

New College of Florida — Undergraduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Financial Aid Purposes

Undergraduate students with Title IV financial aid at New College of Florida (NCF) must meet the requirements of this Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Financial Aid Purposes. This Policy may be stricter than the academic program requirements. It is based on satisfactory completion of semester contracts, Independent Study Projects (ISPs), individual courses, and other work attempted. (The SAP Policy also applies to eligibility for alternative loans that have an academic eligibility requirement, and to external need-based grants. Most NCF institutional funds are subject to the SAP Policy.)

1 unit = 4 semester hour equivalents. NCF checks SAP in part through the system of units that tracks the 124 hours required for graduation. Each NCF ISP, and each semester-long course, tutorial, and Independent Reading Project is assigned 1 unit attempted. For a modular (or modular equivalent) attempt, ½ unit is assigned.

New College of Florida Graduation Requirements

1. Seven satisfactory semester contracts;
2. Three satisfactory Independent Study Projects (ISPs);
3. The satisfactory completion of 31 units (a unit being equivalent to a full-semester course or an ISP);
4. The satisfactory completion of the College's general education requirements (e.g. state requirements for world language in high school or college, and for civic literacy; and the Liberal Arts Curriculum requirements which include study in a broad range of subjects, study of diverse perspectives, basic proficiency in mathematics and English language; and advanced proficiency in written and oral English language;
5. A satisfactory Baccalaureate Examination (usually in the form of an oral defense of the senior project);
6. A satisfactory Senior Project or Thesis, accepted in final form by Library staff.

Please note: A student who seeks to graduate with the minimum number of contracts should plan for satisfactory completion of an average of at least 4 units per contract. However, a student's individual pace within the program may require additional time to complete graduation requirements.

Students who receive financial aid have a special obligation to complete their contracts and ISPs satisfactorily and on time. The most straightforward way to meet SAP Requirements is satisfactory completion—on time—of all NCF contracts, ISPs, all other graduation requirements, and each unit attempted, without exceeding 46.5 cumulative unit attempts. Students on financial aid should keep the SAP Requirements in mind to plan for timely graduation.

Please note that throughout this Policy, contracts, ISPs and units attempted that are not satisfactory count as unsatisfactory for SAP purposes – this includes anything that is incomplete, unevaluated, uncertified, unsatisfactory, evaluation in progress, or withdrawn. These will be indicated as “unsatisfactory, incomplete, or unevaluated.”

SAP Review: NCF will review these 3 SAP Requirements after each semester, for each student on financial aid:

1. **Academic standing consistent with NCF's requirements for graduation: satisfactory completion of academic contracts and Independent Study Projects (ISPs).** For pre-approved part-time enrollment (e.g. part-time summer course work or thesis-unit-only), then satisfactory completion of all work attempted for that term is required toward meeting SAP for aid eligibility in the student's following semester.
2. **Ability to complete remaining contract, ISP, and unit requirements without exceeding 46.5 cumulative unit attempts, and not needing to exceed 4 units per semester contract.**
3. **Satisfactory completion of at least two-thirds (67%) of all cumulative units attempted toward graduation.** (*This is calculated by dividing cumulative units satisfactorily completed by all cumulative unit attempts.*)

4-Week Financial Aid Unit Drop Grace Period Deadline: Courses dropped via contract renegotiation through the fourth week of classes will not count toward unit attempts in calculating Maximum Time Frame or Pace to Graduation. The deadline for this is published as the “Financial Aid Unit Drop Grace Period Deadline” in the academic calendar. (Other contract renegotiations may be submitted through the “Contract Renegotiation Deadline” published in the academic calendar.)

Special requests for follow-up review may be considered when work was completed on time (without extension), such as late arrival of official off-campus study documents ordered by the student in a timely manner; off-campus study recheck deadlines are May 1 for the spring SAP status, November 1 for the fall SAP status. SAP status will be terminated if required off-campus study documents are not received and recorded in time for the subsequent scheduled review; they must be on record with the Office of the Registrar as one condition of SAP for any future term.

