



## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

At AIMS Education, the twofold process of monitoring students both quantitatively (the pace through the program) and qualitatively provides the overall framework to ensure the academic success of each student. Intertwined into the twofold process is the necessity for each student to complete successfully the theory and clinical aspects, if applicable, of each module in a required period.

AIMS Education requires that all students must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and work towards an eligible certificate. In addition, students must be on pace to complete their certificate before reaching the 150% maximum timeframe limit. The Satisfactory Academic Policy (**SAP**) is used to determine that an otherwise eligible student is making SAP in his or her program. Since federal regulations require all financial aid recipients to adhere to the standards of the SAP, financial aid recipients who fail to meet the SAP standards, may be in jeopardy of losing their financial aid eligibility. The SAP policy is consistently applied to all students at AIMS Education. The SAP policy is included in the school catalog, which is provided to each student. Further academic policies are provided in the sections of the school catalog titled "Academic Probation and Course Repetition" and "Termination and Withdrawal."

### Requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress means a student must be proceeding in a positive manner toward fulfilling certificate requirements in a specific length of time. A student's SAP is checked from an interim "**academic transcript for SAP**" after a student completes the required number of clock hours in a payment period.

To be making SAP, a student must comply with the following criteria.

#### Quantitative Progress (Pace)

The quantitative criterion is the measure of the "pace" at which a student is progressing towards program completion. The quantitative criterion/pace of progression is calculated by dividing cumulative course hours completed or earned by the cumulative total hours scheduled. The student is required to make **Quantitative Progress** towards program completion by attending a minimum of 90% of the scheduled class hours on a cumulative basis during each evaluation period.

Students failing to meet standards of Quantitative Progress, i.e. cumulative attendance rate of 90%, will be placed on "SAP Warning" for the next payment period. Students on SAP Warning due to attendance will be counselled with an action plan to complete their makeup hours within a specific time range, subject to the makeup hour policy described in the catalog. Students will be taken off the SAP Warning status after their cumulative attendance rate shows improvement and meets the standards. Student will be terminated if the requirement was not met by the end of the



time limit given to student. AIMS Education reserves the right to review appeals in certain situations.

### **Qualitative Progress**

The student's cumulative grade point average (cGPA) is reviewed to determine **qualitative progress**. A student must achieve a minimum passing grade of 75% in each module and maintain a minimum overall cumulative grade point average (cGPA) of 2.00.

A student enrolled in the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program, on/after 02/01/2015 must achieve a minimum passing grade of 75% in each module and maintain a minimum overall cumulative grade point average (cGPA) of 3.00 for pre-diagnostic modules.

If a student fails to meet standards of Qualitative Progress, i.e. a cGPA of 2.00 (or 3.00, if applicable), then he/she will be placed on "SAP Warning" for the next payment period. Students on SAP Warning due to failing to meet cGPA requirements will be counselled with an action plan to improve their grades.

If a student's cGPA is substantially below the requirement, the student may be dismissed without an SAP warning status if, in the opinion of the Academic Officer or the Program Director, the student cannot meet minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress during the SAP Warning for the next payment period.

Students who show improvement in their cGPA and meet the standards of SAP at the end of the SAP warning period, will be considered to have met the SAP requirement and restore their status to good standing. Students will be dismissed if the requirement is not met by the end of the SAP warning period. AIMS Education reserves the right to review appeals in certain situations.

### **Maximum Time Frame**

All program requirements must be completed within a maximum time frame of 150% of the normal program length. Financial aid students cannot receive aid for more hours than those for which the program is approved.

If it appears that a student would not complete the program during the maximum time period, the student will be terminated from school.

The first disbursement of Title IV funds requires no progress check provided the first disbursement is issued during the payment period of training for a new first-time student. At the end of the new student's first payment period the student must be making satisfactory progress according to the minimum required standards stated above. AIMS Education reserves the right to review appeals in certain situations.



## **SAP Evaluation Statuses**

### **Good Standing**

A student is in Good Standing if one of following conditions exists:

- 1) No grades have been posted.
- 2) If the SAP has not been evaluated.
- 3) A student is meeting minimum SAP requirements at time of evaluation.
- 4) A student regained good standing after being placed on a financial aid warning or financial aid probation period.

### **Financial Aid Warning**

If a student fails to meet the cumulative 90% attendance and 2.0 grade point average for any evaluation period, he or she will be placed on warning for the next evaluation period. For financial aid students a warning means you are still eligible for federal student aid for one payment period and must improve your academic standing in order to avoid loss of federal student aid.

Students will be notified in writing when they are placed on warning and the steps necessary to be removed from warning status. Students will also receive attendance or academic counseling, from the program instructor, as appropriate, when they are placed on warning.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

If a student is on financial aid warning status, he/she would need to meet the SAP requirements (90% attendance rate and 2.00 minimum cGPA) at the next mandatory SAP evaluation point. If the student fails to achieve a good standing status at the following mandatory evaluation point, he/she will lose financial aid eligibility.

If the student wishes to maintain his/her financial aid, he/she will need to submit an appeal. If the appeal is successful, the student would be placed on financial aid probation status. During the financial aid probation status, the student needs to follow the terms of the appeal approval and/or academic plan, if any.

Coursework attempted and successfully completed during the probation period will be checked to determine if the student meets the minimum standards of satisfactory academic policy, i.e. Pace of progression, cGPA and maximum timeframe. If the required standards of SAP are met by the next scheduled evaluation period, the student will regain good standing status.

