

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress

Sonoran University is committed to excellence in educational quality and learning outcomes by providing a supportive academic environment to students. To help Sonoran University and students identify if a student is making progress toward the completion of their degree, the University sets standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Federal regulations require Sonoran University to establish specific standards for measuring SAP for students receiving financial aid, which includes a quantitative measure (credit hours completed) as well as a qualitative measure (grade point average).

Satisfactory Academic Progress describes a student's successful completion of coursework toward a degree. Sonoran University monitors students' satisfactory academic progress at the end of each quarter with the calculation of a term grade point average and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) for enrolled students. A student's academic standing is based on the cumulative GPA and cumulative earned credits.

To meet Satisfactory Academic Progress at Sonoran University, students must:

- Successfully complete (earn) a cumulative number of required credits by the end of every calendar year (see Satisfactory Academic Progress for the prescribed program of study).
- Maintain a minimum career GPA (see Satisfactory Academic Progress for the prescribed program of study).

Failure to maintain either of these requirements will result in a student being placed on academic warning and/or being academically dismissed, see Good Academic Standing (p. 1) for more information.

Academic Standing

Good Academic Standing

Good Academic Standing is defined as consistently meeting or exceeding the program requirements of GPA minimum standards and the minimum academic requirements of appropriate program progression as measured against the program's maximum time to completion (see Satisfactory Academic Progress Completion and Cumulative GPA Requirement for the prescribed program of study).

Course Failure/Withdrawal and Program Completion

Failure of, or withdrawal from, courses may not always progress a student to a warning level. However, students failing or withdrawing from a course(s) are required to meet with Academic Advising to complete an academic development plan, which may include requisite supplemental coursework intended to support improved performance.

- Failure or withdrawal from a course could impact the student's projected program completion date. Students who do not meet the minimum academic requirements of program progression (as measured against the program's maximum time to completion) will be subject to dismissal from the program.
- Failing a course for the second time will result in dismissal.

Academic Warning

Academic Warning is a reflection of a student's academic standing. Academic Warning is assigned as an alert when the student is not making sufficient progress toward completion of the degree and a signal that intervention, in the form of an academic development plan, is required.

First Academic Warning (Academic Warning I)

A student is placed on Academic Warning I if:

- The student does not achieve the required program minimum cumulative GPA standard (2.1 ND/3.0 MS), or
- The student fails one or more clerkships (CLTR course) during a quarter at Sonoran University (ND program only).

A notation of Academic Warning I is included on the academic transcript. Students placed on Academic Warning I will receive notification from the Registrar's Office and must meet with Academic Advising to complete an academic development plan intended to support improved performance. Students are encouraged to engage with all available support resources (e.g., Learning Specialist, and mental health professionals) to obtain additional assistance. Students placed on Academic Warning I will continue in this status unless they meet the requirements for restoring good academic standing.

If the student is unable to continue in their prescribed program of study, the student may be placed on an Administrative Leave of Absence (ALOA) (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/university-policies/enrollment-policies/#leaveofabsencestext>) and therefore may not be eligible for financial aid. The student may be eligible to reenter their prescribed program of study as determined by academic advising and Sonoran University's ALOA policy as outlined in the catalog. #Note: A student whose GPA projections show an inability to recover to 2.1 (ND)/3.0 (MS) or higher in subsequent terms by the projected graduation date may be subject to dismissal.

Second Academic Warning (Academic Warning II)

A student is placed on Academic Warning II if:

- The student does not achieve the required program minimum cumulative GPA standard (2.1 ND/3.0 MS) while on Academic Warning I, or
- The student fails one or more clerkships (CLTR course) during a quarter at Sonoran University (ND program only) while on Academic Warning I.

#A notation of Academic Warning II is included on the academic transcript. Students placed on Academic Warning II will receive notification from the Registrar's Office and are required to meet with academic advising to update their academic development plan intended to support improved performance. #Students are encouraged to engage with all available support resources (e.g., Learning Specialist, and mental health professionals) to obtain additional assistance. Students placed on Academic Warning II will continue in this status unless they meet the requirements for restoring good academic standing.

