

Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards

Students, who receive financial assistance at MSU-Billings through federal, state, or institutional programs, including fee waivers, have a responsibility to maintain certain academic standards and make satisfactory progress toward a degree. The Financial Aid Office is required by federal and state law to determine the eligibility of financial aid applicants for financial assistance, even if they have not received financial aid in the past. These standards apply to all grants, loans, work-study, fee waivers and some scholarships.

Federal law requires the consideration of three factors when determining whether a student is making satisfactory progress toward a degree. These factors are 1) minimum GPA; 2) duration of financial aid eligibility; and 3) satisfactory completion of a minimum number of credits attempted.

1. MINIMUM GRADE POINT AVERAGE (measured after spring and summer semesters)

Undergraduates are expected to maintain at least a 2.00 MSU-B grade point average (GPA). You are not eligible for financial aid if your cumulative MSU-B GPA drops below a 2.0.

Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative MSU-B GPA in order to be eligible for financial aid.

2. DURATION OF ELIGIBILITY

You are expected to earn a degree in a specific amount of time, measured by the credits you have **attempted**. Credits attempted at prior post-secondary institutions will be included with your MSU-Billings credits in determining the credits you have attempted. Credits for which you enroll and subsequently withdraw, all "F", "N", "X", and "I", grades, **and all repeated credits** will be counted toward the number of credits attempted.

The number of attempted credits allowed is 1.5 times the number of credits required to earn your degree. For example, if your degree requires 120 credits, you are eligible for financial aid until you have attempted 180 credits or have earned the credits required for your degree, whichever comes first.

See the chart below for the maximum duration of eligibility in various programs:

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Undergraduate Bachelor Degree | 180 credits attempted | Assoc Degree/2 Yr Cert | 90 credits attempted |
| Second Bachelor's Degree | 240 credits attempted | Certificate Programs | 50-60 credits attempted |
| Master's Degree (varies) | 45-90 credits attempted | (varies) | |
| General Studies | 60 credits EARNED | Provisional Graduates | one calendar year |
| Pre-Professional (varies) | 60-90 credits attempted | Teacher Certification | 60 credits attempted |

3. SATISFACTORY COMPLETION RATE

Satisfactory completion means you have received a minimum grade of D or P (satisfactory in a pass/fail class). Grades of I (incomplete), F (failure), W (withdrawal), N (no credit), or X (withdraw failing) are not acceptable for satisfactory academic progress. Temporary grades (T) can only be earned for graduate level courses as stated in the catalog. Students who receive T grades will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, depending on how many additional semesters the instructor indicates are necessary to complete the course. **Students who do not pass 67% (rounded down) of all credits attempted each academic year will be suspended from financial aid. In addition, students must maintain 67% overall pass rate of attempted credits.**

FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION will occur if you:

- Withdraw from MSU-Billings
- Earn zero credits after any semester ... fall, spring, or summer
- Earn less than 67% of attempted credits at the end of the academic year (spring)
- Earn less than 67% of attempted credits at the end of summer
- Earn less than 67% OVERALL (all attempted credits)
- Earn below the minimum required GPA
- Are academically suspended
- Exceed the duration of eligibility for your program
- Are not a regular student seeking a degree or certificate offered at MSU-Billing

Students who are suspended from financial aid for any reason will remain ineligible until all deficiencies are remedied and Satisfactory Academic Progress is met according to all three criteria. Attending another school, sitting out of school for a period of time, or “bankrupting” credits on your grade transcript will not reinstate your financial aid eligibility at MSU-Billings. **It is your responsibility to notify the FA Office when you believe you are eligible to have your financial aid reinstated.**

If you are suspended because of Duration of Eligibility, contact the financial aid office for advice, as the remedy differs depending on your program. For example, undergraduates who exceed 180 credits will regain eligibility when they graduate and seek a graduate degree, a second bachelor’s degree, or teacher certification. General Studies students must be enrolled in their degree program at the beginning of their junior year.

APPEAL PROCEDURES

If you are denied financial aid because of failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress, you may appeal. To be successful, you must document extenuating circumstances beyond your control, such as a serious illness or a death in your immediate family, which prevented you from doing well in school. Appeal forms explaining the appeal procedures and necessary documentation are available in the Financial Aid Office and on line at <http://www.msubillings.edu/finaid>.