

## **Harris-Stowe State University Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy and Procedures**

Harris-Stowe State University is required to establish and monitor academic progress standards for students who are federal and state financial aid applicants. This policy ensures that any student who receives or applies for financial aid is making progress toward a degree. The student's total academic history is monitored regardless of whether he/she has previously received financial aid. The Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Review process will be completed once a year at the end of spring.

In order to maintain eligibility for financial aid, a student must meet the standard requirements listed below. Failure to meet these requirements will result in the loss of aid. Programs affected by Standard Requirements are:

- Federal Pell Grant Federal Stafford Loan
- Federal SEOG Federal PLUS Loan
- Missouri Access Grant
- Private Loans

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Requirements:**

To maintain Financial Aid standards a student must meet or exceed both the qualitative requirement- cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) and quantitative requirement - successful completion of attempted credits hours (PACE) standards, and stay within the Maximum Time Frame (180 credits) to complete his or her course of study. Students requesting consideration for Federal Financial Aid must demonstrate a positive forward movement toward their degree.

### **Qualitative Measure:**

Students must meet the standards listed as follows:

GPA (Qualitative) for all Undergraduate and Transfer students:

<b>Semester Hours</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Minimum GPA Standing</b>
0-29	Freshman	2.00
30-59	Sophomore	2.00
60-89	Junior	2.00
90 and up	Senior	2.00

### **Grade Effects on SAP Calculations:**

- *Grades reflecting Satisfactory Completion:*

The following grades are considered to demonstrate satisfactory course completion: A, B, and C.

- *Grades reflecting Unsatisfactory Completion:*

The following grades will be counted towards the cumulative GPA and attempted credit hours (PACE). However, they do not demonstrate satisfactory course completion: F, AF, I (Incomplete), WF (Withdraw Fail).

- DR (Drop), Needs Repeating (NR), No Grade (NG), W and WD, Drops, withdrawals, incompletes, repeated and non-credit coursework will only be counted towards the attempted credit hours (PACE) A/SAP standards.

- *Grade Changes*

Students who receive grade changes for a previous semester where they were not meeting SAP requirements but with that grade change will meet SAP requirements will be reviewed again. This could possibly waive the SAP process for the student.

- Dually-enrolled students and Summer Bridge students are included in the SAP process if requirements are not met, per federal regulation and policy.

**Quantitative Measure:**

PACE (Quantitative) for all students is 66% completion rate of earned hours over all attempted credit hours. The number of earned hours are divided by the number of attempted hours cumulatively at the end of each semester. (Accepted Transfer and Remedial courses are included in this calculation in both earned and attempted).

- **Example:** If a student enrolls for a total of 30 credit hours their first year, the student must satisfactorily complete 19 credit hours ( $30 \text{ credit hours} \times .66 (66\%) = 19 \text{ credit hours}$ ).

*Maximum Time Frame for Degree Completion:*

Satisfactory Academic Progress requires that a student complete his/her program of study within 150 percent of the time frame allotted for that program. For example, a student who is pursuing a degree at HSSU and the degree program is 120 hours in length can attempt 180 credit hours (150 percent of the program length) to complete the program.

If the program cannot be completed within 150 percent of the program length (i.e., example student attempts over 180 hours), the student is placed on Time-Frame Suspension and is ineligible for additional financial aid at HSSU for their current degree program. This can be appealed and an academic plan must be established to ensure the student reaches graduation.

- Enrolling in courses outside your degree program of study, as well as withdrawing, repeating and failing courses, results in accumulating hours greater than 100 percent of your program length. Remedial courses and transfer courses that don't count toward your program of study are excluded from attempted hours when determining maximum time-frame status.

### **SAP Review Period:**

The Review process takes place at the end of each Spring semester. A student that falls below the required cumulative GPA (2.0), cumulative completion rate (66 percent), or BOTH, will be notified by e-mail.

A student that received a notification must earn a CGPA of 2.0 AND a cumulative completion rate of 66 percent by the end of the spring semester, in order to be in good standing. If a student does not meet both of these requirements by the end of the notification semester, they will be placed on suspension the upcoming school semester that they are enrolled in.

### **Remedial Courses and Repeated Courses:**

- **Remedial courses**

Remedial courses count as attempted and completed hours, but do not impact the GPA.

- **Repeated Courses**

As per federal policy, courses being paid for using federal financial aid dollars, and which are successfully completed with a grade of "D" or higher can only be repeated once. For courses repeated, only the most recent grade is included in the students cumulative GPA. However, each time a student attempts a course, even if that course is part of a forgiveness or amnesty policy whereby credits attempted and grades earned in prior semesters are excluded from the GPA, it must be included as part of the cumulative attempted credit record for the measuring of pace of progression.