The 3 SAP Requirements in Detail

When a student fails to meet any SAP Requirement, financial aid will either be terminated, or restricted through Financial Aid Warning or Financial Aid Probation Status. The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid will notify the student of any change in financial aid status through the student's NewCLEIS account, once SAP has been reviewed after the end of the term (or Summer Program payment period).

#1 Academic standing consistent with NCF's requirements for graduation: satisfactory completion of academic contracts and ISPs. (*Requirement #1 is the SAP Qualitative Component—academic standing consistent with the school's requirements for graduation.*) Students at New College maintain academic standing consistent with the school's requirements for graduation through satisfactory completion of their semester academic

contracts and ISPs. For pre-approved part-time enrollment (e.g. part-time summer course work or thesis-unit-only), satisfactory completion of all work attempted for that term is required toward meeting SAP for aid eligibility in the student's following semester; the deadline for changing course choice, or officially withdrawing from this program without penalty to academic standing for SAP will be posted in the academic calendar.

In order for a student's performance in a course or academic activity to be designated "satisfactory," it is expected that he or she will complete work that meets or exceeds a standard that is uniformly applied to all students in that course. Academic performance that does not meet this standard is designated "unsatisfactory." At New College this satisfactory or unsatisfactory designation is always accompanied by a narrative evaluation that describes the quality and character of the student's academic work.

Because New College is the Honors College for the state of Florida, instructors have high expectations for student outcomes, and established performance norms are also high. This means that student work that is designated satisfactory in a course, tutorial, independent reading project, or independent study project is apt to exceed common minimum standards and would likely earn a B or an A in a traditional grading system. A final designation of "satisfactory" for an academic activity at New College is equivalent to *at least* a C (2.0) or higher in a traditional grading system.

The academic contract registers the student's units (courses, tutorials, Independent Reading Projects) for the semester. Criteria for satisfactory evaluation of each unit of academic work are based upon established norms defined by the faculty at the beginning of the semester or Independent Study Project. Criteria for satisfactory completion of the academic contract are individually negotiated between the student and the student's faculty contract sponsor (advisor).

The student is expected to complete one satisfactory academic contract for each semester registered. In addition, the student is expected to complete one satisfactory Independent Study Project for each ISP registered. For pre-approved part-time enrollment (e.g. part-time summer course work or thesis-unit-only), satisfactory completion of all work attempted for that term is required toward meeting SAP for aid eligibility in the student's following semester; the deadline for changing course choice, or officially withdrawing from this program without penalty to academic standing for SAP will be posted in the academic calendar.

At each SAP review, the student's record must reflect the following:

- Satisfactory completion of the semester's academic contract; and
- Satisfactory completion of the ISP (if registered) within the one-semester grace period; or
- For pre-approved part-time enrollment (e.g. part-time summer course work or thesis-unit-only), satisfactory completion of all work attempted for that term is required toward meeting SAP for aid eligibility in the student's following semester; the deadline for changing course choice, or officially withdrawing from this program without penalty to academic standing for SAP will be posted in the academic calendar.

Unsatisfactory, Incomplete, or Unevaluated Contract or ISP: With the exception of the one-semester grace period for satisfactory ISP completion, the student will not meet SAP with an unsatisfactory, incomplete, or unevaluated contract or ISP.

Unsatisfactory, Incomplete, or Unevaluated Pre-Approved Study: the student will not meet SAP with pre-approved part-time course work that is unsatisfactory, incomplete, or unevaluated.

Transfer Contracts and ISPs: Any transfer contract or ISP attempted after initial NCF enrollment counts toward Requirement #1.

Emergency Leave of Absence or Leave of Absence: Contract and unit work that is recorded as begun but not satisfactorily completed due to Emergency Leave of Absence or Leave of Absence counts as work attempted but unsatisfactory for financial aid purposes.

