

University of Montana Western
SATISFACTORY PROGRESS POLICY

Students who receive financial assistance at University of Montana Western through Federal, State or Institutional Financial Aid Programs, including fee waivers, have a legal responsibility to maintain Satisfactory Progress towards a degree objective. This requires the Financial Aid Office to make a determination whether applicants are eligible for financial assistance based on their academic record, whether or not they have received aid.

These guidelines represent minimal standards. They do not necessarily coincide with the requirements students must fulfil to initially receive aid nor the number of credits a student is expected to earn in order to complete a certificate, two-year degree or four-year degree in the two or four years' time.

Students will be considered in good standing and eligible to receive financial assistance from University of Montana Western if:

1. Undergraduates satisfy the criteria of minimal academic progress as outlined in the UMW catalog.
2. All students maintain normal academic progress towards their degree as required by Federal and State regulations and the following policies and conditions.

DURATION OF ELIGIBILITY and PACE (Standards based on enrollment of 12 credits)

PACE or progress towards degree, measures a student's ability to achieve their degree within the duration of eligibility. PACE requires schools to suspend aid at the point in which it is mathematically impossible to achieve degree by the maximum duration time frame below:

Students will only be eligible for financial assistance for a specific number of semesters, regardless of whether any aid is received.

Undergraduates--Certificate. 6 semesters	Undergraduates--Two Year. 6 semesters
Undergraduates--Four Year. 12 semesters	Second Bachelor's. 4 semesters

Students who enroll part time will have those semesters pro-rated when duration of eligibility is calculated. Determination includes only those semesters attended at Western. Any semester for which a student was enrolled and subsequently withdrew shall be considered to be a term for which the student was enrolled for the purpose of calculating the maximum period of eligibility for financial assistance. A student enrolled as a non-degree student for Teaching Certification or Re-certification shall be measured as a second bachelor's degree candidate for determination of duration of eligibility.

SATISFACTORY COMPLETION

Satisfactory completion means a student has received a minimum grade of D or P (satisfactory in a pass/fail class). Grades of I (incomplete), F (failure) and W (withdrawal), are not considered adequate or acceptable in maintaining normal academic progress. Repeated courses will be counted for both attempted and completed credits. Special Assistance Courses (non-credit) are offered in Math to help students increase their proficiency to enroll in Math courses for credit. These non-credit courses may be included as part of an undergraduate minimum credit load. For Financial Aid purposes, a student may enroll for no more than two such courses in any given semester. Upper division students must provide the Financial Aid Office with written departmental approval to include any non-credit courses in their enrollment. Challenge Courses will be counted in the minimum credit load provided the student is enrolled in at least six regular, non-challenge credits (assuming the student is enrolled for 12 or more credits per semester). Inappropriate selection of courses is not an acceptable reason for failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress. Students should contact an advisor when they need help with course selection. The Financial Aid Director has the right to refuse financial aid to students who abuse the inclusion of repeat, special assistance (as defined above), and/or challenge courses to obtain funding.

MINIMUM GPA AND CREDIT COMPLETION

Student must maintain at least a 2.00 cumulative GPA. The minimum standards per semester for credits are outlined below:

Enrollment	Credits	Progress
12 + credits	12 or more	Satisfactory
	4 - 11	Warning
	0 - 3	Suspension
9 - 11 credits	9 or more	Satisfactory
	5 - 8	Warning
	0 - 4	Suspension
6 - 8 credits	6 - 8	Satisfactory
	5 - 6	Warning
	0 - 4	Suspension

FINANCIAL AID WARNING

Warning happens when the student has not completed the minimum credits required to achieve academic progress or PACE or has a cumulative GPA below a 2.00. Students who are on Warning may still receive financial aid. Students who do not pass the minimum required credits during the next semester will be suspended from financial aid and, therefore, would be ineligible to receive financial aid.

FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION

Financial Aid recipients will be placed on Suspension Status if:

1. They fail to satisfactorily complete the required number of credits for which they were funded.
2. They fail to achieve satisfactory progress while in a Warning status.
3. They are academically suspended--A student placed on academic probation will be dismissed for one semester if either of the following conditions occur:
 - a. A student on probation fails to achieve a semester grade point average of 2.00 during the next semester of enrollment, or
 - b. A transfer student admitted on probation fails to achieve a grade point average of at least 2.00 during the first semester at Western.

A student will be dismissed for one semester if either of the following conditions occur, even though the student's cumulative grade point average is above a 2.00:

- a. The student's semester grade point average is below 1.00, or
- b. Two consecutive semester grade point averages are below 2.00

Students on suspension for the first time must earn enough credits at their own expense to correct the deficiency. Students on second or subsequent suspension are ineligible to receive any aid for one year from the end of the term in which the infraction occurred.

APPEAL OF SUSPENSION

Students may appeal in writing to the Financial Aid Office. To assist the students in the Appeals Process, an Appeals Form may be picked up from the Financial Aid Office or downloaded at financialaid.umwestern.edu/formts.html. An Appeals Committee has been established to review each case and meets as needed. It is the responsibility of the student to know if their grade reports when compared to the Satisfactory Progress Standards, will cause immediate suspension of their Financial Aid. It is not the responsibility of the Financial Aid Office to notify the students. Further, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office when reinstatement conditions have been met or to initiate an appeal.

REINSTATEMENT OF FINANCIAL AID

Students whose suspension time has elapsed or have successfully corrected the deficiency, must notify the Financial Aid Office and submit a grade transcript for review. Reinstatement of aid will be subject to funds available at the time the completed file is reviewed.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students who transfer to Western from another institution and are not eligible to receive aid at that institution due to failure to maintain satisfactory progress must submit a letter to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee for approval to receive financial aid.

NON-DEGREE STUDENTS

A non-degree student is by definition not considered to be in a degree program and is, therefore, not eligible for Financial Aid. Students enrolled for teaching certification or re-certification may be eligible for aid.

WITHDRAWALS

Financial Aid recipients who drop classes which result in a reduction of fees paid are subject to Western's Return of Title IV Funds policy. Students may be required to repay unearned financial aid when they withdraw before the end of the semester. The amount of repayment is determined according to Federal regulations which take into account the number of class days attended and the total dollar amount of aid received.

CHANGES IN SATISFACTORY PROGRESS STANDARDS

Exceptions or amendments to any of the specific provisions regarding Satisfactory Progress Standards may be made at any time, without publication, due to changes in Federal, State and/or Institutional Regulations and Policies. Questions concerning this policy should be addressed to the Financial Aid Office, University of Montana Western, 710 S Atlantic St, Dillon MT 59725.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Many scholarship recipients are required to maintain higher scholarship standards than outlined in this policy. Such standards are often outlined in a notification letter sent to the student. Students who feel they may not be able to maintain minimum acceptable standards should contact the Financial Aid Office at (406)683-7511.