

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

### **Process Overview & Responsibilities**

Federal regulations require the CMU TSB to establish satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards for student financial aid recipients.

The school's policies for SAP are designed to review a student's academic performance in terms of quantitative and qualitative measures to ensure the student is making normal progress towards the completion of the academic program. The SAP policies apply to all Title IV financial assistance programs.

The TSB FAO is responsible for ensuring that all students who receive Title IV assistance are meeting these standards.

Students who do not meet the standards are placed on financial aid probation for one semester. The results of the SAP reviews are annotated in the PowerFAIDS comments section and the students are placed on hold so that their records can be manually reviewed prior to any further financial aid actions.

### **Standards**

#### ***Policies***

The standards against which all Title IV recipients are measured include quantitative, qualitative, and maximum time frame. For all degree-seeking students, SAP will be calculated at the end of each semester of enrollment, typically in January, June, and August.

#### ***Procedures***

The Director of Financial Aid is responsible to update the SAP policy as needed to ensure it meets all federal requirements.

The TSB financial aid staff works closely with representatives from the student services office to communicate the importance of the SAP policies and to develop procedures on how the FAO is notified of any changes made by the school in its academic policies.

### **Quantitative Measure**

#### ***Policies***

The TSB SAP policy contains the required quantitative measure.

A student's quantitative academic progress is measured by comparing the number of

cumulative attempted units with the number of cumulative units earned, and in reviewing the maximum time frame.

**Attempted and Earned Unit measurement:**

Attempted and earned units include any courses for which the student has remained enrolled for the semester past the add/drop period.

- Withdrawals, incompletes, and failures are considered attempted but not earned.
- Passing grades received for pass/fail courses are considered attempted and earned units; failing grades in pass/fail are considered attempted but not earned.
- Repeated courses are included in the calculation of both attempted and earned units.
- Audited courses are not considered units attempted or earned.

Students must earn 75 percent of units attempted to maintain good standing and be considered as making satisfactory academic progress.

The completion percentage is determined by dividing the units earned by the units attempted.

**Maximum Time Frame**

The school’s policy also specifies a maximum time frame not to exceed the federally required 150 percent of the published length of the program in which a student must complete his or her program.

The table below indicates the minimum number of units required to be completed for each type of degree program, and the corresponding number of maximum units a student can attempt to maintain federal financial aid eligibility.

Program	Degree Minimum	Maximum
MBA Degrees	192	288
MS Degrees	144-150	216-225
Master Dual Degrees	162-192	243-288
Doctoral Degrees	216	324

Note: Students enrolled in non-degree programs are ineligible for federal financial aid at the school.

**Procedures**

The following procedures are used to review the quantitative standards:

- The TSB FAO receives quantitative information about Title IV recipients in the external update from S3, which is uploaded into PowerFAIDS on a regular basis.
- The Director of Financial Aid reviews students for SAP at the end of each semester.

- Students who do not meet the standards are either placed on probation or denied future Title IV aid and are notified in writing.

## **Qualitative Measure**

### ***Policies***

A student at TSB is expected to maintain good academic standing by maintaining a satisfactory GPA in their required core program courses, in addition to their cumulative GPA for overall work at TSB.

All TSB students in all programs must maintain a GPA of 3.0 based on a 4.0 scale for each semester of study.

### ***Procedures***

The following procedures are used to review the qualitative standards:

- The TSB FAO receives qualitative information about Title IV recipients in the external update from S3, which is uploaded into PowerFAIDS on a regular basis.
- The Director of Financial Aid reviews students for SAP at the end of each semester.
- Students who do not meet the standards are either placed on probation or denied future Title IV aid and are notified in writing.

## **Probationary or Conditional Periods**

### ***Policies***

TSB uses probationary periods, in which the student is still considered to be making SAP, even though they have failed to meet one or more of the TSB SAP standards.

- Students are automatically put on probation the first time they fail to make SAP if their **cumulative GPA** falls below 3.0 or if they do not **earn (complete) 75 percent of their attempted units** in any one semester.
- During the probationary period, students are given one semester to satisfactorily either raise their GPA or percentage of earned units. If the GPA or percentage of units completed is successfully raised, the probationary status is removed. Financial aid denial and suspension will result if the student's GPA or percentage of units completed is not successfully raised.
- Students who are close to reaching the 150 percent maximum time frame are monitored and are denied future Title IV aid at the appropriate time when necessary.

## ***Procedures***

The students enrolled in TSB are closely monitored by the representatives in the academic units and student services offices to ensure that they are following the rigid guidelines on standards required to continue enrollment in the degree programs.

## **Appeals**

### ***Policies***

Students on financial aid probation are not required to submit a letter of appeal since their eligibility for federal financial aid continues during the probationary period.

Students who are denied financial aid due to SAP may appeal this decision. A SAP suspension may be appealed if unusual and/or mitigating circumstances affected academic progress. Such circumstances may include a severe illness or injury to the student or an immediate family member, the death of a student's relative, student activation into military service or other circumstances as deemed appropriate for consideration by the SAP Appeals Committee.

### ***Procedures***

The appeal procedures are as follows:

- To appeal, the student must submit a signed and dated letter and a completed SAP Appeal Form to the TSB FAO. The letter should explain in detail why the student failed to meet the minimum academic standards, what unusual and/or mitigating circumstances contributed to the failure, and how their situation has improved.
- Appeals must be received by the committee no later than 15 business days before the end of the payment period for which reinstatement is desired.
- The decision of the SAP appeals committee will be sent to the student by mail or electronic means.
- Appeal approvals are not applied retroactively after the end of a semester for Title IV aid eligibility.
- Appeal approvals will give the conditions and time frame for maintaining aid eligibility.
- SAP appeal decisions cannot be appealed to another source.

## **Documentation**

### ***Policies***

According to federal regulation, SAP appeals are considered a form of professional judgment exercised by the FAO. As with any use of PJ, adequate documentation is critical. The following are examples of acceptable documentation that may be submitted in support of an appeal. Some examples might include but are not limited

to:

- Newspaper obituaries or death certificates to substantiate deaths.
- Physician's statement to substantiate illness or accident.
- Statement from clergy or family member who knows the student's situation.
- Statement from an academic advisor or professor.

### ***Procedures***

The procedures followed in reviewing and responding to appeals are as follows:

- Appeals and documentation are tracked electronically and forwarded to the staff (or committee) who reviews appeals.
- If an appeal is received without proper documentation the appeal is returned to the student with a request for the correct documentation.
- If documentation is submitted without an appeal, receipt of the documentation is noted and a written appeal is requested.
- The FAO documents the action taken as a result of an appeal in PowerFAIDS and sends notification to the student.

### **Regaining Eligibility**

#### ***Policies***

Eligibility is reestablished after the student improves their academic record to meet the minimum standards.

A student not making SAP may reestablish eligibility on his or her own, either because an appeal was denied or because he or she did not submit an appeal.

#### ***Procedures***

The following procedures have been established in order for students to be considered for reinstatement:

- The student must notify the FAO and provide evidence that they have met the minimum standards and would like a review of their academic records performed.
- The FAO will review the academic records and/or documentation submitted to determine the student's status.
- The results of the student's appeal will be documented in the students file and the student will be notified in writing regarding reinstatement.