

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Federal regulations require schools to monitor the academic progress of financial aid recipients and certify the applicant is making satisfactory academic progress toward earning his/her degree. This evaluation process is comprised by three standards; qualitative, quantitative, maximum time frame. This determination must be made at least once per year. This evaluation process may be different for different schools at the HSC.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements

#### **Qualitative Standard– Grade Point Averages (GPA)** *(Excluding Medicine Students, Paul L. Foster and Lubbock)*

- Undergraduate School of Nursing students must maintain at least a cumulative 2.0 GPA.
- Hunt School of Nursing (El Paso) students must maintain at least a cumulative 2.5 GPA.
- Undergraduate students in Health Professions must maintain at least a cumulative 2.5 GPA.
- Graduate students in Nursing and Biomedical Sciences must maintain at least a cumulative 3.0 GPA.
- Graduate students in these Health Profession programs must maintain at least a cumulative 2.7 GPA.
  - Masters of Athletic Training
  - Masters in Healthcare Administration
  - Masters in Molecular Pathology
  - Masters in Occupational Therapy
  - Doctor of Physical Therapy
  - Physical Therapy ScD
  - Physical Therapy Transitional
  - Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling
  - Masters in Addiction Counseling
  - Masters in Clinical Mental Health
- The Health Profession's Physician Assistant program requires at least a 2.8 cumulative GPA.
- These Health Profession, Graduate/Professional programs requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.
  - Audiology
  - Communication Scie & Disorders PhD
  - Speech and Language Pathology
  - Rehabilitation Sciences PhD
- Pharmacy students must maintain a cumulative grade average of 75% or better.
- If the qualitative standard is not met, the student will be placed on financial aid warning for one term. During this warning term the student will still be eligible to receive financial aid.
- If at the end of any warning term the student fails to achieve the minimum qualitative standard, they will be placed on financial aid suspension and will be ineligible to receive financial aid until the minimum standard has been achieved, or until they successfully appeal the suspension.

#### **Qualitative Standard – Medicine Students** *(Paul L. Foster and Lubbock)*

- GPA's are not assigned by these schools. Progression is based on the standards and recommendations of each school's Grading and Promotion Committee.
- If the qualitative standard is not met at the end of an academic year, the student will be placed on financial aid suspension and be ineligible for financial aid until the minimum standard has been achieved, or until they have successfully appealed the suspension.

#### **Quantitative Standard (Pace)** *– (Excluding the Schools of Medicine, and GSBS)*

- All students must successfully complete 67% of the hours attempted.
- This percentage is calculated by dividing cumulative hours the student has successfully completed by cumulative hours the student has attempted.
- At the end of a term, if the student fails to meet this standard he or she will be placed on financial aid warning. During this warning term the student is eligible to receive financial aid.
- A student failing to meet this standard at the end of a warning period will be placed on financial aid suspension and be ineligible to receive financial aid, unless they successfully appeal the suspension.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy cont.

### **Quantitative Standard (Pace)** – *Medicine and GSBS Students (El Paso and Lubbock)*

- Students must successfully complete at least 67% of the hours attempted.
- This percentage is calculated by dividing cumulative hours the student has successfully completed by cumulative hours the student has attempted.
- At the end of an academic year, students failing to meet this standard will be placed on financial aid suspension and be ineligible to receive financial aid until the minimum standard has been achieved, or they have successfully appealed the suspension.

### **Maximum Time Frame** – *All students*

- Students may not attempt more than 150% of the required program hours (or years for medicine students) to complete their degree program.
- Exceeding 150% results in the student being placed on financial aid suspension. During this suspension period the student is ineligible to receive financial aid.
- The maximum amount of hours allowed is calculated by multiplying the number of hours required for the degree by 150%.
- Medicine students have six years to complete the four year program (FMAT 4.5 years).
- Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences - The normal (average) PhD student completes their program with 132 hours (per the GSBS). The maximum time frame is 110%, or 145 hours.

### **Evaluation of Eligibility**

In an effort to provide students with an advance warning period, SAP evaluations will be performed at the end of each term (the combined summer terms equal a single term) unless otherwise outlined.

SAP evaluations for the Schools of Medicine and GSBS will be at the end of each academic year with no warning period, per federal regulations.

### **Grade Changes/Late Grade Entries**

Grade changes, or late grade entries, may retroactively impact a student's SAP status. A grade change triggers a review of the applicable term and all subsequent terms. This may cause the student's SAP status to change from "eligible" to "warning" or "suspension" in the current or prior term. The student could become ineligible for prior aid or current aid that has already been received.

### **Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility**

When a student has been placed on financial aid suspension it is possible to regain eligibility by:

- Submitting a successful appeal after being notified of suspension, or
- Meeting all of the aforementioned qualitative, quantitative, and time frame requirements by the end of a suspension period completed without the benefit of financial aid funds.

Note: A student may not regain eligibility by "sitting out" for a period of time, taking a leave of absence, or otherwise not attending a term.