Withdrawal: A contract not satisfactorily completed due to Withdrawal that is Official or Unofficial (e.g., ceasing course/tutorial attendance before the end of the term), counts as a contract attempted but unsatisfactory for financial aid purposes. For pre-approved part-time enrollment, *the deadline for changing course choice, or officially withdrawing from this program without penalty to academic standing for SAP, will be posted in the summer term academic calendar.*

Meeting Requirement #1 at the Next SAP Review: Except in cases where a student's records trigger termination of financial aid, off-campus study records or credentials have not been received and recorded, or the student is subject to review for academic dismissal (see below), or whose off-campus study credentials have not been recorded, the student will meet Requirement #1 for the next enrolled semester period's SAP Review with satisfactory completion of the semester's contract (and ISP, if registered).

Review for Academic Dismissal Triggers/Termination of Financial Aid:

- Two unsatisfactory contracts, which need not be consecutive.
- In any order, one unsatisfactory contract and two unsatisfactory ISPs; again, they need not be consecutive.
- One unsatisfactory contract, for students who were readmitted after having previously been dismissed.

Financial aid will automatically be terminated on the basis of any of these triggers or the equivalent for financial aid purposes. (Contracts, ISPs and units attempted that are not satisfactory – including anything that is incomplete, unevaluated, uncertified, unsatisfactory, evaluation in progress, or withdrawn - count as unsatisfactory for SAP purposes.)

#2 Ability to graduate without exceeding 46.5 cumulative unit attempts, and 4 units per semester contract.

(Requirement #2 is part of the SAP Quantitative Component—Maximum Timeframe.) The minimum length of NCF's degree program is 31 units, satisfactorily completed. The Maximum Timeframe is 46.5 cumulative unit attempts for NCF Title IV financial aid recipients (150% of 31 units). Attempts include the following:

- all units that remain listed on the student's academic contract as educational activities, after the four-week Financial Aid Unit Drop Grace Period
- all units accepted in transfer

- all subsequent units registered (including any that are satisfactory, unsatisfactory, pre-emptively unsatisfactory, incomplete, unevaluated, or unearned due to leaving the school or ceasing class/tutorial attendance)
- in the case of unit work through an NCF summer program, the deadline for withdrawing or dropping course work without penalty to academic standing for SAP will be posted in the summer term academic calendar

The student meets Requirement #2 if it is possible to continue enrollment and complete graduation requirements (including the requirements of 7 contracts, 3 ISPs, 31 units, and the baccalaureate exam) without needing to exceed 4 units per subsequent semester contract, and without exceeding 46.5 cumulative unit attempts. If the student cannot do both, then the student's aid will be terminated unless saved by successful appeal for Financial Aid Probation.

Units from Dual Enrollment and Other College Transfer Credit: For Requirement #2, transfer credit may be assigned contract (or ISP) credit as well as units attempted and satisfactorily completed. After initial enrollment, units attempted are assigned for off-campus study through a host institution; the units are counted as satisfactorily completed if transferred to the NCF degree by the first day of classes after the one-semester grace period. Four unit attempts for each off-campus term are projected, when the host institution transcript has not yet been received. Transfer credit is assigned 1 unit for every 4 semester hours earned (or every 6 quarter hours).

#3 Satisfactory completion of at least two-thirds or 67% of all cumulative units attempted toward graduation requirements.

(Requirement #3 is part of the SAP Quantitative Component—Rate of Progress, or Pace, to Graduation within Maximum Timeframe.) Criteria for satisfactory evaluation of course work toward the contract are based upon established norms presented at the beginning of the course. Criteria for satisfactory evaluation of independent work are individually negotiated between the student and the sponsoring faculty member. The rate of progress for this Requirement is calculated by dividing the cumulative units satisfactorily completed by all cumulative units attempted. Cumulative units for calculating pace to graduation include the following:

- all units that remain listed on the student's academic contract as educational activities, after the four-week Financial Aid Unit Drop Grace Period
- all units accepted in transfer
- all subsequent units registered (including any that are satisfactory, incomplete, unevaluated, uncertified, pre-emptively unsatisfactory, unsatisfactory, evaluation in progress, withdrawn, or unearned due to leaving the school or ceasing class/tutorial attendance)
- in the case of unit work through an NCF summer program, the deadline for withdrawing or dropping course work without penalty to academic standing for SAP will be posted in the summer term academic calendar

It is important to note that students and faculty frequently negotiate academic contract criteria that exceed the two-thirds (67%) quantitative requirements of SAP; the quantitative requirements impose restrictions for financial aid purposes, but do not replace the contract criteria for progress in the academic program.

