

NORTHLAND COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

3070 SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Introduction

Standards of academic progress are established to require students to progress satisfactorily and timely toward the completion of their degree, diploma or certificate. Additionally, federal regulations require that recipients of federal and/or state financial aid make satisfactory academic progress towards a degree, diploma or certificate to remain eligible for aid. In compliance with federal regulations, the college has established and will apply the following standard of academic progress to all students. The qualitative and quantitative standards of this policy are cumulative and include all periods of enrollment, whether or not a student received financial aid. The registrar's office is responsible for implementing and monitoring the satisfactory academic policy.

Students are responsible for their academic progress and for seeking assistance when experiencing academic difficulty. Students are encouraged to work closely with an advisor or a counselor to ensure that they are successfully completing graduation requirements and maintaining satisfactory progress.

Qualitative Measure (GPA)

All students are required to maintain the following minimum GPA levels:

<u>Cumulative Registered Credits</u>	<u>Minimum Required GPA</u>
0 – 5	0.00
6 – 23	1.75
24 and above	2.00

Grades of A, B, C, D, FW, and F shall be included in the GPA calculation.

Quantitative Measure (Completion Percentage)

All students are required to complete the following minimum percentages of cumulative attempted credits:

<u>Cumulative Completion Credits</u>	<u>Minimum Required Completion</u>
0 – 5	0%
6 or more	67%

Successfully completed credits include A, B, C, D, P, and CR.

Maximum Time Frame

Students whose cumulative attempted credits exceed 150% of the credits required to complete their intended degree, diploma or certificate are not eligible for financial aid. Up to 30 remedial and developmental credits shall be excluded from maximum time frame calculations. Maximum time frames for students pursuing double majors, students enrolled in consecutive programs or with previous degrees may be based on specific curricular requirements.

Evaluation Period

Satisfactory academic progress will be evaluated for all students with registered credits at the end of each semester; fall, spring and summer. Any non-standard session courses shall be evaluated during the

semester in which they are transcribed. Programs less than one year in length will be evaluated at the end of the payment period.

Failure to Meet Standards

Warning Status: If at the end of the semester, a student has not met either the required cumulative GPA standard and/or required cumulative completion percentage standard, the student shall be allowed to enroll and retain their financial aid eligibility under **warning status** for one semester. Students on warning status are encouraged to meet with an advisor or counselor and complete an Academic Improvement Plan at the beginning of the warning term of enrollment. This document will be placed in the student's file.

Reinstatement of Students on Warning Status: If at the end of the warning period a student who has been on warning status has met both the colleges cumulative GPA and cumulative completion percentage status, the college shall end the student's warning status.

Suspension for Students on Warning Status: A student on warning status who fails to meet the required cumulative GPA and/or cumulative completion percentage, shall be placed on suspension immediately upon completion of the evaluation. All suspensions will be one calendar year in duration. Students returning after a period of suspension are eligible to be readmitted and will be placed on probation. Probation students will be required to complete an Academic Improvement Plan prior to registration. Requirements of the Academic Improvement Plan will include earning a term GPA and/or term percent of completion higher than the college's cumulative requirements. Students returning after a period of suspension should not assume that financial aid will be reinstated. An appeal to the financial aid office will be required.

Suspension at another college or university (Minnesota State or non-Minnesota State)

Students with satisfactory academic progress standings from another college or university are subject to the following standards:

- Students with a suspension status from another college or university that has not expired must have an approved appeal to enroll at the college
- Students with a suspension status from another college or university that has expired will be eligible to enroll on a probation status. These probation students will be subject to the same requirements an NCTC student on probation is subject to, including the completion of an Academic Improvement Plan and earning a term GPA and/or a term percent of completion higher than the college's cumulative requirements.

