame suspension, and not be allowed further financial aid unless there were mitigating circumstances.

For the purposes of calculating maximum-time frame, 30 credits of developmental education credits are excluded from the calculation.

C. Students Pursuing an Additional Major/Double Major:

Students who have already completed their program and now change their major or are pursuing an additional major or have a double major

will have financial aid for only those courses that relate to the completion of the additional or changed major. These students will be required to complete an Academic Plan, which will be monitored each term. Only those courses listed in the Academic Plan will be eligible for financial aid.

3. Evaluation Period:

Academic Probation and suspension.

A student will be placed on academic suspension for failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress. Academic progress will be monitored as follows:

- All students with registered credits during a semester will be evaluated at the end of the semester, including summer semester.

4. Failure to Meet Standards:

A. Academic Suspension

- Any student who fails to meet minimum satisfactory academic progress requirements for one semester will be placed on probation for one semester, commencing immediately.
- A student on probation who fails to meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress requirements for a consecutive semester will be placed on suspension, one year in duration, commencing immediately.

B. Financial Aid suspension and probation:

1. Maximum Time-Frame Failure: If at the end of the evaluation period a student has failed to meet the College's standard for measurement of maximum time-frame, the institution shall suspend that student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

2. Qualitative Standard or Completion Failure: If at the end of the evaluation period a student has failed to meet the College's qualitative standard or required completion percentage, the College will allow the student to retain her or his financial aid eligibility under a probationary status for one evaluation period.

3. Reinstatement of Students on Probationary Status: If at the end of the probationary period a student who has been on probationary status has met the College's cumulative qualitative and quantitative standards, the College shall reinstate the student's eligibility for financial aid.

4. Suspension of Students on Probationary Status: If at the end of the probationary period a student who has been on probationary status has not met the College's cumulative qualitative or quantitative standards, the College will suspend the student immediately upon completion of the evaluation; UNLESS

5. Continuation of Students on Probationary Status:

If at the end of the probationary period, the student who has been on probationary status; has met the institution's qualitative and quantitative standards for all courses in which he or she was enrolled during the probationary period (Maintenance of a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) and 100% completion of all courses registered for the term); but has not met Mesabi Range Community and Technical College's cumulative standards, he or she may be permitted to retain his or her financial aid eligibility under a "continued probation" status, until such time as:

- a. The student has met the college's qualitative and quantitative standards, at which time the student's financial aid eligibility will be reinstated, or
- b. The student fails to meet the college's qualitative or quantitative standards for the courses that the student is enrolled in during the probationary period. At such time the college will suspend the student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the review, or

- c. The college determines that it is not possible for a student to raise his or her GPA or course completion percentage to meet the college's qualitative or quantitative college's standards before the student would reach the end of the program for which he or she is receiving financial aid. The college will suspend the student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation period.

6. Continuation of students who successfully appeal suspension:

Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress and are suspended from financial aid eligibility have the right to appeal based on unusual or extenuating circumstances. If an appeal is approved, the College shall permit the student to retain financial aid eligibility under an appeal status for an additional period of time. The length of the period and the minimum academic standards will be outlined in the notification sent to the student. At the end of the appeal period, the student who has met the minimum agreed upon academic standards for that period shall have her/his appeal status extended for an additional period. A student who fails to meet the minimum agreed upon academic standards during the appeal period shall be removed from appeal status and her/his financial aid eligibility shall be suspended.

B. Suspension of Students for Extraordinary Circumstances:

The College may immediately suspend financial aid for a student in the event of extraordinary circumstances, such as, a student who was previously suspended and whose academic performance falls below acceptable levels during a subsequent semester, a student who is registered for but does not earn any credits for two consecutive semesters, or a student who demonstrates an attendance pattern that abuses the receipt of financial aid, etc.

5. Notification:

Students failing to meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress requirements will be notified in writing as to their status. Such notification shall include the conditions of any probationary status, or if suspended, the process by which the student may appeal for reinstatement.

6. Appeals:

A. Academic Appeals:

A student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and is suspended from either enrollment and/or financial aid has the right to appeal based on unusual or extenuating circumstances. These could include, but are not limited to: death in the family, student's injury or illness, changes in the curriculum, etc.

Generally, unless the appeal is solely for financial aid, the appeal must be submitted in writing on a form available in the Records Office of each campus.

Please note that the form from the Records Office can not be used for appealing Financial Aid, a separate Financial Aid form must be used. The appeal must include an explanation of the circumstances that affected academic progress. If requested, the appeal should also include supporting documentation beyond the written explanation (e.g., a physician's statement, etc.). Academic Appeals must be directed to the Committee on Appeals, The committee's decision will be provided to the student in writing. The committee decision is final.

B. Financial Aid Appeals

For appeals that deal with Financial Aid, the appeal form can be obtained from the Financial Aid Office and is directed to the Director of Financial Aid or designee. If requested, the appeal should also include supporting documentation beyond the written explanation (e.g., a physician's statement, etc.). If denied, the student may appeal to the Committee on Appeals. The committee's decision will be final.

