

McNeese State University

# Academic Advising Handbook

Revised 3-30-2017

## Campus Telephone Numbers

Toll-free: 1 (800) 622-3352

Web: [www.mcneese.edu](http://www.mcneese.edu)

Admissions and Recruiting .....	475-5504 !
Advanced Placement and Credit Exams .....	475-5135 !
Assistant Vice President for University Services .....	475-5613 !
Bookstore .....	475-5494 !
Campus Visits and Tours.....	475-5504 !
Career and Student Development Center .....	475-5613 !
Cashier's Office .....	475-5098 !
Counseling Center.....	475-5136 !
Dining Services/Chartwells .....	475-5496 !
Director of Campus Life and Engagement .....	475-5610 !
Enrollment Information Center .....	475-5504 !
Enrollment Management .....	562-4249 !
Equal Opportunity .....	475-5428 !
Fee Payment .....	475-5098 !
Financial Aid.....	475-5065 !
Housing/Ambling .....	562-6500 !
Infirmary .....	475-5748 !
International Programs.....	475-5243 !
Library.....	475-5725 !
McNeese Switchboard (for departments not listed) .....	475-5000 !
Orientation .....	475-5135 !
President's Office.....	475-5556 !
Public Relations and University Events.....	475-5635 !
Registrar's Office (window) .....	475-5153 !
Scholarships (TOPS) .....	475-5140 !
Testing Services (CLEP, Accuplacer, etc.).....	475-5142 !
University Police .....	475-5711 !
Veterans Affairs .....	475-5625 !
Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.....	475-5508 !
Vice President for Business Affairs and University Services .....	475-5501 !
Vice President for University Advancement/McNeese Foundation .....	475-5588 !

### Academic Programs: !

College of Business .....	475-5514 !
Burton College of Education.....	475-5432 !
College of Engineering and Computer Science .....	475-5876 !
College of Liberal Arts.....	475-5192 !
College of Nursing and Health Professions.....	475-5821 !
College of Science and Agriculture .....	475-5785 !
General and Basic Studies .....	475-5135 !

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## I. PHILOSOPHY OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic advising is a process of communication with students and potential students of the University for the purpose of assisting them in realizing their ability to learn, in gaining access to University and community services, and in thinking critically about their education. It includes, but is not limited to, providing students with information about careers, curriculum choices, and registration. During the process of advising, the faculty member guides students through a degree program; interprets the values of higher education; helps the students choose educational and career goals appropriate to their interests and abilities; examines with them the consequences of educational and career choices; provides information about academic policies and procedures, graduation requirements, and specific educational options and opportunities; and refers the students to a wide variety of support services.

Academic advising is vital to the University's overall commitment to the individual student. Through personal contact with an advisor, students are able to express their unique background, needs, and responsibilities. Advisors gain information essential to the University for planning and teaching students with diverse work schedules; family responsibilities; disabilities; and academic, economic, and social backgrounds. A greater rate of retention may be achieved if students receive such individual attention from faculty advisors.

All advisors are strongly encouraged to make appointments with their advisees on a regular and continued basis for both long- and short-term planning purposes. To ensure that all students seek the advice of an academic advisor prior to registration, an alternate PIN number is placed on all students with 59 or fewer hours. Each college and department can request an alternate PIN number on all students no matter the number of hours earned. The purpose of the alternate PIN number is to guarantee that all students seek the assistance of an advisor. It is not for the purpose of web access.

As an extension of the teaching role, academic advising is a responsibility of both the department and the college. A good advisor is friendly, knowledgeable, and fair. Each advisor fulfills the following responsibilities:

- a. ! Provides current information about the University, the core curriculum, degree requirements, and career possibilities. !
- b. ! Tells the student about grade requirements and academic policies relating to the student's progress and graduation.
- c. ! Makes short-term and long-term plans for completion of the degree requirements in a reasonable length of time.
- d. ! Suggests such possibilities as reduced loads, tutoring, writing assistance, personal counseling, and career counseling when a student is having difficulty progressing and, therefore, deemed at risk.
- e. ! Encourages students to "Think 30," or register for and complete 15 credit hours each semester or 30 credit hours per year in order to graduate on time.
- f. ! Cautions advisees against registering for a full-time load when they are having difficulty progressing or when they are working full-time while attending the University.

- g. ! Discusses career objectives and educational requirements with the student in light of current opportunities available in the job market.
- h. ! Posts adequate office hours and is available to see students during those hours.
- i. ! Respects the student's right to and need for confidentiality.
- j. ! Documents completely and correctly the status of each student and the specific advice or assistance given at each meeting.
- k. ! Refers students for additional help as appropriate.

## II. PROCEDURES FOR ADVISING

### A. Advising Session Checklist

- Address continuance in major. For example:
  - Are you planning to stay in Psychology?
  - I have some concerns about your progression in Nursing.
  - In order to be prepared for your classes next spring, you will need to register for these prerequisites this fall.
- Address any plans to pursue more than one degree, a double major, or a minor. Students do not typically add a concurrent degree, double major, or a minor until they reach their major department. Please see the Academic Regulations page of the online Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>) for graduation requirements regarding concurrent degrees, double majors, and minors.
- Introduce students to Degree Works and show them the many features it contains such as: “What If” for students thinking about changing their major, “Graduation Checklist” to narrow down the list of courses still needed to graduate, “GPA Calculator” to estimate the student’s GPA at the completion of the current semester or a future semester, and “Look Ahead” to make sure the classes the student is planning to take will apply to his/her degree.
- Address any detractors to the educational process that need to be taken into consideration when scheduling classes and the number of hours or study time available for the educational process [i.e., work (how many hours and when), familial obligations, etc.]. For example:
  - Two of the education courses you are planning to take this semester require 15 hours of field observation in each course, and I know that you work full-time. Have you made arrangements with your supervisor to meet your observation requirement?
  - If you are working shift work this semester, let’s look at online options for your courses.
- Address academic requirements of financial support such as TOPS, scholarships, veterans’ benefits, financial aid (grants, loans, etc.), or NCAA compliance related to an athletic scholarship. Each of these has special requirements that must be met for continuance of the support and are critical to the advisement process. For example:
  - TOPS and Other Scholarships. Contact Scholarships for the most recent eligibility information or visit the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance website (<http://www.osfa.state.la.us/>).
  - Veteran Benefits. Contact Veterans Affairs in the Registrar’s Office. A Request to be

Certified with the Veterans' Education Assistance Program ([http://www.mcneese.edu/registrar/va\\_forms](http://www.mcneese.edu/registrar/va_forms)) will be sent for the advisor's signature.

