



## 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.

### 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 Monitoring: A status assigned to a student who is at risk of falling below the required Good SAP standing for one semester.

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.

Extenuating Circumstances: Unusual events (that influenced the student's ability to succeed).

## **GRADE BASED STANDARDS AND COMPLETION PERCENTAGE**

SAP is measured at the end of each academic semester and at the end of the academic year through minimum qualitative and quantitative benchmarks (GPA & Completion Ratio). Students who fail to maintain these academic requirements will become ineligible for TIV financial aid funding.

Students must earn and maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) in undergraduate programs and a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) in graduate programs. Specific programs as identified in the Academic Catalog, may mandate higher academic standards to meet SAP. It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to the academic standards for their program of study.

Students must meet the minimum standards of successful course completion percentage (67%). The completion rate is calculated by dividing earned credits by attempted credits. For example: 9 earned credits ÷ 12 attempted credits = 75% completion rate. Attempted credits include grades of F, W, I, and NP. Repeated coursework and grade forgiveness may both negatively impact the student's completion ratio. All attempts will be considered towards the calculation, but only one successful completion will be considered.

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 credits, a student cannot attempt more than 90 credits to complete the program and receive financial aid. Similarly, a student cannot attempt more than 180 credits to complete the program and receive financial aid for a 120-credit bachelor's degree.

## **Financial and Monitoring Status**

Students who are at risk of falling below the SAP standard, will be placed on *Financial Aid Monitoring* status. Undergraduate students who fail to meet a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 and Graduate students who fail to meet 3.2 cumulative GPA will be contacted by the retention team to improve their academic performance. While in *Financial Aid Monitoring* status, the student will remain eligible for federal financial assistance. If a student fails to adhere to the academic standards for their program of study in the following semester, they will be moved to a Financial Aid Warning Status.

## **Financial Aid Warning 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. While on *Financial Aid Warning* status, the student will remain eligible for federal financial assistance, however the student must adhere to the Academic Plan designed by their Director of Retention or Academic and Retention Counselor.

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 be placed on *Financial Aid Probation* and will lose eligibility for federal financial assistance at that time.

### **SAP Appeal Process & Financial Aid Probation Status**

If the student does not meet the minimum SAP requirements and loses Title IV eligibility following a semester on *Financial Aid Warning*, the student may apply for an *SAP Appeal* 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 also 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.

The appeal is reviewed by the SAP Committee and if the committee determines that the student will meet SAP at the end of 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 during *Financial Aid Probation* status at the end of the semester, the student will be considered meeting the SAP standards. If the Committee determines that, based on the appeal, the student will require more than one semester to meet SAP, the student may be placed on *Financial Aid Probation*, and a new Academic Plan may be developed for the student. If the student meets the Academic Plan during *Financial Aid Probation* status at the end of the semester, the student will be considered meeting the SAP standards. If not, the student will no longer be eligible for federal financial assistance 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.

### **Academic Plan**

Once a student is placed on *Financial Aid Probation* status, an Academic Plan will be put into place. 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 designed by the Director of Retention or Academic and Retention Counselor and provided to the student in writing. The plan that is implemented will be regularly evaluated 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 time frame (MTF), and the student stays in compliance with the terms of the Academic Plan.

### **Regaining Eligibility**

Students who are not meeting SAP requirements for GPA or completion ratio 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 made eligible for federal aid if they are now meeting overall SAP requirements. The same process applies to students who have submitted an SAP appeal that has been denied, they can attend without the use of federal financial aid. Students who have been denied a SAP appeal can re-appeal after one semester without federal aid. These students are monitored each semester and are made eligible for federal aid if they are now meeting overall 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 may continue their studies in an extended enrollment status to attempt to earn eligibility for Title IV Financial Aid.

Students on an extended enrollment status will be charged the appropriate tuition and fees and will not be eligible for any Title IV financial aid. While on this extended enrollment status, students must attempt to correct their academic deficiencies. The extended enrollment status must be completed within the required maximum time frame (MTF). The conditions for extended enrollment status will be agreed upon in writing by the student and the Director of Retention or Academic and Retention Counselor. The SAP Appeal Committee reviews and approves all requests for extended enrollment.

### **SAP Appeal Committee**

The SAP Appeal Committee is a representative group of Academic and Student Affairs staff who have been trained to facilitate the SAP process for students. The committee is composed of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs (or designee), the School Dean, Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Financial Services (or designee), Director of Student Affairs or Director of Retention, and the Academic and Retention Counselor.

### **Grade Impacts on SAP Measurements**

Students should be aware that for Satisfactory Academic Progress, all coursework attempted counts toward GPA, Completion Rate, and Maximum Time Frame to determine eligibility for federal financial aid.

**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 final grade will be included in the cumulative grade point average and the credits will count as credits attempted.

**Withdrawals:** All course withdrawals will count as credits attempted but will not be included in the cumulative grade point average. Withdrawals affect the student’s rate of course completion percentage.

**Repetitions:** Students are permitted to repeat courses. All credits count as credits attempted. The grade for the repeated course will count in the cumulative grade point average. Repetitions affect the student’s rate of course completion percentage.

**Transfer Credits:** All transfer credits 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. Transfer Credits affect the student’s rate of course completion percentage.