

**University of Arkansas-Fort Smith**  
**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy**

Federal regulations require students make satisfactory academic progress (*SAP*) toward a degree or certificate to be eligible for Federal Title IV Student Aid (668.34 of the Higher Education Act).

**Federal Title IV Student aid includes the following:**

- **Federal Pell Grant**
- **Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant**
- **Federal Work Study**
- **Federal Direct Subsidized Loan**
- **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan,**
- **Federal Direct Plus Loan**
- **Federal TEACH Grant.**

The SAP policy is consistently applied to all enrolled students at the end of the Fall, Spring, and Summer terms. The SAP status for previously enrolled UAFS students is based on the policy in effect during their last term of attendance. The SAP status for incoming transfer students will be based on this current SAP policy.

**I. How is SAP Measured?**

- A. SAP has a qualitative measure and a quantitative measure, which are measured at the end of each term. Based on these measurements, there are three components of SAP which must be met in order to remain eligible for Federal Title IV student aid. Students must (1) meet the cumulative grade point average (GPA) requirement (Qualitative Measure); (2) meet cumulative completion percentage requirement (Quantitative Measure) and (3) meet the 150% maximum allowable time frame (Quantitative Measure). The chart below provides additional information and examples of the three components of SAP.

| <b>Classification/Level</b> | <b>GPA</b>  | <b>Completion Percentage</b>                             | <b>Maximum Time Frame</b>   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
| Undergraduate               | 2.0 Cumulative GPA  | 67% Cumulative Attempted Hours                           | 150% of published program length                                    |
| Graduate                    | 3.0 Cumulative GPA  | 67% Cumulative Attempted Hours                           | 150% of published program length                                    |
| Example                     | Undergraduate student has an institutional cumulative GPA of 2.75 | Student has attempted 120 hours and has earned 105 hours | Undergraduate in 120 credit hour program and has attempted 130 hour |
| Result                      | 2.0 required<br>2.75 > 2.0= good                                  | 67% of 120 = 80<br>105 > 80 = good                       | 120 X 150% = 180<br>130 < 180 = good                                |

**B. Attempted and Earned Hours**

- Attempted and earned credit hours are based on the official university calculation as presented on the student's academic records in the university database.

- Once a student has completed a degree, all subsequent coursework is considered in the attempted hours calculation until that subsequent degree is completed.
- Attempted hours include: repeat hours, incomplete hours, academic clemency/bankruptcy hours, transfer hours, concurrent (high school) enrollment, regardless of whether a student received financial aid.
- The Department of Education regulations do not exempt hours included in academic clemency/bankruptcy from the SAP policy. This means that terms excluded due to clemency/bankruptcy remain in the maximum allowable time frame and completion percentage calculation of your SAP status.
- All periods of enrollment at UAFS will be counted in attempted hours.
- Courses where a student receives a final grade of A, B, C, D, F, P (Pass), IP (In Progress), or W will be used to compute hours attempted.
- Courses with final grades of F, IP (In Progress), or W will not be counted in earned hours.
- Remedial/Transitional courses will not be considered in the calculations, instead will be monitored based on established policies for that program.
- Courses deleted or canceled are not included in the calculation of GPA, completion rate, and/or maximum timeframe.
- If a student changes their major, degree or seeks to earn an additional degree they are eligible to receive federal aid for no more than 150% of the credit hours required for the chosen major. The 150% maximum timeframe limit is applied to all credit hours earned or attempted while enrolled at UAFS, and includes transferred credit from previously attended institutions.

### C. Recalculations

- Students may request a recalculation of their eligibility for the current term due to grade changes due to corrections. Please note that a grade change is not the same as grade forgiveness.

## II. Financial Aid Warning and Suspension

- A. **Financial Aid Warning**: A student who fails to meet the minimum SAP requirements (because of GPA and/or completion percentage as indicated above) at the end of a term will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. A student on Financial Aid Warning may continue to receive assistance under the Federal Title IV funds for the next term only. During the term of warning, the student is expected to come into compliance with the standard Federal Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy as indicated in section I above.

At the end of that term, if the student has met the minimum GPA and completion percentage, the student is considered to be meeting SAP (unless the student is not meeting the maximum time frame requirement).

If the student has not met the minimum completion percentage and GPA requirement, the student is not considered to be meeting SAP. At this time the student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension and will not be eligible for Federal Title IV funding.

**Note:** Financial Aid Warning and Suspension are separate from Academic Probation and Suspension. Students should contact the UAFS Registrar's office for information regarding Academic Probation and Suspension.

- B. **Financial Aid Suspension**: There are two reasons a student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension:

1. Failure to meet SAP after the Financial Aid Warning period.
2. Failure to complete the academic program within 150% of the published program length.