- Financial Aid. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid at (337) 475-5065 for information on maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress. General information can be found in the online Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>).
- Athletic Scholarship. Students will need to verify their athletic eligibility **prior** to dropping a course or changing their major. Student-athletes must have the approval of their current or future advisor and the Compliance Office before making significant curriculum changes.
- Address any holds the student might have and refer them to the proper department to have those holds resolved prior to registration or receiving a transcript.
- If the student has been assigned an alternate PIN, be sure to give it to the student as they will be required to enter the alternate PIN in order to register classes. Alternate PINs should only be given to a student who has been advised of the classes he/she needs to take. All freshmen and sophomores will have an alternate PIN; departments will decide whether their juniors and seniors require an alternate PIN.
- Address registration dates and fee payment or signature authorization deadlines.
  - Registration opens for graduate students, seniors, student-athletes, veterans, and student registered with the Office of Disability Services on the first day of regular registration. Registration opens for juniors on the second day, sophomores on the third day, and the rest of campus on the fourth day. (Note: Banner will classify a student based on the hours that student has earned plus the hours on that student's current schedule. For example, a student who began as a freshman with 15 earned hours and who is registered in 15 hours for the fall semester would be eligible to register on the third day of regular registration for the spring semester.)
  - For a timeline of events including registration, fee payment, and the course withdrawal deadline, students should go to <http://www.mcneese.edu/schedule> and select the appropriate semester.
- Address the course withdrawal policy and fees.
  - Although course withdrawals do not affect a student's grade point average, excessive course withdrawals reflect negatively on the student's record, increase the amount of time needed for degree completion, and may result in the loss of scholarships and other types of financial aid.
  - Effective Fall 2013, an undergraduate student may only withdraw (WZ grade) from six undergraduate courses during his or her academic career at McNeese. If a student exceeds the six withdrawals, he or she will be charged a \$50 fee per course withdrawal.
  - Effective Fall 2013, a course withdrawal fee of \$50 will be assessed for every WN grade assigned. The fee will automatically be charged to the student's account when the WN is assigned.
  - Please see the Academic Regulations page of the online Academic Catalog for more details (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>).

- Address academic bankruptcy, if necessary.
  - At the time of application for first-time admission or re-admission to the University (and prior to the start of the final exam period for the first term of enrollment or re-enrollment), undergraduate students may file a Petition for Academic Bankruptcy. Academic bankruptcy provides students a fresh start academically by allowing them to gain admission to the University as an entering freshman with no hours earned, no GPA hours, no quality points, no prior suspensions, and no GPA.
  - A minimum of three years must have passed between the end of the semester in which the student was last registered for credit at any college or university and the beginning of their enrollment under academic bankruptcy at McNeese.
  - The director of admissions and recruiting has the necessary forms for this procedure.
- Address with students on probation or students readmitted from suspension what they need to do in order to improve their academic standing.
  - Students are placed on academic probation whenever the overall, or cumulative, GPA is below a 2.0. A student remains on probation as long as each semester average is at least a 2.0. A student is considered to be off of probation and in good standing when the overall, or cumulative, GPA reaches a 2.0 or better.
  - Students who were on probation will be suspended at the conclusion of any semester or summer session in which a semester GPA of 2.0 is not obtained.
  - First-time freshmen admitted in good standing will not be suspended prior to the completion of two semesters of enrollment.
  - Students who are suspended at the end of the spring semester may attend the summer session without appeal. If the student raises his or her cumulative GPA to at least a 2.0, the student will be placed in good standing. If the student does not raise his or her GPA to a 2.0, the student's suspension will be in place for the fall semester and the student will need to appeal.
  - The academic suspension and federal financial aid appeal processes have been combined. Submitted appeals will be reviewed by each academic college's committee. Students who need to appeal will be notified at the end of each term via McNeese email. Instructions for submitting appeals can be found in the email and at <http://www.mcneese.edu/finaid/how-to-appeal>.

## B. Functions of the Advisor

The primary function of a faculty advisor is to direct advisees toward successful completion of their degree and to help to prepare them for a career in their chosen field. In keeping with this function, the advisor should become a resource for students, reminding them about deadlines and forms that might apply to them. Advisors should have a good working knowledge of all courses on the degree plan(s) for which they are responsible and must know about the use of standardized scores (such as ACT scores), core curriculum requirements, departmental mechanics for transfer or substitution of courses, transcript evaluation, course availability (which semester courses are offered), and prerequisites for required courses. The advisor should also be able to give advisees current, accurate information about University policies. If unable to answer a student's question, the advisor should take the time to track

down the needed information or assist the student in making contact with the person who can furnish the information. By the same token, the advisor should carefully instill in advisees the sense that they also have definite responsibilities to themselves, their families, their friends, and the University.

