



UNIVERSITY POLICY

BUSINESS AND FINANCE POLICIES

Number: 200

Subject: Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP)

Covered Individuals: UIU Students

Covered Locations: Fayette Campus, Centers, Online, Self-Paced, and Military Locations

Date of Origin: July 1, 2011

Effective Date of Last Revision: November 10, 2021

POLICY STATEMENT

Federal law requires that institutions of higher education monitor the academic progress of students who receive federal financial aid. In order to remain eligible for federal, state and institutional financial aid, students must comply with the Upper Iowa University (UIU or University) standards for **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**. All undergraduate and graduate students will be evaluated for SAP at the end of every semester.

DEFINITIONS

Financial Aid – Funding that is used to assist students in meeting their educational goals and financial obligations. Financial aid consists of federal, state, and institutional funds. Students must meet and maintain the conditions set forth in the SAP policy in order to qualify for financial aid. Some examples of financial aid under this policy include, but are not limited to, Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal loans, Iowa Tuition Grant, Merit Scholarships, Special UIU Grant, and tuition remission.

Financial Aid Warning – A status UIU assigns to a student who is failing to make satisfactory academic progress. The University reinstates eligibility for aid for one payment period and may do so without a student appeal. This status may only be used by universities that check SAP at the end of each payment period and only for students who were making SAP in the prior payment period for which they were enrolled or who were in the first payment period of their program.

Financial Aid Suspension – An undergraduate or graduate student who fails to meet SAP requirements after Financial Aid Warning is placed on Financial Aid Suspension and is not eligible to receive financial aid without a successful appeal.

Appeal – A process by which a student who is not meeting SAP standards petitions the UIU’s Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Committee for reconsideration of their eligibility for FSA funds.

Financial Aid Probation – A status UIU assigns to a student who is failing to make satisfactory academic progress and who successfully appeals. Eligibility for aid may be reinstated for one payment period.

Maximum Timeframe – A period no longer than 150 percent of the published length of the program.

Payment Period – Is the length of a semester. Example, Fall Semester (August – December).

POLICY

A. SAP Requirements

1. Qualitative Measure (Grade Point Average)

- An undergraduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) as described below.
 - Freshman – 1.75 GPA (0 to less than 30)
 - Sophomore – 1.90 GPA (30 to less than 60)
 - Junior and above – 2.0 GPA (Greater than or equal to 60)
- A graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) as described below.
 - 2.5 GPA (1-6 completed credits)
 - 3.0 GPA (7+ completed credits)
- The following count towards the SAP GPA:
 - Remedial (Developmental) Courses
 - Prerequisite Courses
- The following do not count towards the SAP GPA:
 - Incompletes
 - Withdrawals
 - Non-Attendance
 - Preparatory (Foundation) Courses

2. Quantitative Measure: Pace of Progression (Credit Hours)

- A student must successfully complete a minimum of 66.7% (rounded from 2/3) of all (cumulative) attempted credits.
- For example: Student attempts 100 credits; he/she must complete 67 credits.
- The following count towards the SAP Quantitative Measure:
 - Repeat Courses
 - Withdrawals
 - Incompletes
 - Remedial (Developmental) Courses

- Preparatory (Foundation) Courses
- Prerequisite Courses
- The following do not count towards the SAP Quantitative Measure:
 - Correspondence (Self-Paced) Courses
 - Audit Courses
- Transfer credits are counted in the calculation, but not in the cumulative GPA.

Quantitative Formula:

Successfully completed credits / Attempted credits = Quantitative Measure

3. Maximum Timeframe Measurement (Total Allowable Credits)

- Students must complete their degree requirements within 150 percent of the published length of their program (number of credits needed to complete degree requirements). For example, a program requiring 120 credits to graduate will be limited to 180 credits of financial aid eligibility. All coursework is counted including, but not limited to, repeat and incomplete coursework, transfer credits, and coursework completed for a prior degree or major for which a degree was not conferred.
- Any student who has exceeded the maximum timeframe and/or who mathematically cannot finish the program within this period will be considered ineligible for financial aid.
- The following count towards the SAP Maximum Timeframe:
 - Courses with assigned grades of F
 - Withdrawals
 - Incompletes
 - Repeated Courses
 - Remedial (Developmental) Courses
 - Preparatory (Foundation) Courses
 - Prerequisite Courses

B. Failure to Meet SAP Requirements

1. Financial Aid Warning

- An undergraduate or graduate student who does not meet SAP requirements will be placed on Financial Aid Warning which allows the student to receive financial aid for one additional semester. The student will be evaluated for SAP again at the end of the warning period.