If the student is unable to continue in their prescribed program of study, the student may be placed on an Administrative Leave of Absence (ALOA) (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/university-policies/enrollment-policies/#leaveofabsencestext>) and, therefore may not be eligible for financial aid. The student may be eligible to reenter their prescribed program of study as determined by academic advising and Sonoran University's ALOA policy as outlined in the catalog. #Note: A student whose GPA projections show

an inability to recover to 2.1 (ND)/3.0 (MS) or higher in subsequent terms by the projected graduation date may be subject to dismissal.

Academic Support for Students on Academic Warning

To support students on academic warning, students are required to meet with Academic Advising to help navigate resources and support opportunities. Students on the first or second levels of academic warning will be required to complete an academic development plan during their meeting with Academic Advising. If the student is unable to continue in their prescribed program of study, the student may be placed on an Administrative Leave of Absence (ALOA) and may not be eligible for financial aid. The student may be eligible to reenter their prescribed program of study as determined by Sonoran University's ALOA policy and the Academic Advising Office.

The Academic Warning notation remains on the student's transcript indefinitely. Students reduce a warning level when their cumulative GPA meets or exceeds the minimum required as outlined for their program of study for two consecutive quarters per warning level.

Academic Restoration

To clear an Academic Warning and restore good academic standing, a student on Academic Warning must meet the following requirements for *each* level of academic warning to be reduced by one level.

- Earn a minimum cumulative GPA for two consecutive terms.
 - ND students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.1
 - MS students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0

The Advising Office can help students understand the impact and consequences of earned and future grades on their cumulative GPA.

Academic Dismissal

Students who are demonstrating unsatisfactory academic progress or are unable to meet the Technical Standards of Admission (if applicable) for their prescribed program of study will be subject to dismissal. A student will be subject to dismissal if:

- The student does not achieve the required program minimum cumulative GPA standard (2.1 ND/3.0 MS) while on Academic Warning II, or
- The student fails one or more clerkships (CLTR course) during a quarter at Sonoran University (ND program only) while on Academic Warning II, or
- The student's projected program completion exceeds the program's maximum completion time, or
- The student fails the same course for the second time during any portion of their enrollment at Sonoran University (a course includes any didactic course or clinical clerkship in the prescribed program of study), or
- The student fails to meet the Technical Standards of Admission (if applicable) for a prescribed program of study.

Should, despite reasonable accommodation (whether the student chooses to use the accommodation or not), a student's existing or acquired disability interfere with patient or peer safety or otherwise impede the ability to meet the Technical Standards for their program and advance to graduation, the student may withdraw or be subject to academic dismissal from the program.

Students who have been dismissed will receive official notification from the Registrar's Office. The dismissal notification will outline the student's rights to an appeal. If a student is re-instated on a dismissal appeal, they

are ineligible for academic restoration as outlined in this policy and must meet the requirements outlined in their reinstatement letter.

Academic dismissal from a degree program does not preclude the student from admission to another degree program at Sonoran University. All academic records from the program from which a student was dismissed are reviewed to inform admission decisions.

Academic Dismissal Appeal Process

The student has five (5) business days from the date the dismissal was issued in which to request an appeal to the APPC (https://my.sonoran.edu/ICS/Students/Dean_of_Students/Student_Appeals.jnz?portlet=Student_Appeals) regarding dismissal. The student and appropriate program dean will receive written notification from the Dean of Students regarding the outcome of the appeal.

If the dismissal is upheld, the student then has five (5) business days from the date the dismissal was upheld by APPC to appeal in writing to the appropriate program dean, whose decision is final. A student may not enroll in or attend any courses in that program and may not participate in any of that program's sponsored activities while the Dismissal Appeal process is pending. Additionally, they may be barred from Sonoran University's property unless pre-approved permission is provided by the Dean of Students to attend meetings and/or hearings in person.

