

# TUSCULUM COLLEGE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Fall 2017 (Approved & Updated 2.16.17)

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, as well as the completion of their degrees within the Maximum Time Limit, 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 for students enrolled in the traditional 9 month programs. For students enrolled in the year round programs, that require summer coursework, a review of SAP will be conducted each year at the end of the summer 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.**

Developmental/Remedial courses are assessed in the qualitative (GPA) portion of SAP, but are excluded from the calculations of the quantitative (Pace) portion (qualitative and quantitative explained under Section I, A, & B). Repeated courses may be included in federal and state aid calculations (see the "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. Non-credit and audited courses are not included in any federal aid calculations or SAP reviews.

**Transfer students** (as defined in the College Catalog) **will be evaluated immediately upon acceptance and registration for ELIGIBILITY pertaining to the Maximum Time Frame of Degree Completion.** *All hours attempted will be calculated in the Maximum Time Limit of 150% of the degree program.*

**Transfer students enrolled in the traditional 9 month programs will be evaluated at the end of the spring semester for the Quantitative and Qualitative Progress areas. Transfer students enrolled in the year round programs, that require summer coursework, will be evaluated at the end of the summer semester for the Quantitative and Qualitative Progress areas.** *All credit hours that are accepted by the Registrar's Office will be included in the evaluation of both the qualitative and quantitative areas.* Note: All periods of enrollment are reviewed regardless of whether or not federal and/or state aid was received or if Tusculum College was/was not attended.

**Readmitted students** (as defined in the College Catalog) **will be evaluated immediately upon acceptance and registration for ELIGIBILITY pertaining to the Maximum Time Frame of Degree Completion.** *All hours attempted will be calculated in the Maximum Time Limit of 150% of the degree program.*

**Readmitted students will also be evaluated immediately upon acceptance and registration for the Quantitative and Qualitative Progress.** *All credit hours that are accepted by the Registrar's Office will be included in the evaluation of both the qualitative and quantitative areas.*

**\*\*\* Note:** *All periods of enrollment are reviewed regardless of whether or not federal and/or state aid was received or if Tusculum College was/was not attended. Readmitted students would have been checked for SAP at the end of the spring term of their last enrollment year. They may have withdrawn prior to notification that SAP had not been met. Students will still need to comply with the SAP policy upon being readmitted. A break in continuous enrollment does not negate a student from meeting SAP requirements. \*\*\**

## I. FEDERAL AND STATE AID

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

#### **A. Quantitative Progress or Pace** - the percentage at which a student is progressing toward degree completion

- 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 hours successfully completed by the total number of hours attempted.
  - a. Total hours completed = Cumulative Hours Earned (as determined by the Registrar's Office).  
**Exception** (Remedial/Developmental coursework is included in the Registrar's calculation of attempted coursework. All hours of attempted Remedial/Developmental coursework **will be removed** from the Total Hours attempted prior to performing the PACE calculation.)
  - b. Total hours attempted = All courses attempted.  
**Exception** (not counted in Registrar's calculation): Incomplete courses, and repeats for each course repeated other than the last attempt of a repeated course.
- c) Pace calculations include all accepted transfer hours and any hours that were forgiven via academic amnesty (Academic Fresh Start).
- d) **Example Pace Calc:** 24 Cumulative hours successfully completed **divided** by 30 Cumulative hours attempted = **80% Pace**

## **B. Qualitative Progress or GPA**

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

<b>Undergraduate Credit Hours Attempted</b> (excludes Remedial/Developmental Courses)	<b>GPA Minimum</b>	<b>Graduate Credit Hours Attempted</b>	<b>GPA Minimum</b>
0 - 30.99	1.80	0 - 18	2.75
31 +	2.00	19 +	2.75

- a) How GPA is calculated for SAP
  - a. Total GPA as determined by the Registrar's Office (as listed on the transcript)
- b) Exceptions
  - a. For Pass/Fail classes – if passed, the grade of “P” is NOT calculated into the GPA but will count toward hours earned/completed. if failed, the grade of “F” will be included in the GPA calculation and will count toward hours earned/completed.
  - b. Multiple “R”s (repeats) – If a course has been repeated more than once, only the last attempt will be used in the GPA calculation.
  - c. All grades received in coursework forgiven via academic amnesty (Academic Fresh Start) will be used in the GPA calculation.
  - d. A higher **GPA** requirement of **3.25** must be maintained for **TEACH Grant** recipients.
- c) How Remedial/Developmental Course are assessed for Qualitative Progress:

Students attempting Remedial/Developmental courses must successfully pass at least 50% of the total hours attempted with a D or above grade.

## **C. Maximum Timeframe for Degree Completion Requirements**

Degree requirements must be completed within a maximum timeframe. This is generally determined by multiplying the credit hours required to complete the program by 150%. **A student becomes ineligible for Title IV funds once it is determined that it is mathematically impossible to obtain the credits needed for degree completion without exceeding the maximum hours.** 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.

