OVERVIEW: This policy explains the federal academic requirements to maintain eligibility for Federal Title IV financial aid at the Graduate Level.

OFFICE/DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE: Academic Advisement, Financial Aid, Student Accounts, The Graduate School

DATE UPDATED: March 2013

Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards to Retain Eligibility for Federal Title IV Financial Aid Recipients at the Graduate Level

Students are advised that continued eligibility for federal financial aid awards requires that students maintain Federal Academic Standards. Federal Academic Standards are reviewed at the end of each spring semester.

Award programs applicable to graduate students and affected by the federal standards include:
Federal Perkins Loans
Federal Work-Study
William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans-Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
Federal PLUS Loan for Graduate students
Federal Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant

Federal law requires that satisfactory academic progress standards be measured in both quantitative (i.e., pace) and qualitative terms (i.e., grade point average or GPA).

Maximum Time Frame Standard
Students receiving funds under Title IV must complete their degrees within 150 percent of the published program length as measured in credits or forfeit federal aid eligibility. For example, for a program requiring 30 credits, a student could not complete more than 45 credits. The maximum time frame standard evaluation for transfer students will include only those credits attempted at The College at Brockport or accepted for transfer credit by the academic program in which the student is enrolled.

GPA
A student must be making satisfactory academic progress at the end of each spring semester to be eligible for federal financial aid. Graduate students at The College at Brockport must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0.

Pace
Pace measures a student’s progression to ensure the student will graduate within the maximum time frame of their program. The student’s pace progression is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of hours the student has successfully completed by the cumulative number of hours the student has attempted. This means that students who have attempted graduate credits must successfully complete at least 2/3 of the credits attempted (known as pace).

Title IV financial aid will pay for only ONE retake of a previously passed course. Students must be registered for 12 credit hours in addition to any course repeated more than once. In other words, after the
second taking of a course in which a passing grade has been received, the course will no longer count as part of the student’s enrollment for federal aid purposes. Students who are taking 12 credit hours and 3 of these credits are from a course that is being taken for the 3rd time, would be considered ¾ time for Title IV financial aid eligibility. Courses that are allowed to be repeated for additional credit are not subject to this requirement unless the maximum number of credits has been attained.

In calculating Pace, the following grades are treated as attempted but not successfully completed: E, I, PR, U and W. Courses that are repeated to improve a grade are counted as attempted each time they are taken, but are only counted as completed once. Every semester is considered when measuring the completion rate, whether or not the student received federal financial aid.

Students who fail to maintain Pace or who fall below the required GPA of 3.0 will be out of compliance for Federal Academic Standards.

Students who are in danger of losing their federal aid will be notified after the fall grades are calculated and will receive an alert of the potential loss through BMAIL – the college’s official mode of communication. An annual review of Federal Academic Standards for Title IV Aid compliance is completed at the end of the spring semester for all students. Students who do not meet the Federal Academic Standards at the end of the spring semester will be considered out of compliance and ineligible to receive federal Title IV aid for future semesters. Notification of ineligibility following the spring term will be sent to students after the semester grades have been analyzed.

**Regaining Eligibility for Federal Title IV Aid**

A student will not be eligible to receive federal Title IV aid until they have re-established compliance with Federal Academic Standards. A student may re-establish eligibility by:

- Meeting Federal Academic performance standards
- Completing a Mitigating Circumstance Appeal

Students who fail to meet the established standards for reasons beyond their control may appeal their loss of eligibility due to mitigating circumstances. Such “mitigating circumstances” may include injury or extended illness, the death of a relative, or other special circumstances. Appeals must explain why the student failed to meet the standards and what has changed in the situation that will allow the student to meet the standards by the next evaluation. Mitigating Circumstance Appeals will not be accepted without third party documentation. If the student will not be able to regain satisfactory standards in one semester they will lose eligibility for continued financial aid. Federal regulations, however, do not allow for mitigation under any circumstance for students not completing their program of study within 150 percent of the published length of the educational program for full-time students.

The Mitigating Circumstance Appeal is available through the Financial Aid Office. Completed appeals, including third party documentation, should be returned to the Financial Aid Office. The Federal Academic Standards Committee will review the appeal and will send a letter of decision within two weeks of receiving the appeal. All committee decisions are final. Completing the Mitigating Circumstance Appeal does not guarantee approval.

If the Mitigating Circumstance Appeal is approved, the student will be placed on “financial aid probation” for one semester and will be eligible to receive federal Title IV aid for that semester. If the student fails to meet Federal Academic Standards at the end of the payment period, the student will no longer be eligible for federal aid. A new Mitigating Circumstance Appeal cannot be submitted unless a new and different situation has occurred.

A student who loses eligibility may also regain it by successfully completing courses at The College at Brockport with grades sufficient to meet the stated requirements. Such courses must be funded without benefit of Title IV aid and under no circumstances will aid be paid retroactively for those courses once eligibility has been re-established. Upon completion of these courses, a student should submit a written
request to the Financial Aid Office for re-evaluation of eligibility. The request will be reviewed by a committee of academic and financial professional staff whose determination is final.