

THE SCHOOL OF GENETIC COUNSELING POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS

1. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

For purposes of determining financial aid eligibility under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, all institutions, including Columbia University – School of Genetic Counseling, must establish reasonable standards for measuring whether a student is maintaining satisfactory academic progress (SAP). On October 29, 2010, the Secretary of Education published final rules aimed at improving the integrity of programs authorized under Title IV of the HEA. Effective July 1, 2011, institutions must comply with the published regulations that impact SAP.

Students enrolled at the School of Genetic Counseling who do not make satisfactory academic progress will not be eligible for the following federal Title IV aid programs:

- Federal Work Study Program
- Federal Direct Loan Programs
- Federal Graduate PLUS Loan Program

In addition, students who do not meet satisfactory academic progress will not be eligible to receive institutional grants and scholarships.

The School of Genetic Counseling will review academic records after each term for students seeking a graduate degree (e.g. Master of Science) or Certificate (non-degree) to monitor that students are making progress towards degree completion. Students are required to maintain qualitative and quantitative standards, and may not exceed the maximum time frame for their program.

1.1 “AT LEAST AS STRICT...”

All students, whether Title IV recipients or not, are required to maintain qualitative and quantitative standards, and may not exceed the maximum time frame for their program. Students who do not meet this requirement will risk dismissal from the School. The School of Genetic Counseling considers a student’s academic progress to be satisfactory when it progresses at a rate that allows the student to complete all requirements for degree and non-degree programs.

1.2 CONSISTENT APPLICATION

Satisfactory academic progress standards, as outlined in this policy, apply to all Federal Student Aid programs and FSA recipients. The following are defined categories of students:

1. Full-time, graduate students
2. Part-time, graduate students
3. Full-time, non-degree students
 - a. Certificate
4. Part-time, non-degree students
 - a. Certificate

THE SCHOOL OF GENETIC COUNSELING POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS

1.3 REGULAR EVALUATIONS

The Office of Student Planning in conjunction with the School of Genetic Counseling will review academic records after each term for students seeking a graduate degree (e.g. Master of Science) or Certificate to monitor that students are making progress towards degree completion. Students are required to maintain qualitative and quantitative standards, and may not exceed the maximum time frame for their program.

1.4 GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

To maintain the qualitative standards of satisfactory academic progress, students must meet the cumulative grade point average at the end of each term, as outlined in the charts below. The table below summarizes the minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) required for each program type:

Program Type	Cumulative Grade Point Average
Degree (M.S.)	3.0
Certificate	3.0

1.5 MAXIMUM TIME FRAME AND PACE OF COMPLETION

Pace of completion permits a myriad of enrollment permutations since percentage controls the progress. Students must successfully earn credits toward their degree greater than or equal to 67% of the credits attempted. For example, if a student has attempted 24 credit hours, they must earn 16 credits of those attempted ($16 \text{ earned credits} / 24 \text{ attempted credits} \times 100\% = 67\%$).

Maximum timeframe permits students to receive federal student aid within a set limit over the course of their program. Students are required to progress through their program at a pace which will ensure they will graduate within the maximum timeframe of 150% of the published program length.

1.6 EFFECT/TREATMENT OF “ATYPICAL” COURSES/SITUATIONS

The School of Genetic Counseling includes all courses attempted at the institution plus course work accepted as transfer credit towards the student’s declared major in the quantitative measurement to determine successful satisfactory academic progress. This also includes courses taken via a Consortium Agreement. Earned hours include all courses for which a passing grade was received (A, B, C, D). All withdrawn courses (W, UW) and failed courses (F) are counted as unearned hours in the calculation. Repeated courses are counted in the attempted hours and are taken into consideration for the maximum allowed hours for completion toward the degree.

THE SCHOOL OF GENETIC COUNSELING POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS

1.6.1 EFFECT OF INCOMPLETES

Courses with incomplete grades are included as cumulative attempted credits. However, these courses cannot be used as credits earned toward the degree since successful completion is the criterion for positive credit accumulation. Student may repeat courses and receive federal student aid while enrolled at the School of Genetic Counseling. Successfully completed courses can generally be accepted toward degree requirements once. However, each time a student repeats a course, it is included as part of the total, cumulative attempted credits. record. Therefore, repeated courses, regardless of the prior grade, reduce a student's ability capacity to meet the program's maximum timeframe.

1.6.2 EFFECT OF WITHDRAWALS

Withdrawals, as part of the change of program period, will not be included as cumulative attempted credits. Withdrawals which are recorded on a student's permanent record will be included as cumulative attempted credits and will have an adverse effect on a student's capability to meet the appropriate standard.

NOTE: Retroactive "non-punitive" administrative withdrawal activity may result in the student repaying any federal assistance.

1.6.3 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.

1.6.4 EFFECT OF DUAL DEGREES

This section is not applicable.

1.6.5 EFFECT OF ADVANCED STANDING

This section is not applicable.

1.6.6 EFFECT OF TRANSFERS OF CREDIT FROM OTHER SCHOOLS OR INSTITUTIONS

Transfer students shall be reviewed for purposes of satisfactory academic progress.

All transfer credits will be counted as both completed credits, and attempted points toward the degree at Columbia.

