



# Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University

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## FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES FOR SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

### INTRODUCTION

The Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended and final regulations set by the United States Department of Education require that institutions of higher education establish reasonable standards of satisfactory academic progress as a condition of continuing eligibility for federal aid programs.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is a measure of whether a student is progressing adequately toward completion of his or her course of study. It is determined in terms of grade point average and course completions. The SAP policy standards shall be the same as or stricter than the institution's academic standards for a student enrolled in the same educational program who is not receiving financial aid. The qualitative and quantitative standards contained in the institution's policy shall be cumulative and include all periods of enrollment, whether or not a student received financial aid.

### FREQUENCY OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Florida A&M University will review a student's academic progress at the end of the spring semester of each academic year. For this purpose, Florida A&M University's academic year is defined as a 30week course of study occurring between August and May. If students are cited for not maintaining SAP, they may appeal to receive financial aid for the subsequent semester.

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES

To remain eligible for financial assistance students must:

1. Complete at least 67 percent all of attempted courses each year, which will ensure graduation within the maximum timeframe;
2. Complete developmental and incomplete courses in a timely manner;
3. Graduate within the maximum timeframe (150 percent) specific to their degree programs;
4. Maintain good academic standing.

Satisfactory Academic Progress is based on three components:

1. Qualitative Progress (grade point average)
2. Quantitative Progress (hours earned)
3. Maximum Time Frame for Degree Completion

## **QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE PROGRESS**

Attempted hours are defined as the hours for which the student is enrolled and charged.

Grades A, B, C, D, P and S shall be considered as credits earned.

Grades E, I, F, PN, U, W, WF, NR, or X count as attempted hours for the purpose of determining SAP. Failing grades (F and WF) are included in the GPA calculation.

Withdrawing from courses at any point after the drop/add period will negatively affect the students completion rate. Withdrawals (W) are not used in the GPA calculations.

Incomplete grades (I) are not factored in to the GPA until a letter grade is recorded. Grade changes will be recognized when they occur.

Non-credit courses, incomplete courses, and courses from which a student have withdrawn after drop and add periods are also included as semester hours attempted.

### **QUALITATIVE PROGRESS (GRADE POINT AVERAGE)**

Florida A&M University uses a graduated qualitative standard. Federal student aid recipients must have earned the following minimum cumulative retention/graduation grade point average.

Undergraduate Student Status	Hours Completed	Undergraduate Cumulative G.P.A.
Freshmen	0 - 29	2.0
Sophomore/ Junior/Senior	30 and above	2.0
Law Student Cumulative G.P.A.	Pharmacy Professional Cumulative G.P.A.	Graduate Student Cumulative G.P.A.
2.0	2.0	3.0

The law specifies that at the end of the second academic year (regardless of how many credits the student has accrued) the student must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA average or its equivalent or have an academic standing consistent with the requirement for graduation from the program.

### **QUANTITATIVE PROGRESS**

A student (full time or part time) must successfully complete a minimum of 67 percent of the cumulative credit hours attempted during the academic year.

**Example:**

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Total Attempted (all years)	Must earn at least 67%
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	15 hours	15 hours	30 hours	30 hours x 67% = 20 hours
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	15 hours	15 hours	60 hours	60 hours x 67% = 40 hours
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	15 hours	15 hours	90 hours	90 hours x 67% = 60 hours

**MAXIMUM TIMEFRAME**

All undergraduate and graduate students are expected to finish their program within a maximum time frame, which cannot exceed 150% of the published length of their program. All attempted credit hours are considered toward the maximum time calculation, regardless of whether or not financial aid is received. Once a student reaches the maximum timeframe, he or she is ineligible for financial aid. The SAP Appeals Committee may reevaluate the timeframe limit if there are program changes.

**Example:**

Student Status	Average Program Hours	Percentage	Maximum Timeframe
Bachelor's Degree	120	150%	180
Second Bachelor's Degree	30	150%	45
Graduate Program	36	150%	54

Some academic areas require more than 120 hours for graduation. For those academic areas, the maximum timeframe to complete the degree will be the specific program hours required multiplied by 150 percent.

**TRANSFER CREDITS**

- All hours attempted at Florida A&M University plus attempted hours from other postsecondary institutions, that count towards the degree, are included in the maximum time frame of 180 hours to complete the first undergraduate degree.
- Transfer students must meet the same satisfactory academic progress requirements and maximum enrollment limits as other students.

**REPEATED COURSES AND ACADEMIC FORGIVENESS IN MAINTAINING SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Repeated courses for which a passing grade has already been earned will not be considered in the determination of satisfactory progress as those hours have already been applied.

## **NOTIFICATION OF FINANCIAL AID PROBATION OR TERMINATION**

The Office of Student Financial Aid will send a letter to any student who is put on financial aid probation or a termination letter to any student who is no longer eligible for financial aid. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain current addresses with the Office of the Registrar. Students on Academic Probation are notified by the University of their standing. The financial aid office does not send notification of Academic Probation.

