



Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP)

Federal regulations require that schools monitor academic progress of each applicant for federal financial assistance and that the school certify that the applicant is making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward earning his or her degree. To be eligible to receive financial aid from federal, state and institutional sources at Lake Erie College, students must make satisfactory academic progress in their degree program. This rule applies to all students applying for aid, whether or not financial aid has been previously received. The purpose of measuring and enforcing this regulation is to ensure financial aid recipients' progress toward graduation. The policy and terms described in this SAP policy is for financial aid purposes and is separate from academic probation policies for academic standing with the college.

Not meeting these requirements for SAP may result in loss of all financial aid.

Requirements

The measure of SAP is threefold:

- 1. GPA**
- 2. Percentage Completion Rate**
- 3. Maximum Timeframe**

- Students who fail to meet the any of the SAP requirements become ineligible to receive financial aid until compliance with these requirements are met.
- The Financial Aid Office evaluates SAP after the completion of each semester or term. All terms of enrollment, including summer, will be considered in the determination of SAP including periods in which the student did not receive federal student aid funds.
- Students academically dismissed from their academic program will be recognized as failing to meet SAP standards.

Requirement Definitions

1. Grade Point Average

An undergraduate student must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0
A graduate student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0

2. Percentage Completion Rate: Pace of progression

To ensure a student is making progress in progression toward their degree, a student must earn 67% of hours attempted. This is calculated by dividing cumulative hours earned by cumulative hours attempted.

Attempted credit hours. Courses with grades and with marks of "W" withdrawn, "WF" withdrawal failure, "WP" withdrawal passing, "I" incomplete or "F" failure are counted as courses attempted. Course repetitions and remedial coursework count as credit hours attempted and count toward the maximum time frame. Overall transfer hours accepted are included in attempted credit hours. Hours enrolled are counted after the add/drop period of the semester.

Earned credit hours are the credit hours recorded as earned on the student's academic transcript at the end of each semester for which a student received a passing grade. All other grades, including "F" failing, "W" withdrawal, "I" incomplete or no credit will not be counted as a successful completion or earned. Credits excluded from the credit completion calculation include audit credits, CLEP, prior learning credits.

Transfer credit hours are included in cumulative number of hours attempted and earned

Example: Joe Freshman was enrolled for 18 hours fall semester. He withdrew from a 4 credit hour course, receiving a "W" and failed another 4 credit hour course. At the end of the semester, his transcript showed he earned 10 credit hours. He has a 2.52 cumulative GPA.

His percentage of credit hours earned based on his attempted is 55.5% (10/18). He did not make SAP for the fall semester based upon his earned hours. He must have had at least 67% earned hours from those attempted.

3. Maximum timeframe

Students are required to complete their degree requirements within a specific time frame. Federal regulations require that students complete their degree program by the time they have attempted 150% of the hours normally required for the completion of the degree. Students who have reached the maximum timeframe limit and who have completed coursework to graduate but have not yet received their degree cannot continue to receive further financial aid as an undergraduate student.

- An undergraduate student cannot exceed 150% of the published length of time of the program measured in credit hours attempted. The undergraduate programs require 120 credit hours for graduation. The maximum time frame for these students is 180 hours (120 x 1.5). Students are normally expected to complete an undergraduate degree by the end of 4 years of full time enrollment. To make this progress, a student would need to take 15 credit hours each semester. The possibility exists for a student to receive financial aid up to the maximum time frame of 180 credit hours. However, if it is determined at any point that the student will not be able to complete the program within 180 credits, financial aid eligibility stops.
- The maximum time frame is not increased for dual-degree students or students with minors. All overall institutional hours attempted are included, even if a second major is added, or a student's major changes. Coursework forgiven for academic amnesty are included in attempted and earned counts for SAP.
- Periods of enrollment when a student does not receive federal aid are counted toward the maximum timeframe.
- A graduate student cannot exceed 150% of the published length of time of the program measured in credit hours attempted.

MBA program: published length 36 credit hours, maximum timeframe 54 credit hours

MED program: published length 32 credit hours, maximum timeframe 48 credit hours

MSPA program: published length 112 credit hours, maximum timeframe 168 credit hours

Transfer students are awarded aid without regard to probation status at their prior post-secondary school. Transfer credit hours accepted for the both undergraduate and graduate student's academic degree are counted when measuring the maximum time frame to complete the degree or program.

