

# Ozarka College

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

### Policies and Procedures

Federal regulations require the college to establish and apply reasonable standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for the purpose of the receipt of financial assistance under all programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. The law requires institutions to develop policies regarding SAP, including both qualitative and quantitative measures. The college is required to design criteria which outlines the definition of student progress towards a degree/certificate and the consequences if progress is not achieved. Ozarka College students who wish to be considered for financial aid must maintain satisfactory progress as set forth in the SAP Policies and Procedures below.

### Process Overview & Responsibilities

The College will conduct a review of each student's academic progress at the end of each payment period: Summer I, Summer II, Fall, and Spring terms. If students fails to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress according to these standards, they are notified by mail, and will be placed on Warning (no appeal necessary). Students who are on Warning will remain eligible for Title IV aid for one payment period. Students who are on Warning will have one payment period to meet SAP standards. If they do not meet SAP standards at the end of this payment period they will not be eligible for financial aid and will be placed on suspension. These policies and procedures apply to both full-time and part-time students.

### Quantitative Criteria

#### *Attempted vs. Successfully Completed*

Students must successfully complete at least 67% of all hours attempted during each evaluation period. The term 'attempted hours' includes the total of all credit hours in which the student enrolls during each evaluation period. The term "successful completion" is defined as receiving a "C" or better in each completed course. (See chart below for further explanation).

#### **QUANTITATIVE CHART(examples)**

#### **Multiply Attempted Hours by 0.67 (Results are rounded down)**

<b>Attempted Hours</b>	<b>Minimum Successfully Completed Hours Allowed for SAP</b>
3	2
6	4
9	6
12	8
15	10

## ***Pace Criteria***

All students must be able to demonstrate successful completion of all required courses in their program of study within 150% of the hours required to complete each program of study.

Any student who meets all other components of the SAP policy, but enrolls in hours causing the student to exceed the 150% limit during the payment period, must file an appeal to be eligible to be considered for financial assistance. This specific criterion is reset each time a student is accepted into a new program of study. If a student chooses to change into a different program of study, any attempted hours that satisfy the requirements of the new program of study will be applied according to the pace criteria outlined above. *Only the attempted hours that do not apply to the student's new program of study are excluded from the pace criteria calculation.* See chart below for an example of pace criteria calculations.

### **PACE CHART(examples)**

***Multiply Hours in Program by 1.5 (Results are rounded down)***

<b>Total Hours Required to Complete Program of Study</b>	<b>Maximum Number of Attempted Hours Allowed (150%) for Program of Study</b>
30	45
52	78
60	90
66	99

### ***Pace Criteria and Transfer Work***

All transfer hours accepted at Ozarka College are included in the pace criteria calculation as attempted and successfully completed hours. Transfer work will be evaluated in the same manner as credit hours received at Ozarka College. Transfer students may be placed on probation for their first semester attending Ozarka College pending evaluation of all college transcripts from other institutions (see explanation below).

## **Qualitative Criteria**

### ***Grade Point Average***

Students must maintain **BOTH** a minimum of a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) for each evaluation period **AND** as a cumulative GPA. Transfer hours are not included in the GPA calculation for determining Satisfactory Academic Progress. Students not meeting the GPA minimum for both term and cumulative averages, fail to meet the SAP policy and will be placed on financial aid warning/suspension, which will result in ineligibility for assistance

through the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and Federal Title IV Financial Aid Programs.

### ***Transfer Students***

Transfer students placed on financial aid probation for the first semester at the College, after evaluation of all college transcripts from other institutions, may be required to participate in at least two sessions of financial aid counseling with the financial aid office, or their designee. Students who do not comply with the requirements of this probationary period will be placed on financial aid suspension and must file a financial aid appeal in order to be considered for financial aid assistance in future evaluation periods.

### **Financial Aid Warning**

Once a student fails to meet the standards set forth in the SAP policy, the student is placed on financial aid warning. A student on financial aid warning may continue to receive assistance under the Title IV, HEA programs for one payment period despite a determination that the student is not making SAP. Financial aid warning status does not require an appeal.

### **Financial Aid Suspension**

Once a student fails to meet the standards set forth in the SAP policy, the student is placed on financial aid suspension and will lose their eligibility to receive financial aid.

If a student does not meet the SAP policy, he/she is not eligible for Title IV aid unless approved in the appeal process, or the student meets SAP in subsequent terms.

A student placed on financial aid suspension may also be required to complete an Academic Plan. This plan will give a student specific requirements to be met to be considered eligible for Title IV aid in a future term or terms. Failure to meet the expectations outlined in an Academic Plan will result in ineligibility for assistance through the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and Federal Title IV Financial Aid Programs.

