

MSC SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

(Effective Spring 2022)

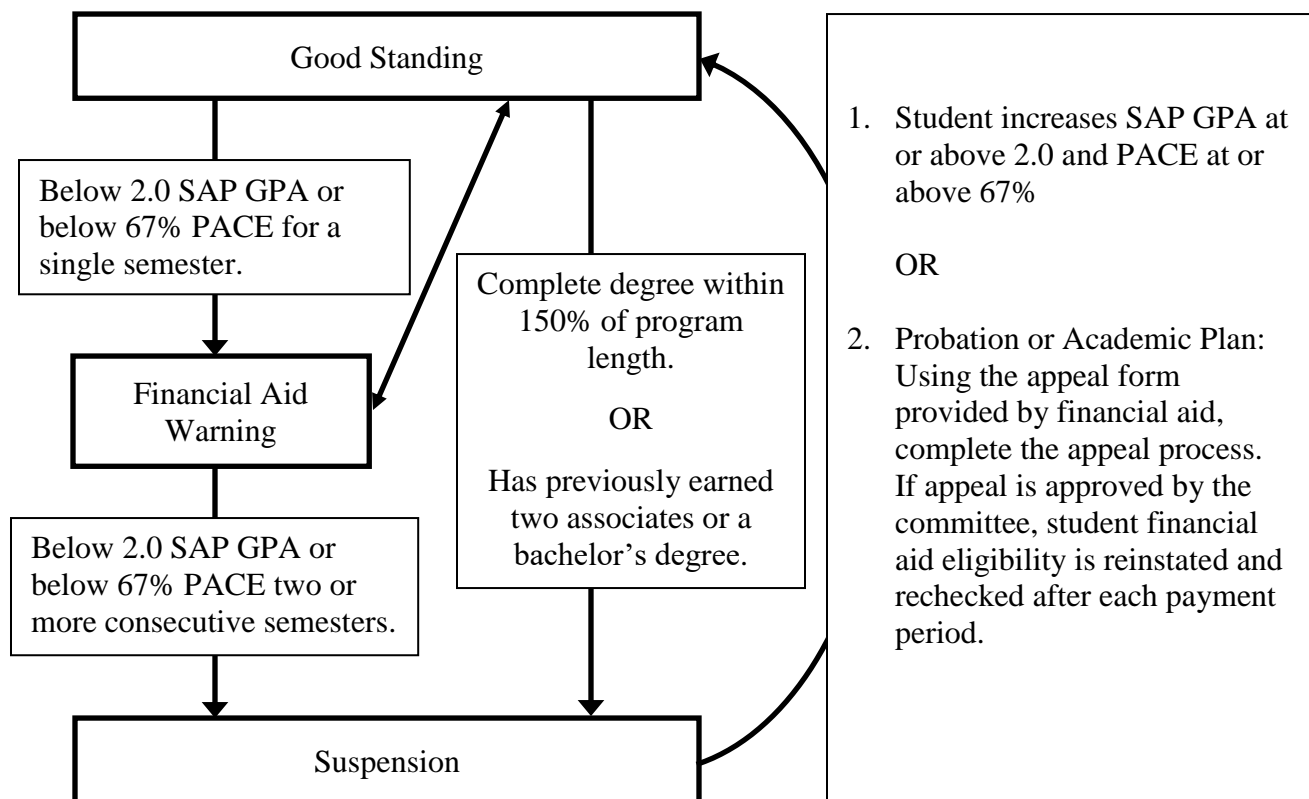
Murray State College's Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP) follows the guidelines required by the federal government (CFR 668.34). You must meet all three of the standards indicated below to be eligible to receive financial aid from the Federal Title IV Programs which include: Pell Grant (PELL), Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Iraq Afghanistan Service Grant, Federal Work-Study (FWS), and the Direct Loan Programs (Subsidized Stafford Loan, Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, and Plus Loan). This policy also impacts state programs such as the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant Program (OTAG) and Oklahoma Promise (OKP). **Please note that only courses that apply to a student's degree program are eligible for financial aid.**

The following requirements must be met in order for a student to receive financial aid:

1. **GPA REQUIREMENT:** 2.0 cumulative GPA using the SAP GPA calculation.
2. **CUMULATIVE HOURS REQUIREMENT** (Pace of completion): 67% successful completion of coursework attempted.
3. **MAXIMUM TIMEFRAME:** Complete degree within 150% of the program length (credit hours).
Example: Degree program of 60 credit hours x 150% = 90 credit hours of aid to complete degree.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Evaluation:

1. The Financial Aid Office will evaluate SAP at the end of each semester. Grade changes occurring during semesters will not result in an SAP recalculation.
2. The MSC academic year is sequenced as fall, spring and summer.
3. SAP can only be determined from **official transcripts and will include all transfer coursework.**



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Good Standing: Student is eligible for the aid listed above based on a minimum cumulative GPA using the SAP GPA calculation of 2.0 and minimum PACE at or above 67%.

