

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY (Revised 12/15/21)

Rogers State University

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is defined as proceeding toward successful completion of degree requirements. The Rogers State University Office of Financial Aid is required by federal regulation and state policy to determine whether a student is meeting the progress requirements. The official record of the RSU Registrar is reviewed to determine student compliance with the SAP policy. For this policy, SAP standards are the same for all categories of students, including those registered with Disability Services.

The policy pertains only to recipients of federal and state assistance including Oklahoma Promise. A recipient of RSU provided scholarship, tuition waiver or athletic grant-in-aid must meet the eligibility requirements of the respective programs. It is possible that a student could have two different SAP reviews based on the financial aid awarded to them.

The academic year at Rogers consists of fall, spring, and summer terms. The Office of Financial Aid conducts the official evaluation of SAP at the end of each of these semesters. All previous terms of enrollment at RSU will be used in the evaluation of SAP. The term in which the students was enrolled is used in the evaluation of SAP, regardless of whether the student received federal or state funding during that period of enrollment.

If at the end of a term satisfactory academic progress has not been achieved, the student can be placed in a warning status and remain eligible for financial aid for one semester following the term in which SAP was not met. Federal regulation allows for a warning status only for students who were making SAP in the prior term or who were enrolled in their first term at RSU. Transfer students are eligible for financial aid in the first term of attendance at RSU and will be evaluated for a SAP status at the completion of that first semester.

Students determined to be ineligible for financial aid due to their SAP status are allowed to appeal the SAP determination and, if approved, can be placed on a financial aid probation during which the student may receive financial aid for one additional term. For additional information on appeals, review Section IV of this policy.

Please note: Academic probation and suspension is not the same as financial aid probation or suspension.

There are two standards used to measuring the SAP status, qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative is defined at the Grade Point Average calculated from all grades earned in courses. Quantitative is defined as the pace toward graduation for each enrolled term.

I. **Grade Point Average (GPA)** (qualitative standard)

This standard is measured through the overall grade point average which includes all grades on a student's transcript except for developmental course grades, incomplete courses and the first grade of a repeated course.

- A. Undergraduate students must maintain at least a 1.7 cumulative GPA for the first 30 credits and a 2.0 cumulative GPA for more than 30 credits.
- B. Grades of "A", "B", "C", "D" and "F" will count in GPA standard for measurement of SAP
- C. Repeated course will only have the second grade counted in the GPA standard even if the second grade is lower than the first grade. A student may not repeat more than four (4) courses in their academic career where the original grade was a "D" or an "F". Both grades will be reflected on the transcript but there will be a note in the Explanation of Grades that the second grade is the only one used in the GPA calculation.
- D. Developmental courses will be given a grade but will only be considered passed with a grade of "C" or higher. The grade is not calculated into the GPA but will be reviewed for a passing grade in the SAP review period.
- E. Students who receive academic forgiveness or academic reprieve consideration through the Academic department will have those courses excluded from the cumulative GPA calculation. However, federal program regulations make no provision for the concept of academic amnesty or academic renewal. Therefore, financial aid SAP review must always include courses applicable to a student's program in evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress (both quantitative and qualitative components). However, a student may be able to appeal loss of eligibility due to special circumstances.

II. **Pace** (quantitative standard)

Students must meet this standard measured by the percentage of total credits completed against the total number of credits a student has attempted.

- A. Student must successfully complete 67% of all credits attempted.
- B. Transfer credits that are accepted toward the student's current program count as both attempted and completed hours. Credits not accepted toward the RSU program requirements are not counted in the Pace calculation.
- C. Students who are pursuing a 2nd bachelor's degree at RSU will not have the credit hours from their prior degree(s) included in the Pace calculation for SAP that do not count toward the current degree pursuit. However, financial aid is limited to 2nd degree students so please contact the Office of Financial Aid for more information.
- D. Repeat courses, development (zero level) courses and courses for which a student receives forgiveness are counted in the Pace standard for measuring SAP.
- E. Courses with grades "A", "B", "C", "D", "S", and "P" will count as successfully attempted and completed courses in the Pace calculation.
- F. Courses with grades of "F", "AW", "U", "NP", "NR", "I", "W" and "X" will be counted in the total number of attempted credits but are not considered as successfully completed.
- G. Audited courses ("AU") are not considered as courses attempted or completed.

RSU does not automatically recheck SAP or recalculate a SAP status as the result of a grade change that occurs between SAP evaluation periods. In addition, RSU will not alter aid already disbursed to students based on SAP evaluations that were accurate at the regular semester evaluation period. However, a student can submit an appeal to the Office of Financial Aid prior to the disbursement of financial aid funds in a subsequent semester if the student has completed the requirements necessary to change an incomplete grade ("I") to a countable grade of "C" or better.

Financial aid warning

RSU checks satisfactory progress at the end of each payment period and therefore will place students on financial aid warning for not making satisfactory progress. A student does not need to appeal or take any other action. The Financial Aid Warning status lasts for one payment period only, during which the student may continue to receive Title IV funds.

