

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

To be eligible for federal, state, and institutional financial aid, all students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP.) The regulations provided by the U.S Department of Education are geared toward improving program integrity. Old Dominion University has established its own policy to adhere to these guidelines while ensuring student success.

The following information provides a more in-depth understanding of the minimum progress requirements a student must meet in order to be eligible for financial aid. It is important to note these requirements may differ from that of the university and individual colleges.

Federal regulations are continuously updated, and we are required to verify that our policy meets any changes. If any changes occur, our website will be updated, and notifications will be sent to those students affected.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress Review Procedure**

The Office of Financial Aid evaluates Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) annually, at the end of the spring semester once grades are posted. Students that are included in this review include undergraduates, graduates, both full-time and part-time, who have filed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA.) This is a cumulative review of all semesters regardless of whether or not the student received financial aid during a particular academic year. The evaluation is based on the student meeting three criteria, which are described below:

- Meeting a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA)
- Earning a minimum number of credits (Pace of Progress)
- Cumulative attempted hours not exceeding program requirements (Maximum Timeframe)

Students who fail to meet any one of the criteria are considered ineligible for financial aid.

Financial Aid, including loans is limited and we must ensure you obtain your degree in a reasonable amount of time with reasonable debt.

To maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, students must maintain the following minimum cumulative GPA:

### **Qualitative/Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Undergraduates – 2.0

Graduates – 3.0

### **PACE of Progress**

This standard is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of credits successfully completed by the cumulative number of credits the student has attempted.

To be eligible for financial aid, an undergraduate student is required to complete a minimum of **67%** of cumulative attempted credits.

Graduate students are required to complete minimum of 80% of cumulative attempted credits.

Credits completed are those for which grades of A, B, C, D and P, are earned. An I-incomplete grade are not earned and therefore, cannot be counted.

Old Dominion University does not round up when determining PACE percentage.

Audit classes are not counted towards Pace of Progress nor counted in enrollment for financial aid eligibility.

### **Maximum Timeframe**

No student may exceed 150% of the published length of their educational program. Students will be notified and will need to appeal for financial aid when they are approaching 150%. Students must complete their degree within a specified amount of time. This standard will depend on the student's enrollment status and degree. Old Dominion University requires an appeal at 125% of degree hours. When a student exceeds 125%, they will be required to submit an appeal for the following semester to determine if they will continue to receive financial aid.

**If a student fails any of the above SAP standards, the student's financial aid eligibility is suspended.**

Example: An Undergraduate student that is required to complete 120 credits to graduate will be eligible for financial aid up to 150 credits

Undergraduates working on a second degree will be given an additional 90 credit hours to earn their second degree.

**Note: Transfer credits are included and completion of the first undergraduate degree must be conferred.**

Graduate students may attempt a maximum of 90 hours. Graduate students working on a second degree will be given an additional 45 credit hours to earn their second degree, however, may not exceed 150% of the published length/credits required for their degree program of study.

**Note: Transfer credit hours are included.**

Credit hours are counted starting with the semester the student entered school, even semesters in which a student did not receive financial aid.

Students pursuing a double major or dual degree should note that once a student has completed the requirements for one major or degree, financial aid eligibility will be limited. Students must complete degrees within 150% of credits needed for double major.

Students who are aware of learning or other disabilities should immediately contact the Office of Educational Accessibility so that appropriate accommodations can be made. A student with a documented disability and functional limitations is still held to the same academic expectations as other students.

Students who have completed all undergraduate course requirements, but do not graduate (for any reason) are ineligible for funding. Reasons not acceptable for further funding include but

are not limited to raising GPA to meet graduation requirement, needed to pass writing proficiency exam, wanting to complete a minor or second major (double majors).

Students with an academic history showing patterns of enrollment of inability or unwillingness to progress, withdrawals, repeats, incompletes, or enrollment inconsistent with the student's educational objective, may be regarded as ineligible for future financial aid.

### **Notification of Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Students who have met these requirements will not receive any type of notification. ODU will send a notification to students who have not met SAP standards stating ineligibility for financial aid. The notification will be sent by email to the student's ODU email address and will outline the academic standards, reason(s) the student failed, and other pertinent information regarding appeal reason and procedures.

### **SAP Evaluations**

If a student who failed SAP later self-identifies that they now meet the SAP standards at a point prior to an official SAP evaluation/checkpoint, the institution can only make formal SAP determinations during an official SAP evaluation/checkpoint at the end of a payment period. Any updates or changes to a student's SAP status can only be made during official SAP evaluations. ODU reserves the right to recalculate SAP due to grade changes, however, these will be done a case-case basis and on rare occasions.

