



## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

**Policy Title:** Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

**Policy Type:** Administrative

**Policy Number:** Administrative Policy # 22-03 (2019)

**Approval Date:** 03/20/2019

**Responsible Office:** Financial Aid

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

**Applies to:** Applies to all NSU students receiving federal student financial aid

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

All undergraduate and graduate students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements to receive financial aid at Norfolk State University. Federal regulations (CFR 668.34) require institutions of higher education to establish, publish and regularly apply standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for financial aid eligibility. The university measures your academic performance based on three standards: grade point average (GPA), pace and maximum time frame.

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### **DEFINITIONS**

SAP Academic Plan – An agreement between the student and academic advisor of the courses

(repeated and new) that a student will take during a one (1) or two (2) semester period that will enable the student to progress academically. The SAP Academic Plan consists of the desired grades in which the student indicated that he/she can obtain during the academic term(s).

**CONTACT(S)**

The Financial Aid Office officially interprets this policy. The Financial Aid Office is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by BOV Policy # 01 (2014) *Creating and Maintaining Policies* through the appropriate governance structures. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Financial Aid Office.

**STAKEHOLDER(S)**

Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, and Finance and Administration.

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP): POLICY CONTENTS**

**Evaluation Process**

Each aid recipient’s record will be evaluated at the end of each semester to determine if the student is meeting the standards described below. If the student has reached the maximum number of credits without earning a degree, the student must be excluded from further participation in federal financial aid programs. In addition, if the student has reached or exceeded 150% in total attempted credit hours for their degree program without earning a degree, the student must be excluded from further participation in federal and state financial aid programs.

**Pace:** You must earn credit for at least **67%** of the hours you attempt. This calculation is performed by dividing the number of credit hours earned by the number of credit hours attempted.

**Grade Point Average:** The minimum GPA requirement is based on the number of credit hours attempted. GPA standards mirror the university’s academic suspension policy. (see table)

**Maximum Time:** You may not receive financial aid for more than **150%** (the equivalent of **180**) credit hours attempted hours. If your program requires more than 120 hours and you have reached the maximum time limit, please submit an appeal for review.

**SAP Requirements**

Credit hours attempted* (includes transferred hours)	Minimum GPA requirement (cumulative NSU GPA for financial aid)	Minimum Number of Credit Hours Earned to ensure Pace
1-29	1.70	Earn 67% of hours attempted
30-59	1.80	Earn 67% of hours attempted
60 and over	2.00	Earn 67% of hours attempted

## **Failure to Meet Minimum SAP Requirements**

Any student who fails to meet minimum SAP requirements will be placed on *warning*. If a student is placed on warning, he or she does not need to appeal, because financial aid eligibility has not been revoked. If at the end of the warning period the student does not meet the minimum requirements for SAP, all aid will be suspended for the following semester. As long as a student is meeting all requirements of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, they are considered in "good standing" for financial aid.

## **Requesting Reinstatement of Aid (Appeal)**

Aid may be reinstated on *probation or academic plan* status by an approved appeal. A student who has had his/her financial aid eligibility terminated has the right to make a written appeal if extenuating circumstances exist and can be documented OR if the student met all minimum enrollment and GPA requirements while on warning/probation/academic plan. If aid is not reinstated, the suspension will remain in effect.

## **Submitting an Appeal**

Students who wish to appeal the determination that satisfactory academic progress has not been maintained, may do so by submitting an appeal form, a personal statement, all supporting documentation and approved academic improvement plan from CAAS and or advisor, to the Office of Student Financial Aid within *ten (10) days* of the date of notification that aid has been suspended.

All financial aid appeals for "extenuating circumstances" should:

1. Be typed or legibly written in ink and submitted to the Office of Student Financial Aid
2. Identify the circumstances which lead to the failure to maintain minimum satisfactory academic progress
3. Provide supporting documentation, (i.e., medical documentation, death notice, etc.)
4. Identify and have approved by a Counselor (Academic or Personal) a plan to correct academic deficiencies-may be completed through the Dr. Patricia Lynch Stith Student Success Center

All financial aid appeals for "meeting minimum requirements" while on financial aid warning/probation should:

- Be typed or legibly written in ink and submitted to the Office of Student Financial Aid
- Identify compliance with conditions of the warning/probation period
- Show that they met all other conditions/requirements including following an approved academic plan

The Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Committee will notify the student in writing of the decision to reinstate or deny aid. If aid is reinstated, conditions may apply. If the conditions are not met, aid will be cancelled. ***All decisions at this point are final.***

All initial and subsequent appeals, supporting documentation and corrective plan of action must be received ***by the appeal deadline of the academic term for which the student is requesting reinstatement.*** The Committee ***will not review*** any incomplete or partial appeals. The Committee ***will not*** assume the responsibility for gathering documentation; it is the responsibility of the student. Appeals received after the deadline date ***will not*** be considered. All appeals must be ***signed originals from the student.*** All supporting documentation submitted by the student becomes the property of the UMES Office of Student Financial Aid.

## **SAP Statuses**

### *Financial Aid Warning Status*

The first time you do not meet SAP standards, you will be placed in Financial Aid Warning. This means you are one term away from losing your financial aid eligibility. You are still eligible for financial aid.

### *Financial Aid Suspension Status*

If you are in Financial Aid Warning and do not meet SAP standards, you are immediately placed on Financial Aid Suspension. You will not receive federal or institutional financial aid. You may appeal this status.

### *Financial Aid Probation Status*

If you have successfully appealed a Financial Aid Suspension, you will be placed on Probation for one term. If you meet the SAP standards at the end of the Probation term, your SAP Status will reset back to Meets SAP. If you do not meet the SAP standards at the end of your Probation, you will be placed back into Suspension.

### *Financial Aid SAP Academic Plan Status*

If you have successfully appealed a Financial Aid Suspension and completed page three of the SAP Appeal Form, you may be placed on a SAP Academic Plan. You must successfully follow your SAP Academic Plan while in this status. You will be monitored by the Financial Aid Office at the end of each term.

If the student meets SAP standards while on Probation or meets the standards of their SAP Academic Plan, you will be placed back into a Meets SAP Status for the next term.

### *Appeal "Denied"*

The “denied” decision is usually rendered when the SAP Committee has deemed that it is “mathematically” impossible for the student to meet the quantitative/qualitative component(s) in a reasonable amount of time, the student failed to follow their “academic plan,” the student does not provide an extenuating circumstance or the student's appeal is undocumented. The student is ineligible to receive federal and state funding in subsequent semesters. The student must seek alternative means to pay their bill.

If you do not meet SAP standards and your SAP Academic Plan expires, you will need to submit a new SAP Appeal in order for your aid eligibility to be re-reviewed.

The purpose of measuring and enforcing SAP standards is to ensure that students who are supported by Federal and State Funds, are progressing towards academic program completion in accordance with the institutions’ academic standards in conjunction with qualitative performance (e.g., GPA) and at a required pace, within a maximum time frame.

***In order to meet warning period requirements, students must come into full compliance with the SAP policy (meeting minimum GPA and percentage requirements).*** Students who are placed on financial aid warning are encouraged to seek academic and/or personal counseling. Counseling services can provide the student with additional support which may help alleviate obstacles that hinder satisfactory academic progress. ***Students who are on financial aid warning/probation are further encouraged to consult with a financial aid counselor prior to withdrawing from any classes or if midterm grades are failures.***

## **PUBLICATION**

This policy shall be widely published or distributed to the University community. To ensure timely publication and distribution thereof, The Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management will make every effort to:

- Communicate the policy in writing, electronically or otherwise, to the University community within 14 days of approval;
- Submit the policy for inclusion in the online Policy Library within 14 days of approval;
- Post the policy on the Division's and Financial Aid websites; and
- Educate and train all stakeholders and appropriate audiences on the policy's content as necessary.

## **REVIEW SCHEDULE**

- Next Scheduled Review: 03/20/2022
- Approval by, date: President, 03/20/2019
- Revision History:
- Supersedes: New Policy

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

*Documentation relating to Return of Funds may be found at <https://faaaccess.ed.gov/FOTWWebApp/faa/faa.jsp>.*

## **FORMS**

Processing forms may be found on the U.S. Department of Education's secure online product at <https://faaaccess.ed.gov/FOTWWebApp/faa/faa.jsp> and within the Colleague Student Information System (SIS).