The following list of suggestions may be helpful in advising students:

1. Discuss and develop realistic educational goals consistent with his/her abilities. Be sensitive to difficulties that affect the student's performance.
2. ! Encourage advisees to keep in touch with you throughout the semester. The sooner an advisor intervenes with a student at risk, the more likely that student is to persist.
3. ! Make the student aware of internship, field experience, service learning, and other career exploration opportunities that they might take advantage of. Encourage students to get involved with organizations related to their major and career.
4. ! Become familiar with campus services. Do you think that your student needs to improve his/her study skills, or that he/she has test anxiety? Contact the Counseling Center at 475-5136. Does your student need help with taking notes because of a broken arm? Contact the Office of Disability Services at 475-5916. If your student needs help with courses in the College of Science and Agriculture, have him/her visit the Tutoring Center in Kirkman Hall Room 129. If your student needs assistance strengthening writing skills or thinking critically about his/her writing, have him/her visit the Write to Excellence Center in Drew Hall Room 234. For a complete list of academic and campus resources, please see the Academic and Campus Resources page of the online Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>). If you refer a student to a campus service, follow up with the student to make certain that he/she received the help that was needed.
5. ! Remember that many of these students are first-generation college students and that they may lack family support. They do not have the benefit of a parent who can guide them through transitioning to college.
6. ! Treat the advisees as you would like to be treated. Effective, appropriate advising is reflected by student success.
7. ! Students should be heard, and their suggestions and ideas should be carefully considered. Try to guide the students to make their own decisions.
8. ! Maintain a record of what was discussed at the advising appointments, and keep any relevant emails.

### C. Legal Aspects of Advising

All University advisors, as well as all faculty members, should be aware of the legal aspects of advising.

1. ! **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.
2. ! **Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972** prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.
3. ! **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** prohibits discrimination against otherwise ! qualified handicapped persons. !
4. ! **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974**, or FERPA, prohibits disclosure of

student records without written consent of the student; however, this prohibition does not apply to officials of the institution who have a legitimate educational interest. This act guarantees that students will have access to their official educational records, but not to an advisor's personal notes, which have not been shared with anyone except possibly a short-term substitute. A form is available in the Registrar's Office to declare that directory information be kept private. Once this form is filled out and on file with the Registrar's Office, the student information system (SPAIDEN) will be updated to reflect the categories of information that are restricted. Each time restricted student records are accessed; the system will display the restrictions on the screen to inform the person accessing the records of these restrictions. Alternatively, the student can complete a form that allows the University to share information with a parent. This must be done in the presence of the Registrar.

5. ! **The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** establishes a clear and comprehensive prohibition of discrimination against persons with disabilities by failure to provide them access to public services and accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications. Students affected by this act may receive aid from the Office of Disability Services located in Drew Hall, Room 200 (475-5916).
6. ! **The Civil Rights Act of 1991** strengthens and improves previous civil rights laws. This act provides for damages in cases of intentional employment discrimination.
7. ! In addition to these federal regulations, advisors should be aware of memos distributed by the University concerning sexual harassment. Advisors should be sensitive to this issue and avoid any actions or statements which might be construed as harassment.
8. ! All employees should review the McNeese State University Diversity Awareness Policy ([http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/diversity\\_awareness](http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/diversity_awareness)). All employees are expected to comply with this and all other institutional policies (<http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/>).

### III. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

#### A. General Information

##### 1. Change of Curriculum

- A curriculum change form may be obtained from the current or new academic department. The academic department head(s) involved must approve the change. The completed form must be returned to the Office of the Registrar. A student who is unable to come to campus to complete this process should contact his/her academic advisor for assistance.
- A curriculum change form may be obtained from the current or new academic department. The academic department head(s) involved must approve the change. The completed form must be returned to the Office of the Registrar. A student who is unable to come to campus to complete this process should contact his/her academic advisor for assistance.

##### 2. Classification

McNeese State University classifies students as follows:

- Freshmen: students who have not earned 30 credit hours.
- Sophomores: students who have earned 30 credit hours, but not more than 59.

- Juniors: students who have earned 60 credit hours, but not more than 89.
- Seniors: students who have earned 90 credit hours.
- Preparatory: students who are enrolled in high school and college through a dual enrollment or early admission program.
- Special Undergraduate: students pursuing a post-baccalaureate certificate or those not in a degree program, such as visiting students.

### 3. Course Numbering System

- 090-099: developmental level !
- 100-199: freshman level (lower-level) !
- 200-299: sophomore level (lower-level) !
- 300-399: junior level (upper-level) !
- 400-499: senior level (upper level) !
- 500-599: graduate level !

## B. Grades and Grade Point Averages

### 1. Course Repeat Policy

When a course is repeated, the highest grade earned is recognized as the official grade for the course. All grades earned for the course (regardless of the number of attempts) are included in the computation of the term and overall GPAs. Prior to Summer 1995, only the last grade earned was included in the computation of the term and overall GPAs.

### 2. Removal of I Grades

- The grade which removes the I grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar by a designated date in the next regular semester in which the student is enrolled at McNeese or within one calendar year if the student does not enroll.
- The student must make arrangements to complete all course requirements by the designated deadline.
- A grade of I becomes a grade of F if it is not converted by the deadline.
- Students who received an incomplete grade during a previous semester must not re-enroll in the same course. Arrangements for completing work from a previous semester are to be made between the instructor assigning the grade and the student.

## C. Transfer Credit Evaluation

The prerogative for accepting a course for credit belongs to the institution to which a student transfers. McNeese's process of evaluating credits from other schools includes the evaluation of course learning objectives and grading policies, as well as established transfer articulation agreements. These agreements outline the correlation between McNeese courses and courses from other institutions. To aid students transferring within the state, the Louisiana Board of Regents and state institutions developed a master course articulation matrix, which can be viewed at <http://www.regents.la.gov/page/master-course-articulation-matrix>. Note that these courses may or may not be applied to a particular degree program depending on degree requirements.

Please see the Academic Regulations page of the online Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>) for the full step-by-step process of evaluating transfer credit.

#### D. Prior Learning Assessment Programs

Credit earned via prior learning assessments is indicated as such on the student's transcript. A grade of P, P-CR, or CRD is awarded, which is included in earned hours, but not in the computation of any GPA or determination of academic standing. The applicability of prior learning assessment credit to a degree is determined by the student's academic department.

Credit earned through any prior learning assessment program does not count toward the TOPS award continuation requirements of 24 earned credit hours per academic year.

A maximum of 45 credit hours of non-traditional credit, including, but not limited to, extension credit, correspondence credit, and credit from prior learning assessments, may be used toward a bachelor's degree; a maximum of 24 credit hours of non-traditional credit may be counted toward an associate's degree.