Special Conditions for Requirement #3

The number of semester contracts attempted determines the standard: NCF uses a graduated standard; for each of the first three semester contracts attempted, students must meet the standard for Requirement #3 at the 50% level. By the end of the fourth semester contract attempted and each semester thereafter, students are required to meet the standard at the two-thirds or 67% level. All NCF contracts registered—including any that are incomplete or unsatisfactory due to Withdrawal, ceasing class or tutorial attendance before the end of the term, Leave of Absence, or Emergency Leave of Absence—count toward contracts attempted.

Transfer semester contracts count toward contract attempts: This includes any transfer contracts accepted toward the degree program for work prior to initial enrollment at NCF (including dual enrollment), and any transfer semester contracts attempted after initial NCF enrollment (via work at a host institution).

Repetitions count, but have other restrictions. All repeated attempts of courses and tutorials (that remain listed as academic activities after the four-week Financial Aid Unit Drop Grace Period), and repeated project units will count toward measurement of Requirement #3. Whether completed through transfer credit or through NCF, a course, tutorial, or project unsatisfactorily completed may be repeated until it is satisfactorily completed; however, once satisfactorily completed, only one voluntary repetition is permitted toward the student's full-time load for financial aid purposes.

Semester contract attempts #1, #2, and #3: At SAP evaluation of each of the first three semesters, the student must have satisfactorily completed at least 50% of all cumulative units attempted (and reasonably able to reach 67% with the fourth contract attempt, without needing to exceed 4 unit attempts per semester).

Semester contract attempt #4, and each semester contract attempt thereafter: At SAP evaluation of the fourth semester and each semester thereafter, the student must have satisfactorily completed at least two-thirds or 67% of all cumulative units attempted.

Units from Exams, and from Dual Enrollment and Other College Transfer Credit: For Requirement #3, transfer credit is assigned units attempted and satisfactorily completed if they are accepted toward the NCF degree. After initial enrollment, units attempted are assigned for off-campus study through a host institution; the units are counted as satisfactorily completed if transferred to the NCF degree by the first day of classes after the one-semester grace period. Transfer credit is assigned 1 unit for every 4 semester hours (or every 6 quarter hours).

Additional Definitions for SAP: Academic Year. NCF's undergraduate program is full-time, using one academic year definition for all students. Occasionally, part-time study may be pursued by pre-approval (e.g., summer study or thesis-unit-only). The minimum academic year comprises the fall and spring semester terms (each semester lasting roughly 4 months or 16 weeks), and the January interterm for Independent Study Projects (between the two semesters). Each semester represents one payment period; the January interterm is attached to the fall semester payment period. A student is not required to register for the January interterm after satisfactory completion of 3 Independent Study Projects.

Additional payment period for summer. If NCF summer course or summer ISP registration is available and the student enrolls in it, then unit assignment will be made to that summer term only. **Semester Hours and Terms.** As of fall 2011, NCF's program uses semester credit hours with terms, tracking semester hours through a system in which 1 unit is equivalent to 4 semester hours. For NCF educational activities attempted prior to Fall 2011, units will be assigned in the same way. For transfer credit attempted for assignment to the degree prior to Fall 2011, every 4

semester hours (or every 6 quarter hours) will be counted as 1 unit. **Full-Time Study.** NCF undergraduate students enrolled in full-time study—as of fall 2011, this is defined as at least 3 units per term (equivalent to at least 12 semester hours per term). Enrollment within module 1 or module 2 of a semester may not fall below three units. An Independent Study Project at NCF, measured as 1 unit, is in addition to the 3 units required for full-time study in the fall semester term. Pre-approved exceptions to the full-time study requirement include NCF summer course, NCF summer ISP, and thesis-unit-only registration.

