

# SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Federal regulations require institutions to establish reasonable standards to ensure that recipients of Title IV financial aid are maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of a degree program. These standards must establish the maximum timeframe for degree completion and include minimum standards for rate of completion (pace) and cumulative GPA.

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) will be evaluated at the end of each semester (including summer) based on each of the standards outlined below. Students who fail to meet satisfactory academic progress standards will lose eligibility for federal financial assistance the following semester. **Federal financial assistance consists of the following:**

- Federal Pell Grant,
- Federal Work-Study,
- Federal Direct Loans,
- Federal PLUS Loans,
- Federal SEOG, and
- Federal TEACH Grant

## SAP Standard Definition

### Minimum Cumulative GPA

The calculation of cumulative GPA will include grades earned from all coursework, including transfer coursework that is accepted toward the student's educational program.

Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 to remain eligible for federal financial assistance.

Students who lose financial aid eligibility based on GPA must receive grades sufficient to increase their cumulative GPA to the required 3.00. The student will be required to use their own financial resources to cover the cost of education until they are again meeting satisfactory academic progress standards.

### Completion Rate (Pace)

The pace at which a student must progress through an educational program to ensure completion within the maximum timeframe. Pace is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of hours successfully completed /earned (Letter grades of A, B, C, and D) by the cumulative number of hours attempted (Letter grades of A, B, C, D, F, I, W, AU, CR/F, U & Repeated Coursework).

Students must successfully complete 67% of all courses attempted to remain eligible for federal financial assistance. Missouri Western uses standard rounding rules when calculating completion rate.

Students who lose financial aid eligibility based on rate of completion must attend, and successfully complete, a sufficient number of credit hours to raise their completion rate (pace) to the required 67%.

Students will be required to use their own financial resources to cover the cost of education until they are again meeting satisfactory academic progress standards.

### Maximum Timeframe

The maximum timeframe allowed for completion of a degree program should not exceed 150% of the published length of the program measured in attempted hours. If it is determined that a student cannot complete their program of study within this timeframe, they will become ineligible for federal financial assistance.

- A student seeking a master's degree must complete program requirements within 52 attempted hours.
- A student seeking a graduate level certificate must complete program requirements within 27 attempted hours.

A student who has exceeded the maximum timeframe for degree completion is no longer eligible to receive federal financial assistance. The student will be required to use their own financial resources to cover the cost of education.

## Attempted and Completed Hours

Attempted hours consist of any hours the student is enrolled in at the end of the official add/drop period including those hours that are earned, withdrawn from, audited, repeated, failed, taken as pass/fail or are incomplete. Hours for which the student did not receive financial aid and those waived under an academic amnesty policy must be included as attempted hours.

Successful completion is defined as the absence of failing or incomplete grades and voluntary/involuntary withdrawals.

Transfer hours that are accepted toward the student's educational program will count as both attempted and completed hours.

### Letter Grades Included in Earned Hours

Level of Performance	Letter Grade	Quality Points Earned
Superior	A	4
Good (above average)	B	3
Average	C	2
Minimum (Passing below average)	D	1
Credit	CR	0

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Level of Performance	Letter Grade	Quality Points Earned
Superior	A	4
Good (above average)	B	3
Average	C	2
Minimum (passing below average)	D	1
Failing	F	0
Incomplete (pending official grade)	I	0
Withdraw (no grade assessment)	W	0
Audit	AU	0
Credit	CR	0
No credit	U	0

## Approaching the Maximum Timeframe

Federal regulations require Missouri Western to ensure that each recipient of Federal financial assistance is able to complete degree

requirements within 150% of the published length of the program as measured in attempted hours. In compliance with this regulation, Missouri Western will conduct an evaluation of each student's degree progress each semester as indicated below.

- Graduate Certificate - Program review begins at 21 attempted hours with a maximum timeframe of 27 attempted hours.
- Graduate Degree - Program review begins at 40 attempted hours with a maximum timeframe of 52 attempted hours.

If it is determined that a student cannot complete program requirements within this timeframe, they will become ineligible for federal financial assistance.

## Additional Degree Programs and Degree Completion

Students who are pursuing an additional graduate degree or other program combinations will be evaluated on an individual basis through appeal.

