

# Minnesota State Community and Technical College

## Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress

### Policy

All students enrolled in a program of study must maintain satisfactory academic progress in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid.

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

**Qualitative Measure:** All students are required to maintain an acceptable (financial aid) Grade Point Average (GPA). The minimum standard is progressive based on cumulative registered credits and is detailed below.

Cumulative Registered Credits	Minimum Required (financial aid) GPA
<b>0-5</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>6-23</b>	<b>1.75</b>
<b>24+</b>	<b>2.00</b>

GPA is calculated using a grade point value for grades of A, B, C, D, and F. (Although a P will count as a credit earned, it carries no grade point value.)

**Quantitative Measure:** All students are required to earn an acceptable percentage of cumulative registered credits. The minimum acceptable percentage earned shall be 67% of all cumulative registered credits.

The successfully completed credits counted towards the required percentage of completion include only A, B, C, D, S and P (Pass); they do not include I (incomplete), W (withdraw), V (audit), F, and NC (no credit).

**Quantitative Measure of Progress:** All students are expected to complete their degree/certificate within 150% of the published length of the program. As soon as it is clear that a student will not graduate within this period, she/he immediately becomes ineligible for aid. Credits that a student has earned at MSCTC in the successful completion of a degree, diploma, or certificate program shall not be counted in the quantitative measure of progress for a subsequent program(s) in which the student enrolls. However, any credits that apply to the new program **must** be counted. Students who change programs (majors) without successfully completing a program, and who would otherwise be ineligible to receive financial aid due to the 150% rule, have the right of appeal to have their financial aid reinstated.

### **EVALUATION PERIOD:**

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be evaluated at the end of each academic term.

All students with registered credits during a term will be evaluated at the end of the term.

Any student found not meeting minimum satisfactory academic progress requirements for one term will be subject to probation during their next term of enrollment.

A student on probation found not meeting minimum satisfactory academic progress requirements at the end of their next enrolled term will be subject to suspension of financial aid eligibility commencing immediately unless they meet the criteria for "Continued Probation" status listed below. The student shall remain ineligible for financial aid until such time that the student meets or exceeds satisfactory academic progress standards or successfully petitions for reinstatement.

**FAILURE TO MEET STANDARDS:**

When monitoring satisfactory academic progress and implementing probation and/or suspension, MSCTC will apply the following standard for students enrolled in degree or certificate programs:

1. **Maximum Time-Frame Failure.** If at the end of the evaluation period a student has failed to meet MSCTC's standard for measurement of maximum time-frame, the institution shall suspend that student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.
2. **Qualitative Standard or Completion Percentage Failure.** If at the end of the evaluation period a student has failed to meet MSCTC's qualitative standard or required completion percentage, MSCTC will allow that student to retain her or his financial aid eligibility under a probationary status for one evaluation period.
3. **Reinstatement of Students on Probationary Status.** If at the end of the probationary period a student who has been on probationary status has met MSCTC's cumulative qualitative and quantitative standards, MSCTC shall reinstate the student to good standing.
4. **Suspension of Students on Probationary Status.** If at the end of the probationary period a student who has been on probationary status has not met MSCTC's cumulative qualitative or quantitative standards, MSCTC will suspend the student immediately upon completion of the evaluation and the student shall remain ineligible for financial aid until such time that the student meets or exceeds satisfactory academic progress standards or successfully petitions for reinstatement;  
UNLESS:
5. **Continuation of Students on Probationary Status.** If at the end of the probationary period a student who has been on probationary status has met MSCTC's qualitative and quantitative standards for all courses in which she or he was enrolled during the probationary period but has not met the institution's cumulative standards, MSCTC shall permit the student to retain her or his financial aid eligibility under a "continued probation" status, until such time as:  
(a) the student has met the institution's cumulative qualitative and quantitative standards, at which time the student's financial aid eligibility shall be reinstated, or  
(b) the student fails to meet the institution's qualitative or quantitative standards for the courses in which he or she was enrolled during the probationary period, at which time the institution shall suspend the student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the review, and the student shall remain ineligible for financial aid until such time that the student meets or exceeds satisfactory academic progress standards or successfully petitions for reinstatement, or  
(c) the institution determines that it is not possible for a student to raise her or his GPA or course completion percentage to meet the institution's standards before the student would reach the

end of the program for which he or she is receiving financial aid, at which time the institution shall suspend the student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

6. **Continuation of students who successfully appeal suspension.** Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress and are suspended from financial aid eligibility have the right to appeal based on unusual or extenuating circumstances. If an appeal is approved, MSCTC shall permit the student to retain financial aid eligibility under an appeal status for an additional period of time. The length of that period and the specific minimum academic standards that the student must meet during that period shall be determined by the institution and communicated to the student 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 his/her appeal status extended for an additional period. A student who fails to meet the minimum agreed upon academic standards during the appeal period shall be removed from appeal status and his/her financial aid eligibility shall be suspended.

