

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy**

Effective: May, 2018

Federal regulations require that all students make satisfactory academic progress in a program of study to maintain eligibility for financial aid. SAP requirements are the same for all students.

### **SAP Evaluation Schedule**

SAP will be evaluated at the end of every quarter, before the first day of the next quarter, including summer. The first occurrence of not meeting SAP will result in the student receiving a warning. The second occurrence will result in loss of financial aid eligibility and eligibility to participate in CPT (internship) or Work Study. The third occurrence will result in dismissal from the university and termination of F1 student status. All notifications will be sent to the student's official university email address.

Students will lose financial aid eligibility and will not be eligible to participate in CPT (internship on or off campus) if they do not complete all their coursework before the maximum timeframe allotted. Students will receive a notification two quarters before they reach their limit.

### **Financial Aid Appeal Process**

If a student has extenuating circumstances that prevented them from making academic progress toward a degree, an appeal may be submitted to their Program Chair as soon as the student receives official notification or no later than 3 weeks before the end of the next quarter.

A complete appeal will include the following:

1. Personal statement explaining the circumstances that prevented academic progress toward a degree and a plan to ensure future academic success.
2. Supporting documentation (Examples: letters from professors, medical documentation, etc.)
3. Remaining Courses Required for degree completion for students who have exceeded the maximum timeframe requirement.

### **No Appeal Process is offered for CPT**

## Scholarship Recipients

Scholarship recipients are also expected to meet and maintain SAP requirements. In addition to SAP, a scholarship may have more rigorous requirements and/or a separate appeal process. Refer to your original scholarship award notification for specific requirements.

In the event a student fails to meet the SAP requirements, student services will contact either the private scholarship donor or the university department to notify them. It is then their decision to determine if the student is still eligible for the scholarship. If the scholarship is cancelled, the student may appeal directly to the donor or scholarship provider.

## SAP Definitions

The following definitions apply to the terms used in this section:

**Warning:** A warning quarter is given to every student the first time they violate one of the SAP requirements. Students are still eligible to receive financial aid while in warning status.

**Probation:** If a student has received their warning quarter and is still in violation of the SAP requirements, the student will be suspended from receiving financial aid and from participating in CPT (internships) or Work Study. The student may appeal this decision and if the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on a probation quarter, emailed an academic plan and will be eligible to receive financial aid for this quarter.

**Appeal:** A personal statement and supporting documentation must be submitted to the student's Program Chair asking for financial aid to be reinstated based on an extenuating circumstance that prevented the student from meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress. Appeals that are approved will allow a student a probationary quarter and require that the student sign an academic plan including a time line and completion date.

**Academic Plan:** If a student appeals their financial aid suspension and is approved they will be assigned an academic plan created by their Program Chair detailing the academic performance and necessary measures required to maintain financial aid eligibility until meeting SAP.

**Completion Rate (Pace of Completion):** All students must complete at least 67% of the credit hours they attempt for their degree program. The rate is

calculated by dividing the number of successfully completed credits by the number of attempted credits to date. For students in Pass/No Pass graded classes, students may receive no more than 33% NP grades of total Pass/No Pass classes taken per quarter. For example, if the student takes 3 Pass/NP classes, only one NP (No Pass) grade is permitted. If a student takes 2 classes, no NP grades are permitted.

**Maximum Timeframe:** Students must complete their program within the maximum timeframe allowed by degree type. (Please see the maximum timeframe chart next page.)

In addition, if at any point a student cannot mathematically complete his/her program within the maximum allowable timeframe, the student will be dismissed. Students dismissed for exceeding the maximum allowable timeframe may appeal the dismissal. If the appeal is approved, the student must return on an academic plan with a specific new maximum timeframe completion rate not to exceed two additional quarters of study or 24 additional quarter credit units. Failure to progress at a pace to complete at or prior to the specified date or with the required GPA will be dismissed with no right to appeal.

The requirements for rate of progress are to ensure that students are progressing at a rate at which they will complete their programs within the maximum allowable timeframe.

