

UCI GRADUATE POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID (EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2011)

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UCI GRADUATE POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID

Beginning July 1, 2011, Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards will change in accordance with Federal Regulations. These new SAP standards will be monitored annually at the end of the spring term beginning with the completion of the 2011-2012 academic year.

In order to maintain satisfactory academic progress for financial aid eligibility, students must meet four standards: a gpa requirement, a pace requirement, a minimum cumulative unit requirement and a maximum timeframe requirement.

If a student fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress, she will be notified that she is ineligible for financial aid beginning with the term immediately following the term the SAP requirements were not met. Since SAP is monitored annually at the end of the spring term, the first term of ineligibility will typically be the following summer or fall term.

Eligibility for continued financial aid will only be re-established if a) the student subsequently meets the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements; or b) the student successfully appeals and her aid is reinstated. A student who has her financial aid eligibility reinstated is placed on probation and becomes subject to the terms of an academic plan.

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (OFAS) will evaluate whether the student is adhering to the plan on a term-by-term basis. If the student has made up all of her deficiencies, she will no longer be considered on probation and instead will be considered an eligible student and meeting the SAP requirements.

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I. Requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress -

The following requirements for satisfactory academic progress for receipt of financial aid apply to all applicants for any financial aid awards administered by the UCI Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (OFAS). These requirements are separate and distinct from UCI's policy regarding satisfactory academic progress set by academic departments and/or schools.

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A. Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement. Graduate students must have at least a 3.0 GPA at the conclusion of the spring term of each academic year.

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B. Pace Requirement. All graduates must complete at least 66.6% of the units attempted each year to keep pace toward graduation.

$$STUDENT'S PACE = \frac{UCI\ Completed\ Units + Accepted\ Transfer\ Units}{UCI\ Attempted\ Units + Accepted\ Transfer\ Units}$$

- The number of attempted units counted in the formula reflect the units attempted as they appear on the student's transcript.
- All transfer credits UCI accepts toward a student's program are included in the pace calculation, both as attempted units as well as completed units.
- These pace calculations include all completed and attempted units from the academic year's summer term.
- Units for the following grades will *not* be counted as completed units toward meeting the pace requirement for graduate students: F (Failure), I (Incomplete), NP (Not Pass), U (Unsatisfactory), W (Withdraw), NR (No grade reported).
- If a student repeats a previously passed course, only the first repeat will apply toward the completed unit count; subsequent repeats will not. This does not apply to courses that are repeatable for credit (i.e. independent study courses).
- Required remedial courses will count toward the graduate student pace requirement.

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C. Minimum Cumulative Unit Requirement. Graduate financial aid applicants must complete at least 24 units per academic year. Units for the following grades will *not* be counted as completed units toward meeting the minimum cumulative unit/clock hour requirement for graduate students: F (Failure), I (Incomplete), NP (Not Pass), U (Unsatisfactory), W (Withdraw), NR (No grade reported). Required remedial courses *will* count toward the graduate student unit/clock hour requirement.

Master of Science in Pharmacology students have their own minimum cumulative unit requirement, as shown here:

Year of	Minimum Cumulative
1	21
2	39

Part-time MS in Nursing students have their own minimum cumulative unit requirement, as shown here:

Year of	Minimum Cumulative
1	14
2	40
3	72

NOTE: Part-time MS in Nursing students will not be eligible for aid for the second and third terms of their first year, because they are enrolled in less than 6.0 units per term (3 units for second term and 5 units for third term). Students who choose to enroll in 6.0 or more units will be eligible.

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D. Maximum Time Frame Requirement. All graduate financial aid applicants exceeding the following term limits will be ineligible for financial aid consideration. Students will not be granted additional terms of eligibility solely by reason of changing their field of study.

California Educational Credential students are eligible for 4 terms of academic year attendance.

Master's degree students are eligible for financial aid for up to 9 terms of academic year attendance following completion of their baccalaureate degree. This includes Criminology, Law and Society's Master of Advanced Study (MAS) distance education program. Exceptions are as follows:

- Studio Art, Drama, ACE-MFA, Part-Time MS in Nursing = 13 terms
- Terms in which the student withdraws are counted toward a student's maximum term limit.
- Terms in which the student did not receive aid are counted toward the maximum term limit.
- Summer terms attended are counted when determining if a student has reached his maximum term limit. If a student attempts more than 8 units in summer, he will have used one term of eligibility. If a student attempts 8 or fewer units in summer, he will have used half a term of eligibility.
- Every term in which the student was enrolled as official part-time status is counted as a half a term of eligibility used.

Doctoral students may be eligible for financial aid for up to 21 terms of academic-year attendance following the completion of their baccalaureate degree (whether or not they received financial aid during these terms).

