

## 2.16.2 Satisfactory Academic Progress

To be eligible to receive financial aid a student must maintain satisfactory academic progress. Satisfactory academic progress is defined for financial aid purposes both by the seminary and by federal requirement. Two components are included in this definition, a qualitative one and a quantitative one.

**Qualitative component:** Because the seminary is a graduate school, a higher level of academic work is required than might be required at the college level. Students are expected to maintain at least a minimum grade level for a degree program, (Credit or C- or 2.0 for all master level programs; B or 3.0 for S.T.M) or higher in each semester. However, some courses are only offered on a **Credit/No-Credit basis**, (which varies by degree program;), and such results do not readily translate into a grade-point system. Seminary students' academic work is expected to be at the "Credit" level. A student not taking letter grades may receive only one "No-Credit" grade while at seminary and still meet requirements for satisfactory academic progress. The student then will receive a warning letter stating that the course for which a "No-Credit" was received must be repeated and taken for a letter grade.

**Quantitative component** (Varies according to degree and program type):

**M.Div.** – The normal time for completion of all tracks of the M.Div. degree as prescribed is four years as a full-time student. The residential learning (RL) program is full-time for four years – two years at seminary (28 credits per year, which includes two January interims), a summer CPE unit (6 credits), a one-year off-campus internship (27 credits), and a final year at seminary (28 credits, which includes a third January interim). The distributed learning (DL) program is the same as the residential program, except the coursework in years one, two, and four are off-campus. The collaborative learning (CL) program spreads the coursework over all four years, incorporating internship as taken concurrently with coursework, and has the following pace: 21 credits of coursework in year one (including January), 21 credits of coursework in year two (including January), plus usually one-third (9 credits) of the internship in the spring, 18 credits in year three (with no January), plus two-thirds (18 credits) of the internship, and finally 21 credits (including January) in year four.

**M.A.** – The normal time for completion of both the residential and distributed learning programs is one year - years – first year (21 to 27 credits, depending on course choices), and second year (a minimum of 21 credits), with both years including a January interim. Please ask Kevin for this information.

**M.A. in Diaconal Ministry-** The normal time for completion of the residential and distributed learning programs is full-time for two years of coursework plus time for fieldwork– two years at seminary (26 and 23 minimum credits respectively), plus additional summer or overlapping internship registration (18 credits total for clinical pastoral education and internship). A collaborative learning version extends the coursework over three years (21 credits each year, including a course in two of the three January terms), plus the same clinical pastoral education and internship requirements in summer or some of the semester.

The minimal rate of normal progress for degree students in all degree programs, at rates that qualify a student for institutional financial aid (i.e., full-time status), is 9 credits or more per fall and spring semester, plus a January interim (3 credits) in each year applicable (up to the maximum needed for that degree program) and 6 credits or more per fall and spring semester to qualify a student for federal loans. F

If a student needs to deviate substantially from the normal number of credits per year, the student may request an additional semester or year in order to complete requirements for graduation. Upon approval of such a request by the academic dean, the extended plan will qualify as meeting the requirement for satisfactory academic progress.

### **Repeated Courses**

Grades for required courses that are repeated because of previous failure will only have the most recent grade and credits applied toward a GPA calculation (for determining academic standing) and toward the minimum credits needed for a degree. Courses for which a student passed the course or requirement (i.e., received a Credit or C- or better grade) cannot normally be repeated. All instances of the course will still be recorded on the transcript.

If a student fails to complete a degree requirement (i.e., grade of No-Credit or D+ or less), the student will normally be expected to repeat the specific course that meets the requirement. In some cases, the faculty or academic dean may designate a substitution. For distributional requirements (i.e., requirements for which several different courses may meet the requirement, e.g., pastoral care, final-year theology and Bible capstones), the student is normally asked to complete a different eligible course offering for the same requirement.

### **Academic Probation**

When a student fails to maintain academic progress either qualitatively or quantitatively, the student is placed on academic probation for the next semester. If the student does not regain satisfactory academic progress during the next semester, the student may be subject to dismissal from seminary for academic reasons. A student who falls below the expected level of academic performance should contact his or her academic advisor to determine what steps he/she can take to regain satisfactory progress.

Students on an extended plan (additional semester or five-year plan) who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress will be considered by the faculty on a case-by-case basis.