Satisfactory Academic Progress
Policy
Undergraduate, Graduate,
Seminary

The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by Congress, mandates that institutions of higher education monitor the academic progress of students who receive federal financial aid. Baylor University has established the following minimum standards to be eligible for and continue to receive federal financial aid. This policy reflects the changes to federal regulations that are effective as of July 1, 2011.

Please note that state and institutional programs may have higher academic requirements, and eligibility for those financial aid programs is subject to the requirements of each program.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be reviewed at the end of each enrollment period (fall, spring, winter, and summer semesters, trimesters, and quarters) and is based on the student meeting the requirements listed below:

Qualitative Requirement:
- Student must earn a minimum of 75% of the credit hours attempted during each enrollment period (fall, spring, and summer semesters, trimesters, or quarters) to be meeting SAP guidelines.

Quantitative Requirement:
- Undergraduate and Seminary Students: Minimum 2.0 CGPA
- Graduate Students: Minimum 3.0 CGPA

Pace Requirement:
- In addition to the above requirements, federal guidelines stipulate that a student must remain on course to graduate within an allotted timeframe, which is referred to as pace.
- Satisfactory academic progress regarding the pace is determined by dividing the total number of credit hours successfully completed by the total number of credit hours attempted (including transfer credit hours that have been accepted).
- The maximum timeframe for program completion is 150% of the published program length.
- Students must maintain a 67% completion rate overall based on attempted hours in

order to be eligible for financial aid and to be meeting the pace requirement in order to graduate.

In accordance with federal guidelines, should a student not meet the pace requirement, he/she is no longer eligible for federal aid.

Warning Period:
In the first enrollment period (semesters, trimesters, quarters) after SAP has not been met, students will be sent notification to inform them that they are not meeting SAP standards. The notification will include SAP requirements, steps necessary to meet SAP in the upcoming enrollment period (semesters, trimesters, quarters) and the consequences for failing to meet SAP at the end of the warning period.

During the warning period, students are eligible to receive financial aid. At the completion of the warning period, students who do not meet SAP are ineligible for financial aid. The Student Financial Aid Office will notify students at the end of the warning enrollment period (semesters, trimesters, quarters) if they failed to meet SAP. The notification will include information concerning the loss of financial aid for the upcoming enrollment period (semesters, trimesters, quarters) due to failure to meet either pace, CGPA and/or 75% completion rate, as well as the appeal process.

Appeal:
If the student does not meet SAP after the warning period, an appeal process is available for those students who had a personal injury or illness, death of a relative, or believe they had other mitigating circumstances that affected their ability to meet SAP. Financial aid will not be awarded until SAP is met or an appeal is approved.

Probation Period:
This is the enrollment period(s) that the student may receive financial aid after the SAP appeal has been approved. A student placed on probation can receive aid for only one payment period. Continuation of financial aid on probation is contingent on the student successfully meeting the academic plan of action provided with the approved appeal.

Appeal Process:
Step One: Students who choose to follow the appeal process must:
- Submit Appeal Form to Student Financial Aid Office
    - Student must state why he or she failed to meet SAP requirements
    - Student must state what has changed so that he or she will meet SAP at the

next review (for example, change of major, additional degrees etc.)

Step Two: Student Financial Aid Office will:
- Review the Appeal Form
    o In addition to the appeal form students must also submit the Academic Advisor Questionnaire (to be completed by an academic advisor with the student). Questionnaire is available online as part of the appeal form and academic plan.
- Send results of appeal to the student
    o Approved appeals include:
        ▪ Approval and terms of reinstatement of financial aid eligibility requirement to meet SAP in next enrollment period (semesters, trimesters, quarters) or
        ▪ Requirement to follow an academic plan over an extended period of time
        ▪ Consequences for not meeting terms of approval
        ▪ Approved appeals will result in financial aid being awarded for the enrollment period
    o Denied appeals include:
        ▪   Reasons for denial
        ▪   What the student must do to meet SAP
        ▪   Denied appeals will not be awarded financial aid until SAP is met

Students who enroll and pay for classes without the use of financial aid; and who are able to demonstrate progress toward meeting SAP guidelines can reappeal and be considered for financial aid. Sitting out for an enrollment period is insufficient to re-establish eligibility for Title IV aid.

Transfer Credits:
Accepted credit hours will be included in the SAP calculation for the next enrollment period.
- Assumes all accepted credits will be at least 2.0 GPA
- Counted in next evaluation period following receipt and review of transcript
- Admitted transfers are considered SAP eligible initially
- Transfer hours for returning students will be evaluated in the next enrollment period

Incomplete Grades:
Incomplete credit hours will be considered as attempted credit hours when meeting the pace component of SAP. Grades will be included in the CGPA component of SAP during the term in which they were assigned.

Financial aid will not be disbursed until all prior academic year grades have been reviewed, with the exception of students who are completing their thesis or dissertation.

Dropped Classes:
Courses dropped prior to the 12th class day will not be counted as attempted hours in calculating the percentage of completed hours each enrollment period (semesters, trimesters, quarters) and in determining the overall progress toward degree completion when determining financial aid eligibility.

Withdrawing from the University:
When a student officially withdraws from the University, any credit hours showing as attempted will be included in the SAP review.

Covid-19 Provisions

ED guidance, as of June 24, 2020 states:

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Section 3509 of the CARES Act allows institutions to exclude from the quantitative component (pace measurement) of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) attempted credits a student was unable to complete as a result of the COVID-19 national emergency. It is not necessary for a student to have filed a SAP appeal for an institution to exercise this flexibility. However, to exclude attempted credits from SAP, an institution must have reasonably determined that the student's failure to complete those credits was the result of a COVID-19 related circumstance. Allowable circumstances include, but are not limited to, illness of the student or family member, need to become a caregiver or first responder, economic hardship, added work hours, loss of childcare, inability to continue with classes via distance education, inability to access wi-fi due to closed facilities. If an institution temporarily ceases operations during a period of enrollment, attempted credits for all affected students (specific to that enrollment period) may be excluded.

Regarding the effect of excluding attempted credits on maximum timeframe, SAP regulations require that the pace at which students progresses through the program ensures completion of that program within the maximum timeframe. A four-year program consisting of 120 credit hours with a maximum timeframe of 180 credit hours (150 percent of program length) must have a pace of 66.666 percent (rounded to 67 percent), cumulatively measured at each interval, to ensure students complete within maximum timeframe. For example, the pace of a student who has completed 78 of 120 attempted hours is 65 percent (78/120), below what is necessary to be making SAP. However, if 12 credits the student attempted but was unable to complete in spring of 2020 are excluded due to a COVID-19 related circumstance, the pace becomes 72 percent (79/108) and he or she is making SAP. The 12 credits are effectively excluded from the maximum timeframe as well as the measurement of pace.

https://ifap.ed.gov/electronic-announcements/051520UPDATEDGuidanceInterruptStudyRelCOVID19May2020

At Baylor, students who met one of these circumstances were identified through conversations with the advisors and/or counselors. SAP statuses were also determined based on university-wide decisions that impacted all students. (For example, students were required to transition to online learning or were canceled with very little notice.)

In Spring and Summer 2020 and in accordance with federal regulations, students were not required to submit an appeal based upon the institution reasonably determining that the student's failure to complete credits were a result of Covid-19 related circumstances. Any student not meeting SAP for the period were placed on probation without an appeal.

In the Fall of 2020, we reinstated the official appeal requirement for students who were not meeting SAP after their warning period.