### **Frequency & Mode of SAP Evaluations**

- SAP is evaluated (official evaluations) at the point when the student successfully completed the scheduled clock hours for that payment period.



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- Prior to the mandatory SAP evaluation point described above, an informal SAP evaluation may be made by the academic department at their discretion.
- Academic performance history of all students will be reviewed at the end of every period from the **Academic Transcripts for SAP**.
- Each official SAP evaluation shall be documented and placed in the student's file.
- At the end of each payment period, the school will determine if the student has maintained at least 90% attendance, on a cumulative basis since the beginning of his/her program.
- Grades are assigned at the end of each module and are used to calculate cGPA.
- *If the module is in progress* and the final grade for the module is not available, the average grades of all exams in that module shall be considered to calculate the cGPA for SAP.
  - If the average grade falls below the passing grade, a student shall be placed on SAP Warning. Such students shall be re-evaluated upon completion of the module in progress when final grades are available.
  - If the student meets the SAP requirements upon completion of the module in progress, the student is deemed to have met SAP requirements for the payment period and is considered to have never been on SAP warning.
  - In case a student fails to meet the SAP requirements at the end of a module, SAP warning status shall continue for that payment period.
  - When the exam scores are not available or exam scores do not represent reasonable progress of the module, the academic office may delay the evaluation for a reasonable period not exceeding 3 weeks or 75 scheduled hours, whichever is greater. The disbursement of federal student aid funds, in such situations, will be made only after the SAP Evaluation.
- Financial aid students meeting the minimum standards are considered to be making SAP and remain eligible to receive title IV financial aid.
- For students who are enrolled and attending more than one program simultaneously, each program will have separate *SAP evaluations* for each of the required standards, i.e. pace of progression, cGPA, and maximum time frame.

**Consequences of not meeting SAP**

- Students failing to meet any of the minimum required standards shall be considered as not making satisfactory academic progress and be placed on SAP warning status.
- Students placed on SAP warning status will be notified in writing with an explanation of its impact and on their eligibility for financial aid.
- Students on academic warning are required to rectify any attendance issues in a certain period and show academic improvement above a 2.0 through the various methods offered at AIMS Education and through personal academic discipline.
- Students placed on SAP warning shall be eligible to receive financial aid for one payment period.
- Students on SAP warning who fail to meet the requirements of SAP at their next mandatory evaluation period shall be dismissed, unless the student successfully



appeals the determination as per the procedure defined here below. Failure to appeal or when the appeal is denied, leads to ineligibility of receiving financial aid and/or dismissal from the program.

- A student may reapply if the application of the SAP policy results in termination from a program as per the conditions outlined in the re-enrollment policy.

### **SAP Appeals**

An SAP appeal allows a student, who has failed to meet the minimum required standards for SAP, to petition for reconsideration of academic good standing and, if a financial aid student, eligibility for title IV aid after completion of a payment period under SAP Warning.

The appeal should include...

- Why the student failed to make SAP.
- What has changed that will allow the student to meet SAP at next evaluation period.

The SAP appeal will be approved if the school determines that the student will be able to reach SAP standards by the end of the next payment period and the student is placed on financial aid probation.

The school may recommend an academic plan that will ensure the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time. Students can appeal only once during their program duration.

#### **Formal Process...**

- SAP appeal forms should be submitted within 5 working days of determination of the school administrator reviewing the SAP.
- Reasons for which students may appeal a negative progress determination include death of a relative, an injury or illness of the student, or any other allowable special or mitigating circumstance.
- Appeal documents will be reviewed by the Director of Education and a decision will be made and reported to the student within 15 calendar days.
- If the student prevails upon the appeal, the SAP determination will be reversed and federal financial aid will be reinstated, if applicable for financial aid students.
- The appeal and decision will be retained in the student file.

### **Academic Plan**

An academic plan worked out in consultation with the program director specifies a series of actions required to help the student to improve their academic performance. The purpose of an academic plan is to prepare the student to regain good standing status at the next mandatory SAP evaluation. In other words, the academic plan duration should not exceed more than one payment period or, for non-financial aid students, one module.



### **Transfer of Credits**

All accepted transfer credits from another institution transferred into the student's current program of study are considered both attempted and completed credits for purposes of calculating the course completion rate but are not included in cGPA calculations. Undergraduate transfer credits are included in the maximum timeframe but not in program cGPA calculations. The maximum time frame is reduced for transfer students, based upon the remaining length of their program.

### **Course Repetition**

A student may continue to receive financial aid when repeating a course as long as the student has never passed the course. However, once a student has received a passing score, the student can only receive financial aid for repeating the same course once. Students can repeat coursework only with prior approval from the program director. Only the highest grade for a repeated course is counted in the program GPA. All attempted courses are counted toward the course completion rate and the maximum timeframe for program completion.

### **Course Drop Outs / Withdrawals**

Course withdrawals and incomplete grades are not included in the computation of overall cGPA.

### **Changing Programs**

If a student transfers from one program to another program at AIMS Education, the SAP will be reviewed to reflect any credits awarded for common coursework that have been successfully completed. Hours and grades for coursework not transferred into the new program of study will NOT be included in the cGPA calculations for the new program.

### **Second Credential**

If a student enrolls in a second program after successful completion of a program and receives an in-school transfer, all accepted transfer credits from the prior program are considered both attempted and completed. Grades achieved in the prior program are also transferred and considered in the cGPA calculations. The maximum time frame is reduced for transfer students, based upon the remaining length of their program.