

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Undergraduate Students

In order to maintain eligibility for financial aid, each undergraduate student at the University of Maine must meet the established guidelines for academic progress.

WHAT IS A SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY?

Federal financial aid regulations require financial aid recipients to make progress toward earning their degree, stay above specific GPA minimums and to complete the degree within a maximum time-frame. You can lose eligibility for aid if you are not doing well in your classes and/or frequently withdraw from classes and/or if it is taking you a very long time to earn your degree. If you are not meeting the minimum standards, even if you are allowed by your academic dean to continue your enrollment, you will have to do so without the benefit of financial aid.

WHAT IF THERE ARE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES?

Every student has the right to appeal if you believe that you have special circumstances which have impacted your academic progress. Submit your appeal using the SAP Appeal Form (www.umaine.edu/stuaid/sap), along with the required supporting documentation, to the attention of the *Undergraduate Satisfactory Progress Appeal Committee*, Office of Student Financial Aid, 5781 Wingate Hall, Orono, ME, 04469-5781. The Office of Student Financial Aid will cancel aid for any student who does not appeal, or for whom an appeal is denied. If you have questions about this policy, contact the Office of Student Financial Aid.

WHAT IS EXPECTED?

Your progress is measured once each academic year at the end of the spring semester. If you are not making satisfactory progress, *you will receive communication through your MaineStreet Message Center regarding the loss of your eligibility* for financial aid effective the following semester or for the semester in which you have applied for aid. You must meet the following expectations:

1. Quantitative Standard — Successful Completion of Credit Hours Attempted

As a matriculated student, you are required to successfully complete a minimum specified percentage of the credits/hours that you attempt. The policy uses the following graduated scale:

<u>Attempted Credit Hours</u>	<u>Percentage Earned</u>
1–24	50%
25–54	55%
55–84	62%
85+	67%

2. Maximum Time Frame — Cumulative Credit Hour Limit

The maximum time frame allowed for you to complete your degree is defined as 150% of the credits needed for your degree. Attempting more than 150% of the credits needed without completing your degree will result in you failing to meet the academic progress standards. For example, if you enroll in a degree program that requires 120 credits, you can attempt up to 180 and remain in compliance with this policy. If more than 180 hours are attempted, the standards of the policy are no longer being met.

3. Qualitative Standard — Cumulative Grade Point Average

As you progress toward degree completion you are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average based on the number of credits earned in order to maintain financial aid eligibility. The policy uses the following scale:

<u>Earned Credits</u>	<u>Minimum GPA</u>
0–23	≥ 1.5
24–53	≥ 1.7
54–83	≥ 1.8
84+	≥ 1.9

This measure is separate from and is in addition to the University's Academic Action performance requirements that are reviewed by your academic dean (please consult the Undergraduate Catalog for more information).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How often will my progress be reviewed?

Progress is measured once each academic year at the end of the spring semester. This review includes all attempted coursework, even if you did not receive financial aid for some or all of that coursework.

What can I do if I'm not meeting the SAP standards? Can I appeal this determination?

Yes, you do have the right to appeal if you believe that you have special circumstances that caused undue hardship. You can complete the SAP Appeal Form; explain the circumstances that contributed to your situation; and provide documentation to support your appeal within 30 days of your SAP status notification. Send your appeal to the Undergraduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Committee in the Office of Student Financial Aid. You will receive a response to your appeal via the MaineStreet Message Center within 30 days of receipt of a complete appeal.

How long do I have to submit an appeal?

All appeals must be received within 30 days of receiving your SAP status notification. No appeals will be accepted later than 30 days prior to the end of the current semester.

If my appeal is approved, what happens next?

You will be placed on **SAP probation** for the next enrollment term and are eligible for financial aid during that term. You may be given a plan with specific measures to meet during the probationary period. You will be reviewed again at the end of the probationary period. If you fail to meet SAP or fail to meet the measures prescribed in your plan, you will be suspended from receiving financial aid.

If my financial aid eligibility is suspended, how can I regain eligibility?

You can continue to enroll without the benefit of financial aid provided that your academic dean allows your enrollment. If with additional coursework you believe that you now meet the SAP policy, contact the Financial Aid Office and request a review of your record.

Do I have any recourse if my appeal is denied?

The decision of the SAP Appeals Committee is final. If you have additional new documentation concerning a hardship that was not available when your appeal was reviewed, you may contact the Office of Student Financial Aid to request your appeal be reconsidered. It is unlikely that the decision will be reconsidered or overturned without compelling new documentation.

How are transfer credits from my prior school treated by this SAP policy?

Transfer credits are counted as attempted and earned in both the "Quantitative Measure" and the "Maximum Time Frame."

I needed to complete some developmental coursework. How are those courses counted?

Developmental courses are counted as both attempted and earned so long as you received a passing grade. They are counted as attempted but not earned if you do not receive a passing grade.

How are courses with incomplete, deferred and/or missing grades counted? What happens if I audit a class?

All of these courses are counted as attempted, but not earned.

I repeated one of my courses in an effort to bring my GPA up. How is that course counted under this policy?

When repeating a course, the credits count as attempted each time the course is taken, but the credits count as earned with a passing grade only one time.

What happens if I completely withdraw from all of my classes part way through the semester? What happens if I withdraw from just one of my courses? How are those courses counted?

All of the courses for that semester from which you have withdrawn would be counted as attempted, but not earned.

I had a really poor semester and then took a semester off. When I returned to UMaine, I had my transcript reevaluated. As a result, I have a semester of coursework that has been reevaluated and is no longer being counted in my GPA or toward my degree requirements. How are reevaluated courses treated under this policy?

You may request that your transcript be reevaluated so that a "poor" semester can be removed from your GPA. However, the decision can negatively impact the "Quantitative Measure" of this policy because the reevaluated courses will continue to be counted as attempted, but not earned, even if you earned a passing grade in the course(s).

I am pursuing several undergraduate degrees and/or academic majors. Will I receive more time to complete the additional coursework?

You will not automatically receive more time. If you are not meeting the policy, you will need to appeal. When you appeal, submit a degree completion plan specifying what course work is required for each degree and/or major. The plan should be signed by your advisor or associate dean.