An Academic Plan is based upon an individual's ability to complete his/her program of study within 150% of the hours it takes to complete that program of study.

### **Appeal Process**

The College has established a financial aid appeals process, which is outlined in the policy below. Exceptions can be made to this policy under extenuating circumstances.

### ***Student Responsibility***

Students removed from financial aid eligibility may file an appeal with the Financial Aid Officer. The appeal must be in writing, and extenuating circumstances must be well documented. The appeal should clearly identify the extenuating circumstances causing the student to fail to meet the SAP policy for the term(s) in question. Any necessary documentation that can help validate the appeal must be submitted with the appeal. Such documentation may include hospital records, police records, court records, letter from a doctor, and/or any other documentation that may help support the specific circumstances of the situation. The student must include a statement explaining what has changed in the student's situation that will allow the student to demonstrate SAP at the next evaluation.

Each Financial Aid Appeal MUST include the following items:

Suspension Appeal Form

Advisor-approved Academic Plan

Statement describing situation (see above)

Supporting Documentation

The Suspension Appeal Form (<https://otc.ozarka.edu/finaid/>) and all required and supporting documentation must be submitted to the Financial Aid office by the Wednesday before the first day of classes each semester.

Appeals will be responded to within three weeks of submission. The committee will review appeals on the Wednesday before the first day of class each semester. The committee will notify the student of their appeal decision through their Ozarka email address; if the student's Ozarka email address is not available a letter will be mailed using the address submitted with the appeal. Neither the committee nor the financial aid office staff will give appeal results over the phone.

### ***Appeal Committee Responsibility:***

The Appeals Committee uses professional judgment to evaluate all items submitted by each student, as well as the student's educational records, to determine the decision to reinstate eligibility to receive financial aid. The Appeals Committee requires a majority vote to either approve or deny a student appeal. The Appeals Committee reserves the right to place further recommendations on the student as a condition of receiving financial aid, such as reduction of course hours, extra academic advising, or extra academic support.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

Once a student reestablishes eligibility to receive financial aid, he/she is placed on a financial aid probation semester. During the probationary period, the college may require the student to fulfill specific terms and conditions such as taking a reduced course load, enrolling in specific courses, and/or participate in academic counseling with a Student Support advisor. Students placed on Financial Aid Probation are expected to be able to meet the criteria of this Satisfactory Academic Progress policy by the end of their next term of enrollment. Students placed on Financial Aid Probation that do not meet the criteria

outlined in this policy by the end of their next term of enrollment are considered to not be maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress.

### **Special Conditions**

**Developmental Courses** – Enrollment in these courses will be included in the total hour requirement for calculating financial aid awards, the calculating of cumulative semester hours of credit required, and in the calculation of cumulative semester hours attempted. However, developmental courses do not earn a GPA and will not count toward the student's overall GPA for academic progress purposes. Developmental courses will be considered "successfully completed" if the student earns a grade of "C" or better.

**Repeating Courses** – A student may repeat courses taken at Ozarka College for the purpose of grade point adjustments by re-enrolling in the same courses at the College. When a course is repeated once, the higher grade will be used to calculate the grade point average. If a course is repeated more than once, only the lowest grade earned will be excluded from the GPA calculation. All courses will count toward the number of hours attempted and will count as successfully completed as long as the course met the guidelines for successful completion of a degree. All courses attempted will be included in the 150% rule concerning degree completion. The SAP policy does not limit the number of times a course can be repeated. However, there are limits on receiving financial aid for repeated courses.

**"I" and "W"** – Courses with a grade of "I" or "W" will count towards the student's hours attempted, but will not count toward the number of hours successfully completed.

**Transfer Students** – Students must report to the Financial Aid Office and Admission's Office, all colleges, universities, and other schools in which they have enrolled prior to Ozarka College. Transfer students are subject to the same policies regarding length of time, pacing criteria and GPA as native Ozarka College students, for all transfer hours accepted at Ozarka College. Any hours transferred to the college after a student has completed a previous degree at the college will count towards the new degree.

### **Satisfactory Progress Definitions**

**Appeal** – A process by which a student who is not meeting SAP standards petitions the school for reconsideration of his eligibility for FSA funds.

**Financial Aid Probation** – A status a school assigns to a student who is failing to make SAP and who successfully appeals. Eligibility for aid may be reinstated for one payment period.

**Financial Aid Warning** – A status a school assigns to a student who is failing to make SAP. The school reinstates eligibility for aid for one payment period and may do so without a student appeal.