

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

The Higher Education Amendment Act of 1965, as amended, mandates institutions of higher education to establish a minimum standard of "Satisfactory Academic Progress" for students receiving financial aid. SUU makes this standard applicable to all federal, state and institutional financial assistance programs for the purpose of maintaining a consistent policy for all students receiving financial aid.

To be eligible to receive financial assistance while attending Southern Utah University, a student must be enrolled at least halftime (with the exception of the Pell Grant program, which allows less than half-time enrollment), be in good standing, and maintain satisfactory academic progress through a course of study toward a certificate or degree. A student must also be a citizen of the United States or an eligible non-citizen.

### ***Review Period***

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is reviewed at the end of the Spring semester for all students who were enrolled during the previous Summer, Fall, and Spring terms. Failure to make Satisfactory Academic Progress during the review period will affect financial aid eligibility for the upcoming academic year. Please note that if you did not attend SUU during Summer, Fall and Spring terms, but were previously enrolled, your prior SAP status will still apply.

To make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), students must meet all of the following standards:

- 1. Academic Standards**
- 2. Maximum Time Frames**
- 3. Enrollment Status**

#### **1. Academic Standards (GPA)**

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA minimum requirement, reviewed at the end of Spring semester each year. For all credit hours attempted: undergraduate students must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA; graduate students must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA. If the cumulative GPA drops below the minimum requirement, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

#### **2. Maximum Time Frames**

The number of credit hours an undergraduate student attempts may not exceed 150% of the number of credit hours required for graduation in his or her program of study, as published in the University catalog. For example, if the published number of hours required for graduation is 122, a student may not attempt more than 183 credit hours ( $122 \times 150\% = 183$ ) and continue to receive financial aid. All periods of enrollment must be considered, even those for which the student did not receive financial aid as well as hours transferred in from another school. If the number of attempted hours reaches 150% of the hours required for graduation, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid. Upon reaching 159 earned credit hours, students are advised to meet with their academic advisor to review the remaining courses they must take to complete their degree within the 183 credit hour limit.

Attempted hours include all registered hours per semester whether or not the student earns a grade or receives credit. The following are considered hours attempted, but not completed:

- a) "F" grades for undergraduate students

- b) "D" or "F" grades for graduate students
- c) "W" or withdrawal from courses
- d) "UW" or unofficial withdrawals from courses
- e) "I" or incomplete

Completed hours include all semester hours for which the student earns a grade:

- a) "A" through "D" grades for undergraduate students
- b) "A" through "C" grades for graduate students
- c) All transfer hours completed

Repeat courses may not count as earned credits for financial aid purposes and should be taken in addition to the number of credits used to determine a student's financial aid award. Audited courses **are not** considered in determining financial aid eligibility. Incomplete grades must be completed within four weeks from the last day of class instructions.

In accordance with federal regulations, the standard is "cumulative" and credits earned without the receipt of financial aid or at other institutions must be counted. These policies may be appealed on a case-by-case basis for students with extenuating circumstances or a qualifying disability. Disabilities must be documented with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in the Student Support Center (ST 206F). Each request for appeal, and the supporting documentation, will be carefully considered by the Financial Aid Review Committee.

### **3. Enrollment Status**

During the academic year (Fall/Spring) a student who receives financial aid must successfully complete a minimum of 70% of all attempted course work. If the number of completed hours drops below 70% of attempted hours, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

Examples:

1. If a student attempts (registers for) 30 credit hours in an academic year, he or she must complete a minimum of 21 credit hours ( $30 \times 70\% = 21$ ) in order to make SAP for the year.

Note: All partial credit hours will be rounded down to the nearest hour.

2. If at the end of the second year a student has attempted 60 credit hours, he or she must have completed a minimum of 42 credit hours ( $60 \times 70\% = 42$ ) to be making SAP.

Students who have attended prior school terms without receiving financial aid and who do not have a minimum GPA of 2.0 (3.0 for graduate students) will be placed on financial aid probation during the first term in which financial aid is received.

