

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Title IV Federal Student Assistance**

(Effective 8/14/2024 starting with evaluation of 2024-2025 academic year unless otherwise noted)

Federal regulations (General Provisions 34 CFR 668.16(e), 34 CFR 668.32(F), and 34 CFR 668.34) require that Ursinus College review the academic progress of a student before a student receives federal financial aid to assure the student has met and continues to meet the basic academic progress standards set forth by the College. The three standards that the Office of Student Financial Services (OSFS) must evaluate are as follows:

### **Maximum Timeframe Standard**

#### **Qualitative Standard**

#### **Quantitative Standard**

**All students** enrolled at Ursinus College are subject to the academic standards of the college, which may vary from the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for financial aid.

### **Frequency of Evaluation**

OSFS will evaluate all students in a Bachelor's Degree or Teacher's Certificate (stand alone certification) program for SAP requirements annually at the end of the spring semester once grades are available as confirmed by the Registrar. All students who fail to meet SAP requirements will be notified by email by OSFS and reevaluated after each subsequent semester until SAP requirements are met again. All active (enrolled or on leave of absence) students who fail to meet SAP requirements will be notified by email by OSFS. Any students who were in a withdrawn (withdrawn, suspended, or dismissed) status at the time of notification will not receive notification unless they are later reinstated to the college as a readmit. When OSFS is notified that a student will be readmitted to the college, they will notify the student by email at that time if they failed to meet SAP requirements in their previous evaluation.

Students who are non-degree-seeking visiting students are not eligible for federal and state financial aid and are not evaluated for SAP. These students will continue to receive any institutional financial aid awards/credits provided by the college, regardless of grades.

### **Maximum Timeframe Standard**

#### **Federal**

The Department of Education requires a student receiving federal aid to complete their degree within 150% of the published length of the academic program. A student will no longer be eligible for federal aid at the point that they reach 150% of the published length of their academic program and have not completed their degree requirements. Many bachelor's degree programs have a published program length of 128 credits, although some programs may vary in length. For the Maximum Timeframe Requirement, a student must complete a program with a published program length of 128 credits having attempted fewer than 192 credits ( $128 * 1.5 = 192$ ).

#### **Institutional**

Students receiving Ursinus College institutional aid are eligible to receive institutional aid for a total of 8 semesters. If a student must enroll in any additional semesters, they will no longer be eligible for their institutional aid beyond their 8<sup>th</sup> semester. Students will have the opportunity to appeal for institutional aid after their 8<sup>th</sup> semester, but institutional aid reinstated upon a successful appeal may be subject to change at the discretion of OSFS.

NOTE: Students receiving institutional merit scholarships and UC Fund are only eligible for these funds during fall and spring semesters in which they are enrolled as full-time students. Students receiving these funds are not eligible to receive them during any summer semesters.

## **Qualitative Standard**

A student must meet the following GPA criteria to continue to receive federal and institutional financial aid:

### **Cumulative GPA Requirement**

<b><u>Bachelor's Degree</u></b>	
<b><u>Semesters Attempted*</u></b>	<b><u>Cumulative GPA Required**</u></b>
1-2	1.50
3	1.75
4+ (or 64+ credits attempted)	2.00

**\*All transfer and AP credits will be counted towards semesters attempted as they are grouped on the student's Ursinus transcript. Typically transfer and AP credits are grouped on the transcript by school and not by semester – each school represented in this manner will count as one semester attempted for SAP evaluation purposes, even if the credits listed are representative of multiple semesters. All other transfer and AP credits grouped by individual semesters on the transcript will be counted by attempted semester as they are grouped on the transcript.**

**\*\*See 2 Semester GPA Requirement below**

### **Teacher Certificate (stand-alone certification)**

<b><u>Cumulative GPA Required</u></b>
2.00

Students who have no established GPA due to any combination of the withdraw from all of their attempted courses (through leave of absence or other means) or taking courses graded on an exclusively S/U evaluation at Ursinus College, both cumulative and during the evaluation period, will fail the cumulative GPA portion of the Qualitative Standard.

### **2 Semester GPA Requirement**

In addition to the cumulative GPA requirements, students having a semester GPA below 2.00 for two successive semesters within the academic period being evaluated (fall and spring semesters of the academic year being evaluated) are considered to have failed to meet the Qualitative Standard, regardless of their cumulative GPA. Students enrolled in only one semester at Ursinus College during the evaluation period are not evaluated by this standard. If a student fails to meet this requirement and successfully appeals to receive an additional semester of financial aid on financial aid probation, they must earn a 2.00 GPA or higher in the probationary semester and meet all other SAP requirements to be considered satisfactory upon re-evaluation.

