

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

In accordance with federal financial aid regulations, the Academy has guidelines for all students regarding Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). The academic progress policy applies to all students regardless of financial aid eligibility.

In order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, a student must:

- maintain a successful course completion rate of 100%;
- maintain the necessary pace for completion within the maximum timeframe (MTF); and
- meet the student specific requirements of the program as set forth by the academic team and the financial aid officer.

### Qualitative Review

The Academy does not use a traditional GPA model using letter grades. Students must achieve a minimum grade of Achieved Competency "AC" in all courses, assignments and exams, and all phases of clinical internship. Satisfactory completion of all required courses in a given term is a prerequisite for progression in the program of study. If a student has received a grade of Limited Competency "LC" or an Incomplete "IN", the student has not met the completion requirements for the program. Required courses are defined in the school catalog.

### *Comprehensive Exams*

Students are required to pass various examinations, including a comprehensive exam at the end of years one through three. A student must pass each of these exams in order to progress to the next phase of the program.

### *Attendance*

Attendance for all classes, examinations, quizzes and in-class graded assignments is part of the learning experience and is required. All periods of attendance are counted toward the student's academic progress review. Attendance should be the student's highest priority and, in general, permission to make up missed work will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Whenever a student has an absence, either planned or unplanned, the faculty member may choose to provide the original or a different make-up assessment or in-class graded learning experience.

### *Other Academic Requirements*

In addition to attendance, the timely submission of homework and completion of required co-requisite coursework is monitored closely and will affect a student's academic progress status.

### Quantitative Review

Students must maintain academic standing consistent with the Academy's curriculum and graduation requirements. This requires a 100% course completion rate in all years of the program. Course completion rates are reviewed at mid-term, and final grades are issued after end-of-year examinations to determine whether the student has qualified to progress to the next year of the program.

### Timeframe/Pace

Students enter the program as a cohort group and typically proceed through their coursework in the same sequence, at the same time. Students are required to complete all first-year classes before second-year classes can be taken, and all second-year classes before commencing clinical internship. Individual student plan requirements may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis. If a student fails a class during the period of their clinical internship or

fails to resolve an incomplete within the prescribed time frame, the student's clinical internship may be suspended until that class has been successfully completed.

The educational program must be completed within a reasonable period of time, defined as the maximum timeframe (MTF). Students are eligible to receive financial aid for 150% of the published M.Ac. degree courses and clinical requirements (collectively referred to as "coursework"). This equates to a maximum time frame of (6) years. Completed coursework is defined as any sequence for which the student receives a passing grade. Program withdrawal is not included in the calculation of pace. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Academy may approve an additional year for program completion.

At the point that all required coursework for the academic program has been completed, financial aid eligibility will be suspended, even if the student does not apply to graduate.

Maximum timeframe for the Chinese Herbal Studies program is (6) years and (8) years for dual enrollment in the Master of Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Studies programs.

*Repeat/Incomplete:* The Academy does not have a system of incompletes or non-credit remedial coursework.

*Transfer Credit:* If the student receives transfer credits both the program length and the maximum timeframe for completion is reduced for SAP.

*Withdrawals:* If the student withdraws and later re-enrolls in the program it may affect the student's SAP.

## PROCEDURES

Faculty make it a priority to identify as soon as possible and to offer support to students who may be having academic difficulty. The academic dean receives notice from instructors when a student is not meeting academic expectations. The dean will work with the student to develop a plan to improve academic performance. Students are also urged to contact the dean if they are having academic challenges so that steps may be taken to avoid academic sanctions.

### Academic Review for SAP

The registrar, in coordination with the academic dean, will conduct a SAP review for all students at the mid-term and end-of-year when all examination grades are available. The annual review will include course completion, pace and progress rate and maximum time frame.

The registrar is responsible for notifying the financial aid officer when there is a change of status for any student. The financial aid officer is responsible for notifying the third-party servicer and the lender of any changes in student enrollment status.

The academic dean will notify a student in writing when academic satisfactory progress has not been met. The financial aid officer will notify a student in writing of changes in financial aid status.

