

Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Graduate & Law Students



Northern Illinois University

Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

Student Financial Aid Office
Swen Parson Hall 245
DeKalb, IL 60115

Federal Regulations require all institutions of higher education to monitor Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and ensure that students receiving financial aid are making progress towards degree completion. Your academic performance is reviewed each semester to verify that you have completed the required number of hours (pace), maintained the minimum grade point average, and have not exceeded the maximum number of cumulative attempted hours allowed.

Graduate and Law students who are not meeting the pace or cumulative SAP standards after one semester of warning lose financial aid eligibility for federal student loans and work-study. Ineligible students have the right to appeal. SAP Progress appeals are denied or approved on a case-by-case basis. Final decisions are based upon your written appeal and the documentation submitted. You must provide details of the extenuating circumstances related to your situation.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements:

- **Grade Point Average:** Students-at-large and graduate students must maintain at least a 3.00 cumulative GPA (CGPA). Law students who began prior to Fall 2012 must maintain at least a 2.00 CGPA and Law students whose first term was Fall 2012 or later must maintain at least a 2.20 CGPA.

Note: Failure to maintain the grade point average requirement also has implications regarding academic status. For additional information on GPA and Academic Status, see "Academic Probation and Dismissal" in the appropriate catalog.

- **Rate of Completion:** A student must successfully complete at least 67% of the credit hours attempted. Graduate courses in which grades of *A*, *B*, *C*, *P*, *S* or *IP* have been earned are considered to be successfully completed. Enrollments resulting in withdrawals, incompletes (grades of *I* or *IN*) and courses in which grades that are not passing have been received are not considered successfully completed but may be counted in the hours attempted. Law courses with a grades of *A*, *B*, *C*, *D* are included in earned hours.

- **Maximum Timeframe Requirement**

Federal law limits the maximum timeframe for which a student can receive federal financial aid including student loans. To continue to be eligible for federal aid, total hours attempted must not have exceeded the maximum number of credit hours established for their program and listed in the following table. Maximum timeframe exceeds minimum program requirements and can accommodate electives, internships, disruptions in enrollment, changes in concentration, and work on thesis or dissertations with careful planning. Student-at-large (SAL) hours and credit hours accepted for transfer courses are included in hours attempted.

Degree Program	Maximum Hours Attempted
Master's degree unless otherwise published in the Graduate Catalog or at www.niu.edu/fa	58
Combined Master of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics and Internship Program	100
Master of Arts in Communicative Disorders with a specialization in Rehabilitation Counseling	80
Master of Arts in Psychology	72
Master of Arts in Teaching with a specialization in Elementary Education	70
Master of Fine Arts in Art	108
Master of Physical Therapy	80
Master of Public Administration	75
Master of Public Health	70
Master of Science in Applied Family and Child Studies	80
Master of Science in Education in Counseling	90
Master of Science in Education in Special Education	80
Master of Science in Nursing with a specialization in Nursing Education	72
Doctoral degree unless otherwise published in the Graduate Catalog or at www.niu.edu/fa	150
Doctor of Audiology	180
Doctor of Education in Counselor Education and Supervision	158
Juris Doctor	135

All graduate course work, including SAL and master's credit hours, will be included when determining maximum time frame for Ph. D. students.

Graduate Change of Program - In the appeal process one change of graduate program will be considered. No appeal will be considered for additional graduate program changes.

Graduate Additional Degree - In the appeal process pursuit of a second master's degree will be considered. No appeal will be considered for additional master's degrees.

No appeal will be considered for more than one Ph.D.

Appeals Procedures - Appeals must be submitted to the Student Financial Aid Office. Special circumstances

include but are not limited to

- documented medical circumstances
- documented learning disabilities
- documented death in family
- personal or family crisis

The following reasons **will not be considered** as special circumstances:

- not performing well academically
- not adjusting in general to college life and/or academics
- changing academic program more than once
- being a transfer student
- working beyond a master's degree level without admission to a doctoral program
- taking courses not required by program to establish enrollment level eligibility for an assistantship or fellowship

The Student Financial Aid Office's appeal decisions are final and cannot be overturned by the U.S. Department of Education.

