



Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

The policy contained herein is the result of the federal regulations governing Satisfactory Academic Progress, October 29, 2010, to be effective July 1, 2011. The applicable regulations are 34 CFR 668.16(e), 668.32(f) and 668.34.

Programs Governed by this Policy: All Federal Title IV programs: Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Direct Loan programs (Subsidized, Unsubsidized, PLUS, and Graduate PLUS), and Federal College Work Study Program, as well as other State and Institutional Programs for which SAP compliance is required are governed by this policy, as applicable.

Louisiana Tech University will evaluate all applicants for federal financial aid using the following policy contained herein. These policies meet the federal requirements but may not coincide with other academic institutions' policies as each institution is required to develop their own specific policy. This policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate academic programs offered at Louisiana Tech University.

Louisiana Tech's University's SAP Rules determine who is eligible or ineligible for Federal Financial Aid.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is determined at the end of each academic year (the end of each Spring quarter) or at the time of admission/re-admission. A student's eligibility is evaluated using three criteria: 1) GPA, 2) Completion rate (PACE), and 3) the 150% rule for maximum aggregate hours. Upon posting grades/transcripts and attendance data (at the end of each Spring quarter), a student's cumulative GPA will be evaluated along with the completion rate (PACE). PACE is determined by dividing the cumulative hours earned (EHRS) at, or transferred to, Louisiana Tech University by the cumulative hours attempted (AHRS) at, or transferred to, Louisiana Tech University. All withdrawals (W), Incompletes (I), No Credit (NC), Completed/Passed (A, B, C, D, S), and Failed (F) courses are included in attempted hours for calculating PACE (*even if they show as 0 hours on your transcript*).

The U.S. Department of Education allows students a maximum of 150% of their program hours to earn a degree. If a student has met, exceeded, or cannot achieve their degree before reaching the 150% rule, the only action available is to appeal their limit or complete the program without further federal financial aid. Appeals must be prepared and submitted according to the guidance furnished later in this policy.

- Undergraduate: Eligible students must have a minimum of a 2.00 undergraduate cumulative GPA with at least 67% completion rate (PACE) and must meet the criteria for the 150% rule based on their program hour requirements. All attempted undergraduate level hours are calculated as part of 150% rule. A completion rate greater than or equal to 66.5% shall be considered as meeting PACE. A completion rate of less than 66.5% will not meet the PACE requirement.
- Graduate: Eligible students must have a minimum of a 3.00 graduate cumulative GPA with at least 67% completion rate (PACE) and must meet the criteria for the 150% rule based on their program hour requirements. All attempted graduate level hours (posted on Student Record) are calculated as part of 150%

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rule. A completion rate greater than or equal to 66.5% shall be considered as meeting PACE. A completion rate of less than 66.5% will not meet the PACE requirement.

If a current Louisiana Tech University student is found to be below SAP standards for GPA and/or PACE at the time of evaluation period, students who have not met SAP qualifications will be deemed ineligible for federal financial aid and have funds terminated for the upcoming quarter. (*See additional descriptions Dual Enrollment and Transfer students*) A student who has their federal financial aid funds terminated has the option to either submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal or attend at their own expense until their cumulative GPA and/or PACE are within SAP standards and have successfully requested an Informal Review of SAP. An approved appeal, or meeting SAP standards (Informal Review), will result in resumed eligibility if the student is within the 150% rule and meeting all SAP requirements.

A student's SAP status cannot be retroactively reinstated for a prior quarter.

Specific appeal requirements can be found below or on the [SAP Appeal form](#). The following will provide definitions and appeal guidance.

Additional Descriptions to Policy

Academic renewal: Students granted academic renewal will have to appeal for federal financial aid eligibility. If the appeal is approved, students will still have all attempted hours considered when evaluating aggregate hours. Questions about Academic Renewal should be addressed to the Admissions Office at (318) 257-3036.

Appeal: Process for requesting Office of Financial Aid to engage in a review for exceptions to the policy for an individual student. Students must initiate the appeal.

Disabilities: Students who arrive at Louisiana Tech and are aware of learning or other disabilities should immediately contact the Office of Disability Services so that appropriate accommodation can be provided. A student with a documented disability and functional limitations is still held to the same academic expectations as other students. If the student is registered with the Office of Disability Services and receives appropriate accommodation, the student should maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress for financial aid eligibility purposes.

Dual Enrollment (Early Start) and Summer Enrichment: High school students taking college courses will have these courses evaluated when matriculating at Louisiana Tech University. If the true freshman's college level courses attempted prior to freshman enrollment fail to meet the 2.00 cumulative GPA and/or 67% completion requirements (PACE), the student will remain eligible until the annual SAP evaluation (end of spring quarter). The student is expected to raise their grades and completion rate to the required level by the end of the first academic year.

Reestablishing Title IV aid eligibility: When a student who has had their federal financial aid funds terminated is found to be meeting SAP standards as well as the 150% rule.

Transfer Students: Students entering Louisiana Tech University from previous or intervening post-secondary institutions must submit all prior transcripts to the Admissions Office for subsequent posting by the Registrar to the student's Louisiana Tech University academic record. Students who have not submitted all transcripts needed to determine eligibility will remain ineligible for federal Title IV student financial aid until such time as all transcripts have been received and posted by the Registrar's Office. If the college level credit from all universities is not sufficient to meet the cumulative GPA, PACE, or 150% rule requirements, the student may appeal and/or fund the academic costs with alternative funds until they reestablish aid eligibility. SAP status for transfer students is either eligible or ineligible.

