

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

OFFICE OF SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID

STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

FOR FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY 2017-2018

Federal regulation requires the Financial Aid Office to monitor the academic progress of all students seeking to earn a degree or certificate. ***This monitoring process is called Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).*** SAP is required of ***ALL*** financial aid applicants at the University of Houston, including those applicants who have not previously participated in federal aid programs. ***This policy applies to all new, transfer, continuing, and returning students.*** Academic progress is evaluated using both qualitative and quantitative requirements:

- Grade Point Average (GPA) – Undergraduate, Law, Optometry or Architecture students must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA. Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA.
- Percentage of attempted cumulative hours completed – Complete and pass a minimum of 75% of the hours attempted at the University of Houston.

Undergraduate Level	Cumulative GPA Required	Cumulative Completion Ratio Required	Cumulative Hours Allowed
All levels	At least 2.0	75%	180
Graduate Level	Cumulative GPA Required	Cumulative Completion Ratio Required	Cumulative Hours Allowed
Masters	At least 3.0	75%	54
Doctoral	At least 3.0	75%	100
Optometry Master of Science in Physiological Optics/Vision	At least 3.0	75%	45
Doctor of Optometry	At least 2.0	75%	265
Doctor of Philosophy in Physiological Optics/Vision	At least 2.0	75%	90
Doctor of Pharmacy	At least 2.0	75%	318
Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmaceutics and Pharmacology	At least 3.0	75%	120
Master of Science in Pharmacy Administration	At least 2.0	75%	57

Law J.D.	At least 2.0	75%	135
Law LLM	At least 2.0	75%	36
Law J.D./MBA	At least 2.0	75%	166
Master of Architecture level I	At least 2.0	75%	145
Master of Architecture level II	At least 2.0	75%	90
Master of Science in Architecture	At least 2.0	75%	45
Master of Architectural Studies	At least 2.0	75%	45
Master of Space Architecture	At least 2.0	75%	45

*Attempted hours are all credit hours in which the student enrolls. All credit hours attempted at the University of Houston, including repeated courses with a grade of "F", "W", "I", or "IP" and all **transfer hours** to be used toward a degree at the University of Houston that were pursued at a previous institution will be counted in the determination of hours attempted.*

- Maximum credit hours needed to complete a degree or eligible certification – Complete all degree or certification requirements within 150% of the minimum number of credit hours required to graduate.
 - Students not meeting the SAP policies will be placed on financial aid suspension upon their first infraction. While on first suspension, student will not be able to receive financial aid for the full aid year unless a completed appeal is approved. Eligibility for future aid years will be established based on the successful completion of requirements during the warning period.
- I. **Maximum Time Frame** – Federal regulations require that a student complete his program of study within 150% (length of program x 1.5) of the time allotted for the program. For example, if an undergraduate degree is 120 credit hours in length, a student with this major must complete the program within 180 (120 x 1.5) credit hours. All credit hours attempted at the University of Houston, including repeated courses with a grade of "F", "W", "I", or "IP" and all **transfer hours** to be used toward a degree at the University of Houston that were pursued at a previous institution will be counted in the determination of hours attempted. After attempting 180 credit hours, the undergraduate student's financial aid eligibility will be terminated for this program.
 - II. **Increments of Evaluation** – The academic year is defined as Fall, Spring, and the subsequent Summer semesters. The academic progress of financial aid students will be evaluated on a yearly basis after the Fall and Spring grades have been submitted and academic standing has been processed. Students will be awarded based on the academic year; however, eligibility will be evaluated based on prior Fall and Spring grades.
 - III. **Satisfactory Completion** – Successful completion for ratio purposes is defined as receiving a grade of A through D- or an S. Grades of "F", "W", "I", "IP", or "X" are considered as credit hours attempted, but not earned.
 - IV. **Withdrawals ("W" grades)** – Courses with a grade of "W" (Withdrawn) will not be calculated in the GPA or considered credits successfully completed, but will be counted as credits attempted

and will affect both completion ratio as well as cumulative hours attempted.

- V. **All “W”s or “Fs” in one semester** – Withdrawing after the 100% refund period will impact a student’s completion ratio calculation, future financial aid eligibility, and could result in repayment of financial aid received in the current term.
- VI. **Repeat Courses** – Students who successfully complete a course with a grade of A, B, C, or D, may repeat that course one time and still receive financial aid. Students may repeat a course and receive financial aid if the original grade is not successful (“F”, “I”, “W”, or “IP”). A grade of D (1.0) is successful for financial aid purposes.
- VII. **Incomplete (“I” grades)** – A grade of “I” (Incomplete) indicates that a student has not finished all course work required for a grade and is included in the cumulative credits attempted. An incomplete grade will not count as hours passed until a final grade is posted in the Registrar’s Office. If a student’s “I” grade changes during a semester, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the financial aid office of the change. If the change of grade will affect the student’s financial aid eligibility, the financial aid office will then do a recalculation during the year. Otherwise, the change of grade will not be factored into the overall completion rate until the next increment of evaluation.
- VIII. **Audit Courses** – Audit courses neither earn credit nor influence GPA, and they are not counted in credits attempted. They are not eligible for financial aid.
- IX. **Transfer Courses** – Courses accepted for credit at the University of Houston from another institution—which meet the college’s transfer policy—are counted in the total credits attempted. Grades for transfer courses are not calculated in the GPA. Courses at proprietary and trade schools will generally not be accepted for credit towards degree or certificate requirements.
- X. **Academic Amnesty/Renewal** – As part of the University of Houston institutional academic progress policy, the college adheres to State Law (Educ. Code, Sec. 51.931) which allows students with academic credits earned 10 or more years prior to the starting date of the semester in which they seek admission to any public institution of higher education to have those credits or grades not considered in the admission decision (Academic Fresh Start). For the purposes of calculating a student’s SAP for student aid programs, all grades earned from previous enrollment periods will count towards the student’s maximum timeframe.
- XI. **Change of Program of Study/Major** – A student may change from one program of study/major to another during his/her attendance at the University of Houston. Students who change from one program of study/major to another are still expected to maintain SAP and complete the coursework within the timeframe limitations. The total amount of credit hours taken will be evaluated for SAP purposes.
- XII. **Prior Attendance** – The financial aid office is required to consider all attendance at the University of Houston when determining whether or not a student is making SAP, even if financial aid was not received during any of the previous periods of enrollment. The financial aid office will review the student’s University of Houston academic history to determine if the SAP requirements have been met. Any student who does not meet these requirements will be placed on warning,

probation, or suspension as appropriate.

