

**UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT MACHIAS**  
**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY**  
**Financial Aid Office**

Federal Student Aid Regulations require institutions to establish and uphold policies governing financial aid eligibility as they relate to academic progress of financial aid applicants. The University of Maine at Machias (UMM) Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP)\* for continuation of financial aid eligibility incorporates the University's academic standards with the federal requirements establishing a specific timeframe for degree completion. Students must meet these minimum Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements in order to be eligible for student aid funds. SAP is measured once per year after grades are posted following spring semester. Students not making satisfactory progress based on that review will have financial aid eligibility suspended and will receive written notification of their status. The policy has three standards, all of which must be met to continue receiving financial aid:

**Quantitative Measurement:**

Matriculated students are required to successfully complete a specific percentage of credits attempted. The policy uses the following scale:

Attempted Credit Hours	Minimum Percentage Earned
0-23.99	50%
24-53.99	55%
54-83.99	62%
84 +	67%

**Qualitative Measurement:**

The academic standards against which a student's performance is measured are stated in the university's course catalog as follows:

Attempted Credit Hours	Minimum Cumulative GPA Expected
0-15	1.5
16-30	1.6
31-60	1.7
61-90	1.8
91 +	1.9

**Maximum Time Frame:**

Federal financial aid regulations also require that the university establish a maximum time frame of 150 % of the credits needed for completion of degree programs. For four-year degree programs, the maximum number of attempted credits is 180. For two-year programs, the maximum number of attempted credits is 90. If a student attempts credits more than the maximum number identified for a degree, then eligibility is terminated because the standards of the policy are no longer being met. Repeated courses are counted as attempted but not earned. Aid may be received one time for repeating a required course if the purpose is to achieve a passing grade (grade improvement).

Attempted Hours

For the purpose of this policy, attempted hours include: Audited classes, classes withdrawn from, deferred grades, incomplete grades, missing grades, L grades, developmental courses taken and repeated courses.

Passed Hours

For the purpose of this policy, passed hours include: Passed credit hours that can be used for the purpose of completing degree requirements. Letter grades of "A" through "D" and "P" will be considered as credits completed.

Transfer Students

If a student earned credits at a prior institution(s) that will be accepted toward her/his degree, those accepted hours will be included as attempted hours for the purposes of financial aid satisfactory academic progress evaluation.

**Financial Aid Suspension**

- Recent changes in federal regulations governing SAP eliminates the automatic probationary period which existed under the most recent regulations.

At the end of each academic year (as stated above), a student's academic standing as it relates to the financial aid SAP policy, will be reviewed to determine if the minimum requirements are being maintained. Failure to maintain the required minimums will result in a suspension of financial aid eligibility. Any financial aid for upcoming terms (including summer) that has been awarded will be cancelled. The suspension is permanent until the student has:

1. completed sufficient coursework on his/her own, without benefit of financial assistance to reestablish eligibility according to the SAP standards (the student must notify the Financial Aid Office that additional coursework has been completed and request a review; or
2. successfully appealed the financial aid suspension.

Financial aid suspension is independent of academic suspension. It is possible to be in acceptable academic standing but not in acceptable financial aid standing due to the Quantitative Standard or the Maximum Time Frame Standard in the federal Satisfactory Academic Progress policy. Re-entry to the University after withdrawing, taking a Leave of Absence or "stopping out" when not meeting SAP will not reestablish eligibility for financial aid.

### Appeal of Financial Aid Suspension

Students placed on Financial Aid Suspension may submit a written appeal, normally within 30 days of notification, to the Director of Financial Aid. The appeal must explain the circumstance that prevented SAP standards from being met and what has changed that will permit the student to meet the SAP standards in the student's upcoming terms of attendance. A successful appeal will usually include a plan for academic improvement with approval from the student's advisor. The appeal should also discuss "conditions of hardship" such as death of a relative, personal injury or prolonged illness of the student and these circumstances should be supported by third-party documentation. The appeal and supporting documentation should address any possibility of recurring circumstances that impacted the student's ability to meet the SAP standards.

Under the policy, appeals may be granted if the University considers that the plan for improvement will enable the student to meet the SAP policy within a specified time period. The student may be placed on Financial Aid Probation for one term or longer, and will be able to receive financial aid during that time period. If at the end of the probationary period, the minimum standards of the policy are not being met, financial aid eligibility will be suspended. Appeals will be reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid in consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and/or advisors. Students will receive written notification of the decision within 30 days of receipt.

### Condition of Financial Aid Reinstatement

Students must meet the conditions stated above under "Financial Aid Suspension" in order to have financial aid eligibility reinstated. Students should notify the Financial Aid Office in writing that the conditions of reinstatement have been met. Students will observe the published application procedures and deadlines for financial aid consideration and will receive written notification if financial aid is to be reinstated. When appeals are granted, the University will make every effort to restore financial aid to its originally awarded levels; otherwise, aid will be restored on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Effective for 2011-12 Academic Year