

# UMass Boston Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Federal regulations require that schools monitor the academic progress of each applicant for federal financial assistance. The University of Massachusetts Boston has established the following policy for evaluating Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) of financial aid recipients. This policy also extends to state and institutional financial aid programs.

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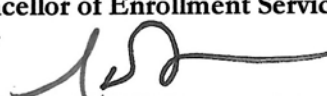
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<b>Recommending Officer Signature:</b> Cherly Pierre (Executive Director of Financial Aid Services)	<b>Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Services</b> John Drew 	Date: 3/14/2022
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Policy (34 CFR 668.34)

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the measurement of a student’s academic progress toward a degree. SAP evaluates three components to determine eligibility for financial aid: qualitative (cumulative grade point average), quantitative (pace) and maximum time frame allowed for degree completion.

The review of a student’s SAP status is based on the entire academic record, even if the student did not receive financial aid for previous semesters of enrollment.

Undergraduate students must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0
- Minimum pace (completion rate) of 67%
- Maximum time frame of 150% of defined academic length for bachelor’s degree and undergraduate certificate programs.

Graduate students must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0
- Minimum pace (completion rate) of 67%
- Maximum time frame of 150% of defined program length for doctoral degree, master’s degree and graduate certificate programs

Graduate students working full-time on their dissertation or thesis are eligible to receive financial aid if they are meeting SAP standards and making progress in completing their final degree requirement. Students must submit the Dissertation Thesis form. Both student and program director must sign the form.

**Measures of Academic Progress**


Qualitative Measure - GPA

GPA is calculated using the UMass-Boston Grading system. Any graded credits on the student’s record is factored into the GPA for SAP. Undergraduate students must meet a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 and Graduate students must meet a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the time of annual SAP review.

Courses with a grade of Incomplete (INC) at the time of the SAP review will not be factored into the GPA. When an Incomplete is converted to a grade (A, B, C, D, IF), at the next SAP review, the new grade is factored into the GPA

When a course is repeated, both grades appear in the transcript. However, only the most recent grade is factored into the GPA.

Transfer credits and Withdrawals are not factored into the GPA calculation.

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Quantitative Measures – Pace and Maximum Time Frame

Pace is measured by dividing the cumulative number of credit hours the student has successfully completed (earned credits) by the total number of credits hours the student attempted. Students must successfully complete at least 67% of all attempted credit hours.

- **Attempted credits** include successfully completed courses, non-passing grades, incomplete, withdrawn courses, transfer credits and repeated courses.
- **Earned credits** include successfully completed courses and transfer credits. Audited and remedial coursework are not included.

Incomplete grades are considered credits attempted, not earned for Pace. Passing grades (A,B,C,D,Pass) from an incomplete become credits earned in the Pace requirement. When a course is repeated, each repeat is considered an attempt for Pace. Transfer credits are factored into the Pace calculation as attempted and earned credits.

If a student officially or unofficially withdraws after the official add/drop period, the hours attempted will be used in the pace calculation.

Maximum Time Frame allowed is calculated by multiplying the published program length by 150 percent.

A student is in violation of the Maximum Time Frame standard when it has been determined that it has become mathematically impossible to complete a degree within 150% of the published program length.

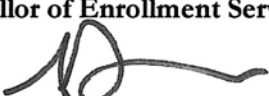
Incomplete grades are considered credits attempted, not earned for Maximum Time Frame. Passing grades (A,B,C,D,Pass) from an incomplete become credits earned in the Maximum Time Frame requirement. When a course is repeated, each repeat is considered an attempt for Maximum Time Frame. Transfer credits are factored into the Maximum Time Frame calculation as attempted and earned credits.

If a student officially or unofficially withdraws after the official add/drop period, the hours attempted will be used in the maximum time frame calculation.

A student may not appeal a maximum time frame status if the student has a minor or more than one major AND all degree requirements have been met for one major.

Dual Enrollment

Courses taken at UMass Boston for college credit while in high school are counted in the GPA, pace and time frame standards when students become degree seeking students at UMass-Boston.

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COVID-19 Pandemic Policy (temporary, during pandemic phase only)

Pass/Fail Grades

UMB relaxed its institutional policy that limits how many courses a student may elect to take pass/fail.

In a case where a student elects to take every course pass/fail, and if every grade they receive is “P”, the student is still considered to be meeting SAP standards if the GPA shows as “0.000” due to having no GPA and student is meeting SAP standards for both pace and maximum time frame.

Exclusions to the Pace / Maximum Time Frame Standards

As part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act CARES Act (Section 3509), the Department of Education (ED) allowed greater flexibility for calculating SAP. Any non-completed coursework during this national emergency may be excluded from the quantitative (Pace, Time Frame) calculation based on an affirmative survey response from the student that their inability to complete the coursework was a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The federal guidance did not make any exceptions for the qualitative standard (GPA), so all F’s will still be counted against the GPA for SAP. Students who are failing the GPA standard will have to submit an appeal, however we are allowed to consider COVID-related setbacks as an “extenuating circumstance”.

Evaluations and Notifications

The following groups of students are monitored at the end of each payment period:

- Students enrolled in a financial aid eligible certificate program
- Students whose SAP status is Probation and Academic Plan
- Students enrolled in a program that will be completed in 12 months or less


All other students are monitored annually upon the receipt of their FAFSA.

Students are ineligible for financial aid once it has been determined that they have not met SAP standards. Students will be sent email notification of their financial aid ineligibility to their official UMass-Boston email address.

The office of Financial Aid Services notifies students of their SAP status at the SAP evaluation period. Notification is sent to the student’s UMass-Boston email address, and students can view their SAP standing on WISER.

Appeal Guidelines

Students who have failed SAP can appeal their status if they experienced extenuating circumstances, such as injury or illness, death of a relative, or other special circumstance beyond the student’s control.

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Undergraduate Students with less than 49 attempted credits are only required to submit a personal statement with supporting documentation. Undergraduate students with 49 attempted credits or greater are required to submit an academic plan in addition to a personal statement and supporting documentation. The academic plan must be completed in collaboration with the student's professional (non-faculty) academic advisor.

Graduate students are required to submit a personal statement with supporting documentation and an academic plan. The academic plan must be completed in collaboration with the student's program director.

Appeal decisions are emailed to the student's official UMass-Boston email address.

Approved Appeals

Undergraduate students with less than 49 attempted credits will be placed on an SAP Probation status for one term. During the SAP probationary period, the student is considered eligible for financial aid. Students who are required to submit an academic plan, with 49 credits attempted or greater, will be placed on SAP Academic Plan status for one term. The student will be re-evaluated at the end of the subsequent payment period.

Failing to make academic progress during a SAP probationary period, will result in a loss of financial aid eligibility for the subsequent term. However, students may submit another appeal if new extenuating circumstances arise.

Denied Appeals


Denied appeals will result in the student continuing to be ineligible for financial aid. The student may enroll in coursework but will be responsible for payment of their university bill. Students who are notified that their appeal has been denied will have their academic progress reviewed at the next annual SAP evaluation.

Once an appeal has been denied, students are not eligible to submit any subsequent appeals for further consideration unless their academic performance has risen to the level of SAP standards.

Reestablishing Financial Aid Eligibility

A student may regain financial aid eligibility by successfully meeting the University's SAP policy requirements at the annual SAP evaluation.

Sitting out for a term (or multiple terms) does not affect a student's academic progress status, so it is not sufficient to reestablish aid eligibility.

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