

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY FOR STUDENTS IN SACI GRADUATE PROGRAMS WHO ARE RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

Title IV Federal Financial Aid at SACI

At SACI, Title IV Financial Aid Programs include *Unsubsidized Stafford Direct Loans* and *GRAD PLUS Loans* for Graduate students only. United States Federal Regulations specify that a student receiving **Title IV Federal Financial Aid** must be making **SAP** towards his or her academic degree in order to remain eligible for such aid, and must meet the standards indicated below at the end of each term in any of SACI's graduate study programs.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is a measure of whether a student is progressing adequately toward completion of his or her course of study. It is determined in terms of grade point average and completed courses. Standards and requirements for **SAP** are applied equally across all enrolled students in a particular degree program, regardless of whether or not they are receiving **Title IV Federal Financial Aid**.

Evaluation Elements & Frequency

Each official evaluation of a student's **SAP** includes an evaluation of the *qualitative* (grade-based), *quantitative* (time-related) and *maximum timeframe* standards for the respective program of study. SAP evaluations are conducted at the end of every term by the Dean and/or Assistant Dean/Registrar, who are responsible for developing, approving, and monitoring compliance with academic plans.

Qualitative Measurement - GPA Requirement:

All students enrolled in the **Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Programs (PB)**, the **Master of Fine Arts programs (MFA)**, and the **Master of Arts (MA)** are graduate students and are required to matriculate full time and maintain a minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 (based upon a scale in which A = 4.0). A letter grade (A-F) is given in each class. Pass/Fail is not permitted except for *MFA Teaching Assistantship* courses, and *MA Thesis* courses.

Transfer Credits are not accepted and therefore would not be included in either earned or attempted credits, and therefore the GPA of the previously earned credits will also not be considered.

Repeated Coursework: Students can repeat coursework if needed as long as they are able to do so within the maximum timeframe allowed for completion of all coursework. Students must pay additional tuition on a prorated basis for any repeated coursework.

Withdrawals: The GPA of a student who Withdraws Passing from a course is unaffected by the withdrawal. The GPA of a student who Withdraws Failing from a course is affected in the same way as if the student had received a grade of "F" for the course. A student who Withdraws either Passing or Failing must make up any required credits within the maximum timeframe allowed for completion of the program.

Incompletes: An Incomplete will automatically become an "F" if all coursework is not completed by: March 1 for Fall; August 1 for Spring; November 1 for Late Spring or Summer. If the Incomplete becomes a grade of "F" the student must make up any required credits within the maximum timeframe allowed for completion of the program.

Changes in majors or degrees will be a matter of professional judgment and will be done on a case-by-case basis.

See **Program Assessment Policies & Procedures** for each degree program for a complete description of evaluated academic elements.

Maximum Timeframe of Program Completion

SACI students must complete 100% of coursework within the following timeframes:

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Programs within one academic year

Master of Arts Program within one academic year

Master of Fine Arts Programs within two academic years

Quantitative Measurement - Pace Requirement

SACI calculates the pace at which students are progressing by dividing the cumulative number of hours the student has successfully completed by the cumulative number of hours the student has attempted. SACI does not include remedial courses in this calculation.

The maximum timeframe is used to determine the pace of completion required to ensure that a student completes the program within the maximum timeframe.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Status Categories and Appeal

GOOD Status

The Graduate aid recipient has maintained a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA, has completed 100% of all attempted coursework and is on track to complete their program within the 100% maximum time-frame required to obtain their degree or certificate.

WARNING Status

At the end of any term of study, the aid recipient has not maintained a cumulative 3.0 GPA, or has not completed at least 100% of all attempted coursework and is not on track to complete their program within the 100% maximum time-frame required to obtain their degree or certificate. Students placed on **Financial Aid Warning** status are still eligible to receive the next term's disbursement of aid. However, if SAP is not met at the end of the consecutive term while under **Warning** status, and all coursework has not been made up, the student will be placed on **Suspension Status**.

SUSPENSION Status

Financial aid recipients placed on **Suspension Status** are not eligible for financial aid.

Students in any of the following three categories are considered to have a status of **Financial Aid Suspension**:

- Students who are on financial aid **Warning** and do not maintain a minimum cumulative GPA 3.0 at the end of the next consecutive semester will be placed on **Suspension**.
- Students who are on financial aid **Warning** and who do not complete 100% of their coursework at the end of the next consecutive semester will be placed on **Suspension**.
- Students who reach or exceed the **Maximum 100% Time-frame** of their program will be placed on suspension and are no longer eligible for Federal student aid. The student must use their own funds to continue and complete their program.

Financial Aid Notification and Suspension Appeal Process

Students who are placed on Financial Aid **Warning** or **Suspension** will be notified via email. Students on **Suspension** may appeal their status by completing a Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Application. Appeal applications are to be emailed to the Dean at SACI. The Appeal Application must include the following:

1. **Personal Statement Explaining Circumstance** – The statement must explain why you failed to make satisfactory academic progress and what has changed that will allow you to make academic progress for the next period of study.
2. **Supporting Documentation** – The student must submit documentation to support the personal statement
3. **Academic and Success Strategies Plan** – The student must complete an Academic Plan and Success Strategies Plan. The plan must outline coursework and academic services the student will utilize to ensure academic success.

Appeal Review and Decision and Financial Aid Probation

Note: SUBMISSION OF AN APPEAL DOES NOT GUARANTEE APPROVAL

The Financial Aid Appeal will be reviewed and the student will be notified in writing via email of their appeal decision. **APPEAL REVIEWS MAY TAKE UP TO TWO WEEKS BEFORE A DECISION IS RENDERED.** Hence, students are encouraged to submit their appeal as early as possible should they wish to be reconsidered for aid prior to the start of their next semester of enrollment.

If your appeal is approved, you will be placed on **ONE-TERM FINANCIAL AID PROBATION** and will be allowed one enrollment period/semester of funding to bring your status up to the required minimum standards. Eligibility is not retroactive to previous semesters in the award year. Approved appeals will move a student from **Suspension** to **Probation** status. Students who make progress after their probationary semester may return to "good satisfactory academic progress" status.

Students who fail to meet **Satisfactory Academic Progress** requirements after their probation period will be placed back on **Suspension** and will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

Appeals that are Denied and Regaining Eligibility

Students who are denied their appeal will remain on Financial Aid **Suspension** and will no longer be eligible for Federal Financial Aid through SACI. Once a student becomes ineligible for financial aid, the student can regain eligibility by completing the following:

- Achieve the required 100% quantitative cumulative course completion rate as described in this policy
- Achieve the minimum 3.0 GPA required to reestablish satisfactory academic progress.

Students may not re-appeal, for any reason, should they fail to meet SAP requirements during their probation period.

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