Center for Student Financial Aid

California State University, Los Angeles
5151 State University Drive, SA 124
Los Angeles, CA 90032-8402
Phone: (323) 343-6260

FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY (SAP)

Federal and State regulations governing student financial aid require that students receiving financial aid must maintain standards of reasonable academic progress in the completion of their degree or certificate. California State University, Los Angeles has developed a standard of satisfactory academic progress policy to monitor a student's academic progress in accordance to the most recent federal and state regulations.

OVERVIEW OF THE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) STANDARDS:

Standard 1 – Minimum Cumulative GPA

- Maintain a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) specific to your academic program.

Standard 2 – Minimum Cumulative Pace of Completion

- Satisfactorily complete (earn credit in) at least 75% of the cumulative units you attempt.

Standard 3 – Maximum Time Frame of Aid Eligibility for Degree Completion

- Complete a degree or certificate program within a maximum number of attempted units equal to 150% of the units required for the specific academic program.

The above standards are separate from the University's academic policies and are applicable to all federal, state, and institutional (i.e. State University Grant) financial aid including grants, loans, and work-study. Non-financial aid recipients awarded only scholarships, graduate assistantships, veteran's benefits, stipends (excluding Cal Grant B stipend), or student assistant earnings must meet the eligibility requirements specific to those programs.

Below is a summary of the minimum standards students must meet to remain eligible for financial aid. **IMPORTANT:** A student's entire academic history must be considered in these standards regardless of whether or not the student received financial aid for that course work.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) STANDARD DETAILS:

Standard 1 – Minimum Cumulative GPA

The GPA standard takes into account your cumulative GPA and academic progress. The cumulative GPA includes and factors in all completed and attempted units at Cal State LA and any coursework from all other colleges and universities.

Academic Level	GPA
Undergraduate (1st Bachelor's)	2.0
Graduate Certificate, Master's & Doctorate	3.0
Post-Baccalaureate Programs (e.g. Credential)	2.5

Standard 2 - **Minimum Cumulative Pace of Completion**

The Pace Standard determines the pace in which a student is progressing toward program completion. The Pace Standard is calculated by dividing the total number of credit hours completed (passed with units earned) by the total number of credit hours attempted. To meet the Pace Standard, students must satisfactorily complete 75% of all cumulative credit hours attempted.

Types of courses and credits included in the Pace Standard calculation are:

- All Cal State LA courses enrolled including courses for which a W is posted
- All transferable courses from other colleges and universities
- Repeated coursework
- Consortium coursework, if applicable
- Coursework from Study Abroad programs

Types of courses and credits not included in the Pace Standard calculation are:

- Audited courses
- Credits earned through examinations (AP, IB and other test credits)

Standard 3 – Maximum Time Frame of Aid Eligibility for Degree Completion
Students are eligible to receive financial aid for a maximum number of attempted units equal to 150% of the units required for the degree program. All attempted units at Cal State LA and transfer units are counted whether or not financial aid was received. Be aware that some federal and state programs (i.e. Pell Grants and State University Grants) have additional limitations. For more details, please visit: http://www.calstatela.edu/financialaid/types-aid

The maximum number of attempted units for continued funding is as follows:

Undergraduate - 180 attempted units
Graduate/Masters - *45 attempted units
Post-Baccalaureate (credential) - Based on each program's unit requirements
Ed.D (Doctor of Education) – 90 attempted units
Doctor of Audiology – 171 attempted units

*Graduate courses 5960, 5970, 5990, 5995, and 6990 (or equivalent semester courses) may be certified as full-time (12 units) with a study load of fewer than 12 units. These courses are counted towards the maximum time frame standard at their certified full-time unit level.

For more information, refer to the "Study Load" information within *Schedule of Classes* (any semester) http://www.calstatela.edu/classschedule or the *University Catalog* http://ecatalog.calstatela.edu.

Second Degree:
Students pursuing a Second Baccalaureate degree, Second Master's degree at Cal State LA, or are pursuing dual programs concurrently, will have reached the maximum time frame standard at an accelerated pace. As such, students must have their SAP status and aid eligibility reviewed individually by a financial aid administrator.

Double Major or minor:
The maximum time frame calculation is based only on the primary major. Additional time is not granted for students pursuing a double major or minor.

WHY AND HOW IS SAP DETERMINED?

Financial aid regulations require students to be making and maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward a degree to be eligible for continued funding. All academic records are evaluated at the end of the most recently graded term based on cumulative Cal State LA and transfer work. All coursework (including prerequisite courses) is included whether or not the students received financial aid for that term. The Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy for financial aid is available at http://www.calstatela.edu/financialaid/policies. Students who fully meet all three standards described above are considered to be in good standing and are eligible for financial aid.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NOT MEETING ONE OR MORE SAP STANDARDS:

Warning Status:
Students who do not meet the cumulative GPA standard and/or do not complete the number of units attempted for the **first time** may be placed on a financial aid **"warning status"** for one semester and may continue to receive financial aid for one payment period. Students who reach and/or exceed the maximum time frame standard are not eligible to receive a financial aid warning status and will be deemed ineligible to receive financial aid.

Probation Status:
Students who are placed on probation after having successfully appealed their ineligibility status will be reviewed at the end of the following payment period. Students on probation must meet the terms specified in their agreement. Unless otherwise stated in the agreement, all three SAP standards must be met upon completion of the probationary period in order to be removed from probationary status and be eligible for continued funding.

