



SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

COLLEGE ONLY

(For Title IV Financial Aid Applicants only, to determine continued eligibility for Federal, State, and/or Institutional Need-based Aid)

The U.S. Department of Education has regulations concerning “satisfactory academic progress” for Title IV financial aid recipients. These regulations outline requirements for each institution to establish a policy for monitoring the academic progress of each student receiving Title IV financial aid. The intent of this policy is to fulfill this requirement established by the Department of Education. This policy in no way infringes upon or replaces UNCSA’s current policies for Arts and Academic Probation.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY

The requirements of this policy apply to all students as one determinant of eligibility for aid. According to federal regulations, this policy has qualitative measures (GPA) and quantitative measures (Completion Ratio and Maximum Timeframe). Financial aid recipients must maintain satisfactory progress in all areas according to this policy for all periods of enrollment, regardless of whether aid was received during all periods of enrollment.

A student’s Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be reviewed at the end of each academic year. At that time, any student who is not making satisfactory academic progress will be placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Suspension for the next academic year. A student on SAP Suspension will be denied all federal financial aid, as well as other need-based aid, and will be required to use other options for covering their costs of attending school for the academic year. At the end of the academic year in which the student was on SAP Suspension, if the student is determined to be progressing satisfactorily according to this policy (i.e., “meeting SAP”), the student’s eligibility to receive aid will be reinstated for the following academic year. If the student is not meeting SAP after an academic year without aid, they will remain on SAP Suspension for another academic year. A student has the right to appeal Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension using the appeal process described later in this policy.

Invitation to Return

Students in the degree or arts diploma/certificate programs must be invited to return to UNCSA by their Arts School each academic year. To state the obvious, Title IV and other need-based financial aid will not be available to students who are not invited to return. If a “not-invited” student reenrolls at a later date, that student will be subject to the same Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy as students who are invited to return. Furthermore, to be eligible for aid when reenrolling, this student must have been meeting SAP at the end of the last academic year enrolled; the student must continue to meet SAP using the current SAP Policy in effect at the time of each evaluation.

New, Transfer, and Returning Students

UNCSA has several categories of students, as follows:

1. Undergraduate
 - a. Degree
 - b. Arts Diploma/Certificate
2. Graduate
 - a. Degree
 - b. Performing Artist Certificate
3. Full-time
4. Part-time

Degree and certificate/diploma students are treated equally for the purpose of this policy. Full-time and part-time students are treated equally, except where noted otherwise.

MEASURES OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

1. Qualitative (Grade Point Average)

To be progressing satisfactorily, students must meet UNCOSA standards for minimum Grade Point Averages (GPAs), as detailed in the *UNCOSA Bulletin*. The achievement of acceptable GPAs will be monitored and administered by the arts schools and University Programs (Academics), in conjunction with the University Registrar, according to each applicable standard. Although standards vary, all students must achieve a minimum GPA of 2.0 for satisfactory progress according to this policy. GPAs include all course work at UNCOSA.

Students on Arts Probation and/or Academic Probation may retain financial aid eligibility, if their cumulative GPA is 2.0 or above, and they meet both of the Quantitative Measures outlined below when SAP is reviewed. Students dismissed, suspended, expelled or not invited to return will not be eligible to receive financial aid.

2. Quantitative

To be progressing satisfactorily, a student must meet two types of quantitative measures.

a. Completion Ratio

Students must achieve and maintain a cumulative Completion Ratio of at least **67%** to remain eligible for financial aid.

The Completion Ratio will be calculated by dividing the cumulative number of total credit hours **completed** by the cumulative number of total credit hours **attempted**. Credit hours successfully **completed** at UNCOSA are for all courses in which a student receives a non-failing letter grade (A – D), S (Satisfactory), or P (Passing). Credit hours **attempted** at UNCOSA include credit hours for all courses in which a student was enrolled on the tenth day of class each term. Credit hours from other institution(s) accepted toward a student's program at UNCOSA are added to both **attempted** and **completed** hours. (*See Section 3, Additional Information*).

A student who does not maintain the minimum Completion Ratio of 67% will be placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension for the next academic year. The student will not be reinstated for aid until satisfactory academic progress is established. A student has the right to appeal Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension using the appeal process discussed later in this policy.

b. Maximum Timeframe

Students must complete their program within the maximum timeframes outlined below.

Normal Length of Program:	Maximum Time-Frame:	
	Full-Time	Part-Time
Undergraduate 4-year program	5 years	8 years
Graduate program 3-year program	4 years	6 years
Graduate program 2-year program	3 years	4 years
Graduate program 1-year program	2 years	3 years

At UNCSA, successful completion of the core arts curriculum is the basis by which students progress toward completion of their program. The arts curriculum requires a mastery of topics acquired through successful completion of a prescribed set of courses in a specified order, in order to obtain and demonstrate proficiency in the art form. Due to the strict structure of the UNCSA arts curriculum, transfer work must demonstrate proficiencies equal to a certain level in the arts curriculum to allow the student to be classified higher than C1 for undergraduates or G1 for graduate students when they enter the program. Therefore, Maximum Timeframe begins with the level assigned at the time the student enters UNCSA.

