

# TUSCULUM COLLEGE

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Federal regulations require that students receiving financial aid must be making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree and comply with all federal, state, and institutional policies and standards applying to financial aid programs. To insure that recipients of federal, state, and/or institutional funds make qualitative and quantitative (Pace) academic progress, Tusculum College has set forth a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy as explained in this document.

A review of SAP will be conducted each year at the end of the spring semester. **Students are strongly encouraged to monitor their academic progress carefully and they should understand that drops, withdrawals, grades of E (Excused), I (Incomplete), IP (In Progress), and non-attendance (NR) can affect current and upcoming financial aid eligibility.**

Repeated courses may be included in federal and state aid calculations (see “Repeated Coursework” section for details).

A student may receive federal and state aid for a maximum of 30 developmental / remedial credit hours. This includes all failed courses, repeats, and incompletes. Developmental / Remedial courses are calculated in the qualitative portion of SAP, but are excluded from the quantitative portion (qualitative and quantitative explained under Section II, A & B).

Non-credit, and audited courses are not included in any federal aid calculations or SAP reviews.

Transfer students – All credit hours that are accepted by the Registrar’s Office will be included in the SAP evaluation (both qualitative and quantitative).

All periods of enrollment are reviewed regardless of whether or not federal and/or state aid was received or if Tusculum College was attended.

### I. TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP (TELS)

#### **Renewal Criteria for the TELS (HOPE Lottery Scholarship)**

In order to retain the TELS a recipient must have attained the minimum cumulative GPA shown below at the end of the semester during which the student has attempted the corresponding number of semester hours:

24, 48 Attempted Semester Hours = 2.75 Cumulative GPA

72, 96, 120, and above Attempted Semester Hours = 3.00 Cumulative GPA **or** 2.75-2.99 Cumulative GPA **and** a 3.00 semester GPA in the preceding term\*

\*A recipient meeting this condition must be enrolled full-time each semester and maintain a semester GPA of 3.0 (review will be made at the end of each semester)

If you plan to change your enrollment status, prior approval is required from the Office of Financial Aid. It is recommended to consult with the Office of Financial Aid before finalizing any schedule changes.

Please refer to [www.tn.gov/collegepays](http://www.tn.gov/collegepays) for specific guidelines regarding the lottery scholarship. Please consult with the Office of Financial Aid regarding use of the **repeat option**, as well as **regaining** the scholarship.

You may appeal the loss of the scholarship so long as the loss was **NOT** due to GPA issues. Examples: Leave of absence, Change of enrollment status to less than fulltime. Appeal reason must be based on personal hardship or medical reasons (documentation required). Please consult with the Office of Financial Aid regarding the appeal process.

Due to state legislation, the calculation for TELS GPA differs from the school GPA. All credit hours attempted after high school graduation, home school completion or GED test are used. Please consult with the Office of Financial Aid for your personal TELS GPA.

## II. FEDERAL AND STATE AID

### Full-time/Part-time Undergraduate Students (must be considered degree-seeking)

#### A. Quantitative Progress (Pace)

- a) Students must pass and/or successfully complete **67%** of all credit hours attempted; this is referred to as “**Pace**”.
- b) Pace is calculated by dividing the total number of credit hours completed by the total number of credit hours attempted as defined by the Registrar’s Office and recorded on the student’s transcript.
- c) Pace calculations include all accepted transfer hours
- d) Multiple “R”s (repeats) – If a course has been repeated more than once, all attempts of the same course will be included in the “Pace” calculation.
- e) *Exception:* Developmental / Remedial Classes will not be counted in the calculation and will be manually removed.

*Example:* 24 credit hours completed *divided* by 30 credit hours attempted = 80% Pace (the percentage at which a student is progressing toward degree completion).

#### B. Qualitative Progress

Students are expected to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) as outlined in the chart below:

UG Credit Hours Attempted	UG Cumulative GPA Minimum
0 - 29.99	1.50
30 - 59.99	1.70
60+	2.00

- a) How GPA is calculated for SAP
  - a. GPA as determined by the Registrar’s Office and recorded on the student’s transcript.
  - b. Pass/Fail. Courses that are so designated in the catalog are graded on a pass/fail basis. The “Pass” grade is counted in hours toward graduation but will not affect the G.P.A., whereas a “Fail” is figured in the hours completed and will affect the G.P.A.
- b) Exceptions:
  - a. Not calculated into the GPA - courses graded as “IP”, “I”, “E”, “W”, or “AW”.
  - b. Multiple “R”s (repeats) – If a course has been repeated more than once, only the last attempt will be included in the cumulative GPA calculation.
  - c. Developmental / Remedial Classes

### NOTICE to Transfer Students

Transfer students will be evaluated at the end of the spring semester or after an equivalent of an academic year (whichever occurs first). All credit hours that are accepted by the Registrar’s Office (attempted and earned) will be included in the SAP evaluation (qualitative and quantitative).