### **Appeal Procedures**

Appeals must be submitted 10 days after notification of appeal or by the deadline on the appeal form. These dates vary from year to year; however, the deadline will be the Friday before classes begin. The deadlines are listed on the SAP appeal form.

#### **Deadline for appeal submission for 2022-23 academic year**

Fall term- August 26, 2022, Spring term - January 6, 2023, Summer June 1, 2023

**Students awaiting a response from the SAP Appeal Review Committee are responsible for paying their tuition and other fees by the payment deadline to avoid late and collection fees.**

**The decision of the financial aid office is FINAL and cannot be appealed.**

**The complete packet including advisor's portion and all documentation needed must be submitted or appeal will be denied.**

The University will consider appeals for uncontrollable events, special circumstances that happen in a student's life such as death of a family member, student illness, and transition to college issues that can be documented or being called to the military, etc. The student must describe what impact the circumstance had on academics, what the student has done to address the impact and how the student plans to be successful. If the student is not yet prepared to vigorously focus on academics with assistance, if necessary, the student should not submit an appeal.

Some examples include but are not limited to:

- Death in the family. State how this person was related to you (i.e., parent, spouse, sibling, etc.). **You must provide a copy of the death certificate or related documentation.**
- Disabling illness or injury to the student. **Please provide supporting documentation from your medical provider.**
- Disabling illness or injury of immediate family member that required your care. **Please provide supporting documentation from your medical provider.**
- Emotional or mental health issue (for student) that required professional care. **Please provide supporting documentation from your medical provider, social worker or other professional.**
- Other special circumstance beyond your control (transition that may lead to depression, anxiety, and other problems that can be documented, divorce/separation, natural disaster, extreme change in financial or legal circumstances, etc.)

Documentation or evidence that supports the reason(s) must be included with your appeal. This might include a letter from a doctor, court documents, death certificates or copies of university documents, layoff notices, foreclosure notices, etc. Attach copies. Original documents will not be returned.

### **Potential Delay of Disbursements**

Financial aid may not be disbursed to a student's account until SAP has been evaluated. This process cannot be completed until after grades have officially posted from the prior semester.

**Students that have failed SAP may experience a delayed financial aid disbursement if grades are not made official before the start of the subsequent semester. No exceptions can be made to this process.**

### **Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility**

#### **Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility with a Grade or Degree Change**

Students who have received a SAP failure notice due to GPA or Pace of Progress and have received a grade change will need to notify our office for a re-evaluation of SAP. If the student is back in compliance with SAP standards, our office will update the student's SAP status and make any other necessary adjustments. Also, if a student is failing for undergraduate maximum-time frame and is now accepted to Graduate School, they will need to contact our office so we can update the system. The SAP process is run with prior semester information.

#### **Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility with Maximum Timeframe**

Undergraduate and Graduate students who need additional time to complete their first degree must complete the SAP Appeal explaining why the student has not completed the degree, a SAP Advisor form signed by an advisor/department chair explaining what classes remain, what terms they will be taken in and note the student's expected graduation date.

NOTE: Students who do make SAP while on a Maximum Timeframe Appeal are disqualified from receiving further financial aid, including loans, and will be unaided until or unless they are able to reestablish eligibility. Reinstatement of aid will not be automatic, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and requires achieving SAP standards and taking courses only from the approved Maximum Timeframe Appeal.

### **Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility with a GPA or Pace of Progress**

Students may also appeal for failing GPA and/or Pace of Progress. The following will be considered: injury or illness of student or family member, death of a close relative, emotional or mental health issue (for student) that required professional care, or other reasons resulting in undue hardship to the student such as divorce/separation, natural disaster, extreme change in financial or legal circumstances or transition that may lead to depression, anxiety, and other problems that can be documented. Undergraduate and Graduate students would need to submit the SAP appeal explaining why the student has failed and what changes they have or will make to successfully complete their degree and supporting documentation for their appeal. This might include a letter from a doctor, court documents, death certificates or copies of university documents, layoff notices, foreclosure notices, etc. Copies should be attached. Original documents will not be returned.

### **Notification of Appeal Decision**

SAP appeals will be reviewed once ALL required documentation is received. Notification of the decision will be emailed to the student's Old Dominion University email address within 10 business days.

### **Approved Decision**

If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on an academic plan/contract whereby specific conditions must be satisfied to demonstrate progress toward degree completion. The academic plan/contract is an agreement with the student and financial aid office that may be stricter than the above guidelines in order for a student to successfully graduate. Acceptance of the approved plan/contract supersedes all other SAP regulations. The student's approved academic plan/contract may be shared with his or her academic department.