To ensure that credit for a correspondence course will be counted toward a degree, a student must obtain approval in writing from his/her advisor and department head before registering for the course. A student must take the final examination of a correspondence course under the supervision of the Office of Testing Services. After a correspondence course is completed, the student should request the registrar of the college from which the course was taken to send an official transcript of credits to the Office of the Registrar at McNeese.

##### 1. McNeese State University Advanced Placement Program

- Students with special competence in some subject areas may participate in the University's advanced placement program in the following ways:
  - English:
    - Students who have an ACT English score of at least 32 and ACT composite score of at least 28 will receive credit for ENGL 101 and ENGL 102. Students who have a revised SAT writing and language score of at least 37 and a revised SAT total of at least 1310 will receive credit for ENGL 101 and ENGL 102.
    - Students who have an ACT English score of at least 28 and ACT composite score of at least 28 will receive credit for ENGL 101. Students who have a revised SAT writing and language score of at least 34 and a revised SAT total of at least 1310 will receive credit for ENGL 101.
    - Students who have an ACT English score of 26 or 27 may elect to take ENGL 102 as their first English. Students who have a revised SAT writing and language score of 33 may elect to take ENGL 102 as their first English. After completion of ENGL 102 with a grade of C or better, students will receive credit for ENGL 101.
  - Foreign Languages: A student with exceptional high school preparation in French, Latin, or Spanish may be enrolled at the advanced level. If the student earns a grade

of C or better in the advanced course, credit may be awarded in the appropriate lower-level course(s).

- Mathematics: A student who earns an ACT score of 25 in mathematics (or a 590 in mathematics on the revised SAT) will receive credit for MATH 113. A student may be placed into MATH 190 with an ACT mathematics score of 27 or a revised SAT mathematics score of 630. Upon completion of MATH 190 with a grade of C or better, credit will be granted for MATH 170. Upon completion of MATH 291 with a grade of C or better, credit will be granted for MATH 175.
- For a full list, please see the Academic Regulations page of the online Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>).
- To grant advanced placement based on satisfactory performance at a higher level, the course taken must be the first attempt of an academic course in the discipline granting college credit.
- To award credit as outlined above, a student's academic advisor or department head, or when appropriate the testing officer, must submit the necessary documentation to the director of advanced placement for final approval.
- Inquiries about the McNeese State University advanced placement program should be made to the director of advanced placement in the Department of General and Basic Studies.

## 2. McNeese State University Credit Examinations

Students with special training or experience may have acquired knowledge traditionally gained from certain college courses. Departments may offer such students credit examinations and award college credit for the courses provided the equivalent of a C or better is scored on the examinations.

- Request forms for credit examinations are issued only if a student demonstrates fundamental knowledge of the subject.
- Permission to take a credit examination is granted only to students who are currently enrolled at McNeese.
- If a student has ever registered in a course or failed a prior credit examination in the course, a credit examination in the course cannot be taken.
- No student may take a credit examination in a course which is a stated or implied prerequisite for an advanced course in the same discipline for which credit has already been earned.
- A student or a department can obtain a credit examination request form from the director of advanced placement in the Department of General and Basic Studies. Once eligibility for testing is determined based on the four criteria listed above, the form will be signed by the director of advanced placement.
- The student must obtain the signature of his/her department head and the signature of the department head in which the course is taught prior to the examination. A fee of \$10 per credit hour is charged for each credit examination (subject to change). This fee is payable at the Cashier's window in Smith Hall after the student has obtained all the necessary signatures. The paid Cashier's receipt must be submitted to the director of advanced placement.

- After the testing, the department administering the exam completes the necessary information to request the credit and returns the form to the director of advanced placement.

### 3. College Board College Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Through the College Level Examination Program, a national standardized testing program, students can earn college credit by examination. Credit will be awarded by the Office of the Registrar for satisfactory scores as specified in the chart below. Additional information may be obtained from the Office of Testing Services.

To ensure that credit earned through CLEP will be applied toward his/her degree, a student should obtain academic department head approval before registering for the examination.

McNeese State University is an official CLEP Test Center (college code 6403) and offers the examinations at regularly scheduled intervals at a cost of \$85 per examination plus an administration fee. Additional information and CLEP registration materials may be obtained from the Office of Testing Services or at [www.mcneese.edu/testing/clep](http://www.mcneese.edu/testing/clep).

For more information on the above prior learning assessment programs as well as other prior learning assessment opportunities, please see the Academic Regulations page of the online Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>).

## E. Enrollment Information

### 1. Undergraduate Course Load

- Full-time course load: Undergraduate students registered for at least 12 credit hours during a regular semester or a summer session are considered full-time.
  - Students enrolled in any of the following courses are considered full-time to prevent student loans from entering repayment status, for insurance purposes, and for Citizenship and Immigration Services (SEVIS) reporting: ARED 445, ARED 483, ARED 485, BADM 400, CSCI 399, EDUC 468E, EDUC 468P, EDUC 468S, EDUC 483E, EDUC 483P, EDUC 483S, EDUC 485E, EDUC 485P, EDUC 485S, EDUC 683, EDUC 685, ENGR 350, ENGR 450, ENGR 550, HHP 468, MATH 399, MUED 442, PSYC 606, SPED 468, SPED 488, SPED 610, SPED 611, STAT 399, TECH 250, and TECH 450.
  - Undergraduate students on an F-1 visa registered for at least six credit hours during a summer session are considered full-time for Citizenship and Immigration Services (SEVIS) reporting.
- Part-time course load: Undergraduate students registered for less than 12 credit hours during a regular semester or a summer session are considered part-time.
- Full-time and part-time students as defined above are University definitions and not necessarily those of other agencies or organizations.
  - A student is permitted to represent the University in competitive activity with other institutions only if enrolled as a full-time regular student or as required by the regulations applicable to the competition.

