Welcome to the 2012-2013 Financial Aid Orientation!

The orientation covers three topics:

1. Satisfactory Academic Progress
2. The new Federal Regulation governing Pell Grant Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU)
3. Federal Aid Disbursements

You will need the following information before you begin the orientation:

- Number of college credits that you have attempted at NWACC
- Number of college credits that you have passed at NWACC
- Number of college credits that you have transferred to NWACC from other colleges
- Total number of Quality points that you have earned at NWACC
- Total number of GPA hours you have earned at NWACC

You can find this information by:

- logging onto My NWACC Connection
- Select Eaglenet
- Click on the Student tab
- Select Student Records
- Select Academic Transcript
- Submit
- Click on Transcript Totals

Satisfactory Academic Progress

The Department of Education regulations require that student's must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in four areas to receive Federal Aid:

1. Course Completion Rate
2. GPA
3. Too many hours attempted-150% rule
4. Be on pace to graduate within the 150% rule

College credits are counted regardless of how long ago they were taken and whether or not federal aid was received for the course work. NWACC counts all hours attempted at the college and all transferred hours from other schools.

1. Course Completion Rate

Students must complete 67% of all credit hours attempted. To calculate your course completion rate, you add the number of hours attempted at NWACC plus the number of hours transferred in and multiply by 67%. This is the number of hours you must complete to meet the minimum standards. If the number of college credits completed is lower than 67%, you are not meeting the minimum standards.

2. **GPA**

Students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.00 or higher. When a student does not meet the minimum requirements, they are placed on Financial Aid Warning for the next semester attended.

Financial Aid Warning

If a student's cumulative course completion rate and/or the GPA fails to meet the minimum standards, they are placed on Financial Aid Warning for the next semester attended. During the Financial Aid Warning semester, the student is still eligible to receive federal aid. At the end of the Warning semester there are only two possible outcomes:

1. If the overall course completion rate and GPA are meeting the minimum standards, the student is placed in "Good Standing".
2. If the overall course completion rate or GPA is below the minimum standards, the student is placed on Financial Aid Exclusion.

Notice the first option says the course completion rate AND GPA are at or above the minimum standards. The second option says if the course completion rate OR GPA are still deficient, the student is no longer eligible for aid.

Financial Aid Exclusion

Students on Financial Aid Exclusion are not eligible for any type of federal aid including Direct Student Loans. The student remains on Exclusion until they bring their course completion rate and GPA up to the minimum standards. A student on Financial Aid Exclusion for their course completion rate and/or GPA has two options to regain aid eligibility:

1. Take classes on their own and bring their course completion rate and GPA up to the Good Standing standards.
2. Have an appeal approved for an extenuating circumstance. A student that fails to meet the minimum standards due to an extenuating circumstance that they can document may appeal the Exclusion status. We will discuss Financial Aid Appeals a little bit later in the training.

Notification of Warning and Exclusion status

The Financial Aid Office calculates student's Satisfactory Academic Progress status when reviewing a student's initial request for federal aid and at the end of each semester. Notification of Warning or Exclusion status is sent to the student's NWACC email address after the initial review and at the end of each semester as soon as grades are available for the semester. For the Summer 2012 semester, grades should be available on August 9, 2012. For the Fall 2012 semester, grades should be available by December 20, 2012. Please note that most student's will not receive notification of a Warning or Exclusion status for the Fall 2012 semester until two days after the Fall payment due date of August 7, 2012. This is extremely important information for students going on Financial Aid Exclusion because they are no longer eligible to receive Federal Aid and will be dropped from their Fall classes if they have not setup a payment plan or do not have some other type of aid to hold their classes (AR Rehab, Scholarship, VA benefits, etc).

3. **Too many hours attempted**

Students are allowed to attempt up to 150% of the number of hours needed to complete their declared degree plan at NWACC. For example, if an Associate's Degree plan requires 60 hours to complete, a student may attempt 60 x 150%= 90 credit hours. Once the student goes over 90 hours they are automatically placed on Financial Aid Exclusion regardless of their course completion rate and GPA. Another example would be a certificate program that requires 36 credit hours to complete, 36 x 150%= 54 hours. The only way to regain eligibility for this type of Financial Aid Exclusion is through an approved appeal.

