Norfolk State University

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Policy Title: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
Policy Type: Administrative
Policy Number: Administrative Policy # 22-03
Approval Date: 06/07/2024
Responsible Office: Financial Aid
Responsible Executive: Vice President for Operations & Chief Strategist for Institutional Effectiveness
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 **students'** academic performance based on three standards: grade point average (GPA), pace, and maximum time frame.

TABLE OF CONTENTS   PAGE NUMBER

DEFINITIONS

SAP Academic Plan – An agreement between the student and academic advisor of the course (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 indicates 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):

Vice President for Operations & Chief Strategist for Institutional Effectiveness, 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: A student must earn (complete) credits for at least 67% of the hours attempted. 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: A student may not receive financial aid for more than 150% (the equivalent of **180**) credit hours attempted hours. If the student's academic program requires more than 120 hours or the student has reached the maximum time limit, an SAP Appeal may be submitted 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 after the initial semester of enrollment will be placed on *warning*. A student placed on an SAP warning does not need to submit a request for an appeal. Should the student fail to meet SAP standards at the end of the warning period, all aid will be suspended for the following semester. If a student is meeting all requirements of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, he or she is considered in "good standing" for financial aid.

Requesting Reinstatement of Aid (Appeal)
Aid may be reinstated on a *probation* 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 the circumstances can be documented OR if the student met all minimum enrollment and GPA requirements while on warning or probationary status. 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 plan from **the** advisor to the Financial Aid Office 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 Financial Aid Office
2. Identify the circumstances leading 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 which may be completed through the Dr. Patricia L. Stith Student Success Center
   All financial aid appeals for "meeting minimum requirements" while on financial aid warning **or** probation should:
   - Be typed or legibly written in ink and submitted to Financial Aid Office
   - 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 plans 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 Financial Aid Office.

SAP Statuses:

Financial Aid Warning Status:
The first time a student does not meet SAP standards, the student will be placed in Financial Aid Warning. This means the student will be awarded one (1) semester of financial aid.

Financial Aid Suspension Status:
If a student is on a Financial Aid Warning status and does not meet SAP standards, the student is immediately placed on Financial Aid Suspension. The student is not eligible to receive federal, state, or some institutional financial aid. Students may appeal this status.

Financial Aid Probation Status:
If a student has successfully appealed for a Financial Aid Suspension, the student will be placed on Probation for one term. If SAP standards are met at the end of the Probation term, the student regains eligibility for financial aid. If the SAP standards are not met at the end of the probationary status period, the student is placed on financial aid suspension.

Students placed on a financial warning, probation, or suspension status are monitored each semester for following or failing his or her academic plan and meeting SAP standards. If the student meets SAP standards while on Probation or meets the standards of their SAP Academic Plan, the student returns to making satisfactory academic progress status and regain eligibility for financial aid.

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 the student does not meet SAP standards or follow the SAP Academic Plan, a new SAP Appeal is required to determine approval or denial of the request.

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.

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 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 Vice President for Operations and Chief Strategist for Institutional Effectiveness and Financial Aid Office 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: 03/01/2027
- Approval by, date: President, 06/07/2024
- Revision History: 06/07/2024 ;03/20/2019
- Supersedes:

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)