

## Dickinson College Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

Dickinson College offers both federal and institutional financial aid. Eligibility for federal and institutional need-based financial aid is determined through the submission of the required documents (FAFSA, CSS Profile, federal tax returns, schedules, and W-2's) by the College's listed deadline dates. In addition to this, students must maintain **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)** to continue receiving Title IV federal financial aid. Dickinson College follows the established Federal guidelines to determine SAP.

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### FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

The Financial Aid Office has established the following policies and procedures to fulfill the requirements in the Higher Education Act (HEA). All Dickinson College students receiving Title IV federal financial aid must meet the criteria below regardless of whether they previously received federal financial aid.

### REQUIREMENTS

The [HEA revised section 668](#) contains updated regulations concerning SAP. The College is required to establish, publish, and enforce reasonable standards for measuring a student ability to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. The standards must meet the following criteria:

- The policy is at least as strict as the policy the institution applies to a student who is not receiving assistance under the Title IV, HEA programs.
- Provides consistent application of standards to all students within categories of students (full-time, part-time, undergraduate, graduate, and education programs established by the institution).
- Academic progress must be evaluated annually, at minimum.
- Include both quantitative (pace) and qualitative (grade) elements.
- Provide specific procedures under which a student may appeal a determination that the student is not making satisfactory progress including documentation of extenuating circumstances.
- Provide procedures for a student to re-establish that he or she is maintaining "satisfactory progress."
- Describe the pace at which a student must progress toward a degree to complete degree requirements within the allowed timeframe providing measurement at each evaluation.
- Describe how Grade Point Average (GPA) and pace of completion are affected by transfer credits.
- Require that if the student is not making Satisfactory Academic Progress, the student is no longer eligible to receive aid.
- Notify students of the results of the evaluation at the end of each increment as to whether the student has met the qualitative and quantitative components and if it impacts their eligibility for Title IV, HEA program funds.
- Define terms used in discussing the evaluation of Satisfactory Academic Progress including the terms appeal, probation, academic plan, and maximum timeframe.

**FEDERAL PROGRAMS GOVERNED BY SAP:**

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
- Federal Work-Study (FWS)
- Federal Direct Subsidized Loan
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan
- Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan for Undergraduate Student (Parent PLUS)

**SAP COMPONENTS**

There are three components to SAP standards for both undergraduate and graduate students:

- Quantitative Measure – Completion Rate/Pace
- Qualitative Measure – Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Maximum Time Frame

*The following section provides detailed information regarding the evaluation of the three components required in the review of SAP.*

**1. Quantitative Measure – Completion Rate/Policy**

Students must make satisfactory quantitative progress toward the completion of degree requirements. Quantitative progress is calculated by dividing the number of courses creditable toward graduation by the number of courses attempted. While not creditable toward graduation, courses with grades of W (withdrawal), I (Incomplete), NC (no credit) and F or FA (failure) are calculated in the number of courses attempted.

QUANTITATIVE CRITERIA	Cumulative Course Credits <u>Attempted</u>	Completion Rate of Course Credits <u>Attempted</u>
		All Credits

*\*All course credit hours will be rounded up to the next 1 or .5 interval.*

Attempted hours can be defined as:

- The course credits for which the student is registered at the end of Add/Drop period.
- All approved transfer credits.
- All course credits are included, even if the student did not receive financial assistance during these time periods.

**Examples:**

- Student A has attempted 14 credits and earned 10.  $10 \div 14 = 71\%$ . They would remain eligible for federal financial aid as long as they meet the other two components.
- Student B has attempted 20 credits and earned 11.  $11 \div 20 = 55\%$ . This student is not meeting the minimum quantitative requirement for SAP and would lose eligibility for federal financial aid for the upcoming academic year. They can regain eligibility by:
  - Earn new credits to bring up percentage of attempted vs. earned credits above 60%.
  - Appeal their SAP status if extenuating circumstances led to their ability to earn less than 60% of the credit they attempted.

**2. Qualitative Measure – Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Students must also satisfy the qualitative portion of the Federal SAP regulations by maintaining the minimum cumulative GPA accepted by Dickinson College:

QUALITATIVE CRITERIA	Cumulative Course Credits <u>Earned</u>	Minimum Cumulative GPA
	1-6	1.75
	Greater than 6	2.0

\*The award year begins with the fall semester and ends with the spring semester.

When calculating Grade Point Average (GPA) and credits attempted vs credits earned, the following conditions apply:

- Transfer credits will be included in course credits attempted and earned. Grades received for these credits (transfer) will not be computed in the cumulative GPA.
- Progress will be reviewed once the temporary grades (I, S, NG, X) have been replaced with an official grade.
- Repeated courses will count as attempted and both are calculated into the GPA.
- A grade of PA (Pass) or CR counts toward credits attempted and earned but is not calculated in the GPA.
- A grade of FA or NC counts toward credits attempted but is not calculated in the GPA.
- A grade of W (Withdrawal) counts as credits attempted but is not calculated in the GPA.

### **3. Maximum Time Frame**

Maximum Time Frame (MTF) is defined as the required length of time it will take a student to complete a degree program based on the appropriate enrollment status. Federal regulations allow a student to be eligible to receive federal aid up to 150% of the time that it would normally take to complete a degree.