- Students who are receiving financial assistance through the Veterans' Administration or other agencies should determine the number of credit hours necessary to be considered full-time.
- For undergraduates, the normal course load is 15 to 19 credit hours for a regular semester and nine for a summer session. The maximum course load is 22 credit hours (18 hours for freshmen advised in the Department of General and Basic Studies) in a regular semester or 12 credit hours in a summer session.
- In order to schedule more than the maximum load, an undergraduate student must have a GPA of 3.25 the previous semester or a 3.25 overall GPA. A student wishing to schedule more than the maximum load should contact his/her academic department for the appropriate form and approvals.
- The maximum course load for which a student may enroll during an interim period, or pre-session, is three credit hours.

## 2. [Withdrawal from Courses and Resignation from the University](#)

- After the last day of late registration and through the last day to withdraw from a course, a student can withdraw from a course by completing a Course Withdrawal Form with his/her advisor and submitting the completed form to the Office of the Registrar. The student will then be withdrawn from the course, and a grade of WZ (or W for graduate students) will be assigned. A student who is unable to visit campus to complete this process should contact his/her academic advisor for assistance.
  - International students and student-athletes must have their Course Withdrawal Form approved by the Office of International Programs or the Athletic Compliance Office, respectively, prior to dropping a course.
- All recipients of federal financial aid who officially withdraw from a class or who unofficially withdraw by discontinuing class attendance are subject to repayment of a portion of funds received.
- Although WZ grades do not affect a student's GPA, excessive course withdrawals reflect negatively on the student's record, increase the amount of time needed for degree completion, and may result in the loss of scholarships and other types of financial aid. The University assesses a per course withdrawal fee of \$50 for excessive course withdrawals beyond an established limit.
  - An undergraduate student may only withdraw (WZ grade) from six undergraduate courses (numbered 100-499) during his/her academic career at McNeese, without incurring the per course withdrawal fee for excessive withdrawals.
  - If a student exceeds the specified number of course withdrawals (WZ grades), the student is assessed the course withdrawal fee for each course over the limit. The student must pay the charges prior to submitting the course withdrawal form to the Office of the Registrar for processing.

- The following drops and withdrawals are not counted toward the course withdrawal limit:
  - Course drops during registration where withdrawal grades are not assigned;
  - Any withdrawal before Fall 2013;
  - Withdrawals resulting from resignation from the University (W grades);
  - Withdrawals resulting from military activation (WM grades);
  - Withdrawals resulting from administrative action (WX grades);
  - Withdrawals from ORIN 101;
  - Withdrawals from linked lab sections where no credit or grade is assigned (Ex: BIOL 225 LA – 0 credits); and
  - Withdrawals earned at other institutions.
- The amount of the per course withdrawal fee for excessive course withdrawals is subject to change without prior notice.
- A student who wishes to withdraw from all courses must resign from the University.
  - Resignations must be received in the Office of the Registrar by the designated date published in the University calendar. A resignation form may be completed at the Office of the Registrar. A student who is unable to visit campus may mail or fax a signed letter of resignation and a copy of a valid photo ID to the Office of the Registrar. Resignations may also be e-mailed to [registrar@mcneese.edu](mailto:registrar@mcneese.edu) from a student's University e-mail account. The resignation is effective when the letter is received by the Office of the Registrar.
  - A student who officially resigns from the University prior to a designated date will receive a grade of W in all courses; however, if a student previously withdrew from any courses, the assigned grade of WZ will not be replaced with a grade of W. Courses with a grade of W are not counted toward the course withdrawal limit.
- Grades of F, I, or WN may be recorded for students who leave the University without officially resigning by the designated deadline. A course withdrawal fee of \$50 is assessed for every WN grade assigned. This per course fee will automatically be charged to the student's account when the WN grade is assigned.
- The deadline for withdrawing from a course or resigning from the University is approximately 60% into the semester or summer session. The date appears in the University calendar at [www.mcneese.edu/schedule](http://www.mcneese.edu/schedule). After this date, a student may not withdraw from a course or resign from the University.
  - In extraordinary cases, a student may appeal to his/her academic dean to withdraw from a course or resign after the published deadline, but before final exams begin. Such cases might include, but are not limited to, job relocation, prolonged medical problems, serious accidents, or death in the immediate family. It is the student's responsibility to provide documented evidence of the reasons for the request. Extraordinary cases shall not include dissatisfaction with an anticipated grade or a decision to change a major. Any approved requests must be submitted by the dean to the Office of the Registrar prior to the beginning of the final exams. Course withdrawals approved by the dean will count toward the course withdrawal limit. Any student exceeding the course withdrawal limit must pay the per course withdrawal fee before the Office of the Registrar will process the request.

- Retroactive withdrawal after a semester ends may be permitted only by approval of a student appeal. Information and appeal forms for undergraduates may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar. A non-refundable fee must be paid prior to filing the appeal. Course withdrawals approved by the retroactive withdrawal committee will count toward the course withdrawal limit. Any student exceeding the course withdrawal limit must pay the per course withdrawal fee before the Office of the Registrar will process the approved withdrawals.

## F. Degree and Graduation Requirements

### 1. General Graduation Requirements

Candidates for a degree or certificate must fulfill the following general graduation requirements:

1. ! Complete curriculum requirements listed in one issue of the Academic Catalog.
  - a. ! The catalog in effect when the student first registered in that curriculum, at McNeese or at another regionally accredited institution, is followed. However, the student may choose to follow updated curriculum requirements that become effective while enrolled in that curriculum. In the case of a transfer student, supporting documents showing original entry into the program must be furnished.
  - b. ! Students who interrupt their college work for at least one regular fall or spring semester will be required to complete degree requirements in effect at the time of re-entry.
  - c. ! If a student changes to another curriculum and then changes back to the former curriculum, the catalog in effect at the time of returning to the former curriculum is followed.
  - d. ! Students are expected to complete undergraduate degree requirements within ten years. After that time, students become subject to current catalog requirements.
  - e. ! Changes may be made without prior notice, and students may be required to comply with curriculum changes when they become effective.
  - f. ! Updates to a program's concentration will not change the catalog year of the student's curriculum requirements, provided the concentration was in place for that catalog year.
  - g. ! A student who adds a concentration that was not in place for his/her catalog year's curriculum requirements will be required to complete the curriculum requirements from the catalog year establishing the concentration.
  - h. ! In cases where extenuating circumstances exist, exceptions to this policy may be made with approval of the academic department head, dean, and vice president for academic and student affairs.
2. Have a minimum GPA of 2.0 in all courses credited toward the degree, as well as a GPA of 2.0 in work completed at McNeese which is credited toward the degree.
3. ! Have a minimum GPA of 2.0 in the courses that apply to the major.
4. ! Meet specific departmental requirements.