Exceptions are as follows:

- 18 terms for students in: Economics or Psychology

- 24 terms for students in: Classics, Culture and Theory, East Asian, French, German, History w/o language requirement, Spanish, Visual Studies, Anthropology, or Social Science, Sociology
 - 27 terms for students in: Comparative Literature, English, History with language requirement, or Philosophy
- Terms in which the student withdraws are counted toward a student's maximum term limit.
 - Terms in which the student did not receive aid are counted toward the maximum term limit.
 - Summer terms attended are counted when determining if a student has reached his maximum term limit. If a student attempts 9 or more units in summer, he will have used one term of eligibility. If a student attempts 8 or fewer units in summer, he will have used half a term of eligibility.
 - Every term in which the student was enrolled as official part-time status is counted as a half a term of eligibility used.

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II. Appeal Process for Satisfactory Academic Progress -

If a student fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress, she will be notified that she is ineligible for financial aid beginning with the term immediately following the term the SAP requirements were not met. Since SAP is monitored annually at the end of the spring term, the first term of ineligibility will typically be the following summer or fall term.

Eligibility for continued financial aid will only be re-established if a) the student subsequently meets the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements; or b) the student successfully appeals and her aid is reinstated.

Graduate/Professional Students (note: this excludes Graduate Students in the Paul Merage School of Business, the Law School and the School of Medicine) wishing to appeal must submit a UCI SAP Appeal Form and a letter to the UCI Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. The appeal form is available in the UCI Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

All appeals must state the reason(s) for failing to meet the SAP requirements. Students must demonstrate some type of extenuating circumstances during the term(s) in question which hindered academic performance (e.g., prolonged hospitalization, death or extreme sickness in the family, etc.). Supporting documentation of these extenuating circumstances should be submitted with the appeal form and letter.

Furthermore, students must submit, as part of the appeal, information regarding what has changed in their situation that would prevent a re-occurrence and would now allow them to reestablish the satisfactory academic requirements by the conclusion of the outlined timeframe.

On the appeal form, students must propose an academic plan which details how they will make up their deficiencies:

- If deficient in units, the number of units required for each future term to eventually meet the minimum cumulative unit or pace requirements by the conclusion of the plan.
- If deficient in GPA, the minimum GPA required for each future term to eventually meet the minimum cumulative GPA requirement by the conclusion of the plan.
- If maximum number of terms of eligibility has been reached, the number of additional future terms required to complete degree requirements.

In all circumstances, students must report which future terms of enrollment will be required to complete any and all academic deficiencies.

Students must consult with their academic counselors as they must sign and approve all academic plans. By approving a plan, a counselor concurs that, if followed, the plan will permit the student to meet the SAP requirements at the end of the duration of the plan.

Students may also seek the assistance of the University Ombudsman in the preparation of appeals.

Students cannot apply retroactively for aid eligibility for a term that has ended. Deadline dates for each term are published annually on the sap appeal form.

Once received by the aid office, the appeal is reviewed for completeness. If the application is incomplete, it is returned to the student with instructions to resubmit once it has been completed in full.

Once accepted, appeals will be evaluated by a minimum of two financial aid counselors. Before making a decision on the appeal, the financial aid counselors are encouraged to consult with the student's academic counselor. If the two counselors differ on their determination of approval or denial a third counselor will evaluate the appeal and their decision will serve as the tie-breaker. All recommended denials will receive a final review by the Assistant Director and Associate Director for Student Services and they will make the final decision.

Any appeal that includes an academic plan that exceeds one academic year (fall, winter, spring and summer) must be approved by the Assistant and Associate Director for Student Services.

The student's financial aid counselor will prepare a decision letter for signature by the Director. If the decision was to deny the appeal, the student will be informed in the letter that the decision is final and no subsequent review of the appeal will be permitted. If the appeal was approved, a copy of the student's approved academic plan will be mailed with the decision letter.

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III. Review of Academic Plans for Satisfactory Academic Progress -

A student whose appeal is approved will have her financial aid eligibility reinstated and become subject to the terms of the academic plan. At this time, the student is considered to be on academic probation. Financial aid probation is a status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated.

At the conclusion of the next term for which the student enrolls (likely summer or fall), OFAS will evaluate whether the student is meeting the conditions of the plan. If so, but the student has not made up all of the deficiencies (i.e., her plan is longer than one term), she will remain on probation and may continue to receive aid for the subsequent term. The determination of whether the student will be eligible for aid in a subsequent term will only be determined after the student's adherence to the plan has been verified. The student remains eligible for Title IV aid as long as she continues to meet the conditions of that plan (note: GPA deficiencies must be cleared at a University of California campus).

OFAS evaluates whether the student is adhering to the plan on a term-by-term basis. If the student has made up all of her deficiencies, she will no longer be considered on probation and instead will be considered an eligible student and meeting the SAP requirements. If the student fails to meet the terms of the plan in a future term, she will be sent an email notifying her that her aid has been placed on hold due to her failure to meet the requirements of the plan. Going forward, the student may a) continue without aid until she meets the SAP requirements; or b) submit a new appeal which includes a new academic plan. For a student's subsequent appeal to be considered, she must document extenuating circumstances *different from the original extenuating circumstances*.

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