

CSUSM Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Undergraduate Students

Policy Update Effective for the 2015-16 Academic Year

Federal regulations require all institutions participating in Title IV federal student aid programs to establish academic standards to ensure students make satisfactory progress towards their educational objectives. At California State University, San Marcos, satisfactory academic progress is reviewed, in general, at the end of each spring semester. Students enrolled in summer courses will be reviewed at the end of summer, rather than the end of spring. Students with no previous CSUSM academic history are considered to be in good academic standing until completion of coursework is reviewed at their first evaluation period.

The Satisfactory Academic Progress requires evaluation of the following standards:

- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Pace of Completion
- Maximum Timeframe Requirement
- University Academic Good Standing

Grade Point Average Requirement

In order to maintain Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress, undergraduate students must maintain cumulative minimum Grade Point Averages consistent with Cal State San Marcos University Academic Regulations. Please see the CSUSM Catalog for full details. Undergraduate students are placed on Academic Probation if, during any academic term, their overall GPA or their cumulative CSUSM GPA falls below 2.0. Once on Academic Probation, students must maintain an overall GPA or cumulative CSUSM GPA greater than or equal to the following Grade Point Averages listed below. If the GPA requirements listed below are not met, students will be academically disqualified. If reinstated, the GPA upon readmission is considered satisfactory until such time the GPA is brought back to 2.0 or higher, or the student again is academically disqualified.

Pace Requirement

Students must demonstrate progress to ensure completion of educational objectives within the maximum timeframe. Pace is calculated by dividing the cumulative successfully completed units by the cumulative attempted units. Successfully completed units include coursework with grades of A through D-, CR, and RP. Attempted credits are defined as the number of credits enrolled in as of the census date used for financial aid, which is typically the University's census date for each term. All courses attempted or completed at CSUSM, as well as courses attempted or completed at all previous colleges, will be counted in the pace calculation, regardless of whether or not financial aid was received.

Students are required to maintain a pace of 67%.

$$\text{Total of } \underline{\text{Cumulative Successfully Completed Units}} \div \text{Total of } \underline{\text{Cumulative Attempted Units}} = \text{Pace}$$

Maximum Timeframe Requirement

Students receiving financial aid are expected to complete educational objectives within a designated timeframe. Federal regulations require that the timeframe does not exceed 150% of the established length of the program. As outlined in the Cal State San Marcos Catalog, undergraduate degrees require a minimum of 120 units. Thus, financial aid students are expected to complete their undergraduate programs within 180 attempted units. All courses attempted at Cal State San Marcos, as well as courses attempted at all previous colleges, will be counted towards the maximum timeframe, regardless of whether or not financial aid was received.

University Academic Good Standing Requirement

Students receiving financial aid are expected to maintain good standing, or probation, in accordance with the Cal State San Marcos University Academic Regulations as outlined in the CSUSM Catalog. Students academically disqualified are also disqualified for Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Disqualification

Students failing to meet one or more of the standards of Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (including a GPA below the University requirement, maintaining a pace of less than 67%, exceeding 180 attempted units, and/or becoming Academically Disqualified), are ineligible to receive financial aid. To be removed from Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Disqualification due to pace and/or exceeding maximum timeframe, students must: 1) Complete the financial aid appeal process and be approved; or 2) Again meet all standards of Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress by attending and successfully completing coursework without receiving financial aid. To be removed from Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Disqualification due to GPA and/or Academic Disqualification, students must follow the appropriate steps to be academically reinstated. If academically reinstated, the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic standard of Academic Disqualification will automatically be cleared upon academic reinstatement; and if there are no other Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic standards failed (pace or exceeding maximum timeframe), financial aid appeals are not necessary. However, if upon academic reinstatement, failed standards remain (pace or exceeding maximum timeframe), students would be required to complete the financial aid appeal process or regain financial aid eligibility as described above.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Process

Students failing to meet one or more of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress standards are notified of the disqualification and are provided with instructions to complete the appeal process. Appeal forms are available at www.csusm.edu/finaid in the "Forms" section. Appeal forms require Academic Plans be completed by academic advisors for undergraduate students exceeding 180 attempted units or students with less than the designated pace (freshmen - 55%, sophomores - 60%, and juniors or seniors - 65%).

The following examples reflect circumstances for which an appeal may be considered:

1. Illness, injury, or medical treatment that led to a complete or partial withdrawal, or failure to pass courses
2. Extreme financial hardship or change in legal circumstances
3. Compulsory military duty
4. Serious illness, injury or death of a parent/guardian, spouse, child, or loved-one

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Probation

Students are eligible to receive financial aid while on Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Probation. Probation is required for previously disqualified students who submitted appeals which were approved. Students with appeals not requiring Academic Plans are automatically placed on Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Probation for one following term. Students with appeals which require completion of Academic Plans may required one or more terms of probation. During the term(s) of probation, students must meet the conditions established on the Academic Plan in order to continue on probation for the remaining term(s). If students on probation do not meet the conditions to reestablish eligibility within the specified term(s), they are once again disqualified from financial aid. Additional appeals are allowed only if new circumstances occurred since completion of the previous appeal.