

Saint Mary's College of California

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

In keeping with government regulations and Saint Mary's College of California policy, *financial aid recipients* must make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) towards a degree in order to receive institutional, federal and/or state aid. Progress is monitored at the end of the spring semester with the policy as outlined below. Please note that SAP policy is a financial aid policy and is different from the SMC's Academic Standing Policy and/or Departmental Academic Policy.

SAP Requirements: to maintain satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes, a student must meet the following requirements:

Traditional Undergraduate

Minimum Grade Point Average (Qualitative): Cumulative GPA of at least 2.0;

Pace (Quantitative): a minimum 7.25 credits completed each academic year

Non-Traditional Undergraduate

Minimum Grade Point Average (Qualitative): Cumulative GPA of at least 2.0;

Pace (Quantitative): at minimum completes 67% of attempted credits each academic year.

Graduate Students

Minimum Grade Point Average (Qualitative): Cumulative GPA of at least 3.0

Pace (Quantitative): at minimum completes 67% of attempted credits each academic year.

Maximum Timeframe: All program requirements must be completed within a maximum period of *1.5 times the normal program length*, as measured in attempted credits or units. Example, the program 36 credits in length, must be completed within 54 attempted credits.

Other Considerations:

Non-passing Grades: Grades of W (Withdraw), I (Incomplete), P/NP (Pass/ No Pass) will be counted towards the number of credits attempted.

Repeat Courses: Repeated credits will be counted toward the number of credits attempted. Repeats of previously unearned credits are eligible for funding within reason. Students may receive funding for a previously passed course one time only.

SAP Status:

Satisfactory: SAP status assigned to a student who met SAP requirements

SAP Suspension: SAP status assigned to a student who did not meet SAP requirements

SAP Probation: SAP status assigned to a student who failed to meet SAP requirements and who are successful in their appeal.

SAP Notification:

The Financial Aid Office will notify all students who are placed on financial aid suspension after spring semester. A student under financial aid suspension has the right to appeal.

SAP Appeal Process:

A student who is suspended from financial aid because of failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress may appeal the suspension. A successful appeal will be based on documented extenuating or special circumstances that caused lack of progress. An appeal consists of:

- *Short Letter* addressing why the student failed to make SAP and what has changed that will now allow him/her to progress
- *Appropriate Documentation* supporting the reason for the appeal and/ or showing how the problem has been resolved. If a student feels it is not possible to document the extenuating circumstances, the letter of appeal must explain why.
- *Academic Plan of Study* completed by the student and the academic advisor, showing how the student will meet SAP standards by a specific time or complete the program.

A committee reviews appeals and students will be notified in writing of the results and of any conditions expected. The appeal will be Approved, Tabled, or Denied:

Approved Appeal: Students with an approved appeal are placed on Financial Aid Probation and are eligible to receive funding provided they continue to meet the conditions of the academic plan. The student's grades and pace will be reviewed at the end of each payment period (semester) to ensure that he/she is meeting the terms of the appeal:

- If the student now meets minimum SAP standards, Probation will be removed and the student is in good standing.
- If the student has met the terms, conditions of the appeal, and is following the Academic Plan of Study, but still does not meet minimum SAP standards, he/she will continue on Probation.
- Failure to meet the terms and conditions of the appeal or failure to follow the Academic Plan of Study will result in financial aid Suspension.

Tabled Appeal: Appeals may be tabled for additional documentation, further explanation, waiting for current grades to posts or any other appropriate materials.

Denied Appeal: Students will be informed of the reasons for the denial of their appeal and given an explanation of how they can restore Financial Aid Eligibility.

Reestablishing Aid Eligibility

Students who are not making satisfactory academic progress and their appeal was denied may regain eligibility by:

1. Completing course work without financial aid, either at SMC or other accredited college and universities to make up for his/her SAP deficiencies.

SAP Questions and Inquiries:

Contact the Office of Financial Aid at 925-631-4370 or financialaiddean@stmarys-ca.edu