

Undergraduate Evening & Graduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy and Procedures

The Federal Regulations require that institutions monitor the academic progress of each student for federal financial aid assistance and the institution certify that the student is making satisfactory academic progress toward earning his/her degree. The determination of progress must be made at least once a year and before the Financial Aid Office releases any federal aid funds for the subsequent semester. Wheeling University will monitor credit hour completion requirements and grade point average at the end of each semester. Scholarships may require higher academic standards than those provided under the academic progress guidelines.

Maximum time frame to earn a degree: To quantify academic progress, an institution must set a maximum time frame in which a student is expected to complete a program. For an undergraduate program, the maximum time frame cannot exceed 150% of the published length of the program measured in credit hours attempted.

The majority of the undergraduate evening programs require 120 credit hours for graduation. The maximum time frame for students in the programs is 180 attempted credit hours ($120 \times 1.5 = 180$). Students whose programs require more than 120 credit hours for a degree will have a higher limit.

The majority of the graduate programs require 36 credit hours for graduation. The maximum time frame for students in the programs is 54 attempted credit hours ($36 \times 1.50 = 54$). Students whose programs require more than 36 hours for a degree will have a higher limit.

Students are normally expected to complete an undergraduate degree by the end of 4 years. Therefore, students will forfeit their eligibility to participate in federal financial aid programs after 6 years of full-time enrollment ($4 \times 1.5 = 6$).

Withdrawals and Pass/Fail Courses: Grades of W, WP, WF, and FA are counted as courses attempted and count toward the maximum time frame.

Incompletes or Grade Changes: Grades of I and X are counted as courses attempted and count toward the maximum time frame. Students must report any grade change to the Financial Aid Office that may impact their financial aid eligibility.

Double Majors and/or Minors: Students who receive approval to pursue a double major/minor will be expected to complete all degree requirements before reaching 180 attempted credit hours.

Change in Major: Students who change their majors will be expected to complete all degree requirements before reaching 180 credit hours.

Transfer Credit Hours: Students who transfer credit hours into WU will be counted as credit hours completed and count toward the maximum time frame.

Repetition of Courses: If a student repeats a course, both grades will appear on the transcript, but only the highest grade will be factored into the students adjusted GPA. Repeated courses will be counted as courses attempted and count toward the maximum time frame.

2nd Bachelor's Degree: To earn a second bachelor's degree at Wheeling University, a student must fulfill the requirements of the new major and fulfill the residency requirements of two full semesters or thirty credit hours earned at WU. Some majors will involve substantially more than two semesters for completion. Students working towards a second degree are no longer eligible for Federal Pell Grant, Federal SEOG, state aid and institutional aid. Students are limited on how much they can borrow under the Federal Direct Loan Program.

Credit Hour Progression: For students to earn a bachelor's degree you must successfully complete 120 credit hours within a limited time frame. Students are considered to be progressing normally or on pace towards degree completion as follows:

- Freshman – less than 27 semester hours
- Sophomore – minimum of 27 semester hours
- Junior – minimum of 60 semester hours
- Senior – minimum of 90 semester hours

To determine enrollment status of a student, the University will use the number of credit hours in which the student is enrolled for on the first day of classes each semester.

- Credit completion requirement for a full-time student (12 + credits/semester): the student is required to complete a minimum of 24 credit hours per academic year.
- Credit completion requirement for a three-quarter-time student (9-11 credits/semester): the student is required to complete a minimum of 18 credit hours per academic year.
- Credit completion requirement for a half-time student (6-8 credits/semester): the student is required to complete a minimum of 12 credit hours per academic year.

Note: A student who enrolls at different enrollment levels during the academic year will have the credit completion requirement pro-rated. Example, Full-time enrollment –Fall semester and half-time enrollment –Spring semester, the student must complete a total of 18 credit hours during the academic year.

- Undergraduate Qualitative Standards- Grade Point Averages: A student must maintain at least a 2.000 cumulative grade point average (GPA) to be considered making satisfactory academic progress. If the student's GPA falls below the cumulative 2.000 requirement for two consecutive semesters, the student will automatically lose federal financial aid eligibility.
- Graduate Qualitative Standards- Grade Point Averages: A student must maintain at least a 3.000 cumulative grade point average (GPA) to be considered making satisfactory academic progress. If the student's GPA falls below the cumulative 3.000 requirement for two consecutive semesters, the student will automatically lose federal financial aid eligibility.

Procedures: Students receiving financial aid will be evaluated at the end of each semester to determine that he/she is meeting the standards described above. If the student has reached the maximum number of credit hours without earning the degree, the student will no longer be eligible to participate in the federal financial aid programs.

Federal regulations require that these standards apply to all students. This includes first-time aid applicants, students who have previously enrolled at Wheeling Jesuit University, or those who have not been formally placed on probation.

