

## Satisfactory Academic Progress

---

Maintaining satisfactory academic progress is one of many requirements mandated under federal statutory and regulatory requirements for federal student aid programs and for institutional financial aid offered by New York Theological Seminary. In order to remain eligible for federal student aid at NYTS, students must maintain both a qualitative and quantitative standard for satisfactory academic progress.

These standards measure a student's progress in three different aspects:

- Semester and cumulative grade point average
- Credit hour completion rate, and
- The maximum time frame allowable for completion of an academic program as a recipient of federal student aid

This satisfactory academic progress policy is specific to maintaining eligibility for federal student aid and does not replace academic policies pertaining to academic standing and/or degree progression. Federal regulations require a specified level of academic achievement and the completion of a set number of credits within a given time frame. Students must meet the minimum standards in this policy after each academic year in which the student is enrolled. The Financial Aid Office will review satisfactory academic progress at the end of the spring semester and will accordingly notify federal student aid recipients.

### Quantitative Standards

Students are expected to complete their academic program within reasonable time frames based on the average length of the academic program and not exceeding maximum time frames as set forth in federal regulation. This is measured in two ways:

- Semesters enrolled – fall, spring, and the summer sessions.
- Credit hours attempted – All courses attempted, with the exception of audited courses.

## Maximum Time Frames

Credit hours included in the maximum time frame are comprised of all credits applied to a student's degree program, as follows:

- All transfer credits applied to the student's academic program.
- All credits attempted, regardless of passing or failing grades, and including incomplete grades, an unsatisfactory grade, no grade, or a withdrawal from a course.
- Courses taken for credit or no credit.
- All courses taken, regardless of a student's change of academic program, and regardless of whether a student had multiple majors and/or academic concentrations.
- All repeated coursework.

Audited courses are not counted towards maximum time frame.

Average and maximum time frames are as follows:

Degree Program	Avg. Timeframe/Credit Hours	Max. Timeframe/Credit Hours
Master of Divinity	4 years; 90 credit hrs.	7 years; 135 credit hrs.
Master of Pastoral Care & Counseling	2 years; 48 credit hrs.	5 years; 72 credit hrs.
Master of Religious Education	2 years; 48 credit hrs.	5 years; 72 credit hrs.
Master of Youth Ministry	2 years; 48 credit hrs.	5 years; 72 credit hrs.
Master of Religious Leadership & Administration	2 years; 48 credit hrs.	5 years; 72 credit hrs.
Doctor of Ministry	3 years; 42 credit hrs.	6 years; 63 credit hrs.

## **Rate of Completion/Pace**

The credit hour completion rate refers to the pace at which students must progress through their academic program to ensure that the student completes their academic program within the maximum time frame per federal regulation.

At the end of the academic year (June 30), the Financial Aid Office will evaluate a student's academic progress in accordance with the following regulatory formula:

$$\text{Pace} = \text{total hours completed} \div \text{total hours attempted}$$

This means that courses for which the student withdraws after the drop/add period has ended will be considered as attempted credit hours. For all students, attempted hours are defined as all courses in which they are enrolled after the drop/add period has ended and for which academic credit will be earned. This means that courses from which students withdraw after the drop/add period has ended will be considered attempted hours. All attempted hours will be counted regardless of whether financial aid was received. The following course designations are included in attempted hours:

- Withdrawals
- Incompletes
- No grades
- Courses taken as **Pass/Fail**
- Repeated coursework
- Failing grades

All graduate students will be expected to complete 67 percent of credit hours attempted, during all terms of enrollment, including the summer session.

## **Qualitative Standards**

New York Theological Seminary has established academic progress standards of at least a 2.0 grade point average for all degree programs. Therefore, students must maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average for continued federal student aid eligibility.

Courses marked **AU, I, P, X, or W** are not considered in determining the grade point average, except that courses marked “I” will be considered when a final grade is recorded.

### **Evaluation of Satisfactory Academic Progress**

The Financial Aid Office will evaluate satisfactory academic progress for all students receiving federal student aid in accordance with this policy at the end of the academic year. Students who do not meet satisfactory academic progress will be notified of their status by email.

Students who fail to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements will be given an automatic financial aid warning and will have one semester to meet requirements as set forth in this policy. Failure to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements following a financial aid warning will result in the student being ineligible for all federal student aid. Students who become ineligible and have extenuating circumstances which contributed to poor academic performance may appeal to be placed on financial aid probation for one additional semester of eligibility. After a period of financial aid probation, students must either meet satisfactory academic progress requirements or fund their educational expenses without the use of federal student aid.

A student may appeal the denial of federal student aid by writing to the Financial Aid Committee. Appeals are considered in cases where there has been a death of a relative, injury or illness of the student, or other special circumstances. Our committee may consult with deans, professors, or physicians (as appropriate) to determine if an appeal for financial aid probation should be approved.

The appeal must include:

- A letter of explanation as to why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress along with supporting documentation that substantiates the circumstances. Documentation should be from unrelated adults such as professors, academic advisors, clergy, doctors, or mental health professionals.

- A separate academic and enrollment plan developed in conjunction with and approved by your academic advisor which provides a path to follow that allows the student to meet the requirements at the end of the Financial Aid Probation (one semester).

Please note that federal student aid (and scholarships), once lost, cannot be reinstated retroactively for previous semesters where the student was ineligible. Upon reinstatement, students will be eligible to apply for federal student loans.