

NMSU Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Policy

Students that fall below the satisfactory academic progress requirements have the right to appeal their ineligibility for Federal Financial Aid. All appeals are reviewed for extenuating circumstances by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.

Financial Aid appeals must contain the following documentation:

1. The student must complete the Appeal for Financial Aid and/or Scholarships form, describing in detail, all extenuating circumstance(s) that prevented the student from meeting the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic requirements for the most recent semester. If the student's academic transcript indicates that the student had more than one difficult semester, the student must address the circumstance(s) for each semester.
2. The student must provide information about why he/she failed to make SAP, and what has changed in the student's situation that would allow him/her to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the next evaluation.
3. Students should attach any documentation that is relevant to their circumstances. Including supporting letters from counselors, doctors, ministers, and/or other appropriate third parties. For example, if the student had an illness that prevented them from attending classes, the student should provide a doctor's note or medical billing statement as verification of illness.
4. The Appeals Committee will act on the appeal in a timely manner, and if approved, financial aid eligibility may be reinstated for one additional semester after which the student must have returned to satisfactory academic standing. The Financial Aid and Scholarship Services office may also require an academic plan that must be followed if returning to good standing is not possible in one semester's time. If students who have previously been placed on suspension subsequently fail to meet either of the two standards, future eligibility will be immediately suspended. The student may also appeal this suspension. **A student may appeal the termination of eligibility only twice per degree level (Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, etc.).** If mitigating circumstances do not exist, the student may secure alternative funding until the satisfactory academic requirements (see above) have once again been met. Students must be registered in at least 6 credit hours per semester when selecting this option.
5. Students exceeding the maximum timeframe rule and are pursuing a subsequent degree will need to explain in detail how the subsequent degree will benefit the students career and any mitigating circumstances surrounding their intent to pursue a subsequent degree.
6. All appeals, including relevant documentation, must be submitted by the semester deadline based on the current semester of enrollment. Appeals need to be date stamped by the Financial Aid Office or postmarked by this deadline. No exceptions will be considered. If the Financial Aid Office receives an appeal after the semester deadline, the appeal will be considered for regaining eligibility for the next term of enrollment.
7. **Decisions rendered by the Appeals committee are final.**

Appeals will not be approved for reasons such as:

- Withdrawing from a class to maintain a higher grade point average
- Withdrawing from or failing classes because of the student's work requirements
- Being previously ineligible for financial aid and returning to school after an absence
- Adjusted Credit Option-ACO
- Several semesters of low grades because of an ongoing illness or other situations
- Conflict with a professor
- Classes not being what was expected
- Not being prepared for college

All appeals must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office by the semester's census date of the student's enrollment period. Appeals submitted after this deadline will be returned to the student.

Once a decision has been made on the appeal and the documentation provided, the student is to be notified of the committee's decision via NMSU email. If a student has a balance with University Accounts Receivable, they should make payment arrangements while waiting on a committee decision, in case of a denial.

Students are encouraged to access the applicable forms at fa.nmsu.edu/resources/forms/. Appeals may be submitted through your myNMSU account. For instructions on uploading documents through myNMSU, visit fa.nmsu.edu/instructionguide. Forms may also be submitted by email, fax, or in person to the Financial Aid Office.

Academic Plan Agreement

Students will be required to visit with their Financial Aid Advisor, in order to obtain their personalized Academic Plan Agreement. Failure to meet the terms and conditions of the academic plan will result in suspension from future Financial Aid eligibility. *Academic Plan Agreements must be signed by the Friday after the deadline to appeal each semester. Appeal deadlines can be found at fa.nmsu.edu/sap.*

Academic Plan Status/Probation (W-STIPS)

Students who have had an appeal approved will be placed on an Academic Plan. The student will be considered for federal aid during the semester for which the student has applied and is otherwise eligible.

The Academic Plan Agreement will be reevaluated by the Financial Aid Advisor at the end of each semester. Students may regain eligibility to receive Financial Aid for the next semester of enrollment by either:

1. Completing the semester with grades that bring the student into compliance with Financial Aid policies; OR
2. Completing the specific requirements of the Academic Plan Agreement.
3. If the academic plan is required for more than one semester, the terms must be met for each semester of enrollment until the student has returned to the minimum standards as defined within the University's SAP policy.

If the student again fails to meet the cumulative satisfactory progress standards at the end of one semester, they will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension (U-XXXX).

Timeframe Requirements – Maximum Timeframe and Second Degree Seeking

Maximum Time Frame (Pace of Progression)

Students, who have exceeded the maximum timeframe for their declared program of study, must submit the Appeal for Financial Aid and/or Scholarships Form. This includes students returning to NMSU for a second or subsequent degree and are in violation of the Maximum Timeframe standard. Appeals need to be submitted to the Financial Aid Office at the student's primary campus.

Credit remedial courses, up to 30 credits, may be deducted from the total number of credits attempted when calculating timeframe since they do not count as a credit toward a degree; but may be required and taken within an eligible program.

An academic plan will be used for maximum timeframe appeals that are approved for extenuating circumstances; this also includes second degree seeking students.

