



Satisfactory Academic Progress for Graduate and Professional Schools

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Overview of Session



- Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements
- Institutions Approach to Develop SAP
- Sample Challenges
- Discussions
- SAP Resources
- Q & A

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SAP Requirements



- Program Integrity Regulations (October 29, 2010). SAP implementation effective July 1, 2011.
- SAP Regulations now contained in ONE location: 668.34– Student Eligibility
 - Reasonable Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy includes:
 - at least as strict as the institution's academic progress policy
 - Consistent application of standards to all students within categories of students
 - Frequency of Evaluation – annually or at end of each payment period
 - Grade-Point-Average (GPA) Requirement
 - Pace Requirement which ensures completion within maximum time frame

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SAP Requirements



- Reasonable Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy includes:
 - How GPA and Pace are affected by course incompletes, withdrawals, repetitions, or transfers of credit from other institutions.
 - Students who are not meeting GPA and Pace standards do not receive Federal Financial Aid funds
 - Provision for a Warning period for institutions which evaluate at the end of each payment period
 - Provision for Appeals (if institution permits appeals)
 - If institution does not permit appeals, then policy must describe how an ineligible student may restore eligibility for Federal Financial Aid funds
 - Notification to students



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SAP Terminology



- Grade-Point-Average (formerly Qualitative)
- Pace (formerly Quantitative)
- Warning
- Financial Aid Probation – may only be used for approved appeals
- Academic Plans

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Key Departments/Partners

- Perspectives
- Territory Protection
- Workload Implications

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Process Considerations

- Process Flow Chart
- Responsibility identification
- Create a Model to Recommend After Gathering Input from Colleagues

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Institutional Approach

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American Public University

- The Invitation
 - Provost Email March 27, 2013
 - SAP; Extensions; Student Course Load; Probation Policy and Retake Policies
 - Financial Aid was an Afterthought of a Grand Plan to Reimagine Academic Policies
 - End Goal – Align Academic Progress Policies

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American Public University

- Understanding of Institutional Responsibility to ensure Title IV aid eligibility
- SAP Policy vs. Academic Policy
- Opportunity for Collaboration
- Improve Communication
- Build sense of teamwork

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American Public University

- What is the Goal of SAP
- 4 year plan vs 6 year plan vs 3 year plan
 - What is yours?
 - Who is your target audience?
 - Do you publicize the correlation between student and parent debt to length of program?

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American Public University

- University vs. Financial Aid
 - Current University Policy
 - Military TA SAP Policy
 - VA Benefits SAP Policy
 - How do they differ from FA Policy?
 - What are the touch points?
 - Have You Mapped the Flow of Activity?

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Florida International University

- Master's, PhD, Law, and Medical School.
- Consulted with
 - Graduate Studies
 - Law
 - Med School
- Worked to align SAP Policy with Academic Policy

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Florida International University

- Med School presented special challenges
 - Non traditional calendar
 - Yearly faculty review to advance or “remediate”

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Challenges

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Challenges



- Academic Policy versus Financial Aid Policy
- Reviewing Annually or By Semester
 - Law – grades are not timely?
- Measuring Satisfactory Progress
 - Medical
 - what's satisfactory?
 - USMLE and COMLEX studies
- Repeat coursework
- Academic Plan Requirement
- Maximum Time Frame definition for graduate programs
- System difficulties when students progress from Masters degree to higher degree

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What Other Schools are Doing

Category/School	Pitt	FIU	Phoenix	WGU	UMUC	Garrett	JMU	Strayer	APUS/C
UG - Yr 1 min GPA	1.5	2.0		P/F	2.0	1.5	1.5	2.0	1.5
UG - Yr 2 min GPA	2.0	2.0		P/F	2.0	2.0	1.65/1.75	2.0	1.8
GR - Yr 1 min GPA	2.0	3.0			3.0	N/A		3.0	2.0
Maximum Timeframe	150%	150%	150%	150%	150%	150%	150 cr hrs		150%
Pace of completion	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	80%		50-67%
Review Intervals	Annual	Term	Term/12	Term	Annual	Term	Annual	13.5/9	Term
Status Tiers	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5
Maximum Appeals			2						

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American Public University

- Academic Warning
 - If your program GPA falls below the minimum required by APUS within your first 9 semester hours at the graduate level, you will receive a notice of Academic Warning from your Academic Advisor.
 - Restricted to half-time enrollment
- Academic Probation
 - For graduate students, Academic Probation can begin after attempting 3 semester hours with a cumulative GPA below 3.0.