4. **Pace**

Federal Regulations state that a student must be on pace to graduate within the 150% rule. When it becomes mathematically impossible for a student to complete their degree within the 150% time frame of their declared degree program, they are placed on Financial Aid Exclusion.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals

Students may appeal their Financial Aid Exclusion status. There are two types of Satisfactory Academic Progress appeals:

1. Appeal for low course completion rate and/or GPA
2. Appeal for too many hours (150%)

We will first discuss the appeal process for low course completion rate and/or GPA.

A student that is not meeting the Good Standing standards at the end of the Warning semester due to an extenuating circumstance may request an appeal. Here are some examples of acceptable and unacceptable circumstances:

Acceptable Extenuating Circumstances	Unacceptable Circumstances
Death of an immediate family member during a semester	Death of a family member prior to the start of the semester
Car or other accident that required extended hospitalization	No transportation, daycare, etc
Serious Medical issue that occurred during the semester	Medical issue that started or was ongoing prior to the start of the semester, flu, short term illness or medical issue with short recovery time
Crime committed against student	Incarceration for crime student committed
Abusive relationship or Divorce	Not prepared for classes, no internet access, work schedule conflict, didn't like instructor. These are all things that needed to have been worked out prior to starting classes.

While the table shows several acceptable extenuating circumstances, this does not guarantee approval of the appeal request. The Appeals Committee considers the student's entire academic history. Ideally, the history will show the student doing well prior to the extenuating circumstance and that during the semester in question student does not meet the minimum standards and can document the circumstance.

If the committee approves the students appeal, there are three steps to finalize the approval:

Step 1

- The student will receive an email that their appeal has been moved to the next step in the approval process.
- The appeal will be referred to an Advisor to create an Academic Plan for the student. The Advisor will first look to see if the student needs to take any remedial classes. If so, the student will be required to complete this coursework first. They will then review a degree audit for the declared degree plan to see what classes the student needs to take to complete their degree.
- Within a week the Advisor will contact the student to setup an appointment.

Step 2

- During the appointment the Advisor will go over the degree audit with the student and they will create schedule for the student to adhere to based on the number of hours the student was approved for.
- The student will sign an agreement that outlines their Academic Plan. After signing the Academic Plan, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and remain on Probation until their cumulative totals are at Good Standing standards as long as they are meeting the terms of the Plan. A student is eligible to receive Federal Aid under the Probation status as long as they are otherwise eligible. If the student fails to adhere to the plan, it will be rescinded and the student will be placed back on Financial Aid Exclusion.

Step 3

- The Academic Plan will be submitted to the Financial Aid Office. This is the final step in the processing of the appeal. The Financial Aid Office will then process the student's aid request. The student will receive notification of award through their NWACC email account.

<u>The Appeal process for too many hours.</u>

A student may need to appeal for attempting too many hours when they change majors or schools and are now over the maximum number of hours needed for their new degree plan at NWACC. The process is as follows:

- The committee will review a student's appeal letter to see if they have a clear academic plan. They will also review their academic history and current enrollment if applicable to see if the student is only enrolling in the classes needed for their degree plan at NWACC.
- A degree audit will be performed for the new degree plan which will tell the committee exactly how many hours and what classes the student needs to take to graduate.
- If the appeal is approved, financial aid will be awarded for the exact number of hours and classes needed to complete the degree. An agreement will be emailed to the student with stipulations for receiving aid granted in the approval process.
- If the student fails to follow the agreement, the approval will be rescinded and the student will be placed back on Financial Aid Exclusion.

The Appeals Committee's decision is final. A student may submit a course completion rate/GPA appeal only two times during their academic career for separate extenuating circumstances. Students with too many hours will not be approved to complete more than one degree plan.

<u>Repeat Coursework and other important grade information</u>

- A student may repeat a failed class two times.

- A student may repeat a successfully completed course (grade of D or higher) or a class they have withdrawn from one time.
- When a student repeats a class, the highest grade earned is computed in the refigured cumulative grade point average; however, all classes are counted as attempted and only the highest graded class is counted as completed.
- Incomplete grades are counted as attempted but not completed and are counted in the student's GPA as an "F".
- It is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office of any grade changes, if they would like for their Satisfactory Academic Progress status to be recalculated**.**

Enrollment and Disbursement of Federal Aid Funds

When the Financial Aid Office uses the term disbursement, we are not referring to the issuance of a refund. The Financial Aid Office disburses or credits federal funds to the student's account and the Cashier's Office issues refunds. Contrary to popular belief, the Financial Aid Office never has any "real money". This is due to Federal Regulations that state there must be a separation of duties between the office that credits the students account and the office that issues refunds to eliminate the possibility of fraud or embezzlement. The disbursement and refund process will be explained later in the orientation. Students cannot receive a Pell grant at more than one school for a semester. Any grant or loan monies received at another school, will be subtracted from the students total eligibility for the year.

