

## **University of Illinois at Chicago Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

Federal and state regulations require financial aid recipients to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) towards a recognized degree or certificate. SAP applies to all undergraduate, graduate and professional students who receive most types of federal, state and institutional financial aid administered by the university. At the conclusion of the spring term each academic year, the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) will review all currently enrolled UIC undergraduate and graduate students to verify they are meeting the SAP requirements. Additionally, for those students in undergraduate or graduate degree/certificate (eligible to receive financial aid) programs less than two years in length or who need to follow an academic plan, their status will also be reviewed at the conclusion of the fall and summer terms. Professional students from the Colleges of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy will have their status reviewed at least annually by the respective college's promotion or academic review committees.

The university's SAP policy includes both qualitative and quantitative measures. Failure to meet any one of the criteria will result in the cancellation of the student's financial aid award for current and/or future semesters, depending upon the time of the review. For example, the timeframe between when the spring term grades are available and the start of the summer term is only a few days. However, if students are not meeting SAP at the end of the spring term, they will be ineligible for financial aid for the summer term, regardless if they already have a financial aid award and are enrolled or attending classes. Please be aware, once enrolled for a term students accept responsibility for any bill assessed regardless of their financial aid status. Students not meeting the SAP requirements will be notified accordingly via their UIC email address as soon as possible.

All periods of a student's enrollment, whether or not the student received aid, are included in the SAP review. In addition, all credit hours transferred to UIC for the current enrollment level are reflected in the student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) if a GPA was able to be determined based upon the transcript(s) provided to the Office of Admissions and Records (OAR). Earned transfer hours are also included in a student's maximum time frame and ratio.

### **Qualitative Measure (cumulative grade point average):**

*Undergraduate* - Students will have their status reviewed at least annually by the respective college's academic review committees. After a student's second year or when a student has 60 cumulative hours, whichever comes first, the GPA review by the OSFA is independent from any review of a student's academic record conducted by the various academic departments. Undergraduate students must have at least a 2.0 (or "C" average) cumulative GPA by the end of their second academic year. *For example, this would apply to students whose first semester of attendance at UIC was fall 2016 or earlier when SAP is reviewed at the conclusion of the spring 2018 term. The 2.0 cumulative GPA requirement applies to transfer students whose institutional attempted and transfer hours are 60 or greater, or after 2 academic years, whichever comes first. In both cases, if the cumulative GPA is below a 2.0 (when SAP is reviewed) after the student's second academic year, the student's aid will be cancelled.* Some grades such as "S, SH and CR" will not be included in the cumulative GPA.

*Graduate/Professional* – In order to graduate, most programs require a student to have at least a 3.0 (or "B" average) cumulative GPA. Due to stricter requirements, the satisfactory academic progress policy requirement for GPA will be the same as that required to remain in good academic standing in the student's respective program. However, if the cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 (or "C" average) at the time when SAP is reviewed, the student's aid will be cancelled. Some grades such as "S, CR and DFR" will not be included in the cumulative GPA.

### **Quantitative Measures (maximum time frame and course completion ratio):**

*Undergraduate* - Regulations state that undergraduate students must complete their program within 150% of the published length of their program. The minimum number of credit hours required for an undergraduate degree at UIC is usually 120. Therefore, undergraduate students are allowed to attempt a maximum of 180 credit hours while pursuing their degree. The required number of credit hours may vary based upon degree; therefore the maximum number of credit hours that a student may attempt will also vary in some cases. The 180 credit hour maximum timeframe still applies, regardless of the number of times a student changes majors or if he/she is pursuing multiple majors or degrees. Students may appeal their status if their aid is cancelled and they are pursuing multiple majors or degrees. If at the time when SAP is reviewed at the conclusion of the spring term (or any other term) it is determined that a student has exceeded the maximum number of attempted credit hours based upon their degree, the student's aid will be cancelled.

In addition to the maximum number of credits undergraduate students may attempt while pursuing their degree, they must also successfully complete 67% of the cumulative attempted credits at UIC and transferable credits. Credits attempted are those hours a student is registered for at the conclusion of the add/drop period each semester as defined by the OAR. All classes for which a student is registered after that date will be included. Successfully completed course work is defined as the total number of hours which a student receives a grade of A, B, C, D, AH, BH, SH, S, or CR. When SAP is reviewed, if a student falls below the 67% cumulative standard the student's aid will be cancelled unless they are satisfactorily meeting the requirements of their academic plan.

