

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

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Overview

Federal Regulations require that students meet basic Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards to receive Title IV Federal Financial Aid.

The following is considered Title IV Federal Financial Aid:

- Federal Pell Grant
- TEACH Grants
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant Program
- Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG)
- Federal Work Study Programs
- Direct Subsidized Loans
- Direct Unsubsidized Loans
- Direct Plus Loans

Requirements

There are three criteria a student must satisfy to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards. Within each criterion, the requirements needed to satisfy may vary based on the student's academic level (Undergraduate, Second Bachelor's, Graduate).

Grade Point Average (GPA):

- **Undergraduate students:** minimum 2.00 cumulative GPA and FAU GPA AND CANNOT be on academic suspension or dismissal at end of most recent term at FAU.
- **Second Bachelor's students:** minimum 2.00 cumulative GPA and FAU GPA AND CANNOT be on academic suspension or dismissal at end of most recent term at FAU.
- **Graduate students:** minimum 3.00 cumulative GPA and FAU GPA AND CANNOT be on academic suspension or dismissal at end of most recent term at FAU. Graduate students must also meet the academic standards required by their department for continued enrollment.

PACE:

- **Students pursuing their first bachelor's degree** must earn a minimum of 67% of the total credits attempted in their current level, both FAU credits and Cumulative credits.
- **Students pursuing their second bachelor's degree** or Graduate Degree must earn a minimum of 67% of the total credits attempted at FAU.

How is PACE calculated?

Pace is determined by dividing the total number of credit hours earned by the total number of credit hours attempted.

Students who (1) do not meet the Pace criteria, (2) are meeting both GPA and Timeframe criteria, (3) are mathematically determined to be able to meet the Pace criteria within their maximum timeframe, and (4) were determined to be meeting ALL Satisfactory Academic Progress criteria in their prior review, will be assigned a Satisfactory Academic Progress Status of "Financial Aid Warning" for a duration of one semester. When on "Financial Aid Warning," the student will be eligible to receive aid for one semester.

Students who do not meet the Pace criteria and do not qualify for "Financial Aid Warning"; status (based on the criteria above) will have their financial aid eligibility terminated. If eligibility is terminated, the student may apply for reinstatement on a probationary basis through the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal process (see below).

Maximum Time Frame:

A student's maximum timeframe cannot exceed 150% of the academic program. In compliance with this regulation, the following maximum time frame thresholds have been established based on the student's current academic level:

- **Student's Pursuing Their First Baccalaureate Degree:** As the majority of undergraduate academic programs require 120 earned credits to complete, the maximum timeframe provided to a student pursuing their first bachelor's degree is 180 attempted credits. Exceptions made for programs requiring more than 120 credits to complete and cases where the Revised Maximum Timeframe has been extended as a result of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal process.
- **Students Pursuing Second (or beyond) Baccalaureate Degree:** As the average of post baccalaureate undergraduate programs require the student to earn 30 additional credits to complete, the maximum timeframe provided to a student pursuing an additional post baccalaureate undergraduate degree is 45 attempted credits. Exceptions will be made for specific programs based on published second bachelor program length and cases where the Revised Maximum Timeframe has been extended as a result of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal process.
- **Graduate (Masters or Doctoral) Students:** Per federal regulations, graduate students may only receive financial aid for a pre-determined timeframe, established by the school, which is based on the published length of the program.
 - Graduate students in master's level programs which require less than 50 credit hours for completion may not receive financial aid after they have attempted 70 institutional credit hours.
 - Graduate students in master's level programs which require greater than 50 credit hours for completion, and Graduate students in PhD programs, may not receive financial aid after they have attempted 120 institutional credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree.

Students who exceed this timeframe may not submit an appeal based on changes in major. Students may only submit an appeal if they have already earned one or more graduate degrees at FAU, as this creates the appearance of excessive credit attempts.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING TIMEFRAME: Excessive transfer credits, changes in major, double majors, or changes and/or additions of minor(s) may cause students to reach their maximum attempted credit timeframe, and lose their eligibility, prior to earning their degree. A student's timeframe will not be extended to accommodate changes in major unless the student was previously in a major that is no longer offered at FAU and is therefore required to change. Students who are determined to be unable to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards of GPA and/or Pace within their maximum timeframe will also be viewed as in violation of the maximum timeframe criteria, even though they have yet to exceed their attempted credit maximum.

* Exceptions made for programs requiring more than 120 credits to complete and cases where the Revised Maximum Timeframe has been extended as a result of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal process.