**Suspension of Students for Extraordinary Circumstances:** MSCTC may immediately suspend a student in the event of extraordinary circumstances, such as a student who was previously suspended and whose academic performance falls below acceptable levels during a subsequent term, a student who registers for but does not earn any credits for two consecutive terms, a student who does not meet the minimum GPA standards for two consecutive terms regardless of cumulative GPA, or a student who demonstrates an attendance pattern that abuses the receipt of financial aid, etc.

#### **NOTIFICATION:**

MSCTC will notify a student in writing any time the student is placed in a probationary status. The notice shall inform the student of the conditions of that probationary status.

MSCTC will notify a student in writing when a student has been suspended from eligibility, and describe the process by which a student may appeal for reinstatement.

#### **APPEAL FOR REINSTATEMENT:**

A student who is unable to achieve satisfactory academic progress and is suspended from financial aid eligibility has the right to petition for reinstatement based on mitigating or extenuating circumstances. Mitigating circumstances are situations that are out of the control of the student and were not present at the time of initial enrollment. Some examples are: student illness or injury or death in the student's immediate family. The Director of Financial Aid (or a person or persons designated by the Director of Financial Aid) shall hear petitions for reinstatement.

Petitions for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility must:

Be submitted in writing to the Director of Financial Aid (or persons designated by the Director of Financial Aid). Students may choose to support their written appeal by appearing in person to the Director of Financial Aid, or person(s) designated by the Director of Financial Aid.

Include an explanation of the circumstances that affected academic progress.

Include supporting documentation beyond the written explanation.

All appeals for reinstatement will be considered and responded to in writing as early as possible, but no later than 10 days into the academic term.

After a period of non enrollment following a suspension, a student may appeal for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility for the next term of enrollment providing they do so at least 30 days prior to the start of the term. The student must have met the minimum standards of satisfactory academic progress to regain eligibility for financial aid. The petition should address mitigating circumstances such as illness, injury, or death of a family member.

A student who has a complaint regarding the appeal process or who feels they were denied due process, may submit a request for review to the Director of Financial Aid. The Director will forward the request to a college-wide financial aid appeals committee for review.

A student who has been suspended from MSCTC at a particular campus shall be suspended from all MSCTC campuses. A student wishing to petition for reinstatement must direct their appeal to the campus offering the program for which they wish to enroll.

### **REINSTATEMENT:**

Any student who has been suspended remains ineligible for financial aid until such time that the student meets or exceeds satisfactory academic progress standards or successfully petitions for reinstatement.

### **DEFINITIONS/CONDITIONS:**

**Grade Point Average** - calculated using a grade point value for grades of A, B, C, D, and F. (Although a P will count as a credit earned, it carries no grade point value.)

**Academic Forgiveness** – credits for which a student has receive forgiveness in the calculation of grade point average must still be included in calculating all areas of academic progress for determining financial aid eligibility.

**Earned Credits** - successfully completed credits counted towards the required percentage of completion; includes only A, B, C, D, S and P (Pass); does not include I (incomplete), W (withdraw), V (audit), F, and NC (no credit).

**Grade Point Average** – Students must maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average.

**Consortium Credits** - credits accepted by the college for purposes of processing financial aid are included with registered credits.

**Developmental Credits** - remedial and ESL coursework (below 1000 level) may be included with registered credits limited to 30 semester credit hours. These credits are included in GPA and completion percentage calculations but are not included in maximum time frame calculations.

**Repeat Credits** - repeats may be allowed in order to improve a grade. The highest grade earned will be the grade that is calculated in the GPA. Students may repeat a course three times.

**Transfer Credits** - credits earned at another college shall not be included when calculating GPA or completion percentage, but all credits accepted by the college toward general education, program, or degree requirements shall apply toward the maximum time frame calculation.

**Registered Credits** - credits for which a student is officially enrolled at the end of the registration drop period each term.

**Withdraws** – Courses students withdraw from that count toward the quantitative measure of satisfactory progress.

**Cumulative Credits** - total number of credits evaluated (registered, earned, etc.) for all periods of enrollment at the college, including summer terms or terms for which the students did not receive financial aid.

### **Purpose**

To monitor student academic progress toward achievement of an academic award so as to ensure effective and responsible management of federal and state student financial aid.

### **Responsibility**

The table below describes responsibilities for this policy:

<b>Group/Individual</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
College President	Ensure that the College complies with the terms of the Program Participation Agreement between the College and the United States Department of Education.  Ensure that the College complies with the terms of the Program Participation Agreements between the College and the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office

Director of Financial Aid	Implementation of Financial Aid Satisfactory Progress Policy
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**Supporting References**

Listed below are college document(s) that support this policy:

College Catalogue;  
Student Handbook

**Compliance References:**

Listed below are references to compliance requirements (e.g. MnSCU policy, federal regulations).

USDE Student Assistance General Provision 34 CFR 668.16;  
USDE Student Assistance General Provision 34 CFR 668.34;  
Minnesota Statutes 136A.101 Subd 10