Southern Arkansas University Tech Policy for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
For Students Receiving Federal Student Aid

Students that receive Title IV assistance (federal 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, maintaining a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA), and completing within 150% of the degree program.

Beginning with the fall 2017 semester, students must maintain a cumulative GPA on the following 4.0 point scale. Note: students are still required to have cumulative 2.0 GPA in order to graduate with a degree or certificate at SAU Tech.

Hours Attempted	Required cumulative GPA
Up to 29 hours	1.75
30 or more hours	2.00

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 in an Associate program gets within 15 hours of the 150% limit (may be less for students in Technical Certificate programs), 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%

Example of percentage: Student attempts 12 hours, but only passes 6. 6/12=50% This student would not be meeting the requirement as they should have 55%.

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 (5th day of class in summer terms) 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; summer will be considered as one term. At such time that a student's SAP is checked and if 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. Students must notify the Financial Aid Office if they take courses after being suspended from financial aid in order for the Financial Aid Office to determine if they have regained eligibility.

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. In order for an appeal to be approved the Appeals Committee must:

   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.

3. 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.

4. The Appeals Committee meets once 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).

5. 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. A statement of understanding will be required for those who are granted their 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 and repeated programs, 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. "I" grades may later be recalculated to determine current eligibility.

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 and report SAU Tech attendance prior to 1993. 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. Hours considered as transferred will appear on the student's SAU Tech transcript; these hours will be counted as both attempted and earned. Hours not considered as transferred will not be counted for SAP purposes. Transfer hours do not count towards a student's GPA at SAU Tech.

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** – Students must complete their program within 150% of the published timeframe of their degree program. Example: Associate degree program that requires 60 hours to complete. 60 X 150% = 90 attempted hours maximum

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.
9. **High School Concurrent Students** – Upon entering SAU Tech as a regular college student, students will be placed on Warning and not Suspension if they have an SAP issue after attending college classes concurrently while in high school.

Clock Hour Program - Cosmetology

In order to be making satisfactory academic progress toward a certificate in Cosmetology, you must maintain a specified grade average and proceed through the program at a pace leading to completion in a specified time frame (150% of the length of the program). Satisfactory progress is measured in clock hours.

Clock hour definition: All attendance is based on clock hours and sixty minutes is considered one hour (this may, but is not required to, include a 10 minute break each hour). Time is rounded to the nearest half-hour and/or whole –hour by the electronic time clock and is recorded for each students attendance. The school does not add or deduct attendance hours as a penalty.

Students may receive scheduled Pell Grant award(s) and/or other federal financial aid funds during the calendar year. The number and amount of each payment made within the calendar year will depend on the number of hours and the number of weeks the student completes as they progress throughout the calendar year.

For purposes of the Cosmetology program, SAU Tech defines the program as follows:
Program length: 1500 clock hours and 51 weeks
Academic year: 900 clock hours and 34 weeks

Payment periods will be as follows:

Clock Hours Completed	Weeks Completed	Financial Aid Eligibility	Comments
0-450	0-17	Payment Period 1	Eligible/Program Start
451-900	18-34	Payment Period 2	Cannot progress to Payment Period 2 until 450 hours and 17 weeks are completed and verified
901-1200	35-43	Payment Period 3	Cannot progress to Payment Period 3 until 900 hours and 34 weeks are completed and verified
1201-1500	44-51	Payment Period 4	Cannot progress to Payment Period 4 until 1200 hours and 43 weeks are completed and verified

Students must meet the following requirements to be considered as making satisfactory academic progress in the Cosmetology program. SAP is checked at the end of each payment period at the point when the student's scheduled clock hours for the payment period have elapsed, regardless of whether the student attended them:
Minimum Required Percentage: hours earned ÷ hours expected to complete in payment period = 67%
Maximum Time Frame: One and one-half the length of the program (76 weeks). Students must average 20 hours per week in order to remain on pace to complete within the maximum time frame.

Beginning with the fall 2017 semester, students must maintain a cumulative GPA on the following 4.0 point scale. Note: students are still required to have cumulative 2.0 GPA in order to graduate with a degree or certificate at SAU Tech.

Hours Attempted	Required cumulative GPA
Up to 29 hours	1.75
30 or more hours	2.00

A student's official enrollment status will be determined on the eleventh day of class, and aid will be awarded according to the payment schedule above. 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 eleventh 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 payment period for 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. Students must notify the Financial Aid Office if they take courses after being suspended from financial aid in order for the Financial Aid Office to determine if they have regained eligibility. Please see the above policy for the Appeal Process and Special Conditions.

Revised February 15, 2017 to begin in fall 2017