

## **NORTHLAND COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL**

### **3070 ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY**

#### **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 their 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:

- **Any student who has attempted 1 to 16 cumulative credits must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 1.75**
- **Any student who has attempted 17 or more cumulative credits must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0**

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

#### **Quantitative Measure (Completion Percentage)**

**All students are required to successfully complete a minimum of 67% of cumulative attempted credits. Successfully completed credits include A, B, C, D, and P.**

#### **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 calculation. Maximum time frames for students with one program change, 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 midpoint of the program.

### **Failure to Meet Standards (Suspension and Probation)**

**Maximum Time-Frame Failure:** If at the end of the semester, 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.

**Probation:** If at the end of the semester, a student has failed to meet the required cumulative GPA and/or completion percentage, the student shall be allowed to enroll and retain their financial aid eligibility under **probationary status** for one semester. Students on probation are encouraged to meet with their advisor and complete an Academic Improvement Plan at the beginning of the probationary semester. This document will be placed in the student's file.

**Suspension:** A student on probation, who fails to meet required cumulative GPA and/or completion percentage, shall be placed on suspension unless requirements of continued probation status are met. The earliest that a student suspended for the first time may reenroll at NCTC is as follows: if suspended after spring or summer semester, the student may enroll the following spring semester; if suspended after fall semester, the student may enroll the following summer semester. 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. The second suspension will be for one calendar year. The third suspension is permanent.

**Continued Probation Status:** A student who has been on probationary status and has met the institution's term GPA and completion percentage standards for all courses for which they were enrolled for the probationary period but have not met the cumulative standards shall be allowed to retain their enrollment and financial aid eligibility under a "continued probation status", until such time as;

1. the student has met the cumulative GPA and completion percentage standards, at which time enrollment and financial aid eligibility will be reinstated, or
2. the student fails to meet GPA or completion percentage standards for the courses in which they were enrolled during the probationary period, at which time NCTC shall suspend the student from enrollment and financial aid eligibility immediately, or
3. NCTC determines that it is not possible for a student to raise their GPA or course completion percentage to meet the satisfactory academic progress standards before the student would reach the end of the program for which they are receiving financial aid, at which time NCTC shall suspend the student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

Students on continued probation are encouraged to meet with their advisor and complete an Academic Improvement Plan at the beginning of the probationary semester. This document will be placed in the student's file.

**Continuation of Students Who Successfully Appeal Suspensions:** Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress and are suspended from enrollment and/or financial aid eligibility have a right to appeal based on 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. If an appeal is approved, NCTC shall permit the student to retain enrollment and/or financial aid eligibility under an appeal status for an additional semester. The student may be required to sign a Satisfactory Academic Progress Contract and comply with conditions determined by the committee, advisor, or counselor. These conditions may include but are not limited to the following:

- i) a restriction on the number of credits taken, and/or;
- ii) a requirement that certain courses be registered for, and/or;
- iii) required class attendance, and/or;
- iv) scheduled meetings with a counselor or advisor to review student progress.

The specific minimum academic standards that the student must meet during the semester shall be communicated to the student in writing as part of the appeal resolution process. At the end of the appeal period, a student who has met the minimum agreed upon academic standards for that period shall have their appeal status extended for an additional semester. A student who fails to meet the minimum agreed upon academic standards during the appeal period shall be removed from appeal status and their enrollment and financial aid eligibility shall be suspended.

**Suspension of Students for Extraordinary Circumstances:** NCTC 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) previously suspended students who have been reinstated whose academic performance falls below acceptable standards during a subsequent semester;
- ii) students who register for courses, receive financial aid, and who do not attend classes; and
- iii) students whose attendance patterns appear to abuse the receipt of financial aid.

### **Notification**

Students will be notified of their probationary or suspension status in writing as soon as possible after the end of the semester. Notifications will be sent prior to the 5th day of the following semester.

### **Appeals**

#### **Appeal 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 by using the college Academic Appeal Procedure. The student must complete the Appeal Form accurately

and submit the form to the campus registrar. 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. The Academic Appeal committee will notify the student of the outcome in writing. Approval of an appeal to reenroll does not affect financial aid status. A separate process exists to appeal for reinstatement of financial aid. This process is explained in the next section.

### **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 complete the Appeal/Petition Form accurately and submit the form and supporting documentation to the financial aid office; the financial aid director will notify the student of the outcome in writing.

A student who files an appeal with the financial aid director requesting to have financial aid reinstated and is denied, may appeal the financial aid decision by using the college Student Appeal/Petition Form within five days of receiving the financial aid director's decision. The student must complete the Student Appeal/Petition Form accurately and submit the form 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 campus 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 will notify the student of the joint outcome in writing.

Appeals will 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 Appeal Form.

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

### **Reinstatement**

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 will remain on probation status and may be required to sign a Satisfactory Academic Progress contract and comply with conditions determined by the committee, advisor or a counselor. These conditions may include but are not limited to the following:

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

A suspended student who has not successfully appealed, but has returned to the college following the period of suspension remains ineligible for financial aid until such time that the student meets or exceeds satisfactory progress standards.

### **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, and P. They do not include I (incomplete), W (withdraw), AU (audit), NC (no credit), Z (grade not yet entered), or GH (grade held – specific to the aviation program) 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, F, Z, and GH shall be treated as credits attempted but not successfully completed. Audited courses (AU) are not counted as credits attempted.

**Incompletes:** A grade of “I” may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor in exceptional circumstances and is a temporary grade. It is to be given only to students who cannot complete the course work on schedule because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control. An incomplete grade will automatically become an “F” grade at the end of the next semester if requirements have not been satisfactorily met. Instructors have the option of setting an earlier completion date.

**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 and F carry grade point value.

**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) will 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 *even though they no longer are considered part of the GPA shown on the student’s transcript.*

**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 by this college for the purposes of processing financial aid and are included for purposes of calculating satisfactory academic progress.

**Remedial/Developmental Courses:** Credits awarded for remedial course work (below 100 level). Students may receive financial aid for these credits up to a maximum of 30 semester credit hours. Grades earned are considered in GPA and percentage completed calculations. Up to 30 remedial and developmental credits shall be excluded from maximum time frame calculation.

**Repeated Courses:** In order to successfully complete a course as defined by program requirements, a student may repeat a course no more than two (2) times. 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. Courses repeated to improve a grade are not eligible for financial aid. 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:** Credits earned at another college which are accepted by NCTC. Transfer credits are not considered when calculating GPA or percentage completed. Transfer credits will be counted when calculating the 150% timeframe if the credits apply towards the student's current degree.

**Withdrawals:** Credits for which a grade of "W" is received are considered attempted credits but not successfully completed 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 MnSCU 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*