Financial Aid
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Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Effective: Spring 2016

Federal Regulations require all institutions participating in Title IV student financial aid programs to establish, publish and apply reasonable standards for measuring a student's progress towards earning a degree. This standard of measurement is referred to as the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP). The SAP policy applies to all students whether or not a student is receiving financial aid of or from any source. The SAP policy applies to all terms including the summer term.

The Financial Aid SAP policy measures a student progress toward earning a degree or certificate by a student's earned grade point average (GPA) and by the percentage of courses attempted and completed (PACE).

Financial Aid SAP policy applies to all transfer credits and grade point averages transferred into the University.

GPA: In order to meet the minimum requirements of the Financial Aid SAP with respect to GPA, an undergraduate student must have a grade point average consistent with the requirement for graduation from their program of study at the end of their fourth term of attendance, which is a 2.0 grade point average.

Students who earns a cumulative grade point average below a 1.60 GPA at the end of their first or second term of attendance will receive an **Information letter.**
Students who earn a cumulative grade point average below a 1.75 GPA at the end of their third term of attendance will receive a **Financial Aid Warning letter**. During the above terms of attendance students may continue to receive financial aid and no appeal is required.

Students who after the fourth term of attendance have earned a cumulative grade point average below a 2.0 will be placed on **Financial Aid Disqualification.** Financial Aid Disqualification means that the student is no longer eligible for federal financial aid. Financial Aid Disqualification does not prevent the student from enrolling in classes.

Remedial courses do not impact the GPA standard for SAP.

Graduate GPA**:** Graduate students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the end of each semester.

PACE: In order to meet the minimum requirements of the Financial Aid SAP with respect to attempted credits, students must complete 66 2/3% of the cumulative attempted credits.

Attempted credits include any credits a student is enrolled in each semester as of the census date (the census date is the last date to drop a class and receive a 100% refund; the census date is approximately the 10th calendar date of the fall and spring term or the 2nd calendar date of the summer term, and any credits added after the census date.
Courses or credits dropped or withdrawn from after the census date and any credits failed are considered attempted but not completed.

Successfully completed credits include those courses in which a student receives a passing grade of an A, B, C, D, P (pass) or an S (satisfactory). Credits that are considered as not successfully completed are those courses with a grade of (F) failed, I (incomplete), W (withdrawn or dropped), U (unsatisfactory).

Remedial courses are counted as both attempted and completed.

PACE also includes the maximum time frame during which a student must complete their degree program. For example, for an associate degree program a student must complete their degree within the maximum attempted credits of 96 (64 credit hours x 150%= 96 credits); 64/96 is the pace of 66 2/3%. The maximum time frame for a bachelor degree program is (128 credit hours x 150% = 192 credits; 128/192 is the pace of 66 2/3%. The maximum time frame for a graduate program is (34 credit hours x 150% = 51 credits); 34/51 is the pace of 66 2/3 %.

Students need to complete 66 2/3% of the credits attempted, regardless of enrollment status or program. Students who are approaching the maximum time frame will receive an **Information letter**. Students who do not complete 66 2/3% of cumulative attempted credits will be placed on ***Financial Aid Disqualification**.

Exception for Unofficial Withdrawal
Students who receive all failing (F) or incomplete (I) grades in any given semester are considered to have unofficially withdrawn from that semester and are immediately placed on Financial Aid Disqualification**. In addition, federal regulations require that federal aid eligibility be recalculated for students who unofficially withdraw which may result in the student owing a balance to DSU. See the DSU Refund and Return of Title IV Funds Policy for more information.

Grade Changes
If a grade change occurs after the SAP evaluation process is completed, students may contact the DSU Financial Aid Office to review their status with the inclusion of the new grade. In the inclusion of the updated grade changes the student's SAP status, the status will the updated to reflect the new evaluation for the current term.

Review and Notification Process
At the end of each semester, SAP will be evaluated for all students. Students will be notified of their SAP Information, Warning, or Disqualification status via email or postal mail and a service indicator will be posted on their Campus Connection.

