



SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY Effective Fall Semester 2015

Foreword

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements are contained in three sections of the regulations: Section 668.16(e), 668.32, and 668.34. Section 668.16(e) specifies that in order to be considered administratively capable, a school must establish, publish, and apply reasonable standards for measuring whether a student is maintaining SAP. Reasonable standards are the same as or stricter than the schools' standards for students enrolled in the same program who are not Title IV recipients, and contain both qualitative (grade-based) and quantitative (pace) standards. In order to comply with the federal regulations governing SAP, Fort Valley State University has established, published, and will apply the following standards to ensure students are satisfactorily progressing toward degree completion. Fort Valley State University (FVSU) semester is considered a trailer term with Fall and Spring being the primary academic year.

Satisfactory Academic Progress must be maintained to remain eligible to receive Title IV aid. Title IV aid includes Federal Pell Grants (PELL), Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), TEACH Grants, Federal Work Study (FWS), Federal Direct Loans and Federal Perkins Loans. SAP is determined by measuring the student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) and the student's rate of progression (PACE) toward degree completion.

Policy

In accordance with federal regulations, the guidelines used to determine SAP are as follows:

- SAP will be calculated at the end of every semester.
- A student failing to meet the SAP standards for the first time at the end of a semester will be placed in an SAP **"Warning"** status.
- A student may continue to receive financial aid for **one** payment period while in a **"Warning"** status.
- A student failing to meet the SAP standards after an initial **"Warning"** will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid. The student will be placed in a **"Suspended"** status.
- A student in a **"Probation"** status **must** successfully maintain the terms of his/her Academic Advisement Progress Assessment Plan. Failure to comply with the plan will result in a student being placed in a **"Suspended"** status. The student will be responsible for paying all educational costs until evidence of academic success is shown or SAP standards are reached.
- Students who have reached the Maximum Allowable Time Frame (MATF) or Learning Support maximum hours will be automatically placed in a **"Suspended"** status.

- A student in a “**Suspended**” status may submit a SAP Appeal Form. If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed in a “**Probationary**” status.
- Effective Fall 2015, a student may receive only **3** approved appeals.
- SAP requires monitoring of both GPA (qualitative) and Pace (quantitative).

Qualitative Component (GPA)

All financial aid recipients of Title IV aid will be reviewed by the Office of Financial Aid at the end of every term (fall, spring, and summer). Students not meeting the below standards will be placed on financial aid **suspension**. Students may submit a formal appeal for reinstatement of aid.

Undergraduate Credit Level (Hours Attempted)	Minimum Required Overall GPA
0-29	1.70
30-59	1.90
60-89	2.00
90 and above	2.00

Graduate students must maintain a **3.00 GPA** throughout their enrollment at FVSU.

Quantitative Component (Pace)

All financial aid recipients are expected to earn a minimum percentage of their total hours attempted (including learning support attempted hours and all attempts for courses repeated), and must complete degree requirements within the maximum allowable time frame (MATF). This quantitative measure is called **Pace**.

- Students must successfully complete courses attempted. The minimum acceptable course completion rate is **67%** of the total hours attempted. Successful completion is limited to the grades of **A, B, C, D and S**. The grades of **F, WF, W, WP, U, I, and IP** are considered unsuccessful attempts. Pace is calculated by dividing earned hours by attempted hours.
- Students must complete the program of study within a reasonable time frame. The **MATF** is **150%** of the total hours required for degree completion. This applies to all undergraduate and graduate programs of study. For example, degree programs requiring **120** hours for degree completion will be allowed up to **180** attempted hours ($120 \times 1.5 = 180$).
- If a student is granted Academic Amnesty/Renewal, all hours are still subject to the overall standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Student Classifications

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS must maintain the required minimum GPA and Pace.

New Transfer Students - New transfer students will be monitored at the time of matriculation. All courses accepted by FVSU for transfer credit will be calculated in SAP.

Repetition of Courses/Withdrawals, and Incompletes – All attempts at a course are counted in the maximum hours allowed to obtain a degree. Excessive incompletes can result in the suspension of financial aid. Refer to the FVSU Catalog for more information relating to the maximum credit hours allowed by the Institution for withdrawals.

Learning Support Students - Financial aid is available for thirty (30) attempted hours of Learning Support coursework (including FVSU attempted hours and transfer attempted hours). Students required to take Learning Support coursework will be monitored each semester after grading. Students who voluntarily take Learning Support coursework are ineligible for Title IV aid. Any student who registers for Learning Support coursework, knowingly or unknowingly, in excess of the maximum 30 hours must repay all aid received.

