

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Eligibility

Missouri Baptist University completes Satisfactory Academic Progress (hereafter, SAP) once a year at the end of the spring semester for undergraduate, masters, and educational specialist programs. SAP is run on doctoral students at the end of the spring quarter. Financial Aid recipients must demonstrate through their scholastic records that they are making satisfactory academic progress toward completion of their program(s) of study in order to maintain eligibility for enrolling in classes and receiving any form of federal financial assistance. Academic progress for financial aid is measured at the end of each year utilizing qualitative and quantitative standards from the advisor's transcript.

Credit Definitions

Credits Attempted are defined as all classes for which a student receives a passing grade ("A", "B", "C", "D" or a "P" or its equivalent in instances of Pass/Fail courses), or an "F", "XF", "IP", "IN", "W", "WF". Credits Earned are defined as all classes for which a student receives a passing grade ("A", "B", "C", "D" or a "P" or its equivalent in instances of Pass/Fail courses). Repeated courses count as credits attempted during each term the student is enrolled in the course; however, the highest grade will be counted once as credits earned.

Qualitative Standards for Financial Aid Eligibility

At the end of the spring semester, all undergraduate students who have an overall cumulative GPA below a 2.0 will be placed on SAP suspension for the next semester. All graduate and doctoral students who are below a 3.0 will be placed on SAP suspension when measured at the end of the spring or winter quarters, respectively. Grades of "IP" do not contribute to grade points for assessing a student's GPA. Courses graded as Pass or Credit in Pass/Fail, Credit/No Credit scenarios will not impact the GPA.

Quantitative Standards for Financial Aid Eligibility

This standard has two components: maximum time frame and course completion rate. The maximum time frame in which a student must complete an educational program of study cannot exceed 150 percent of the published program length measured in credit hours attempted. Example: A student pursuing an educational program that contains 120 hours would be allowed to attempt a maximum of 180 hours [120 x 150 percent (1.5) = 180]. The number of hours attempted includes any transfer hours accepted from other institutions that are applied to the student's program of study. In conjunction with the maximum program length, students must successfully complete (measured as credit hours earned) at least 66.67 percent of all coursework attempted as they progress through their program of study. This is a cumulative process, illustrated as follows: A student has maintained satisfactory academic progress for the first year of enrollment. However, at the end of the second year, the student's academic transcript indicates 45 hours attempted and 27 hours earned. The course completion rate is 60.0 percent (27 divided by 45). The student does not meet the required 66.67 percent standard and thus will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension and the student will have to appeal the Financial Aid Committee to receive federal aid for the next semester.

Students who switch programs before completing the requirements of the program will have a higher probability of failing to meet the quantitative standards of maximum time frame and course completion rate. MBU will take into consideration ignoring one change of major within a degree program when calculating the aforementioned quantitative standards. As the CAMSe system does not distinguish between academic data from one degree to another, students will be put on suspension if the cumulative set of data shows them to be failing standards. If the student is still not meeting standards after accounting for prior major, they will have to follow the typical process to regain SAP or otherwise seek an approved appeal.

Financial Aid Suspension

A student on Financial Aid Suspension is not eligible for any form of federal financial assistance and remains ineligible until satisfactory academic progress standards are met or there has been an approved appeal or approved academic plan. Where standards are met during a term, as in the completion of a module or mini-session, eligibility is only reinstated after the next sanctioned review period.

Appeal Process

A student who feels mitigating circumstances existed which adversely affected the student's ability to maintain satisfactory academic progress may submit a written appeal to the financial aid committee for review at their scheduled meetings. This appeal should be directed to the Student Financial Services office. The Director will first review the appeal and can individually decide to approve or deny an appeal but will have the right to pass the appeal on to the Financial Aid Committee if they themselves are unable to render a decision. The Financial Aid Committee will hold a hearing in a timely manner to consider the appeal. If a student's appeal is approved by the Financial Aid Committee, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation for one term. After the Financial Aid Probation term the student must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress or must successfully follow an academic plan. If the student's appeal is not approved the student has no additional recourse.

1. If a Student has been placed on Federal Aid Suspension they will remain on suspension unless an appeal is written to the Financial Aid Committee or they reach satisfactory academic progress. The student will have 2 options.
 - a. Option 1: Student submits application to the Financial Aid Committee asking to extend their financial aid for one semester with an explanation of their prior grades and what they will do to achieve the required GPA by the end of the next semester. They may be placed on probation for one semester (generally the fall) and must be maintaining SAP by the end of that semester. If not, they may be placed back on Federal Aid Suspension until they have once again achieved Satisfactory Academic Progress, having no additional appeal process available to them..
 - b. Option 2: Student completes an appeal form and submits to the Financial Aid Committee along with an Academic Plan. This Academic Plan must explain how the student will be meeting SAP by a certain timeframe, not to extend beyond the end of the term for which SAP is next assessed. At the end of the scheduled academic plan, the student must be maintaining SAP. In addition, each semester until that time, they will be reviewed and must be making progress towards their plan.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO POLICY:

- 1) Do we have any programs lasting one year or less? Certification programs? If so, we have to evaluate them for SAP at the end of each payment period.
- 2) Grades for test-based credits count in our GPA's, right?
- 3) How do we incorporate remedial courses? They don't have to count in the GPA, but they do have to be part of our review. How would we do this in CAMS if it isn't in the GPA?

- 4) Our policy does not say how credits will be counted if a student switches majors. We have practices that aid TRANSFER students in that we only accept a certain amount of transfer credit (and even then, our policy is not clear on what we will take as transfer or not), but we have no policy for people who begin and finish at MBU and change majors throughout that time.