Change of Major or Second Major:

All hours attempted and earned are counted, even if a student adds a second major or changes major and needs additional coursework to complete their degree due to the change or addition. Students who need to remain enrolled beyond their maximum time frame due to a change of major or a second major will be required to submit an appeal. This appeal must include documentation from their academic advisor indicating the number of credit hours needed to complete their degree or second major.

Outcomes: SAP Warning, Financial Aid Suspension, SAP Probation

Student's progress is monitored after grades are finalized each semester – summer, fall and spring - to determine if a student is eligible to receive financial aid for subsequent enrollment periods. The Lake Erie College Financial Aid Office will notify student's not meeting SAP at the end of each semester via their LEC email. Notification will include why SAP is not met, if an academic plan is required and the timeframe to appeal. It is the student's responsibility to know whether or not these requirements are met. It is possible that a subsequent term may be in progress at the time of SAP notification from the Financial Aid office. (For example: summer term begins within days of spring term ending). Students with concerns should contact the Financial Aid Office.

SAP Warning

The first time a student does not meet the SAP requirement the student will receive a SAP Warning. The student will be eligible to receive financial aid for the next semester. This warning period lasts one semester. No other action is required by the student. The SAP Policy will be delivered to the student for review.

Exception: Any student dismissed by Academic Standards after one semester, (GPA is zero and no hours are earned) will be automatically placed into SAP Financial Aid Suspension.

Financial Aid Suspension

Financial Aid Suspension occurs when any of three SAP requirements was not met and no appeal was provided and approved. The student will not be eligible for financial aid in subsequent terms. Students in this status may enroll at their own expense. Personal resources, an LEC payment plan or private loan resources may be payment options during enrollment period(s) while attempting to regain eligibility.

Neither paying for classes out-of-pocket nor sitting out for an enrollment period is sufficient for students to re-establish eligibility for financial aid.

SAP Probation and the Appeal Process

Students who fail to make SAP after one semester on SAP Warning will lose all eligibility for financial aid and be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. If extenuating circumstances contributed to the student not meeting SAP requirements, the student may appeal the denial for financial aid by submitting a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal to the Financial Aid Office. The purpose of the appeal is to show there were extenuating circumstances that occurred during that semester that led to requirements not being met. The student must submit a letter of appeal to petition reconsideration for financial aid eligibility for the next term. The appeal must include a dated and signed statement with:

- The reason for failing to make SAP including any extenuating circumstances that caused failure to meet the SAP standards
- A description of how circumstances have changed to be in a better position to be academically successful
- Specific steps that will be taken during subsequent enrollment to ensure academic success. This can be the same plan delivered by Academic Standards Committee
- Statement or documentation from a third party sources that can support your circumstance and clearly indicate your situation has been rectified to ensure successful future enrollment
- If Maximum Timeframe has been exceeded, a signed statement from an academic advisor indicating the hours remaining for degree completion

An appeal must be based on significant extenuating circumstances that seriously impacted academic performance. Examples of extenuating circumstances include serious illness or injury, death of a family member or other extreme hardship or personal situation. The appeal letter must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office within 14 days of receiving notification. Include supporting documentation if indicated.

An appeal will be approved if the Financial Aid Office can determine the student will be able to make SAP standards by the end of the next term. The student with an approved appeal will be on SAP Probation and regains eligibility for financial aid for the next term.

Academic Plan

If the Financial Aid office determines that SAP cannot be made during the next term, for example, even with a 4.0 GPA earned in the next semester, the SAP GPA requirement of 2.0 cannot be obtained, the student must include an Academic Plan of action from the Academic Standards Committee or meet with their academic advisor to devise a plan to restore their SAP standards by a specific point in time. The academic plan must be submitted as part of the appeal. The student must adhere to the requirements specified in their academic plan to be eligible for financial aid.

Requirements to Re-Qualify for Financial aid

Students who are placed on Financial Aid Suspension for any reason may appeal their case to the Financial Aid Office. If the appeal is approved, the student regains financial aid eligibility for the next semester. The student is considered to be on SAP Probation.

Students can regain full eligibility for financial aid by successfully completing coursework that will raise their GPA (2.0 undergrad, 3.0 graduate) to meet or exceed the minimum requirement, raise their Percentage Completion Rate for all coursework attempted to 67% or more or have submitted an academic appeal for maximum timeframe that has been approved.