Students who have been dismissed from an academic program will not be readmitted to that program under any circumstance.

Grading Scale Policy

Faculty members are required to provide students with a course syllabus that outlines course requirements, including methods of evaluation that assess mastery of course content.

Core courses in the ND program will be graded A/B/C/F; clinical clerkships and lab/medicinary posts and some classes/selectives are graded satisfactory/ unsatisfactory (S/U). S/U graded courses have no effect on GPA and are noted in the course syllabus.

Core courses in the MS programs are graded A/B/F. Some selectives are graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U). S/U graded courses have no effect on GPA and are noted in the course syllabus.

Faculty are not required to round up a grade to a higher grade irrespective of relative percentages. Faculty may also adjust a final letter grade depending on extenuating circumstances while maintaining the academic integrity and learning objectives of the course.

Grade Point Averages

The Grade Point Average (GPA) for each quarter is calculated by multiplying the point value of the grade received (see the following table) by the number of credits for each course. To calculate the GPA, add the credits, then add the grade points and divide the total points by the total credits. The same principle applies to the cumulative GPA reflected on the transcript. If a course is repeated, all grades earned are used in determining the GPA. Grades received at another institution are not included in Sonoran University's GPA. Grades specific to the Doctor of Naturopathic (ND) program and the Master of Science (MS) programs are indicated next to the grade.

Grade	Description	Points	Percentage
A	Outstanding	4	90-100%
B	Very Good	3	80-89%
C (ND)	Average	2	70-79%

F (ND)	Fail	0	Less than 70%
F (MS)	Fail	0	Less than 80%
AU	Audit	Taken	
I	Incomplete	Additional work required	
I/R	Incomplete/ Remediate	Additional work required	
S (ND)	Satisfactory	Pass/Credit earned	
U (ND)	Unsatisfactory	Fail/No credit earned	
T	Transfer	Graduate transfer	
WD	Withdrew	Withdrew	
WV	Waived	Requirements waived	
WIP	Work in Progress	Continuing course	

Grade of Fail, Unsatisfactory

A grade of Fail (F)/Unsatisfactory (U) can seriously affect the student's academic progress and the student's eligibility for financial aid. Students failing any course(s) will be required to meet with Academic Advising to complete an academic development plan, which may include co-requisite developmental coursework intended to support improved performance.

- A grade of U or F in a prerequisite for other courses precludes the student from entering those courses until the U/F has been rectified.
- To rectify the grade of U/F, the course must be repeated at the next available offering in the student's prescribed program of study, with the exception of selectives.
- Students on federal financial aid should be aware of funding eligibility for repeating a failed course. For more information see the Financial Aid Policy for Repeat Coursework (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/financial-information/#financialpoliciestext>).
- Both the original U/F grade and the grade given in the repeated course appear on the student's transcript and are calculated in the student's cumulative GPA.
- If a U/F is earned for the repeated course, the student will be academically dismissed. For more information, see Satisfactory Academic Progress (p. 1) and Academic Dismissal (p. 1).

Grade of Incomplete

If a student is unable to complete a course, the student may request a grade of Incomplete "I" using the Incomplete Grade Request Form on MySonoran. The student initiates the process by submitting the completed form to the course faculty, including supportive documentation. The Incomplete Request Form is to be completed collaboratively by the student and course faculty and serves to create a feasible course completion plan should the request be approved by the program dean.

The faculty will itemize unfinished coursework and sign the form, indicating preliminary approval, only if the student meets all minimum course completion requirements to receive a Grade of Incomplete:

- The Grade of Incomplete does not contradict the course requirements as outlined in the course syllabus or other published course documents;
- The student either:
 - Has completed at least 70% of the course duration, or
 - Has no more than 30% of grades outstanding;
- The student is passing the course at the date of submission of the Grade of Incomplete request;
- The request is submitted to the course faculty before the final week of the course;

If approved by the course faculty, the program dean will ensure:

- The presence of a legitimate circumstance (i.e., serious illness, bereavement, or another unanticipated factor) beyond the student's control;
- The course is not a repeat of a previously failed course;
- The student is not on Academic Warning II or Dismissal Appeal status.