**Retaking coursework:** Students may retake any class in their degree program and include the course in their enrollment status for a quarter as long as the student has never passed the course. Once the student passes the course, they can retake the class only one time. Any second or subsequent repetition of the passed course may not be included in the student's enrollment status for purposes of the title IV, HEA, programs.

## SAP – Undergraduate and Graduate Programs Policy

The following measurements are monitored at the end of every quarter: GPA, completion rate, and maximum timeframe.

### GPA Requirement

Students must maintain a university GPA consistent with their academic program requirement. The university GPA is the official GPA on the student transcript. For students in Pass/No Pass graded classes, students may receive no more than 33% NP grades of total Pass/No Pass classes taken per quarter. For example, if the student takes 3 Pass/NP classes, only one NP (No Pass) grade is permitted. If a student takes 2 classes, no NP grades are permitted.

Type of Program	GPA
<b>Undergraduate</b>	2.00
<b>Graduate</b>	3.00
<b>Doctorate</b>	3.00

### Completion Rate (Pace of Completion)

All students must pass at least 67% of all attempted credit hours with a grade of Pass, or C (or better) for undergraduate, C+ (or better) for graduate. Attempted credit hours will include all Sofia hours and transfer hours accepted by any other college or university. Repeated and non-passing grades will also count as attempted credit hours even if the grade is no longer calculated in the GPA.

The following grades are not considered passing: D, F, I, NP, W.

WIP (work in progress) grades are considered satisfactory and will not affect the completion rate.

### Maximum Timeframe

Students are given a certain amount of terms to complete their degree before they become ineligible to receive financial aid (including federal

student loans). Students will receive notification when they get close to meeting their maximum timeframe.

Refer to the charts below to review the maximum timeframe allowed by degree type:

Degree Type	Maximum Quarters
<b>Undergraduate</b>	24 (6 years)

Degree Type	Maximum Quarters
<b>Master's</b>	16 (4 years)
<b>Doctorate</b>	28 (7 years)

Students will receive notice via their Sofia University email when they are within 2 quarters of exceeding 150% of the normal time frame for their program. Students will also be informed that this may make them ineligible for financial aid.

For dual degree programs, students will be allowed to complete both degrees based on the program with the highest maximum time frame allowed. For example, if a student is enrolled in a Master’s and PhD program, they will be given a total of 40 quarters to complete both degrees.

### Dissertation Work

Students are given a maximum of 18-quarter units of time to complete their dissertation work before they become ineligible to receive financial aid (including federal student loans). After 18-units of dissertation work, students may continue working on their dissertation for another 4 quarters, under “1-unit Continuing Dissertation Status,” however they are ineligible to receive financial aid for these additional 4 quarters. Students who are unable to finish their dissertation in 4 additional quarters will be dismissed from the program with “All But Dissertation” (ABD) status.

## Steps to Submit an SAP Appeal

Complete these steps if you have special circumstances, which caused you to violate the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy.

### Appeal Process:

Sofia will review and consider appeals based on the following circumstances:

- Death in the family
- Medical Illness (Personal/Immediate family)
- Other special circumstance

If the appeal is approved, you will be placed on financial aid probation, meaning you will be eligible to receive financial aid for at least one quarter. You will also be provided an academic plan, which will outline what you will need to do to maintain your eligibility.

If the appeal is denied, you may request a second review only if you can provide new information and documentation that was omitted in the initial appeal.

### Instructions:

- Be sure your name and student ID is on top of each page you submit.
- Provide a personal statement, which includes:
  - What specifically happened that caused you not to meet SAP requirements or extend the time needed to complete your academic program?
  - How did the situation affect your academic performance?
  - Explain what has now changed, or steps you plan to take, that should improve your academic performance?
- Provide documents that support your personal statement (i.e. medical documentation, obituaries, statements from a third party).

Submit a list of the remaining courses required for degree completion if you are over the **maximum timeframe** allowed.

**Review:** The appropriate Program Chair will review appeals within 8-10 business days.

An email will be sent to your Sofia.edu email address to inform you of the results of your appeal.