Satisfactory Academic Progress

The Higher Education Amendment Act of 1965, as amended, mandates institutions of higher education to establish a minimum standard of “Satisfactory Academic Progress” for students receiving financial aid. UTSA makes its standard applicable to all federal, state, and institutional financial assistance programs for the purpose of maintaining a consistent policy for all students receiving financial aid.

To make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), students must meet all of the following standards:

1. Academic Standards
   Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average minimum requirement as determined at the end of each Spring Semester for all credit hours attempted at UTSA: undergraduate students must have a 2.0 cumulative grade point average; and graduate students must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average. If the cumulative grade point average drops below the minimum requirement, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

2. Maximum Time Frames
   The number of semester credit hours a student attempts may not exceed 150 percent of the number of semester credit hours required for graduation in his or her program of study, as published in the University catalogs. For example, if the published number of semester credit hours required for graduation is 120, a student may not attempt more than 180 semester credit hours (120 x 1.5 = 180) and continue to receive financial aid. All periods of enrollment must be considered, even those for which the student did not receive financial aid as well as hours transferred from another school. If the number of attempted hours reaches 150 percent of the hours required for graduation, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

   Attempted hours include all registered hours per semester whether or not the student earns a grade or receives credit. The following are considered hours attempted, but not completed:

   Completed hours include all semester hours for which the student earns a grade:

   a. “F” grades for undergraduate students
   b. “D+,” “D,” “D-” or “F” grades for graduate students
   c. “W” or withdrawal from courses
   d. “IN” or incomplete
   e. all transfer hours
   f. “A+” through “D-” grades for undergraduate students
   g. “A+” through “C-” grades for graduate students
   h. all transfer hours accepted for credit.

3. Enrollment Status
   A student must successfully complete a minimum of 67 percent of all attempted coursework. The student’s academic progress will be reviewed at the end of each Spring Semester. If the number of completed hours drops below 67 percent of attempted hours, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

   Examples:

   a. If a student attempts (registers for) 30 semester credit hours in an academic year, he or she must complete a minimum of 21 semester credit hours (67% x 30 = 20.10) in order to make SAP for the year.
   b. If a student attempts 36 semester credit hours, he or she must complete a minimum of 25 semester credit hours (67% x 36 = 24.12) in order to make SAP for the year.
      Note: All partial credit hours will be rounded up to the nearest hour.
   c. If, at the end of the second year, a student has attempted 60 semester credit hours, and completed 41 of those 60 hours, their completion rate is (41/60) 68.33%.
      Note: There is no rounding up for the percentage of the completion rate.

Review Policy

After final grades are posted for the Spring Semester, the Office of Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services will review the SAP progress of every enrolled student, regardless of whether or not they received financial aid. Students’ academic progress will be reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the following criteria:

1. cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher (undergraduate students) or cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher (graduate students)
2. successful completion of at least 67 percent of all attempted coursework for all periods of enrollment (cumulative), even those for which the student did not receive financial aid
3. total attempted hours does not exceed 150 percent of the published length of the program of study.

Financial Aid Termination

In the event the student does not meet the requirements for SAP during the review period, he or she will be placed on financial aid termination, effective beginning the Summer 2016 term. This means that the student will not be eligible for any type of federal, state, or institutional aid until he or she returns to satisfactory academic progress status.

Conditions for Reinstatement

Students whose eligibility for financial aid has been terminated may appeal the decision, in writing, to the Office of Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services (SFAES) if they believe that they had extenuating circumstances that led to their unsatisfactory progress. SFAES will notify students of the appeal outcome via the preferred e-mail account the student designated in the Automated Student Access Program (ASAP).

Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Process

Students appealing their Satisfactory Academic Progress status are required to submit an appeal for review. The following are to be included with the SAP Appeal:

• Financial Aid Appeal Form
• A typed letter answering the two items below and related supporting documentation:
  • Please provide details regarding the situation(s) that prevented you from maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress during the evaluation periods of Summer 2015, Fall 2015 and/or Spring
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2016. (Examples: extenuating medical/personal issues, change in field of study, dual major, transferred hours not counted, etc.)

• How has your situation(s) changed to allow you to demonstrate Satisfactory Academic Progress during the Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 evaluation period? (Examples: attending tutoring, adjusted work schedule, reduction in course schedule, etc.)

• Degree Plan, if applicable for Maximum Time Frame (see Probation with a Graduation Plan (p. 2) below)

Appeals are reviewed by the Financial Aid Review Committee. Students are notified of the committee’s decision via their preferred e-mail address. A student who has an appeal approved will be placed on an academic plan that has mandatory requirements that must be met each term for the length of the plan.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Plan Requirements and Agreement

After a student’s Satisfactory Academic Progress appeal and academic history is reviewed, and a decision to reinstate financial aid is made, the student will be required to follow an academic plan for financial aid. The academic plan will have mandatory requirements that the student must follow and complete to continue with financial aid eligibility. The SAP Plan requirements will be checked at the end of every semester for compliance. Failure to meet the requirements will result in the loss of financial aid.

A student who is on an academic plan for financial aid will be required to submit a signed SAP Plan Agreement to the Office of Student Financial Aid and Enrollment Services. The agreement will be placed as a requirement on the student’s ASAP account. This agreement will list the mandatory requirements that must be followed. It will also state the ramifications if the plan is not followed. The SAP Plan Agreement must be submitted before any financial aid is awarded or disbursed. The appeal is not complete until receipt of the signed SAP Plan Agreement.

Types of Financial Aid Probation

Probation

If a student has a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal approved they will be placed on Probation if it is possible to bring their Course Completion Rate and grade point average up to SAP standards after the next semester. All students on Probation will be checked at the end of the probation term and each subsequent semester until the student is meeting SAP standards.

Probation with an Academic Plan

If a student has a SAP Appeal approved and it is NOT possible for them to maintain the required Course Completion Rate and grade point average after one semester of enrollment, they will be placed on Probation with an Academic Plan by their academic advisor. If a student on Probation with an Academic Plan fails to meet the semester goals of their plan, their financial aid will be suspended for the upcoming and subsequent terms until they are in compliance with the SAP standards. A new appeal will be required in order to be placed on probation again.

Probation with a Graduation Plan

If a student’s appeal is approved for Maximum Time Frame, the student will be placed on Probation with a Graduation Plan. This Graduation Plan will be developed with a degree plan that consists of the classes and number of hours needed to graduate as well as the signature of the student’s academic advisor. The Graduation Plan will be reviewed at the end of each term. If a student’s appeal for Maximum Time Frame, or exceeding 150 percent, is approved, they will ONLY be approved for the number of hours indicated on their Graduation Plan and the required courses needed to graduate. Progress will be checked at the end of each semester until the student graduates.

Notification of Status

Students who have been terminated from financial aid will be notified of changes to SAP status via their preferred e-mail address. Changes in SAP status can also be viewed by the student by logging in to ASAP. Paying out of pocket for classes or sitting out a semester is not grounds for reinstatement of aid. Students must bring their academic progress back into compliance or have an appeal approved to have aid reinstated. Students who are denied may not appeal continuously (each semester) for the same circumstance. This policy decision does not prevent a student from enrolling in future semesters but, it does prevent financial aid awarding and disbursement. Students on financial aid termination are responsible for paying all educational expenses without the assistance of financial aid.