Financial Aid Suspension of Students

Maximum Time-Frame Failure: If at the end of the evaluation period a student has failed to meet the maximum time frame measurement, the student shall be suspended from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

Suspension for Extraordinary Circumstances: The college may immediately suspend students from financial aid eligibility in the event of extraordinary circumstances which may include but are not limited to the following:

- i. reinstated students whose academic performance falls below acceptable standards during a subsequent semester;
- ii. students who register for courses and receive financial aid, but do not attend classes; and

- iii. students whose attendance patterns appear to abuse the receipt of financial aid.

Suspension for Inability to Meet Program Requirements within the Maximum Time Frame: If at the end of any evaluation period the college determines that it is not possible for a student to raise their GPA or course completion percentage to meet standards before the student would reach the end of the program for which he or she is receiving financial aid, the college shall suspend the student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

Appeals for Reenrollment

Any student who has been suspended from enrollment due to failure to make satisfactory academic progress may appeal their ability to enroll in courses based on documented unusual or extenuating circumstances which may include but is not limited to death of a relative, illness, hospitalization, or injury of the student by using the college Academic Appeal Procedure. The student must complete the Appeal Form accurately and submit the form to the campus registrar. The student shall submit, as part of the appeal, information regarding why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress, and what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the end of the next semester. If the student wants to present their case in person to the Academic Appeal committee, they must notify the campus registrar of that decision at the time the appeal is submitted.

An appeal may be approved only if the college:

1. Has determined that the student has documented unusual or extenuating circumstances and should be able to meet satisfactory academic progress standards at the end of the next evaluation period; or
2. Develops an academic improvement plan with the student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time. The academic improvement plan must include term standards of GPA and/or percent of completion that are higher than the institution's cumulative standards.

The academic improvement plan may include but is not limited to the following:

- i. a restriction on the number of credits;
- ii. a requirement that certain courses be taken;
- iii. a requirement regarding class attendance;
- iv. a requirement that scheduled meetings occur with a counselor or advisor to review student progress.

The Academic Appeal committee will notify the student of the outcome in writing. Notification of approved appeals must include the standards that the student is expected to meet or the academic improvement plan that the student is expected to complete. Notification of denied appeals must describe the reason(s) for the denial and the institution's process for appealing that denial according to NCTC Student Complaints and Grievances procedure 3240P. A separate process exists to appeal for reinstatement of financial aid. This process is explained below.

Probationary Status:

A student who has successfully appealed must be placed on probation for one semester. If at the end of the next semester, a student on probation status:

1. Has met the college's cumulative GPA and cumulative completion percentage standards, the student will regain enrollment and financial aid eligibility.
2. Has not met the college's cumulative GPA and cumulative completion percentage standards, but has met the conditions specified in the student's academic improvement plan, which includes a GPA and/or percent of completion higher than the college's cumulative standards, the student shall retain probationary status for a subsequent evaluation period.
3. Has not met the college's cumulative GPA and cumulative completion percentage standards and has also not met the conditions specified in the student's academic improvement plan, the student shall be re-suspended immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

Appeal for Reinstatement of Financial Aid

Any student who has been suspended from financial aid may appeal their ability to receive financial aid directly to the financial aid director by using the Appeal/Petition for Reinstatement of Financial Aid Form. The student must accurately complete and submit the form with supporting documentation and an Academic Improvement Plan to the financial aid office. The financial aid office will log the appeal and submit to the financial aid director for review. The financial aid director must notify the student of the outcome in writing. Neither paying for their own classes nor sitting out a period of time is sufficient in and of itself to re-establish a student's financial aid eligibility. Students whose financial aid eligibility has been suspended may regain their eligibility only through this appeal process or when they are again meeting the college's financial aid satisfactory academic progress GPA and completion percentage standards.

Appeals may be granted in situations that demonstrate unusual or extenuating circumstances. Unusual or extenuating circumstances may include but are not limited to the following: death of a relative, illness, injury, or hospitalization of the student. It is required that students attach appropriate supportive documentation, such as doctor's statements to their form.

The student shall submit, as part of the appeal, information regarding why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress, and what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the end of the next semester.