All course credits in which a student enrolls or transfers to the College are included in the maximum time frame calculation, regardless of the number of degrees a student chooses to obtain. Grades that are considered course credit hours attempted and completed in the calculation of MTF include: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, PA, CR, FA, NC, W.

MTF is calculated for aid applicants regardless of whether they previously received federal financial aid. All hours attempted are considered when determining the MTF calculation for earning a degree. Proper withdrawal from a course (prior to the end of Add/Drop) will not affect the maximum time frame.

150% of the course credits hours that it would normally take to complete a Baccalaureate Degree is 48 credit hours ( $32 \times 150\% = 48$ .) For a student seeking a degree, the student may remain eligible through 48 course credit hours attempted of enrollment. If the 48 course credit hours MTF is exceeded while pursuing a degree, a student is no longer eligible for federal financial aid.

### **FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID SAP REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION**

SAP will be reviewed on an annual basis at the end of the academic year. Once the review is completed, students will be notified if their eligibility for federal financial aid has been impacted and will be sent a letter via email.

Letters will be sent to any student who fails to meet at least one component of SAP. These students are considered ineligible for federal financial aid during the subsequent award year. Federal financial aid can only be reinstated by either resolving all deficiencies, or through a successful, documented SAP appeal.

### **FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID APPEAL PROCESS**

*Federal regulations do not require that a school allow students an opportunity to appeal an unsatisfactory status decision. Dickinson College has chosen to exercise the ability to use professional judgement and review appeals for reinstatement of aid for no more than one term of probation during their education.*

The SAP Appeal process provides for a student who is not meeting the College's federal financial aid academic progress policy to petition the College for reconsideration of their federal financial aid eligibility. At the end of the academic year (spring semester), students not meeting any of the federal SAP components (quantitative, qualitative, and MTF) will be ineligible for further federal financial aid.

At this time, students may submit an appeal to be considered for reinstatement of federal financial aid on a probationary status of no more than one semester to resolve all deficiencies. Per federal regulations, only students with documented extenuated circumstances will be considered for an appeal.

All appeals must complete the Dickinson College Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form in its entirety. These will be received by the College's Financial Aid Appeals Committee. Once a determination is made, students will be notified.

### **How to Appeal:**

Once SAP is reviewed at the end of the academic year, a letter will be sent to all students who fail to meet at least one component. This letter will also include the **Dickinson College SAP Appeal Form**. Student may only appeal one time per academic career.

Per federal regulations, only appeals documenting specific circumstances will be considered for approval. These include:

- Military deployment, required training, or change in orders.
- A Serious medical condition or death in the family.
- Sever personal or family problems that significantly impacted your ability to complete your studies.
- Personal or financial catastrophe.
- Any other extreme circumstance not listed above.

The Financial Aid Office will consider additional extenuating circumstance, if in the judgement of the Dean of Academic Advising, they are warranted. Appeals will be evaluated on the extenuating circumstance listed and the likelihood that the academic plan for the student will ensure satisfactory academic progress. Failure to adhere to the academic plan, will result in removal of future aid.

If an appeal is not submitted for acceptable reasons, or does not include the Dickinson College SAP Appeal Form, it will automatically be denied and will not be reviewed the SAP committee. If the appeal is submitted, but documentation is not included, the student will be contacted to submit additional documentation. Only once the Financial Aid Office has a completed appeal will it be reviewed.

**The committee's decision is final, there is no secondary appeal process.** If an appeal is denied, students can only be reinstated for aid once they satisfy all deficiencies. Students may still attend without the benefit of federal financial aid, but they will need to make up this loss in funding (out of pocket, private loans, outside scholarships, etc.)

If your SAP Appeal is approved, but it is mathematically impossible to resolve all SAP deficiencies in one semester, an additional Academic Plan will be created giving more flexibility in federal financial aid reinstatement. The result of the Academic Plan will resolve all SAP deficiencies. The plans are created by the Academic Advisor or Dean of Advising and can vary in length. Students who are granted aid eligibility through this process may receive aid for up to one year before another SAP review is conducted. This plan could be extended if the student meets the benchmarks outlined in the plan.

## **SAP PROBATION**

Students who fail to meet SAP requirements, but successfully appealed, and had their federal financial aid reinstated, will be placed in a probationary status. Aid will only be reinstated for one semester; any future semesters of probation will be determined based on the students' performance during each probationary semester.

Students must maintain the minimum cumulative GPA and pace required in their academic plan to be extended any additional semesters. Students on an approved academic plan will be monitored to ensure the plan is still feasible.

At the end of the semester, students on probation or an academic plan will be reviewed to determine if they met all minimum requirements. *If the student fails to meet the criteria, they will lose eligibility for federal financial aid. This aid (federal financial aid) will not be reinstated until the student corrects all SAP deficiencies.*

## REINSTATEMENT

Federal financial aid eligibility may be reinstated when a student has removed all SAP deficiencies during all periods of enrollment or caused by transfer credits and their federal financial aid eligibility for academic reasons is restored. Reinstatement is not a status granted regarding an appeal.

Students who regain eligibility by resolving all deficiencies will be identified during the annual SAP review. After eligibility has been established, any aid will depend upon the availability of funds and other aid eligibility criteria.