

Southern Arkansas University Tech

Policy for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Students that receive federal financial aid are required to make satisfactory academic progress. Federal guidelines stipulate that the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy apply to all enrollment periods at SAU Tech regardless of whether or not aid was received. SAP is defined as passing a required percentage of hours and maintaining a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 point scale.

Students must be degree seeking in an eligible program of study in order to receive federal financial aid. Students may receive financial aid while enrolled for a full or part-time course of study, 12 semester hours is considered full-time. Students receiving financial aid are advised to consult with the financial aid staff before making any adjustments to their program of study or course load.

Students may receive financial aid for no longer than **150%** of the published length of the educational program. For example, a student may use up to 90 credit hours to complete the requirements for a 60 hour degree. Upon completing a program, students may pursue another degree or certificate under the same guidelines. However, completion percentage and GPA will always be cumulative.

Students must complete the following minimum percentage of courses to maintain SAP:

Hours Attempted	Completion Percentage Required of Hours Attempted
Up to 15 hours	55%
16 – 30 hours	60%
31 or more hours	67%

A student's official enrollment status will be determined on the 11th day of class (5th day of class in summer terms), and aid will be awarded accordingly. Students must attend at least one day of a class in order for that class to count towards their enrollment status for financial aid purposes. A student that withdraws after the 11th day of class will be held responsible for the minimum percentage of hours for his/her official enrollment status.

SAP will be reviewed at the end of the fall and spring terms and will be checked the first time aid is packaged for each academic year. At such time that a student's SAP is checked and they do not meet this policy, they will be notified in writing. This notification will be sent to the current address on file in the Financial Aid Office. Students who fail to make SAP will be placed on financial aid probation if the degree they are seeking is two years or more in length; if the degree they are seeking is less than two years they will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students placed on suspension are not eligible to receive financial aid.

Students who are placed on probation will have one semester to meet SAP standards. If the SAP standards are not met they will be placed on financial aid suspension until the standards are met. Students on financial aid suspension must notify the financial aid office in writing when the GPA and completion percentages are met if they want to be re-considered for financial aid.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. **Developmental/Basic Studies Courses** – Enrollment in these courses will be included in the total hour requirement for calculating financial aid awards, the calculating of cumulative semester hours of credit required, and in the calculation of cumulative semester hours attempted. Developmental/Basic studies courses do not earn a GPA and will not count toward the students overall GPA for academic progress purposes. Developmental/Basic Studies courses will be considered “completed” if the student earns a grade of “C” or better.
2. **Repeating Courses** – The last grade recorded in repeated courses is the grade of record at SAU Tech and will be used in computing the student’s GPA. Both courses will count towards the number of hours attempted, but only the hours associated with the last grade will be counted in the number of hours completed. The SAP policy does not limit the number of times a course can be repeated.
3. **“I” and “W”** – Courses with a grade of “I” or “W” will count towards the students hours attempted, but will not count towards the hours successfully completed.
4. **Transfer Students** – Students must report to the Financial Aid Office and Admission’s office, all colleges, universities, and other schools in which they have enrolled prior to SAU Tech. Transfer students are subject to the same policy regarding length of time and GPA as native SAU Tech students for those hours accepted at SAU Tech. Hours transferred in after a student has completed a previous degree at SAU Tech will count towards the new degree being sought, regarding the 150% rule.
5. **Audits** – Audited courses do not count toward hours attempted or hours earned. Students may not receive aid for auditing a course.
6. **Maximum Time Frame** – Associate Degree 90 hours; Technical Certificates 45 hours. There are two exceptions: the AAS in Aviation will be given 135 hours and the Practical Nursing Certificate will be given 77 hours.

APPEAL PROCESS

SAU Tech’s appeals committee is made up of five staff/faculty personnel. Appeals will not be considered until the Federal application for the academic year and ALL prior academic transcripts are on file in the Financial Aid Office. The committee reviews each appeal on an individual basis, the process is outlined below.

1. Once the student is informed that they are no longer making SAP they have 30 days to submit an appeal in writing to the Financial Aid Office. Appeals are for extenuating circumstances (such as serious illness or death of a close family member). Supporting documentation must be submitted with the appeal letter.
2. The letter, along with all supporting documentation, will be submitted to the Financial Aid Office then forwarded to the Appeals Committee.
3. The Appeals Committee meets the first business Tuesday of each month as necessary to review appeal cases. (Appeal letters must be submitted a week prior to the monthly committee meeting in order to be reviewed that month).
4. Once the decision is returned to the Financial Aid Office the student will be notified in writing. All decisions of the Appeals Committee are final; there is no further appeal.