Student Success Plan for Satisfactory Academic Progress Graduate & Law



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Part I – All Students

Printed Student Name:		Z-ID:	Date:
Student Signature:		Major:	Expected Graduation Date:
Term Appeal	Fall <input type="checkbox"/>	Spring <input type="checkbox"/>	Summer <input type="checkbox"/>
Dean (Designee) or Major College Advisor:		Dean / Advisor Signature:	
		Year: 20_____	

We highly recommend that students visit our website for further information and directions for preparing your appeal: <http://www.niu.edu/fa/policies/sap.shtml>

Part II – Pace and Cumulative GPA: To be completed if the pace and/or cumulative GPA standards are not met. Other documents approved by the Advising Dean may be attached in lieu of completing the sections below. Please see back of form for more detail.

Note: For maximum timeframe complete **Part III**

Semester:		Year:	
Course Title / Number	Hours		
Minimum Semester GPA:	Cumulative GPA:		
FA Office Use Only:			

Semester:		Year:	
Course Title / Number	Hours		
Minimum Semester GPA:	Cumulative GPA:		
FA Office Use Only:			

Semester:		Year:	
Course Title / Number	Hours		
Minimum Semester GPA:	Cumulative GPA:		
FA Office Use Only:			

Semester:		Year:	
Course Title / Number	Hours		
Minimum Semester GPA:	Cumulative GPA:		
FA Office Use Only:			

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Part III – Maximum Timeframe: To be completed if maximum timeframe has been exceeded

Student Instructions: if you are approaching or exceeding SAP maximum timeframe, you must have this form completed in addition to the SAP appeal and signed by your academic advisor. You must make arrangements to meet with your dean (designee) or major college advisor to determine the remaining courses required for graduation and agree upon an academic plan.

Academic Advisor Instructions: This student is nearing or exceeding the maximum allowable timeframe to complete his/her degree. Therefore, the student must appeal for an exception to the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for consideration to receive financial aid. The student should make arrangements to meet with you to discuss and evaluate the student's transcript and provide the information requested below.

Please answer all questions below and provide all terms through graduation required for the student to complete his/her degree for the student's current academic program. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact our office at finaid@niu.edu

Academic Program: _____ **Degree Level:** _____

Did the student transfer to NIU? Yes No **If Yes,** how many credit hours accepted for transfer do NOT count toward the student's NIU degree requirements? _____

Did the student change majors during his academic program? Yes No **If Yes,** how many credit hours from the prior major do NOT count toward the student's NIU degree requirements? _____

- Only one change in undergraduate major will be considered in a maximum timeframe appeal.
- Changes of major of program that occur after an undergraduate student has attempted 120 hours will only be allowed if recommended by an academic advisor and it is unlikely the student will be able to complete the current major.
- If a student has taken all courses required for a degree or certificate program, the student is no longer eligible for financial aid even if the student has not applied for graduation.

Anticipated Graduation Term: _____ **Anticipated Graduation Year:** _____

List the required courses remaining to complete degree: Students who have exceeded maximum timeframe and have an approved appeal based on an extenuating circumstance may only receive financial aid for the shortest path to degree completion. Only the minimum courses required to complete the degree are eligible.

Courses for minors, double majors, areas of specialization or certificates that are part of a degree program or other courses associated with the students program are only eligible if the degree cannot be awarded without completion of the course. Please note, the maximum timeframe limit provides opportunity for students to take additional coursework for these reasons, it is only after maximum timeframe is exceeded that these course restrictions apply.

Course #	Course Title	Credit Hours	Anticipated Term

NOTES:

- Financial aid will not be disbursed until course registration is reviewed each term.
- Only the courses on this list that are approved by SFAO in the SAP plan will be used in determining aid eligibility.
- Students seeking a student loan are advised to take sufficient courses from the approved list to be at least halftime.