

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policies and Procedures Guide

Federal regulations (Sections 668.16(e), 668.32(f) and 668.34) require that schools monitor the academic progress of each applicant for federal financial assistance and that the school certify that the applicant is making satisfactory academic progress toward earning his/her degree. The U.S. Department of Education requires UTPB to establish and apply reasonable standards of satisfactory academic progress for eligible students to receive financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act.

UTPB students who wish to be considered for federal student aid must maintain satisfactory academic progress as set forth in this policy. Satisfactory academic progress is a federal student aid eligibility requirement that is administered by the university, in addition to the academic standards of performance required under the UTPB Academic Progress Policy. Satisfactory academic progress is determined at the end of every term by the Financial Aid Office. This policy also applies to state financial aid.

The satisfactory academic progress policy must include a *qualitative* and *quantitative* measure of the student's progress. The *qualitative* measure must establish a minimum grade point index standard. The *quantitative* measure must establish a maximum time frame for a student to complete his/her program and a minimum number of credits a student must satisfactorily complete each year.

*At UTPB a student is considered to be meeting the satisfactory academic progress standards if the following three requirements are met:*

- 1. Cumulative Grade Point Average (Qualitative Measure):** An undergraduate/post-bachelors student must maintain a 2.00 cumulative grade point average (GPA), and a graduate student must maintain a 3.00 GPA. This GPA includes units at UTPB and those from other regionally accredited colleges and universities that have been evaluated by the UTPB Admissions & Records Office and applied to the student's academic record.
- 2. Cumulative Pace of Unit Completion (Quantitative Measure):** A student must complete at least 67% of the total number of units they attempt (passed hours divided by attempted hours). All courses with grades of A, B, C, D, X, S, NG, W, U, F, and I, as well as repeated courses will be counted towards the total attempted units. Units from other regionally accredited colleges and universities that have been evaluated by the UTPB Admissions & Records Office and applied to the student's record will also be counted.

For financial aid purposes,

- Satisfactory grades are defined as: A, B, C, and D, X, and S.
- Unsatisfactory grades are defined as: NG, W, U, F, IP, and I.

- 3. Maximum Timeframe:** A student has not exceeded the 150% maximum timeframe allowed for the completion of his or her educational program. All courses, including remedial, English as a Second

Language (ESL), repeated courses, and courses taken while pursuing other majors with grades of A, B, C, D, or F, as well as W, I, IP, NP, S, U, X, or NG will be counted as attempted units and applied to the maximum timeframe allowed. Courses from other regionally accredited colleges and universities that have been evaluated by the UTPB Admissions & Records Office and applied to the student's record will also be counted toward the maximum timeframe

### **Notification of SAP status**

A student's satisfactory academic progress is determined by the Financial Aid Office at the end of each semester. Students are informed of the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy on the UTPB website, in the College catalog, and in the Financial Aid Office. All terms of enrollment at UTPB are included when determining a student's satisfactory academic progress, even if a student did not receive federal student aid in the past.

Students are notified via email, to the student's assigned email address, at the end of each semester if they are in Financial Aid Warning or Financial Aid Suspension status. Students who are removed from Financial Aid Suspension status due to successfully meeting these SAP requirements will be notified and are eligible to receive their Federal Pell Grant and other Federal Grant funds, as well as any campus based funds, for the payment period in which they regain eligibility; however, students receiving Federal Student Loan funds are eligible for the entire period of enrollment.

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

**Financial Aid Satisfactory Progress** - Students who meet all of the requirements of satisfactory academic progress will continue to be eligible for federal and state financial aid as long as financial aid application(s) and appropriate documentation are submitted to the Financial Aid Office and the student continues to remain financially eligible for aid.

**Financial Aid Warning** - Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress after one term due to their cumulative grade point average (GPA) and/or cumulative attempted unit completion rate will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. While on Financial Aid Warning, students may continue to receive federal and state financial aid. Students who do not meet all conditions of satisfactory academic progress at the end of the warning term will be disqualified from federal and state financial aid.

**Financial Aid Suspension** - Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress for two consecutive terms due to their cumulative grade point average (GPA) and/or cumulative attempted unit completion rate will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. While on Financial Aid Suspension, a student is not eligible to receive federal and state financial aid with the exception of a Fee Waiver, if eligible.

**Financial Aid Probation** - Students with an approved satisfactory academic progress appeal petition will be placed on Financial Aid Probation for one term. Approved satisfactory academic progress appeal petitions may include specific requirements and/or conditions with which students must comply during the term. If students fail to meet satisfactory academic progress and any additional requirements on an approved appeal petition at the end of the term, they will be disqualified from federal and state financial aid with the exception of Fee Waiver, if eligible. In some instances, the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Committee will approve an academic plan for the student that extends beyond one term. In these cases, students will continue on Financial Aid Probation if they meet the requirements specified on the approved appeal petition.