Transfer students are eligible to apply for federal aid upon being academically admitted to SUU.

Those students who have cumulative GPAs lower than 2.0 will be placed on financial aid probation.

### ***Review Policy***

After grades are posted for the Spring semester, the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships will review the SAP progress of every enrolled student, regardless of whether or not they received financial aid. Students will be reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the following criteria:

1. Cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher (undergraduates) or Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher (graduates).

2. Successful completion of at least 70% of all attempted course work for all periods of enrollment (cumulative), even those for which the student did not receive financial aid.
3. Total attempted hours does not exceed 150% of the published length of the program of study.

### ***Financial Aid Suspension***

In the event the student does not meet the requirements for SAP, he or she will be placed on financial aid suspension for the following academic year. This means that the student will not be eligible for any type of federal, state or institutional aid until he or she returns to satisfactory academic progress. Students who have been placed on Financial Aid Suspension because they do not meet the GPA or Enrollment Status requirements may do the following if they decide not to appeal, or if their appeal is not approved:

- Students may attend the next semester without financial aid or apply for alternative loans to cover their balance.
- If at the end of that semester the student meets the SAP requirements, they may submit an appeal to have their aid reinstated for the next and subsequent semesters for that award year only.
- Students will be reviewed again at the end of each spring semester to determine if they meet the SAP requirements and eligibility for aid will be reviewed during the regular review process.

### ***Conditions for Reinstatement and Appeal Process***

Students whose eligibility for financial aid has been terminated may appeal the decision, in writing, to the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships if they believe that they had extenuating circumstances that led to their unsatisfactory progress. The Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships will notify the student in writing of the decision.

To appeal for the reinstatement of financial aid eligibility, complete and submit the Request for Appeal Form. A completed form must include:

1. A letter from the student documenting the extenuating circumstances. For example, personal illness or medical problems, death in the family, etc. This letter should provide a detailed explanation of the situation.
2. If the student has exceeded the maximum time frame and is appealing based on a change of major, he or she should state the reason for the change and indicate the number of hours remaining to be taken in the new major. The student must also have his or her academic advisor complete the advisor section of the form indicating the number of credit hours required for the major and the number of hours remaining.
3. The student's name, T Number and email address.

The status of each aid recipient will be monitored for satisfactory academic progress and written notification will be sent to the last known address of those students who are placed on Financial Aid Suspension.

Students who fail to complete the requirements for a degree or certificate within 150% of the normal, published timeframe are entitled to submit an appeal for an extension. The Financial Aid Review Committee may grant timeframe extensions under certain circumstances.

A student may request an exception to any of the above policies, due to extenuating circumstances, including disability, by submitting an appeal to the Financial Aid Review Committee. The appeal must include a letter of explanation with supporting documentation and a completed financial aid suspension advising form. Documentation for a low GPA should include a letter from the appropriate academic advisor. Documentation for low hours should be in line with the cause of the low hours. Verification of disability will be provided to the Committee by the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities. The Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities may recommend that the Committee grant an extension if such is among the reasonable accommodations that would be appropriate for the student.

Examples of exceptions that may be made on a case-by-case basis include situations such as: a documented disability or serious illness, death in the family, change of major, or other unexpected and extenuating circumstances that can be appropriately documented. Each request for an exception is reviewed anonymously by the Financial Aid Review Committee, and will be carefully considered based solely on the individual situation presented by the student and the supporting documentation provided. Before the appeal is presented to the Financial Aid Review Committee, it is stripped of all personally identifying information about the student who has appealed. The Committee will make its decision based solely on the information presented. It is the intent of the Committee to review each appeal fairly and justly, and the committee will not use information presented in the appeal to discriminate in any way on age, national origin, disability, sex, religion, or any other legally recognized category.

Students will be notified in writing of the status of their appeal, including an explanation that supports the determination of the committee.