All Federal Aid awards are based on full time enrollment; however, a student does not have to be enrolled full time to receive Federal Aid.

- Minimum enrollment for a student loan is six credit hours.
    - Loan award amounts are not prorated for enrollment that is less than full time (see loan exceptions)
- The minimum enrollment for the Pell grant and Supplement Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG) is one hour (see below).
    - Pell grant and SEOG award amounts are prorated for enrollment that is less than full time:
        - 9-11 hours=75% of the scheduled award ($1,000 award for the semester x 75%= $750)
        - 6-8 hours =50% of the scheduled award ($1,000 award for the semester x 50%= $500)
        - 1-5 hours=25% of the scheduled award unless the 25% is less than $288 ($1,000 award for the semester x 25%=$250 in this case the student

would not be eligible to receive the Pell grant for enrollment less than 6 hours)

- For higher EFC's however, students may not be eligible for aid unless enrolled in more hours. (this needs to be addressed since for higher EFC's the proration doesn't always apply.

NWACC offers traditional 16 week class sessions and sessions that are shorter. For the Fall and Spring semesters, in addition to the 16 weeks classes, we also have the following options:

- 16 week classes
- First 8 week classes
- Late start 12 week classes
- Second 8 week classes
- First 8 week Weekend classes (it is on the Fall 2012 calendar)
- Second 8 week Weekend classes (it is on the Fall 2012 calendar)

For the Summer term, we only offer the shorter sessions:

- First 5 week
- First 8 week
- Second 5 week
- Weekend classes First 8 Week Term (it is on the Summer 2012 calendar)

The start and end dates of these shorter options are different than the traditional 16 week classes; therefore, this affects the disbursement/credit of a student's federal aid. The timing of a student's financial aid disbursement/credit depends on the number of hours they are attending. Attending means that the class has started and the student is attending or in the case of online classes, participating in class. If the student enrolls in only traditional 16 week classes, the timing of the disbursement for classes is all the same except for first time freshman student loan disbursements. Students classified as first time freshman have a 30 day delay from the start of classes for their first loan disbursement.

The disbursement is split when students enroll in classes that are shorter because of the different start or attending dates. The Academic Calendar link is located on the front of NWACC's webpage on the right hand side. The calendar shows the start and end dates, drop periods, book credit availability, holidays and other important information for each session for the semester.

Monies are not credited to the student's account until after the drop period is over for each class and on the next scheduled disbursement date. See the chart below.

Fall Semester	Class starts on	drop period expires	Pell %	Pell amt	Loan %	Loan amt
3 hour 16 week class	8/20/2012	9/4/2012	25%	$250	0	0
3 hour late start 12 week class	9/10/2012	9/20/2012	25%	$250	100%	$2,000
2-3 hours (6 hours total) 2nd 8 week	10/15/2012	10/23/2012	50%	$500	0	0
Student is not a 1st time freshman and has a Pell award of $1000/semester and a student loan for $2000/semester						

Fall Semester	Class starts on	drop period expires	Pell %	Pell amt	Loan %	Loan amt
3 hour 1st 8 week class	8/20/2012	9/4/2012	25%	$250	0	0
3 hours 2nd 8 week	10/15/2012	10/23/2012	25%	$500	100%	$2,000
Student is not a 1st time freshman and has a Pell award of $1000/semester and a student loan for $2000/semester						

Fall Semester	Class starts on	drop period expires	Pell %	Pell amt	Loan %	Loan amt
12 hours all 16 week classes	8/20/2012	9/4/2012	100%	$1,000	100%	$2,000
Student is not a 1st time freshman and has a Pell award of $1000/semester and a student loan for $2000/semester						

Fall Semester	Class starts on	drop period expires	Pell %	Pell amt	Loan %	Loan amt
12 hours all 16 week classes	8/20/2012	9/4/2012	100%	$1,000	0	$0
30 day delay date		9/19/2012			100%	$2,000
Student **IS** a 1st time freshman and has a Pell award of $1000/semester and a student loan for $2000/semester						

Important loan exceptions

- Loans are prorated for students who have a one semester loan and are graduating at the end of the semester
- There is a 30 day disbursement delay on Direct Student Loans for first time college students

- Federal regulations state that student loans must have two disbursements. Normally, this would be one disbursement in the Fall and one in the Spring semester. For students with a one semester loan (Fall only, Spring only or Summer loans that are always one semester) the money is disbursed in two parts during the semester. The first disbursement on the first available disbursement date according to start and attending dates of the classes and the second disbursement after the midpoint of the semester.
- Students cannot receive aid at two schools for the same semester, so if a student is attending part time at two different schools, they may only receive aid from one of those schools for the hours they are attending at that school.