Financial Aid Warning:

The first time a student experiences academic difficulty, they will receive a "financial aid warning" letter. This letter will remind them of the minimum academic requirements for their financial aid programs and strongly recommend them to take advantage of the academic resources available to them. Students will be eligible to receive federal financial aid during the Financial Aid Warning semester. Students will be notified that their academic records will be checked again at the end of that semester. Further action may need to be taken if there are no significant improvements during their warning semester. Students can only receive financial aid for one semester under this "warning" status.

Financial Aid Probation:

If a student fails to reach the maximum number of scheduled hours and the Director of Financial Aid determines that the student has fallen below the completion ratio standards for satisfactory progress, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation. The student's continued eligibility for federal aid will be at risk. Students who fail to maintain the required minimum GPA will also be placed on Financial Aid Probation.

Students on Financial Aid Probation will receive a separate letter that will outline the academic requirements they must meet in order to receive aid for the following semester. If the student on Financial Aid Probation meets the required conditions of the probation, then the student will be permitted to continue to participate in the federal financial aid programs for subsequent semesters. Students that have been placed on probation will be considered as making satisfactory academic progress for the purpose of receiving financial aid as long as they continue to meet the academic requirements outlined in their probationary letter.

The Financial Aid Office will review the academic records of each student on Financial Aid Probation at the end of each semester. If the student is not meeting the terms outlined on their probationary letter, the student will forfeit their federal financial aid eligibility.

Lack of Satisfactory Progress equals Loss of Eligibility:

Students who lost eligibility to participate in the federal financial aid programs for reasons of academic progress can regain that eligibility by enrolling at Wheeling Jesuit University at your own expense (no financial aid assistance). Within the unfunded semester, the student must demonstrate that they are capable of completing a semester without any failures, incompletes, withdrawals and must show the ability to complete their degree requirements within the time frame.

Students who have been academically excluded from the university and decide to re-enroll are not automatically eligible to continue to participate in federal, state or institutional aid programs.

Right to Appeal:

A student has the right to submit a written appeal to any decision of ineligibility to continue to receive financial aid. This appeal must be submitted in writing to the Director of Financial Aid within 30 days of notification that the student's aid eligibility has been lost. Appeal letters must be written by the student and submitted via US postal mail, fax or email. All appeal letters must have the student's signature. Appeal letters that are emailed must be submitted through their WU campus email account, which will represent the student's signature. The Financial Aid Committee will then review all financial aid appeals submitted to the Director of Financial Aid. The appeal cannot be based on the need for financial assistance or lack of knowledge that your financial aid was at risk. The appeal needs to be based upon some extenuating circumstance or condition which prevented you from successfully completing your attempted credit hours and/or lack of GPA, or which necessitated that you withdraw from class(es). Students must include in their appeal letter: 1.) Why the student failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress and 2.) What has changed that will allow the student to make satisfactory academic progress during the next semester. Examples of possible situations include death of a family member, serious injury or illness, loss of job, etc.

Students will need to provide documentation along with their appeal letter within the 30 days of notification that the student's aid eligibility has been lost. Examples of possible documentation include death certification, copy of obituary, hospital bills, notification of job loss or overtime work on company letterhead, etc. If no proof of documentation was provided, the Financial Aid Committee will not evaluate the appeal letter. Therefore, the student will forfeit any financial aid eligibility.

If you do not have grounds for an appeal or if your appeal is denied, you may still be able to regain your eligibility for future semesters. You will need to enroll at Wheeling University at your own expense (no financial aid assistance) and implement an academic plan with the Financial Aid Office and Academic Advisor, in advance for the conditions under which eligibility can be regained.

Appeal Approval: Appeals can only be approved if the Financial Aid Appeals Committee determines:

- The student will be able to meet the university's satisfactory academic progress after the next payment period; or

- The student has agreed to follow an academic plan that, if followed it will ensure the student can meet the university's satisfactory academic progress guideline by a specific point in time.

The students whose appeals are granted will receive financial aid on a conditional basis for one semester. The conditions will be outlined in the letter sent to the student granting the appeal. The Financial Aid Committee will review the student's record at the end of each semester to determine their status for the following semester. Students who fail to meet the conditions outlined in their individualized academic plans during their semester will not be able to submit a subsequent appeal.

Academic Plan Procedure:

In conjunction with the Academic Advisor, students will be required to develop a written Academic Plan as part of any appeal process. The Academic Plan will include any of the following:

- Regular meetings throughout the semester with the Academic Advisor and/or the Academic Resource Center (ARC).
- Specific steps that the student will take throughout the semester to address the academic difficulties that they encountered in previous semesters.
- Students may be referred to other on-campus departments to address any other problems that may have impacted the student's eligibility to succeed academically.
- Students may also be required to retake courses, review current academic major, faculty early monitoring/academic alerts, and/or conduct inventory on learning styles.

The student's financial aid eligibility will be reinstated for the upcoming semester upon approval of the student's appeal letter and a proposed academic plan. The Financial Aid Committee reserves the right to add additional requirements to the Academic Plan.

Resources Available for Students:

Academic Advisor
Academic Resource Center
WU Student Counseling Services – Health Center
Campus Ministry
Career Development Center