

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

Students receiving federal student financial aid must maintain "Satisfactory Academic Progress" in order to be eligible to receive aid. The Financial Aid Office evaluates Satisfactory Academic Progress after the completion of each academic year, generally two semesters. There are three components to satisfactory progress: a qualitative standard (grade point average); an incremental quantitative standard, referred to as "Pace" (number of credits attempted and earned for each year of study); and a maximum time frame for the degree or program. All courses attempted must be factored into the determination of satisfactory academic progress.

Purpose

The intent of this policy is to ensure that students using the financial aid program are demonstrating responsible use of public funds in pursuit of their educational goals; to set standards for monitoring all financial aid recipients' course completion rates each year, and to warn individual students when progress is inadequate.

Definitions

- Attempted Course – course that remains on the student's record after the first fourteen days of the term.

- Completed Course/earned credit – course in which a grade of A, B, C, or D was received. Withdrawals (W), incomplete grades (I), or failures (F) are not considered "earned credit" for meeting satisfactory progress requirements.

- Financial aid – The Federal Title IV programs and state institutional programs listed below:
 1. Direct Stafford Loan (subsidized and unsubsidized)
 2. Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)
 3. Scholarships and Awards
 4. Fee Waivers

- Financial aid probation – A term in which a student who has been identified as not meeting one or more standards in this policy and continues to receive financial aid. At the end of the semester of financial aid probation, a student is expected to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements in order to continue receiving financial aid.

- Financial aid termination – The point at which a student is no longer eligible to receive financial aid as defined in this policy; normally, this is following an unsuccessful term of probation.
- Incomplete – A grade of "I" received for an attempted course; no credit is received until the course is completed.
- Quantitative measure – Time frame for the student to complete the program and a minimum number of credits the student must satisfactorily complete each year.
- Qualitative measure – Measurement of a student's academic standing consistent with the requirement for graduation from the program of study.
- Satisfactory Academic Progress – Completion of courses at a rate that meets the standards defined in this policy.
- Transfer credit – Course(s) accepted for credit at SULC from another institution.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS STANDARDS

It shall be the policy of the Southern University Law Center to provide financial aid awards to students who are making satisfactory academic progress toward their degrees while receiving financial aid. In order to be eligible for financial aid, satisfactory academic progress shall be defined as having a minimum cumulative grade point average as outlined in the chart below and having earned 70 percent of the credits attempted.

A financial aid recipient is to earn credit for at least 70 percent of all courses attempted. A student who receives financial aid but does not earn credit for any courses within a semester is not eligible to receive financial aid in subsequent semesters. If mitigating circumstances were responsible for zero course completion within a semester, a student may appeal and be granted a term of financial aid probation, if adequate documentation is provided (e.g., a doctor's statement).

Financial aid recipients who do not meet these conditions will lose their financial aid eligibility. Unless otherwise stated, a student's entire academic history (including transfer hours) is considered for purposes of this policy, regardless of whether the student received financial aid at the time the credit hours were completed. The official class list from the 14th day report is used to determine a student's attempted hours.

<i>Credit hours attempted</i>	<i>Maintaining progress</i>	<i>Financial aid suspended</i>
0-29 credit hours	1.9 or better	0.00-1.89
30-96 credit hours	2.0 or better	0.00-1.99

Course Repetitions, Incompletes, and Withdrawals

When a student repeats a course, the grade earned in the course before it was repeated is included in the cumulative computation of the student's average.

Incomplete grades—Students receiving excessive incomplete grades in their courses are not progressing satisfactorily. Therefore, a student who has six or more hours of incomplete grades in any semester or at any time will be placed on financial aid probation for the next semester of attendance and is expected to complete the courses with incomplete grades within six weeks after registration for the following semester. Failure to remove timely an incomplete grade results in automatic conversion to "F." An incomplete grade is given only when the student can convincingly demonstrate, through documentation whenever possible, that he will be or was unable to take a final examination as regularly scheduled and that he would have taken it, but for the intervening circumstances.

A course in which a student withdraws and receives a "W" grade will be counted as an attempted course in evaluation of the student's satisfactory academic progress.

MONITORING INTERVALS

Satisfactory academic progress shall be monitored annually at the conclusion of each spring semester or at the time the student is applying for financial aid if a current satisfactory progress assessment is not available.

NOTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL AID PROBATION OR TERMINATION

The Financial Aid Office will send a warning letter to any student who is put on probation or a termination letter to any student who is no longer eligible for financial aid. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain current addresses with the Office of Registrar or Banner Self Service.

INELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Students who are deficient in credit hours or grade point averages at the end of the Spring Semester and subject to losing their financial aid eligibility may make up the deficiencies during the Summer Session. First year students who fall below a 2.0 cumulative grade point average are not eligible to attend summer school. A student may lose financial aid eligibility, if the student fails to attain academic progress after the Summer Session.

APPEALS

Students who have been denied financial aid based on this policy have the right to appeal. To initiate a satisfactory academic progress appeal, the student must complete a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form and submit it along with all required supporting documentation, to the Southern University Law Center Financial Aid Appeals Committee. If the Appeals Committee allows the student to continue to receive financial aid, the student is placed on a limited conditional or probationary semester of aid. Additionally, students may be required to submit an Academic Plan of Study if he/she is unable to meet the SAP policy by the end of the period. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final. Students will be notified regarding the decision prior to the start of the semester of application via SULC email.

REASONS FOR APPEAL

Under general circumstances, a student may appeal his or her financial aid termination for one or more of the following reasons:

- Change of grade.
- Death or serious illness of an immediate family member (e.g., parent or legal guardian, sibling, spouse, or family member). A death certificate and a notarized statement regarding the relationship with the deceased is required.
- Medical illness or injury to the student or a dependent child (attending physician's statement is required).
- Other causes (e.g., natural disaster or act of God)

All appeals must be in writing and submitted within the timelines established by the Appeals Committee. All documents and appeal applications will be accepted by U.S. Mail, Express Mail (e.g., Federal Express) or hand delivery. Faxes and late separated documents will not be accepted. All appeals must be completed by the student. Appeals completed by the parents, guardians, friends or other parties on behalf of the student will not be accepted.

FINANCIAL AID PROBATIONARY PERIOD

At the end of one payment period on "Probation," the student must meet the minimum SAP standards on their own in order to continue to receive financial aid or meet the requirements of his/her Academic Plan (if applicable) to qualify for further funds. While a student is on "Probation," the student may be required to fulfill specific terms and conditions under the "Academic Plan" developed through the Academic Affairs Department. If a student placed on an Academic Plan and fails to meet the plan's requirements at the end of each term on probation, the student will lose his/her eligibility for financial aid and will be required to submit a Financial Aid Appeal for reinstatement consideration for the next enrolled semester/term.

REINSTATEMENT OF FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress shall lose their eligibility for financial aid but may regain eligibility only after eliminating all deficiencies.

RETURNING AND TRANSFER STUDENTS

Returning and transfer students must be in good academic standing and must have earned 70 percent of all hours attempted with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 to be eligible to receive financial aid.

This policy will be amended whenever applicable federal or state laws and regulations are changed.