

Dalton State College Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for Financial Aid Recipients

Policy

Federal regulations, HEA Sec. 484(c), §668.16, 668.34, require all schools participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs to have a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy that conforms to the requirements detailed below. These requirements apply to all students as one determinant of eligibility for financial aid.

- Your SAP status is based on your entire academic record, at all schools attended (includes all transferrable and non-transferrable hours), regardless of whether you received financial aid.
- SAP is calculated each semester after grades have been posted to academic history by the Registrar's Office.
- If after any term of attendance you are not making SAP, you will be put on a **Warning** status and allowed to keep aid for one term. Your continued eligibility will be determined after the next term checkpoint. **The exceptions** to this policy are timeframe violations, incoming transfer hours that are below SAP standards, and semesters in which you have a combination of Fs, WFs, Is or FWs. These circumstances will result in automatic SAP failure. A semester with all Ws will NOT result in an auto suspend. Students with I grades who have questions may ask to have those grades reviewed on a case by case basis.
- If your SAP status is **Failure** after the check is performed, you will not qualify for financial aid for the following term.
- Students may appeal their SAP Failure status **only three times** during their academic career at DSC and **only one time per academic year**. Documented mitigating circumstances **may** allow additional appeals on a case-by-case basis.
- If your appeal is approved and you are on **SAP Probation** you are placed on an **Academic Plan** for a certain amount of time. Academic Plans will be developed individually and based on the area or areas in which you are not meeting SAP requirements currently. If you are below course completion rate or GPA you will need to maintain grades of A, B, C or S. If you make below a C or withdraw from a class during this time, you will be asked to appeal once again to explain why you did not complete the classes successfully. The circumstances mentioned in this appeal **MUST** be different than the circumstances in your previous appeal.

If you are on an Academic Plan for a Maximum Timeframe issue you will only be allowed the amount of credit hours that your advisor has signed off on when completing your Graduation Plan.

- Please be aware that a W will **NOT** receive any quality points on a transcript.
- You will be notified through email, U.S. mail, or on your Roadrunner Portal of your SAP status and the outcome of any appeal you may submit.

Quantitative and Qualitative Requirements

1. **Quantitative Requirement** – The quantitative requirement has two parts:
 - A maximum time frame
 - A required pace of completion ratio

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Maximum time frame – To determine the maximum time frame, multiply the total hours required for the degree by 150%. As an example, if the program required 33 hrs. x 150% = 50 hours. This includes credits attempted at any school prior to and while enrolled at Dalton State College, including learning support hours and hours that do not apply to your current program of study.

Pace of Completion Ratio – You must complete and pass at least 66.67% of all credit hours you attempted. Courses earned include grades of A, B, C, D, or S. Courses attempted include any course in which grades of A, B, C, D, F, W, WF, I, S, U or IP are given.

Qualitative Requirement – The qualitative requirements sets a minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average for all students. Each student must maintain a cumulative 2.00 GPA to remain in good academic standing at DSC. The cumulative GPA includes grades of A, B, C, D, F, FW, UF, and WF. The cumulative GPA, which is determined by the Registrar's Office processes, will be checked each term for SAP. This must include all hours taken at DSC and at prior institutions, regardless of transferability or receipt of Financial Aid.

Policy Details

When is SAP determined?

- **Initial Review** – You are considered to be meeting SAP during your **first** DSC term. The exceptions to this policy are **timeframe violations and incoming transfer hours that are below SAP standards. These circumstances will result in automatic SAP failure.**
- **End of Every Semester Review**- Your SAP status is calculated at the end of each semester, including summer if you are enrolled, after grades are posted to your academic history by the Registrar's Office.

What happens when you do not meet the requirements?

- You are no longer eligible for financial aid – including work study, loans, grants or scholarships. If you are on a **Warning Status** – eligibility may continue.
- Because you do not qualify for financial aid, you must pay your tuition and fees by the payment deadline or your registration will be cancelled by the Bursar's Office. **Loss of Financial Aid eligibility does NOT mean you are suspended from Dalton State College.**

Maximum Time Frame (maximum attempted credit hours) – When you have attempted the maximum credit hours, you are no longer eligible to receive financial aid.