Financial Aid Warning: Student is eligible for aid listed above for one semester. Students on warning will be connected to campus resources in the Student Success Center or Student Support Services. If the student improves SAP GPA and PACE to meet the SAP policy, they will continue to be eligible for financial aid. If the student does not improve SAP GPA and PACE to meet the SAP policy within one semester, they will be placed on suspension.

Probation: Students on probation must have an approved appeal and can be meeting SAP within one semester with no academic plan required.

Suspension: Student is no longer eligible for aid listed at the beginning of this document. Eligibility can be reinstated if the student meets SAP or has an appeal approved and will be assisted in identifying alternate aid options if appeal is denied.

Pace of Completion (PACE):

1. PACE is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of hours successfully completed by the cumulative number of hours attempted. See example below.
2. Students must complete **67%** of attempted coursework to meet the PACE requirement. We will not round percentages up. (For example: 66.8% will not be rounded up and will stay at 66%.)
Some examples of PACE are:
 - a. Student attempts 14 hours and completes 11 hours. 11 divided by 14 is 78% and the student has successfully met the PACE requirement.
 - b. Student attempts 9 hours and completes 3 hours; 3 divided by 9 is 33% and the student has not successfully met the PACE requirement.
3. **All courses** attempted at **all accredited institutions** are counted in the PACE and maximum timeframe.
 - a. Remedial courses are not counted in either PACE nor the maximum timeframe.
 - b. Audit courses are not eligible for financial aid and are not counted as hours attempted.
4. The number of hours attempted is based on the number of hours enrolled in at the end of the 100% refund period (known as the drop period, typically the 10th business day of fall and spring and the 5th business day of summer). The refund period varies for shorter enrollment periods.
5. Grades of A, B, C, D, S, and P are counted as hours **successfully** completed.
6. Grades of I, U, F, N, W, NP, and AW are **not successfully** completed.
7. There may be differences in how your MSC hours are calculated versus the SAP calculation.

Cumulative GPA:

1. Student's cumulative SAP GPA is determined using the courses included in calculating PACE. Student who have remedial courses will have SAP GPA calculated with separate guidelines. See Remedial Courses below.
2. Grades are assigned points as follows: A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0
3. P, S, U, N, NP, W, I and AW are GPA neutral meaning they are not counted in the calculation of GPA.
4. When a student's SAP GPA falls below 2.0, they are no longer in good standing and do not meet the SAP requirements.

Remedial Courses

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Students enrolled in remedial (zero-level) courses will be given grades for satisfactory completion of the course or unsatisfactory completion. The grades are neutral and are not figured into the student's MSC cumulative GPA.

Grades for remedial courses will be included in the overall GPA (for purposes of the SAP calculation only). S-Satisfactory = 4 points and U-Unsatisfactory – 0 points. The remedial course GPA will be averaged with cumulative GPA to determine satisfactory academic progress. This average must be at 2.0 or above to meet SAP.

Students may receive financial aid for a maximum of thirty (30) zero-level credit hours.

Maximum Timeframe:

1. Complete degree within the 150% of the length of the program.
2. Students who are pursuing a change of a major or second associate degree may be considered for financial aid. A change of a major or second associate degree must be obtained within the 150% length of program (LOP) timeframe of the initial degree. Students become ineligible for financial aid once they reach 150% of the hours required for their degree program, but may pursue their degree without financial assistance. Students can appeal if the required degree hours for change of major or second associate degree is beyond the 150% LOP of the initial degree. See Appeal section for details.
3. Students are only eligible to receive federal financial aid for two associate degrees.
4. Students planning to transfer to a four-year college and pursue a bachelor's degree need to be aware of the federal maximums on the various programs to ensure they don't run out of eligibility before completing their bachelor's degree.
5. Students who cannot complete a degree within the 150% of the length of the program will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students on financial aid suspension may submit an appeal, but these appeals are subject to the requirements for extenuating circumstances explained in the Appeals section.
6. Students with a bachelor's degree are not eligible for most financial aid programs but can submit an appeal to request eligibility for financial aid.
7. Changes in the student's major or degree program do not automatically extend the number of hours in the maximum timeframe. However, there may be extenuating circumstances that contributed to the change of major that warrant an appeal to the maximum timeframe allowed.
8. For appeals of the maximum timeframe, Financial Aid will request an official degree check that indicates the number of hours needed to complete the degree.
9. According to Department of Ed regulations, "A student is ineligible (via the maximum timeframe element) when it becomes mathematically impossible for them to complete the program within 150% of its length if it is an undergraduate program..."

