



ANA G MENDEZ UNIVERSITY STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION Standards of Academic Progress Policy

Introduction / Purpose

The Ana G. Mendez University Standards of Academic Progress policy serves to:

1. Outline academic classifications and delineate a method of identifying degree-seeking students who are experiencing academic difficulty.
2. Present a series of interventions aimed at student retention and completion while upholding the academic integrity of the University.

Students pursuing an academic degree must meet the minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) in order to continue Title IV eligibility and in some cases, continue with their academic program. These standards shall apply to all students, regardless of the methods by which they fund their studies. SAP is measured at the end of each academic semester (including summer) to ensure students are meeting minimum qualitative and quantitative benchmarks. Additionally, students must complete their academic programs within a maximum timeframe. Students who fail to meet these standards will become ineligible for federal financial aid and may be dismissed from the university.

Definitions

Academic Plan: An Academic Plan is a course of action that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet the University's SAP standards by a specific point in time.

Appeal: The process by which a student who is not meeting the SAP standards petition to request reconsideration for eligibility of financial aid.

Financial Aid Warning status: A status assigned to a student who was previously in Good SAP standing and fails to make SAP for one semester.

Financial Aid Probation status: A status assigned to a student who fails to make SAP and who appealed and had financial aid eligibility reinstated for one semester.

Financial Aid Suspension: A status whereby financial aid eligibility is terminated due to not meeting SAP standards.

Extended Enrollment Status: A status assigned to a student who appeals to remain enrolled but is ineligible for financial aid until the student meets SAP at the end of the evaluation period.

Qualitative Standard (Minimum CGPA)

Students must earn and maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) in most undergraduate programs and a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) in graduate programs. Specific programs as identified in the Academic Catalog may mandate higher academic standards to meet SAP. Students must earn and maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (CGPA), among other requirements, if they are enrolled in the Associate of Science in Nursing or Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs. It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to the academic standards for their program of study.

Grades of A, B, C, D, F and WF are included in the CGPA calculation. Transfer credits, incompletes, audited courses, courses dropped during the add/drop period, and withdrawals (W, WA and WN) are not included in the CGPA calculation. If a student repeats a course, the highest earned grade is included in the CGPA calculation.

A student enrolled in a program of more than two academic years in length must have a CGPA of at least 2.0 (“C or equivalent”) at the end of the student’s second academic year to be meeting the qualitative standard of SAP.

Quantitative Standard (Completion Rate)

Students must meet the minimum standards of successful course completion percentage (67%) to ensure they are on track to graduate within the maximum timeframe for their academic program. The completion rate is calculated by dividing the number of earned credit hours by the number of attempted credit hours. For example: $9 \text{ earned credits} \div 12 \text{ attempted credits} = 75\% \text{ completion rates}$. Earned credits include grades of A, B, C, D, and Pass. Attempted credits include grades of F, W, WF, I, WA and WN. Transfer credits are considered attempted and earned credits. Courses dropped during the add/drop period and audited courses are not included in the completion rate calculation. Repeated coursework and grade forgiveness may both negatively impact the student completion rate. All attempts will be included in the denominator of the calculation, but only one successful completion will be included in the numerator.

Maximum Timeframe

Completion of a program of study may not exceed 150% of the length of the academic program under the Maximum Timeframe (MTF) under SAP. For example, if the length of an AA degree is 60 credit hours, a student cannot attempt more than 90 credit hours to complete the program and receive federal financial aid. Similarly, with respect to a 120-credit hour program, a student cannot attempt more than 180 credit hours to complete the program. Maximum timeframe for graduate programs is also determined by multiplying the length of the program in credit hours by 150%. Each semester, the university will evaluate if a student can complete their program within the maximum timeframe. A student becomes disqualified for federal financial aid when it is determined that it is not mathematically possible for them to complete their program within the maximum timeframe.

Financial Aid Warning, Suspension Status & Probation Status

Students who fail to earn the minimum required cumulative grade point average and/or earn the 67% minimum required rate of course completion percentage will be placed on *Financial Aid Warning* status for one semester. A student can only be placed on Financial Aid Warning if they were meeting the SAP standards in the prior semester in which they were enrolled or were in the first semester of their program.

While on *Financial Aid Warning* status, the student will remain eligible for federal financial assistance.

At the end of the *Financial Aid Warning* period, the student's cumulative grade point average and rate of course completion percentage are again reviewed. If the student's cumulative grade point average and rate of course completion percentage meet the minimum standards, the student is removed from *Financial Aid Warning* status.

If the student's cumulative grade point average and/or rate of course completion percentages are below the required minimum for SAP, the student will be deemed not making satisfactory academic progress, and the student will lose eligibility for federal financial assistance at that time (*Financial Aid Suspension*).

If the student does not meet the minimum SAP requirements for CGPA or completion rate and their Title IV eligibility is suspended, the student may submit an *SAP Appeal*. *If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation* status for one semester and remain eligible to receive federal financial assistance. If the student meets the minimum SAP requirements at the end of the semester in which they are on *Financial Aid Probation*, the student will be considered as meeting the SAP standards.