2. Financial Aid Suspension

- An undergraduate or graduate student who fails to meet SAP requirements after Financial Aid Warning is placed on Financial Aid Suspension and is not eligible to receive financial aid without a successful appeal. Should the student not wish to appeal, the student must meet SAP requirements before aid eligibility can be re-established.
- The Financial Aid Office will attempt to notify any student currently receiving financial aid who is placed on Financial Aid Suspension.

However, failure to receive such notification does not relieve the student of the requirement to read, understand, and follow the SAP requirements for financial aid recipients.

3. Financial Aid Probation

- An undergraduate or graduate student who has successfully appealed a Financial Aid Suspension will be placed on Probation for one semester. If the student meets the SAP standards at the end of the Probation semester, the student's SAP status will reset back to passing SAP. If they do not meet the SAP standards at the end of their Probation, the student will be placed back into Financial Aid Suspension.

RULES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES, FORMS, AND OTHER RELATED RESOURCES

- **Rules**

1. Transfer Credit

- UIU will count transfer credits accepted toward a student's educational program as both attempted and successfully completed hours. These credits will be included in quantitative and maximum timeframe calculations but excluded from the semester qualitative measurement calculations.

2. Attempted Credits

- All credits are part of the calculation, including, but not limited to, repeat and incomplete coursework, transfer credits, and coursework completed for a prior degree, major for which a degree was not conferred, regardless of receiving financial aid.

3. Incompletes and Withdrawals

- Courses with incomplete (I) and withdrawal (AW or W) grades at the time of the SAP review count as attempted hours but are not counted as successfully completed hours.
- The first SAP Evaluation will be conducted on the Tuesday following the last day of the semester. An official SAP evaluation will be completed on Monday of the next week for any student with an incomplete grade or non-recorded grade. A student **WILL NOT** receive financial aid for the following semester until all grades are entered and it has been determined that the student passes satisfactory academic progress.
- Faculty must have all grade changes completed on the second Friday following the last day of the semester.

4. Change of Grade

- As grade changes from past courses are posted to a student's academic record, a recalculation of SAP for the related semester will be performed. These recalculations are performed on a regular basis.

- 5. Repeat Courses**
 - Courses that are repeated will count in attempted hours. Repeated courses that are excluded from the academic record will not count as successfully completed hours or in the GPA calculation.
- 6. Drop and Non-Attendance Courses**
 - Courses that are dropped prior to the start of the module and courses with a non-attendance (NA) code are not counted in attempted or successfully completed hours, except when a student has retained an overpayment.
- 7. Remedial (Developmental) Coursework**
 - Students enrolled in a degree-granting program may receive financial aid for remedial coursework. However, federal regulations prohibit the receipt of financial aid for more than 30 semester hours of remedial course work.
- 8. Preparatory (Foundation) Courses**
 - Courses that a student is required to take in order to enroll in an eligible degree program are to be considered preparatory courses. The courses are preparatory to the degree, not a part of the degree requirements. Applicants who need to take preparatory coursework at UIU prior to being eligible for final admission into a degree program may be able to receive a limited amount of funding through the Federal Direct Loan program.
- **Procedures**
 - 1. SAP Determination**
 - The Financial Aid Office evaluates SAP for all students (excluding self-paced students) at the end of each semester of their current academic year to determine financial aid eligibility for the next semester. Self-paced students will be evaluated in the following semester evaluation after grades have been posted. For example, if the grade for the self-paced student was entered November 30th, the SAP evaluation will be conducted at the end of the fall semester. Students who have failed to meet federal SAP requirements are ineligible to receive any federal or state financial aid.
 - 2. SAP Notification**
 - Students who have failed to meet SAP at the semester evaluation will receive a notification to their UIU email addresses and a letter sent to their preferred mailing addresses displayed in Jenzabar. Academic advisors will be notified through email.
 - 3. SAP Appeal**
 - Students are not eligible for a SAP appeal while on Academic Suspension, as determined by the Standards for Academic Standing (SAS) review committee.