**Graduate students in Master level programs which require less than 50 credit hours for completion may not receive financial aid after they have attempted 70 institutional credit hours. Programs that require more than 50 credit hours (Masters and PhD programs) may not receive financial aid after they have attempted 120 institutional credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree.

For Students Pursuing Second (or beyond) Baccalaureate Degree: Most post baccalaureate undergraduate programs require students to earn 30 additional credits to complete. Typical maximum timeframe provided is 45 attempted credits. Exceptions will be made for specific programs.

Timeframe Alert Status:

Students will be assigned a "Time Frame Alert" status if they meet both the GPA and Pace criteria and meet one of the conditions below:

- Are pursuing their first bachelor's degree and have between 162-179 total attempted credits.
- Are pursuing their second bachelor's degree and have between 36-44 total attempted credits in their second bachelor career.
- Students assigned this status remain eligible to receive financial aid as long as they are compliant with all SAP criteria.

Coursework Evaluation for SAP Status

- **First Bachelor's Degree Seeking Students:** All attempted credits (FAU and transfer) are evaluated in SAP.
- **Second Bachelor's Degree Seeking Students:** All FAU coursework since 1st term in 2nd Bachelor's Degree.
- **Master's degree Seeking Students:** All FAU coursework since 1st term in Master's Program.
- **Doctoral Degree Seeking Students:** All FAU coursework since 1st term in Doctoral Program.

Remedial Courses:

Remedial courses, taken as part of FAU's [Individualized Learning Plan \(ILP\)](#), are excluded from the SAP review process.

Repeated Courses:

Repeated courses are included in the student's attempted credit total in evaluating Pace and Timeframe.

Both attempts of a repeated FAU course will count in the attempted credit total, but only the second attempt will count in the earned credit total. However, attempting repeated FAU courses can reduce the student's completion percentage (Pace) and count against the maximum number of credits the student may attempt in pursuit of completing their degree program (Time Frame).

Incomplete, Withdrawn, and Drop-Retained Courses:

Incomplete, Withdrawn, and Drop-Retained courses are included in the student's attempted credit total in evaluating Pace and Timeframe. (Drop-Retained courses are FAU credits dropped after the drop/add deadline but prior to the University grace period deadline to drop without a "W.")

However, with incomplete or dropped FAU courses can reduce the student's completion percentage (Pace) and count against the maximum number of credits the student may attempt in pursuit of completing their degree program (Time Frame).

Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals

Fall 2022 changes: A **maximum** of two SAP Appeal submissions are permitted for a bachelor's degree and master's degree – regardless of whether it was approved or denied. Students that submitted an SAP Appeal prior to Fall 2022 will be exempt from the maximum two SAP Appeal Submissions.

To submit an SAP appeal, complete the form below that best corresponds to your situation:

- [SAP Appeal for GPA/PACE](#)
- [SAP Appeal for Time Frame](#)

Policies:

1. Appeals submitted after the submission deadline will not be accepted.
2. Submitting an appeal does not guarantee an approval.
3. If you are returning from academic suspension or dismissal, documentation of special circumstances or documented satisfactory academic progress (no failing grades or withdrawals) after being suspended or dismissed is required. Undergraduate students: 6 credits of satisfactory academic completion. Graduate students on 2 or more times on academic suspension need to complete 9 credits in one semester.

4. If you have submitted a SAP appeal in a prior term, documentation of special circumstances must be different from prior appeal(s) or documented satisfactory academic progress is required (no failing grades or withdrawals). Undergraduate students: 6 credits of satisfactory academic completion; Graduate students: satisfactorily complete 9 credits in one semester.
5. If GPA is below 1.0 (Undergraduate) or 2.0 (Graduate) and/or Pace is below 50%, documentation of special circumstances or documented satisfactory academic progress is required (no failing grades or withdrawals). Undergraduate students: 6 credits of satisfactory academic completion; Graduate students: satisfactorily complete 9 credits in one semester.
6. I will be notified of the appeal decision via my FAU student email within three weeks of fully completed SAP Appeal submission.
7. If I am registered for courses and my appeal has not been reviewed/approved before the payment deadline for tuition and fees, I am responsible for all charges, or I can officially drop my class(es) before the deadline to avoid charges.
8. If my GPA and/or Pace appeal is approved, I must meet the conditions of the CRITERIA FOR CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY provided in the email notification to continue receiving aid.
9. If my Time Frame appeal is approved, I must not exceed the number of credits indicated in my new Maximum Time Frame extension in the email notification to continue receiving aid.
10. If my appeal is denied, I cannot receive aid until I meet SAP requirements or successfully appeal in a future semester.
11. The decision of the SAP Appeals Committee is final.
12. Effective Fall 2022, undergraduate and graduate students can only submit 2 SAP appeals per degree level, whether they were approved or denied.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Title IV Federal Financial Aid?