### Full-time/Part-time Graduate Students

SAP requirements are met by a graduate student as long as he/she remains eligible to continue in the program according to the Registrar’s Office.

### Maximum Timeframe for Degree Completion Requirements

Degree requirements must be completed within a maximum timeframe. Federal regulations require no federal and/or state aid to be released when a student has exceeded 150% of the published length of his/her program. This is generally determined by multiplying the credit hours required to complete the program by 150% (*i.e. federal and/or state aid for an undergraduate program requiring 128 credit hours will cease after 192 credit hours have been attempted*). Some aid programs may have more stringent limitations.

The maximum time frame includes hours attempted prior to an Academic Fresh Start being granted; however, an evaluation may be made (if appealed) to only include courses applicable to the student’s current major (as determined by the Registrar’s Office).

Students changing majors prior to the completion of their second (full-time) academic year must complete all course work within the maximum timeframe specified above. Students changing degree programs or their major after completing two (full-time) academic years and second-degree students will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis (an appeal may be required).

### **Denial**

Students not maintaining the minimum requirements will be denied all forms of federal and state assistance for future award years. Financial aid may be awarded for one semester if an appeal is approved; during which time the student must make use of the Tusculum College Academic Resource Center and / or Tutoring Center.

### **Appeal**

An appeal of a SAP denial must be submitted in writing to the **SAP APPEALS COMMITTEE** (forms online at <http://www.tusculum.edu/faid/forms.html>). **Submitting an appeal is not a guarantee that eligibility will be reinstated.** Your appeal must state the reason(s) for having unsatisfactory progress, what has changed about that situation that will allow academic progress, and supporting documentation. It is the student's responsibility to submit all necessary documentation supporting the circumstances of the appeal. The terms for re-establishing eligibility will be set forth in the committee's response. An appeal decision may impose limitations upon aid eligibility, duration of aid eligibility, and/or future minimum academic standards. If the appeal is approved, the student is placed on *probationary status* and is eligible for aid for one semester. After one semester SAP will be re-evaluated. A student will be eligible to receive aid if they now meet the SAP standards.

Reasonable appeals may include, but are not limited to:

- *Serious Illness/Accident/Injury* - acceptable documentation could include a doctor's note (on letterhead), hospital bills and/or insurance statements, police accident reports, etc.
- *Death of Immediate Family Member* - acceptable documentation could include a copy of the death certificate or published obituary.
- *Serious Impediments to Study Habits* - acceptable documentation could include doctor's or counselor's notes (on letterhead), description of circumstances from faculty or staff member, and/or statements from family members; the student should include a statement explaining an established plan to address the concerns and/or improve study habits.

It is recommended that students consult with the Office of Financial Aid prior to submitting any appeal.

### **Academic Plan**

If it is determined that a student will be unable to meet SAP at the next evaluation, an "**Academic Plan**" is required along with the appeal request. The "Academic Plan" will be developed by the Office of Financial Aid with the student and guidance from Academic Advising. If the student's appeal is approved, the "Academic Plan" must be followed each semester to maintain financial aid eligibility. If the student meets the SAP standards at the end of the next semester's evaluation, the "Academic Plan" may be disregarded. If the student does **NOT** meet the SAP policy and the "Academic Plan" is **NOT BEING FOLLOWED** the student becomes ineligible for federal and state aid.

### **Repeated Coursework**

*Federal Aid:* If a student receives an "F" in a course and repeats the class - All repetitions will be included for aid (if eligible) as long as the student never passes the course. However, if the student passes the class, only one repetition after receiving a passing grade may be included in aid eligibility. Any additional repetition will not be included for purposes of federal aid and enrollment status.

*State Aid:* State grants follow the policy listed for Federal Aid. The TELS (HOPE) policy requires all coursework after high school graduation to be calculated for renewal eligibility. A "one-time" exception policy for repeats is available. For more information please refer to [www.tn.gov/collegepays](http://www.tn.gov/collegepays) and/or consult with the Office of Financial Aid.