

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy - (SAPP)

Effective August 1, 2012

General Information

Before a student receives federal, state and institutional student aid*, federal regulations require that the student has met and continues to meet some basic academic progress standards. The following policy represents Texas A&M International University's implementation of the federal financial aid regulations regarding GPA, Pace, and Maximum Credit requirements, as well as the University's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) appeal process.

Students not meeting these SAP standards will receive communication via email to their DUSTY email address. All students should watch Dusty email and check the **HOLD details** on **Uconnect** regularly.

If a student has a financial aid warning and any other SAP standards have generated **HOLDS**, the **HOLD** will take precedence over the financial aid warning.

Students with financial aid warnings or approved SAP appeals may have a longer delay in receiving funds the following term because **ALL** the previous term's grades need to be checked before federal student aid can be released.

This policy is available on the University website; students can print it or pick one up at the Office of Student Financial Aid, <http://www.tamtu.edu/affairs/financial/forms.shtml>.

This policy takes effect Fall 2012. The first monitoring period under these rules will occur after Fall 2012 grades are declared official by the Registrar's Office. Only students enrolled in the Fall 2012 term or later will be monitored based upon these rules. If a student has a hold for SAP from a prior term (i.e., Summer 2011 or earlier), they may appeal as directed in the appeal guidelines noted in this policy.

These standards apply to all students, regardless of whether or not a student has received previous financial aid or transferred in from another institution.

Students are required to meet the following **THREE** standards to continue TAMTU financial aid eligibility:

- Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA Requirement).
- Students are required to successfully complete a percentage of total hours attempted (Completion Percentage Requirement, PACE).
- Students must complete a degree in a timely manner (Maximum Timeframe Requirement).

**Includes the Federal and State Work-study Program. Other programs such as the TEXAS Grant, B-On Time Loan and TAMTU General Scholarship have their own eligibility criteria that must also be met. These programs may change without notice; please see the Financial Aid website for the most current information.*

Change of Major: The maximum time frame for degree completion does not change or increase due to a change of major. All attempted hours are counted until completion of a degree.

Grades: For financial aid purposes, grades of A, B, C, D, F, I, P, Q, S, W, AU, CR, IP and NC are all considered attempted hours.

Incomplete Courses: Incompletes (grade of “I”) do not affect a student’s cumulative GPA for SAP, but count as credit hours attempted toward both PACE and Maximum Time Frame. At the end of each enrollment period “I” grades are not calculated into a student’s GPA for SAP, nor are they considered a completed course. Upon receiving an official grade for an “I” course, the student is required to meet with a Financial Aid Counselor to update records.

Repeated Courses: Title IV funds will only pay for one repeat of a previously passed course. A previously passed course repeated for a third time is not calculated into enrollment status for Title IV payment.

Title IV Aid: All federal programs are part of Title IV funding. This includes: Pell Grant, SEOG, Federal work-study, Community work-study, subsidized loans, unsubsidized loans, Parent-Plus loans, Graduate Plus loans, and TEACH Grant.

Transfer Hours: All transfer hours will count towards attempted hours for Maximum Time Frame calculation, whether the student received financial aid or not.

Withdrawal from Courses: Withdrawals do not affect a student’s cumulative GPA for SAP, but count as credit hours attempted toward PACE and Maximum Time Frame.

SAPP Definitions and Monitoring Periods

Students will be monitored based on their most recent academic status (undergraduate or graduate) for the semester just ended. A review of academic progress is done at the end of each term for all students enrolled during that term, regardless of whether the student received financial aid.

SAPP Definitions:

- Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is **evaluated** after grades have been posted at the end of each academic semester. All attempted hours are counted during this evaluation. Rules are applied uniformly to all students whether or not aid has been previously received.
- A **warning** is given to students for one semester who do not meet requirements under 1 and 2. A student is placed on WARNING STATUS at the end of one semester in which SAP is not met.
- **Financial Aid Suspension** is given to a student who fails to meet SAP requirements. Students on suspension cannot receive financial aid funds.

Monitoring Periods:

- The **first** time a student falls below SAP standards for Comprehensive GPA or Pace, they will generally be placed on “**Warning**” and will remain eligible for financial aid.
- The **second consecutive** time a student falls below the SAP standards for Comprehensive GPA or Pace, they will receive a “**HOLD**” placed on student’s account, making the student ineligible for financial aid. *For example: if a student receives a Pace warning one semester and the following semester meets Pace standard; but now has a GPA warning, the student will be ineligible for financial aid the following semester. This is considered two consecutive semesters of violating the SAP Policy standards.*
- The **first time** students are in violation of the Maximum Credit Standard, they will have a “**Hold**” placed on student’s account, making them ineligible for financial aid. There is no “Warning” period for the Maximum Credit Standard.

Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement

SAPP Requirements	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Minimum cumulative TAMIU GPA Requirement	2.0	3.0
First-time undergraduate students at TAMIU are eligible to apply for Financial Aid the first semester of enrollment, regardless of GPA.	Must meet 2.0 cumulative TAMIU GPA requirements at the end of first semester at TAMIU.	N/A

How to Regain Financial Aid Eligibility for Minimum GPA Requirement:

- Enroll in and complete enough credits to increase GPA requirement to the minimum level described above.
- Student must enroll at TAMIU in order to increase GPA requirement. Transferring course work from another institution will assist the student in completing degree requirements, but will not fulfill SAPP requirements.

