

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy – Graduate & Professional Students

Satisfactory Academic Progress standards (SAP) are separate from academic policies each graduate/professional school may require for degree completion. Students must be meeting SAP standards, as defined by the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships, to remain eligible for federal Title IV student aid. Students receiving federal Title IV financial assistance will have a SAP evaluation annually. At each evaluation period students must be meeting all three components of the SAP policy; qualitative (grade-based), quantitative (pace), and maximum timeframe.

- **Qualitative:** The qualitative measurement evaluates the quality (GPA and academic standing) of your academic work. The student is responsible for notifying the Office of Student Financial Aid if an earned grade is later received. Minimum cumulative GPA requirements for each graduate/professional school:
3.0 GPA – Graduate School, Engineering, Peabody, Owen, School of Nursing, School of Medicine (except MD) programs
2.5 GPA – Divinity
2.0 GPA - Law
- **Quantitative:** Pace is calculated by dividing the total cumulative earned hours by the total cumulative attempted hours, including repeat credit hours. The result must be 67% or greater, which means students must complete and pass at least two-thirds of their cumulative attempted hours. A reported grade of I, M, or W are included in attempted hours. Credit hours earned at prior colleges/universities and accepted by Vanderbilt University will be included in the quantitative evaluation.
- **Maximum Timeframe:** For each graduate/professional program, the maximum timeframe is defined by the individual schools and based on the length of the program. Each graduate/professional school has established a maximum length of time to obtain your degree. Credit hours earned at prior colleges/universities and accepted by Vanderbilt University will be included in the maximum time frame evaluation. Please refer to the specific academic requirements for your individual program.

Note: Note: Ph.D. students are allowed 4 years after passing Qualifying Examinations to complete all degree requirements. Students in this status are considered to be making satisfactory progress if officially registered. Students enrolled in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program are required to take 12 additional hours of course work plus a 1 year internship.

Suspension Status for Graduate/Professional Students

Students who fall behind schedule in the cumulative number of required credit hours or fall below the stipulated GPA will be *suspended* from Title IV funding until the student is back in good academic standing and on schedule as required for satisfactory progress.

Appeal Process

Any student whose federal Title IV student aid is suspended may submit an *appeal for reinstatement* of aid to the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships. The appeal for reinstatement should include the following elements:

- An explanation of extenuating circumstances, such as injury, illness, death of a relative, or other special circumstance as to why you failed to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements.
- An explanation of what has changed that will now allow you to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the end of the next semester.
- Include supporting documentation from medical doctors, advisors, psychologists, etc., to verify the information you are including in your personal statement. Failure to provide information may result in your appeal being denied.

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Probation Status

If the student's appeal is approved, federal aid eligibility will be reinstated for one additional semester on a *probationary* basis. The student must meet SAP at the end of the *probationary* period in order to continue to remain eligible for federal Title IV student aid. If it is determined, based on the appeal, that the student will require more than one payment period to meet progress standards, then the student will be placed on an *academic plan*, developed in collaboration with the program administrators. If the student meets the requirements of the *academic plan*, the student is eligible to receive Title IV aid.

Reinstatement of Aid

Students whose federal Title IV aid is suspended may have aid eligibility reinstated once SAP standards are met. It will be the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Student Financial Aid for a reevaluation of SAP and Title IV eligibility.