	<b>Program Length</b>	<b>150% of Program Length</b>
<b>Undergraduate – Associate Degree</b>	60 credit hours	90 credit hours
<b>Undergraduate – Bachelor Degree</b>	120 credit hours	180 credit hours
<b>Graduate Degree</b>	30-63 credit hours	45-94.5 credit hours

As illustrated in the chart above, all federal and/or state aid for an undergraduate bachelor degree program requiring 120 credit hours will cease after 180 credit hours have been attempted and all federal/state aid for a graduate program requiring 30 credit hours will cease after 45 credit hours have been attempted (variations apply as some graduate programs are longer in length). Some aid programs may have more stringent limitations.

The maximum time frame calculation above will include all hours attempted. This will also include any hours forgiven via academic amnesty (Academic Fresh Start) being granted. However, students may appeal to exclude courses that are not applicable to their current major as determined by the Registrar's Office. *Note: Remedial/Developmental coursework will automatically be excluded from the 150% computation of attempted credit hours since the College does not award college credit for completion of these courses.*

### **Change of Degree Program (major)**

Students changing degree programs or their major after completing two full-time academic years and second-degree seeking students will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for a pre-approved, one time only “AUTO RESET” however, an appeal may be required. 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.

## **Financial Aid Denied – not meeting SAP**

Students not maintaining the above minimum SAP requirements will be **denied all forms of federal and state assistance** for future award years by the Office of Financial Aid. In order to regain eligibility, students would need to meet each of the requirements shown above for PACE, GPA, and the Maximum Timeframe for Degree Completion. Students can submit an Appeal to the SAP Appeals Committee as outlined below.

## **SAP Appeal Process**

Students may make an appeal of the Notification of Unsatisfactory Academic Progress – Denial of Financial Aid within 30 days of the notification. The appeal form must be submitted in writing to the **SAP APPEALS COMMITTEE (forms are available 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 the appeal form and all necessary documentation supporting the circumstances of the appeal within the above timeframe. Any appeal received after the 30 day period may not be reviewed by the Committee.

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;** during which time the student must make use of the Tusculum College Academic Resource Center and/or the Tutoring Center. After completion of the one semester of allowable aid, the student's SAP will be re-evaluated. A student will be eligible to receive aid for another semester if they now meet the SAP standards at the time of being re-evaluated or if they are following the academic plan, utilizing resources, and showing successful progress toward regaining eligibility.

**If the appeal is denied, the student is not eligible for federal and state assistance until such time that they meet each of the requirements shown above for PACE, GPA, and Maximum Timeframe.** The Committee will offer the student optional payment arrangements via the College's payment plan and the student can pursue private outside educational loans.

It is recommended that students consult with the Office of Financial Aid Staff prior to submitting any appeal. Reasonable appeals may include, but are not limited to:

- *Maximum time frame appeals resulting from Concurrent Majors/Change of Major/Change of Degree Program/Transfer credits that do not apply to degree program.* If approved, a maximum number of remaining terms of eligibility will be determined and aid eligibility will cease after those defined terms.
- *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.

## **Academic Plan**

If it is determined that a student will be unable to meet SAP at the next evaluation, in addition to the appeal an "**Academic Plan**" may be required. The "Academic Plan" will be developed by the student's Academic Advisor with any needed guidance from the Office of the Registrar. 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 any 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**

Students may repeat courses. All attempts will be recorded on the permanent transcript record along with the grades received. For all repeated courses, only the last attempt will be used to determine GPA and hours earned for graduation. An "R" will be placed on the transcript by all courses that have been repeated. Students must indicate to the Registrar's Office at registration that they are repeating a course.

**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.

**Repeated Coursework continued**

**State Aid:** State grants follow the policy listed for Federal Aid. The TELS (HOPE) policy requires that 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.

**II. TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP (TELS)**

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

ALL students receiving the Hope Scholarship must meet the following requirements:

- Maintain SAP (as outlined above in item I)
- Maintain continuous enrollment
- Be enrolled in at least 6 hours; 12 hours if eligibility was granted on a provisional basis\*
- 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:

Attempted Semester Hours	Cumulative GPA Required	Provisional GPA Alternative*
24 attempted hours	2.75	n/a
48 attempted hours	2.75	n/a
72 attempted hours	3.00	2.75-2.99 Cumulative GPA <b>and 3.00+ GPA</b> in the most recently completed semester/term
96 attempted hours	3.00	2.75-2.99 Cumulative GPA <b>and 3.00+ GPA</b> in the most recently completed semester/term
120 attempted hours	3.00	2.75-2.99 Cumulative GPA <b>and 3.00+ GPA</b> in the most recently completed semester/term

*Due to TN State Legislation, the calculation for the TELS GPA differs from Tusculum College’s GPA. All credit hours attempted (including remedial/developmental and repeated coursework) after high school graduation, home school completion or GED test are used.*

\*A recipient meeting this Provisional GPA Alternative 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 full-time enrollment status, prior approval is required from the Office of Financial Aid. It is recommended to consult with both your Advisor and your Financial Aid Counselor before finalizing any schedule changes.

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, etc... The reason for appealing must be based on personal hardship or medical reasons (documentation required). Please consult with your Financial Aid Counselor regarding the appeal process, possible use of the **repeat option**, or about an opportunity of possibly **regaining** the scholarship.

Please refer to [www.tn.gov/collegepays](http://www.tn.gov/collegepays) for specific guidelines regarding the lottery scholarship.