# Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Graduate Students

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the term used to define successful completion of degree requirements to maintain eligibility for federal and state financial aid. As required by regulations, Marshall University must determine whether a student is meeting SAP requirements. SAP evaluation for graduate students occurs at the conclusion of the spring semester each year.

This SAP Policy for Graduate Students is not applicable to professional students pursuing a Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Pharmacy, or Doctor of Physical Therapy degree, but to all other graduate students enrolled in graduate certificate, master degree, or doctoral degree program.

The student's entire academic history must be considered when determining SAP status irrespective of whether or not the student received financial aid. This includes transfer credits that reflect on the student's academic transcript as a course that applies to a Marshall University degree.

**Requirements of the SAP Policy:**

The following components are measured to determine whether the student is meeting SAP standards: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Maximum Timeframe.

Qualitative (Grade Point Average)

The qualitative component measures the quality of the student's SAP by conducting a review of the student's cumulative grade point average (GPA). To meet the qualitative requirement, the student must have a minimum cumulative Marshall University and overall GPA of at least a 3.0. Credits accepted from other schools that are applied to a Marshall University degree are counted in the calculation of the student's GPA and are, therefore, included in the qualitative measure.

(Specific federal, state, and institutional scholarships and grants may require a different minimum GPA for continued eligibility. This consideration is a separate and distinct factor in renewing or continuing eligibility for these specific financial aid funds. Information about the terms and conditions of specific student aid programs that have GPA and credit completion requirements is provided to the student at the time the award is offered. This information may be reviewed by logging into myMU and accessing financial aid records.)

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Quantitative Measure (Calculating Pace or Completion Ratio)

The quantitative component corresponds to the pace at which the student must progress through his or her program of study. This evaluation is to ensure completion within the maximum timeframe (see below) permitted and provides for the measurement of the student's progress at the end of each evaluation. Pace or completion ratio is calculated by determining the cumulative number of credit hours the student has successfully completed divided by the number of cumulative credit hours the student has attempted. Credits accepted from other schools that are applied a Marshall University degree are counted in the calculation as both attempted and completed hours. To meet the quantitative requirement, the student's completion ratio must be 67% or higher.

Maximum Time Frame Measure

The evaluation of maximum time frame commences the first semester or term of enrollment the student begins his or her graduate program and is counted going forward whether or not the student enrolls in all subsequent semesters or terms. To meet the maximum timeframe requirement, the following rules apply:

| **Graduate Student Pursing a Certificate, Master Degree or Ed. S. Degree** |
| --- |
| Not to exceed 7 years from the start date of the program |

| **Graduate Student Pursing a Doctorate Degree** |
| --- |
| Not to exceed 10 years from the start date of the program |

Financial aid eligibility is limited to the student receiving a maximum of two Graduate Certificates, two Master Degrees, one Ed. S. Degree, and two Doctorate Degrees (excluding Doctor of Pharmacy, Doctor of Medicine, and Doctor of Physical Therapy). If the student is pursuing a second Graduate Certificate or second Master Degree, the seven year count begins again when the student is admitted into the program. If the student is pursuing a second Doctorate Degree, the ten year count begins again when the student is admitted into the program.

In addition to the three measures referenced above to determine a student's SAP, a student who is placed on Academic Probation or Academic Suspension by their school or college based on University academic policy is considered ineligible for financial aid.

Effects Repeated Courses

If the student repeats a course, those credits are counted when measuring the qualitative, quantitative, and maximum time frame components.

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Effects of Withdrawal, Incomplete, and In-Progress Grades

If the student withdraws from a course after the first week of classes during any given semester (i.e., student receives a grade of "W" for the course), the course credits are included in the count of attempted credit hours. Thus, withdrawn courses are calculated in the quantitative and maximum time frame measures.

Credits for an incomplete course (i.e., student receives a grade of "I" for the course) are always counted as credits attempted for quantitative and maximum timeframe measures but are not included in the GPA or the credits earned count until the incomplete grade changes to a passing or a failing grade.

Credits for courses in progress (i.e., student receives a grade of "PR" for the course) are not counted as attempted credits for the quantitative measure but are counted in the maximum timeframe measure.