Students who fail to make satisfactory progress after the warning period loses their aid eligibility. The student will be placed on financial aid probation and will have an opportunity to appeal. See the *Appealing Financial Aid Eligibility* section of this policy.

A continuing student may receive an additional warning period but only if the previous semester SAP status was in good standing. A student may not receive two consecutive warning periods.

Financial Aid probation

This status is assigned to a student who is failing to make satisfactory academic progress after the warning period and who successfully appeals. Eligibility for aid is reinstated for one semester during which it is expected that a student will bring their SAP status back into good standing. If the student does not bring their SAP status back to acceptable levels, the probation may be extended if the student experiences new reasons for failing to meet SAP standards. After two periods of probation a student would be required to submit an academic plan from approval. See the *Appealing Financial Aid Eligibility* section of this policy.

Maximum Timeframe for degree completion

A student must complete their program at RSU within a total number of attempted credit hours that does not exceed 150% of the total hours required for the completion of their program. A student who exceeds the maximum number of attempted credits is determined to be ineligible for financial aid. Students fail the maximum timeframe measure at the point at which it is determined that it is not possible for them to complete their program within the maximum timeframe, not at the point they reach the maximum timeframe point.

This total includes all attempted coursework at RSU and all transfer work from other schools that is accepted toward their degree requirements. All attempted credit hours are considered in the calculation, even if the student did not receive federal aid for the coursework or earn a grade. In addition, all repeated courses or count in this calculation.

The following are the maximum attempted credit hours for each student type:

Undergraduate students enrolled in a 124-credit hour program are eligible for a total of 186 attempted credit hours of study.

Graduate students enrolled in a 36-credit hour degree program are eligible for a total of 50 attempted credits hours of study.

Students who have exceeded the maximum number of hours to complete an academic program are eligible to appeal. In this case, a degree check is required for the financial aid office to determine how many additional hours are needed to complete the academic program. Please review *“Appealing Financial Aid Eligibility”* for more information about the appeal process.

Completed academic program but no degree

A student who completes the academic requirements for a program but does not yet have the degree or certificate is not eligible for further additional Title IV funds for that program. Students are not permitted to extend their Title IV eligibility beyond the completion of the original degree program to attain a minor or second major. There is no appeal process available for this situation. Changing a degree program after the completion of the original bachelor’s degree program requirements does not reinstate some types of financial aid eligibility as the student is determined to have achieved a Bachelor’s degree, a specific eligibility criterion for federal Pell grants, Oklahoma state grants and the federal SEOG program. Students with questions regarding this policy should make an appointment with a financial aid counselor to review their financial aid options.

Appealing Financial Aid Eligibility

A student whose financial aid is suspended based on the SAP policy may submit a written appeal. The appeal should be based on mitigating circumstances that have a direct effect of the student’s ability to make progress. While not totally inclusive, the appeal form provides examples of mitigating circumstances that are unexpected or beyond the control of the student.

The appeal must explain in detail why the student failed to meet the minimum academic standards, what caused the failure and what has changed or improved that will allow the student to demonstrate SAP at the end of the next semester. Documentation supporting the appeal must be submitted with the appeal form, not separately, so be sure that all information is together. Appeals without proper documentation will not be reviewed by the Appeals committee.

If the Financial Aid Appeals Committee approves an appeal for a student who has an insufficient cumulative GPA or a pace deficiency and has determined that the student can meet the SAP standards by the end of the next term, the student will be placed on financial aid probation. This probation approval will not require the student to submit an academic plan. All federal/state/RSU aid will be reinstated for one term. The student will be evaluated at the end of that term to determine if the continued eligibility for financial aid is warranted. A student’s financial aid probation can be extended one additional semester without the need for an additional appeal, but the committee may request an academic plan.

If the Financial Aid Appeals Committee approves an appeal and determines the student cannot meet the SAP standards by the end of the next semester, the student will be placed on financial aid probation with a required academic plan. The student must adhere to the specific terms and conditions as

determined by the committee. Financial Aid will be reinstated for one term and the student's progress will be reviewed at the end of that term. At that point, the student must meet the requirements of the academic plan. If the plan is met, the financial aid probation will continue for an additional term and financial aid eligibility will continue.

The Office of Financial Aid will notify the student via email of the decision of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. The Appeals committee decision is final. Students with an academic plan are required to schedule an appointment with a Financial Aid Counselor to review the plan and discuss regaining their eligibility. If a student needs to change an academic plan because a course is not being offered in a specific term or the course was cancelled by the university, the student is responsible contacting the Office of Financial Aid to review the effect of the change. The academic plan must be updated. Students on an academic plan who withdraw from a course will be considered not meeting the requirements and become ineligible in the next semester. Students who do not meet the requirements of the academic plan will become ineligible for federal/state/RSU financial aid.

Students will regain their financial aid eligibility once they meet the minimum requirements of SAP. This eligibility is not retroactive to any prior term. Students not meeting SAP who have lost their eligibility also have the option of attending RSU at their own expense or by using private education loan funds, if approved by the lender until they meet the conditions of the SAP policy.