See the examples below:

Example 1 – John enters as a first-time college freshman (no prior college work). He is classified as C1 and begins his first year. He has five years to work toward a 4-year degree/diploma.

Example 2 – Jane enters as a transfer student. Arts credits from her previous college work are accepted towards her degree at UNCSA, and she is classified as a C2. This begins her 2nd year toward her degree, and she has three additional years to complete a 4-year degree/diploma.

Note: Transfer credit hours for academic courses from a student’s previous college work may substitute for academic courses that could be taken at UNCSA as part of the Bachelors degree requirements, but these transfer hours do not escalate the pace at which a student can progress through their core arts curriculum.

A student who does not complete his/her program, within the maximum timeframes stated above, will be placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension for the next academic year. The student has the right to appeal using the appeal process discussed later in this policy.

3. Additional Information

Grades of “F” (Fail), “W” (Withdrawal) and “U” (Unsatisfactory) are considered hours attempted but not successfully completed, therefore, they negatively impact the Completion Ratio. “F” will also negatively affect the GPA.

Grades of “I” (Incomplete) are considered hours attempted but not successfully completed, which will negatively impact the Completion Ratio, until or unless the work is completed and a grade is given to replace the “I”. However, if an “I” is given at the end of the Spring term, the course will not be included in the Completion Ratio for that academic year. An “I” for a course becomes an “F” after one full term, if the work has not been completed for a passing grade to replace the “I”.

Example: John receives an “I” for a course taken in the Fall Term. At the end of the following term, John has not satisfied the requirements to upgrade the “I” to a letter grade. The grade for the course then becomes an “F” and will negatively impact the GPA as well as the Completion Ratio.

Course repetitions will be included in both the GPA and Completion Ratio. However, if a student applies for and is granted permission to replace a grade for an academic course under the School’s “Grade Replacement

Policy”, only the replacement grade will count in the GPA, but the credit hours for both attempts will be included in the Completion Ratio. Non-credit remedial courses and audited courses will not be used in determining satisfactory academic progress.

At UNCSA, student success is determined by the results of attempted and completed coursework while attending UNCSA. For Satisfactory Academic Progress, GPA will begin with courses taken at UNCSA. Completion Ratio will be calculated based on courses at UNCSA; also, credit hours for courses taken at other institutions which are accepted toward a program at UNCSA will be counted in the Completion Ratio as both attempted and completed hours. Maximum Timeframe will consider the level of classification at the beginning of enrollment at UNCSA.

Students that change programs to a different arts school before completing their original program must have been meeting SAP before the change, to be eligible for continued financial aid in the new program. Because of the prescribed arts curriculum, Maximum Timeframe for these students will begin with the level assigned for entry in their new program.

When satisfactory academic progress is monitored at the end of each academic year, the student’s cumulative record will be reviewed for Completion Ratio and Maximum Timeframe. Students must adhere to GPA requirements as detailed in the UNCSA Bulletin for their programs, and their cumulative record will be reviewed to ensure a GPA of 2.0 or higher.

A student who officially withdraws from UNCSA will be monitored for satisfactory progress upon reentering UNCSA. The review will not include courses with an official withdrawal (“W”) status due to institutional withdrawal. SAP will be based on the results of satisfactory progress monitoring from the most recent full academic-year increment.

4. Appeals Process

Any student placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension has the right to appeal. An appeal must be made, in writing, to the Director of Student Financial Aid. The appeal must include a detailed description of extenuating circumstances that occurred during the academic year in which the student failed to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress. Extenuating circumstances may include an injury or illness of the student, the death of a relative, the serious illness of an immediate family member, or other individual special circumstances. The appeal must also include documentation to support the existence of circumstances described in the appeal and evidence that the circumstances have been resolved or changed to allow the student to progress satisfactorily. The appeal will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, consisting of staff and faculty. The Director of Student Financial Aid will act as the non-voting chair of the committee.

The committee will review the student’s written appeal and documentation, along with academic records, any additional recommendations submitted on behalf of the student, and any financial aid records. The decision by the committee will be final. This committee will have the ability to assign approval, conditional approval, or denial of financial aid. A student who is granted conditional approval may be required to seek assistance/counseling to help overcome obstacles hindering satisfactory progress, and/or the student may be required to complete and adhere to a written “success plan”. The committee will convene in a timely basis when needed.

5. Reinstatement of Financial Aid

To have federal financial aid reinstated after being on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension (i.e., the student failed SAP and did not have an appeal approved or conditionally approved), the student must have continued in school without the benefit of federal and need-based financial aid for one academic year. At the end of that academic year, the student must notify the Office of Student Financial Aid that they wish to have their academic record reviewed for satisfactory academic progress. If satisfactory progress has been established at that time, aid will be reinstated for the upcoming academic year. If not, the student has the right to appeal.