

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Graduate Students

In order to maintain eligibility for financial aid, each graduate student at the University of Maine must meet the established guidelines for academic progress

WHAT IS A SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY?

Federal financial aid regulations limit how long students can continue to receive financial aid. In order to keep your eligibility for financial aid; you must be making progress toward earning your degree. You can lose eligibility for aid if you are not doing well in your classes and/or if it is taking you a very long time to earn your degree. If you are not meeting the minimum standards, even if you are allowed by The Graduate School to continue your enrollment, you will have to do so without benefit of financial assistance.

WHAT IF THERE ARE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES?

Every student has the right to appeal. Submit your appeal using the SAP Appeal Form (www.umaine.edu/stuaid/sap1.html), along with appropriate support documentation, to the attention of the *Chair of the Graduate Satisfactory Progress Appeal Committee*, Office of Student Financial Aid, 5781 Wingate Hall, Orono, ME, 04469-5781. The Office of Student Financial Aid will cancel aid for any student who does not appeal, or for whom an appeal is denied. If you have questions about this policy, contact the [Office of Student Financial Aid](#).

WHAT IS EXPECTED?

Your progress is measured once each academic year, normally at the end of the spring semester. If you are not making satisfactory progress, *you will be notified in writing of the loss of your eligibility* for further financial aid effective the following fall semester. You must meet the following expectations:

1. Quantitative Measure - Successful Completion of Credit Hours Attempted

As a matriculated student, you are required to successfully complete a specified percentage of the credits/hours that you attempt. The policy uses the following graduated scale:

Attempted Credit Hours	Percentage Passed
0-11	50%
12 and above	75%

2. Maximum Time Frame

The maximum time frame to complete your degree is defined as:

Master's Degree: All work for the degree must be completed within six years of matriculation.

Certificate of Advanced Study: All work for the degree must be completed within six years of matriculation.

Doctoral Degree: All work for a doctoral degree must be completed within eight years of matriculation. Students must be admitted to candidacy within four years of registration as a doctoral student; the dissertation must be completed within four years of admission to candidacy.

3. Qualitative Measure - Grade Requirements

The Graduate School will monitor this aspect of SAP in accordance with established Graduate School policies:

Students may not accumulate more than six hours of "C" in a program of study for a master's degree or more than twelve hours of "C" in a doctoral program. These limits apply to prerequisite and elective courses as well as to required degree courses. Students may not accumulate more than nine credits combined of "incomplete" grades and "L" grades.



A Member of the University of Maine System

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Questions and Answers

How often will my progress be reviewed?

Progress is measured once each academic year, normally at the end of the spring semester.

What can I do if I'm not meeting the SAP standards? Does it matter that there were special circumstances that contributed to my not performing well academically or for my taking a long time to complete my degree?

You do have the right to appeal. If you have special circumstances, please make your appeal in writing, explain the circumstances that contributed to your situation and document those circumstances where appropriate. Send your appeal to the Chair of the Graduate Satisfactory Progress Appeal Committee in the Office of Student Financial Aid.

How are courses with incomplete, deferred and/or missing grades counted?

All of these courses are counted as attempted, but not as earned.

What happens if I audit a class or take a class Pass/Fail?

All of these courses are counted as attempted, but not as earned.

I repeated one of my courses in an effort to bring my GPA up. How is that course counted under this policy?

When repeating a course, the credits count as attempted each time the course is taken; graduate grades are not evaluated out.

What happens if I completely withdraw from all of my classes part way through the semester? What happens if I withdraw from just one of my courses? How are those courses counted?

All of the courses for that semester from which you have withdrawn would be counted as attempted, but not as earned.

What if I receive one of the following grades in a class: C, D, F or L?

These credits are counted as attempted, but not as earned.

I am preparing a thesis as part of my degree requirements. How does an "R" grade count?

The credit counts as attempted and earned each time.

How are transfer credits from my prior school treated by this SAP policy?

Transfer credits are used in the SAP Policy to determine where the student falls on the "Attempted Hour" scale. However, when determining whether the student has passed the necessary percentage of classes, the policy only looks at the classes at UMaine. An example may clarify the policy:

Assume a student transfers in 3 credits from his/her prior school. At the end of the first year at UMaine, the student goes through the SAP review process. During the year at UMaine, the student attempts 9 credits. So, when determining where the student falls on the "Attempted Hour" scale, the student's transfer credits (3) and the student's attempted credits at UMaine (9) are added together for a total of 12. This puts the student in the 12+ category for "Attempted Hours".

However, when determining whether or not the student has passed the necessary percentage of credits, the policy only takes into account the credits attempted at UMaine. Assume that the student successfully completed 6 of the 9, or 67%, of the credits attempted at UMaine. Given that the student fell into the 12+ category on the "Attempted Hours" scale, the student would be required to complete 75% of the attempted credits to remain in compliance with this portion of the SAP Policy. The student completed 67% of the credit hours attempted, so the student would not be meeting the standard for this portion of the SAP Policy.