

# Satisfactory Academic Progress Is Your Policy Complete ?

## DOMA

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# Agenda

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- Statutory and Regulatory Requirements
- Policy Components
- Academic Plan
- SAP Appeal
- Discussion Questions
- DOMA

# Satisfactory Academic Progress

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- 34 CFR 668.34 (a) *Satisfactory academic progress policy*. An institution must establish a reasonable satisfactory academic progress policy for determining whether an otherwise eligible student is making satisfactory academic progress in his or her educational program and may receive assistance under the title IV, HEA programs.
  - ❖ All requirements are in §668.34 with cross references in §668.16(e) and 668.32(f)

# SAP Standards

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- Reasonable.
- Consistently applied.
- Applies to all TIV eligible programs.
  - If not meeting SAP, not eligible for any TIV program.
  - Cannot say eligible for Pell but not eligible for other TIV programs.
- “ED provides the outline; schools fill in the details”
  - Schools have a lot of flexibility.

# “As Strict or Stricter”

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- Having a SAP policy “as strict or stricter” than other school policies refers to the actual measurements used to monitor qualitative and quantitative standards – GPA and pace.
- It does NOT refer to the frequency in which the school checks SAP.
  - Therefore academics might check GPA every term but financial aid can check GPA for SAP purposes annually.

# SAP: Frequency of Review

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Specified in §668.34 and include—

- Measurement of student's progress at each evaluation—
  - Can take place each payment period, or annually.
  - Must occur at the end of a payment period.

# SAP: Frequency of Review Clock Hours

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- Evaluation at “end of payment period”
  - Schools have 3 options
    1. At the point when the student’s scheduled clock hours for the payment period have elapsed, regardless of whether the student attended them; or
    2. At the point when the student has attended the scheduled clock hours; or
    3. At the point when the student successfully completes the scheduled clock hours for that payment period.

*School must establish one review option for a program; cannot start with one option and then after the first review, switch to a different option for that cohort of students.*

# SAP Evaluation Items

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- At each formal SAP evaluation point, a school checks:
  1. Qualitative measurement for SAP is the student's Grade Point Average (GPA).
  2. Quantitative measurement (pace) for SAP is the student's percentage of attempted credits completed.
  3. Maximum Time 150%.



# SAP: Defined Terms

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- Must incorporate the terminology used in these regulations.
- Must explain terms and use consistently with these regulations.
- Must make sure conditions of each term are clear to students.

# Defined Terms

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- Financial Aid Satisfactory: The student has met SAP requirements and is eligible for federal student aid.
- Financial Aid Unsatisfactory: The student has not met SAP requirements and is ineligible for federal student aid.
- Financial Aid Probation: The student has successfully appealed an Unsatisfactory SAP status and is eligible for federal student aid for **one term**.

# Defined Terms

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- Financial Aid Warning: The institution evaluates SAP at the **end of each payment period** and determines that the student did not meet the SAP requirement(s).
  - Student may continue to receive Title IV aid for **one payment period**.
  - No appeal necessary.
  - Possible for student to receive more than one .warning period during academic career, just **NOT** consecutively.

# Policy Components Checklist

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1. R2T4
2. Consortium Agreement
3. Withdrawals
4. Incomplete Courses
5. Remedial Courses
7. Audited Courses
7. Study Abroad
8. Academic Amnesty
9. Change of Major
10. Grades for test based credit
11. Transfer Students
12. Repeated Courses



# SAP Affect on R2T4

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- A return of Title IV funds calculation must be completed for students who withdraw from **ALL** of their classes before completing the payment period or period of enrollment.
  - All credits attempted must be included as attempted credits.



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## Consortium Agreement Credits

- Credits taken at other institutions under a consortium agreement, will be considered as transfer credits in the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.

## Withdrawals

- May not be counted as attempted credits but must be if the student was enrolled on the census date or after add/drop.

# Incomplete Courses

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- Example of a policy statement:

“Incomplete course work will not be considered as being successfully completed. An incomplete grade will count as credits attempted and credits not earned until the grades have been changed to a passing grade.”

# Remedial Courses

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- Remedial Courses are allowed and will be funded; this includes classes in English as a Second Language. Remedial coursework may be part of or separate from regular qualitative measure.
- You may include, but aren't required to include, remedial coursework when making the quantitative assessment.