Is there extended eligibility for a 2nd bachelor's degree? – Yes. This will be determined on a case by case basis.

How do you regain eligibility?

- **SAP Appeal** – If extenuating circumstances during a specific term of enrollment prevented you from meeting the requirements, you may file a **SAP Appeal.**

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- **Appeal Denials or Non-appeals** – If your appeal is denied or you decide not to appeal, you must complete the necessary hours and earn the appropriate grades. Once you have reached the prescribed standards you become eligible to receive financial aid, considering you meet all other requirements.

Appeal Requirements:

- A typewritten explanation of extenuating circumstances associated with **Failure Status**. Indicate how these circumstances have changed so that you can comply with regulations in the future. Attach supporting documents to corroborate extenuating circumstances mentioned in the letter.
- Please **do NOT** submit your appeal until you can submit a **COMPLETE** appeal, including all supporting documents that are relevant to your situation. If you submit an incomplete appeal, **your appeal can automatically be denied**.
- Include a “student plan of action” for academic improvement.
- Attach at least one letter of support from someone that can substantiate the extenuating circumstances. This individual **may not** be a family member. Examples would include a medical doctor, clergy, professional, etc. This letter of support **should** be printed on letterhead if it is not notarized.
- The appeal form must be provided to the Financial Aid Office within the prescribed dates as noted on the SAP Appeal Form. Failure to provide these within the prescribed dates will result in a delayed determination.
- When your complete appeal is received your appeal will be reviewed by a Financial Aid Counselor.
- If your appeal is denied you have the right to ask that it be sent one step further to the Appeals Committee. A group of selected individuals, both inside and outside the Financial Aid Office, determines whether the appeal is approved. The Appeals Committee may ask for an in person interview in certain cases. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and cannot be appealed further. There are two situations in which you cannot ask to go to committee, maximum timeframe appeals and appeals that did not have attached documentation.

Academic Circumstances that Affect Your Status:

- **Changes in major, double majors or minors** – may cause you to reach your maximum attempted hours, and lose your eligibility before earning a degree.
- **Incomplete grades, missing grades, failing grades, course withdrawals** – all reduce your completion ratio, because they are counted as attempted, but not earned credits. They also count against your maximum attempted hours. Final grades that replace incomplete grades may cause students to be ineligible, therefore causing the student to have to repay aid if the grade causes the student to fall below SAP or HOPE standards.
- **Repeated courses** – count as attempted credit hours each time you register for them. They also count against the allowed maximum. This can also reduce your completion ratio because repeated credits count as earned credits only once. The SAP GPA counts every course attempt.

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- **Transfer credits, credits taken while cross-registered, enrolled in study abroad, transient study** – count toward your maximum attempted credits and your completion ratio.
- **Remedial courses** – count as attempted and earned credits and are included in the GPA calculation regardless of the letter grade given.
- **Late posted grades or grade changes-** Once notification is received from the Registrar's Office of grade changes, the SAP status will be recalculated.
- **Dismissal and Return** – students who are suspended academically or choose not to attend because of SAP Failure will not be automatically eligible for financial aid upon their return. Student must meet both qualitative and quantitative standards of SAP. If below standards, a student must appeal or use means other than financial aid for educational expenses. **Absence does not restore eligibility for financial aid.** It remains the responsibility of the student to be knowledgeable of their SAP standard when returning to school after dismissal or choosing not to return because of SAP Failure.
- **Summer Term Courses** – all hours attempted and completed in the summer terms are treated as any other semester hours in determining SAP status. SAP will be checked following the summer term as well.
- **Students pursuing dual bachelor's degrees** - Students who are pursuing dual degrees are subject to the maximum time frame rules but may be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Office of Student Financial Aid.

The Office of Student Financial Aid reserves the right to review denied appeals, cumulative GPAs and completion rates on a case by case basis. The Department of Education's regulations are subject to change; therefore, Dalton State College has the right to change our policy to align with the federal policy.