*Graduate/Professional* – Graduate and professional students' financial aid eligibility is contingent upon completing their degree requirements within 150% of the program's published length in accordance with the standards established by their respective college. Students should consult with their particular college regarding the published length of their specific program. Please be aware that students seeking a second graduate or professional degree, who have exhausted their financial aid eligibility, will need to file a SAP appeal to regain eligibility.

In addition to the maximum timeframe, students must also successfully complete 67% of the cumulative attempted credits at UIC and transferable credits. Credits attempted are those hours a student is registered for at the conclusion of the add/drop period each semester as defined by the OAR. All classes for which a student is registered after that date will be included. Successfully completed course work is defined as the total number of hours which a student receives a grade of A, B, C, D, S, CR or DFR. For students from the College of Medicine, the grading system is different; students are encouraged to review the academic catalog to determine which grades are considered for successful completion of coursework. When SAP is reviewed, if a student falls below the 67% cumulative standard the student's aid will be cancelled unless they are satisfactorily meeting the requirements of their academic plan.

**Treatment of course withdrawals, incomplete(s)/not reported, repeated courses and remedial courses:**

*Withdrawals (W):* Courses dropped before the conclusion of the add/drop period that no longer appear on the students enrollment record or transcript will not count as a course attempted. Courses dropped after the add/drop period for which the student receives a "W" grade, will count as a course attempted.

*Incompletes (I) or Not Reported (NR):* Courses in which a student has an incomplete grade or the faculty has not reported a grade at the time in which SAP is reviewed will be included in the attempted hours. However, as there is no current grade in the system, these courses will not be included in the cumulative GPA determination at such time.

*Repeated courses:* For courses repeated, only the most recent grade is included in the students cumulative GPA. When determining if a student is meeting the quantitative SAP standards, all courses will be included in the attempted hours.

*Remedial courses:* Non-credit (NC) remedial courses are not included in either the attempted hours or the students cumulative GPA. There are a limited number of remedial courses for credit otherwise known as academic preparation courses which are included in the attempted hours, but not in the cumulative GPA.

**Reinstatement**

Neither paying for one's classes nor sitting out a term affects a student's academic progress standing, so neither is sufficient to reestablish financial aid eligibility. If a student's aid is cancelled due to not maintaining satisfactory academic progress, the student can have their eligibility reinstated once he/she is in good standing with all SAP requirements.

Students may reestablish eligibility for financial aid at any point during the academic year and be given the same consideration for aid as other students maintaining satisfactory academic progress. Depending upon when students regain their eligibility, they may become eligible for financial aid for the payment period in which it is determined they have met the SAP requirements, otherwise it would become effective the following payment period. Students should track their progress as it is their responsibility to notify the OSFA if they feel they have regained their financial aid eligibility. Since SAP is only reviewed at the conclusion of the spring term for all students, it is extremely important that students notify the OSFA in a timely fashion, if they feel they have regained eligibility during the summer and/or fall terms.

**Appeal**

If a student is not meeting the SAP requirements (including those seeking a second degree) and financial aid is cancelled, the student may appeal their cancellation. Students must provide proper documentation of an extenuating circumstance (i.e. doctor's notice, letter from an academic advisor, etc.) by submitting the documents outlined on the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form. It is important to note, circumstances related to the typical adjustment to college life are not considered as extenuating for purposes of appealing suspension of financial aid. Appeals for undergraduate and graduate students will be reviewed by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Committee, which consists of members from various colleges and departments at UIC. The committee will determine if the student's financial aid should be reinstated or remain in cancellation. Once the committee has reviewed the appeal and made their determination, the student will be notified accordingly via their UIC email address of the committee's decision. The committee's decision is final. Students may submit multiple appeals, but the reason or rationale of the appeal must be different than previous SAP appeals submitted by the student. If the committee approves the appeal, the student will be eligible to receive financial aid for at least one additional term. When appeals are approved, the committee will require certain standards to be maintained each term, known as an academic plan. If at any time the standards are not maintained, the student's aid will be cancelled. It is highly recommended that all appeals be submitted in their entirety to the OSFA at least 30 days prior to the start of the semester in which the student is seeking financial assistance. If appeals are not submitted in their entirety by the semester deadline (please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form), the appeal may not be reviewed until the following semester. Professional students from the Colleges of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy will have to appeal their status to the respective college's promotion or academic review committees following their specific appeal procedures.