

### Process Overview

Institutions must establish minimum academic progress standards for all matriculated students, including those receiving federally funded financial aid. Federal regulations limit Title IV Student Financial Aid funding to those students who, according to institutional policy, are maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objective. In practice, SAP is required for all Sul Ross State University financial aid. From a financial aid perspective, the primary interest is to assure the best and most equitable use of financial aid funds from all sources. Sul Ross State University has established the following SAP policy for financial aid by these regulations.

### Evaluation of Eligibility

- Student eligibility will be reviewed at the end of each semester (including summer terms) and during the application process.
- A student must be admitted and enrolled in an eligible Sul Ross academic degree program.
- A student must complete at least 67% completion rate
- A student must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA for their academic degree program (undergraduate or graduate).
- A student may not exceed 150% of the published length of their current Sul Ross academic degree program.

### Categories of students

#### Statement of Standards for Part-time and Full-time Undergrad Students

- Students enrolled less than full-time will be required to maintain the same minimum cumulative grade point averages (2.0) as full-time students and must complete at least 67% of all coursework attempted. Additionally, students may not exceed 150% of the published length of their current Sul Ross academic degree program.

#### Statement of Standards for Part-time and Full-time Graduate Students

- Students enrolled in degree-seeking graduate programs will be expected to complete 67% of all coursework attempted and maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 to remain eligible for financial aid assistance. Additionally, students may not exceed 150% of the published length of their current Sul Ross academic degree program.

### Qualitative Measure (Fixed)

The **qualitative** component of satisfactory academic progress assesses a student's academic work (academic achievement). Quality is measured at SRSU using a numerical scale or grade point average (GPA).

To remain eligible to continue receiving federal and institutional financial aid, Sul Ross students must achieve the following academic qualitative standards:

- 2.0 cumulative GPA for undergraduate students
- 2.5 cumulative GPA for post-baccalaureate teacher certification students

- 3.0 cumulative GPA for graduate students

A student who fails to meet the qualitative SAP standards is not making satisfactory progress toward completing their program of study. As a result, the student may lose eligibility to receive additional Title IV aid as of the date the school determines he/she has not met the school's SAP standards.

### Quantitative Standards (PACE)

The quantitative component of SAP policies typically measures the pace at which a student is progressing toward their degree. This is usually assessed through a completion rate, which measures the percentage of attempted credits that a student successfully completes. The completion rate requirement is typically around 67% or higher. For example, if a student attempted 30 credits, they would need to have successfully completed at least 20 credits (67% of 30) to meet the completion rate requirement.

A student who fails to meet the qualitative SAP standards is not making satisfactory progress toward completing their program of study. As a result, the student may lose eligibility to receive additional Title IV aid as of the date the school determines he/she has not met the school's SAP standards.

Both the quantitative and qualitative components of SAP policies are important to ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward their degree and meeting certain academic standards. If a student fails to meet either the quantitative or qualitative requirement, they may become ineligible for financial aid and may need to submit an appeal to have their aid reinstated. It's important for students to understand their institution's SAP policy and to make every effort to maintain their academic progress in order to remain eligible for financial aid. This may include meeting with academic advisors, seeking tutoring or other academic support services, and planning to improve their academic performance if necessary.

### Maximum Time Frame

The **maximum time frame** is the amount of time in which a student should complete his or her program of study. Federal regulations specify that the absolute maximum time frame during which a student can continue receiving Title IV FSA funds may not exceed 150 percent of the program's published length.

To remain eligible to continue receiving federal and institutional financial aid, Sul Ross students must achieve the following academic quantitative standards:

- Undergraduate program - the maximum timeframe is 150 percent of credit hours attempted for the specific degree program.
- Graduate program - the maximum timeframe is 150 percent of credit hours attempted for the specific degree program.

### Transfer and Re-Admitted Student Eligibility

- Transfer and Re-admitted student eligibility will be reviewed upon admission to the university.
- A transfer student must submit an official transcript from all colleges attended and submit it to the Office of Admissions before eligibility can be determined.
- Unofficial transcripts will not be used to determine eligibility.
- Eligibility will be based on the hours accepted by Sul Ross.
- A transfer and re-admitted student must meet the following requirements:
- A transfer and re-admitted student must complete at least 67% of cumulative hours attempted and maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA. A transfer and re-admitted student may not exceed 150% of the published length of their current academic degree program.
- Transfer - graduates

### Appeals

If a student fails to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements, they may have the option to appeal the decision and request that their financial aid be reinstated. The appeal process is typically a formal process that requires the student to submit documentation and provide an explanation for their inability to meet the SAP requirements.