A student who has completed all required coursework for his or her degree program but has not yet received the degree, may not receive further financial aid for that program.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Process

### Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal

A student may submit an appeal to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee if documentable extenuating circumstances caused the student to fall below satisfactory academic progress standards (Minimum Cumulative GPA and/or Completion Rate (Pace)) or exceed the maximum timeframe allowed for degree completion.

#### Examples of circumstances that may warrant an appeal include:

- The death of an immediate family member or close relative (i.e. mother, father, grandparent, sibling, or immediate family such as a related aunt or uncle)
- A serious injury or illness (physical or mental) that required medical intervention
- Significant, unanticipated family obligations due to medical issue or illness
- A catastrophic loss due to fire, flood, or natural disaster that affects the student's academic attendance or performance
- An involuntary call to active military duty
- An unsafe or abusive environment
- Any undue hardship that prohibits the successful completion of coursework
- Other extreme circumstances (case by case basis)

#### Appeals should include the following documentation:

- A completed Statement in Support of Appeal;
- An explanation describing how extenuating circumstances resulted in the student's inability to maintain satisfactory academic progress;
- Sufficient documented evidence that the extenuating circumstance clearly caused the student to fall below the required standards or exceed the maximum timeframe; and

- An explanation of what has changed that will allow the student to maintain satisfactory academic progress going forward.

#### Examples of documentation supporting the extenuating circumstance may include:

- Medical documentation;
- Letter from a doctor, therapist, and/or counselor on letterhead indicating the dates you were under their care;
- Notice of death;
- Third-party documentation of death such as an obituary, funeral notice, or death certificate;
- Accident reports, police records, court records, etc.;
- Court documentation;
- Work related documentation;
- Letter from employer, termination/separation letter, letter from employer including effective date(s) and whether the increase in hours was mandatory;
- Police report, court documentation, letter from clergy, social worker, counselor, and/or doctor;
- Other relevant documentation.

#### Appeal Process

The Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form is available in the Financial Aid card in Goldlink (select Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal). All communication regarding SAP appeals will be sent to the student's MWSU email account.

Appeals will be reviewed by the University Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee through the mid-point of each semester. Appeals received after this date, may not be considered. Students will be notified of the committee's decision within three (3) weeks of the appeal submission date (assuming all required documentation is provided). If the committee has denied the appeal, the student will be required to use their own financial resources to cover the cost of education until they are again meeting the academic standards necessary to receive Federal aid. The last day to drop classes without charge may be found online at [intranet.missouriwestern.edu/registrar/withdrawal](https://intranet.missouriwestern.edu/registrar/withdrawal) (<https://intranet.missouriwestern.edu/registrar/withdrawal/>).

#### The decision of the University Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee is final.

## Probationary Period

A probationary period may be granted only after a student has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated based on the approval of the student's appeal. Students who are granted a probationary period will be required to adhere to an academic plan that, if followed, should ensure the student will achieve the academic standards required to continue receiving Federal financial assistance and complete their degree program within the maximum timeframe.

As a general rule, a student on an academic plan will be required to:

- successfully complete all attempted courses with a passing grade and not audit or withdraw from any course;
- maintain the GPA requirement indicated in the plan; and
- satisfy any additional requirements as deemed appropriate by the Appeals Committee.

In addition, the student may be required to enroll in only those courses required for completion of their degree program and may not be allowed to change majors without approval from the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee.

A student on financial aid probation may receive Title IV funds for one semester. At that point, the student must meet satisfactory academic progress standards or the requirements of the established individual academic plan to maintain eligibility for federal financial assistance in future semesters.

## Repeated Coursework

Federal regulations for financial aid permit students to retake any coursework within the program, provided it doesn't involve repeating a previously passed course more than once or retaking a previously passed course due to failing other coursework.

Repeating coursework can affect a student's satisfactory academic progress status in the following manner:

- The repeated course and the original attempt will be counted in calculation of overall attempted hours; and
- The most recent grade received for the course will be included in the calculation of GPA.

## Communication of Satisfactory Academic Progress Status

All communication regarding eligibility for Federal financial aid will be sent to the student's Missouri Western email account.

Although students will be notified should they fall below satisfactory academic progress standards, it is the student's responsibility to know his or her academic standing in regard to this policy.

Failure to receive notification does not dispute or reverse the termination of a student's eligibility to receive financial assistance