



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Student Financial Aid

Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards I-1

Policy Statement

Effective Summer II 2011, to remain eligible for institutional, federal and state financial aid programs, students need to make satisfactory academic progress, or SAP, toward a degree or certificate.

Standards of SAP are applied to all students who wish to establish or maintain financial aid eligibility at Western Michigan University, regardless of whether they have received financial aid in the past.

The **Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress** state a student must:

1. Pass a minimum of 67 percent of all attempted hours at WMU
2. Maintain a minimum 2.00 cumulative grade point average by the end of the second academic year as an undergraduate
3. Not exceed 183 maximum total undergraduate hours attempted at WMU, including transferred credit hours. The maximum total hours for a master's or doctoral degree is monitored and enforced through the University's Graduate Academic Standards policy, as stated in the University's Graduate Catalog

These standards are established to encourage students to complete their degree within a reasonable time frame. If the standards are not met, students are not eligible for federal and state financial aid.

Academic progress will be monitored each term. A student's eligibility for financial aid may be in jeopardy for the upcoming term if the standards are not met.

In addition to these standards, Student Financial Aid may use professional judgment to terminate eligibility. This may occur when a student falls significantly below a standard and does not have a realistic chance to meet the requirement by the end of the warning period, or when a student fails all of their courses in a term.

Credit Hours Passed

Credit hours passed are defined as having grades of A, B, BA, C, CB, D, DC, CR, FA, FB, FBA, FC, FCB, FD, FDC, TCR or CR. Grades of E (failure), I (incomplete), W (official withdrawal), X (unofficial withdrawal), NC (no credit), AU (audit), R (repeat), FE, FI, FW, FX, NA or TNC are not considered as hours passed.

Total Hours Attempted

Students must pass a minimum of 67 percent of all attempted hours at WMU in all prior terms to remain eligible for financial aid. *Attempted* hours are assessed at the end of each term's drop/add period. *Passed* hours are assessed by reviewing grades at the end of the term.

In addition, undergraduate students must not exceed 183 maximum total undergraduate hours attempted, which is based on one and a half times the average number of credit hours required for a bachelor's degree. The maximum total hours for a master's or doctoral degree is monitored and enforced through the University's Graduate Academic Standards policy.

All attempted hours at WMU and all credit hours transferred in from other institutions are counted in the total hours when determining the maximum total hours attempted.

Cumulative Grade Point Average

A student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) at WMU must meet the minimum standards by the end of the second academic year. Undergraduate degrees for juniors and seniors require a minimum grade point average of 2.00. Transfer credits will not be included in the cumulative GPA.

The student's GPA requirement will be monitored and enforced by Student Financial Aid. If the university dismisses the student, the student is not eligible for financial aid.

Review Procedures

After grades are posted each term, Student Financial Aid will review academic history files of financial aid students for the 67 percent and GPA standards. After census of each term, Student Financial Aid will review the academic history files of financial aid students for the maximum total hours attempted. Student Financial Aid will notify students of their academic progress status for financial aid purposes. Whether a student has received financial aid in the past is not relevant.

Students who are not meeting all of the standards will receive notification if their academic progress status code is identified as "Warning" or "Unsatisfactory".

Academic Progress Status Codes

Satisfactory: The student met the overall standards of SAP and is eligible for financial aid.

Warning: The student met the overall standards in the previous term but has not currently met one or more of the standards of SAP; if the student is an undergraduate, total hours attempted have not exceeded 183 hours; and the student is eligible for financial aid for one additional term.

Probation: The student has not met one or more of standards of SAP and is not eligible for warning status; has filed an appeal which has been approved on the condition that the overall standards of SAP will be met by the end of the term; and the student is eligible for financial aid for one additional term.

Academic Plan: The student has not met one or more of the standards of SAP and is not eligible for warning status; has filed an appeal which has been approved and is eligible for aid as long as the student meets the terms of the plan or meets the overall standards of SAP by the end of the term.

Unsatisfactory: The student has not met one or more of standards of SAP; is not eligible for warning, probation or academic plan and has not filed an appeal or the appeal has been denied. The student is not eligible for financial aid.

New: The student is new to WMU and either has no academic history or has not been reviewed and is eligible for financial aid.

Students who are close to not meeting the 67 percent or total hours attempted standards will receive an 'alert' notification. Alert notices are sent if students have passed at least 67 percent of all hours attempted and, if an undergraduate, have attempted 150-170 hours with a maximum of two terms of eligibility; or have attempted 171-183 hours and only one more term of eligibility; or have only passed between 67 to 75 percent of all attempted hours; and is eligible for financial aid.

Clearing Up Attempted Hours Deficiencies

Financial aid awards may be reinstated if an attempted hour deficiency has been cleared. To clear up an attempted hour deficiency, students could have a grade change, complete coursework for an incomplete or pass greater than 67 percent of all future attempted hours. Students will need to inform Student Financial Aid once the attempted hour deficiency has been cleared and the academic record at WMU has been updated.

Appeal Process

If the student has received a "not eligible" notice due to not meeting SAP, the student may appeal for reinstatement of their financial aid eligibility based on extenuating circumstances. A written appeal and supporting third-party documentation are required to be submitted within 30 days of notification but no later than 30 days prior to the end of the term for which the student is requesting financial aid. Each request will be considered on an individual basis and may take up to three weeks to process (depending upon the time of year). Appeal forms are available on the financial aid website at www.wmich.edu/finaid/forms.

Reinstatement of financial aid is dependent upon professional judgment and awards are based on the availability of funds. Following are examples of "extenuating circumstances" that may be considered for an appeal: significant medical illness or injury; death of a close

relative; change in an academic program of study along with another significant event; obtaining a second bachelor's degree; a significant event or personal tragedy.

After reviewing the appeal, students will be notified of the decision. If a student's appeal has been approved, they will be placed on probation or an academic plan and will be eligible to receive financial aid for the term of their approval period. Eligibility for future terms will be dependent upon meeting the conditions of the probation or academic plan.

Probation requires meeting the overall standards of SAP by the end of the next term. *Academic Plan* requires meeting the standards as outlined in the academic plan for the term. Students who meet the conditions of probation or the academic plan as outlined will be eligible for financial aid effective the next term. Students who do not meet the conditions of probation or the academic plan will not be eligible for financial aid effective the next term. If there are extenuating circumstances, students may appeal. If an appeal is denied, the student must clear up the deficiencies in order to receive financial aid.

Note: If a student received the Michigan Competitive Scholarship and has a GPA below 2.0, they are not eligible for reinstatement of the scholarship until their GPA is 2.0 or higher.

Dropping or Withdrawing From Courses

Reducing a student's enrollment during any semester or session may have **serious consequences**. If a student is considering dropping one or more courses after their financial aid has paid or after the end of the drop/add period, the student should contact Student Financial Aid to determine how this may affect their awards. The student may be required to return some or all of the financial aid paid to their student account. The student may be considered "deficient attempted hours" and, therefore, may not make SAP. The student may exceed attempted hours, and, therefore, may not make SAP. Or, the student may go into repayment on federal loans if he is enrolled less than half-time for a period of time greater than the six to nine month grace period (or the grace period may be lost).

If you have questions, please call (269) 387-6000 or email us at finaid-info@wmich.edu. Visit Bronco Express in the Bernhard Center, or our website at www.wmich.edu/finaid