#### ***Withdraw from Semester***

If a student withdraws from all their registered courses during the semester but prior to the end of the semester, that semester will not be counted towards this calculation. These students will be evaluated the same as a student who only attempted one semester and cannot fail the 2 semester GPA requirement.

#### ***Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory Grading***

If a student attempts courses that were all graded on a S/U grading scale and does not receive a GPA for that semester, they will be considered to have met a 2.00 for that semester if they earned S grades in 75% (not rounded) or more of their attempted credits.

#### ***Study Abroad***

If a student studied abroad during the academic year, they will be evaluated the same as a student who only attempted one semester and cannot fail the 2 semester GPA requirement since study abroad credits are reflected on the transcript as transfer credits without grades.

### **Transfer Credits**

If a student has exclusively transfer credits for one of the semesters during the evaluation period, these students will be considered to have attempted one semester at Ursinus College during the evaluation period and cannot fail the 2 semester GPA requirement.

### **Academic Standards and Discipline Committee (ASDC)**

ASDC receives the record of every student with an average GPA below 2.00 at the end of each semester. ASDC's review and determination of a student's eligibility is based on the Academic Suspension and Dismissal policy found at <https://www.ursinus.edu/academics/catalog/academic-policies/>. The process for ASDC's review of academic progress is separate from the review of academic progress performed by OSFS. If a student fails to meet both ASDC's and OSFS's academic progress standards and is placed on academic probation from ASDC, they must also successfully appeal to OSFS to continue to receive institutional and federal financial aid.

### **Institutional Merit Scholarship**

In addition to the above GPA requirements, Ursinus College has a 2.0 cumulative GPA requirement for any institutional scholarships received. If a student fails to meet the required GPA for continuation of their institutional merit scholarship (see Institutional Merit Scholarship in Definitions section below) and meets the SAP requirements, their academic scholarship will be reduced as follows\*\*\*:

<u>Cumulative GPA</u>	<u>Scholarship Reduction (Year/Semester)</u>
1.75-1.99	\$1,500/\$750
1.50-1.74	\$3,000/\$1,500
<1.50	Not Eligible for Scholarship

Students who do not meet the SAP requirements and successfully appeal for continued financial aid will have their institutional merit scholarship eligibility evaluated by the SAP Appeal Review Committee on a case-by-case basis. The SAP Appeal Review Committee will have the discretion to either renew the scholarship at its full amount or reduce it according to the above criteria depending on academic and financial factors reviewed at the time of the appeal.

**\*\*\* Students who fail to meet the 2.00 cumulative GPA requirement but both 1. meet all other SAP requirements and 2. take and successfully complete (with a passing grade) IDS-021 (Creating Success: Skills for Academic Success in College) are exempted from the scholarship reductions listed above. This change will take effect starting with the evaluation of SAP for the 2023-2024 academic year (2024-2025 academic year aid renewal). Please note that the IDS-021 course is only available for first-year students in the spring semester each year.**

### **Quantitative Standard**

Students receiving federal and institutional aid must successfully complete 67% of their cumulative, attempted credit hours as recorded by the Office of the Registrar on the student's transcript.

#### **Examples of Pace Requirement:**

1. A student who has attempted a total of 12 credits must have successfully completed at least 8 credits ( $8 / 12 = 66.67\%$ ).
2. A student who has attempted a total of 18 credits must have successfully completed at least 12 credits ( $12 / 18 = 66.67\%$ ).
3. A student who has attempted a total of 33 credits must have successfully completed at least 22 credits ( $21 / 33 = 66.67\%$ ).
4. A student's UC transcript reflects 24 transfer or AP credits. If the student has attempted a total of 60 credits of UC coursework, s/he must have successfully completed at least 56 credits, including transfer and AP credits ( $56 / 84 = 66.67\%$ ).

Note: Pace calculations that do not result in whole numbers are rounded to the nearest whole percent.

***Course Incompletion/Withdraw and Non-Credit Remedial Courses***

Course incompleteness, course withdrawals, and non-credit remedial courses are counted towards attempted credits but not completed credits for the quantitative standard and will count, as recorded by the Office of the Registrar on the student's transcript, for the qualitative standard.

