

## Ensuring compliance with Satisfactory Progress

On the following pages you will find a sample Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for a program offered in credit hours with a term-based academic calendar. This policy provides for SAP evaluations at the end of each academic term.

This sample policy uses federally required minimum standards of 67% pace of program completion and a 2.0, or "C" average academic standard. If your pace of completion or academic/grade standards are different than these federal minimums, simply replace the percentages in this sample policy with your requirements when you are publishing your official SAP policy. The standards of your SAP policy must be designed so that students will meet your program's maximum time frame (MTF) as published in your policy.

Your required minimum percentage of successfully completed credit hours must also be consistent with your maximum time frame. For example, the maximum time frame for program completion based on federal guidelines is 150% of the normal time for program completion. Mathematically, a MTF of 150% is consistent with a pace of completion/attendance standard of approximately 67% ( $100 / 0.67$ ). If you require students to successfully complete more than 67% of the credit hours they attempt, you must adjust your MTF to be consistent with that pace of completion standard. A school that requires students to successfully complete 80% of the credit hours attempted would have a MTF of only 125% of the normal program length ( $100 / 0.80$ ).

This policy has been submitted to and examined by the U.S. Department of Education's Third-Party Servicer Oversight Group (USDE/TPSOG) in Kansas City, MO. Its content has been accepted by the USDE as being compliant with the requirements of federal statute and regulations.

Also, although this sample policy complies with the provisions of USDE regulations regarding the measurement of student progress, be certain that your policy meets any additional published requirements of your state and your accrediting agency.

GEMCOR, Inc.

# Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Sample Policy

Students are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress throughout their training to comply with institutional policy and to remain eligible for Title IV, HEA federal student financial assistance. Satisfactory academic progress is measured in both quantitative terms (pace of program completion), as well as qualitative terms (academics/grades). Students must meet the school's pace of completion standard and the academic standard on a cumulative basis (start date to evaluation date) to maintain eligibility for federal student financial assistance funds unless the student is on "Financial Aid Warning" or "Probation" as defined in this policy. In the event that an evaluation results in the determination that a student is not meeting the institution's pace of completion and academic standards, or that the student is not in compliance with the terms of an academic plan developed in accordance with this policy, the institution will notify the student of that determination.

## Quantitative Standard (Pace of Completion)

Students must successfully complete at least 67% of the credit hours they attempt to complete for each term. Compliance with this standard shall ensure that the student is progressing toward completion of the program within the published maximum time frame. A student's pace of program completion is determined by the following formula using cumulative numbers of credit hours:

$$\frac{\text{Number of credit hours successfully completed as of the date that the term has ended}}{\text{Number of credit hours attempted by the student as of the date that the term has ended}}$$

For example, at the end of the student's term, records indicate that the student has successfully completed 14 credit hours of education. If the number of credit hours that the student attempted to complete as of this date is 20, then the student will have met this standard. If the student successfully completed 14 of the 20 attempted credit hours, his/her pace of program completion would be 70.0% (14/20) and would be meeting the attendance requirement of this policy.

## Qualitative Standard (Academic Achievement)

Theory, practical, and lab/clinic exams and procedures that are graded will be based on the following scale:

Grading System		
95% - 100%	A	Excellent
85% - 94%	B	Above Average
75% - 84%	C	Satisfactory
Below 75%	D	Unsatisfactory/Fail

Students must maintain an academic average of at least 75% (C) or higher on a cumulative basis as of the date the payment period ended to meet the academic standards of this policy and be considered as making satisfactory academic progress. If a GPA method is used, we recommend using 2.0 as the minimum acceptable cumulative GPA.

## **Review and Evaluation Periods**

Students may be counseled at any time if the institution determines that the student may be at risk regarding satisfactory academic progress. At risk students will be advised regarding efforts to improve progress. Formal satisfactory academic progress evaluations, which determine continuing eligibility for federal student aid, will be determined as of the date that each academic term ends. Students who meet the quantitative and qualitative standards described herein will be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress until the next scheduled evaluation.

