



Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

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Reach for the Stars!

Presented by: Bruce Honer
US Department of Education



SAP Regulations



Effective July 1, 2011:

- All SAP regulations are located in:
34 C.F.R. § 668.34




SAP – Background and Resources

Federal Register
October 29, 2010
(the Final Program Integrity Regulations)

Electronic Announcement -
September 2, 2011


- Policy Q & A Webpage on program integrity regs
- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/integrity-qa.html>



SAP Regulation Highlights

Highlights of new/changed regulations effective July 1, 2011:


- Continued flexibility for institutions in establishing their SAP policies
- Additional flexibility for institutions that monitor SAP more often than annually
- Definitions for “warning” and “probation”
- In general, a student who is not making SAP is no longer eligible for Title IV aid

4 

SAP Policy Requirements

SAP policy requirements include—


- Measurement of student’s progress at each evaluation—
 - Can take place
 - each payment period
 - annually or less than each payment period
 - Must occur at the end of a payment period

5 

SAP Policy Requirements (cont.)

SAP policy components:

1. GPA that a student must achieve at each evaluation (qualitative)
2. Pace of progression to ensure completion within maximum time frame (quantitative)
 - Both must be measured at each evaluation


6 

Calculating Pace of Progression

Pace =

$$\frac{\text{cumulative \# of hours successfully completed}}{\text{cumulative \# of hours attempted}}$$


**More guidance forthcoming on pace for clock hour programs*




7

SAP Policy Requirements (cont.)

SAP policy requirements (more)

- How GPA and pace are affected by incompletes, withdrawals, repetitions, or transfer of credits
 - Institutions must count transfer hours accepted toward completion of the student's program as both hours attempted and completed 
 - Institutions may choose how to treat incompletes, withdrawals, and repeated coursework




8

SAP Policy Requirements (cont.)

SAP policy requirements (cont.)

- Description of and conditions surrounding “warning” and “probation” statuses, if used
- The specific elements and process required for appeal (if offered)
- How a student can reestablish eligibility




9

SAP Warning

Financial Aid Warning:

- Status assigned to a student who fails to make SAP at an institution that evaluates SAP at the end of each payment period
- Student may continue to receive Title IV aid for one payment period
- No appeal necessary

10




SAP Probation

Financial Aid Probation:

- Status assigned by an institution to a student who fails to make SAP *and who has appealed* and has had eligibility for Title IV aid reinstated (through successful appeal)
- Institution may impose conditions for student's continued eligibility to receive Title IV aid

11




SAP Appeal

Appeal:

- A process by which a student who is not meeting an institution's SAP policy petitions the institution for reconsideration of the student's eligibility for Title IV aid
- Must specify the conditions under which a student may appeal

**Reminder: A school may impose conditions on the student as part of granting the appeal*

12




SAP Appeal (cont.)

Appeal (cont.):
 A student appeal must include both of these:

- Why the student failed to make SAP
- What has changed that will allow the student to make SAP at the next evaluation

**Reminder: A student may appeal the 150% maximum timeframe per the Federal Register*

13




SAP –Evaluation Every Payment Period

Institutions that evaluate SAP each payment period

- Student loses eligibility for Title IV aid
- Student may be placed on Financial Aid Warning for one payment period
- Student must make SAP or may be placed on Financial Aid Probation after an appeal

14




SAP –Evaluation Every Payment Period (cont' d)

Institutions that evaluate SAP each payment period (cont.)

- After Financial Aid Probation, the student must be:
 - making SAP, or
 - successfully following an academic plan

15




SAP –Evaluation Less Than Every Payment Period

Institutions that evaluate SAP less often than each payment period

- Student loses eligibility for Title IV aid
- Student may be placed on Financial Aid Probation after an appeal
- After Financial Aid Probation, the student must be making SAP or successfully following an academic plan


16



SAP – Probation Reminders

- A student on Probation may only receive Title IV funds for ONE payment period
- A student on Probation may not receive Title IV funds for the subsequent payment period UNLESS:
 - Student is now making SAP; or
 - Institution determines student met requirements specified by the school in the academic plan


17



SAP - Reminders

- If on Financial Aid Warning -
 - After 1 payment period, student must make SAP; or
 - *May* be placed on Probation
- To be placed on Probation
 - Student expected to make SAP in next payment period; *OR*
 - Be successfully following an academic plan designed to ensure student will be able to meet SAP by a specific point in time
 - Use of academic plans is at the institution's option
 - Can set conditions on developing plans

18




SAP Notifications

Required Notifications:

- Institution must notify student of results of SAP review that impacts the student's eligibility for Title IV aid
- If the institution has an appeal process, must describe the specific elements required to appeal SAP
 - May specify how often and/or how many appeals are allowed

19




SAP Notifications (cont.)