Examples of timeframe maximums for **most programs** are listed below:

Degree	Attempted Credits
Certificate	45 Attempted Credit Hours
Associate Degree	90 Attempted Credit Hours
Bachelor's Degree	180 Attempted Credit Hours (includes Associate's degree(s) credit hours)
Master's Degree	45 Graduate Attempted Credit Hours
Doctorate Degree	120 Graduate Attempted Credit Hours (includes Master's degree(s) credit hours)
Specialist in Education Degree	75 Graduate Attempted Credit Hours (includes Master's degree(s) credit hours)

Second Degree Students

Students who have completed a pace of progression and have earned an Associate's Degree, a Bachelor's Degree, or a Master's Degree, and wish to attempt a second degree at the same level, e.g. two bachelor's degrees, will need to submit an appeal if the student has exceeded the maximum timeframe standard within their initial degree. Within the appeal, the student will need to provide what extenuating circumstances are present and why they need to pursue the second degree. The student will also need to provide examples of how the second degree will benefit their career.

Students who are submitting an appeal will also need to submit a signed statement, on official NMSU letterhead, from their Academic Advisor listing the required courses remaining to complete their degree. The Academic Advisor must state the number of credit hours required for the degree and how many credits are remaining to complete the degree. The Financial Aid Advisor will review the form and determine the total number of maximum allowable attempted credits hours for the student's second degree program. If the student's registered courses do not match the information listed on the document, they will be ineligible to receive financial aid.

Students moving from an associate's degree to a bachelor's degree that transfer credits may encounter a timeframe issue and will be required to submit an appeal explaining the circumstances that caused the timeframe issue.

Second Degree seeking undergraduate and graduate students will need to maintain a 2.0 or 3.0 cumulative GPA, respectively. Both must maintain a 70% completion rate.

Adjusted Credit Option

Students granted the Adjusted Credit Option (ACO) by NMSU will have to have their SAP separately calculated for Timeframe, Completion Rate, and GPA. Federal regulations do not allow a student's SAP to be calculated based on adjusted GPA, timeframe or completion rate if Academic Amnesty has been applied to the student's records.

When evaluating a student with an ACO, the financial aid advisor must calculate their completion rate as would be done for any other student (all credits completed divided by all credits attempted). Timeframe will be evaluated by adding all credits attempted at NMSU plus any transfer credits accepted at NMSU. For GPA, the actual non-adjusted cumulative GPA must be determined without any consideration of the ACO and the non-adjusted cumulative GPA must be used for purposes of evaluating SAP requirements. These students will be coded U-ACO until reviewed.

Notes of Importance:

- Federal regulations do not allow rounding of financial aid SAP standards.
- The financial aid SAP standards are not the same as NMSU's Academic Standards of Progress criteria. Financial aid students must maintain a higher completion rate (70%).
- Failing grades, withdrawals and incompletes will reduce a student's completion ratio as well as counting against maximum hours.
- Repeated courses count as attempted hours each time a student registers for them. Also, each course is counted in the student's financial aid GPA requirement.
- Academic renewal hours count toward all components of the SAP policy.
- Students who are suspended academically or choose not to attend because of SAP Suspension will not be automatically eligible for financial aid upon their return. Absence does not restore eligibility for financial aid. It remains the responsibility of the student to be knowledgeable of their SAP standard when returning to school after dismissal or choosing not to return because of SAP Suspension.
- Grade changes require students to submit a written request to have SAP recalculated after confirmation has been received that grade change has been posted to academic history.
- Summer Term Courses – all hours attempted and completed in the summer term are treated as any other semester hours in determining SAP status. SAP will be checked following the summer term as well.
- Audit Courses – students are not eligible to receive financial aid for audit courses. Audited courses are not included in hours attempted or earned for SAP determination.
- Financial aid will not be provided for certain courses taken by audit, credit hours earned by placement tests (CR), and Continuing Education (CE) courses.

SAP Codes

Academic Problem Area

Unsatisfactory, GPA, Completion, Time Frame
Unsatisfactory, GPA & Completion
Unsatisfactory, GPA & Time Frame
Unsatisfactory, Completion & Time
Unsatisfactory, GPA
Unsatisfactory, Completion
Unsatisfactory, Time Frame

Identifying Codes

U-All
U-GPCO
U-GPMX
U-COMX
U-GPA
U-COMP
U-MAX

Conditional/Warning Status

Conditional/Warning status is to make students aware that although they are meeting SAP they are close to the minimum SAP requirements.

Conditional/Warning, GPA, Completion, Time Frame
Conditional/Warning, GPA & Completion
Conditional/Warning, GPA & Time Frame
Conditional/Warning, Completion & Time
Conditional/Warning, GPA
Conditional/Warning, Completion
Conditional/Warning, Time Frame

Identifying Codes

C-ALL
C-GPCO
C-GPMX
C-COMX
C-GPA
C-COMP
C-MAX

Miscellaneous

Student in good standing
Approved appeal with stipulations
Appeal reviewed and denied
Adjusted credit option needs review

Identifying Codes

G-GOOD
W-STIP
APDN
U-ACO