Effect of Change in Academic Program

If a student changes his or her academic program (excluding Doctor of Pharmacy, Doctor of Medicine, and Doctor of Physical Therapy), all course credits attempted will be included in the calculation of the maximum time frame measure. Whether or not a student changes his or her major or is seeking a second Graduate Certificate or Degree, qualitative and quantitative measures are always evaluated.

**SAP Definitions:**

Financial Aid Probation

Financial Aid Probation status is assigned to a student who fails to make SAP and who has successfully appealed. A student who is placed on Financial Aid Probation may receive financial aid for one subsequent payment period. A student on Financial Aid Probation may be required to meet certain terms and conditions while on Financial Aid Probation, such as taking a reduced course load or taking specific courses. A student assigned a Financial Aid Probation status will be placed on a Financial Aid Academic Plan. At the conclusion of the SAP Academic Probation payment period, the student must either meet the SAP standards or fulfill the requirements specified in the Financial Aid Academic Plan.

S**AP Appeal Procedures:**

If a student fails one or more of the three measures (qualitative, quantitative and maximum time frame) or is placed on Academic Probation or Academic Suspension, the student is not eligible for federal and state aid including grants, scholarships, work-study and loans. However, students failing SAP standards who have had mitigating circumstances (e.g., death in the family, illness, involuntary military leave) may request reinstatement of their financial aid eligibility by completing the SAP Appeal for Financial Aid Reinstatement Form and submitting it to the Financial Aid SAP Appeals Committee, c/o Office of Student Financial Assistance. The SAP Appeal for Financial Aid Reinstatement Form is available at www.marshall.edu/go/fasap.

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The appeal, which must be typed, includes the following student requirements:

1. Detailed explanation for failure to meet SAP standards for each payment period the student failed to perform satisfactorily;
2. Documentation to support the reason for failure;
3. Attach a copy of the Plan of Study indicating which courses are remaining to complete the academic program;
4. If cumulative GPA is less than a 3.0, attach a copy of Academic Improvement Plan;
5. Detailed explanation of what has changed that will now allow the student to comply with SAP standards, a statement of academic objectives, and corrective action plan; and
6. Meet and discuss the appeal with the student's academic advisor and obtain his or her signature.

**SAP Appeal Deadlines:**

| Semester/Term | Date |
|---|---|
| Fall Semester | One week prior to the first day of classes ( for 2013-14, August 19, 2013) |
| Spring Semester | One week prior to the first day of classes (for 2013-14, January 6, 2014) |
| Summer Terms | End of Award Year (for 2013-14, June 30, 2014) |

**SAP Appeals Committee and Decision:**

The SAP Appeals Committee is comprised of representatives from the Office of Student Financial Assistance, Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs. Students will be sent official notification of the SAP Appeals Committee decision. The decision of the SAP Appeals Committee is final.

If the appeal is approved, the student is placed on Financial Aid Probation and the student's financial aid eligibility is reinstated for one subsequent payment period. During the Financial Aid Probation period, the student may be required to fulfill certain conditions for financial aid reinstatement (e.g., enroll part-time). In addition, all students placed on Financial Aid Probation will be provided a Financial Aid Academic Plan.

At the conclusion of the payment period, if the student meets the standards of SAP, the Financial Aid Probation status will be removed. If not, the student's academic performance for the term will be evaluated against the student's Financial Aid Academic Plan. The academic plan requires students to complete 80% of the attempted coursework (100% if the student failed maximum timeframe) and earn a minimum 3.1 GPA for the payment period the student is on Financial Aid Academic Probation. If the student meets the requirements of the Financial Aid Academic Plan, the student will be assigned Financial Aid Probation for a subsequent payment period.

(The FA Academic Plan is separate and distinct from an Academic Improvement Plan, which is required of graduate students who fail to maintain a minimum 3.0 Marshall or overall GPA.)

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If the student fails to meet SAP standards or the requirements set forth in the Financial Aid Academic Plan, the student will be deemed ineligible for financial aid. The student may appeal again for a future payment period within the published deadlines.