Satisfactory Progress

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Whether or not a student has or will receive financial aid, federal regulations require USD to establish and implement a policy to measure if a student is making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree. Federal student aid funds include but are not limited to the Pell grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), TEACH grant, work-study, Perkins loan, Stafford loan (Subsidized and Unsubsidized), and PLUS loans. Other federal, state, and private agencies may require students to maintain satisfactory academic progress for their aid programs as well. The academic record of all students will be monitored to ensure compliance with the requirements specified below. Therefore, even the academic record of those who have not received federal student aid in the past may impact future eligibility. Satisfactory Academic Progress is measured once a year—at the end of the spring semester, or the last semester attended in that academic year. Terms measured will include summer, fall and spring. Failure to meet any of the three following standards will result in the suspension of eligibility for federal student aid.

1. Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (Qualitative measure)
   - Undergraduate students: Federal regulations require a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher for undergraduate students. The cumulative GPA is calculated on all USD and transfer undergraduate credits accepted by USD, excluding remedial and audited coursework.
   - Graduate students: Graduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on all USD and transfer graduate credits.

   If a student has a grade changed as a result of late notification for the previous summer, fall or spring terms, the academic progress will be re-evaluated. The student is required to bring the grade change to the financial aid office’s attention.

2. Pace of progression for cumulative credits attempted and completed (Quantitative measure)
   - All students (both undergraduate and graduate) must successfully complete 67% of cumulative attempted credit hours. Attempted credit hours include all hours that would appear on a student’s academic transcript at the end of any given term, including withdrawals, incompletes, repeated courses, remedial coursework, and transfer hours. Audited coursework is not included. Successfully completed hours for both graduate and undergraduate students include grades of A, B, C, D, RS, and S. A grade of EX for undergraduate students is also considered successful completion. All other grades would not be considered successful completion such as F (failure), I (incomplete), U (unsatisfactory), RI (remedial incomplete), RU (remedial unsatisfactory), IP (in progress), SP (satisfactory progress), and W (withdrawn).

3. Maximum Attempted Credit Hours
   - There is a limit on the number of credit hours a student can attempt and still remain eligible for federal student aid. All credits attempted (except audited coursework) are included. This limit is based on 150% of the credit hours needed to complete the degree that the student is pursuing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Program</th>
<th>Max Credit Hours Attempted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate of Arts in General Studies</td>
<td>90 (based on 60 hour program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate of Arts Degree (Nursing)</td>
<td>98 (based on 65 hour program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts/Sciences Degree</td>
<td>180 (based on 120 hour program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Degree</td>
<td>45 (based on 30 hour program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Degree</td>
<td>90 (based on 60 hour program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy Degree</td>
<td>126 (based on 84 hour program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor’s Degree</td>
<td>135 (based on 90 hour program)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Incompletes

If a student is unable to complete all requirements, due to extenuating circumstances approved by the instructor, an incomplete may be issued. The incomplete will not be calculated into the grade point average. If the student does not complete the work within the specified time frame, a grade of F will be assigned; or, if the course was taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis, a grade of U or RU will be assigned. The student will receive the letter grade when all work has been successfully completed. This grade will be reflected on the current semester’s grade report. Incomplete grades will be monitored by the Financial Aid Office as the final grade can affect both GPA and completion requirements.

Repeated Courses

In certain circumstances, students may receive financial aid for repeated courses. Any courses that are repeated will be used in the calculation of a student’s Satisfactory Academic Progress status. Each repetition will count towards the attempted hours and will be counted in the GPA calculation for SAP. Limits on repeated courses are outlined in the college catalog. Note: Federal aid regulations may limit the number of times a course can be repeated and eligible for aid.

Progression/Repeating a Course

Students may choose to repeat courses for which credit may be granted only once in order to improve a grade. When students repeat such courses, the grade received for the most recent registration is calculated in the grade point average; the earlier grade(s) received are indicated on the official transcript, but a notation is made that the course has been repeated. For Satisfactory Academic Progress calculations, both grades are included.