An appeal may be approved only if the financial aid director:

1. Has determined that the student should be able to meet satisfactory academic progress standards at the end of the next evaluation period; or
2. Reviews the Academic Improvement Plan that was developed with an advisor or counselor, and if followed, ensures that the student is able to meet satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time. The academic improvement plan must include term standards of GPA and/or percent of completion higher than the institution's cumulative standards.

Notification of approved appeals must include the standards that the student is expected to meet or the academic improvement plan that the student is expected to complete in order to retain financial aid eligibility at the end of the next evaluation period. Notification of denied appeals must describe the reason(s) for the denial and the college's process for appealing that denial.

The initial consideration of an appeal must be undertaken by the Director of Financial Aid or a designee. If an initial appeal is denied by the Financial Aid Director or designee, the student may appeal the initial decision by using the college Appeal/Petition for Reinstatement of Financial Aid Form within ten days of receiving the financial aid director's decision. The student must complete the Appeal/Petition for

Reinstatement of Financial Aid Form accurately and submit the form and any additional required documentation to the campus registrar; the student must attach a copy of the denied appeal/petition for reinstatement of financial aid; if a student wants to present their case in person to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and the Dean of Student Affairs, they must notify the campus registrar of that decision at the time that the appeal is submitted. The Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs must notify the student of the joint outcome in writing and must include the standards that the student is expected to meet or the academic plan that the student is expected to complete in order to retain financial aid eligibility at the end of the next evaluation period.

The decision of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and Dean of Student Affairs is final and binding.

Financial Aid Appeal/Petition for Maximum Timeframe

Students who have reached the maximum timeframe for financial aid and who have only a few courses left to complete their degree, diploma, or certificate may petition to have the suspension lifted for ONLY the courses needed to finish that degree, diploma, or certificate. To file an appeal for maximum timeframe suspension, a student must meet with an advisor to complete an academic improvement plan. The academic improvement plan must outline the courses needed for completion and a completion date. Students must submit a copy of the academic improvement plan along with the Appeal/Petition for Reinstatement of Financial Aid form and any other supporting documentation to the financial aid office for review. If approved, the student's financial aid will cover only the courses related to completion of the degree, diploma, or certificate. Financial aid appeals submitted without required documentation will be denied.

Notification of Status

NCTC shall notify a student in writing any time the student is placed on warning, suspension or probation status.

1. Notification of warning – The College shall notify a student in writing any time the student is placed on warning status, and shall inform the student of the conditions of that warning status.
2. Notification of suspension – The College shall notify a student in writing any time a student is placed on suspension status, and shall inform the student of their right to appeal the suspension.
3. Notification of probation – The College shall notify a student in writing any time a student is placed on probationary status, and shall include the standards the student is expected to meet or the academic improvement plan the student is expected to complete at the end of the next evaluation period.

Treatment of Grades

Earned Credits: Successfully completed credits that count toward the required percentage of completion. Earned credits include only A, B, C, D, and P (pass).

Completed Credits: Credits that include A, B, C, D, F, FW (unofficial withdraw), P, and CR. They do not include FN (failure for non-attendance), I (incomplete), W (withdraw), AU (audit), NC (no credit), Z (grade not yet entered), or drops (classes dropped during the drop/add period). Completed credits may qualify for retroactive payment of financial aid.

Successfully Completed Credits: Credits for which a student receives a letter grade of A, B, C, D, and P are included in the calculation of cumulative completion percentage of credits successfully completed.

Credits Attempted But Not Successfully Completed: Credits for which a student receives a letter grade of I, NC, W, FN, FW, F, and Z shall be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed. Audited courses (AU) are not counted as credits attempted.