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## Audited Courses

- Audited courses are not taken for credit and are not funded by the federal student aid programs.
- Therefore, audited courses are not considered in the SAP policy.

## Study Abroad

- Courses approved by the home school for academic credit toward a student's degree taken in a study abroad program are counted as attempted and completed credits.

# Academic Amnesty/Renewal

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- There are no provision for the concept of academic amnesty or academic renewal.
- A school must always include all courses when evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress.
- The school may include this as an appeal item in it's policy.

# Change of Majors

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- The SAP policy may permit that for students who change majors, credits and grades that do not count toward the new major will not be included in the satisfactory progress determination.
- The SAP policy may also limit how many times a student can in this way “**reset**” academic progress by changing majors.

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## Grades for Test-based Credits

- Credits count toward the student's program and the grades for those credits count in the student's GPA for all FSA purposes.

## Transfer Students

- Transfer credits from other institutions **accepted towards the student's educational program** must count as both **attempted** and **completed** hours.

# Repeated Courses

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- Repeated courses will count in the calculation of credits attempted. The initial enrollment of the course will count once and any repeat course will count once.



# APPEALS

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- Process by which the student who is not meeting school's SAP policy petitions for reconsideration of eligibility for Title IV.
- Policy must specify the conditions under which a student may appeal.

# Sample SAP Appeal Policy Statement

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- Students may submit an appeal for funding to the Financial Aid Office.
- Students with approved appeals may be placed on “probation” with the Financial Aid Office for “*one academic term/payment period*”.
- During a probation period, student will continue to receive financial aid.

# Examples of Acceptable Conditions to File an Appeal

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1. Death of a family member;
2. Students own serious illness or;
3. The serious illness or injury of a family member;
4. Student received an approved medical withdrawal;
5. Extreme change in financial or legal circumstances;
6. Compulsory military duty.



# SAP Appeal Process

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- Provide documentation that supports their written statement(s).
  - Examples of acceptable documentation include:
    - a statement of support from a physician, counselor, or
    - clergy; court documents; obituaries; etc.



# SAP Appeal Policy

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- In addition, students who did not meet the Maximum Timeframe SAP requirement, are required to meet with their academic advisors and may complete the SAP Appeal “Maximum Timeframe Form”.



# SAP Appeal Policy

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- Students who successfully appeal will be placed on **Financial Aid Probation** for one term.
- If appeal is approved with an academic plan, student must agree with the plan by the term's academic progress plan deadline.



# SAP Appeal Policy

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- For *all appeals*, students should attach other supporting documents that further document their situation.
- Students awaiting a response are responsible for paying their tuition. Students will receive appeal determination by mail.

# Academic Plan

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What is an academic plan ?

- Federal regulations (34 CFR 668.34) do not define “academic plan.”
- School-defined academic plan may be part of a school’s SAP appeal process.
- A plan should provide a framework that would allow a student to meet SAP standards by a particular point in time.

# When does a student need a plan?

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- If During the appeal process, a school determines that a student cannot meet SAP standards by the end of the probationary period (one payment period), an academic plan would be required to approve the student's appeal.



# Who needs to develop the plan?

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- The school develops the academic plan, but a student must agree to the plan.
- Regulations do not specify who at the school must perform this function.
- Work related to academic plans might be through your financial aid office, advising center or registrar's office.

# What Does an Academic Plan Entail?

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- Those details are up to the school.
- The overall purpose is for the student to meet SAP standards..
- Plan could be as detailed as a course-by-course outline.



# Sample Academic Plans

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# Example of Proposed Academic Plan

Student has attempted 76 credits and earned 39 = 51%. School's policy requires 75%.

Proposed Academic Plan for Credit Hour Completion Rate:


Term of enrollment	Term attempted credit hours	Term earned credit hours	Cumulative attempted credit hours	Cumulative earned credit hours	Credit hour completion rate
Summer 2013	9	9	85	48	56%
Fall 2013	9	9	94	57	61%
Spring 2014	12	12	106	69	65%
Summer 2014	12	12	118	81	69%
Fall 2014	15	15	133	96	72%
Spring 2015	15	15	148	111	75%

# Cumulative Grade Point Average

Student has a cumulative GPA of 1.50. School's policy requires 2.00.

