

I. Overview

One of the foundational eligibility criteria for federal (Title IV) aid requires that students are making “Satisfactory Academic Progress” (SAP). Therefore, Financial Aid is required to track each student’s academic progress at the conclusion of **each term of enrollment** (regardless if the student has received aid).

Students must complete a minimum number of credit hours based on percentage of work to be completed (quantitative) and maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (qualitative), as set forth by the graduate school, which is consistent with the requirements for both enrollment and graduation. Student’s coursework will be reviewed for classes in which the student was enrolled past the census date (end of drop/add period).

The following table summarizes the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP) requirements for maintaining eligibility for federal student aid:

Academic Progress Evaluation Methods (two separate criteria)		Hours Attempted
Quantitative	$\frac{\text{Completed Hours}}{\text{Attempted Hours}} = \text{Percent (Pace)}$	67%

A student will be considered meeting the **qualitative** requirement of SAP by meeting the minimum GPA standards as set forth by the *respective school* within the graduate program.

Students who are considering withdrawing from courses during any point in the semester are **strongly encouraged to schedule an appointment with a financial aid counselor before taking any action.**

II. Process

Students are evaluated for Satisfactory Academic Progress (minimum cumulative GPA, maximum time frame, and pace of completion) at the end of each semester (fall, spring, and summer). It is assumed that the majority of students will graduate in the normal four-year time frame. However, in addition to “Pace” and “GPA” assessment, no student may continue more than six years as a full-time student in order to complete his/her academic program (150 percent of program). Regardless of the credit hours a student attempted and for which aid was received, the student must complete the percentage of work attempted and have the appropriate cumulative grade point average as stipulated above.

Unsuccessful Grade Marks/Incomplete:

In conjunction with and in addition to the academic policy listed in the University catalog, the grading marks F, NC, NP, W, WP, WF, and Z are not considered as successfully completing the course(s) attempted. Therefore, the SAP analysis will consider the attempt of these courses in the quantitative (percent completion) analysis but not the qualitative (GPA) analysis.

For SAP analysis, the grade mark I (Incomplete) will be considered in both the quantitative (percent completion) and the qualitative (GPA) analysis when completed according to the provisions in the University catalog. When an incomplete grade changes to another grade notation, that change will be picked up in the next SAP review.

Repeated Courses/Auditing a Class:

Repeat course credits earned are averaged into the cumulative grade point averages; however, credit hours are counted only once toward graduation requirement, but both attempts are included when calculating the percent of completion.

Audit classes (AU) do not constitute hours attempted or completed. However, if a student enrolls in a course (for credit) and switches the class to an audit class, this will be calculated into the quantitative analysis.

Aid recipients who fail to meet these “Satisfactory Academic Progress” criteria will be designated “**Non-Satisfactory Academic Progress**” (NSAP). Any student whose status is NSAP is ineligible for any further federal and state financial aid until:

- Satisfactory Academic Progress status is reestablished
- An NSAP appeal is approved based on a documented appeal for mitigating circumstances that affected academic progress (see VI below: Method of Appeal)

III. Transfer Students

Transfer students who have never attended Cedarville University and bring in transfer credits will have those hours count toward their current program as both hours attempted and earned. The transfer credits plus the credits received at Cedarville University will be used for the percent of completion measurement (quantitative); however, only the grade point average earned at Cedarville will be assessed (qualitative).

IV. How to Re-establish Eligibility

As stated above, the SAP evaluation is made for each student at the conclusion of each term of enrollment. Students who are not maintaining satisfactory academic progress for the first time will be placed on **Financial Aid Warning**. Students under Financial Aid Warning can receive student financial aid without submitting an appeal for only one semester. At the end of the following semester, the student must meet the criteria for satisfactory academic progress. If unsuccessful, the student is considered **NSAP**. A student whose status is NSAP is ineligible for financial aid unless they submit an appeal and it is approved.

An appeal must explain why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress and what has changed in his or her situation that will allow him/her to make satisfactory academic progress at the next evaluation period.

If a student's appeal is approved, he or she will be placed on **Financial Aid Probation** and can receive student financial aid for only one semester. At the end of the semester, the student must meet the criteria for satisfactory academic progress. If unsuccessful, the student is once again considered **NSAP** and is ineligible for aid. The student may appeal again, but the latter appeal must be based on a reason different from the first appeal.

Financial Aid, at its discretion, *may* place the student on an **Academic Plan**. This "Academic Plan" category stipulates that students must meet specific criteria within the plan itself. If the student meets the requisite requirement(s) but still does not meet the overall requirements of SAP, the student may continue to receive financial aid without an appeal for the next semester. After that semester, the student on an Academic Plan will again be reviewed to ensure they are either meeting the academic plan or meeting SAP standards overall.

V. Definitions

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) – The student's GPA meets or exceeds the minimum standard required for continuing enrollment and graduation, the student has attempted less than 150 percent of the credit hours required to complete a degree, and the student has completed 67 percent or more of his or her attempted hours.

Minimum cumulative GPA (qualitative) – The grade point average required for continuing enrollment or graduation.

Maximum time frame (quantitative) – The number of credit hours a student can attempt to complete a degree, not to exceed 150 percent of the published time measured in credit hours.

Pace of completion (quantitative) – The percentage calculation of credit hours completed divided by the number of credit hours attempted past the census date (end of drop/add period).

Financial Aid Warning – The status of a student who is not *initially* maintaining SAP. The student is eligible to continue to receive aid for one semester without appealing for aid.

Financial Aid Probation – The status of a student who is not maintaining SAP after being placed on Financial Aid Warning. The student has successfully appealed and is eligible to receive aid for one term.

Academic Plan – The status of a student who is not maintaining SAP after being placed on Financial Aid Warning. The student will be required to meet specific criteria and if it is met, the student may continue to receive aid for the next semester.

VI. Method of Appeal

Students who have been denied federal aid due to NSAP designation have the right to appeal and may do so by submitting a completed **Non-Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal** form to the Assistant Director of Financial Aid. All appeals must provide an explanation for why the student failed to achieve satisfactory academic progress and what has changed that will allow him or her to make satisfactory academic progress during the next evaluation period.

The appeal form is available at cedarville.edu/finaidforms under "Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards."

The Assistant Director of Financial Aid, along with the appeal committee, will review each appeal; the Assistant Director will respond by letter and/or email clearly stating whether the appeal has been approved or rejected. All appeal decisions are final.