Transfer Students:

1. Transfer students **must submit an up-to-date official transcript from all previous colleges attended** to the MSC Registrar Office before a financial aid award will be calculated.
2. All transfer hours from accredited colleges accepted by the registrar will be added to the MSC transcript and will count toward SAP calculation. Financial aid eligibility will not be determined until all official transcripts have been submitted to the MSC Registrar Office.
3. Students with transfer hours that do not meet the standards of the MSC SAP policy, including maximum timeframe, will not be eligible for financial aid.

Appeals:

1. Students may appeal financial aid suspension by meeting with an advisor and following the steps using the MSC Satisfactory Academic Progress appeal form.

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- a. There are separate appeals forms for maximum timeframe and SAP GPA/PACE.
2. It is critical that all of the information required on the appeal form be completed. Please work with your financial aid advisor to get this form completed properly before going before the committee.
3. Appeals must be submitted as early as possible but must be submitted **15 business days before the end of the semester** in which the student is requesting to receive financial aid. Note deadlines listed on the form.
4. The student must explain and provide documentation (proof) of **extenuating circumstances** for each semester the student feels contributed to not meeting SAP requirements. The student must also indicate **how their situation has changed** that will allow them to successfully meet the SAP requirements at the next SAP evaluation.
5. Students are not permitted to use the same extenuating circumstance documented in a previous appeal. Any subsequent appeals must be based on a distinct and current set of extenuating circumstances that caused the student to once again not meet the current SAP policies.
6. The appeal decision is eligible for due process but must be done within the same semester the appeal was reviewed.

Extenuating Circumstances:

- significantly impact your ability to complete courses and get passing grades;
- are outside your control;
- occurred during the semester(s) in question;
- are not normal circumstances that a typical college student expects to encounter during a normal semester.
 - Some examples of extenuating circumstances are: death of an immediate family member, extended illness, unexpected or complicated divorce situation, etc.
 - Some examples of proof of extenuating circumstances are: copy of a death certificate, letters from doctors, hospital discharge papers, copy of a divorce decree along with letters on agency letterhead from a person in authority who can corroborate and authenticate extenuating circumstance concerning divorce., etc.

Academic Plans:

1. Academic plans are required for students who have failed to meet the SAP requirements and are unable to reach good standing in just one semester. Once the appeal has been approved, the student is required to meet with a financial aid advisor to develop an academic plan.
2. The Financial Aid Office may place a student on an Academic Plan to ensure the student is able to meet the SAP requirements by a specified point in time, especially if it will take more than one semester to meet SAP requirements. Advisor may provide student a maximum of a three (3) semester plan without FA Office director approval.
3. SAP will be reviewed at the end of each semester for students on Academic Plans.
4. An academic plan can be reviewed and changed with director approval for extenuating circumstances.
5. As long as the student is meeting all of the requirements of the Academic Plan but not meeting SAP, the student will remain eligible for financial aid. If the student fails to meet any the requirements of the Academic Plan at any time, the student will lose eligibility and be placed on financial aid suspension.

Suspension:

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1. Students who fail to meet the requirements of the SAP policy for two (2) or more consecutive semesters based on SAP GPA and/or PACE will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students that exceed the maximum timeframe will immediately be placed on suspension. Students on suspension are not eligible to receive financial aid listed above.
2. Students on financial aid suspension may regain aid eligibility if their financial aid appeal is approved.
3. If suspension is due to SAP GPA and/or PACE, and an appeal is denied or the student chooses not to appeal, the student may regain aid eligibility by taking or retaking courses, get a reprieve or renewal to improve GPA or PACE to meet all of the SAP requirements.
4. For appeals of the maximum timeframe, the FA Office will request a degree check from Registrar's office.
5. The FA Office will notify the student of the decision in writing.
6. If the appeal is approved, the student will be **required** to meet with their financial aid advisor to review any conditions of the appeal or academic plan before financial aid will be awarded/dispensed.
7. The Department of Education does not permit consecutive (back to back) appeals for the same extenuating circumstance.

Repeated Coursework:

For financial aid eligibility, courses may be repeated one time. A student can receive aid for the same course for a maximum of two times. According to Department of Education regulations: "SAP regulations allow a student to receive Title IV funds for retaking a course he or she failed, and if a student withdraws before completing the course that he or she is being paid Title IV funds for retaking, that is not counted as his or her one allowed retake for that course. However, if a student passed a class once, then is repaid for retaking it, and fails the second time, that failure counts as their paid retake, and the student may not be paid for retaking the class a third time."

Second Degree

Students can earn a second degree as long as it can be obtained within the 150% of the initial degree. Example: Degree program of 60 hours x 150% = 90 hours. Subtract the number of hours earned in the first degree and subtract from the 90. Remaining hours can be covered by financial aid. If this number is short of the number of hours required for the second degree, these must be obtained without financial aid assistance or the student may complete the appeal process.