



Institute of Human Nutrition
POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS
FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS



June 25, 2013

In accordance with federal regulations, to receive funds administered by the Financial Aid Office at Columbia University Medical Center, students must be making measurable academic progress toward completion of an eligible degree or certificate program. The following policy and procedures are laid out to guide this process for students enrolled at the Institute of Human Nutrition.

1. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

CFR SOURCE:

Compilation of Federal Regulations (CFR):

34 CFR 668.34 – Student Assistance General Provisions

34 CFR 668.16(e) – Administrative Capability

34 CFR 668.32(f) – Student Eligibility - General

1.1 “AT LEAST AS STRICT...”

To receive funds administered by the Financial Aid Office at Columbia University Medical Center, students must be making measurable academic progress toward completion of an eligible degree or certificate program. Federal regulations require evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative academic progress according to requirements that are at least as strict as the IHN’s academic progress policy for students not receiving Title IV aid.

The IHN holds all students, regardless of whether they receive federal financial aid, to the same academic standards.

1.2 CONSISTENT APPLICATION

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards are the same for all categories of graduate students, including those students registered with Disability Services. Students registered with Disability Services should take advantage of suggested accommodations in order to meet SAP requirements. Failure to register with Disability Services will not be considered an extenuating circumstance.



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1.3 REGULAR EVALUATIONS

The academic year at the Institute of Human Nutrition (IHN) consists of fall, spring and summer enrollment periods. Fall begins the academic year, and summer concludes it. The measurement of academic progress is made at the end of each enrollment period (or term), and the resulting student status is effective with the next enrollment period.

All periods of enrollment will be included in the measurement of SAP. Terms in which the student enrolled but did not receive financial aid are included in the measurement. Students are notified by email to their official Columbia University account if they are not meeting satisfactory academic progress.

Students enrolling at the IHN for the first time are considered initially to be meeting SAP. Students who have been academically suspended from the IHN after the first term and who are re-admitted will be placed on “financial aid warning” for the first term of re-enrollment. Students who have been academically suspended from the IHN after the second term when they were on “financial aid warning” and who are re-admitted will be placed on “financial aid probation” and are not eligible for financial aid until they meet SAP standards at the end of the first re-enrollment term. Students who are re-admitted and put on “financial aid probation” may follow the appeal policy to be considered for financial aid. All attempted credit hours and all earned grades will be considered as part of the evaluation of academic progress for financial aid.

1.4 GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Qualitative Standards

Students must meet a qualitative standard of academic progress measured through cumulative grade point average. Graduate students must have a 2.67 overall GPA at the conclusion of each term to meet SAP requirements. Grades of Pass (“P”) and Honors (“H”) do not contribute to the overall GPA, but they do contribute to the number of credits attempted and to the number of credits successfully completed. A grade of Credit Pending (“CP”) does not contribute to the overall GPA, but CP credits do contribute to the overall number of



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credits attempted. Until the CP has been changed to a grade, these credits do not contribute to the total number of credits successfully completed.

Grades at the IHN contribute to the GPA as follows:

Grade	GPA Equivalent
A+	4.33
A	4.00
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	0.67
F	0.00

1.5 MAXIMUM TIME FRAME AND PACE OF COMPLETION

Quantitative Standards

Students must meet a quantitative standard of academic progress measured by a percentage completion rate. Students must successfully complete 73% of all attempted credit hours – this allows students to attempt up to 45 credits to successfully complete the required 33. Successful completion of a course is defined as completing all of the required assignments and receiving a passing grade (minimum C-).

The fee structure of the Institute of Human Nutrition requires a flat rate tuition payment for 12 – 19 credits in the Fall and in the Spring. Full time students are able to take 24 to 38 credits in the Fall and Spring semesters combined for the same tuition fee. Students are unable to complete the 33 required credits for the entire program within these two semesters because the IHN requires a 3-credit Thesis Research component, traditionally completed during the Summer term after coursework completion. Only in special circumstances can the Thesis Research credits be completed outside of the Summer term, and



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this decision is at the discretion of the Director of the MS program and the Education Committee.

The satisfactory progress calculation is made as follows: earned credit hours divided by attempted credit hours equals completion rate (which is rounded to the closest whole number).

Courses with grades of Withdrawal (“W”), Incomplete (“I”), Fail (“F”) and courses taken under the IHN class repeat regulations are included in attempted credit hours but are not included in earned credit hours.

Maximum Time Frame for Degree Completion

Students must graduate within 5 years of the date they first enrolled in the IHN program. That is, students have 5 years to attempt up to 45 credits to complete the required 33. Students who have not successfully completed the 33 required credits for graduation within this time frame are no longer eligible for financial aid.

1.6 EFFECT/TREATMENT OF “ATYPICAL” COURSES/SITUATIONS

1.6.1 EFFECT OF INCOMPLETES

Courses completed with a grade of Incomplete (“I”) count towards the number of credits attempted but not the number of credits completed. Incomplete grades do not contribute to the GPA calculation. However, a grade of Incomplete is automatically changed to an F after one year without completion of the course requirements.

