JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

Manual of Policies and Procedures

POLICY NO.: III.20 **DATE: May 2019**

REVIEW/REVISION DATES: June 2023

SUBJECT: Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

APPROVED: Dr. Don C. Killingsworth, Jr., President

PURPOSE

In order to receive federal financial aid, a student must make satisfactory progress toward a degree. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is made up of two components: a qualitative standard (GPA) and a quantitative standard (Rate of Completion and Maximum Time Frame). JSU evaluates SAP at the end of each semester, and a student who does not meet the minimum standards is notified via email to their JSU email account as well as via a postal letter mailed to their permanent address on file.

POLICY

Qualitative Standard

GPA (Grade Point Average): Students must have the following Institutional GPA to be considered as meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards.

Degree Level	Minimum Institutional GPA
Undergraduate	2.0
Graduate	3.0
Doctoral	3.0

Impacts on GPA regardless of degree level:

- The cumulative institutional GPA will be used for a student, unless they have received Academic Forgiveness or Second Chance. If a student is granted either of these, a separate GPA calculation will be performed. The Federal Student Aid program regulations make no provision for the concept of academic amnesty or academic renewal. Therefore, a school must always include all courses (whenever taken) in evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress (both quantitative and qualitative components).

- Transfer Credits will not be included in the Institutional GPA. The GPA standard is based on JSU credits only.
- Grades of P, W, WP, NC, I, IP, or X are excluded from the GPA Calculation.
- Grades of F or WF will count in the GPA calculation as 0 quality points.
- For courses which are repeated at JSU, the highest grade received will count in the GPA calculation.

Quantitative Standard

Pace of Completion: Students must complete 2/3 (66.67%) of the total credit hours attempted. The pace of completion is calculated by dividing the overall earned hours by the overall attempted hours. If a student does not meet the pace of completion the student will be placed on financial aid suspension.

- Overall Earned Hours = Institutional Earned + Transfer Earned
- Overall Attempted Hours = Institutional Attempted + Transfer Earned

Impacts on Attempted Hours:

- All repeated courses will count as attempted hours in the pace of completion ratio.
- Grades of F, I, IP, NC, W, WP, or WF do not count as earned hours, but do count as attempted hours.
- Audited courses (grade of X) are excluded from Attempted Hours.
- All Academic Forgiveness and Second Chance coursework are counted Rate of Completion calculation.

Maximum Time Frame: Students must complete their degree requirements within a specific number of attempted credit hours. Students not meeting the maximum time frame requirement will be placed on financial aid suspension.

- Undergraduate Students
    - Students may attempt up to 180 undergraduate hours.
    - Students pursuing a second undergraduate degree (concurrently or separately) may attempt up to 240 undergraduate hours. No extension of maximum attempted hours is permitted for more than two undergraduate degrees.
- Graduate Students
    - Students may attempt up to 150% of their published degree length. If a student changes their course of study, all previous attempted hours are included in the calculation of attempted hours.

- Students pursuing a second graduate degree (including students pursuing an Ed. S) may attempt an additional 40 graduate level hours.

- Doctoral Students
  - Students may attempt up to 150% of their published degree length. If a student changes their course of study, all previous attempted hours are included in the calculation of attempted hours.

SAP Status

A student's SAP status will be evaluated at the completion of each term of enrollment. At JSU, the term of enrollment is the semester. Students enrolled in summer semester will be evaluated for SAP at the conclusion of the summer semester. At each evaluation period, one of the following SAP statuses will be assigned:

- Good Standing
  - Student is meeting the GPA, Pace of Completion, and Maximum Time Frame standards. Student is eligible to continue receiving federal and state financial aid (grants, work study and student loans).
- Warning
  - Student is not meeting either the GPA, Pace of Completion, or Maximum Time Frame standards. Student is eligible to continue receiving federal, state, and institutional financial aid for one semester only. Continued eligibility beyond the warning semester will be contingent on the student bringing the deficient requirements to the required minimum standards.
- Suspension
  - Student is not meeting either the GPA, Pace of Completion, or Maximum Time Frame standards after a Warning semester. Student is not eligible to continue receiving federal and state financial aid until the student meets all SAP standards.
- Probation
  - Student placed on Suspension provided an SAP Appeal which was approved by JSU review procedures. Student must complete the requirements of an academic plan which will be monitored by the Financial Aid Office in conjunction with other academic support offices. Student is eligible to continue receiving federal and state financial aid for one semester only in coordination with the details of the academic plan. The student's continued eligibility beyond the probation semester will be determined at the conclusion of each semester in coordination with the details of the academic plan.

SAP Appeal Process

A student who has been placed on Suspension may appeal the SAP status decision only in cases of extenuating circumstances. Examples of extenuating circumstances for which a student may file a SAP Appeal may include a student's injury or illness, serious illness or death of an immediate family member, or other special circumstances. Each SAP Appeal will be reviewed individually, and decisions are made on a case-by-case basis as outlined in the procedures given below.

The SAP Appeal process requires the submission of a written statement by the student outlining the extenuating circumstances which led to their academic difficulties, how the circumstances have changed, and the student's plan for improving their academic status. The statement must be submitted via the Financial Aid section of a student's MyJSU account and must specifically address the courses, grades, and terms of enrollment which are affecting the insufficient SAP standing. The statement should have correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation and should be written in a professional manner. The appeal must be accompanied by supporting documentation from at least two individuals who can corroborate the student's circumstances, which is to be uploaded via MyJSU. If the documentation is provided by a professional (business, medical, counselor, clergy, etc.), the documentation must include the institution's professional letterhead, the professional's credentials, and must be signed. If a letter of support is provided by a personal reference (teacher, family friend, etc.), the documentation must be signed by that reference. For students appealing Suspension for Maximum Time Frame, a letter from their academic advisor stating the remaining courses required for graduation and the semesters in which they will be taken will be required. Step-by-step instructions for submitting an appeal can be found on the Financial Aid Office's website in the Frequently Asked Questions.

SAP appeals will be reviewed by a committee comprised of JSU Financial Aid staff. A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the SAP Appeal Committee may submit a request for a review by the 2nd Appeal Committee. Any further request for appeal will be sent to the Director of Financial Aid. The decision of the Director of Financial Aid is final.

If a student's SAP appeal is granted by either the SAP Appeal Committee, 2nd Appeal Committee, or the Director of Financial Aid, the student will gain eligibility for continued federal, state, or institutional financial aid eligibility for one semester only. The student and a representative from the Financial Aid Office will work cooperatively to develop an academic success plan that will be monitored throughout the semester to be sure the student is making proper academic progress.

In cases where it is mathematically impossible to bring the GPA or Pace of Completion ratio to the minimum standards within one semester, the academic plan may be developed across multiple semesters, but it will be evaluated at the conclusion of each semester to be certain that the requirements at each checkpoint are being properly achieved by the student.

If a student's SAP appeal is denied by either the SAP Appeal Committee, 2nd Appeal Committee, or the Director of Financial Aid, the student will not be eligible for federal, state, or institutional financial aid until the student meets the minimum SAP standards.

Re-Establishing Aid Eligibility

Once placed on Suspension, a student must meet the minimum SAP standards or have a granted appeal in order to receive federal student aid. A student who is not making Satisfactory Academic Progress may choose not to submit an appeal. If this is the case, the student will not be eligible to receive federal student aid until he/she is meeting the minimum SAP standards. The student will need to earn credit until he/she is once again meeting SAP standards. This may take several semesters to accomplish, but it will be the responsibility of the student to improve his/her academic performance during this time.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Vice President for Enrollment Management is responsible for this policy.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years.