### Failure to Meet Academic SAP Requirements

Any student who fails to meet SAP is subject to the following sanctions:

**Academic warning.** Students failing to meet SAP are placed on academic warning. Students are still eligible to receive financial aid. SAP standards must be met by the end of the subsequent term for the academic warning to be lifted.

**Academic probation.** Students will be placed on academic probation and notified in writing by the academic dean for the following reasons:

- Failing to meet SAP for two consecutive terms
- Failing to maintain appropriate pace as defined in the quantitative measure of SAP for two consecutive terms
- Demonstrating unprofessional conduct

There may be situations where, given factors such as course timing and/or the nature of the professional misconduct, the sanction of academic probation may be immediate. For example, an unexcused absence from a comprehensive exam, or repeated disruption to classroom activity, would warrant immediate academic probation rather than an academic warning.

Students on academic probation must meet with the academic dean to develop an academic plan of action. An academic plan is course of action that, if achieved, will ensure that the student is able to meet the Academy's standards for SAP by a specific point in time. An academic plan may include suggestions for remedial work, tutoring, prioritization of school work and changes in time management. The academic dean will develop an academic plan in consultation with faculty and/or administrators.

Students may reestablish SAP during academic probation by:

1. successfully completing all coursework, including any remedial work; passing all exams (if applicable); and maintaining standards for pace; and
2. successfully meeting the requirements of the academic plan which might include attending additional classes to make up for missed class time, repeating a segment or part of the segment of the program that has already been completed, or other conditions. Requirements may also include recommendations for tutoring, counseling, mentoring, treatment, other personal work or medical evaluation.

While on probation students are still eligible to receive financial aid. At the end of the probationary period the student must have successfully completed all courses attempted with a passing grade. Students who fail to pass out of academic probation for two consecutive academic probationary periods will lose their eligibility for financial aid unless an appeal is filed and approved. At this point, a student is considered to be in financial aid suspension.

**Academic dismissal.** Students who fail to regain SAP during a probationary period or violate any of the conditions of their probationary status will be dismissed from the Academy. Students who are dismissed for academic failure may be eligible to reapply in the future. To be considered for reinstatement, the student must demonstrate that he or she has remedied the situation that has caused the academic dismissal.

**Financial Aid probation.** Students who fail to meet SAP standards will be notified by the financial aid officer and will be placed in a financial aid suspension. Students may submit an appeal to the financial aid officer for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility. A student who successfully appeals will then be placed in financial aid probation until their SAP issue has been resolved or they have successfully met the requirements of their academic plan.

**Appeals.** Circumstances to appeal a decision to suspend financial aid are limited. A student may appeal a suspension if the student did not meet SAP due to extenuating circumstances (e.g. personal illness, a death in the family). The SAP appeal must address why the student failed and what has changed in the student's situation that will allow the student to meet SAP at the next evaluation. Appeals must be submitted within ten days of receiving notice of financial aid suspension. Late appeals may be considered but timely review is not guaranteed before the start of the next term.

An ad hoc Academic Appeals Committee will review the appeal and may require a discussion of the appeal with the student. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and cannot be appealed further. If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation and will be eligible for one additional loan period during which time the student must regain SAP. If the appeal is denied, the student will remain on academic probation but is ineligible for aid until SAP is re-established.

If a student fails to meet SAP at the end of the academic probation period, the student loses financial aid eligibility unless another appeal is filed and approved. Students who are not receiving financial aid may appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee if they are in jeopardy of academic dismissal. In either case, no more than two separate appeals are allowed and the reasons for requesting the appeals cannot be the same. If a second appeal is not approved, the student will be dismissed from the program.

This appeals policy does not apply to professional conduct code violations, nor is it an appeal or process to supersede the professional code of conduct. In cases of sexual harassment, sexual assault or sexual discrimination, please refer to those policies for appropriate procedures. The Academy has both informal and formal mechanisms in place to resolve student concerns about faculty and staff.