Required Notifications (cont.):

- If the institution does not have an appeal process, must describe how a student who has failed SAP reestablishes eligibility for Title IV aid

20



SAP Notifications


Clock hour evaluation periods:

Review SAP at the end of a payment period by *selecting one of the following times for all students in a program:*

- when scheduled hours elapsed (regardless if attended);
- when student has attended all scheduled clock hours;
- when student has *successfully completed* all scheduled clock hours in the payment period

– Electronic Announcement - June 6, 2011

21



SAP FAQ


Q: May a school use different standards for different classes of students?

A: Yes...

Q: May a school evaluate quantitative each payment period and qualitative once a year?

A: No...

22




SAP - Academic Plans

Academic Plans:
No regulation of:

- what must be included
- who should monitor an academic plan

*The student should be able to meet the institution's SAP standards by a specific point in time established in plan *or* at program completion

24




**SAP EXAMPLE--
Credit Hour Program**

Student A:

- 120 credit hours over 8-12 semesters
- Annual SAP check after Spring term
- Uses Appeal and Probation, and Academic Plans
- 2.0 GPA & 70% completion required

- Attempted and earned 60 credits in 4 terms
- No transfer hours
- Cumulative GPA = 1.8
- Completion rate = 100%
- What now???

24




SAP - FAQs

SAP-Q2: Must schools adopt the terminology, such as warning and probation, used in the regulations?

SAP-A2: Yes. If your institution uses the statuses we describe in the regulations, it must use the terminology in the regulations.


28



SAP - FAQs

- SAP-Q3: How are remedial courses treated for SAP purposes?
- SAP-A3: The institution's SAP policy should describe how remedial courses are treated. An institution may, but is not required to, include remedial coursework in determining pace. The school must evaluate remedial coursework under the qualitative factor, though it does not have to be part of the GPA. If not part of the GPA, the school must have some other measurement process to evaluate remedial coursework (passing courses, meeting course requirements, etc.)

29




SAP - FAQs

SAP-Q5: How should an institution handle changes of majors?

SAP-A5: The treatment of a student who changes majors is determined by the institution and should be specified in its SAP policy. An institution *may* specify in its SAP policy that it will include coursework taken by a student for enrollment in other majors.

30




SAP - FAQs

SAP-Q6: SAP regulations require credit hours accepted toward student's program count as both attempted and completed when calculating GPA and pace for SAP. Can an institution's policy include *non-accepted credits* as attempted credits for purposes of these calculations?

SAP-A6: Yes. The treatment of these credits would be up to the institution.

- May refer to transfer credits or credits earned in other academic programs at your school

31




SAP - FAQs

SAP-Q7: Can the SAP pace requirements be different for students at different points in academic program?

SAP-A7: Yes. An institution may use a different pace standard for students in different grade levels. This could result in the pace gradually becoming more strict. For example, the institution may use a 50% pace for first year students, a 65% pace for second year students, and an 85% pace for third and fourth year students, rather than a flat 67% pace each year.

32




SAP - FAQs

R-Q4: If an institution reviews SAP each payment period, must the institution also review SAP after a summer term?

R-A4: If an institution reviews SAP each payment period, the institution must review SAP after a summer term if the student attends the summer term.

33




SAP - FAQs

PROB-Q4: How many times may a student be placed on probation for failing to meet SAP standards?

PROB-A4: A student may be placed on probation for one payment period per appeal. It is possible that a student could be placed on probation more than once in his or her academic career.

34




SAP - FAQs

PROB-Q2: After one payment period on probation, student still not making SAP, can student be automatically put on an academic plan, or must the student appeal again?

PROB-A2: The student would have to successfully appeal to be placed on a plan. The institution would need information about why the student failed to make SAP at the end of the probation payment period, including what had changed that caused the student to not make SAP during the probationary payment period and why the student will be able to meet SAP on the terms of the academic plan.

35




SAP - FAQs

ACP-Q3: Can the academic plan be the same for all students or the same by student categories or must the plan be created individually for each student?

ACP-A3: According to the regulations, the academic plan is developed by the institution and the student individually. It is possible that a general plan could be used for students in a similar circumstance and then customized, as needed, for each particular circumstance.

36




SAP - FAQs

ACP-Q4: Must the academic plan be mathematically set to graduate student within 150% time frame?

ACP-A4: The academic plan must be designed to ensure that the student is able to meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time. In some cases, this *could mean that the maximum timeframe would be extended based on the student's approved appeal.*


37



Contact Information

- If you have follow-up questions about this session, contact me at:
 - Bruce Honer, Training Officer
 - Bruce.honer@ed.gov
- To provide feedback to my supervisor:
 - Mark Gerhard, Supervisor
 - Mark.gerhard@ed.gov

38



Your Region III Training Team

- Virginia Hagins, Training Officer
 - Virginia.hagins@ed.gov
- Bruce Honer, Training Officer
 - Bruce.honer@ed.gov
- Robert Vallas, Training Officer
 - Robert.vallas@ed.gov

39

