

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Administrative policy approved May 1, 2023. Effective immediately.

Revision history: Formerly part of the Financial Aid Policies & Procedures Manual; clarifying language added when established as standalone policy in May 2023; technical revisions in October 2023.

Related policies: Academic Policies and Procedures; Academic Disqualification, Academic Probation, and Academic Improvement Program Policies; Grading, Scholastic and Other Honors, and Specialized Courses Policy; SCALE Program Policies

Scheduled Review Date: Financial Aid Office and General Counsel Office May 2025

A. Background

Federal regulations require financial aid recipients to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward a recognized degree program to continue receiving Federal Student Aid (FSA) (e.g., Direct Unsubsidized Loan, Graduate Plus Loan, or Federal Work-Study).

To maintain SAP, a student must earn acceptable grades and complete enough units to keep progressing toward degree completion in an acceptable time frame. This Policy describes Southwestern's standards for measuring whether a student is maintaining SAP and the consequences of failing to maintain SAP.

Office evaluates student progress under these standards once each academic year for all continuing students, typically at the end of the spring semester or, for SCALE students, after Period 4. Disqualification will begin at the beginning of the fall semester or, for SCALE students, at the beginning of Period 5.

1. Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement

All FSA recipients must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher for each semester.

have their SAP evaluated at the end of the spring semester or, for SCALE students, period 4. The student would be disqualified from receiving FSA when they return, although they can appeal this disqualification. If Southwestern grants the appeal, the student could be placed on FSA probation and receive FSA for the returning enrollment period. The student must correct the issues that led to the FSA probation before receiving FSA after the FSA probationary period.

F. Appeal Process

Students who fail to maintain SAP may appeal. The appeal process is to provide information to Southwestern's Financial Aid Appeals Committee (Committee) that is not captured on the student's academic record but has impacted the student's academic progress.

Students cannot apply retroactively for FSA eligibility for an enrollment period that has ended. For any appeal to be granted, the appeal must be submitted at least 30 days before the end of an enrollment period.

Students must submit an academic plan as part of the appeal (see **Section F.1**). In addition, as described in **Section F.2**, students must provide a detailed explanation for why they did not maintain SAP, what they have done to fix the issues identified, S).s4.4 (ct)-4.1TJ-0.001 T

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1. Student Services Office and Academic Plan

Before submitting an appeal, the student must seek assistance from the Student Services Office with the goal of establishing a realistic academic plan toward degree completion. An academic plan typically requires the student to reach a 2.330 cumulative GPA within one enrollment period but, in extraordinary circumstances, may allow the student to cure within two enrollment periods.

The academic plan must detail how the student

FSA if they have met the conditions of the academic plan (e.g., cumulative GPA is once again at or above 2.330 or, if a pace issue, the student is on track to curing the deficiency).

A SCALE II probationary student **must** carry at least 5 SCALE units so the Committee can evaluate their grades at the end of Period 5. Some SCALE students also cross-enroll in traditional fall units. If the student has cured their cumulative GPA with the Period 5 SCALE grades, even if also enrolled in fall units, the student's probation will end, and they will be eligible for FSA in Period 6. If the student does not cure for Period 5, but with the added fall units does cure, then funding will be restored for Period 7, but not Period 6. If the student completes 5 SCALE units in Period 5, should their fall grades place them below the 2.330 minimum cumulative GPA, they will not lose FSA for Period 6.