

# Graduate and Professional Schools Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

Financial aid eligibility is based on satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards that Hamline University Office of Financial Aid is required by the U. S. Department of Education to establish, publish, and apply. The Financial Aid Office measures academic performance and enforces SAP standards to ensure that financial aid recipients progress toward completion of their degree or certificate program. Students who fail to meet these standards become ineligible to receive financial aid until compliant with all of the requirements detailed in this policy.

To demonstrate Satisfactory Academic Progress, a student's academic performance must meet two main SAP components. The first is a qualitative component, represented by grade point average (GPA). The second is a quantitative component measured by credit completion (the ratio between attempted and completed credits) and the maximum timeframe to complete the degree or certificate program.

## Section 1. Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress

**Grade Point Average** - All graduate and professional students must maintain a cumulative GPA that is equivalent to the graduation standards published by their program.

**Credit Completion** – Students must complete 67% of all credits attempted. A completed credit has a grade of A, B, C, D, H, or HP. Withdrawals, incompletes, and repeated courses are included in attempted credits.

**Maximum Time Frame** – Students are expected to finish their degree or certificate within an acceptable period of time. Acceptable period of time for financial aid recipients is defined as 150% of the required number of credits needed to complete their program. This includes transfer credits from another college that apply to the Hamline program. For example, for a program that requires 48 credits, students must finish their program before they reach 72 attempted credits. Hamline is required to suspend aid eligibility after any review which shows that the student cannot possibly complete the program within the 150% program length. Review graduate bulletin to view number of required credits for your program. Students who require developmental coursework may appeal to have the 150% limit extended.

## Section 2. Definitions/Conditions

**Credit** – A credit is the unit by which academic work is measured.

**Attempted credit** – An attempted credit includes all credits for which you are registered at the beginning of each term.

**Cumulative credits** – Cumulative credits represent the total number of credits evaluated (attempted and earned) for all periods of enrollment at the University, including summer and J-terms or terms for which the student did not receive aid.

**Earned credits** – Earned credits are those that are successfully completed with a grade of A, B, C, D, HP, and P and all plus and minus variations. Grades of I, W, N, F, and EX, or drops are not counted as earned credits. Audit credits are not counted as attempted or earned credits.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)** – The GPA is calculated using a grade point value outlined in the catalog for grades A, B, C, D, and F and all plus or minus variations. Although a grade of P or HP will count as credit earned, it carries no grade point value.

**Incompletes** – An “I” or “EX” are included in the cumulative credits attempted. These credits cannot be used as earned credits until a passing grade is assigned.

**Repeat Credits** – Repeats may be allowed in order to improve a grade or meet program requirements. They are included in credit completion and maximum time frame standards. The most recent grade will become the grade calculated for GPA.

**Transfer Credits** – Grades associated with transfer credits are not included in the cumulative GPA calculation. Transfer credits accepted by Hamline University that are applicable to the current degree program apply toward number of attempted and earned credits as well as the maximum timeframe calculation for that program.

**Change of Degree, and Dual Degree** – Many students receive multiple awards from Hamline University. Only attempted credits eligible for application toward the student’s current degree program will count toward the maximum timeframe of that degree. Attempted and earned credits under all degrees will be included in the calculation of GPA and credit completion. Students who change degree or seek a dual degree may appeal for an extension of the maximum timeframe provision of this policy. Appeals will be evaluated on an individual, case-by-case basis.

**Consortium/Joint Program Credits** – Credits accepted by the University are included with attempted and earned credit totals.

### Section 3. Implementation

Academic progress for every financial aid applicant will be monitored after each semester, including summer term. If the program is less than one year in length the review will take place at the mid-point. All of a student’s academic coursework is considered in the review process, whether the student received aid that term or not. The assessment will be based on the student’s entire academic record, including all transfer credit hours accepted. ***Because grades may not be available before the next scheduled term begins, it is possible that financial aid may be disbursed before the review is conducted.*** In the event that a student is found to be ineligible for the financial aid that has been disbursed due to failure to meet one of the standards, the aid that was disbursed will be canceled and returned to the appropriate program(s). If the student successfully appeals and is granted a probationary term, the aid can be reinstated for that term.

## **Financial Aid Warning Status**

If the student does not meet either the GPA or credit completion standard, the student will be placed on financial aid warning for the next registered term. While on warning status, students are eligible to receive financial aid.

To be removed from financial aid warning status, the student must meet the program's minimum cumulative GPA requirement and credit completion standards. A student who has reached the maximum timeframe prior to completing the program will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

## **Financial aid ineligibility/suspension**

Students, who do not meet the minimum cumulative GPA and/or credit completion ratio after completing a term while on financial aid warning status but failed to meet SAP, will no longer be eligible for federal, state, or institutional aid. Students may be eligible for private loan programs and outside assistance that does not require SAP.

Provided the student's academic status allows for registration, s/he may attend the University at his or her own expense until the minimum cumulative GPA and credit completion requirement has been met.

Hamline University may immediately deem a student ineligible for financial aid in the event of extraordinary circumstances, such as a student who registers for but does not earn any credits for two consecutive terms, or a student who demonstrates an attendance pattern that abuses the receipt of financial aid.

Students who failed to meet these standards due to unusual circumstances may appeal the financial aid SAP suspension status.

## **Academic suspension**

Students who have been suspended by the University are no longer eligible for financial aid. If a student is readmitted, s/he must complete the SAP appeal process. Eligibility for financial aid will be determined based on financial aid SAP standards through a review of the academic record.

## **Section 4. Right to Appeal**

A student who is unable to achieve SAP and is suspended from receiving financial aid has the right to appeal. The student may appeal the financial aid suspension status within 14 days of date of suspension notification or prior to the start of the term. If appeals are received after the start of the term, they will be considered, provided there is an acceptable reason for the delay. Students are encouraged to submit appeals if:

- The record shows that the student has now earned the required cumulative minimum GPA and credit completion ratio to meet SAP standards.
- The student is readmitted after suspension by the University.
- Unusual circumstances interfered with the student's ability to meet SAP standards, including but not limited to:

- Illness, accident, or injury experienced by the student or a significant person in the student's life.
- Death of a family member or significant person in the student's life.
- Divorce experienced by the student or parent.
- Reinstatement after an academic dismissal or extended break in the student's enrollment.
- Personal problems or issues with spouse, family, roommate, or other significant person.
- Exceeding time frame while in a second undergraduate or dual degree program or as a result of changing major.

To appeal, students must submit to the Financial Aid Office the following:

1. A statement from the student explaining the nature of the extenuating circumstances that contributed to the SAP deficiency with an explanation of how the barriers/circumstances to academic success have been removed.
2. Third party documentation to support the circumstances. If applicable
3. Approved academic plan developed by the student and Academic Advising Office.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

If the student successfully appeals the financial aid ineligibility/suspension status, the student will be placed on financial aid probation for their next registered term. While on probation, students are eligible to receive financial aid. Students on financial aid probation status are encouraged to use the many academic support services on campus to improve their academic standing.

To remain eligible for financial aid, the student must meet the general SAP GPA and credit completion standards or meet the terms listed in their specific approved academic plan. If after any review period the student is no longer meeting the terms of the academic plan or the general SAP standards, Hamline will suspend federal, state and institutional aid.