



GRADUATE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY

The Office of Financial Aid at Hood College monitors graduate students annually, following the spring semester, to determine whether they are meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for financial aid eligibility. For financial aid purposes, terms are defined as fall, winter, spring, and summer. All students are evaluated using both qualitative (grade-based) and quantitative (pace and maximum timeframe) standards. Students who fail to meet SAP standards are not eligible for financial aid unless an appeal is approved. Students are not limited to one appeal.

Graduate programs range from 30 to 60 credits, with most master's programs requiring 36 credits for degree completion. A cumulative GPA of 3.00 is generally required to complete a graduate degree. Students are making satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes by meeting the standards outlined in this policy.

Students who do not meet SAP standards at the end of the spring semester will be notified by email at their Hood College email address and provided information regarding the appeal process and applicable deadlines.

CUMULATIVE GPA

The qualitative standard measures academic performance based on cumulative grade point average (GPA). Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 at the conclusion of the spring semester each academic year to meet this standard. Students who fail to meet the required GPA will be suspended from financial aid eligibility and may appeal in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

CUMULATIVE COMPLETION RATE (PACE)

The quantitative standard measures a student's progress toward degree completion. Federal regulations require students to successfully complete at least 67% of all attempted credits to maintain financial aid eligibility.

The Office of Financial Aid calculates pace by dividing the cumulative number of credits successfully completed by the cumulative number of credits attempted. All periods of enrollment are included in this calculation, regardless of whether the student received financial aid during those terms.

Pace = Cumulative number of credits successfully completed ÷ Cumulative number of credits attempted

TREATMENT OF W, INC, AU, F, S AND U GRADES AND REPEATED COURSEWORK

Course withdrawals (W or WX) after the drop/add period are not included in the GPA calculation but are considered a non-completion of attempted coursework.

- Incomplete (INC) grades are not included in the GPA calculation but are considered a non-completion of attempted coursework until the incomplete grade is replaced with a permanent grade and academic progress can be reevaluated.
- An audit (AU) grade is not considered attempted coursework. It is not included in the GPA calculation or completion rate determination.
- A satisfactory (S) grade is treated as attempted credits earned, but it is not included in the GPA calculation.
- An unsatisfactory (U) grade is treated as attempted credits that are not earned, but it is not included in the GPA calculation.
- A failing grade (F) is treated as attempted credits not earned; it will be included in the calculation of the GPA and the minimum completion rate.
- All grades earned for a repeated course will be recorded on the transcript and the highest grade received will be included in the GPA calculation; however, every repeated attempt will be included in the completion rate determination.
- Transfer credits and/or credits for prior learning given at the time of enrollment will be counted in the total number of credits attempted and the maximum timeframe standard.

Students can only receive financial aid for a repeated, previously passed course one additional time. If the student registers for a previously passed course the third time, the course is ineligible for financial aid.

Students may only receive financial aid for courses which are required for their program of study.

Due to flexibility provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), attempted courses will be excluded from the qualitative component if the credits not completed was a result of the COVID-19 national emergency.

MAXIMUM TIMEFRAME

The maximum timeframe standard measures the length of time a student may receive financial aid while completing a degree program. Graduate students must complete their program within 150% of the published length of the program, measured in attempted credits.

For example, a student enrolled in a graduate program requiring 36 credits for degree completion may attempt up to 54 credits and remain eligible for financial aid ($36 \times 150\% = 54$). Students who exceed the maximum timeframe will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid.

The 150% maximum timeframe standard also applies to students pursuing an additional or dual degree, based on the published credit requirements of the applicable program.



The maximum timeframe for Hood College programs is as follows:

- Certificate programs: - 2 years
- Master's degree - 3 years
- Doctorate degree- 6 years.

(Note: the SAP policy is separate from the time-to-completion Graduate School policy which allows up to seven years to complete a degree program.)