The Financial Aid Office will evaluate all students that have a SAP plan/contract at the end of each semester. If a student meets the terms of the plan/contract but is not back in compliance, the contract will be extended for another term.

A student that fails to meet the terms of the plan/contract will lose financial aid eligibility until the student is able to meet all the SAP standards.

***Students who fail to complete the probationary conditions cannot submit a new appeal.***

### **Denied Decision**

If the appeal is denied, the student may pay for the classes out of pocket or make monthly payments using the university payment plan with the office of finance. Students may regain eligibility for aid once they meet SAP standards.

Financial aid suspension does not prohibit students from continuing their education at Old Dominion University. It does prohibit students from receiving financial aid until they again meet the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress.

**Students awaiting a response from the SAP Appeal Review Committee are responsible for paying their tuition and other fees by the payment deadline to avoid late and collection fees.**

**The decision of the financial aid review committee is FINAL and cannot be appealed.**

### **Students Who Do Not Appeal**

Students who choose not to appeal will be required to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards before regaining eligibility for financial aid. Once the student has regained SAP, the student is eligible to receive financial aid at Old Dominion University. The student cannot automatically regain eligibility by paying for classes for a semester, by sitting out a semester, or by taking classes elsewhere.

### **Academic Circumstances that Affect Your Status**

**Changes in major, double majors, double degrees or minors** may cause you to reach your maximum attempted hours and lose your eligibility before earning a degree.

#### ***Withdrawing from courses***

Withdrawing from courses may impact your financial aid awards. Before withdrawing from class, students should contact the Financial Aid Office to determine the consequences.

#### ***Withdrawing from the university***

Students who totally withdraw and receive aid may owe the university money. Before withdrawing from the university, students should contact the Financial Aid Office to determine the consequences

#### ***Incomplete grades, missing grades and failing grades***

Courses assigned a grade of "I" are not considered complete and will not be included in the total credits earned until the final grade has been submitted. All reduce your completion ratio, because they are counted as attempted, but not earned credits. They will also count against your maximum attempted hours.

### **Dismissal and Return**

Students who are suspended academically or choose not to attend because of SAP Failure will not be automatically eligible for financial aid upon their return. Student must meet all standards of SAP. Student must appeal if eligible or use means other than financial aid for educational expenses. **Absence does not restore eligibility for financial aid.** It is the student's responsibility to be knowledgeable of their SAP standard when returning to school after dismissal or choosing not to return because of SAP failure.

**Audit Courses** – Students are not eligible to receive financial aid for audit courses. Audited courses are not included in hours attempted or earned for SAP determination.

***Transfer and Repeat Coursework***

Accepted transfer credits must count as both attempted and completed hours. Repeat courses count as attempted credit hours each time you register for them. They also count against the allowed maximum. This can reduce your completion ratio because repeated credits count as earned credits only once. NOTE: The U.S. Dept. of Education allows only one retake for Title IV credit.

Students are allowed to repeat a previously passed course and have it count toward enrollment for financial aid eligibility only once. However, all repeats count against the maximum total attempted credits and reduce the pace/completion rate.

For federal student aid, passing grades higher than an “F” will be considered to have passed the course and considered as an attempt. NOTE: This is regardless of any university or major program policy requiring a higher grade or measure for academic purposes.

	<b>1st Attempt</b>	<b>2nd Attempt</b>	<b>3rd Attempt</b>	<b>Eligible for Aid?</b>
<b>Scenario 1</b>	D	C-	Enrolled	No
<b>Scenario 2</b>	F	D+	Enrolled	Yes
<b>Scenario 3</b>	C	W	Enrolled	No

Remedial courses may be included, however, enrichment and ESL courses ARE NOT taken into consideration

**Other examples: PACE requirement**

Undergraduate student attempts 30 credits for the academic year, earned 19; student would not be meeting satisfactory academic progress at the time of sap review. Total credits needed would be 20.1 or 21 completed (30 X 67%).

Graduate student attempts 18 credits for the academic year, earned 17, student would be meeting the PACE standard for satisfactory academic progress at the end of sap review. Number of minimum credits needed would be 14.4 or 15 (18 x 80%)

**Note regarding our office policy on alternative loans:** Alternative loans may be certified if the student is not making satisfactory academic progress with lender who will approve for students not meeting SAP standards. Please discuss with the financial aid counselor if you have questions.

The Office of Financial Aid reserves the right to review denied appeals, GPA's and completion rates on a case-by-case basis. On rare occasions when grades are updated before the formal sap evaluation checkpoint, we may update SAP eligibility and award aid. The official SAP evaluation checkpoint is completed at the end of the spring term. Students on financial aid probation are reviewed at the end of each term.