

2024 – 2025 Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (Revised 08/01/2024)

Truett McConnell University has adopted the following Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy according to federal and state mandates. Both federal statutes and the U.S. Department of Education regulations require institutions of higher education to establish minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for students receiving federal aid. In addition, all state of Georgia financial aid program regulations (HOPE, GTEG, etc.) require students to meet SAP criteria established for federal student aid.

The Truett McConnell University Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy measures a student's performance in the following areas: completion rate, maximum time frame, and cumulative grade point average (CGPA). The intent of this policy is to ensure that students who are receiving federal and state financial aid are making measurable progress toward completion of a degree program within a reasonable time frame. All students receiving any federal and state student financial aid must adhere to the university's SAP policy. Satisfactory progress is the minimum requirement for a student to receive federal, state, and institutional financial aid. Some financial aid programs have requirements that are more rigorous.

SAP consists of two types of measurement: quantitative (pace) and qualitative (GPA). To accurately measure a student's progress in a program, more than a qualitative (GPA) standard is needed. A student who is maintaining a high GPA by withdrawing from attempted courses may meet a qualitative standard, but may not be progressing towards graduation. While grades for prior attempts (repeats) may be excluded when calculating a student's GPA, credits from all attempts must be included when assessing the quantitative SAP standard.

The Office of Financial Aid monitors the SAP of all financial aid recipients by reviewing a student's academic record after grades are posted at the end of each fall, spring and summer semester. The completion rate calculation and maximum time frame calculation (quantitative measurement), as well as the GPA calculation (qualitative measurement), are reviewed using grades and hours from the student's total academic record. Failure to meet the standards in any one of three calculations may result in the cancellation of a student's awards. The SAP components of measurement for Truett McConnell University are summarized below.

Quantitative Measurement (Pace)

Completion Rate

Financial aid recipients are required to complete at least 67% of the cumulative credit hours attempted. The completion rate is derived by dividing the cumulative hours earned by the cumulative hours attempted. The following grades are used in computing the percentage of course work completed: A, B, C, D, F, W, WF, WP, I, TR, and any grades

excused under the Second Chance policy. Grades of AU (audit) are not used in computing the percentage of coursework completed. Course incompletes, withdrawals and repeats will impact the quantitative standard of satisfactory academic progress and incompletes should be completed as soon as possible. Courses accepted by the Registrar's Office for transfer from another college are treated as both attempted and completed courses at Truett McConnell University in calculating the completion rate.

Completion rate example:

Total attempted hours: 30 hours
Earned hours needed: 30 hours X 67% = 20.1 or 21 hours
(the minimum number of earned hours required to maintain the quantitative standard for Satisfactory Academic Progress)

Returning Student's Academic Record

The federal government requires the Office of Financial Aid to track a student's academic progress from the first date of enrollment, whether or not financial aid was received. Students returning to college after a break in enrollment should consult the Office of Financial Aid on how their college history will affect their eligibility for financial aid. A student that completely withdraws from school during a semester and receives W, WF or WP grades in all courses, will generally return to school not meeting the SAP requirements.

Maximum Time Frame

Financial aid recipients must complete their program of study without having attempted more than 150 percent of the credit hours required to complete their curriculum. This provides up to 189 attempted semester hours for student financial aid recipients to complete a 126 semester hour undergraduate program, 67 attempted semester hours for 45 semester hour graduate program or 45 attempted semester hours for a 30 semester hour graduate program.

Students who change majors or programs of study should do so early in their academic career so as not to jeopardize eligibility for student financial aid. Students can risk exceeding the 150% maximum allowable number of attempted semester hours before obtaining a degree. Students taking an excessive number of elective courses may have their financial aid revoked as these do not contribute to making satisfactory progress toward earning a degree.

Students pursuing a subsequent Bachelor's degree may be eligible for up to 90 additional semester hours of federal loans after earning their first degree. Students must have remaining undergraduate loan limit eligibility. The 67% annual completion standard still applies.

Students desiring a double major must still meet the 150% standard for completing their degree. The 150% is calculated from the degree which requires the most hours.

Qualitative Measurement (GPA)

SAP is also evaluated according to a required cumulative grade point average (GPA) scale determined by the cumulative credit hours attempted at the conclusion of each semester.