Students who fail to meet the maximum timeframe standard will be placed on financial aid suspension and will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid. Students may submit an appeal in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION

Students who do not meet all Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards will be placed on financial aid suspension and will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid unless an appeal is approved.

Hood College evaluates SAP annually at the conclusion of the spring semester. Students who fail to meet SAP standards will be notified by email at their Hood College email address and provided information regarding the appeal process.

Because SAP is reviewed annually, Hood College does not assign a financial aid warning period. Students placed on financial aid suspension may submit an appeal in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy.

FINANCIAL AID PROBATION

If an appeal is approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation for one semester and will be expected to meet all SAP standards by the end of the probationary period. Students who fail to meet SAP standards at the conclusion of the probationary semester will be placed on financial aid suspension and will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid unless a subsequent appeal is approved.

If it is determined that a student will be unable to meet SAP standards within one semester, the Financial Aid Appeals Committee may require the student to follow an academic plan as a condition of the approved appeal. Students who successfully meet the requirements of the academic plan will remain eligible for financial aid during the terms specified in the plan. Any modifications to the academic plan must be approved by the student's academic advisor and/or the appropriate student support office.

REINSTATEMENT OF AID

Reinstatement of financial aid may be achieved as follows:

- The student submits the online SAP Appeal Form, and all required supporting documentation in accordance with the appeals process. If the Financial Aid Appeals Committee approves the appeal, the student will be placed on financial aid probation for one semester or assigned an academic plan and will remain eligible to receive financial aid. SAP will be reviewed at the end of that semester; or
- The student enrolls in coursework at Hood College and pays all educational expenses without the assistance of federal, state, or institutional financial aid. Once the student has successfully met all Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards, financial aid eligibility may be reinstated for a subsequent term.; or
- The student may enroll in summer coursework at Hood College to address a deficiency in cumulative GPA and/or completion rate. Students planning to use summer enrollment to regain SAP eligibility must notify the Office of Financial Aid. Coursework taken at another institution may be used to address a credit deficiency if accepted by Hood College; however, courses taken elsewhere cannot be used to improve a Hood College cumulative GPA.

A student whose financial aid eligibility has been suspended may regain eligibility by either meeting all Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards or having an appeal approved by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.

Students on financial aid suspension cannot regain eligibility by sitting out a semester. No financial aid will be disbursed while a student remains on financial aid suspension.

APPEALS PROCESS

Students on financial aid suspension may submit an online SAP Appeal Form to the Office of Financial Aid. Appeals must be submitted by the deadline indicated in the student's SAP notification. Appeals received after the deadline may not be reviewed until the next evaluation period.

The appeal must include:

1. A description of the extenuating circumstances that prevented the student from meeting SAP standards. The student should explain the circumstances that contributed to their academic performance and demonstrate an understanding of the factors that led to the deficiency.
2. A description of what has changed and the steps the student will take to successfully meet SAP standards moving forward. The student should include a specific plan for academic success.



3. Supporting documentation that substantiates the circumstances described in the appeal.
Documentation must be uploaded as part of the online appeal process.

The Financial Aid Appeals Committee may request additional information, including an academic plan approved by the student's academic advisor, if the student will not be able to meet SAP standards by the end of the next semester. The Office of Financial Aid will notify the students by email if additional documentation is required.

The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review the appeal and notify the student of its decision by email, typically within ten business days of receiving a complete appeal.

All decisions of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee are final.

If an appeal is approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation for one semester and will be expected to meet SAP standards by the end of that semester. Students who successfully meet SAP standards will return to good standing for financial aid purposes.

Students who cannot reasonably meet SAP standards within one semester may be placed on an academic plan as a condition of the approved appeal. Students who comply with the terms of the academic plan will remain eligible for financial aid during the periods specified in the plan. Any modifications to the academic plan must be approved by the student's academic advisor and/or the appropriate student support office.

SAP appeals must be submitted through the [online SAP Appeal Form](#).