5. ! Complete statewide general education requirements as mandated by the Louisiana Board of Regents. Please see the General Education Core Curriculum page in the online Academic Catalog (<http://catalog.mcneese.edu/>) for more information.
6. ! Clear all University accounts.
7. ! File an application for degree at the time of registration for the semester or summer session in which the candidate will complete degree requirements.
8. ! Ensure that any transfer credit used toward completion of degree requirements will be received at least 72 hours before commencement.
9. ! Be present for commencement exercise unless approval to be absent is given by the University. The request to graduate *in absentia* can be found at [www.mcneese.edu/registrar/graduation](http://www.mcneese.edu/registrar/graduation).

## 2. Bachelor's Degree Requirements

Candidates for a bachelor's degree must fulfill the general graduation requirements as well as the following:

1. ! Earn a minimum of 40 credit hours in courses numbered above 300.
2. ! Earn a minimum of 12 credit hours in courses numbered above 300 required for the major. Six credit hours of these courses must be earned in residence at McNeese.
3. ! Earn in residence at least 25% of the credit hours offered in fulfillment of degree requirements, exclusive of non-traditional credit, such as credit by examination or advanced placement credit.
4. ! Complete the final 30 credit hours at McNeese. Any exceptions must have the written approval of the appropriate department head and dean. This requirement is automatically waived for all active-duty service members as well as reservists and National Guardsmen on active-duty.
5. ! For active-duty service members enrolled in undergraduate degrees, McNeese limits academic residency to no more than 25% of degree credit hour requirements. Academic residency can be completed at any time while active-duty service members are enrolled. Reservists and National Guardsmen on active-duty are covered in the same manner.
6. ! Courses taken for graduate credit cannot be used to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements.

## IV. ADVISING STUDENT-ATHLETES

Advising forms should be filled out on **ALL** student-athletes. The forms are available through the academic counselor in Athletic Compliance. The forms are in triplicate (athletics, advisor, and student copies) and require both the advisor and student-athlete signatures.

The student-athlete's course load should always include a minimum of 15 academic hours in addition to the 2-hour varsity sport course. They must also be enrolled in a baccalaureate program; if any minor or second major is chosen, only the primary courses are counted in progress toward degree. If any class is

listed on the advising form that is not applicable and give a short explanation as to why the student is being advised to take it, e.g. for a second teaching field.

Student-athletes must be full-time students in order to compete or practice; the 12 hours can include the varsity sport course (Bylaws 14.1.8.1 and 14.1.8.2). Exception – In the final semester, the student may compete with less than a full-time schedule provided the institution certifies the student is carrying the courses necessary for completion of the degree (Bylaws 14.1.8.1.3 and 14.1.8.2.1.3).

## A. Progression toward Degree

To be eligible to compete in intercollegiate athletics, the following must be met:

1. ! During the first year in residence, a student-athlete must earn 24 hours of acceptable degree credit. Assuming fall is the first semester of full-time enrollment, this “year” can include the summer immediately preceding their first full-time enrollment, fall, spring, and summer. This is known as the 24-Hour Rule.
  - a. ! Up to six hours of developmental courses that are considered prerequisites for required courses can be included in the 24 hours. If developmental courses are taken outside of the first year, the hours cannot be used for satisfactory progress.
  - b. ! 18-Hour Rule: 18 hours of acceptable degree credit must be earned during the fall and spring semesters.
  - c. ! 6-Hour Rule: Six hours of acceptable degree credit must be earned each full-time semester. (Effective Fall 2011, football student-athletes must earn nine hours each fall semester or be ineligible for the first four games of the next season. If he earns 27 hours of acceptable credit before the end of the summer, he can—once in his career—earn back the four games and no longer be ineligible.
2. ! Entering the second year in residence and all subsequent years, student-athletes must meet the following degree completion percentages and the required overall GPA. These must be maintained semester by semester, as well as meeting the 6-hour, 9-hour (if football), and 18-hour rules (Bylaws 14.4.3.2 and 14.4.3.3). The “year” begins with fall and ends with summer, including any terms/intersessions. Courses must be completed by the end of the summer semester for eligibility determination.

Entering...	Degree Completion* and GPA Requirements
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	24 hours with a 1.8 overall GPA
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	40% with a 1.9 overall GPA
4 <sup>th</sup> Year	60% with a 2.0 overall GPA
5 <sup>th</sup> Year	80% with a 2.0 overall GPA

\*Degree percentage is rounded up. For example, if the degree is 128 hours, 60% is 76.8 hours. To meet percentages, the student must have at least 77 hours; having only 76 would render the student ineligible.

3. ! If a student makes an acceptable grade in a course, do not permit a student-athlete to retake the course because it cannot be used in satisfactory progress. No course can be counted more than once for eligibility—unless it is a course that can be repeated for credit and there is room in the degree plan. NOTE: If a grade of C or better is required for a course, but a D is earned, the hours cannot be counted in hours earned toward the degree. The student can retake the course, and after earning an acceptable grade, the hours can be counted in satisfactory progress.

