

# Financial Aid Office – financialaid@ucc.edu



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## Satisfactory Academic Progress Q & A

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### WHAT IS SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS?

In accordance with U.S. Department of Education regulations, schools are required to assess the academic progress of eligible students receiving Title IV funds. The purpose of Section I is to define terminology as outlined in the federal regulations. These regulations are effective for all financial aid students beginning July 1, 2011. The purpose of Section II is to define procedures for monitoring the satisfactory academic progress (SAP) of financial aid students. The purpose of Section III is to establish procedures for students who are not meeting these standards and who have extenuating circumstances to file an appeal and apply to have their eligibility reinstated.

#### **Section I. Definition of Terms**

***Financial aid probation*** is defined as a status assigned by an institution to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated.

***Financial aid warning*** is defined as a status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress at an institution that evaluates academic progress at the end of each payment period. This status may be conferred to the student automatically without any action taken by the student. Students on financial aid warning may continue to receive assistance under the Title IV, HEA programs for one payment period despite a determination that the student is not making satisfactory academic progress.

***Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal*** is defined as a process by which a student who is not meeting the institution's standards petitions the institution for reconsideration of the student's eligibility for Title IV, HEA program funds.

The definition of *Extenuating Circumstances* includes:

- A. Death in the immediate family.
- B. Medical conditions such as a family member needing round-the-clock care by the student.
- C. Extended illness of student or immediate family.
- D. Military duty.
- E. Other documented extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student.

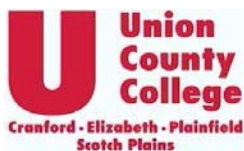
## WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE?

### ***Section II. Satisfactory Academic Progress***

Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) to retain eligibility for Title IV funds. SAP requirements must be applied consistently for all Title IV eligible students. Procedures for monitoring academic progress are as follows:

1. All academic history is included when reviewing a student's SAP status whether or not Title IV funds were received during the period of enrollment.
2. Thirty (30) hours of remedial coursework and all English for speakers of other languages (ESL) courses are excluded from the maximum timeframe (150%) calculation.
3. Each student's progress will be evaluated each term.
4. Students will be allowed a financial aid warning period of one term. During this term students will maintain financial aid eligibility even though they are not currently meeting SAP standards. Students on financial aid warning will not be awarded aid for subsequent terms until academic progress is in compliance or an approved appeal is processed.
5. When evaluating SAP, all attempted transfer hours will be included. However, transfer hours attributed to the completion of a previous degree may be excluded from the SAP calculation.
6. The College will monitor quantitative and qualitative criteria to determine satisfactory academic progress. Students are deemed "meeting SAP standards" if they are in compliance with criteria listed below:
  - A. To meet **quantitative** SAP standards students must successfully complete 67% of all courses attempted and must not attempt more than 150% of the coursework required to complete their degree or certificate program.
  - B. To meet **qualitative** SAP standards students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.
7. If a student who was previously not meeting SAP criteria brings his/her academic progress back into compliance prior to the next time SAP is calculated, no appeal is required. The student's eligibility for financial aid will be automatically reinstated. Students who are not meeting SAP criteria and who are not eligible for a financial aid warning period are no longer eligible for financial aid. Students no longer eligible for financial aid with documented extenuating circumstances may submit an appeal to have their aid reinstated. If the appeal is approved, the student may have financial aid reinstated for the current or subsequent term and will be considered to be on financial aid probation. Appeals are approved for one term only and cannot be approved retroactively.

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8. To ensure compliance with federal regulations and college policy, the Director of Financial Aid will monitor campus appeals as needed.

## **Section III. Appeal Process**

1. Students in associate degree programs are not eligible for an approved appeal if they have the equivalent of two associate degrees or attempted more than the equivalent of 180 credit hours. Once a student has reached these limits, no appeal will be approved regardless of the extenuating circumstances.
2. Appeal forms are available to students online via the financial aid website. Students must complete the appeal application and submit the completed packet to the campus financial aid office. All appeals must be approved or denied by the SAP Committee. The committee's decision will be posted and available to view on student's Web Advisor/Owl's Nest account within 45 days upon receipt of the appeal. Decisions made by the committee are final and may not be appealed by the student.
3. Incomplete appeal applications will not be reviewed. An appeal application is considered incomplete if any requested information is omitted, the appeal form is not filled out completely or supporting documentation is not attached. Supporting documentation must be appropriate for the extenuating circumstance; e.g., death certificate for death in family, physician's note for illnesses or hospitalization, military orders, etc.
4. During the appeal review process, a student's record of academic progress will also be reviewed for maximum timeframe violations. If at the time of the review, it is determined the student will be unable to complete his/her program of study without exceeding the maximum timeframe, the appeal will be denied.
5. Students whose appeals are approved will be approved for one term only with the stipulation that they must successfully complete all courses attempted.
6. Provided a student is making positive progress towards program completion, an appeal based on completion rate or GPA may be approved for one term and can be continued (extended) for a maximum of four consecutive terms. This excludes students violating 150% maximum timeframe.
7. An appeal may only be approved for courses that count towards the student's current program of study.

8. Student appeals must include, in the student's own words, why they are not meeting SAP standards and what has changed that will enable them to successfully complete all courses attempted going forward.
9. If a student was on an approved appeal and subsequently does not complete a course, the student's appeal cannot be approved again unless extenuating circumstances as previously defined, were present that were not a factor in the previous appeal such as a death in the immediate family or a catastrophic illness. Appropriate documentation must be submitted with the appeal request to be considered.
10. Appeals cannot be made retroactively. An appeal may only be approved for the term in which it was received or for future terms.
11. If an appeal is denied, the student cannot resubmit the appeal until he/she has successfully completed at least one academic semester with the equivalent of 6 credit hours and earned a term GPA of 2.0 or higher.
12. An appeal may be approved for a student pursuing a second degree or certificate provided:
  - A. The student explains why s/he is pursuing a second degree or certificate.
  - B. The student successfully completed a previous degree or certificate.
  - C. The student has not reach maximum time-frame (150% rule) with all credit hours earned.
    - Note: Thirty (30) hours of remedial coursework and all English for speakers of other languages (ESL) courses are excluded from the maximum timeframe (150%) calculation.