## **APPEAL OF FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION**

Students who fail to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards may appeal the suspension of their student financial assistance funds to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Committee. Letters of appeal should be based on some type of mitigating circumstances that impacted negatively upon the student's ability to meet the required standards. These circumstances must be documented and should pertain to all terms that contributed to the failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. Failure to submit documentation and follow instructions will result in a delay in the decision of your appeal. All appeals and relevant documentation are kept in the student's file.

Extenuating circumstances that **will** be considered in an appeal include, but are not limited to, the following:

<b>Circumstance(s) that Apply</b>	<b>Required Documentation (must include dates)</b>
Severe illness, medical condition or injury	Signed and dated letter from physician on office letterhead; legible copy of accident report
Death of a family member	Death certificate and/or dated obituary from newspaper
Traumatic life-altering event such as fire, hurricane, etc.	Evidence of event such as insurance claim or FEMA application
Military Assignment or reassignment	A Statement of Service signed by, or by direction of, the adjutant, personnel officer, or commander of your unit or higher headquarters which shows your date of entry on your current active duty period and the duration of time.
Other circumstance beyond the control of the student (Must explain in detail the nature and dates of the unexpected circumstance)	Appropriate documentation which will verify situation

A student's appeal must explain the circumstances that prevented him/her from making SAP and the reasons for the basis of this appeal. The student must address the following:

1. What was the problem?
2. When did the problem occur?
3. How long did the problem last?
4. How did this affect his/her ability to complete coursework?
5. The steps taken to ensure that the minimum standards will be met at the next evaluation.

Extenuating circumstances that **will not** be considered in an appeal include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Complaint about instructor/course/staff/University policy.
- Failure to study/immaturity.
- Childcare and/or transportation problems (ex. losing driver's license due to excessive tickets).
- Failure to read, understand, and follow published Financial Aid and University policy. Students who cannot meet the above requirements for an appeal must reestablish Satisfactory Academic Progress through Reinstatement before regaining eligibility for assistance.

**SAP APPEAL LIMITS**

The Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Committee may grant or deny any SAP appeal. The maximum number of appeals any student may normally have granted during the total of all their enrollment periods at FAMU is two (2). Under extreme circumstances, a third appeal may be granted, provided that the student has documented proof of the circumstances. In the case of a student who files a third appeal, the reasons for the students' two previous appeals will be considered when making a decision. The student's progress within their academic program will be a determining factor on the rare occasion when a third appeal is allowed. Please note the appeal approval is for one term. Appeal approvals cannot be deferred to another semester due to non-attendance.

**DEADLINES FOR SAP APPEALS**

<u>Semester</u>	<u>Deadline Date</u>
Summer Semester	June 5
Fall Semester	July 1
Spring Semester	December 17

**REESTABLISHING ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID**

**REINSTATEMENT OF ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

Any student whose eligibility for financial aid consideration has been terminated due to unsatisfactory academic progress may re-establish eligibility once all satisfactory academic progress standards are met. Students cannot re-establish academic standards if they have exceeded the maximum timeframe to complete their degree. This work may be at FAMU or another institution or a combination thereof as long as the courses completed will apply toward the student's degree.

## **PROBATIONARY STATUS**

A student who has successfully appealed shall be placed on financial aid probation for one evaluation period. If at the end of the next evaluation period, a student on financial aid probation status:

1. Has met the institution's cumulative grade point average and completion percentage standards, the student shall be returned to good standing.
2. Has NOT met the institution's cumulative grade point average and completion percentage standards but has met the conditions specified in his/her academic plan, the student shall retain his/her financial aid eligibility under a continued probationary status for one subsequent semester.
3. Has NOT met the institution's cumulative grade point average and completion percentage standards and has also not met the conditions specified in his/her academic plan, the student's financial aid shall be suspended immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

## **REINSTATEMENT**

Students who have been suspended from financial aid (including those who have lost financial aid eligibility due to academic suspension) may seek reinstatement by achieving, without the benefit of the aid from which they have been suspended, both the cumulative 67 percent completion rate and cumulative 2.00 GPA required. Reinstatement may be requested for the term after this occurs.

Student with grade changes, after notifying Student Financial Aid of the grade change, including grades posted for incomplete courses, may regain eligibility should these changes result in satisfactory progress.

Students requesting evaluation of grade changes or reinstatement must complete the **SAP Financial Aid Reinstatement Form**; the office cannot automatically evaluate the progress of students who have met the reinstatement conditions or have had grade changes.

A student paying for tuition and fees through alternative funding not related to financial aid funds or sitting out for an academic term will not restore a student's satisfactory academic progress standing. Neither is sufficient to re-establish eligibility for financial aid funds.