Appeals for financial aid beyond the maximum time frame use the same form that can be obtained from the Financial Aid Office. However, appeals

for financial aid beyond the maximum time frame will be granted only in the case of documented mitigating circumstances. Among these are: death in the family, illness or injury of student, family emergencies, changes in the curriculum, changes in major, etc. Appeals reasons also may vary with the program length.

The student must meet with an advisor or counselor and develop an Academic Plan which indicates the course work necessary to complete the degree/certificate. The Financial Aid Office will review the Academic Plan, and if found acceptable will inform the student in writing. The Academic Plan will be monitored each term to ensure that the student is adhering to the Plan. Courses not found on the Academic Plan are ineligible for financial aid. Should the appeal be denied, the student may appeal to the Committee on Appeals. The decision of the Committee shall be final.

7. Reinstatement:

A. ACADEMIC RESINSTATEMENT

A student who has been suspended from enrollment may return to the College after an appeal has been approved or the period of suspension has passed. The student remains on probation upon return to the College.

B. FINANCIAL AID RESINSTATEMENT

A student who has been suspended from financial aid may have financial aid reinstated only through the appeal process or when she/he is again meeting the institution's financial aid satisfactory academic progress qualitative and quantitative standards. Neither paying for their own classes nor sitting out a period of time is sufficient for reinstatement of financial aid.

8. Additional information:

A. Treatment of Grades:

A letter is assigned at the end of the semester for each course in which the student is enrolled. A grade point value for each credit in the course is assigned to each letter grade. Only the grades of A, B, C, D, and F carry grade point value.

Grade point total is the sum of grade points earned as determined by multiplying the grade point value of the grade by the number of course credits.

Grade Point Average (GPA) is the quotient of the student's grade point total divided by the grade point credits. Each grade report shows the student's GPA since admission.

Completed credits include A, B, C, D, P, F, and FN are used in the calculation of the Grade Point Average. They do not include "I" (incomplete), "W" (withdraw), "V" (visitor/audited), "NC" (no credit) or drops (classes dropped during the first six days of the term generally called the drop/add period). Completed credits may qualify for retroactive payment of financial aid.

Courses for which a student receives a letter grade of "I", "NC", "W", "F", and "FN", shall be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed. Blank ("Z") grades shall be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed. Audited courses ("AU") are not counted.

B. Academic Amnesty/Forgiveness: The College may grant Academic Amnesty/Forgiveness to students who previously attended the College more than seven years from the current start date. Students must petition to receive Academic Amnesty/Forgiveness. While this policy applies to the academic concerns, the student's previous GPA and completion rate will continue to apply for the purposes of financial aid. Accordingly, students granted Academic Amnesty/Forgiveness will be required to meet the current standards of GPA and completion rate during subsequent terms of enrollment.

C. Audited course: Audited courses will not be funded by financial aid and are not included in any financial aid satisfactory academic progress measurement.

D. Consortium/Joint Program Credits: Consortium/joint programs allow a student to register for credit at two colleges at the same time. Consortium/joint credits are those credits for which a student is registered at

another college which are accepted by Mesabi Range College for the purposes of processing financial aid at Mesabi Range College. Students must first obtain a Consortium Agreement from financial aid and seek approval from the academic advisor prior to financial aid considering the credits as acceptable. Consortium credits are included in determining grade point averages and completion rate.

E. Remedial/Developmental Credits: Credits awarded for remedial course work (below 1000 level). Students may receive financial aid for developmental credits up to a maximum of 30 semester hours. 30 semester hours of remedial/developmental credits are excluded from the final computation.

F. Repeat Credits: Students may, by petition, request to repeat courses in which they received grades of “D”, “F”, “NC”, or “W”. Forms can be obtained from the Records Office. Both the old and new grades stand on the records and will be used to compute the course completion rate, but only the new grade will be used to compute the Grade Point Average (GPA). A student may repeat a class once for financial aid eligibility. Advisors will provide a copy of the Request to Repeat A Course Petition to financial aid.

G. Transfer Credits: These are credits earned at another college, which are accepted by this college. Transfer credits are included in calculating maximum time frame for the purposes of financial aid.

H. Withdrawals: Credits for which a grade of “W” is received are considered attempted credits but not successfully completed credits for the purposes of monitoring satisfactory academic progress. Thus, a W does not impact GPA, but does negatively impact the cumulative completion percentage.

9. Definitions:

Credit: The unit by which academic work is measured.

Cumulative Credits: Cumulative credits are the total number of credits registered for all terms of enrollment at the College, including summer terms, and terms for which the student did not receive financial aid.

Earned Credits: Earned credits are successfully completed credits that count toward the required percentage of completion. Earned credits include on A, B, C, D, and P.

Incompletes: The mark of “I” is a temporary grade, which is assigned, only in exceptional circumstances. It will be given only to student who can not complete the work of a course on schedule because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control. An “I” grade will automatically become an “F: grade (or “NC” in the case of courses number below 1000) at the end of the next semester if the requirements to complete the course work have not been satisfactorily met. Instructors have the option of setting an earlier completion date for the student.

Registered Credits: The total number of credits for which a student is officially enrolled at the end of the registration drop period for each semester.