

Financial Aid Appeal Process for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Federal student financial assistance regulations require Sterling College, as an institution offering federal student financial assistance, to measure Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) of each attending student on a regular basis. SAP, as assessed by Sterling College's Financial Aid Office is separate and distinct from a student's academic standing as determined by his/her college or academic unit at Sterling College. SAP is a method of measuring a student's progress toward program completion. To be eligible for federal aid, a student must maintain satisfactory academic progress. SAP is measured through the use of qualitative and quantitative tests. Qualitative tests reference a student's grades (e.g. cumulative GPA) and quantitative tests reference how much time has elapsed since the student began his/her program of study (i.e. length/duration).

If a student is found to be in violation of the Satisfactory Academic Progress guidelines and has been placed on financial aid exclusion, an appeal process is available for extenuating circumstances. Appeals are reviewed based on a documentable extenuating circumstance impacting academic performance. Extenuating circumstances are considered to be past events that are no longer barriers to academic progress. The appeal application should support how student is now in a position to be academically successful. Examples of extenuating circumstances to be considered for appeal are:

- Serious illness or injury to student or immediate family member (parent, spouse, sibling, child) that required extended recovery time
- Death of an immediate family member
- Significant trauma in student's life that impaired the student's emotional and/or physical health
- Withdrawal due to military service
- Other unexpected circumstances beyond the control of the student

Note: Circumstances related to the typical adjustment to college life are not considered as extenuating for purposes of appealing suspension of financial aid.

Appeals **MUST** include the following documentation:

- A completed Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Form which will include an explanation describing how extenuating circumstances resulted in your inability to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress and an explanation of what has changed that will allow you to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress at the next evaluation
- Documentation required to support the extenuating circumstances (*Examples: medical documentation, notice of death, accident reports, court documentation, or other relevant documentation*)
- Statement of your educational goals
- Academic Advisor statement and approval of Academic Plan

Upon receipt of the completed appeal, a financial aid appeals committee will review the information provided to determine if the student has encountered mitigating circumstances that warrant the continuation of federal student eligibility even though the student is not currently meeting the established SAP standards.

An appeal may be approved or denied. SAP appeal determinations are final and may not be contested.

To Request Aid Consideration For:
Term (circle): Fall or Spring
Year:

Appeal Priority Deadline:
15 Days after Receipt of Form

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Form

Name: _____ Student ID _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

Educational Goals are: _____

Summary of extenuating circumstances that have prevented me from achieving successful academic progress: (*attach additional pages if necessary*)

My Plan of Action Strategies

In order for me succeed academically, I will: (*Examples: meet with instructors regularly, attend classes regularly, seek tutoring, reduce credit load, use available centers to enhance study skills, etc.*)

In addition to the above strategies, a maximum credit load of _____ credits will be attempted for _____ semester.
Term/ Year

Advisor Statement:

Academic Advisor Certification: I certify that I have met with this student and agree that the plan detailed above will enable the student to meet the College's financial aid satisfactory academic progress guidelines. (*Guidelines can be found in the College's catalog*)

Advisor Name (please print): _____

Advisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Certification: I certify that I have met with my academic advisor to develop an academic plan designed to assist me with meeting the College's financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress guidelines. I understand that in order to continue receiving financial aid I must be meeting the requirements of this academic plan. The standards of the Academic Progress Policy are:

- Completion rate of 67% of all attempted credits **AND**
- A cumulative GPA of 1.85 for students with 31 or less earned credit hours or 2.0 for students with 32 or greater credit hours

I further understand that if I fail to meet the terms of this plan, my financial aid will be suspended and I will have to regain financial aid eligibility at my own expense. (*See College catalog for details on regaining eligibility*).

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY

Financial Aid Eligibility Appeal Checklist Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

1. Letter of Explanation for Appeal: _____ Received/Reviewed
2. Supporting Documentation: _____ Received/Reviewed
3. Copy of Transcripts: _____ Received/Reviewed
4. Academic Completion Plan: _____ Received/Reviewed

Reason for Appeal: _____ Credit Hours _____ CGPA

Circumstance:

Additional Requirements for Academic Completion Plan:

Appeal Decision: _____ Approved _____ Denied
(Date) (Date)

Student Notification: _____ Method: _____
(Date) (Email or USPS)

Reviewed by: _____ Date Reviewed: _____
(Name and Title (print))

(Signature)