Definitions:

1. Financial Aid Information: The student has reached 138% (176 credits) of the maximum attempted credit limit of 150% (192 credits). The student is eligible to receive federal financial aid until they have attempted 150% of the maximum credit limit. If the student will not graduate before they reach the 150% attempted credit limit the student should contact the Financial Aid Office.

2. Financial Aid Warning: The student has failed to meet one or more of the minimum SAP standards. While on Financial Aid Warning the student is eligible to receive federal financial aid. A Financial Aid Warning indicator will be added to the student's Campus Connection portal. The indicator is for information purposes only and will not affect the ability to drop or add classes. If the student does not meet all SAP standards at the end of the warning semester, they will lose eligibility and be placed on Financial Aid Disqualification.

3. Financial Aid Disqualification: The student has failed to maintain the minimum SAP standards. The student is no longer eligible to receive federal financial aid. Financial Aid Disqualification does not prevent a student from reenrolling in classes. Students on Financial Aid Disqualification may seek other funding methods or sources including use of the DSU Tuition Payment Plan available from the DSU Business Office or an alternative education loan that does not require that the student be meeting the SAP standards. Financial Aid Disqualification will stay in place until the student either completes additional coursework to bring their academic record into compliance with the standards required or until an appeal of their disqualification has been approved.

4. Financial Aid Probation and Plan of Study: If the Financial Aid office approves a student's appeal of their Financial Aid Disqualification, they will be placed on either Financial Aid Probation or Plan of Study status. Students under these statuses are eligible for financial aid.

*_Financial Aid Probation_ will be granted when it is reasonable to expect that the student will be able to meet the minimum SAP standards within one semester. If the student fails to meet SAP at the end of their probation term, they will return to Financial Aid Disqualification.

*_Financial Aid Plan of Study_ (POS) will be granted in situations where it may not be possible to meet SAP in one semester and/or the student has exceeded the maximum credit limit for their program. Students must meet with an Academic Advisor or other designated official to create a POS. Students on a POS must follow the conditions of their POS each semester to maintain eligibility. Compliance with the POS is reviewed at the end of each semester by the Director of Financial Aid. Failure to meet the conditions of the POS will result in Financial Aid Disqualification.

5. Unofficially Withdrawing: The student has received all failing grades in a term. The student is placed on Financial Aid Disqualification and is no longer eligible to receive federal financial aid.

Types of aid affected by Financial Aid Disqualification:
Federal financial assistance includes: Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, ND State Grant, ND Academic and Career and Technical Education Scholarship, ND Indian Scholarship, Federal Work Study, Federal TEACH Grant, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Nursing Loan, Federal Direct Loans (subsidized and unsubsidized), and Federal Direct PLUS Loan and some alternative loan programs.

Reinstatement of Eligibility:
Students who have become ineligible for financial aid can reestablish eligibility by:

1. Successfully completing coursework without federal financial aid to bring their cumulative GPA and rate of completion to the minimum required standard of 2.0 GPA and 66.67% successful completion.

2. Filing an appeal of the Financial Aid Disqualification. The appeal form can be found online at: http://dickinsonstate.edu/student-services/forms/#financial-aid

The appeal must be signed by the student and include the completed appeal form, letter of explanation, plan of study, and appropriate documentation of extenuating circumstances. Students are encouraged to work with their Academic Advisor or the Academic Success Center.

Extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to the following:
Medical Condition, Death of a Family Member, Divorce/Separation, Military Service, Difficulty balancing school and work and financial difficulties.

Submitting an appeal does not guarantee approval to reinstate eligibility to receive federal financial aid. Students will receive written notification, via the students official campus email address, of the SAP appeal decision within 15 business days after receipt of a completed appeal form and the required documentation. If the appeal is not successful, students may consider an alternative/private loan to fund their cost of education until they meet the minimum SAP standards.
Any appeal submitted without the requested documentation will be denied.

A student may appeal more than one time only if they are experiencing a different extenuating circumstance or need to update a Plan of Study.

Any part of this policy may be changed or revoked without notice.

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