#### B. Mid-term Grades and Class Attendance

Halfway through the semester, every student-athlete will be given a Mid-term Grade Check Form to be completed by each of their instructors to verify attendance and grades. On this form, the faculty will indicate grade and how many excused absences the student-athlete has in the class; the faculty must also sign (or initial) the form. The completed form is returned to the academic counselor for student-athletes. Some students are considered “academically at-risk” and may be monitored more closely through the At-Risk Student-Athlete System, which is accessible in the MyMcNeese Portal. Any faculty members with students in their classes who are being monitored will be notified via email at the beginning of the semester.

#### C. Verification of Satisfactory Progress Memos

These memos are used for departmental verification that courses taken by student-athletes are acceptable toward fulfillment of degree requirements, as well as providing information on any substitutions being made for required courses and percentages of degree requirements completed. The forms are sent from the Registrar’s Office after the University’s official reporting day and should be completed by the athletic advisor or department head and returned by the deadline listed on the forms. Complete, current, and accurate records are important in certifying student-athletes.

#### D. Prior Approval Form for Courses Taken at another University

This form is used to verify courses taken at other institutions will be accepted to fulfill particular degree requirements at McNeese. The form contains spaces for the other institution’s name and semester, as well as for the student’s information. When submitting the form to the advisor, the student is required to provide the name of the course(s) and a copy of a course description for each course. The advisor or department head is asked to determine which degree requirement(s) the course(s) will fulfill. The form is sent via the student to the advisor or department head and must be returned to the academic counselor for student-athletes in Athletic Compliance PRIOR TO the student’s registering for the courses elsewhere.

#### E. Changing Degree Plans or Concentrations

Once a degree plan has been completed, it should not be reworked or rearranged. Once courses are used on a degree plan, they cannot be moved to courses not counted toward degree in order to make room for a different course. Before completing a curriculum change form on a student-athlete, please contact the academic counselor for student-athletes in Athletic Compliance or student certification officer in the Registrar’s Office. The new department **MUST** do a degree plan for the student-athlete to submit to the academic counselor for student-athletes in Athletic Compliance. The Athletic Compliance office will approve all degree plan changes before the student can obtain a change of curriculum form.

## F. Course Withdrawal Forms

All student-athletes must obtain a completed course withdrawal form from their advisor or departmental office in order to withdraw from a course. This form MUST be taken to the athletic counselor for student-athletes for verification/approval before being able to turn it in to the Registrar's Office. In order to remind students to do this, as well as alert the Registrar's Office to the student's athletic status, please circle "student athlete" in the left-hand column on the withdrawal form.

## V. FINANCIAL AID

### A. Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards

To be eligible for federal financial assistance, a student must meet minimum Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards each term—fall, spring, and summer. SAP requirements apply to all students, including transfer, continuing, and re-entry students as well as those who have not previously participated in federal aid programs.

#### 1. Minimum GPA

An undergraduate student must maintain an overall GPA of at least 2.0. A graduate student must maintain an overall GPA of at least 3.0.

#### 2. Minimum Pace

A student must earn a specified number of credit hours per term based on the student's classification at the beginning of the term and the total hours attempted for that term.

<b>Minimum Pace for Term*</b>		
<b><i>Classification at Beginning of Term</i></b>	<b><i>Total Hours Attempted</i></b>	<b><i>Minimum Hours that Must be Earned</i></b>
Freshman	5 or less credit hours	All attempted
	6 to 8 credit hours	3 credit hours
	9 to 11 credit hours	6 credit hours
	12 or more credit hours	9 credit hours
Sophomore, Junior, or Senior	5 or less credit hours	All attempted
	6 to 8 credit hours	6 credit hours
	9 to 11 credit hours	9 credit hours
	12 or more credit hours	12 credit hours
Graduate	5 or less credit hours	All attempted
	6 to 8 credit hours	6 credit hours
	9 or more credit hours	9 credit hours

\*The pace percentage (earned vs. attempted credit hours) for each term can vary from 37.5% to 100% depending on the student's enrollment status.

### 3. Maximum Timeframe for Program Completion

A student must complete his or her degree or certificate program within the maximum timeframe allowed. The maximum timeframe allowed is 150% of the time normally required for completion of the degree or certificate program. A student who fails to complete his or her program within the maximum timeframe is ineligible to receive federal financial assistance, even if the student did not receive federal financial aid each term of enrollment.

Maximum Timeframe	
Degree/Certificate Program	Maximum Attempted Credit Hours Allowed
Associate's Degree	90 attempted credit hours allowed
Bachelor's Degree	180 attempted credit hours allowed*
Post-Baccalaureate Certificate (initial teacher certification)	60 attempted credit hours allowed
Master's Degree	50 attempted credit hours allowed**
Education Specialist	50 attempted credit hours allowed
2 <sup>nd</sup> Associate's Degree	135 attempted credit hours allowed
2 <sup>nd</sup> Bachelor's Degree	270 attempted credit hours allowed
2 <sup>nd</sup> Master's Degree	80 attempted credit hours allowed

\*Based on a 120-hour bachelor's degree program.

\*\*Based on a 33-hour master's degree program. !

Students with bachelor's and master's degree programs requiring more hours may appeal for extended periods of entitlement.

### 4. Other Considerations Relevant to Academic Courses

- Remedial or developmental courses are included in attempted and earned credit hours when calculating maximum timeframe for completion.
- Courses with withdrawal grades (W, WM, WN, WX, WZ) are included in attempted hours, but not earned hours, and do not affect grade point averages.
- Courses with grades of incomplete (I, IN, IP, IPC) or not reported (NR) are included in attempted hours, but not in earned hours or GPA calculations until changed to grades other than incomplete, not reported, or withdrawn.
- Once a grade change has occurred, it is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of Financial Aid to determine the impact to financial aid eligibility.
- Federal financial aid may be paid for repeated coursework but may not include more than one repetition of a previously passed course. For example, if a student passes a course with a grade of D or better, federal financial aid can pay for only one more attempt of the same course.
- For financial aid eligibility purposes, credit hours dismissed through academic bankruptcy are included in attempted hours only; however, in the case of a transfer student, all credit hours and grades are also included in the calculation of the GPA.