Incompletes: A grade of incomplete (I) may be assigned at the discretion of an instructor only in extenuating circumstances. An incomplete grade is to be given only to students who cannot complete the coursework on schedule because of illness or other extenuating circumstances. Students interested in an incomplete grade must complete the “Request for Incomplete” form and submit it to the instructor for consideration. Instructors are responsible for deciding if it is appropriate and feasible to approve a request for an incomplete. An incomplete grade is a temporary grade and will automatically become an “F” grade at the end of the next term (includes summer), if requirements have not been satisfactorily met by the student. Instructors have the option of setting a completion date earlier than the end of the next term.

Grade Point Average (GPA): GPA is the quotient of the student’s grade point total divided by the grade point credits. “P” does not carry a grade point value and as such is not calculated in the GPA. A “P” will neither raise nor lower a student’s GPA. However, “P” counts toward registered and completed credits.

Grade Points: A letter grade 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 grades of A, B, C, D, FW, and F carry grade point value and shall be included in the GPA calculation.

Grade Point Total: The sum of grade points earned as determined by multiplying the grade point value of the grade by the number of course credits.

Fresh Start (Academic Amnesty): Credits for which students have been granted a Fresh Start (Academic Amnesty) shall be recorded and retained in the Student Data System in such a way that they will be included in both the qualitative and/or quantitative measurements of financial aid satisfactory academic progress.

Audited Courses: Audited courses (AU) are not funded by financial aid and are not included in any financial aid satisfactory academic progress measurements.

Consortium Credits: Credits for which a student is registered at another college which are accepted for the purposes of processing financial aid are to be included for purposes of calculating satisfactory academic progress (cumulative GPA, completion percentage, and maximum time-frame calculations).

Remedial/Developmental Courses: Credits awarded for remedial or developmental course work (below 1000/100 level) shall be included in the qualitative and quantitative percentage measurement of satisfactory academic progress. Students may receive financial aid for these credits up to a maximum of 30 semester credit hours. Up to 30 remedial and developmental credits shall be excluded from maximum time frame calculation.

Repeated Courses: A student may repeat a course no more than two (2) times unless otherwise defined by program requirements. Repeating a course will not remove previous attempts from the student’s transcript. The best grade will become the grade calculated for GPA purposes. All repeated credits are included in the completion percentage calculation for satisfactory academic progress and are taken into

consideration when calculating maximum time frame. A student shall not be permitted to receive financial aid for more than one repetition of a previously passed course. In order for repeated courses to be calculated into a student's GPA, a passing grade must be earned. Repeating a course will not remove previously posted Satisfactory Academic Progress notations on the student's transcript.

Transfer Credits: Transfer credits are credits earned at another college which are accepted by NCTC. Transfer credits accepted by NCTC and applied to the student's program requirements shall be counted as credits attempted and completed for calculation of cumulative completion percentage. Grades associated with these credits shall not be used in calculating cumulative GPA. Transfer credits will be counted when calculating the 150% timeframe if the credits apply towards the student's current degree, diploma, or certificate.

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

Date of Implementation:

Date of Adoption: **6/2/04**
Date & Subject of Revisions: **AASC Approved 5/9/06; Executive Council Approval 5/18/06; Revision based on Minnesota State Changes, First Read AASC 11/15/06; Rev.5/23/07 requested by Financial Aid; Rev. 2/1/08; Rev. 2/29/08; AASC Approval 4/7/08; Rev. Position Titles 6/9/08**
12/16/08 Revised
03/26/10 Revised
04/06/10 AASC 1st Read
04/22/10 Revised with recommendations
Approved AASC 2nd Read
05/24/10 Cabinet Approval
12/02/10 Made change to title of form; Student Appeal/Petition to Student Appeal
04/29/11 Updated
05/20/11 Revised
06/09/11 Cabinet Approved
11/09/11 System Change
03/19/12 Revised (FN and FW additional revisions)
04/17/13 Revised
03/25/14 Revised
05/22/14 Cabinet Approval
03/17/15 Revised
04/08/15 AASC Approval
03/23/16 Revised
04/12/16 AASC Approval
03/31/17 Revised
05/10/17 AASC Approval
04/04/18 Revised
05/09/18 AASC Approval