

North Iowa Area Community College
Financial Aid Office
500 College Drive
Mason City, IA 50401



North Iowa Area Community College (NIACC), in accordance with Federal and State law, requires that students make satisfactory academic progress towards a degree or diploma. NIACC's satisfactory academic progress standards for financial aid apply to all students who want to establish or maintain financial aid eligibility.

The standards apply to a student's entire academic transcript whether or not the student received financial aid.

These are minimum standards that must be attained. Students bear primary responsibility for their own academic progress and for seeking assistance when experiencing academic difficulty.

NIACC will evaluate satisfactory academic progress after each term which includes fall, spring and summer. All students with registered credits during a term will be evaluated at the end of that term.

Financial Aid's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standard is a different policy than the Successful Satisfactory Academic guidelines. Students will follow a different procedure when suspended academically and will need to contact the Student Development Office with questions.

Students may be suspended from financial aid but not from NIACC, so please always check with BOTH the Financial Aid Office and the Student Development Office.

POLICY

The Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended requires students to maintain satisfactory progress towards their degree in order to receive financial aid.

Financial aid satisfactory progress is a three part federal regulation with minimum standards that must be met.

1. Pace of Progression

Students are required to earn, with passing grades, at least 2/3 (67%) of the semester hours of which have been **cumulatively** attempted. Pace is calculated by dividing cumulative hours the student has successfully completed by cumulative hours student has attempted.

2. Maximum Time Frame.

Students are required to complete their program of study within 150% of the published length of the program measured in semester hours attempted.

Courses taken for, but not limited to audit, Institutional Proficiency exams, correspondence, independent study, articulated courses and college level examination programs will be included in the maximum time frame allowed for the pursuit of a degree.

3. Minimum GPA

Students must maintain a cumulative gpa of 2.0 or higher to remain eligible for financial aid.

GRADES/CREDITS

Completed hours: Only grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D- and P are counted as completed coursework.

Attempted hours: The total number of semester hours for which the student is officially enrolled in at the end of the 5th day of the term. Cumulative attempted hours are the total number of semester hours registered for all terms of enrollment at the college, including summer terms and terms for which the student did not receive financial aid.

The following do not count as completed hours, but, will be counted as attempted and may affect satisfactory academic progress:

Failed classes (F)

Audited classes (N)

Withdrawn classes (W)

Incomplete grades (I)

No credit/no pass (Q)

Grade requital (Fresh start / 0)

For complete definition of grades see the NIACC Catalog.

If your incomplete grade is what caused you to fail satisfactory progress guidelines, it is your responsibility to submit a final grade to the financial aid office for reevaluation.

Consortium credits: Credits taken at another college with prior approval of the NIACC Financial Aid Office. These credits are used in determining financial aid eligibility and used in SAP calculations.

Developmental Courses: Students may receive financial aid up to 30 semester hours of remedial course work. However, all of these hours attempted are used in measuring SAP.

Repeated Courses: You are allowed to repeat courses, however, keep in mind that all the credits will continue to be counted in the time to complete your degree. In computing the cumulative grade point average, only the most recent grade earned will be used.

Transfer Coursework: NIACC assumes transfer students enrolled at NIACC are making satisfactory academic progress; however, NIACC reserves the right to request transcripts of previous institutions attended at any time to determine prior completion rate.

Transfer credits are earned at another college and accepted by NIACC. Transfer credits that are accepted by NIACC and apply to the students program of study shall be counted as credits attempted and completed in determining pace of progression and maximum time frame requirements. Grades associated with these credits are not included in calculating gpa.

FAILURE TO MEET SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

NIACC reserves the right to place a student on financial aid warning or suspension who exhibits abuse of receipt of financial aid at any time or receives a 0.00 gpa in any semester at NIACC.

WARNING

After one term of not complying with the financial aid standards for satisfactory academic progress students will be placed on "Warning" status and be notified in writing or email. Students on warning status are eligible to receive financial aid. If at the end of the warning period, a student who has been on warning has met both the cumulative gpa and pace of progression standards, the warning status is ended and the student is returned to good standing.

If a student had an incomplete grade or a grade was submitted in error and that is what caused him to fail satisfactory progress guidelines, it is his responsibility to submit a final grade to the Financial Aid Office for reevaluation.

SUSPENSION

If students currently on warning status fail to meet any Satisfactory Academic Progress standards for financial aid, the student will be placed on suspension status and be denied financial aid.

The Financial Aid Office will notify students of suspension status via mail or email and include the appeal process students may complete in order to reestablish financial aid eligibility.

If you had an incomplete grade or a grade was submitted in error and that is what caused you to fail satisfactory progress guidelines, it is your responsibility to submit a final grade to the financial aid office for reevaluation.

Suspension may also occur when a student has exceeded the 150% of the published length of the program measured in credit hours attempted. Students may also appeal this decision by following the process outlined below.

APPEAL / REINSTATEMENT OF FINANCIAL AID

Students who have been suspended from financial aid due to extenuating circumstances, (ex: death in the family, student injury or illness or other circumstance beyond your reasonable control) may appeal for reinstatement.

Complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form and submit to the Financial Aid Office. The appeal form requires a written explanation of why the student failed to meet SAP and what has changed that will allow the student to meet SAP at the next evaluation. The student may submit or be asked to submit additional supporting documentation.

The Financial Aid Appeal Committee will review a student's appeal and their decision will be communicated to students in writing or email. Students will be approved, approved with academic plan, or denied.

Approval of Appeal

Student appeals may be approved in one of two ways:

PROBATION: If, it is believed, that the student will be able to correct himself in one term, the student will be placed on probation status. The student will be eligible for financial aid during this probationary term. At the end of the probationary term, SAP will be reevaluated. If a student is at that time meeting the standards, he will return to satisfactory status. Failure to meet SAP will result in a suspension status. Students cannot appeal a second time with the same rationale.

OR

PROBATION on an ACADEMIC PLAN: If when reviewing a student's appeal, it is determined by the committee that it will take longer than one term to meet standards, the student will be required to meet with an academic advisor and develop an academic plan outlining steps to success.

Students will meet with an academic advisor and develop a plan for success outlining the steps necessary to meet SAP by a specific point in time. Once the Financial Aid Office is notified that the Plan is complete, the student's financial aid will be reinstated.

Plans will be monitored at the end of each term. If not following the plan, the student will be suspended. Failure to follow these steps will result in suspension. Students cannot appeal a second time with the same rationale.

Once the student has met the conditions of the Plan, SAP status will return to satisfactory.