Financial Aid SAP policy allows for a student to receive Title IV funds for retaking a course he or she failed, and if a student withdraws before completing the course that he or she is being paid Title IV funds for retaking, that is not counted as his or her one allowed retake for that course. However, if a student passed a class once, then is repaid for retaking it, and fails the second time, that failure counts as their paid retake, and the student may not be paid for retaking the class a third time.

- **Transfer Credit Hours**

All students attending Harris-Stowe State University institution are required to stay within the maximum time frame of 150% of program pursued that is required by federal regulations. Transfer credits that are accepted and that count toward a student's degree do not count in the calculation of the GPA, however will be included in the calculation of both attempted and earned credit hours (In other words, transfer credit hours are only included in the PACE calculation and not GPA or Maximum Time Frame calculation).

### **Second Bachelor's Degree**

Student's seeking a second undergraduate or second graduate degree must appeal in order to receive federal financial aid. A student must be able to graduate with a second Bachelor's Degree without going over a total of 225 undergraduate hours and have a cumulative 2.0 GPA. All undergraduate hours, including the hours used to earn the first Bachelor's Degree will be included.

- Students seeking a third Bachelor's are not eligible for federal aid.

### **Change of Major:**

If a student changes majors, the hours from the previous major that count towards the student's new degree requirements are included in the calculation of attempted and earned hours, except for 9 credit hours.

### **Financial Aid SAP Statuses:**

- **Good/Approval** – eligible for financial aid
- **Suspended/Denial** – not eligible for financial aid
- **Probation with an academic plan** – eligible for two semesters of financial aid, if progression is met. *Requires Appeal Approval.*

### **Financial Aid Suspension**

Suspension occurs when a student fails to meet either the cumulative GPA or cumulative completion rate requirements, or both when the review is completed after the Spring semester. Students may regain good standing after they have completed enough courses to bring their cumulative GPA to at least 2.0 AND their cumulative completion rate to at least 66 percent.

- Financial Aid Suspension will limit students enrolling in courses, affect covering balances and will affect students' financial aid until SAP is met or SAP appeal was approved.
- SAP Appeal Soft Deadline Dates:
  - Fall 2018 Semester: June 1<sup>st</sup> – August 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Spring 2019 Semester: November 1<sup>st</sup>-January 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Summer 2019 Semester: February 1<sup>st</sup> – May 15<sup>th</sup>

### **Academic Plans:**

Academic Plans will be completed by the student prior to submitting their SAP appeal. After completing the plan, the student must sign and their Student Success must sign. After signatures have been made, the student needs to upload their Academic Plan to their SAP appeal as documentation.

A student whose suspension appeal has been approved must enroll and successfully complete the courses specified in their academic plan. The academic plan is a component of their suspension appeal; it is provided in the form of a plan devised to bring the student back into good standing. Failure to follow the academic plan will return a student to suspension status and the student will not be able to submit another suspension appeal for the same extenuating circumstances.

If the student is close to regaining eligibility for federal aid a student is allowed to complete an academic plan and receive aid for one semester. At the end of that semester the student could regain eligibility by meeting the SAP standards. However, if they are unable to reach the SAP requirements by the end of one semester they must submit an appeal documenting why they failed to meet the SAP Academic Plan requirement's and will again lose their eligibility for federal aid, if the SAP appeal is not approved again.

## Appeal Process:

To be considered for financial aid eligibility, the student must submit the following to the Office of Student Financial Aid.

### A. The Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Application

There are two types of SAP Appeals:

1. GPA and/or PACE Appeal
2. Maximum Time Frame Appeal (Can only be appealed once)

The following extenuating circumstances are reason(s) for appealing:

- Death of an Immediate Family Member
- Serious Illness or Injury
- Other Emergency or Special Circumstances.
  - Lack of focus and/or transitioning issues will not be considered for Financial Aid appeals.
  - Second appeals must be based on a reason different from the First Appeal to be considered.

**B.** SAP appeal forms and instructions are available on students' MY HSSU accounts. A typed statement, signed and dated, from the student explaining in detail the reason for not meeting the minimum SAP Standards, the changes that have occurred and what measures are being taken in order to meet the minimum SAP Standards in the future is needed to have a complete appeal.

**C.** Two forms of documentation of the extenuating circumstance(s) is required. (SAP Appeals with no documentation submitted will be considered incomplete and will result in an automatic denial).

**D.** A revised Academic Plan signed by you and your Student Success Coach is needed.

**E.** The appeal must be submitted electronically, through your MY HSSU, to the Office of Financial Assistance SAP Committee for review of financial aid eligibility. If decision is approved, financial aid will be awarded for the next term enrolled and reviewed each semester thereafter until the student regains Financial Aid eligibility.

- ✚ If the SAP Committee denies the appeal, student will not be awarded until they are meeting the SAP. Notification will be sent to student from Office of Financial Assistance.