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American Public University

• University vs. Financial Aid

- Failing Academic Probation: If you fail to raise your GPA during your probationary period, you will be placed on academic suspension pending your academic dismissal. You will have 30 days to appeal your pending academic dismissal in writing before it is processed.
- Next Step - Academic Dismissal
- Grad Students - Reviewed within 9 hours by FA
- Meet min GPA for all courses or have 30 days to appeal Dismissal

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University vs. Financial Aid

• Military TA SAP Policy

- Meet University SAP Policy
- UG - Minimum Grade of 'D'
- GR - Minimum Grade of 'C'
- Unacceptable Grades or W/D Must be Repaid

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University vs. Financial Aid

- **VA Benefits SAP Policy** must adhere to School policy which at a minimum must dictate the following:
 - The school's grading system
 - The minimum satisfactory grade level
 - Conditions for interruption of training due to unsatisfactory grades or progress
 - A description of any probationary period
 - Conditions for a student's reentrance/ readmission following dismissal/suspension for unsatisfactory progress
 - Conditions for dismissal due to unsatisfactory conduct
 - The school's attendance policy

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Potential Status Tiers

Six potential levels of Student status

1. Regular = meeting SAP
2. Risk
3. Warning
4. Academic Probation (Ineligible for FA)
5. FA Probation = first semester after successful appeal (eligible for FA)
6. Academic Dismissal

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Qualitative Measure of Progress (GPA)

Students must maintain the required grade point average (GPA) necessary to continue as degree candidates at the University. Therefore, they must maintain an academic standing consistent with the University's Academic Retention Policy as outlined in the University Catalog. If a student is dismissed from the University, their financial aid will be suspended. Academic Standing is reviewed at the end of each semester.

This policy states:

Graduate Students:

Warning: a graduate student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 will be placed on warning, indicating academic difficulty.

Probation: a graduate student on warning whose cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0 will be placed on probation, indicating serious academic difficulty.

Dismissal: a graduate student on probation whose cumulative and semester GPA fall below a 3.0 will automatically be dismissed from his/her program and the University. A graduate student will not be dismissed prior to attempting a minimum of 12 semester hours of coursework.

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Law Students:

Probation: a law student whose GPA falls below a 2.0 at the close of the first semester will be placed on probation, indicating academic difficulty

Dismissal: a law student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 2.0 after the second or any subsequent semester will be dismissed.

Whenever students are placed on warning or probation, their academic standing satisfies the qualitative measure for maintaining financial aid eligibility

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Medical Students:

Medical Student Evaluation and Promotion Committee

a. Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of the MSEPC is:

- i. To ensure that each student who graduates from Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to assume the responsibilities of a medical doctor;
- ii. To evaluate academic performance in the required curriculum, to assess advancement to the next period (as this term is defined in this *Medical Student Handbook*), and to recommend appropriate intervention in the event of unacceptable academic performance; and
- iii. To evaluate personal qualities which bear on a student's professionalism and fitness to become a physician and recommend appropriate intervention. The MSEPC relies upon the cooperation, advice and judgment of faculty, students and administration to perform these duties.



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Quantitative Measure of Progress (Pace/Time Frame)

Pace of Completion Requirement:

Undergraduate and graduate students must successfully complete 67% of the total number of all attempted credits taken at the University inclusive of the transfer credits accepted by the University at the end of each academic year. The completion rate is checked annually at the end of the spring semester. The percentage is calculated by dividing the total number of all credits earned including transfer credits, by the total number of all credits attempted including transfer credits accepted by the University

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Sample Academic Plans

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Formal/Informal - APUS

- Academic Plan set at beginning of program
 - Differentiated by program of study
 - Differentiated via a advisor/student collaboration
 - Counseling session
 - Potential Remediation Course (in pilot)
 - Critical Probation – 75% or more earned for degree
 - Prior to 75% completion – FA catches SAP cases

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FIU FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS APPEAL

Academic Plan

Student Contact Information
 Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Advisor Contact Information
 Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Email: _____

APPEAL INFORMATION (Check appropriate options)
 I am appealing my _____
 I am appealing my _____
 I am appealing my _____
 I am appealing my _____

Reasons for Appeal
 I am appealing my _____
 I am appealing my _____
 I am appealing my _____
 I am appealing my _____

Academic Plan

Term	Required Courses	Elective Courses	Total Credits
Spring 2015			
Fall 2015			
Spring 2016			
Fall 2016			

Advisor Signature _____ **Student Signature** _____
Advisor Title _____ **Student Title** _____
Advisor Email _____ **Student Email** _____
Advisor Phone _____ **Student Phone** _____

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Resources

- [ED Program Integrity Q&A](#)
- [FSA's Guide to Creating a Policies & Procedures Manual](#)
- [FSA Assessment Tool: Satisfactory Academic Progress](#)
- [FSA 2014-15 Handbook: Student Eligibility](#) (starts on page 1-9)
- [NASFAA Self-Evaluation Guide](#)
- [NASFAA Policy & Procedure Tools](#)

www.ifap.ed.gov
www.nasfaa.org

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