If approved, the program dean will notify the faculty and student.

All work for the course must be completed by the Friday following completion of the course. Students are responsible for meeting all stated requirements. Any failure to meet these requirements will result in the Incomplete grade reverting to the cumulative grade calculation, including all assessments – completed or not – at the end of the course.

Incompletes for ND clinical clerkships will follow the Incomplete/Make-Up Policy and process outlined in the Clinical Handbook and do not require a dean's approval unless completion requires an extension beyond the normal time period, as determined by clinical faculty.

Students on documented medical or military leave must resolve their Incomplete grade within four academic quarters. If the Incomplete grade is not resolved within four quarters, the Incomplete will be converted to the cumulative grade calculation, including all assessments – completed or not – at the end of the course, see Medical or Military Leave of Absence Policy (<https://catalog.sonoran.edu/catalog/university-policies/enrollment-policies/#leaveofabsencestext>).

Grade Reports

Grade reports are available within two weeks of the end of the quarter for the prescribed program of study. Grades are considered a part of the student's educational record and will not be released to anyone other than the student or authorized school official or posted in any personally identifiable form. Grade reports are available upon request through the Registrar's Office and online through MySonoran.

Grade Appeal Procedures

For courses taken in the College of Naturopathic Medicine, grade appeals must be initiated no later than the second Monday after the quarter has been completed. For courses taken in the College of Nutrition and the School of Mental Health, grade appeals must be initiated no later than the second Monday after the course has been completed. Final grades are posted to the Student Services, Academic Records section in MySonoran. Grade appeals are only applicable for final course grades and will only be pursued if evidence and a valid basis are presented. The responsibility for presenting a case for appeal rests with the student.

Students should consider only the following evidence when initiating a grade appeal:

- The final grade included a miscalculation of the course grades or final exam/assignment.
- The final grade deviated from the calculation of course grades as outlined in the course syllabus.

The following situations do not serve as a valid basis for grade appeal:

- A dispute over how to interpret the syllabus.
- The grade change does not alter the final course grade.
- Comparing the course grading standards with another course.

First Appeal

The student must submit an appeal using the online Grade Appeal form on MySonoran (see initiation deadlines above). Students must provide evidence to support their appeal. The Academic Services Manager has the responsibility to screen out frivolous or unsubstantiated appeals and report such findings to the student and faculty. At this time the student will have an opportunity to voice concern(s) about the grade received. The course faculty may elect to meet with the student and/or obtain additional information to further evaluate the student's concern(s) and will decide whether to maintain the original grade or submit a Grade Change Form to the Registrar's Office. A written notification of the decision will be provided to the student from the faculty within two (2) business days. Note, that if the faculty is unavailable for the first appeal, the Academic Services Manager will advance the appeal to the next level supervisor.

Final Appeal

If the grade appeal is denied by the course faculty, the student may appeal in writing to the next level supervisor: the appropriate Department Chair (DC), Division Director (DD), or Dean within two (2) business days of notification of denial from course faculty. The DC, DD, or Dean may make a decision regarding the grade appeal with or without meeting with the student directly. If a meeting is granted, the DC, DD, or Dean may also request the course faculty be present for this meeting. The student will again have an opportunity to voice concern(s) about the grade received. The DC, DD, or Dean will have the chance to review the criteria by which the final grade is determined. The DC, DD, or Dean may elect to obtain additional information to further evaluate the student's concern(s) and will decide whether to maintain the original grade or submit a Grade Change Form to the Registrar's Office. A written notification of the decision will be provided to the student within two (2) business days. The decision is final and is not subject to further appeal or grievance.