

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for the Office of Student Financial Aid

The Office of Student Financial Aid is committed to assisting students to successfully obtain a university education by providing funding to eligible students. It is important that students understand the standards of academic performance required to maintain their eligibility for financial aid.

In accordance with the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by Congress (34CFR668), Portland State University (PSU) has established this Satisfactory Academic Progress policy to insure that financial aid recipients make reasonable progress toward completion of their degree in a timely manner. Although the academic progress standards set by the financial aid office are similar to those set by specific academic departments and/or university standards, the financial aid standards for satisfactory academic progress are not the same as academic departments and/or university standards. Permission to enroll does not guarantee that satisfactory academic progress requirements have been met.

The policy covers the following list of financial aid programs:

- Federal and State Grants
- Federal Work Study
- Federal Loans
- Certain Alternative Loans (determined by lender policy)
- Certain Scholarship Programs

Evaluation

Portland State University monitors the following for all financial aid recipients:

- maximum time frame for completion of program of study
- grade point average for PSU courses, according to student level
- completion rate - the percentage of credits taken at PSU which have passing grades, calculated by dividing credits earned at PSU by credits attempted at PSU

The requirements for undergraduate, postbaccalaureate and graduate students are given below. Please consult the Definitions section within this policy for clarification by using the footnotes for guidance.

Satisfactory academic progress status is determined at the end of each academic year₁ of enrollment. Students will be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress if they meet all policy requirements. Failure to comply with any one policy component will result in a loss of financial aid eligibility. This policy will consider all terms of enrollment whether or not financial aid was received. Students in a Warning status₅ or Suspended eligibility₄ status will be notified by mail and/or e-mail.

Academic dismissal, academic reinstatement, and financial aid eligibility

Failure to maintain a satisfactory grade point average has an impact on a student's academic status with the University. Please see the University's policies on academic standing in the PSU *Bulletin*. In some cases, a student may become academically dismissed at the end of a term due to their failure to meet the University's minimum GPA requirements, without being placed in financial aid Suspended eligibility status.⁴ **Any student who is academically dismissed is immediately ineligible for any financial aid.**

Students who are academically dismissed must be reinstated by the University to resume enrollment. Graduate students dismissed from their program must follow the policies of the Office of Graduate Studies for readmission to their program. The PSU *Bulletin* provides guidance on the options available for reinstatement. Students who have been reinstated but whose cumulative GPA does not meet the requirements of this policy will be in a financial aid Warning status⁵ until the required GPA is achieved. If the required GPA has not been achieved by the end of the academic year,¹ the student will then be placed in financial aid Suspended eligibility status.⁴

Total Withdrawal From Classes

Students who withdraw from all classes within the university's published add/drop period two times in an academic year,¹ will be placed in a Suspended eligibility status,⁴ immediately after the second withdrawal. Students may request reinstatement of aid eligibility by submitting a Satisfactory Academic Progress petition as described in the Appeals section.

UNDERGRADUATE POLICY

(for students working on a first baccalaureate degree)

Maximum Time Frame Requirement

An undergraduate student may receive financial aid until they have 270 undergraduate attempted credits,² including transfer credits accepted by PSU. This limit is based on the federal maximum of 150% of the credits required to complete a baccalaureate degree. All transfer credits which are accepted as attempted credits are counted as attempted credits for this policy. The maximum limit of 270 attempted undergraduate credits applies to all terms of enrollment, regardless of whether financial aid was received for that enrollment.

Students who have attempted 270 or more undergraduate credits are immediately placed in a Suspended eligibility status,⁴ regardless of when this occurs in the school year. A student may petition for reinstatement of financial aid based on the guidelines listed in the "Appeal Procedures" section of this policy.

Grade Point Average Requirement

An undergraduate student must maintain a 2.00 cumulative grade point average or higher for all undergraduate courses taken at PSU. This policy applies to all undergraduate credits taken at PSU, regardless of whether financial aid was received for those courses. If a student's cumulative PSU grade point average falls below 2.00 as of the end of fall term, end of winter term and/or the end of spring term, the student will be placed on financial aid Warning status.⁵ The student will remain on financial aid Warning for each term during the academic year,¹ that a 2.00 cumulative PSU grade point average is not achieved. If a 2.00 cumulative PSU GPA has not been achieved at the end of the academic year, the student will be in a Suspended eligibility status.⁴

Please consult the PSU *Bulletin* or *Schedule of Classes* for the grading policy of the University and calculation of GPA. Please refer to the Definitions section below for the impact on GPA calculation for courses taken with a “repeat option.”⁶

Rate of Completion Requirement

An undergraduate student must earn passing grades,³ for at least 67% of all undergraduate credits attempted² at PSU. The completion rate calculation applies to all undergraduate credits taken at PSU, regardless of whether financial aid was received for that enrollment. If a student’s PSU completion rate falls below 67% as of the end of fall term, end of winter term and/or the end of spring term, the student will be placed on financial aid Warning status.⁵ The student will remain on financial aid Warning for each term during the academic year that a 67% PSU completion rate is not achieved. If a 67% PSU completion rate has not been achieved at the end of the academic year,¹ the student will be placed in a Suspended eligibility status.⁴ Please refer to the Definitions section below for the impact of courses taken with a “repeat option” on the calculation of the completion rate.