***Transfer and AP Credits***

Transfer and AP credits are counted towards both attempted and completed credits for the quantitative standard, but they do not count towards a student's GPA for the qualitative standard. If a student must repeat a course for major or degree requirements, it may be counted toward the annual required credits completed and/or grade average.

***Credits with S/U Grading***

Credits attempted on a S/U Grading scale are counted towards attempted credits for the quantitative standard. Credits attempted under this grading scale and completed with an S grade are counted towards completed credits for the quantitative standard. Credits attempted under this grading scale do not count towards a student's GPA for the qualitative standard, except as noted in the 2 Semester GPA Requirement Section above.

**Repeated Courses**

Students may retake any course, but they shall receive credit only once for the same course. Although a course may be retaken as many times as necessary to receive a passing grade, students may repeat only once courses they passed on the initial try. All grades for courses taken at Ursinus will appear on the transcript, but the last grade earned will replace the previous grades for the purpose of calculating the GPA. Credits earned elsewhere and accepted as transfer credits will not alter the GPA or serve as a replacement grade.

**Study Abroad**

Students who studied abroad and are waiting for grades to be transferred to Ursinus from their semester(s) abroad will be evaluated at the same time as all other students at the end of the spring semester once all Ursinus grades are available. At the time when notification is received that the grades and credits from a student's semester abroad are available, OSFS will reevaluate the student's progress. If at the time of either of these evaluations a student does not meet SAP requirements, OSFS will notify them by email.

**Grade Changes/Late Transfer Credits**

If a student has a change in grade, an incomplete grade changed to a completed grade, or summer or transfer credits that they believe may affect their eligibility, they will be able to request a reevaluation of SAP outside of the standard appeal process. Requests for reevaluation should be emailed to OSFS at [financialaid@ursinus.edu](mailto:financialaid@ursinus.edu) at the time the new grades or credits are available and prior to the first day of class of the next semester. For transfer credits, the transcript must be received by Ursinus prior to the first day of class of the next semester. Once OSFS has reviewed this request, OSFS will notify the student by email with the results of the reevaluation. If, at the time their SAP status is reevaluated, OSFS will process their appeal in the financial aid management system as "Re-evaluated Now Satisfactory" and their financial aid will be fully reinstated for the next academic year as long as they meet all other aid renewal criteria. Because their re-evaluation results in a satisfactory SAP status, the student will not be placed on a probationary status for any of their renewed financial aid and they will be re-evaluated for SAP at the next scheduled evaluation period at the end of the following spring semester. If a student still does not meet the SAP requirements upon reevaluation, they will be advised that an appeal will be necessary in order to be considered for reinstatement of financial aid.

## **Appeals Process**

Any student who does not meet the SAP requirements at the time of evaluation due to unanticipated, extenuating circumstances can appeal to OSFS for continued financial aid eligibility.\*\*\*\* Acceptable reasons for appeals are as follows:

- the death, serious injury, or illness of an immediate relative
- a serious injury or illness of the student which required medical intervention
- significant, unanticipated family obligations or hardships
- catastrophic loss (e.g. flood, fire, etc.)
- other special circumstances

Students appealing for continued financial aid eligibility will be required to complete a SAP Appeal Form as well as provide supporting documentation where applicable. A student's SAP Appeal Form must include an explanation of both why they failed to meet the SAP requirements as well as what has changed in their situation that will allow them to make satisfactory progress at the next evaluation of their progress. Students can complete the SAP Appeal Form found on OSFS's website at [www.ursinus.edu/financialaid/forms](http://www.ursinus.edu/financialaid/forms). All appeals will be reviewed by a committee and any approvals of appeals will be granted on a case-by-case basis. If a student is unable to fill out the SAP Appeal Form, they can submit their appeal by other means such as by an email to [financialaid@ursinus.edu](mailto:financialaid@ursinus.edu) or completing the standard financial aid appeal form, as long as it meets the two required explanations listed above and submission by other means is approved by OSFS.