## Resubmission of Appeals:

Students may resubmit their appeal if they did not include the needed documentation with their original submission will have one opportunity to resubmit their appeal with the needed documentation. After the one resubmission opportunity, the status of the appeal is final.

## Incomplete Appeals:

Incomplete appeal submissions will be **automatically denied**. All appeal forms and supporting documentation must be submitted by the appeal deadline of that semester (see appeal dates above). This includes the appeal letter information, format and supporting documentation of the situation. Students may resubmit by the appeal submission deadline or the next semester deadline.

## Maximum Amount of Appeals:

Students will have the opportunity to complete a max of 3 appeals over the course of the college career.

A student who fails to meet the minimum SAP requirements after the max of 3 appeals, will no longer be eligible for financial aid and will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension and may submit an appeal but will be automatically denied.

### **SAP Appeal Decision:**

A SAP Appeal decision will result in either an Approval or Denial. If approved, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation (see details below) and have to meet the requirements of their Academic Plan. The SAP Committee has 5-7 days to review when the SAP appeal is submitted by the soft deadline. If the appeal is submitted after the soft deadline for that semester, please allow 10-14 days for review.

If denied, the student will remain suspended and is responsible for all expenses accrued at Harris-Stowe State University. Students who are denied financial aid should meet with a Student Success Coach for guidance on improving their academic standing.

Students who are denied must be able to show that they can maintain at least a 2.00 or better cumulative GPA for two consecutive semesters. If the student has completed a max of 3 appeals and have been denied, they are no longer eligible for financial aid at Harris-Stowe State University.

### SAP Appeal Decision – Approval Status:

**Probation** – A student is considered on probation for the semester(s) in which they have a Suspension Appeal approved with a signed Academic Plan. At the end of the probationary period, a student must either be in good standing or meet the requirements set forth in their academic plan in order to continue receiving financial aid for the following semester(s).

#### **Probation Academic Plan**

Students placed on Financial Aid Probation with an academic plan must meet with a Student Success Coach **before** consideration will be given for one additional semester in which to comply with the standards. During the probationary period, the student must achieve good academic standing – 2.00 cumulative GPA for undergraduate students– and successfully pass 100% of the hours attempted during this period to improve PACE (making progression).

- ✚ During probation, PACE (completion of at least 66%) can take time to achieve. As long as a student is meeting their Academic Plan, the student will remain in good standing and the academic plan will roll along into future semesters.

### **Appeal Approval Follow-up:**

At the end of each semester, SAP requirements will be reviewed for students that have a completed Academic Plan to see if that have met the requirements to no longer be on probation.

- **Academic Plan review**

Students on an academic plan (1 or more semesters) who meet the minimum SAP standards or meet the agreed academic plan semester benchmark(s) detailed on the student's academic plan, will then be eligible to receive Federal Financial Aid for the next semester enrolled.

Students on an academic plan (1 or more semesters) who do **not** meet the minimum SAP standards or meet the agreed academic plan semester benchmark(s), the plan minimum GPA listed and 100% of the hours attempted during the term (detailed on the student's plan) will then

be placed on SAP suspension. If eligible, a new SAP appeal would need to be submitted for Federal Financial Aid eligibility.

**Notification:**

Students are notified of their SAP status and appeals process at the end of each year (Spring semester) and after each semester, if on an Academic Plan, through the Office of Financial Assistance via their student email addresses.

**Missing Documents:**

All documents must be completed and submitted by the Soft Document Deadline Date of May 15<sup>th</sup> annually. Failure to submit all required documents will further increase chance of denial appeal status.

**Disbursement of Aid:**

Students on SAP with an Appeal Approval must submit all required documents before financial aid will be disbursed. The Academic Plan must be completed and signed by the student and their Student Success Coach before awards will be released. A financial aid hold will be placed on their account until ALL documents are received, if approved.

**Reinstatement of Aid:**

Reinstatement of aid shall occur only upon the successful achievement of the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements or the Academic Plan as set forth in this policy.

**A WORD OF ADVICE TO STUDENTS:**

- To bring up your grade point average, you may want to consider RETAKING courses in which you have received a grade of "D" or "F". This should bring up your average much faster than if you were to enroll in all new courses. Of course you will want to retake courses in which you expect to do extremely well.
- If you have already retaken courses, you may want to check with the Registrar's Office to be sure that the penalty for the lower grade of "D" or "F" has been replaced by credit for the higher grade in the retaken course. Refer to Grade Change section of policy.
- Please make sure to get in SAP appeals in on time. Pay attention to the Soft Deadlines in place. This will ensure that your appeal gets reviewed in time for the upcoming semesters and that your aid is reinstated in a timely fashion. Don't wait until the last day to submit your appeal.