Proposed Academic Plan for GPA:


Term of enrollment

Current Cumulative GPA	Credits earned during term	Proposed Term GPA	Projected cumulative GPA at end of term
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Fall 2013  
Spring 2014  
Summer 2014

1.50	12	2.0	1.75
1.75	12	2.2	1.98
1.98	6	3.0	2.49

# Common SAP Questions

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# Q & A

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Q1: May an institution's SAP policy include automatic "academic amnesty" in certain circumstances, such as, after a student has not attended for a certain number of payment periods or years?

A1: No. The regulations permit use of the automatic financial aid warning status for institutions that review SAP at each payment period. No other status may be granted automatically. A successful appeal is needed to grant financial aid probation status or to develop an academic plan.

# Q & A

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Q2: What documentation is required for a student appeal?

A2: That is up to the institution. An institution may choose to request additional documentation when a particular student circumstance warrants it. The institution may decide to require more extensive documentation on an initial appeal and an update statement on a subsequent appeal.

# Q & A

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Q3: After one payment period on probation, student still not making SAP, can student be automatically put on an academic plan, or must the student appeal again?

A3: The student would have to successfully appeal to be placed on a plan. The institution would need information about why the student failed to make SAP at the end of the probation payment period, including what had changed that caused the student to not make SAP during the probationary payment period and why the student will be able to meet SAP on the terms of the academic plan.

# Q & A

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Q4: What is the status of a student who has completed the probationary payment period and who is continuing to receive aid by *meeting the requirements of the student's academic plan*?

A4: A student who has been reinstated to eligibility under an academic plan and is making progress under that plan is considered to be an eligible student.



# Q & A

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Q5: Can the academic plan be the same for all students or the same by student categories or must the plan be created individually for each student?

A5: According to the regulations, the academic plan is developed by the institution and the student individually. It is possible that a general plan could be used for students in a similar circumstance and then customized, as needed, for each student's particular circumstance.

# Q & A

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Q6: Must the academic plan be mathematically set to graduate student within 150% time frame?

A6: The academic plan must be designed to ensure that the student is able to meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time. In some cases, this *could mean that the maximum timeframe would be extended based on the student's approved appeal.*

# Q & A

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Q7: How should an institution develop an academic plan?

A7: The regulations do not specify what must be included in an academic plan. The institution and the student should develop a plan that ensures that the student is able to meet the institution's SAP standards by a specific point in time.

# Q & A

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Q8: How many times may a student be placed on probation for failing to meet SAP standards?

A8: A student may be placed on probation for one payment period per appeal. It is possible that a student could be placed on probation more than once in his or her academic career.

# Q & A

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Q10: Must schools adopt the terminology, such as warning and probation, used in the regulations?

A10: Yes. To the extent that your institution uses the statuses we describe in the new regulations, it must use the terminology in the regulations.

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# Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)



# Implementation of the Supreme Court's Defense of Marriage Act Decision

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- In June the Supreme Court struck down section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) that provided that for purposes of federal programs, a marriage can only be between one man and one woman.
- See Dear Colleague Letter GEN-13-25 published on December 13.

# Implementation of the Supreme Court's Defense of Marriage Act Decision

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- 2014-2015 FAFSA –
- All responses must be consistent with legal marital status.
  
- 2013-2014 FAFSA –
  - New filers - All responses must be consistent with legal marital status.
  - Earlier filers – If legally married when FAFSA was initially filed may change marital status.



# Same-sex marriage in the U.S.

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- California
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Hawaii
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Minnesota
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- Rhode Island
- Vermont
- Washington
- District of Columbia

Source: Wikipedia.org

GEN-13-12

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2014-2015 FAFSA  
Parental Information  
Collection

# GEN-13-12

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- 2014-2015 FAFSA Parental Information Collection.
  - Dependent students will be required to include on the FAFSA income and other information from the dependent student's legal parents (biological or adoptive) regardless of the parent's marital status or gender, if those parents live together.

# GEN-13-12

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- Collecting parental information from both of a dependent student's legal parents will result in fair treatment of all families by eliminating longstanding inequities that were based on the legal relationship of the parents (married or not married) rather than on the parent's relationship with their child.



# Questions time !

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