- Transfer students must be in good standing at all previous institutions attended, must have a 2.0 term GPA for the last period of enrollment, and must meet the earned hour requirements specified in the SAP standards to be eligible for financial aid. Entering transfer students are not eligible for a financial aid warning term. All previous hours attempted are considered in establishing total remaining federal financial aid eligibility.

## B. Failure to Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is assessed at the end of every term—fall, spring, and summer—after final grades are posted. Email notifications are sent to the student’s University email address if the student does not meet SAP standards. The email notification includes instructions to appeal for continuation of financial aid.

### 1. Financial Aid Warning

A student, other than a transfer student, who fails to meet SAP standards is placed on Financial Aid Warning. A student on Financial Aid Warning may receive federal financial aid for the next term of enrollment without appeal.

### 2. Financial Aid Suspension

A student who fails to meet SAP standards while on Financial Aid Warning is placed on Financial Aid Suspension and is not eligible to receive federal financial aid. The student may appeal to request continuation of federal financial aid. A successful appeal allows continuation of eligibility of federal financial aid for the next term. If the appeal is unsuccessful and the student wishes to reestablish eligibility for federal financial aid, the student must enroll, cover tuition and fees from sources other than federal financial aid, and meet SAP standards.

## C. Appeal for Continuation of Financial Aid

A student with extenuating circumstances which negatively impacted academic progress may appeal the financial aid suspension. Examples of extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to, prolonged personal illness or illness of a dependent, serious accident, or death of an immediate family member.

- Federal financial aid SAP and academic suspension appeals are combined into a single process.
- Appeal information and instructions are located at [www.mcneese.edu/finaid/how-to-appeal](http://www.mcneese.edu/finaid/how-to-appeal), and the appeal process may be accessed through Banner Self-Service or the MyMcNeese Portal.
- Appeals must be submitted electronically by deadlines published by the Office of Financial Aid.
- Academic personnel review submissions for appeal and make one of the following decisions:
  - Granted, Placed on Financial Aid Probation;
  - Granted, Academic Plan Approved for One Term;
  - Granted, Academic Plan Approved for Two Terms;
  - Granted, Academic Plan Approved for Three Terms;
  - Granted, Change of Major Required; or
  - Denied.

- Students placed on an academic plan must meet plan requirements. If a student fails to earn a 2.0 term GPA while on an academic plan, the academic plan will be revoked and the student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension.
- Committee appeal decisions are final, are communicated to the student via email, and are uploaded into the student's record in the financial aid component of the student information system.

## VI. SCHOLARSHIPS

Academic scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis to qualified full-time students who remain in good standing. When making scholarship awards to incoming freshmen, University selection committees use standardized test scores, high school GPA and class standing, and courses completed as the basis for initial consideration. For transfer and continuing students, cumulative GPA is the primary basis for initial consideration. Secondary factors in consideration include extracurricular participation, leadership positions held, and honors/awards received. Academic scholarships may be used to pay for educational expenses and range from \$100 to \$4,700 per semester. Students may apply for academic scholarships by completing the [Academic Scholarship Application](#). The priority deadline for scholarship applications is December 1 for the upcoming academic year.

### A. TOPS and Rockefeller Scholarships

The Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) and Rockefeller Scholarships are available to eligible Louisiana high school graduates. The value of TOPS is determined by annual legislative appropriation. Information may be obtained from the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance at [www.osfa.la.gov](http://www.osfa.la.gov) or (800) 259-5626.

## VII. STUDENT SERVICES

### A. Career and Student Development Center

The Career and Student Development Center (CSD) Center, located in Holbrook Student Union across from the University Bookstore, provides services for students and alumni related to career goals. Services are designed to assist with developing professional skills and to provide information about employment and internship opportunities. The CSD Center provides a variety of career-related services, including:

- Career and major exploration
- Career guidance and advisement
- Professional document writing (e.g., résumé, cover letter, etc.)
- Interview preparation and techniques
- Job search strategies

The CSD Center is committed to serving students and employers and assisting both to meet employment needs. Through the biannual offerings of the Career Fair and the School District Recruitment Fair, students are provided with direct career and networking opportunities with employers. The CSD Center also coordinates informational sessions; on-campus recruitment; and job, internship, and career announcements.

Additional information may be obtained online at [www.mcneese.edu/career](http://www.mcneese.edu/career) or by calling (337) 475-5612.

## B. Counseling Center

The Counseling Center, located in Kaufman Hall Room 112E, provides comprehensive mental health counseling services to all enrolled students. Counseling helps students to effectively manage daily stressors, experience personal growth and development, and succeed in fulfilling their academic goals. The Center is staffed by Licensed Professional Counselors and also serves as an internship site for graduate-level counseling interns from the McNeese counseling psychology program.

Counseling services are funded through a student self-assessed fee. No additional payment is required at the time counseling services are rendered. The Center also offers marital/family/couples counseling if at least one person participating is an enrolled student. Select assessments for learning disabilities are available by appointment. The Center also offers a career assessment to help guide undecided students toward a major.

Confidentiality is strictly maintained in accordance with state counseling ethical guidelines and applicable law. Records are kept separate from other university/academic records.

All enrolled students are invited to use the Counseling Center at any time during their academic enrollment. Students are encouraged to make appointments by calling (337) 475-5136, but walk-ins are available in the event of an emergency and crisis situations. Additional information may be obtained online at [www.mcneese.edu/counseling](http://www.mcneese.edu/counseling).

## C. Office of Disability Services

The Office of Disability Services, located in Drew Hall Room 200, provides academic support services and academic adjustments for emotionally, physically, and learning impaired students enrolled at the University. For students with disabilities that qualify for academic adjustments, services provided may include monitored testing, interpreters, and note-taking. The Office of Disability Services operates under the guidelines of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act as Amended. Students seeking academic adjustments or assistance with barrier removal should contact the Office of Disability Services, who will then review the request, obtain necessary documentation, and determine the appropriate academic adjustment. More information may be obtained online at [www.mcneese.edu/swd](http://www.mcneese.edu/swd) or by calling (337) 475-5916.