THE SCHOOL OF GENETIC COUNSELING POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS

1.6.7 EFFECT OF CHANGES OF MAJOR OR PROGRAM OF STUDY

Readmission

Upon readmission, the academic record will be evaluated for satisfactory academic progress under these standards as the record stood at the end of the last term of attendance.

Approved Leave of Absence (LOA)

For students who are on an approved Leave of Absence (LOA), they are required to maintain both qualitative and quantitative standards as outlined in this policy in order to return to the program and receive federal student aid.

Change of Major / Program

Students who are changing programs shall have their status reviewed for the purposes of satisfactory academic progress. This measurement is calculated using the courses deemed acceptable toward the new program. Courses that are deemed acceptable toward the new program will affect the student's CGPA, maximum time frame, and pace of completion.

1.6.8 EFFECT OF EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS AND UNIVERSITY-WIDE CHANGES

In the event of a national or state-wide emergency, and/or where a pass/fail grading system is implemented University-wide:

Any courses graded as pass/fail will be counted in the total number of attempted hours.

When a course is successfully completed and given a grade of "P", the credits are added to the total number of attempted and earned credits hours; but, the Pass grade is not included in the GPA calculation.

When a course is *not* successfully completed and the student is given a grade of "F", it will be treated as a standard grade of "F" and this will negatively impact the progression and GPA of the student.

Any student who fails a SAP assessment as a result of a qualifying emergency will be allowed to submit an appeal, even if an appeals process is not included in the individual school's SAP policy.

Any and all treatment of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) updates and changes will abide by existing statutory regulation on SAP, any temporary statutory relief provided by Congress, and any temporary guidance provided by the Department of Education (ED).

THE SCHOOL OF GENETIC COUNSELING POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS

1.7 STATUS DEFINITIONS

Below are satisfactory academic progress definitions:

Financial Aid Probation

The School will assign this status to students who are failing SAP and who successfully appeal the academic review. Eligibility for aid may be reinstated for one payment period.

Financial Aid Warning

The School will assign this status to students who are failing SAP at the end of each payment period and were making SAP in the prior payment period. The School will reinstate eligibility for one payment period without an appeal.

1.8 APPEALS

Federal regulations do not mandate institutions to offer an appeal process, however the Office of Student Affairs at the School of Genetic Counseling has established a Title IV satisfactory academic progress appeal process. Students who have unforeseen extenuating circumstances that prevented them from making SAP may submit an appeal in writing to the Office of Student Affairs at the School of Genetic Counseling.

A student may initiate the SAP appeal process by preparing and submitting a written Title IV Satisfactory Academic Progress appeal with all substantiating documentation to the Office of Student Affairs at the School of Genetic Counseling. The appeal must include a detailed explanation regarding: (a) why the student failed to make SAP (examples of appeal worthy circumstances are: serious physical or mental illness of the student, serious physical or mental illness of a student's immediate family member, death of a student's immediate family member and other extreme circumstances) and (b) what has changed that will allow the student to make SAP at the next evaluation.

A determination will be made by the Office of Student Affairs at the School of Genetic Counseling whether the students appeal will be approved or denied. All appeal decisions are final. If an appeal is approved, the student must be placed on a SAP Academic Plan that outlines the specific plan/corrective action to improve academic progress.

1.8.1 ACADEMIC PLANS

A SAP Academic Plan outlines the specific plan/corrective action to improve academic progress. Students will be required to follow the SAP Academic Plan in order to receive federal financial assistance.

Students must be enrolled only in the course work listed on their SAP Academic Plan, meet minimum completion rates, and be making progress each semester

THE SCHOOL OF GENETIC COUNSELING POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS

toward all SAP requirements, as outlined by the School, by the Academic Plan projected end date and/or graduation date to retain Title IV eligibility. Failure to meet the terms of the Academic Plan will jeopardize eligibility for federal financial assistance.

1.9 RESTORING ELIGIBILITY

A student whose appeal has been granted will receive federal financial aid, but will be expected to meet the terms of the Academic Plan to assure that the student is fully meeting the minimum SAP requirements by the end of the subsequent term. The approval of a SAP appeal is related to the renewal of federal aid.

A student whose appeal has been denied or who has lost eligibility by not meeting the standard without appeal may regain eligibility by leaving the institution for at least one year. Upon re-admittance, the student will receive assistance for the terms in the academic year of re-admittance and will be subject to SAP evaluation of eligibility at the end of that year or payment period.

Students who choose to remain enrolled at the School without the receipt of Title IV funding may request a review of their academic records after any term in which they are enrolled without such benefits to determine whether the appropriate standards for the degree program(s) in which the students are enrolled have been met. If the standards are met, eligibility is regained for subsequent terms in the academic year.

Students who choose to remain enrolled at the School without the receipt of Title IV funding or institutional aid are responsible for all debts owed to the University, including any fees or tuition that may have been incurred during the review process.

1.10 NOTIFICATIONS

The Office of Student Affairs at the School of Genetic Counseling will review all students' academic records after each term. Students who are not making satisfactory academic progress towards their degree may lose eligibility for future Title IV aid. Students will be notified of their ineligible status via Office of Student Affairs at the School of Genetic Counseling.

Note: If a student has a grade change or correction to their academic record subsequent to the review process, he/she should notify the Office of Student Affairs at the School of Genetic Counseling in writing to request a re-evaluation of their academic progress.