### **Appeal Procedures**

- It is recommended that an appeal be submitted within 30 days of a suspension notification.
- A suspension appeal must include:
  - a) a letter of explanation detailing what extenuating factor(s) caused him or her not to meet the SAP requirements, and what specific steps the student has taken to resolve the situation to allow the requirements to be met,
  - b) a verified session with their academic advisor (which is documented on the appeal form section 3), and c) acknowledgment of the SAP policy.
- The appeal may not be based upon the student's need for the assistance or the student's lack of knowledge that their assistance was in jeopardy.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy cont.**

- An appeal should be based upon an extraordinary situation or condition which prevented the student from successfully completing their courses, or which necessitated their withdrawal from classes. Examples are serious illness, severe injury, or death of a family member.
- If the student's appeal is approved he or she will be placed on financial aid probation.
- Students are typically provided an appeal form with their suspension notification email (TTUHSC email).
- The appeal committee may approve an appeal with or without an academic plan. Use of an academic plan will be based on the professional judgment of the appeal committee when a student has sufficiently proven that an extenuating circumstance has caused the suspension, but it will take the student more than one term to meet the SAP requirements, and/or the student will exceed the 150% timeframe.

### **Without Academic Plan:**

- If the student's appeal is approved he or she will be placed on financial aid probation for one term. During this probationary term the student will be eligible to receive financial aid.
- If a student meets all SAP requirements at the end of a probationary term, he or she will be taken off of probation and will be eligible to receive financial aid.
- If a student fails to meet all SAP requirements at the end of a probationary term he or she will be placed back on financial aid suspension.

### **With Academic Plan:**

- If the student's appeal is approved he or she will be placed on financial aid probation for one term. During this probationary term the student will be eligible to receive financial aid.
- While on probation, the student's progress will be evaluated at the end of each term based on the academic plan requirements. The student will remain on financial aid probation each term as long as the conditions of the academic plan are being met.
- If a student meets all SAP requirements at the end of the academic plan, he or she will be taken off of probation and will be eligible to receive financial aid.
- If a student fails to meet all requirements of the academic plan at the end of a probationary term during the academic plan, he or she will be placed back on financial aid suspension.

## **Additional Information**

### **General Disclosures**

- The Financial Aid SAP policy may differ from the academic standards required of each of the respective programs within the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center.
- Summer is considered a term.
- All correspondence regarding SAP will be sent to the student's TTUHSC email account.

### **Treatment of Courses and Grades**

- Transfer hours (prerequisite and core curriculum) are not counted towards the student's HSC degree, and are not used to calculate the quantitative or maximum time frame components.
- Grades of Withdrawal (W) and Dropped (DG, DW, DX) are used in calculating the quantitative and time frame components.
- Repeated courses, grades of Withdrawal Failing (WF), and No Credit (NC) are used in all calculations pertaining to SAP and are considered unsatisfactory.
- Grades of Credit (CR), Incomplete (I), and In Progress (PR) are satisfactory.
- GPA and completion percentages (pace) will be rounded to the nearest tenth.
- A student who is on warning, probation, or suspension may have their next financial aid disbursement held until grades are posted and their new status can be determined.
- A missing grade (X) is assigned when an actual course grade has not been submitted to the Registrar. A missing grade (X) is unsatisfactory and may negatively affect a student's SAP status.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy cont.

### Funding Information

Please note that the following types of funding may be affected by a student's SAP status:

- Federal student aid (grants & loans)
- State student aid (grants & loans)
- Institutional Scholarships
- Tuition/Fee waivers & exemptions

For more information on tuition and fee exemptions and waivers that are affected by SAP, please contact Student Business Services at 806.743.7867 or [sbs@ttuhsc.edu](mailto:sbs@ttuhsc.edu).

While on financial aid suspension, a student may apply for a private/alternative student loan, as some lenders do not have a satisfactory academic progress requirement. A student may also apply for an Emergency Tuition Loan through the Financial Aid Office at [www.ttuhsc.edu/financialaid/shorttermloans.aspx](http://www.ttuhsc.edu/financialaid/shorttermloans.aspx).

### Definitions

<i>Academic Plan</i>	A prescribed series of measures by which the student will regain SAP status within a specified period of time. The student must agree to the plan, and the school must monitor the student's compliance with the plan. The student is considered eligible for financial aid while meeting the terms of the plan.
<i>Financial Aid Probation</i>	Status assigned to a student who fails to make SAP but who has successfully appealed the school's determination that they are not meeting the school's FA SAP standards.
<i>Financial Aid Warning</i>	Status assigned to a student who fails to make SAP at the end of a payment term. A student may not be placed on warning for two consecutive terms.
<i>Maximum Time Frame</i>	The maximum amount of hours (years for medicine students) a student may attempt without having successfully obtained their degree. To calculate this percentage multiply the maximum amount of hours required for the program by 150%.
<i>Pace</i>	The rate students are required to complete their courses to complete their program within the maximum time frame. The percentage is calculated by dividing cumulative hours successfully completed by cumulative hours attempted.

Rev: for spring 2017, GSBS, GEBS, HP Addiction Counseling, Mental Health Counseling.