Noncredit remedial courses

Any remedial courses are considered in the ‘hours attempted’ and ‘hours completed’ for calculation of Satisfactory Academic Progress even though the hours do not count towards graduation requirements. Remedial courses are considered eligible courses for financial aid purposes and enrollment status.

Withdrawal from a course

Courses that a student withdraws from are considered in ‘hours attempted’ towards the maximum time frame. If a student withdraws from a course, they are given the grade of ‘W’.

Transfer Credits

Transfer credits that have been accepted by USD toward your current degree are subject to the Satisfactory Academic Progress measurements. USD calculates the pace at which a student is progressing by dividing the total number of hours the student has successfully completed (including transfer credits) by the total number he/she has attempted.

Changes in Major or Degree

The student is eligible to receive aid for no more than 150% of all the credit hours required to complete the new program of study. The 150% limit is applied to all credit hours earned by the student while enrolled at USD and includes all transferred credits accepted from previously attended institutions. Students who change their major or degree must submit a degree audit completed by the registrar’s office to the financial aid office.

Pursuit of a 2nd degree

Students who pursue a 2nd degree from USD must submit a degree audit completed by the registrar’s office to the financial aid office. The student is eligible to receive aid for no more than 150% of the credit hours required to complete the 2nd program of study. The 150% limit is applied to all hours earned by the student while enrolled at USD and includes transferred credits accepted from previously attended institutions. Credits earned for a degree already awarded by USD are not included in the 150% of the new degree program.

Appealing a Financial Aid Suspension

Students who have had their eligibility suspended for Federal Student Aid may complete a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form (http://www.usd.edu/~media/files/finaid/sapappealform.ashx?a=en) to explain circumstances that were beyond their control and adversely affected their ability to be academically successful at USD (not taking classes seriously, failing to attend classes, complete class assignments and/or take exams are not considered valid reasons for submitting an appeal). Students are advised to carefully read the procedures for submitting an appeal listed on the appeal form and
submit the requested documentation with their appeal. The academic plan, which must contain what you plan to do differently to be academically successful and the campus resources you are going to take advantage of to make that happen that are reasonable and attainable given your past academic performance in order to complete or work toward completing your degree at USD must accompany your appeal. Failure to abide by the academic plan that is submitted to the Appeal Committee will be grounds for denial of Federal Student Aid for subsequent semesters. Each appeal will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis; therefore, each appeal is evaluated on its own merits or lack thereof. As a result, no appeal is guaranteed to be approved.

To ensure a timely review, appeals for the Fall semester must be received in the Financial Aid Office no later than July 1st. Appeals for the Spring semester must be received no later than December 1st. You will be notified of the result of your appeal by letter.

Appeals received after the due dates will be reviewed as soon as possible; however, if your appeal is approved we cannot assure you that your financial aid would be available for the fee payment deadline. As a result, students MUST make other arrangements to pay their account via WebAdvisor prior to the start of the semester pending the outcome of their appeal. In either case, you are encouraged to submit your appeal as soon as possible.

If your appeal is approved, aid will be reinstated for one term and you will be notified via letter. Based upon the circumstances of an approved appeal, the Appeals Committee reserves the right to stipulate conditions the student must meet to be considered for financial aid on a probationary basis for subsequent semesters. Conditions of your specific appeal will be outlined in your letter. Examples of conditions may include if you are an undergrad, requirement to complete 100% of all courses attempted with no withdrawals or failures with a 2.0 term GPA.

*Note that an academic suspension appeal is a separate process. Being reinstated academically does not guarantee financial aid reinstatement.

Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility

If the committee does not approve your appeal, you will be notified via letter. The student must then come into compliance on their own without use of the federal aid programs. Students who have lost their Financial Aid eligibility, but have subsequently met the qualitative and/or quantitative standards as stated above, will have their aid eligibility reinstated. Regardless of when a student meets the standards, because Federal Student Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress is evaluated at the end of the spring term only, reinstatement will be considered effective with the next academic year.

6.10.15