Completion Percentage Requirement (PACE)

Students must successfully complete (pass) 75% of total TAMIU courses attempted. Successfully passing grades are D or higher.

PACE	Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
Student must pass:	75% of attempted hours at TAMIU	75% of attempted hours at TAMIU

Calculating PACE:

$$\frac{\text{Total hours passed at TAMIU}}{\text{Total hours attempted at TAMIU}} = \text{PACE \% (percentage)}$$

***Sample: 60 hours passed / 72 hours attempted = 0.83 which is 83% of PACE completion*

How to Regain Financial Aid Eligibility for PACE Requirement:

- Students must enroll in and successfully complete courses to meet 75% PACE requirement.
- The start of a first graduate program or doctoral program restarts PACE count.

Maximum Credit Hours for Degree Completion

Students are expected to complete degree requirements and may not exceed the following hours:

First Bachelor's Degree	180 Attempted Hours
Additional BA Degrees/Stem Work (including 1 st BA attempted hours)	240 Attempted Hours
First Master's Degree	60 Attempted Hours
Additional MA Degrees/Stem Work (including 1 st MA degree attempted hours)	80 Attempted Hours
First Doctoral Degree	80 Attempted Hours

Once a student maximizes the allotted credit hours, he/she is no longer eligible for financial aid. The Office of Student Financial Aid recommends that students who have attempted 90 hours toward a Bachelor's degree log on to TAMIU's **DegreeWorks** to ensure they are enrolled for the necessary courses to complete their degree. DegreeWorks is located under 'My Business' tab in Uconnect. Students must meet with an academic advisor to review their degree audit to plan their enrollment accordingly.

***Note that both Completion Rate and Maximum Time Frame are measured in credit hours only, regardless of full-time or part-time attendance.*

How to Regain Financial Aid Eligibility for Maximum Credit Hour Requirement:

- Student can submit an appeal to request a review of his/her current standing and the plan of progression towards completing their degree program.

Appeal Process

A student with extenuating circumstances may appeal their financial aid suspension by submitting the Appeal of Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress form located here:

(<http://www.tamtu.edu/affairs/financial/documents/AppealFormNEW.pdf>) to the Office of Student Financial Aid. Appeals must explain in detail why the student failed to meet minimum academic standards, the extenuating circumstances that caused failure to comply, and how the situation has improved. Examples of extenuating circumstances include illness, medical issues with immediate family members, or a death in the family. Personal or financial issues with family, friends, or roommates are not considered extenuating circumstances.

Appeal: A Financial Aid Appeal is a request to re-evaluate the termination status of financial aid. The submission of an appeal **is only a request for review and does not guarantee a change in status.**

- A student's typed appeal should include:
 - The reason(s) why the student failed to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress.
 - Supporting documentation that may be pertinent to the student's appeal.
 - Student's Degree Plan.
 - Student's Academic Plan for success.

The Financial Aid Appeal Committee will **only** evaluate appeals for students who have a complete financial aid folder and are enrolled for the semester of appeal. The results of the appeal will be emailed to the student's TAMIU email account within approximately ten (10) working days after the Committee has met. Federal regulations do not allow the decisions of the Committee to be overturned by another institutional office or official.

Appeal Results, Financial Aid Probation and Academic Plan

Appeal Definitions:

- **Probation:** A status granted to students whose appeal has been approved to receive aid for one more period of enrollment. Additional periods of enrollment may be granted if following a required Academic Plan (which may include documentation requirements not directly related to academic performance).

- **Academic Plan:** Based on the discretion of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, students who have had continuous struggles with regaining and maintaining the minimum SAP standards may have an individualized academic plan created for them which outlines additional requirements that must also be met. Individual academic plans will be documented and agreed upon by the student and a financial aid administrator. Students placed in an Academic Plan status will be reviewed each semester to ensure they are meeting their Academic Plan requirements. If a student is unable to meet the minimum requirements of their Academic Plan, they will be ineligible for financial aid.
- **Ineligible:** Failure to meet probation requirements for each semester or Academic Plan will result in student's appeal status to be revoked and student will be placed automatically on Financial Aid Suspension. The student will no longer be eligible to receive or appeal for financial aid until cumulative SAP standards or Academic Plan requirements are met.

Appeal Results:

If approved, the student will either be:

1. Placed on probation for one semester only, or
2. Placed on continued probation as stipulated on Academic Plan established for success by the Financial Aid Appeal Committee.

If denied, the student is responsible for paying for their own educational costs until the student improves his/her scholastic record to meet the minimum standards. Students who were denied due to maximum time frame are responsible for paying for their own educational costs for the remainder of their degree program.

Students will be notified of their appeal results thru their Dusty email account. For those students placed on probation, the email will explain all requirements that must be met during the probationary period to continue to receive financial aid.

A student on probation who fails to complete a single course or has withdrawn from the University will be automatically placed on suspension.

Student Acknowledgement and Responsibility

I acknowledge receipt of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAPP) and that I am responsible for reading and understanding the eligibility requirements and knowing my status at the end of each semester. If questions arise, I will contact the Office of Student Financial Aid at (956) 326-2225 or visit with my Financial Aid Counselor.

STUDENT NAME (please print)

TAMIU ID NUMBER

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

Please note: Financial aid warning, probation, and suspension are separate from academic probation and suspension.