The minimum required cumulative GPA for graduate students at the end of each semester is 2.5. The minimum required cumulative GPA for undergraduate students at the end of each semester is according to the credit hours attempted benchmark chart below:

Credit Hours Attempted	CUM GPA Required
0 – 19.9	1.50
20 – 38.9	1.65
39 – 57.9	1.80
58 and above	2.00

The university bases classification of transfer students on hours attempted at Truett McConnell University in addition to hours accepted by Truett McConnell University from transferring institutions.

The following grades are used in computing a cumulative GPA: A, B, C, D, F and WF. Grades of AU, S, U, W, and WP will not impact the cumulative GPA. Withdrawals (W, WF or WP) and repeats will be included in the cumulative attempted hours to determine the benchmark. Course incompletes will not impact the GPA determination of the qualitative standard of satisfactory academic progress, but will be included to determine completion rate and the attempted hours benchmark, and must be completed as soon as possible.

Financial Aid WARNING, SUSPENSION and PROBATION

A student failing to meet SAP standards (either measurement) for the first time at the end of any semester will be placed on financial aid warning for the following semester, during which time the student remains eligible to receive student financial aid. After being placed on financial aid warning, if the student is still not meeting SAP at the end of the following semester, the student will be placed on financial aid suspension and will NOT be eligible to receive federal, state and institutional financial aid for the subsequent semesters until the student achieves satisfactory academic progress. This means the student will have to bear the full cost of attendance without financial aid until the student achieves satisfactory academic progress. A student not meeting the SAP requirements must meet with his or her advisor to determine whether courses need to be repeated and/or the course load needs to be reduced. At the end of the semester of financial aid warning, if a student is placed on financial aid suspension for not achieving Satisfactory Academic Progress due to extenuating circumstances, the student may appeal in writing to the Office of Financial Aid for an additional semester of financial aid probation (see Appeals Process below).

Appeals Process

If a student fails to meet the requirements for the grade point average and/or percentage completion rate, and loses financial aid, due to an extenuating circumstance beyond his or her control, such as serious injury, illness or mental health condition involving the student or immediate family, or death of an immediate family member, the student may appeal in writing explaining his or her circumstances to the Office of Financial Aid. The student must provide a one to two page personal statement and submit documentation that confirms the circumstances. An [SAP Appeals Form](#) must be completed and submitted with the statement.

Student statement of appeal should include the following information:

- Outlines the circumstance that prevented meeting the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress;
- States why it is possible to improve upon past academic performance; Explains the corrective action taken; and
- Includes attached documents that verify the statement. All documentation must include the student's name and ID number, and relate to the specific period during which the student's academic performance was affected.

Examples of acceptable documentation include:

- Birth/death certificates, obituaries, funeral programs of immediate family members (i.e. parents, grandparents, spouses, children, brothers, sisters)
- Medical records on physician's or hospital's letter head with the appropriate signatures that confirm illness and length of recuperation
- Court documents
- Statements from physicians, counselors, clergy or social workers on company letterhead, with the appropriate signatures

If a student has exceeded the maximum attempted hours (150 percent rule), he or she must:

- Provide a personal statement explaining why accumulated attempted hours exceed current degree requirements
- Attach documents that verify statement (see above for acceptable documentation)
- Obtain a Degree Audit from the Registrar's Office listing the remaining requirements for current degree program and a projected completion date. (Timeliness of degree audit requests is essential for appeal. Last minute requests for degree audits could delay and jeopardize an appeal. It is strongly recommended that students obtain and review a copy of their unofficial transcript before submitting an appeal).

The inclusion of supporting documentation as outlined above does not guarantee that an appeal will be granted. Each case will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and students

may be granted financial aid probation for one semester. Appeal letters submitted without supporting documentation will not be considered.

The need for more than one appeal generally indicates a serious problem. Only one appeal will be accepted per Academic Year, unless the appeal is to set up an academic plan following a semester of probation. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review the appeal. The student will be advised in writing of the final decision, generally within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal. During the appeals process, no telephone calls or e-mails concerning an individual financial aid appeal will be accepted.

Re-establishing Satisfactory Academic Progress

Other than when an appeal is granted for unusual or mitigating circumstances, a student can re-establish eligibility only by taking action that brings the student into compliance with the qualitative and quantitative components of this policy listed below:

- Quantitative Standard – 67% of cumulative attempted hours must be passed
- Qualitative Standard – Meet the GPA requirement per GPA scale for hours attempted