- A student with **extenuating circumstances** may appeal the denial of student financial assistance by submitting a SAP Appeal Form. It is recommended that this form be submitted within five (5) business days from the day the **Notice of SAP Suspension** was sent. For example, if the failure notice was sent on a Tuesday, the student should submit the SAP Appeal Form by the following Tuesday. Late appeals may be considered, but the student cannot receive financial aid for the next session of enrollment until a successful appeal is confirmed by the SAP Committee.
- The appeal must be made in writing, addressed to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee and include the following documentation:
 - Completed Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Form.
 - A letter written and signed by the student describing why the student has failed SAP and what has changed that will allow the student to successfully meet SAP in the future.
 - A physician's note if the appeal is based on medical circumstances. In accordance with HIPAA privacy rules, documentation should never include medical records or copies of prescriptions.
 - Additional supportive documents, if appropriate.
 - An academic plan must also be included with the appeal.
- Extenuating Circumstances (**timeframe must be within either the warning or suspension semester**)
 - Death of an immediate family member
 - Major medical issue (i.e. requires hospitalization) experienced by the student or an immediate family member of the student
 - Domestic Violence
 - Involuntary call to active military duty
 - Documented learning disability
- Extenuating circumstances must have occurred during the timeframe of the warning or suspension semester.
- Only one approved appeal per each level of education will be allowed. (One for undergraduate and one for graduate level). *Additional appeals may be reviewed for special circumstances (ex. multiple military deployments).*

4. SAP Academic Plan

- If a student is unable to feasibly meet all SAP requirements within one semester, an academic plan must be developed with the student's academic advisor. The academic plan will outline grade and course requirements that will allow the student to successfully meet SAP. If necessary, the academic plan may extend beyond the current academic year. If the SAP Academic Plan will extend beyond the current academic year then the student must meet the minimum 2.0 GPA each semester going forward at a minimum. Should the student fail to meet the semester 2.0 GPA requirement the student would move to SAP Suspension. If SAP failure was based on the quantitative measure only, it is not necessary to

establish an academic plan. If SAP failure was based on the maximum timeframe measure, the student must complete all credits required for degree completion by the end of the last semester of the academic plan.

- Under an academic plan, a student's progress will be monitored at the end of each semester in order to ensure that the student is progressing according to the requirements of the plan. As long as the student is progressing accordingly, the student will remain eligible for financial aid. If the student is not meeting the requirements of the plan, the student will not be eligible to receive financial aid until all components of SAP have been met.

5. Reinstatement

- Students may reestablish eligibility for financial aid by resolving their qualitative, quantitative or maximum timeframe deficiency. Discontinuing enrollment for a semester or opting to privately pay for coursework without utilizing federal aid will not be, in and of itself, sufficient to allow for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility. Students who are unsuccessful in their SAP appeals may continue their education by utilizing another payment method, such as a payment plan, an alternative loan through a private lender, or by paying out of pocket. The SAP process is run once per semester and student eligibility will be reviewed at that time.

- **Other Resources**

- Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)**

- HEA Sec. 484(c)
 - 34 CFR 668.16(e)
 - 34 CFR 668.32(f)
 - 34 CFR 668.34

- [SAP Appeal Form](#)

CONTACTS

Acting as the Policy Owner, the Financial Aid Office is responsible for answering questions regarding the application of this policy.

SANCTIONS

Failure to adhere to this SAP Policy will prevent a student from receiving financial aid funds.

HISTORY

July 1, 2011 – Policy was created and approved by President's Council
March 29, 2017 – Revised policy approved by President's Council

April 18, 2017 – Revised policy approved by the Enrollment Management Committee of the Board of Trustees

March 21, 2018 – Revised policy approved by the President’s Council

March 18, 2019 – Revision recommended by the University Policy Committee

March 27, 2019 – Revision approved by the President’s Council

November 8, 2021 – Revised policy recommended by the University Policy Committee

November 10, 2021 – President’s Council recommends approval to President Duffy and President Duffy approves