POSTBACCALAUREATE POLICY

(for students who have completed a first baccalaureate degree, but are not admitted to a graduate degree or certificate program)

Maximum Time Frame Requirement

A postbaccalaureate student may receive financial aid until they have 90 attempted credits,² taken since admission as a post-baccalaureate student. Both undergraduate and graduate level credits are included in the 90 credit maximum. The maximum credit limit of 90 attempted credits applies to all terms of enrollment, regardless of whether financial aid was received for that enrollment. **Postbaccalaureate students who have attempted 90 or more credits as a post-baccalaureate are immediately placed in a Suspended eligibility status,⁴ regardless of when this occurs in the school year.** A student may petition for reinstatement of financial aid based on the guidelines listed in the “Appeal Procedures” section of this policy.

Grade Point Average Requirement

All postbaccalaureate students must maintain a 2.00 cumulative grade point average or higher for all courses taken at PSU as a postbaccalaureate student. This policy applies to all credits taken at PSU, regardless of whether financial aid was received for those courses. If a student’s cumulative PSU grade point average falls below 2.00 as of the end of fall term, end of winter term and/or end of spring term, the student will be placed on financial aid Warning status.⁵ The student will remain on financial aid Warning for each term during the academic year,¹ that a 2.00 cumulative PSU grade point average is not achieved. If a 2.00 cumulative PSU grade point average has not been achieved at the end of the academic year, the student will be placed in a financial aid Suspended eligibility status.⁴ Please refer to the Definitions section below for the GPA calculation for courses taken with a “repeat option.”

The 2.00 cumulative GPA is calculated for all courses taken since admission as a postbaccalaureate student. Both undergraduate and graduate level courses taken while a postbaccalaureate student are included for the GPA calculation.

Rate of Completion Requirement

A student must earn passing grades for at least 67% of all credits attempted at PSU. This policy applies to all credits taken at PSU, regardless of whether financial aid was received for those courses. If a student's PSU completion rate falls below 67% as of the end of fall term, end of winter term and/or end of spring term, the student will be placed on financial aid Warning status.⁵ The student will remain on financial aid Warning for each term during the academic year¹ that a 67% PSU completion rate is not achieved. If a 67% PSU completion rate has not been achieved at the end of the academic year, the student will be placed on financial aid Suspended eligibility status.⁴ Please refer to the Definitions section below for the impact of courses taken with a "repeat option" on the calculation of the completion rate.

The 67% completion rate is calculated for all courses taken since admission as a postbaccalaureate student. Both undergraduate and graduate level courses taken while a postbaccalaureate student are included for the completion rate calculation.

GRADUATE POLICY:

(for students admitted to a graduate degree, graduate certificate or licensure program)

Maximum Time Frame Requirement

The maximum time a graduate student may continue receiving financial aid is determined by the student's graduate level. Students who are concurrently working on more than one graduate degree or program will have the maximum time frame limit that applies to the program with the longest limit. For example, a master's candidate who is also working on licensure will have the master's program limit applied. The limits in this policy apply regardless of whether the student received financial aid during attendance since admission. **Students who have reached their maximum time frame limit are immediately placed in a Suspended eligibility status,⁴ regardless of when this occurs in the school year.** A student may petition for reinstatement of financial aid based on the guidelines listed in the "Appeal Procedures" section of this policy.

Master's degree candidates - 7 calendar years from admission to the program. A student who has been admitted to more than one master's degree program will have a maximum limit of 7 years from admission to the most recently admitted program.

Doctoral degree candidates - 10 calendar years maximum from admission to the doctoral program, but **the degree must be completed within 5 years of advancement to candidacy.** This will mean a maximum time frame limit of less than 10 years for some students.

Licensure students - 8 terms of enrollment (part time and/or full time) since beginning the program.

Graduate Certificate students - 12 terms of enrollment (part time and/or full time) since beginning the program.

Grade Point Average Requirement

A graduate student must maintain a 3.00 cumulative grade point average or higher for all graduate level courses taken at PSU. This policy applies to all graduate credits taken at PSU, regardless of whether financial aid was received for those courses. If a graduate student's cumulative PSU grade point average falls below 3.00 as of the end of fall term, end of winter term and/or end of spring

term, the student will be placed on financial aid Warning status.⁵ The student will remain on financial aid Warning for each term during the academic year₁ that a 3.00 cumulative PSU grade point average is not achieved. If a 3.00 cumulative PSU grade point average has not been achieved at the end of the academic year, the student will be in a Suspended eligibility status.⁴

Rate of Completion Requirement

A graduate student must earn passing₃ grades for at least 67% of all graduate credits attempted₂ at PSU. The completion rate calculation applies to all graduate credits taken at PSU, regardless of whether financial aid was received for that enrollment. If a student's PSU completion rate falls below 67% as of the end of fall term, end of winter term and/or the end of spring term, the student will be placed on financial aid Warning status.⁵ The student will remain on financial aid Warning for each term during the academic year₁ that a 67% PSU completion rate is not achieved. If a 67% PSU completion rate has not been achieved at the end of the academic year, the student will be placed in a Suspended eligibility status.⁴

In addition, at least 67% of all credits enrolled each academic year must be in graduate level courses. This will be measured at the end of each summer term. Graduate students who have not met this requirement will be placed in financial aid Suspended eligibility status.⁴ For students who are admitted to a graduate program beginning winter term or later, this requirement applies to all terms attended during the academic year₁ while in a graduate program.

