Effective July 1, 2021/Updated August 10, 2021

All institutions that participate in Title IV programs, which include all Federal and State Financial Aid (Loans, grants, Tennessee Lottery/Hope Scholarship, Work Study), must develop, implement, and publish a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy. (668.34(a)(2), 6689.34(b), 668.42(c)) Failure to meet the following requirements for SAP in coordination with Federal SAP Guidelines may result in the loss of financial aid. These standards are for financial aid purposes only and do not replace or override the academic policies of the University of Tennessee at Martin.

SAP for federal and state financial aid programs is based on three measures: cumulative grade-point average, course completion rate based on hours earned compared to hours attempted, and a maximum timeframe for degree completion. Your SAP status is based on your entire academic record at all schools attended, regardless of whether you received financial aid.

Beginning Fall 2021, UT Martin will check each student's SAP after every semester, after grades have posted whether they receive financial aid or not. Students will be placed in a good standing, warning, or suspended status. Students who are suspended due to failure to meet the SAP standards must have an appeal approved before they will receive financial aid. Students will be suspended for not meeting any or all of the following standards:

- Course Completion Rate (CCR) – Students must earn (pass) a cumulative 67% of all hours attempted to remain eligible for Financial Aid. Grades of A, B, C, D, & P count as attempted and earned credit hours. Grades of F, I, W, WP, & WF count as attempted but not earned credit hours. For example, a student with 100 cumulative attempted hours must have earned a passing grade in at least 67 of those attempted hours. We do not round up.
- Minimum Cumulative GPA – Undergraduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to be making satisfactory academic progress for financial aid. Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.
- Maximum Time Frame – The maximum time limit for a student to receive financial aid is 150% of the published program length. Most undergraduate degree programs at UTM require 120 credit hours to complete. For a student to be placed on unsatisfactory progress due to the maximum time frame, they would either meet or exceed 180 attempted hours. All grades, A, B, C, D, F, I, P, W, WP, & WF count as attempted hours.
- *Graduate programs; the maximum time frame is determined as 150% of the required hours for the degree as published in the Graduate Catalog.

Please be aware that a student **may only submit a total of TWO appeals at UT Martin, before having an in-person meeting.**

Transfer students' course completion rate, minimum GPA, and maximum time frame requirements will be evaluated for satisfactory academic progress based on the transfer credits and grades accepted by UT Martin at the time of acceptance.

Hours for which an incomplete grade is received will count toward attempted but not earned hours in the calculation of the course completion rate. The final grade for the incomplete hours will be calculated into the GPA when the course is graded. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office when the course is graded.

Types of Financial Aid Progress Status

- **Warning –** Financial aid warning can be granted after a student does not meet SAP standards after one semester. If a student has not met SAP standards for one semester, the student will be placed on a warning semester. The Warning status lasts for one semester, during which the student may continue to receive Title IV Aid. The Warning status gives the student one more semester to reach minimum SAP standards. (See above.)

- **Probation** – Financial aid probation can be granted only after the student has appealed and eligibility for Title IV aid is reinstated based on that appeal. Student can only be placed on probation for one semester. If a student has a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal approved they will be placed on a Probation Period if it is possible to bring their Course Completion Rate and GPA up to SAP standards after the next semester.
- **Academic Plan** – If a student has a SAP Appeal approved, and it is **NOT** possible for them to maintain the required Course Completion Rate and GPA after one semester of enrollment; they will be placed on an Academic Plan. An academic plan is tailored to the individualized needs of the student based on the circumstances of their appeal. All students placed on an academic plan may need to maintain a SEMESTER Course Completion Rate of 80% and a 2.0 GPA for undergrad students and Course Completion Rate of 80% and a 3.0 GPA for graduate level students. If a student on an Academic Plan fails to meet the semester goals of their plan, they will be suspended from their financial aid for the upcoming and subsequent terms until they have met the minimum SAP standards or have an appeal approved based on new extenuating circumstances.
- **Graduation Plan** – If a student's appeal is approved for Maximum Timeframe, the student will be placed on a Graduation Plan. This Graduation Plan should consist of the classes and number of hours left to graduate as well as the signature of the student's advisor. The Graduation Plan will be reviewed at the end of each term. If a student's appeal for Maximum Time Frame, or exceeding 150%, is approved, they will **ONLY** be approved for the number of hours indicated on their Graduation Plan, Progress will be checked at the end of each semester until the student graduates

Notification of Status and Right to Appeal

Students who have been suspended from financial aid will be notified of changes to SAP status via UTM email. Changes in SAP status can also be viewed by the student by logging in to Banner Self-Service.

Paying out of pocket for classes or sitting out a semester is not grounds for reinstatement of aid. Students must bring their academic progress back into compliance or have an appeal approved to have aid reinstated.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Process

Students appealing their Satisfactory Academic Progress status are required to submit an appeal for review. Students may only submit two appeals before being required to meet with the Assistant Director or Director of Financial Aid. The following are to be included with the SAP Appeal:

- [Financial Aid Appeal Form](#) (Complete all fields)
  Signed Statement is included in the appeal form indicating rationale for appeal. Statement must include an explanation of **unusual** circumstances that led to financial aid suspension.
- Sufficient documentation to support claim of unusual circumstance. Lack of documentation may lead to the denial of appeal. Supporting documentation might include medical records, police reports, obituaries, or legal records.
- Graduation Plan, if applicable.

Appeals are reviewed by the Financial Aid Review Committee once a week. Students are notified of the committee's decision via email.

A student who has an appeal approved will be placed into a Probation Period, an Academic Plan, or a Graduation Plan status for the following semester of enrollment. The appeal approval notification may list restrictions or requirements to be followed by the student. Failure to follow restrictions or requirements may result in immediate forfeiture of financial aid.

All decisions made by the Director of Financial Aid are final.