

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Satisfactory Academic Progress Procedure (SAP)**  
**Graduate Students**

**I. Purpose**

This procedure outlines the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for students who receive federal student aid. Regulations for federal financial assistance require post-secondary institutions to develop reasonable academic standards that measure a student's progress toward a degree for the receipt of aid. At Texas A&M University-Commerce, the Department of Financial Aid is responsible for reviewing and maintaining SAP standards for recipients of financial aid. Scholarship programs and state aid may have additional requirements. Please contact the program administrator for additional information.

**II. Authority/Regulation**

Part 668-Student Assistance General Provisions and Federal Regulations, 34 CFR 690.75.

This procedure is in effect for Fall 2004 and subsequent semesters and is subject to revision.

**III. Procedure**

Graduate Students must maintain the scholastic standards as outlined in the A&M-Commerce Graduate Catalog.

**A. Financial Aid Regulations**

The academic year begins with the fall semester and ends with the conclusion of the second summer semester. SAP performance is evaluated at least once a year. SAP will be evaluated only when the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) information for the correct academic year is received from the Central Processor.

**1. Qualitative Standard**

**a) Grade Point Average**

Grade point average (GPA) will be checked each semester. A graduate student, who has a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above, will be considered making satisfactory academic progress. Any student on academic suspension will not be eligible for financial aid.

**b) Withdrawals**

A graduate student who withdraws from the university while receiving financial aid will not be eligible for financial aid until a like number of hours has been completed at the student's own expense.

**2. Quantitative Standard**

**a) Deficit/Attempted Hours**

Number of hours successfully completed will be checked at least once each academic year. Enrollment status (hours attempted) will be determined by the student's enrollment on the census date (12<sup>th</sup> class day for fall and spring, 4<sup>th</sup> class day for summer). Enrollment status of nine or more hours attempted per semester will be considered full-time, and six to eight hours will be considered half time. Students enrolled full-time must complete 18 semester credit hours per academic year. (An academic year equals consecutive fall, spring and summer sessions.) Students enrolled less than full-time must complete a proportional number of hours annually (i.e. ½ time = 12 hours). Courses in which a grade earned of A, B, C, D, and S will be used to compile hours completed. Six hours of "X" in course number 518 and twelve hours in "X" in 718 will be counted as courses completed. Certification students and students seeking a second bachelor's degree must submit and follow a definite plan.

## **b) Excessive Hours**

The maximum number of hours a student may attempt will be limited to 150% of their A&M-Commerce catalog degree program (ex. 45 credit hours required for degree x 150% = 67 total hours allowed). A master's student who exceeds 45 credit hours attempted or a doctoral student who exceeds 90 credit hours attempted (or 45 credit hours above the master's degree) will not be deemed making satisfactory academic progress until he/she has documented that he/she will graduate within the 150% limit. Enrollment status (hours attempted) will be determined by the student's enrollment on the census date. All course work transferred to TAMU-Commerce will count toward the allowable number of maximum credit hours.

## **IV. Procedure**

A graduate student who is denied aid under the SAP procedure will be eligible for aid when he/she can illustrate that he/she meets the requirements of (III) above; therefore, the student will be responsible for any balance due to the university during periods of ineligibility. Awarded financial aid may be cancelled upon identification of non-compliance with any aspect of the SAP procedure.

## **V. Appeal**

Student aid regulations allow a student to appeal an adverse satisfactory academic progress finding based on (a) the death of a relative, (b) an injury or illness of the student, or (c) other extenuating circumstances.

### **1. Not an Appeal Item**

A student admitted on probation or provisional status will not be eligible for financial aid.

### **2. How to Appeal**

A student who wishes to appeal shall do so in writing to the Financial Aid Office no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> for fall, April 1<sup>st</sup> for spring, and June 1<sup>st</sup> for summer or within 21 calendar days of notice of the adverse finding whichever occurs first. The appeal should address what occurred to cause non-compliance with SAP and include a detailed plan of action to prevent subsequent occurrences. A student whose appeal is denied by the Financial Aid Office may appeal to the Financial Aid Committee. The student will provide written notice within **14** calendar days to appeal to the Financial Aid Committee. The Financial Aid Committee will review the written appeal. The student may, but is not required, to appear in person before the Financial Aid Committee. The Financial Aid Committee decision is final.

### **3. Notification of Decision**

The student will be notified of the appeal decision by mail or e-mail; therefore, it is imperative that the student maintains accurate address information with the university.

### **4. Reinstatement of Financial Aid**

If appeal is approved, financial aid will be reinstated in a timely manner. Financial aid can be processed only if a student's financial aid file is complete; therefore, students are encouraged to complete their financial aid file in a timely manner.