2014-2015 Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

Policy Requirements

Federal regulations require all schools participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs to have a Satisfactory Academic Progress policy that conforms to federal requirements. The purpose of these standards is to ensure financial aid recipients are adequately progressing toward their degree.

- All financial aid recipients will be evaluated for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at the conclusion of each semester, including summer.
- There are three SAP requirements. Failure to comply with one or more of the following requirements will result in the loss of financial aid eligibility.

1. Minimum Cumulative GPA
   - Undergraduate students must maintain a 2.0.
   - Graduate students must maintain a 3.0.
   - Pharmacy students must meet academic requirements specified to advance within the professional program.

2. Completion Rate
   All students must successfully complete a minimum 67% of all hours attempted. Completion rate is determined by dividing the total number of hours earned by the total number of credit hours attempted.

3. Maximum Time Frame
   Timeframe is defined as the maximum number of credits a student may attempt in pursuit of completing a degree program. Federal regulations allow 150% limit of the hours required for a degree.

   You are no longer eligible for financial aid (including federal student loans) beyond the following number of attempted hours:
   - Associate Degree: 90 hours
   - OTA Degree: 111 hours
   - Bachelor Degree: 180 hours
   - Graduate Degree: multiply number of hours required for your degree by 150%
     For example, your degree requires 36 hours (36 x 150% = 54 hours).

Financial Aid Warning and Financial Aid Suspension Status

- At the end of the first semester SAP is not met, a student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning and allowed to receive financial aid for one semester.
- Students who fail to meet SAP requirements by the end of the Financial Aid Warning semester will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. Students on suspension are no longer eligible for financial aid.
- As you get close to your maximum time frame, your academic progress status, will warn you that you are getting close to the maximum time allowed for your degree.

Second Bachelor’s Degree or Second Master’s Degree

- Student seeking a second undergraduate or second master degree must appeal in order to receive financial aid.
- A student must be able to graduate with a second Bachelor’s degree without going over a total of 225 undergraduate hours and have a cumulative 2.5 GPA. All undergraduate hours, including the hours used to earn first Bachelor’s degree will be included.
- A student must be able to graduate with a second Master’s degree without going over a total of 81 graduate hours. This includes all attempted graduate hours, including the hours used to earn first Master’s degree.
- All appeals will be reviewed on a case-by-case situation. Decisions will be based on the professional judgment of the Office of Financial Aid.
- Students seeking a third Bachelor’s or Master’s Degree are not eligible for federal aid.
- Doctorates are considered terminal degrees thus no federal aid is available for additional degrees.

Transfer Students

- Transfer students must meet all SAP requirements to qualify for financial aid.
- You will not be awarded financial aid until all official transcripts from all previous institutions have been received, posted and reviewed by ULM.
- All posted transfer credit hours are considered attempted and earned.
- Transfer credit hours and grades are included in the Cumulative GPA, Completion Rate, and Maximum Time Frame calculations.

The following information is considered when evaluating a student’s financial aid status:
• A student’s SAP status is based on the entire academic record at all schools attended, regardless of whether financial aid was received.
• Grades of A, B, C or D are considered attempted and earned hours.
• W, I, F, NC, and IP grades are considered attempted but not earned hours.
• Audited courses are considered attempted but not earned hours.
• Remedial courses are included in the calculation of both attempted and earned hours.
• The federal government does not exempt hours included in Academic Renewal. Therefore, these hours are considered attempted but not earned and they will also be included in the total hours attempted.

Notification of Satisfactory Academic Progress

• A notice will be sent to your university email at the completion of each semester SAP review.
• A good time for you to check your status is one week after the last day of final exams.
• A student’s SAP status does not affect the ability to enroll in courses, but it can affect your ability to receive aid to cover expenses.
• It is your responsibility to monitor your academic progress status and understand all requirements of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.
• Students may review their Satisfactory Academic Progress status by signing on to Banner Self-Service and completing the following steps:
  1. Click on the Financial Aid tab
  2. Click on “Overall Financial Aid Status”
  3. Select 2014-2015 Aid Year
  4. Click on academic progress

Once you have logged onto your Banner account, you can view the current status of your academic progress, the number of hours attempted, your completion rate, the ULM SAP Policy and the appeal form required to appeal your financial aid loss due to extenuating circumstances that prevented you from making academic progress.

Re-establishing financial aid eligibility

• Financial aid eligibility can be re-established automatically after a student has raised the Completion Rate and Cumulative GPA to the required level and you have not exceeded the maximum time allowed for your degree.
• You may appeal your financial aid if there were extenuating circumstances that prevented you from meeting the completion rate minimum GPA requirement or not graduating within the allowed time frame.
• Eligibility cannot be re-established by sitting out a semester or paying out of pocket for a semester.

Appeal Process

• Students experiencing extenuating circumstances which negatively impacted the ability to meet SAP requirements may submit a completed a 2014-2015 Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form.
• Examples of extenuating circumstances that will be considered include serious illness, hospitalization, and death of a family member or circumstances in your life that impaired you from making academic progress.
• Federal regulations are clear that students may not make subsequent appeals for the same reason as a previous appeal. This also includes known chronic medical conditions. Students are expected to balance school with these conditions.
• GPA and Completion Rate appeals will not be reviewed for the summer semester. Student must be meeting both the GPA and Completion Rate requirements to receive aid for summer.

Helpful Information for Submitting the Appeal

• Submit the appeal form posted on your Banner account along with a letter and requested documentation
• Incomplete appeals will not be reviewed.
• Submit your appeal form, letter and documentation at one time to ensure all of your appeal information stays together.
• Submit your appeal to the Office of Financial Aid, 700 University Avenue, Library, Room 228 Monroe, LA. 71209 or fax (318) 342-3539.
• Your can view your appeal decision on your Banner Account within three weeks of submitting a completed appeal.
• Your classes will not be held based on a pending appeal decision. You must be prepared to make payment arrangements before the fee payment deadline. If your appeal is denied, you will be responsible for any remaining balance owed the University.

Your appeal will result in one of the following decisions

• Appeal approved for one semester only. You must be meeting SAP at the end of the semester in order to receive financial aid for the following semester.
• Appeal approved on an academic plan. You will be awarded financial aid and be held to specific requirements each semester until meeting SAP requirements.
• Appeal approved for a time frame extension. Coursework will be limited to the courses required on your Time Frame Appeal. In addition, you must earn a minimum 2.0 each semester and successfully complete all courses enrolled while on extension.
• Appeal approved for a second degree. Coursework will be limited to the courses required for your second degree.
• Appeal Denied. All decisions are final