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Appeal Descriptions and Instructions:

Students may appeal SAP decisions if extenuating circumstances impacted their academic performance.

Examples of extenuating circumstances are, but not limited to:

- Prolonged illness, medical condition, or injury to student or immediate family member
- Death of an immediate family member
- Extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control

Examples of Supporting Documentation are, but not limited to:

- Physician's letters and hospital records (must include dates of illness and recovery time)
- Death certificate or obituary
- Court or police documents
- Letters from third party professional counselors on his/her letterhead

SAP Appeals must include the following:

1. Completed SAP Appeal Form
2. Letter of Explanation which has the following elements:
 - a. The mitigating circumstances (e.g., illness, family emergency).
 - b. How and/or why the circumstance caused poor academic performance
 - c. What actions are being taken to improve academic performance
3. Supporting Documentation:
 - a. Examples: Medical records, obituaries, or letters from academic advisors.
4. Degree Completion Plan that must (if applicable):
 - a. Be signed by the academic advisor and student
 - b. List the terms, courses, and credit hours the student will complete

Appeals must be submitted by the deadline for the relevant quarter. Approved appeals will result in temporary eligibility of financial aid under specific conditions determined by the Office of Financial Aid. Appeals submitted without documentation will result in automatic denial and will count toward the maximum yearly appeals. Filing an appeal does not guarantee approval and the decision is at the discretion of the Financial Aid Office.

Appeals for exceptions to the policy must be submitted in writing using the Tech Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form with all appropriate documentation. Suggesting that the Office of Financial Aid contact doctors, professors, or other people for additional information is not considered adequate documentation. Appeals must be received no later than the deadline (stated on form or in a notification letter) for the specific quarter that you are requesting eligibility. We recommend submitting an appeal as soon as possible after the deficiency occurs so that the appeal can be evaluated before classes begin. A student may only appeal twice during an academic year at Louisiana Tech University.

Federal regulations do not provide (allow) for a second appeal based on the same circumstances that immediately follow a previous probation period. While a student may, over the course of an entire academic career, repeat the financial aid warning status and any subsequent probation, two such periods cannot be consecutive without an intervening period during which the student meets SAP requirements.

Appeals for excessive aggregate hours (150% Rule) must include an explanation from you of the need for additional hours, documentation that supports your explanation, a Degree Completion Plan (found on the Financial Aid Forms page) signed by the advisor, which includes courses remaining by quarter, and an expected graduation date. These documents must be furnished with the appeal. A successful appeal will allow you to be "on completion plan". Any deviation from the completion plan will result in cancellation of aid, except when an updated completion plan is approved by both the student's academic advisor and the Financial Aid Office.

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Informal Review: If a student is determined to be ineligible when the annual SAP evaluation is conducted at the end of the spring quarter, but meets SAP eligibility requirements in a subsequent quarter, but before the next annual SAP evaluation period, a student may submit a request for an informal review of their SAP eligibility. During the Informal Review the Office of Financial Aid shall determine if the student has regained aid eligibility by meeting SAP standards. If the student has regained aid eligibility, they will be eligible to receive federal aid for current and/or future quarters. Aid cannot be reinstated for a prior quarter in which the student was determined SAP ineligible.

Additional degrees: Students seeking additional degrees are limited as follows:

- Associate.....60 credit hours beyond prior degree (not to exceed the maximum for one bachelor's program)
- Bachelors.....60 credit hours beyond prior degree
- Masters.....45 credit hours beyond prior degree

Students seeking a third Associate, Bachelor's, or Master's Degree are not eligible for federal financial aid. Doctorates are considered terminal degrees thus no federal aid is available for a second doctoral program.

Developmental/ESL/Remedial courses are counted as hours attempted and, if successfully completed, hours earned unless the aggregate total exceeds 30. Developmental/ESL/Remedial courses in excess of 30 hours are not counted when determining enrollment level for federal aid.

Double Majors and multiple minors: Students seeking double majors must complete their degree program for the primary major within the limits set for that major. Additional hours will not be allowed for double majors, multiple minors or concentrations.

Repeated courses: All repeated courses are counted as attempted whether the hours were earned or not. If a course is repeated, only the most recent attempt will count towards GPA and completed hours.

Financial Aid Eligibility Status Descriptions

- Eligible – Student is meeting Cumulative GPA and PACE requirements without conditions.
- Probation – Student failed to meet SAP standards and had their appeal approved to receive aid. A student may be required to earn 100% successful completion, no drops, F's, or withdrawals, and a specified GPA. In circumstances where a student has met 150% limit, appealed, and has been approved for a finite period of extension during which they must enroll in only specific courses required to complete the degree program. Specifics in the plan will govern requirements for aid.
- Ineligible – Student is not meeting SAP standards, and no exceptions have been granted.

Other Academic Status Descriptions

Academic Probation: has no direct correlation to eligibility for federal financial aid. Contact the Registrar's Office at (318) 257-2176 for further information.

Academic Suspension: Students are ineligible for financial aid while suspended. An explanation of cumulative grade point averages and their effect on enrollment is found in the Louisiana Tech University Catalog. Contact the Registrar's Office at (318) 257-2176 for further information.

Unconditional Admission: Graduate students must be admitted UNCONDITIONALLY to graduate school in a valid degree program before they will be considered for graduate level financial aid. Proof of unconditional admission may be requested by the Financial Aid Department.

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