## **Reinstatement of Federal and State Financial Aid**

**Self-Reinstatement** – A student may have federal and state financial aid self-reinstated by earning a cumulative 2.00 GPA undergraduate or 3.00 graduate GPA and a cumulative 67% attempted unit completion rate but must not have exceeded the maximum timeframe allowed for the completion of their educational program.

**Submission of SAP Appeal Form** – A student may submit an appeal petition accompanied by supporting documentation. Approved appeal petitions may include requirements and/or conditions that must be met by students during the term. Students whose appeal petitions are approved will be placed on Financial Aid Probation.

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

Students may appeal their Financial Aid Suspension by completing the satisfactory academic progress appeal petition available on the UTPB website or in the Financial Aid Office. Students may appeal their Financial Aid Suspension according to the UTPB Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy. If extenuating circumstances exist which affected the student's ability to successfully meet these SAP requirements, that student may appeal the financial aid termination status. Examples of unusual circumstances are, but not limited to, illness or injury of the student or the student's direct family member, death of a family member, family or financial difficulties, and other documented circumstances that were unexpected in nature and beyond the student's control. An appeal consists of a completed **Satisfactory Academic Progress Academic Recovery Plan**.

Students must include the following information in the appeal: specific reason(s) why the student failed to meet the SAP requirements and specifically what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate SAP at the next evaluation period. A student whose appeal has been approved and who is following an Academic Plan must meet the specifics of the plan. The student who fails to do so will be placed on Financial Aid suspension at the end of the payment period.

Supporting documentation must be included with the satisfactory academic progress appeal petition and must prove that the incident (if applicable) occurred during the term(s) in which students did not make satisfactory academic progress. The satisfactory academic progress appeal petition must address what has changed that will allow students to meet satisfactory academic progress standards at the end of the term. If the appeal is approved, students will have a probationary period for the term that may include requirements and/or conditions determined by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Committee.

During this time, students will receive federal and state financial aid and reestablish eligibility. Students may only submit one satisfactory academic progress appeal petition per award year, however, if a unique circumstance is present students may complete a Secondary appeal, but only with prior approval from the SAP officer.

All SAP Appeal Forms must be complete. Incomplete applications may cause a delay. SAP Appeals take approximately three weeks to process. Decisions will be sent via email, to their student's email address. A SAP appeal does not secure financial aid. If the appeal is denied the student is responsible for all charges owed to the University. All SAP appeal decisions are final.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Deadlines

We recommend submitting appeal documents shortly after being notified of your SAP suspension.

***Fall Priority deadline: July 15th***

***Spring Priority deadline: October 15th***

***Summer Spring Priority deadline: May 15th***

Documents received after priority deadline do not guarantee that aid will be available before classes begin and it is recommended that you sign up for a payment plan to hold your classes until your financial aid is processed.

SAP appeals will be accepted no later than 10 days prior to the end of the term for which you are appealing for.

**\*Please note-** A student who fails to meet these deadlines can expect to pay for the courses out of pocket until the next semester begins. Students who are denied SAP appeals are responsible for paying all university charges incurred.

### Factors in determining SAP Status

**Transfer credits:** *Transfer Credits* accepted for the student's academic program or degree is counted when measuring the maximum time frame to complete the degree or program. UTPB does not accept for credit any transfer grades lower than C.

**Repeat Policy:** For federal and institutional aid students can repeat a course once. The most recent attempt will count towards GPA as well as in the calculation for attempted and completed credits. Courses repeated due to an earlier failing grade are eligible for federal student aid if the course is a requirement for the student's degree program.

**Withdrawals:** Grades of W are counted as courses attempted and count toward the maximum time frame. Attempted hours are those hours for which students were still officially registered at the conclusion of each semester's Add/Drop period. Withdrawals are counted as attempted hours.

**Audited Courses:** Students do not earn any academic credits for audited courses. They do not count in the calculation of "attempted hours."

**Pass/Fail Courses:** These hours do count within the total of attempted and earned hours.

**Change in Majors:** Students who change their majors will normally be expected to complete all degree requirements before reaching 180 attempted hours (150% of normal program completion.)

**Approved SAP appeals are primarily for re-instatement of federal aid. Other scholarships and grants have additional requirements and can be lost even if the SAP appeal is approved.** University scholarships requirements can be found on our scholarship website. Progress standards for private scholarships are determined by the private donors. Students who have questions in regards to their scholarship eligibility may contact the scholarship team at [scholarship@utpb.edu](mailto:scholarship@utpb.edu).

Students should refer to the SAP officer in the financial aid office at [sap@utp.edu](mailto:sap@utp.edu) for additional information.