- XIII. **SAP Notifications** – The financial aid office will notify any student who is placed on probation or suspension, via the preferred email address, as noted in the myUH self-service center. Students not eligible for financial aid will receive notification in the same fashion.
- XIV. **Financial Aid Warning** – Starting 2013-14 aid year, UH no longer allows a warning period for those who are not meeting SAP requirements.
- XV. **Financial Aid Probation** – Students will be eligible for financial aid consideration during the period they are placed on probation. If a student's GPA and/or completion rate **does not meet** the SAP minimum standards, the student may be placed on a SAP Academic Plan Agreement, maybe approved for that term, or may be placed on financial aid suspension. To be placed on probation or an academic plan, the student must submit an appeal and the appeal must be approved for a plan submission.
- XVI. **SAP Academic Plan Agreement** – Probation students must make progress towards their cumulative GPA and completion ratio so that they meet minimum SAP standards within 1 semester. If the Financial Aid office determines that the student may not be able to meet the cumulative SAP requirements within 1 semester, the office may choose to place the student on a SAP Academic Plan Agreement, allowing the student additional time to meet the requirements. Students who meet the terms and requirements for their academic plan will be allowed to continue receiving aid during the semesters agreed upon in the plan. If the student does not meet 100% semester completion ratio and a 2.5 semester gpa while being placed on an Academic Plan Agreement, the student will have failed the plan and will have their aid suspended.
- XVII. **Financial Aid Suspension** – Students who do not meet the probation requirements will be placed on financial aid suspension.
- XVIII. **Appeal of Financial Aid Suspension** – Students who are placed on financial aid suspension may appeal to re-establish eligibility. ***Students appealing their aid suspension must pay their own expenses until the appeal has been reviewed and the student determined eligible for the reinstatement of their financial aid.***
- XIX. **Academic Suspension** – Academic suspension is determined by the Registrar's Office. Students may not appeal for financial aid until the academic suspension is lifted. An approval on an academic appeal does not automatically mean the student will be granted approval on a financial aid appeal.
- a. Students who have exceeded the maximum cumulative hours allowed must submit their printed degree plan that accurately reflects their educational goals in the college in addition to their appeal and appeal documentation. Section 1-D is to be completed by an academic advisor.
 - b. A student on suspension must submit a Financial Aid Appeal Form with supporting documentation to the financial aid office by the census date of each regular term in order to receive consideration for financial aid eligibility. Failure to provide supporting

documentation will result in the denial of an appeal. Students appealing their suspension must pay their own expenses until the appeal is reviewed. After an appeal has been reviewed and has been denied, the student will be responsible for paying their own expenses. The student may not appeal the denial for that semester.

- c. The financial aid office will review the appeal **within eight weeks of its receipt and determine whether the financial aid suspension is justified**. Students will be notified of appeal decision via the preferred email address, as noted in the myUH self-service center.
- d. A student may not appeal for two consecutive semesters of enrollment. A student appealing for more than one consecutive semester will be denied unless they are experiencing a documented mitigating circumstance. If the student is assigned an academic plan and they continue to meet the requirements of that plan, they will not need to re-apply for an appeal until and unless the time period of that plan expires, the student has been making progress, and the student has experienced a special circumstance. A student who has restored themselves to satisfactory academic progress will be considered whole and will receive a new suspension semester and may appeal one more subsequent infraction.

XX. **Mitigating Circumstances** – The University of Houston recognizes mitigating circumstances and the effects it may have on a student’s academic progress. In cases where a student has an unusual circumstance that has affected the student’s academic progress, allowances may be made. ***The following are examples of mitigating circumstances that may receive consideration with appropriate documentation: the student becomes very ill or is severely injured and cannot attend school, a student’s learning or functional disability, unusual circumstances that have been disruptive to the student’s academic performance, or the death or illness of an immediate family member.***

XXI. **Reinstatement of Financial Aid** – If a student’s SAP appeal is approved and financial aid eligibility is reinstated, the student will be notified via email of the conditions of reinstatement and placed on financial aid probation.

- a. A financial aid probation status will be applicable to students who have had an appeal approved. Students who are not meeting their cumulative gpa and ratio requirements will be eligible for financial aid but must maintain academic requirements including a 2.5 semester gpa and 100% semester completion ratio.
- b. Students who are exceeding their cumulative hours, but are otherwise meeting their cumulative gpa and ratio must maintain 100% completion ratio and a 2.0 semester gpa.
- c. Students placed on probation must comply with all conditions established by the financial aid office.
- d. If a final decision is made not to reinstate the student’s financial aid, the student must take personal and financial responsibility to complete at least half (6 hours) of self-funded enrollment with high academic performance. In addition, the student must satisfactorily complete all hours attempted (with a term GPA of 2.5 or above) in an eligible program of study. After satisfactorily completing a semester of at least half-time enrollment (6 hours) with personal financial responsibility, the student regains eligibility to appeal for the subsequent semester they enroll. Documentation of progress must be included within this appeal.