

Southern Arkansas University Tech Policy for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Students that receive Title IV assistance (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 strongly 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. Once a student gets within 15 hours of the 150% limit, if they want to continue to receive financial aid, they must present the financial aid office with a degree plan that demonstrates they can finish within 150% of the length of their program. If they cannot do this then they will immediately be ineligible for financial aid. Upon completing their program, students may be able to pursue another degree or certificate under the same guidelines with the approval of the financial aid office. 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 when awards are made and at the end of each term for all students receiving Title IV aid. At such time that a student's SAP is checked and they are not making SAP the student will be placed on Warning (no appeal necessary) and will be notified in writing. Students who are placed on Warning may still be eligible for Title IV aid for one payment period. Students who are on Warning will have one payment period to meet SAP standards. If they do not meet SAP standards at the end of this payment period they will not be eligible for financial aid.

Any student who becomes ineligible for financial aid can make an appeal. If an appeal is granted they will be placed on Financial Aid Probation. Students who are placed on probation can receive financial aid for one payment period. At the end of that payment period the student must be making SAP or successfully following the Academic Plan laid out by the Appeals Committee. If not, the student is no longer eligible for Title IV aid.

APPEAL PROCESS

Appeals will not be considered until the FAFSA 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 only for extenuating circumstances such as the serious illness of the student, death of a close family member or other special circumstances. Supporting documentation must be submitted with the appeal letter.
2. The letter must include what has changed in the student's situation that will allow him/her to make SAP at the end of the next payment period. The letter, along with all supporting documentation, should be submitted to the Financial Aid Office who will then forward to the Appeals Committee.
3. In order for an appeal to be approved the Appeals Committee must:

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- a. Be able to determine that the student will be able to meet SAP standards by the end of the next payment period; or
 - b. The student must be placed on an Academic Plan that will ensure the student is able to meet SAP by a specific point in time.
4. If the student's appeal is approved they will be placed on Probation and be eligible for Financial aid for one payment period. At the end of the payment period the student must either be meeting the guidelines of the SAP policy or successfully following the Academic Plan established by the Appeals Committee.
 5. 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).
 6. 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.

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. Intermediate Algebra will be counted as a regular course, and not a developmental/basic studies course.
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 and they will count as completed as long as the course was completed. The SAP policy does not limit the number of times a course can be repeated. However, there are limits on receiving Financial aid for repeated courses, for additional information check with the financial aid office.
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. **Portfolio Credits** – Portfolio credits will count towards a students' SAP to the extent they count as hours earned and attempted. If they do not count as earned and attempted then they will not count towards the SAP calculation.
5. **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. Portfolio credits do not count towards hours attempted or earned.
6. **Audits** – Audited courses do not count toward hours attempted or hours earned. Students may not receive aid for auditing a course.
7. **Maximum Time Frame** – Associate Degree 90 hours; Technical Certificates 45 hours. There are two exceptions: the AAS in Aviation will be given 135 hours to complete the program and the PN program will be given 69 hours.
8. **Academic Fresh Start** – due to federal regulations, if a student is granted Academic Fresh Start it will have no bearing on their eligibility for financial aid.

NURSING STUDENTS

Students in the Nursing Program will be considered to be making SAP to the extent that they are maintaining a 2.0 GPA and remain in the program. Students who re-enter the program must maintain a 2.0 GPA and have successfully completed 67% of attempted hours.