Here are some common reasons why a student may be able to appeal a financial aid suspension:

1. **Extenuating Circumstances:** Students may experience unforeseen circumstances that affect their academic performance, such as a serious illness, injury, or family emergency. In these cases, students may be able to appeal their financial aid suspension by providing documentation that explains the situation and how it impacted their ability to meet the SAP requirements.
2. **Academic Improvement:** Students who have had a poor academic record in the past but have made significant academic progress since then may also be able to appeal their financial aid suspension. This may include students who have improved their grades, completed additional coursework, or changed their major.
3. **Review by the committee:** If the student's appeal is granted, the financial aid committee will review the case to determine whether the student is eligible for financial aid. The committee may consider factors such as the student's academic history, the severity of the extenuating circumstances, and the likelihood of the student returning to good academic standing.
4. **Notification of decision:** The financial aid office will notify the student of the committee's decision regarding their eligibility for financial aid.

### **SAP Recalculation Due to Grade Change**

If a student's grades are changed due to a grade appeal or other administrative process, it may affect their Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status and their eligibility for financial aid. In such cases, the student's institution will typically recalculate their SAP status based on the new grades.

If the grade change results in the student meeting the SAP requirements, their financial aid will be reinstated. However, if the new grades do not meet the SAP requirements, the student may remain on financial aid suspension and will need to submit an appeal to have their aid reinstated. It's important to note that not all grade changes will result in a recalculation of SAP status. For example, if a student's grades are changed due to a simple calculation error, the SAP status may not be affected. Institutions may also have specific policies in place regarding when and how SAP calculations are recalculated. Students should contact their institution's financial aid office to understand how grade changes may affect their SAP status and financial aid eligibility. It's important to keep in mind that SAP policies are in place to ensure that students are making academic progress toward their degree, and students should make every effort to maintain their academic performance in order to remain eligible for financial aid.

### **Reinstatement**

Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility Students who successfully complete their academic plan and meet the requirements listed above will have their financial aid eligibility reinstated.

### **Transfer Credits**

Coursework taken at another institution accepted as transfer credit by SRSU will count as both attempted and completed credit hours toward the pace and maximum time frame. Students who exceed the maximum time frame/hours can submit an SAP Appeal to determine if their aid can be reinstated.

### **Changes in Major**

Students who have changed majors or are pursuing a double major may reach their maximum time frame/hours before their program of study is complete. All credits attempted are calculated in the SAP evaluation (quantitative, qualitative, and maximum time frame).

### **Remedial Courses**

Remedial Courses are taken at SRSU neither count toward a degree nor are they computed in a student's grade point average. However, they will count toward a student's attempted hours.

### **Academic Amnesty**

In calculating a student's academic progress for federal aid eligibility, federal regulations prohibit schools from omitting attempted or earned grades from previously enrolled periods due to academic amnesty. All courses that have been attempted and completed (including transfer hours) will count towards overall hours and be part of the SAP evaluation (quantitative and qualitative components). Therefore, it is possible for a student that has been granted amnesty to be placed on financial aid suspension. Any student who loses eligibility for student aid funds based on these SAP Policy standards has the right to appeal. Please refer to the Appeal Process.

**Financial Aid Good Standing** (Meets SAP): Students meeting the SAP standards are considered in good standing and are eligible to receive financial aid.

**Financial Aid Warning:** Students not making SAP may still receive financial aid for one term on a "warning status," but no funds will be released until the student has met with a financial aid counselor to discuss their SAP status. Students placed on academic probation have one semester to satisfy SAP requirements. Failure to meet SAP requirements while on warning status will result in the suspension of financial aid.

**Financial Aid Suspension:** Students who fail to meet SAP standards while on warning status or who have attempted more than 150% of the hours required for their degree are placed on financial aid suspension and are not eligible for any aid until they meet the standards or successfully appeal the suspension status.

**Financial Aid Appeal:** The SAP appeal process permits a student who does not meet SAP requirements to request reconsideration of aid eligibility. An appeal must describe the causes that prevented the student from fulfilling the requirements and what has changed in the student's situation that will allow him or her to make satisfactory academic progress at the next review. Similar appeals or appeals for the same reason are not permitted. The inability to comprehend withdrawal policies or the conditions for adequate academic advancement is not a valid appeal reason. The requirements for supporting circumstances and documentation will increase for each succeeding appeal. There is a restriction of one appeal per aid year and two appeals per student's duration.

**Financial Aid Probation:** Students who successfully appeal their suspension of financial assistance are placed on financial aid probation. While a student is on financial aid probation, the student may be required to fulfill specific terms and conditions, such as taking a reduced course load or enrolling in specific courses. Students on probation will receive aid for one term while attempting to meet SAP standards to return to good standing. A student who cannot meet the minimum requirements by the next evaluation period is placed on an SAP Academic Plan as part of the terms of probation. Failure to meet SAP standards at the end of a probation term results in the student returning to financial aid suspension status.

**Financial Aid Academic Plan:** A Financial Aid Academic Plan is intended to help a student satisfy SAP standards in a set number of terms. A student on an academic plan must adhere to the terms of the agreement. Following each term, a review will be conducted to determine whether or not the student met the criteria of the plan. If a student does not meet the terms, he or she will lose eligibility for financial help. If the student passes the plan's requirements, he or she will continue in this status until the plan expires or the student meets SAP standards.