Double Majors – Students with double majors will be allowed an additional 45 attempted hours not to exceed a total of 232 attempted hours. They must also maintain the minimum required overall GPA based on their attempted hours.

Post-Baccalaureate –Post baccalaureate students are required to maintain a minimum 2.00 GPA. Students may be asked to submit a **Post-Baccalaureate Certification Form**.

Preparatory Coursework - Students not enrolled in a degree program are eligible for loans for one consecutive 12 month period if they are taking coursework required for enrollment in an eligible program. Students must maintain minimum GPA requirements.

GRADUATE STUDENTS require a minimum 3.00 GPA. SAP standards will be monitored every semester after grading. Any graduate student found in violation of these standards will be placed in **suspension** with an opportunity to appeal.

Additional Degree Attempted hours from a prior degree are not included in the SAP calculation unless those hours are transferred to the new program.

SAP Definitions:

Satisfactory: Student is meeting both qualitative and quantitative standards. FOR SAP purposes, the student maintains eligibility for financial aid.

Warning: A student in satisfactory status failing to meet one or both of the SAP standards for the first time at the end of a semester will be placed in this status. The student is eligible for financial aid while in this status. If not meeting the minimum SAP requirements at the end of the warning period, the student will be placed in suspension.

Suspension: A student fails to meet the minimum SAP standards and are ineligible to receive aid.

Probation: If a student's SAP appeal is approved, the student will be placed on probation. Under this status, the student is required to submit and follow the terms of an Academic Advisement Progress Assessment Plan.

Appeal Process

Appeals that are incomplete and/or lack sufficient documentation will automatically be denied.

In cases of extreme and/or unusual circumstances, students may submit an **SAP Appeal Form** to the Office of Financial Aid (OFA). The appeal must be specific, in writing, and must address the student's entire previous academic performance as well as steps the student is taking or will take to improve academic success. The student should also submit any supporting documentation at this time. Only 3 appeals may be submitted during a student's enrollment at Fort Valley State University.

As appeals are submitted to the Office of Financial Aid, current enrollment status is verified. If students are not enrolled, a decision will not be made until which time the student enrolls at FVSU. The student may be asked to submit a new appeal.

Students must pay for tuition, fees and other educational expenses out-of-pocket until a decision has been made regarding their SAP Appeal. A pending SAP Appeal does not supersede other enrollment requirements.

Appeal decisions are based on criteria stated on the appeal form. These criteria state that appeals should be for non-academic reasons including but limited to:

- serious injury, illness, medical or mental health condition involving student or immediate family member
- death of an immediate family member
- other non-academic circumstances beyond the student's control

The following are examples of acceptable documentation to support an appeal:

- statement from physician or health professional
- copy of death certificate or obituary

Students appealing Maximum Allowable Time Frame must complete and submit both the SAP Appeal Form and Academic Advisement Progress Assessment Plan.

Appeal decisions are communicated via institutional email.

At the discretion of the Director of Financial Aid, a student may submit a request for review of the appeal decision made by a Financial Aid Advisor and/or the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.

Academic Advisement Progress Assessment Plan

The **Academic Advisement Progress Assessment Plan** is available on the OFA website and must be completed with the student's academic advisor. The Progress Assessment Plan serves as a guideline to assist students in planning out a schedule of coursework that will enable the student to have success in improving his/her SAP status. It should reflect all of the coursework required for the current semester and subsequent semesters for the academic year. If the student's appeal has been approved, the student will be placed in a "**Probation**" status. During the probationary period, students must satisfactorily complete all hours attempted and maintain a minimum 2.50 term GPA. Upon successful completion of the initial Progress Assessment Plan, a student will be required to submit a **new** Plan for the subsequent academic year(s) if his/her SAP status remains below the minimum standards.

Academic performance of students on **Probation** is monitored at the end of every term. Students who receive grades of F, I, W, WF, U or IP are in violation of their probation status. If they remain below the standards, they will be placed back in **Suspension**, and their subsequent aid will be canceled.

Regaining Eligibility

Students not making SAP may reestablish eligibility on their own by taking action that brings them into compliance with the standards. In most cases, this means they are paying out of pocket and performing well academically.

Notifications and Appeals

Students not making SAP will be notified via their FVSU email. SAP status is also viewable on the students' Banner Web account. Students who wish to appeal a determination of SAP must do so no later than the deadlines published on the FVSU Office of Financial Aid website. Appeals received after the published deadline dates will not be reviewed but will be considered for the subsequent term.

All appeal decisions are final and cannot be appealed beyond the Director of Financial Aid.