Federal and state regulations require recipients of governmental financial aid to maintain satisfactory academic progress in their programs of study. It is the University’s expectation that students will make progress towards completion of the degree or credit professional development program in which they are enrolled. These requirements apply to part-time as well as to full-time students for all terms of enrollment within an academic year, including those terms for which no financial aid was granted. In rare situations involving unusual circumstances, students who are not making satisfactory progress may be granted one term of additional aid eligibility.

SCS students must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress in three fundamental ways:

- by maintaining a GPA of 2.0 or higher
- by completing a specified number of courses per academic year
- by completing their program within a specified period of time

In order to meet the minimum standard of academic progress each academic year, students must complete at least two-thirds of the credits attempted. Courses dropped after the second Saturday of each term will be counted towards credits attempted. Grades of D, F, Y (incomplete), W (withdrawal), or X (unofficial withdrawal) do not satisfy the requirements for the 2/3 completion rate. Please note that this requirement is more stringent than the school's Drop policy, which may be found at [http://www.scs.northwestern.edu/ugrad/tuition/withdrawal.cfm](http://www.scs.northwestern.edu/ugrad/tuition/withdrawal.cfm).

The annual minimum requirements refer to the 9-month period from September through the following June. Attendance during Summer Session normally is not required but may be necessary to meet satisfactory academic progress standards (for example, if the required number of courses is not completed during the nine-month academic year, or if the cumulative GPA falls below 2.0).

Students must complete their programs within a set number of terms to maintain financial aid eligibility. This number is determined by the number of hours required for the program and enrollment status (i.e., part- or full-time, number of transfer credits approved).

If a student receives transfer credit for work done at other academic institutions, the assistant dean for student services will determine the number of required terms. Specific term limits for the various degree and credit professional development programs can be received from SCS Student Services.

Current federal regulations permit students to exceed by 50 percent the number of terms required to complete their degree or professional development program before losing eligibility for further financial assistance. For example, it is possible to receive aid for 12 semesters for a program for which eight semesters is the determined length for completion. All periods of enrollment, including Summer Session, are counted in the total. Periods of academic leave will not be considered when determining financial aid eligibility.
Evaluation of satisfactory academic progress is made each academic year at the end of the spring term. If a student is not making satisfactory academic progress, students are placed on SAP probation and an additional review will occur until satisfactory academic progress is attained.

Students who do not meet the SAP requirements will have one SAP Probationary period of one academic quarter. During this probationary quarter, students must meet the following criteria:

1. Complete at least two-thirds of all credits attempted during fall quarter with a grade of C- or higher. Courses dropped after the second Saturday of each term will be counted towards credits attempted. Grades of D, F, Y (incomplete), W (withdrawal), or X (unofficial withdrawal) do not satisfy the requirements for the 2/3 completion rate.
2. Maintain or earn a GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Students who do not meet the terms of their SAP probationary period will be subject to a SAP Suspension, during which the student will not be eligible for Title IV aid. In order to reinstate their financial aid after a SAP suspension, students must meet the following criteria:

- Complete **100%** of the courses you enroll in for your suspension quarter with a grade of "C-" or higher. Grades of D, F, X, Y, N, P, W, and V will not be considered sufficient for meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress. Receiving these grades will disqualify you from receiving financial aid in the following quarters.
- You must complete **at least two classes** according to the criteria above. Therefore, if you only enroll in one class for your first quarter after a SAP suspension, you must complete that course with a grade of C- or higher and then complete 100% of all courses for which you enroll in the subsequent quarter before your aid can be reinstated.
- Any quarter that you do not enroll does not count toward Satisfactory Academic Progress. Therefore, your suspension period will roll over to next quarter of enrollment.
- Be advised that any courses you are enrolled in as of 11:59 PM on the second Saturday of the quarter according the SCS Calendar will count toward your SAP calculation. Therefore, any classes dropped after that date will mean a failure to complete 100% of your classes with a grade of C- or higher and will result in continued suspension of your financial aid.
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of **2.0 or higher.**

Additionally, if a student’s aid is reinstated after a SAP suspension, students are considered to be on probation for each quarter they enroll for the period of one academic year. Their SAP progress will then be checked after each academic quarter for the period of one academic year in order to determine their eligibility for Title IV aid for subsequent quarters. Students must meet the following criteria for each quarter they enroll in order to maintain SAP:

- Complete **at least 2/3 of all classes attempted** each quarter. Grades of D, F, X, Y, N, P, W, and V will not be considered sufficient for meeting
Satisfactory Academic Progress. Receiving these grades will disqualify you from receiving financial aid in the following quarters.

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of **2.0 or higher**
- Complete your program within a specified period of time determined by the Registrar’s Office.

Students are entitled to appeal a determination that satisfactory academic progress is not being maintained. The written appeal should explain any relevant extraordinary circumstances, address the reason(s) for failing to meet the minimum academic requirements, and offer some solution to the problems that affected prior academic performance. Supporting documentation, such as statements from academic advisers, professors, professional health care workers, etc., is also required. The appeal will be reviewed by a committee chaired by the assistant dean for student services.

If an appeal is granted, the student will be eligible for aid during one additional academic term. If eligibility during that probationary term is not established, no further aid can be offered until all satisfactory academic progress requirements have been met. Normally, this involves completing courses that cannot be funded with federal or state grants or loans.

If students have not met the minimum GPA requirements, they may appeal only if they have maintained a cumulative GPA of 1.75 to 1.99. If the cumulative GPA is 1.74 or below, students are not eligible to appeal their status. However, students would regain financial aid eligibility when the GPA is raised to the minimum requirement of 2.0 and all other satisfactory academic progress requirements as outlined in this section are fulfilled.