## **Financial Aid Warning**

Students who fail to meet either of the two progress standards as determined by a SAP evaluation will be placed on Financial Aid Warning (FAW) status, and the student will remain eligible for federal student aid funds for the subsequent academic term. A student may not be placed on FAW for consecutive terms. At the end of the FAW period/term, the student must be meeting the published quantitative and qualitative standards on a cumulative basis to be considered as making satisfactory academic progress and to remain eligible for further federal student financial aid.

## **Probation**

Any student who fails to meet the published standards as a result of a SAP evaluation, and who is not eligible to be placed on Financial Aid Warning, is considered as not making satisfactory academic progress and is ineligible for federal student aid for subsequent academic terms. A student may reestablish his or her federal aid eligibility by submitting a written appeal in accordance with this policy and, if approved by the institution, by being granted "Probation" by the institution. In the event the student submits a successful appeal and is granted probation, federal student aid eligibility will be reinstated for the current term. Students who are granted probation as a result of a written appeal and institutional approval, must meet the institution's published standards on a cumulative basis at the next SAP evaluation, or must be in compliance with the terms of an academic plan established by the institution, in order to maintain eligibility for Title IV, HEA federal student assistance funds.

## **Appeals**

Students who have been designated as not making satisfactory academic progress may appeal this determination with the institution based on mitigating circumstances. Mitigating circumstances may include the death of a relative, injury or illness of the student, or other special circumstances. The student's appeal must be made in writing to the academic dean or school director and must be received within 15 days of date that the institution notified the student of his or her loss of federal aid eligibility. The student's appeal must include documentation regarding the unusual or mitigating circumstances that caused the student to fail to meet the institution's standards as well provide information regarding what conditions have changed that would demonstrate that the student could re-establish satisfactory academic progress in the future. The institution will review the student's appeal and related documentation and its resulting decision will be final.

## Reinstatements

Generally, most students who enroll in the school are considered to be making satisfactory academic progress during their initial academic term. Students who are returning to school after a temporary interruption are reinstated under the same SAP status as they had when their prior period of enrollment ended. Quantitative and qualitative progress will be measured on a cumulative basis from the beginning of the period of enrollment through the date that each academic term has ended. See the section of this policy about “Course Repetitions” for further information.

## Course Incompletes, Repetitions, and Non-Credit Remedial Courses

The institution does not offer grades of “incomplete”, or non-credit remedial courses, and accordingly, these have no impact on SAP. For students who withdraw from a program of study and re-enroll in the same program, their SAP status at the time of withdrawal becomes their SAP status upon re-enrollment. Students who are ineligible for FSA funds due to poor previous progress may pursue reinstatement of their FSA eligibility based on the terms of this policy. For course repetitions, the student’s academic grade for a repeated course will replace any existing grade for purposes of SAP qualitative measurement. However, all credit hours attempted by the student for a particular course will be counted in the quantitative (pace of completion) measurement. Students should meet with a financial aid advisor to discuss the conditions under which federal aid may be awarded for repeated courses.

## Reinstatement of Federal Financial Aid

Students who have lost eligibility for federal student aid may reestablish their eligibility for aid in accordance with the appeal provisions contained in this policy. Students seeking reinstatement of federal aid must also meet with the academic dean or school director. An academic plan may be developed by the institution and may include specific performance requirements that the student must successfully complete to maintain eligibility for federal student aid.

## Maximum Time Frame

The normal time frames and maximum time frames required for program completion are listed below. Students who maintain satisfactory academic progress in attendance will complete the program during the allowable maximum time frame.

	<b>Normal Time Frame</b>	<b>Maximum Time Frame</b>
Program 1 (Full Time)	60 Weeks – 72 Credits	90 Weeks – 108 Credits
Program 1 (Part Time)	120 Weeks – 72 Credits	180 Weeks – 108 Credits
Program 2 (Full Time)	120 Weeks – 160 Credits	180 Weeks – 240 Credits
Program 2 (Part Time)	240 Weeks – 160 Credits	360 Weeks – 240 Credits