Disbursement Process

- The Financial Aid Office credits federal funds to the student's account according to the disbursement schedule.
- We send a file to the Department of Education requesting monies for the funds credited to student's accounts.
- The next day the Business Office draws down available funds from the Department of Education.
- The Cashier's Office removes estimated book credits from the student's account and places actual book charges on the student's account.
- The Cashier's Office reconciles each student's account and issues refunds to students.

Book Credits

A book credit is issued to students whose federal aid award for a semester is more than their tuition charges for the semester. It is not money in addition to what the student has already been awarded. For example, a student is awarded $2,000 in federal aid for the fall semester and their semester tuition and fees charge for the semester is $1,000. The difference between the two results in a $1,000 credit. The Cashier's Office will place an estimated book credit of $1,000 on the student's account no more than 10 days prior to the start of the semester. The student may use the book credit at the Barnes & Noble bookstore on campus to charge books and supplies needed for their classes. The student is not obligated to use the book credit and may elect to buy their books online or at another bookstore; however, the book credit is only good at Barnes & Noble on campus. Book credit availability is published on the academic calendar and it always expires on the last day to drop 16 week class with an 80% refund. Students enrolled in the shorter classes, and who want to take advantage of the book credit, must purchase their books during the published book credit availability dates. This most often will be several weeks prior to the start of the shorter classes. Here is the process:

- An estimated book credit is placed on student's account as listed on the academic calendar. Student's can view their book credit or look to see if they have a book credit on Eaglenet, Account Summary.
- Approximately two days after the book credit expires, Barnes & Noble will send an electronic file to the Cashier's Office with records of student actual book charges.
- The Cashier's Office will remove the estimated book credit.
- If the student used the book credit, the Cashier's Office will then charge the student's account with the actual book charges.

Please note, if the student elects not to use the book credit, the estimated book credit will show on their student account as a charge until the book credit time period has expired. The Cashier's Office will then reverse the estimated book credit off the student's account.

Twelve Full Time Semesters of Pell

A new Federal Regulation goes into effect on July 1, 2012 that limits a student's Pell grant Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU) amount to twelve full time semesters or 600%. For example, when a student attends the Fall and Spring semesters full time they use 100% of their Pell award for the year. If this student attends each semester full time, they would be allowed to receive the Pell Grant for 6 years, a total of 12 semesters or 600% (6 yrs x 100%). If this same student attended each semester ½ time (6-8 credit hours), at the end of their first year they would have used 50% of their LEU. If this student attended their second year full time both semesters, they would have used 100% of their award in the second year and a total of 150% of their LEU for two years of college. This regulation does not grandfather any students in and will count any Pell grant a student has received regardless of how long ago.

Attendance

Students must begin attendance at the beginning of each class. Federal Regulations state that we must confirm that a student has begun attendance prior to disbursing federal funds. If the student has not begun attendance, they are not eligible to receive federal funds for the class. In the case of online classes, the student must be actively participating. Logging in or checking email does not constitute participation. Going to college is just like starting a new job. If you do not show up for your first day of work, you will lose your job. If you do not attend or participate in your classes, you will not receive federal funds. Students may not appeal to receive funds for starting a class late regardless of the reason. If you are unable to attend or participate in class at the beginning, you need to drop the class immediately (before the end of the drop/add period).

We hope the information was helpful and informative and helps you make educated decisions regarding your financial aid. Please complete the Financial Aid Orientation Quiz and return to the Financial Aid Office. There are 4 handouts listed below. We encourage you to print them out for reference. If you have any questions, please stop by our office, call us at 479-619-4329 or email finaid@nwacc.edu.

1. NWACC's 12-13 Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy
2. Disbursement tip sheet
3. Disbursement chart
4. Calculate your course completion rate and if you are close to attempting too many hours worksheet

Please contact the Financial Aid Office for a text version of the Orientation Quiz. You may call us at 479-619-4329 or email us at finaid@nwacc.edu.