PENALTIES FOR FAILING TO MEET ONE OR MORE REQUIREMENTS OF SAP

The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid will consider whether to terminate financial aid if the student does not meet all 3 SAP Requirements. If the student can reasonably be expected to meet SAP requirements with successful work in a specific timeframe, the student may be assigned Financial Aid Warning Status (or Financial Aid Probation Status if aid is terminated and the student successfully petitions for reinstatement with an academic plan). The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid will notify the student of the decision—to terminate aid, to assign Financial Aid Warning Status, or to assign Financial Aid Probation Status—after the payment period's SAP review.

TERMINATION OF FINANCIAL AID: Unless the student successfully appeals for Financial Aid Probation status, aid will be terminated if a student does not meet all 3 SAP Requirements with the end of the assigned period for Financial Aid Warning or Financial Aid Probation, or if the student will not be able to graduate within 46.5 cumulative unit attempts (or without taking unusually heavy loads).

FINANCIAL AID WARNING STATUS: When granted, this permits a student one additional payment period of Title IV aid eligibility, even though the student has failed to meet one or more requirements of SAP. The purpose is to provide funding for that period because the student should be able to meet SAP requirements with successful work from that additional term.

No request or appeal is needed for this status, but some restrictions apply. The student will not be assigned Financial Aid Warning Status if one or more of the following applies:

- The student was on Financial Aid Warning Status or Financial Aid Probation Status for his or her prior payment period. (This is because a student may not remain on Financial Aid Warning Status for two consecutive payment periods.) The student's aid will be terminated unless the student successfully appeals for Financial Aid Probation.
- The student is unlikely to graduate within Maximum Timeframe without an unusually heavy workload (more than 4 units per semester contract). The student's aid will be terminated unless there is a successful appeal for Financial Aid Probation.
- The student meets a dismissal trigger or the equivalent for financial aid purposes (for example, incomplete and withdrawn contracts and ISPs count as unsatisfactory for SAP).

If granted, Financial Aid Warning Status allows the student the chance to re-establish eligibility for Title IV aid by meeting SAP requirements at the end of the semester or NCF summer program payment period. If the student does not meet SAP requirements at the next semester or summer program SAP review, the student's Title IV aid will be terminated unless the student successfully appeals for Financial Aid Probation.

FINANCIAL AID PROBATION STATUS: A Title IV aid recipient whose aid has been, or will be, terminated can submit a letter of appeal to the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid, requesting Financial Aid Probation status. The purpose of Financial Aid Probation status is to provide the student with funding for the chance to meet SAP requirements with successful work for one additional payment period, or successful work according to an academic plan for multiple payment periods. All academic plans are written with graduation as the expected endpoint. In either case, a SAP status of "Good" may be assigned if the student has successfully met the regular requirements of SAP by or before the specific point in time designated by the academic plan. All academic plans are written with graduation as the expected endpoint. Additionally, Financial Aid Probation Status may be granted to extend the Maximum Timeframe to provide the student with extra semester funding to graduate.

Appeals for Financial Aid Probation Status are considered and decided by the VP of Enrollment Management or by the Director of Financial Aid. Appeals are not granted automatically, and are not granted with incomplete contracts or ISPs.

Letter of Appeal for Financial Aid Probation. The letter of appeal must be written by the student, and include the following:

- Why the student failed to meet the SAP requirements (information on the death of a relative, injury or illness of the student, or other special circumstances and information)
- What has changed in the student's situation that will allow the student to meet the SAP requirements

Information on how the student reached out for help at the time, and any plan of support going forward, is also important. Additional support (e.g., documentation such as a physician letter or letter from the faculty sponsor) is very strongly recommended.

The letter of appeal and supporting documentation should be submitted to: Assoc. Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, New College of Florida Office of Admissions and Financial Aid, 5800 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota FL 34243. Materials sent by email should be sent to both swu@ncf.edu and ncfinaid@ncf.edu.

One Appeal. If the student does not meet SAP requirements at the end of the Financial Aid Probation Status period assigned, the student's Title IV aid will be terminated unless the student successfully appeals again for Financial Aid Probation. Typically, however, not more than one appeal will be granted during a student's career at New College of Florida.