OSFS will review the academic record of a student who has not met the SAP requirements and appealed for continued financial aid to reevaluate them for SAP under the same standards they were originally evaluated. If, at the time their appeal is reviewed and their SAP status is reevaluated, they meet the SAP requirements due to a changed grade, initially incomplete grade being completed, or other similar change to their transcript, OSFS will process their appeal in the financial aid management system as "Re-evaluated Now Satisfactory" and their financial aid will be fully reinstated for the next academic year as long as they meet all other aid renewal criteria. Because their re-evaluation results in a satisfactory SAP status, the student will not be placed on a probationary status for any of their renewed financial aid and they will be re-evaluated for SAP at the next scheduled evaluation period at the end of the following spring semester.

If a student's appeal for continued financial aid eligibility is approved by the review committee, a student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and an academic plan. Academic progress for students on Financial Aid Probation will be reevaluated at the end of each subsequent semester once all grades are available. If SAP requirements are not met upon reevaluation, the student will be notified by email by OSFS and will have to repeat the same process to appeal to be considered for continued financial aid eligibility. If SAP requirements are met upon reevaluation, the student will be removed from Financial Aid Probation and fully reinstated for continued financial aid eligibility.

In some cases, OSFS will email students to request additional supporting documents or supplementary explanation. Once the SAP Appeal Review Committee has reviewed an appeal, OSFS will email the student with the results of their SAP Appeal, regardless of the results of their appeal review. If any additional steps are required from the student (setting up academic plan, registration, filing FAFSA, etc.), OSFS will provide that information in the email to the student.

\*\*\*\* If a student is dismissed from the college by the Academic Dean, that decision supersedes any SAP decision and the student will not be eligible to appeal for continued financial aid.

### **PA State Grant Progress Check**

All students who receive the Pennsylvania State Grant will also be evaluated separately for academic progress for the state grant. PHEAA requires that students complete 12 credits in each semester that they receive the state grant as a full-time student or 6 credits in each semester that they receive the state grant as a part-time student to remain eligible for the state grant in the following academic year. Evaluation of the Pennsylvania State Grant academic progress requirements will take place annually at the end of the spring semester once all grades are available. OSFS will notify any student by email who did not meet the state's requirements for progress following evaluation and will report to PHEAA that the student's progress requirement for the state grant was not met. Any questions about the state's progress requirements should be directed to PHEAA by phone at 1-800-692-7392 or by email at [granthelp@pheaa.org](mailto:granthelp@pheaa.org).

### **Students Receiving VA Benefits (Post 9/11 GI Bill)**

In accordance with United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regulations, students receiving VA educational benefits who fail to meet the requirements of this policy will be withdrawn from Ursinus College. The certifying official for VA educational benefit programs will immediately notify the VA that the student failed to meet the requirements of the SAP policy and has been withdrawn from the College.

### **Definitions**

Evaluation period – This is the standard evaluation period that spans the fall and spring semesters of the academic year being evaluated for SAP. All calculations of cumulative GPA and cumulative credits attempted/completed include any prior terms in which a student enrolled or had transfer or AP credits reflected on their transcript.

Federal aid – This is any Federal Student Aid program that is authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Federal aid includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Direct Subsidized Loan
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan
- Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan
- Federal Work Study

Financial Aid Probation – A student who fails to meet SAP requirements, is granted an appeal for continued financial aid, and is placed on an academic plan is considered to be on the Financial Aid Probation status. OSFS will reevaluate students on Financial Aid Probation for SAP requirements at the end of each subsequent semester while they remain on this status. A student will remain on Financial Aid Probation until they meet SAP requirements at the time of reevaluation.

Institutional aid – This is any aid that is awarded by Ursinus College which includes, but is not limited to, institutional scholarship, grant, and endowment funds.

Institutional Merit Scholarship – This is the scholarship a student was awarded at the time of their admission to Ursinus College (excluding Tuition Exchange and Tuition Remission) or a specialty scholarship later received that replaced their initial merit scholarship. Institutional Merit Scholarships include, but are not limited to, the following scholarships: Zacharias Scholarship, Rice Scholarship, Gateway Scholarship, Ursinus International Merit Scholarship, Ursinus Scholarship, Creative Writing Scholarship, UC Performing Arts Scholarship (Dance, Music, or Theater), PVDT Scholarship, Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship, and MCCC Scholarship.

Published program length – This is the program length, in completed credit hours, of the student’s academic program as published in the college catalog.

PHEAA – Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) is the organization responsible for administering the Pennsylvania State Grant Program. More information about PHEAA can be found at [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org).

S/U Grading – This is the grading where credits are assigned a S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory) grade. Because there is no scalable grade, these are not included as part of the GPA calculation for a student.