During this period of suspension, the student will not be eligible to receive Federal Title IV funds. The student may continue to be enrolled at UAFS if they meet admission and enrollment requirements and meet published payment deadlines.

A student who loses their Federal Title IV financial aid eligibility due to SAP at the end of a financial aid warning or as a result of not completing their program within 150% of the published length of the program, has the right to file an appeal.

### III. Appeal Procedure

- A. **Initial Appeal:** A student on Financial Aid Suspension may appeal if the circumstances causing the student to fall below minimum standards were out of the student’s control and warrant special consideration.

| Mitigating Circumstance         | Examples of Documentation  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Death of a family member/friend | Obituary, death certificate  |
| Marital Issues                  | Separation Agreement, divorce decree, statement for counselor/minister |
| Medical health issues           | Statement from medical professional, medical records                   |
| Employment issues               | Letter from employer, copies of time sheets, pay stubs                 |
| Family responsibilities         | Documentation that supports the particular issue                       |
| Financial responsibilities      | Documentation that supports the particular issue                       |
| Natural Disaster                | Documentation indicating how the student was directly impacted         |
| COVID 19                        | Documentation indicating how the student was directly impacted         |

- An appeal should be submitted using the appropriate form, [available at the Financial Aid Office and online at https://admissions.uafs.edu/sites/admissions.uafs.edu/files/Departments/Financial/documents/current/sap\\_appeal\\_form.pdf](https://admissions.uafs.edu/sites/admissions.uafs.edu/files/Departments/Financial/documents/current/sap_appeal_form.pdf).
- The appeal should address each term that the student’s performance was below the minimum requirements.
- Additionally, an appeal should also contain an explanation of the steps that the student intends to take to ensure that future academic progress will be acceptable.
- The student will complete an Academic Plan with the help of an Academic Advisor.
- The Academic Plan will contain a projection of the courses the student will take each term up to the term that they again meet SAP requirements.
- The appeal form, letter, documentation and academic plan will be turned in to the Financial Aid office and sent to the appeal committee for review.

**Appeal Deadline:** Appeals must be submitted by the Wednesday prior to the appeal meeting date. Appeal dates can be found at <https://admissions.uafs.edu/financial-aid/satisfactory-academic-progress>.

- A. **Financial Aid SAP Appeal Committee:** The committee is comprised of representatives from UAFS staff and faculty.

1. The committee reviews the appeal according to the dates on the Financial Aid website and provides its decision to the Financial Aid Office.
2. Students will receive an email informing them of the committee’s decision. The email is sent to the students UAFS email address.
3. The decision of the committee is final. **Note:** No Federal Title IV aid will be paid retroactively for a term in which the student did not meet the minimum SAP requirements as

outlined in Section I.

4. If the student has questions regarding the decision, an appointment can be made with the Director of Financial Aid.

**B. Appeal Approval:** If the appeal is approved, the student is placed on Financial Aid Probation.

#### IV. Financial Aid Probation

A. Students who have their appeal approved will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and must maintain compliance with the Academic Plan submitted with their appeal. While on probation, a student is eligible for Federal Title IV aid.

1. During the period of probation, the student is expected to come into compliance with the SAP policy as described above in Section I, or
2. Maintain compliance with the Academic Plan submitted to the Financial Aid Office as part of the appeal. The Academic Plan will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Office at the end of term. Failure to meet the terms of the Academic Plan will result in the student being placed on Financial Aid Suspension and the will not be eligible for Federal Student Aid.

B. **Reestablishment of Aid Eligibility after not maintaining Academic Plan Requirements:** A student who does not meet the terms of Academic Plan may establish federal aid eligibility in one of two ways.

1. The student will be eligible for Federal Title IV Aid when they meet the SAP policy requirements listed in Section I, or
2. The student may submit another appeal to the SAP Committee for consideration in order to regain federal aid eligibility.

#### V. Intention of Academic Plans

The purpose of an academic plan is to:

- A. Ensure the student has met with an Academic Advisor to discuss their academic goals and ensure they understand the path to obtain their degree of certificate.
- B. Establish with their Academic Advisor a plan that will allow the student to do one of the following:
  1. Obtain compliance with the SAP policy within one academic term, or
  2. Obtain compliance with the SAP policy within a reasonable time.

#### VI. Repeated Course(s) Rule

- A. Repeated courses are not part of the SAP policy, but it is important students understand they may only receive federal financial aid for one repetition of a previously passed course(s).
- B. If a course is repeated and replacement is approved according to the UAFS Academic Repeat policy, the grade given at the end of the repeated course becomes the official grade. The replacement grade is used to compute the cumulative GPA in the calculation of a student's SAP status.
- C. Each repeated course will count towards the attempted hours when determining completion rate and maximum timeframe.

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