Consequences for not meeting SAP after a Warning or Probation term:
Students whose performance falls short in one or more of the three SAP standards during the probation or warning period will be deemed ineligible to receiving financial aid. Students with extraordinary circumstances beyond their control may submit an appeal. Appeals for students who were already granted a probationary term must include an "approved academic plan." If an appeal that includes an academic plan is approved, the student will continue to be on probation and satisfactory academic progress will be monitored based on the details of the academic plan. Students failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress based on an approved academic plan **will not** be permitted to submit additional appeals until the next academic year. The student may regain eligibility for financial aid if their progress allows them to meet all three Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

SAP APPEAL PROCESS:

Students who are deemed ineligible to receive financial aid for not meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards and have extenuating circumstances beyond their control may submit a SAP appeal to the Financial Aid Office. **The deadline to submit an appeal is 30 calendar days from the date of the SAP ineligibility communication.**

Conditions that would be considered during an appeal:

- Death of a family member – parent, guardian, spouse, sibling, or child during the academic year;
- Your own serious illness or injury that led to a complete or partial withdrawal from your courses. The serious illness or injury of a family member (parent, guardian, spouse, sibling, or child) that required you to be the primary caregiver and prevented you from passing your courses;
- Extreme personal hardship or trauma in your life that impaired your emotional and/or physical health;
- Compulsory military duty.
- Other significant unexpected and documented circumstances beyond your control

Appeals that will NOT be considered:

- Appeals submitted after the established deadlines
- Encountering a situation that could have been anticipated
- Change of major or addition of a major or minor are not viewed as extenuating circumstances, since the standard is quite generous in the time frame allowed to complete a degree
- Dissatisfaction with course material, instructor, instructional method, and/or class intensity;
- Lack of motivation, change in academic interests, or change of major;
- Participation in extracurricular activities;
- Academic/unit overload

SAP appeal procedures:
Students may regain eligibility when there is a determination that the student is again meeting the SAP standard policy. Students with extraordinary circumstances beyond their control may submit a SAP appeal to the Center for Student Financial Aid. The SAP Appeal form is available at http://www.calstatela.edu/financialaid/forms/.

Students will be required to submit a written "Statement of Explanation", which clearly explains the following:

- The circumstances that prevented the student from meeting the satisfactory academic progress standards;
- What the students responsibility had been for these events;
- How their circumstances have changed so that the situation will not occur again;
- The steps the student has taken to ensure Satisfactory Academic Progress in the future.

REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTION CHECKLIST:

SAP Appeals for *GPA deficiencies* must include:

- ✓ Memo from academic advisor that outlines how student will improve Cal State LA GPA SAP.
- ✓ A completed *Academic Plan* reviewed and signed by the academic advisor that has also been "stamped" with the department's institutional stamp or seal. Academic Plan must include all courses through the expected graduation date.
- ✓ The Academic Plan form required as part of your SAP appeal is available for downloading at http://www.calstatela.edu/financialaid/forms/.

SAP Appeals for *Pace of Completion* must include:

- ✓ A completed *Academic Plan* reviewed and signed by the academic advisor that has also been "stamped" with the department's institutional stamp or seal. Academic Plan must include all courses through the expected graduation date.
- ✓ The Academic Plan form required as part of your SAP appeal is available for downloading at http://www.calstatela.edu/financialaid/forms/.

SAP Appeals for *Excessive Units* must include:

- ✓ Copy of the student's Official Program signed by the Department Chair or designee.
- ✓ A copy of your **"Degree Progress Report"** available online via GET under "Academic Requirements."
- ✓ A listing of **all** "*remaining coursework"* required to complete degree program indicating "*expected term of graduation*".

SAP Appeals for all circumstances:

- ✓ Students should attach additional supporting documents that further document their situation (i.e., letter from doctor, copy of a death certificate, etc).

The review time for appeals may take up to **3 to 4 weeks depending on the volume.** Appeals will be processed as received on a first come-first served basis. Students will receive notification of appeal determination by e-mail. Students awaiting a response are responsible for paying their tuition fees by the payment deadline specified in the Schedule of Classes in order to register for classes or to avoid being dropped from enrollment.

If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on probation. Students on probation must either improve their academic performance to meet all SAP standards by the end of the probationary term or will need to follow the specific details of an approved Academic Plan as specified in the approval communication.

APPEAL OF DENIAL (Second Level Appeal):

If your appeal was denied and you wish to challenge the denial, you must provide a clearly written (typed) rationale for your challenge to the SAP Appeals Committee. **The deadline to submit a second level SAP appeal is 14 calendar days from the date of the SAP ineligibility communication.**

Second level appeals may be sent to the address below or faxed to 323-343-3166.

California State University, Los Angeles
Center for Student Financial Aid, SA-124
SAP Appeals Committee
5151 State University Drive
Los Angeles CA 90032-8402

Students will receive a response from the committee by email. **Be aware that the Committee's decision is final.** If the Committee rendered a decision to uphold the denial, the student is not be permitted to submit additional appeals until the next academic year. The student may also regain eligibility for financial aid if their progress allows them to meet all three Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

Please note the SAP policy and its appeal procedures are current as of the date of publication. The SAP Policy is subject to change any time during a given academic year to ensure compliance with the Federal and State regulations.