APPEALS:

Students whose eligibility for financial aid has been suspended for failing to meet any component of this policy have to right to appeal. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Office of Student Financial Aid. Petitions are approved on a case-by-case basis. The student must have experienced special circumstances, such as death or illness of family member, illness or injury of the student, or other unforeseen circumstances that interfered with the completion of their coursework. Petitions will be approved only under these circumstances.

Students who are in a Suspended eligibility status₄ due to failure to meet the GPA and/or completion rate requirement may submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress Petition form to the Office of Student Financial Aid. The student must respond to all questions on the petition form and include documentation supporting their claim of special circumstances. If a student's petition is approved with conditions as a requirement for future aid eligibility, but fails to meet the stated conditions, the student may submit another petition to the Office of Student Financial Aid. However, in a case of failing to meet required conditions, the petition will be reviewed by a committee selected by the Director of Student Financial Aid, in consultation with the Associate Vice President for Finance and Controller. This committee will consist of staff from the Office of Student Financial and from other departments.

Students who have reached their maximum time frame limit may submit a Maximum Time Frame Petition form to the Office of Student Financial Aid.

Petitions must be submitted to the Office of Student Financial Aid no later than the end of the second week of the term for which the student wishes to regain aid eligibility. This allows timely

processing of the petition and delivery of financial aid funds. Petitions received later than this deadline will be reviewed, but late petitions may result in loss of funding for that term.

Upon review, the Office of Student Financial Aid will rule on the student's petition and notify the student in writing and/or e-mail about their financial aid eligibility.

Definitions

¹ **Academic year**: Begins fall term and ends with the conclusion of summer term.

² **Attempted credits**: Courses taken at PSU with grades of A, B, C, D, F, I, IP, M, NP, P, W, X, and Y are counted as attempted credits. Undergraduate courses accepted for transfer with grades of A, B, C, D, E, F, and P are counted as attempted credits. Courses with a grade of AU (audit) are not counted as attempted credits. See the "repeat option" entry below for the impact of taking an undergraduate PSU course with the "repeat option."

³ **Earned credits or passing grades**: Courses taken at PSU with grades of A, B, C, D, and P, are counted as earned credits. Undergraduate courses accepted for transfer with grades of A, B, C, D, and P are counted as earned credits. Grades of "IP" for graduate Research, graduate Project, Thesis and Dissertation are counted as earned credits. Courses with a grade of AU (audit) are not counted as earned credits. See the "repeat option" entry below for the impact of taking an undergraduate PSU course with the "repeat option."

⁴ **Financial aid Suspended eligibility status**: Students in a financial aid Suspended eligibility status will *no longer be eligible* for financial aid. Students who meet the maximum time frame limit for their student level will immediately be in a Suspended eligibility status as soon as that limit is reached. Students who have not met the 67% completion rate requirement and/or the GPA requirement for their student level by the end of the academic year¹ will be placed in a Suspended eligibility status for financial aid. The student may petition for reinstatement of financial aid based on the guidelines listed in the "Appeal Procedures" section of this policy. Students may also regain eligibility by receiving grades that improve their GPA and/or completion rate to the required minimum level.

⁵ **Financial aid Warning status**: Students on financial aid Warning *will remain eligible* for financial aid. Students who are in a Warning status as of the end of fall term, end of winter term and/or end of spring term will be notified of their status. If the student has not met both the 67% completion rate requirement and the GPA requirement for their student level as of the end of the academic year,¹ the student will be placed on financial aid Suspended eligibility status.⁴

⁶ **Repeat option courses**: If an undergraduate or postbaccalaureate student completes a PSU undergraduate level course with a grade of D or F and then re-takes the course with a "repeat option," the original grade is not counted in the calculation of the GPA. The repeated course grade will be counted in the GPA calculation instead. However, both the initial grade of D or F *and* the repeated course grade are counted as part of the student's total attempted credits for calculating the student's maximum credit limit and completion rate. Graduate level courses do not have a "repeat option" available. Please consult the PSU *Bulletin* or *Schedule of Classes* for the full grading policy of the University and calculation of GPA.

PROMULGATION

This policy is effective beginning fall term 2008 and will be reviewed annually. Any policy amendments or changes will be published in the PSU *Bulletin*, and on the PSU website. Written copies of the policy will be available at the Office of Student Financial Aid upon request.

Amendment to the Policy

This policy will be amended whenever applicable federal or state laws and regulations are changed.

Implementation Date

Implementation of New Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy to begin Fall, 2008.