SAP Appeals

If the student does not meet the minimum SAP requirements for CGPA or completion rate and their Title IV eligibility is suspended, the student may submit an *SAP Appeal Form* to their Director of Retention or Academic and Retention Counselor detailing and documenting the basis for an appeal including student injury or illness, the death of an immediate relative, or other special circumstances. The appeal must explain why they failed to make SAP and what has changed in their situation that will allow them to meet SAP requirements at the next evaluation. Students are not permitted to appeal due to exceeding the maximum timeframe for their program. However, students who reach the maximum timeframe for their program may continue their enrollment without the benefit of financial aid.

The SAP Committee reviews the appeal and notifies the student of the outcome of their appeal via student email. Students typically receive a response from the SAP Committee within 30 days. If the committee determines the student's appeal does not provide adequate reasons or documentation for their failure to meet the SAP standards, or that circumstances have not changed such that the student could meet SAP standards in the future, the student's appeal will be denied, and the student will lose federal financial aid eligibility until they meet the SAP standards or successfully appeal.

If the committee determines the student's appeal is approved and that the student will meet SAP standards at the next evaluation, the student will be placed on *Financial Aid Probation* status for one semester and remain eligible to receive federal financial assistance. If the student meets the minimum SAP requirements at the end of the semester in which they are on *Financial Aid Probation*, the student will be considered as meeting the SAP standards. If the committee determines the student's appeal is approved and that, based on the appeal, the student will require more than one semester to meet SAP, the student will be placed on *Financial Aid Probation* and an Academic Plan will be developed for the student. If the student meets the terms of the Academic Plan at the end of the semester in which the student was on Financial Aid Probation status, the student will remain eligible for federal financial aid for another semester under their approved Academic Plan. If the student does not meet the terms of their Academic Plan and is not meeting SAP standards at the end of the Financial Aid Probation term, the student will no longer be eligible for federal financial aid and may no longer continue in their program of study. The student shall be referred to their Director of Retention or Academic and Retention Counselor to explore alternate academic options.

SAP Academic Plan

Once a student is placed on *Financial Aid Probation* status and the SAP Committee determines the student will require more than one semester to meet the standards of SAP, an Academic Plan will be created. The Academic Plan will serve as a road map to guide a student toward meeting their SAP goal within a specified time and

method. The Academic Plan is developed by the Director of Retention or Academic and Retention Counselor and provided to the student in writing. The plan will be evaluated after every semester and refined as internal and external developments warrant. An Academic Plan may span multiple evaluation periods, so long as the Academic Plan allows for graduation from the program within the maximum timeframe (MTF), and the student stays in compliance with the terms of the Academic Plan. If a student wants to change their Academic Plan, they must appeal. The appeal must state what has happened to require the change and how they will be able to make academic progress.

Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility

Students who are not meeting SAP requirements for CGPA or completion rate may regain eligibility on their own without submitting an appeal by attending and achieving overall SAP requirements without the assistance of federal financial aid. Students who are not meeting SAP requirements are checked each semester and are determined eligible for federal financial aid once they meet the SAP requirements. The same process applies to students who have submitted a SAP appeal that has been denied. Students who have been denied a SAP appeal can re-appeal after completing one semester without federal aid using extended enrollment status. These students are monitored each semester and are made eligible for federal aid once they meet the SAP requirements.

Extended Enrollment Status

Students not achieving the minimum standards of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) or who fail to meet the minimum standards at the end of the probationary period may be dismissed from the university. Students not dismissed may continue their studies in an extended enrollment status to attempt to earn eligibility for federal financial aid. Students on an extended enrollment status will be charged the published tuition and fees and will not be eligible for any Title IV financial aid.

Impact Of Certain Grades on The CGPA and Rate Course Completion Percentage

- Incompletes: A student with a grade of “I” must complete the coursework within the allotted time as published in the Catalog. The faculty member will assign a final grade if the student does not complete the course within the allotted time. The I grade is not included in the CGPA calculation, but the final grade for the course is included in the next SAP CGPA evaluation. The I grade is included as credits attempted for the completion rate.
- Withdrawals: All course withdrawals will count as credits attempted but will not be included in the cumulative grade point average.
- Repetitions: Students are permitted to repeat courses. All credits count as credits attempted, but only one successful completion is included in the numerator (earned credits). The highest grade for the repeated course will count in the cumulative grade point average.
- Transfer Credits: All transfer credits that are creditable toward the student’s current program of enrollment count as credits attempted and credits earned in the rate of course completion percentage. Transfer credits do not count in the cumulative grade point average.

Remedial and Developmental Courses

Students are required to earn a passing grade in a remedial course prior to attempting the next course in the sequence. Remedial courses are not included in the calculation of completion rate, maximum timeframe, and cumulative GPA. However, a qualitative assessment of a student’s progress in remedial courses is performed by requiring that the student earn a “P grade” (pass) in a minimum of 50% of cumulative remedial credit hours attempted.

Major Changes

If a student changes their academic program of enrollment, previously completed courses that are not creditable toward the new program of enrollment also will not be included in the SAP evaluation.