

ULM Office of Financial Aid
2009-2010 Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Federal regulations require that all students receiving Federal Title IV Financial Aid funds maintain standards of satisfactory academic progress in the pursuit of their degree or certificate. Satisfactory academic progress is defined as passing a required number of hours and achieving a required grade point average during a reasonable period of time. Regulations require that your entire academic history be considered, even if you have never received federal aid.

Three standards are used to measure academic progress for financial aid purposes:

1. Cumulative Grade Point Average

In order to retain financial aid eligibility a student must progress according to the following grade scale:

Hours Attempted	Minimum Cumulative GPA
1-29	1.50
30-59	1.80
60 +	2.00
Graduate	3.00

2. Credit Completion Rate

This is the number of hours completed compared to the number of hours attempted. To retain financial aid eligibility a student must earn a minimum of 67% of the total number of hours attempted.

- Completion Rate = cumulative earned hours ÷ cumulative attempted hours
- All attempted hours are counted, including transfer hours

3. Maximum Time Frame

A student is no longer eligible to receive financial aid once he/she has attempted more than 150% of the credits required for the major the student is **currently** enrolled. For example, a program requiring 120 hours for graduation would allow 180 attempted hours ($120 \times 1.5 = 180$).

To determine the maximum allowable hours for a specific major, refer to the University Catalog, note the total hours required for the degree, and multiply that number by 1.5.

- 2nd Associates Degree 120 attempted hours (includes all undergraduate hours)
- 2nd Bachelors Degree 240 attempted hours (includes all undergraduate hours)
- Doctoral Degree 100 attempted hours

The maximum time frame is **not** increased for changes in major, double majors, or adding a minor in another subject area.

A student pursuing a second degree must submit a degree plan listing the classes needed to obtain the second degree for eligibility determination. Maximum time frames will be calculated on a case-by-case situation.

A student pursuing a second Master's degree must submit a degree plan listing the classes needed to obtain the second degree listing the classes needed to obtain the second degree for eligibility determination.

The following are considered when evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress:

- Grades of A, B, C, or D are considered attempted and earned hours.
- Withdrawals (W), Incompletes (I), Failures (F), No Credit (NC), and In Progress (IP) grades are considered attempted but not earned.
- Audited courses are included in the attempted hours but not in the total of hours earned.
- Remedial courses are included in the calculation of both attempted and earned hours.

- Transfer credits are included in the calculation of both attempted and earned hours and the cumulative GPA.
- Repeated courses and courses for which the student has been granted **Academic Renewal** are included in the calculation of both attempted and earned hours.

SAP Review

Academic progress will be reviewed at the end of the spring semester for currently enrolled financial aid recipients. The academic progress of new financial aid recipients will be reviewed as ISIR data is received.

SAP will be reviewed at the end of the fall semester for students that withdraw from the University for the fall semester.

- Students not meeting the minimum SAP standards will be placed on financial aid suspension.
- Students on financial aid suspension are not eligible to receive financial aid.

Appeal Process

A student may appeal the loss of financial aid eligibility if extenuating circumstances interfered with the ability to meet satisfactory progress requirements.

In order to appeal the loss of your financial aid, you must submit a letter explaining the extenuating circumstances that resulted in your lack of academic progress and documentation to support your circumstances.

Your circumstances must meet one of the following criteria:

- Prolonged illness, medical condition, or injury to student or **immediate** family member
- Death of an **immediate** family member
- Significant trauma in student's life that impaired the student's emotional or physical health
- Extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control

Your letter must include the following information:

- **Your** circumstances and how the circumstances affected your academic performance.
- Include dates and time periods involved.
- How the documentation you are attaching supports your appeal.
- Explain how your situation has changed and the steps you are taking to change your situation.

Documentation may include:

- Physician' letters and hospital records (**must include dates of illness and recovery time**)
- Death certificate
- Court and police documents
- Letters from third party professionals on his/her letterhead.

Students that have exceeded the maximum time frame must include *additional* information:

- Hours needed to complete current degree and intended graduation date
- Copy of degree plan, highlighting classes needed to graduate.

Appeal Decisions

- All decisions of the SAP Appeals Committee are final.
- Notification of the decision will be sent to the student's university email and posted on ARROW.
- Financial Aid will be awarded for the academic year on a probationary basis for appeal approvals.
- Terms and conditions of appeal approval will be included in the Appeal Approval Agreement that the student must sign before financial aid will be awarded.

Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility

Financial aid eligibility can be re-established after the student improves their academic record to meet the minimum standards required by the SAP Policy, without the assistance of financial aid funds.