1.6.2 EFFECT OF WITHDRAWALS

Students may withdraw from a course or the program at any point during a term. Depending on the circumstances and timing of the withdrawal, students may receive a “W” on their transcripts for the course. A “W” contributes to the number of credits attempted, but it does not contribute to the number of credits completed or the GPA calculation.



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1.6.3 EFFECT OF SUSPENSION OR ACADEMIC TERMINATION

In the event that a student is suspended or asked to leave the program (academic termination), grades may be given for the courses in progress depending on the amount of coursework completed and at the discretion of the Director of the MS program and the Education Committee. These grades contribute to the GPA calculation in the same manner as grades for fully completed courses. The credits in progress will contribute to the number attempted and, depending on the grades given (if applicable), to the credits completed.

1.6.4 EFFECT OF COURSE REPETITIONS

Students may repeat courses that were previously attempted but not successfully completed. Credits and grades received in repeated courses count towards the GPA and credits attempted/completed in the same manner described for courses that were not repeated.

1.6.5 EFFECT OF DUAL DEGREES

SAP requirements apply to students in dual degree programs.

1.6.6 EFFECT OF ADVANCED STANDING

Not applicable. The IHN does not offer advanced standing status for students.

1.6.7 EFFECT OF TRANSFERS OF CREDIT FROM OTHER SCHOOLS OR INSTITUTIONS

Not applicable. The IHN does not accept transfer credits from other schools or institutions.

1.6.8 EFFECT OF CHANGES OF MAJOR OR PROGRAM OF STUDY



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Not applicable. The IHN does not allow for changes in major or program of study.

1.7 STATUS DEFINITIONS

The Institute of Human Nutrition will review each student's academic progress following every term (fall, spring and summer). Students who do not meet SAP requirements will be notified via email to their official Columbia University email account. A representative from the Office of Students Financial Planning will be copied on all SAP email correspondence.

Financial Aid Warning

A student who fails to meet SAP (excluding maximum time frame) at the end of an enrollment period will be placed on "financial aid warning," not to exceed one enrollment period. During the "financial aid warning" enrollment period, the student may receive federal financial aid despite the determination that the student is not meeting SAP standards. The student must meet SAP standards at the end of the financial aid warning period or will be placed on "financial aid probation."

Students who are placed on "financial aid warning" will receive an email to their official Columbia University email account stating this change of status, and they are required to develop an academic plan for the following term with the Director of the MS program.

Financial Aid Probation

"Financial aid probation" is the status assigned to a student who fails to meet SAP standards at the end of the "financial aid warning" enrollment period. At this time, the student is suspended from further financial aid until SAP standards are met. That is, the student must pay for any additional course enrollment during the "financial aid probation" period through personal or private funds. Should extenuating circumstances exist, the student may appeal the probation status.

Students who are placed on "financial aid probation" will receive an email to their official Columbia University email account stating this change of status.



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For a student who fails to meet SAP requirements, if no appeal is approved or academic plan assigned, the student's eligibility for FSA will not be reviewed again until the student's next SAP assessment.

1.8 PROVISION FOR A FINANCIAL AID WARNING STATUS

Upon completion, IHN reviews SAP at the end of each term, IHN will issue a Financial Aid Warning status (described above under "Definitions") to all students not meeting SAP at the end of a single term may be placed on the Financial Aid Warning status

1.9 APPEALS

Students who are placed on "financial aid probation" may submit an appeal by sending an email to the Director of the MS program, Dr. Sharon Akabas (sa109@columbia.edu), copying Ms. Leslie De Peña (lm24@columbia.edu) and Ms. Ellen Spilker (es29@columbia.edu) from the Office of Student Financial Planning. The email should include the basis for the appeal and must be submitted within 30 days after the "financial aid probation" letter is sent.

The Institute of Human Nutrition will review each appeal carefully, and decisions to reverse "financial aid probation" status will be at the discretion of the department based on the extenuating circumstances reported in the appeal letter and the documentation provided by the student. Students will be notified via email to their official Columbia University email account as to whether their appeal was approved or denied.

1.9.1 ACADEMIC PLANS

Students placed on "financial aid warning" are required to develop an academic plan for the following semester with the Director of the MS program. This plan lays out the courses the student will register for, as well as a detailed study plan, including use of instructor and TA office hours, as well as individual tutoring if applicable.



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The academic plan will be shared with the student's advisor, as well, to ensure satisfactory progress throughout the semester.

1.10 RESTORING ELIGIBILITY

Students placed on "financial aid probation" are ineligible for FSA funds. In order to restore eligibility the student may either 1) submit an appeal that is approved by the Institute of Human Nutrition; or if there is no appeal or the appeal is denied 2) successfully complete the following semester(s) to meet SAP standards. The student must pay for any additional course enrollment during the "financial aid probation" period through personal or private funds.

1.11 NOTIFICATIONS

Students will be notified via email to their official Columbia University email account regarding any Financial Aid Eligibility status change (eg. to "financial aid warning" or "financial aid probation"). All correspondence regarding appeals will be delivered via email to their official Columbia University email account, as well.