- Federal Pell Grant
- TEACH Grants
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant Program
- Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG)
- Federal Work Study Programs
- Direct Subsidized Loans
- Direct Unsubsidized Loans
- Direct Plus Loans

Where can I view my SAP status?

1. Sign into [MYFAU](#) with your FAU credentials.
2. Click/tap the "**FAU Self-Service**" tile.

3. Click/tap the "**Financial Aid**" tile.
4. Click/tap the "**Financial Aid Status**" tile.
5. If prompted, select the appropriate award year.

When is SAP determined?

SAP status is re-calculated each semester. New freshman and graduate students with no previous coursework must meet SAP during their first FAU term.

What does it mean if I receive a Financial Aid Warning?

Students given a "Financial Aid Warning" receive financial aid for just one semester. The warning is given to:

- do not meet the Pace criteria,
- are meeting both GPA and Timeframe criteria,
- are mathematically determined to be able to meet the Pace criteria within their maximum timeframe, and
- were determined to be meeting ALL Satisfactory Academic Progress criteria in their prior review.

How do I know if I don't meet the Maximum Timeframe Standard?

Students will be determined to be ineligible if (1) have an attempted credit total in their current level which exceeds their maximum timeframe or (2) are determined to be unable to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards within their maximum timeframe.

How do I appeal my SAP status?

A student whose aid eligibility has been terminated may apply for reinstatement on a probationary basis. See SAP appeals tab/section for more information.

What happens if I file an appeal and have not received a decision before the deadline for tuition and fees?

Students are responsible for all financial obligations made to the University, regardless of whether this appeal is approved or denied. If you are registered for courses and your appeal has not been reviewed/approved before the payment deadline for tuition and fees, you are responsible for all charges, or you can officially drop your class(es) before the deadline to avoid charges.

My SAP Appeal was denied. Can I still receive a federal student loan?

No, student loans are considered Title IV Federal Student Aid. In order to receive ANY Title IV Federal Student Aid, you must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress. You can look into private student loans such as www.elmselect.com.

Why do I need to submit an appeal?

In order to receive Title IV Federal Student Aid, students must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress (GPA, Pace, Timeframe). If you are not meeting SAP standards, you can submit an appeal that illustrates extenuating circumstances beyond your control that would have negatively impacted your academics. Upon submission, a committee will review and render a decision as to whether or not to approve or deny.

What happens if my appeal is denied?

If your appeal is denied, you will not receive any Title IV Federal Student Aid until you are

making Satisfactory Academic Progress. Once you meet the SAP standards, any financial aid you are eligible for will be reinstated.

What does Pace and Timeframe mean?

All students (undergraduate and graduate) must earn a minimum of 67% of the total credits attempted in their current level. Pace is determined by dividing the total number of credit hours earned by the total number of credit hours attempted.

A student's maximum timeframe cannot exceed 150% of the credits in an academic program. For example, if your program requires 120 credits, $120 \times 1.5 = 180$ credits. Thus, a student must complete their degree within 180 credits.

What should I say in my appeal?

- Describe the circumstances that occurred during your most recent semester at FAU that contributed to being unable to successfully complete your class(es) and how these circumstances affected your academic record. (300 Words Maximum)
- How has these circumstances changed so that your academic success is no longer affected? (300 Words Maximum)
- Provide a comprehensive action plan that outlines steps you will take and resources you will use to achieve sustained academic success from here forward. (300 Words Maximum)

Can I get a private loan with bad SAP?

The private lender will review your information and make a determination accordingly.

What documentation should I submit?

The documentation you submit depends on your circumstances. Below are some recommendations based on circumstances:

1. Lack of overall progress as the result of poor performance in first FAU term:
Documentation of participation in tutoring or other types of assistance programs.
2. Personal injury, illness, or disability of student: Statement from health care provider that includes:
 - Confirmation of the date span for which medical conditions existed.
 - Confirmation that the medical conditions may have impaired academic performance.
 - Confirmation that you have obtained treatment to address issue(s) and improve academic performance.
3. Death/illness of family member Documentation of family member's death or illness:
 - If family member is deceased: Government Issued Death Certificate (funeral notice/obituary may be acceptable with accompanying documentation which shows relationship between the deceased and the student).
 - If family member is ill: Documentation of family member's illness.
4. Other Special Circumstances: Any additional supporting documentation

How long will it take for my SAP appeal to be reviewed?

Decisions for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeals are normally made within 3 weeks of submission.