



# UNIVERSIDAD DEL NORESTE

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for the Purposes of Assessing Continuing Eligibility for U.S. Financial Aid**

### **Overview**

US Federal regulations require that a student must be enrolled and making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in order to be eligible to receive Title IV Federal Loans. These regulations require that the University checks the students' progress at regular intervals.

Students receiving US Federal Loans must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress throughout the loan period in order to receive all of the installments of their loans for that period and in order to continue receiving loans.

This definition of SAP may be different from other University policies and is not a replacement for University academic regulations. Furthermore, satisfactory academic progression to retain Title IV Direct Loans is entirely separate from the academic requirements to remain on a program of study and does not guarantee the outcome of a program.

### **Definition of Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) means that a student is proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling program requirements and involves two standards; qualitative and quantitative. Students must meet both standards to continue receiving US Federal Loans and this policy applies to all Title IV students regardless of level or mode of study.

Our definition of Satisfactory Academic Progress for the purposes of receiving Title IV Federal Loans is measured by:

- Time Frame – Maximum time allowed in completing an academic program
- Performance – Student grade level average or equivalent

In order to maintain eligibility to receive US Federal Loans with the qualitative standard, a student must maintain the academic standing necessary to remain enrolled. Academic Registry conducts reviews at the end of each academic year to determine a student's successful progress toward obtaining their award/degree by ensuring the student has been assessed as having 'successfully completed' the year. This successful completion is determined and officiated by each course Exam Board. In order to successfully complete the year, students must achieve a minimum of 70% in each subject (equivalent to US GPA 2.0 or Grade C). This same minimum standard must be met prior to the next disbursement payment period.

At the end of the academic term, students may be withdrawn from their programs if they have not passed each of their terms due to failed assignments throughout the year. Depending on certain circumstances, students may be offered the chance to re-submit work on a referral or deferral basis or they may be allowed to repeat the year.

## **Special Circumstances**

It is understood that there can sometimes be exceptional circumstances that affect a student's ability to meet an assessment deadline or affect their performance in assessment. Where appropriate, these circumstances can be taken into account by the Board of Examiners in making a decision. The Board of Examiners will consider each claim and decide whether or not the circumstances were material to the student's performance in the assessment in question and whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant accepting that special circumstances existed.

## **Deferral**

A deferral situation results when a student successfully submits Special Circumstances which allow the student additional time to complete an assignment with the chance to still receive full grades. If the project is failed again upon resubmission, the student will be deemed to have failed that term/terms or year and thus may be asked to repeat that term/terms or year or be withdrawn from the program.

## **Referral**

Where Special Circumstances were not present, referrals allow students a second opportunity to amend failed course work but only a basic pass mark will be awarded, even if the assignment would normally have received a higher grade. If the assignment is failed for a second time, the student is deemed to have failed that unit and thus the term and may be asked to repeat the entire term next academic year, or withdraw from the program. In cases where there are multiple failed projects accrued over the academic term, the student may be asked to repeat several terms, the entire year or be withdrawn from the program. Tuition fees would be payable again for any repeated study periods and the student would be ineligible to borrow US Loans as repeated modules, terms or years with no special circumstances.

## **Incomplete Grades**

Students who have not submitted assessments may not have their Title IV loans withdrawn as they may have not met the minimum pass rates and pace of credit completion.

## **Quantitative**

Students must be enrolled full-time or, more rarely due to immigration requirements, part-time (at least half-time) throughout the entire academic year. If students fall below

half-time, they must either be on an approved leave of absence or they will be withdrawn from the program.

The student must have met all University progress deadlines plus any written deadlines agreed with their supervisor. The supervisor must agree that progress with research is satisfactory and meeting required timeframes set by them.

### **Timing of SAP Evaluation**

Universidad Del Noreste evaluates Satisfactory Academic Progress at the end of each year but the US Loans Manager conducts checks prior to each loan disbursement ensuring that students are still listed as being fully enrolled and in a state of progression prior to each loan disbursement.

Withdrawals and incompletes are not included in the overall marking scheme. Students must successfully complete all required modules and assignments by the end of each year in order to progress into the next year or in order to complete their course. Students who fail a required assignment or module must repeat it and obtain a passing grade before they are deemed to have successfully completed their program.

### **Transfer Students**

Universidad Del Noreste does not operate a Transfer Credit Framework so students who have completed prior classes elsewhere will not be able to gain credits for those classes when joining UNE.

The Universidad Del Noreste does, however, operate a Study Abroad program where US students may transfer to the University temporarily for one, two or three terms and the credits gained will be transferred back to their Home Institution. Such students are ineligible to receive US Federal Loans from Universidad Del Noreste and must secure such funding from their Home Institution. A Consortium Agreement stipulating these requirements is signed between the Universidad Del Noreste.

### **Change of Program or Degree**

Students who decide to change their degree or program objective within Universidad Del Noreste will be assessed by the relevant International Office and Immigration Compliance Officer and must undergo a new course application and interview with the Director of the Academic Area elected.

If students wish to cease study with the University, ahead of the completion of their program or current academic year, they will be deemed as “withdrawn” and a Return of Title IV calculation will be conducted.

## **Concurrent Degrees**

Universidad Del Noreste does not permit the undertaking of studies on two degrees concurrently.

## **Additional Degrees**

Students who have completed a degree program and wish to pursue another degree afterwards must apply for admission to that program like any other applicant and meet the admission requirements for the new program from the start.

## **Financial Aid Warning**

Where the students' academic department is unable to confirm that they are making satisfactory academic progress, the student will be issued with a financial aid warning for the next academic term. The student will continue to receive their financial aid during this period but will be expected to have resumed satisfactory academic progress prior to the next scheduled disbursement of financial aid. Where satisfactory academic progress is not confirmed by the end of the academic term, the student will be advised in writing that their financial aid will be suspended.

## **Appeals and Waivers of SAP**

Students are notified in writing by the US Loans Manger if their US Loans are at risk, or if they are being suspended or probated on the basis of lack of satisfactory academic progress. An appeal procedure for verifiable extenuating or unforeseen circumstances is available, if the student believes they meet the criteria.

## **Financial Aid Probation and/or Suspension**

1. Students who fail to achieve the required standard as per the University's code of practice and the requirements of the loan program may be placed on US Loan Probation for 6 months
2. Students who have been placed on Probation and subsequently meet the requirements will be placed back into good SAP standing
3. Students who have been placed on Probation and do not meet the requirements to go back into good standing may have their US Loans suspended and will be ineligible to receive additional loans until such time as they achieve the required standards
4. Students may appeal their suspension of US Loans, via written appeal to Academic Registry who may take advice from the relevant course team on the student's progress and academic standing. Students who appeal will be informed in writing of the decision, which is final.

### **Appeals**

Students who have their eligibility for US Loans suspended may appeal the suspension if one or more acceptable grounds for Special Circumstances exist.

All appeals must be received within 15 days of receipt of the Notice of Suspension.  
Students should submit an appeal in the first instance to:

Mario Najera Torres  
Universidad del Noreste  
International Office  
Prol. Av. Hidalgo No. 6315 Col. Nuevo Aeropuerto  
Tampico, Tamps

Students must indicate in writing the reason(s) for failure to meet the necessary US Loan Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements and why their US Loans should not be suspended. All documentation to support the appeal is required at the time of the appeal submission and may include items like bank statements, medical notes from a doctor, statement from tutor or course leader.

Disbursement of loan funding will not be made while an appeal is being processed. The circumstances of the appeal will be considered further and a decision of the appeal will be communicated to the student in writing within 14 days of submission, if all necessary supporting evidence is complete.