

University of Rio Grande/Community College
Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

In response to COVID-19, updates have been made to our SAP policy to help alleviate potential impacts to future aid eligibility. Please review these updates under the *Grade notations counted in attempted for completion rate sections below*.

Policy Overview:

Students receiving Title IV Federal Student Aid are required to be making **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)** toward their degree completion. The SAP regulations, defined in HEA 668.34, require Rio Grande to review on a regular schedule each student's progress using three measures: qualitative, quantitative, and pace (maximum timeframe). Failure to meet the requirements for the University of Rio Grande Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy in coordination with Federal Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Guidelines, may result in the loss of financial aid.

New SAP regulations, effective July 1, 2011, dictate SAP statuses that schools must use based on how frequently SAP is reviewed. The new regulations also addressed the treatment of credit hours that count toward students' degrees but earned prior to attending the school. These regulatory changes necessitated changes in Rio Grande's Satisfactory Academic Progress policy. Beginning with Fall 2015, Rio Grande made a policy change to review a student's SAP requirements at the end of each term. Students will be permitted a warning term and receive written communication from the financial aid office outlining an explanation and terms of the student's warning status.

The Office of Student Financial Aid also uses the same SAP standards for certain institutional aid and for some State of Ohio Programs.

The Office of Student Financial Aid reviews SAP for all students who have records in the financial aid module of Student Information System (SIS). This includes students who may not be receiving any aid affected by SAP eligibility. This is done to ensure that SAP eligibility is considered in the event a student was to become otherwise eligible for such aid in the future.

Students monitored under policy: Undergraduate, Graduate

Aid programs subject to policy: Federal Title IV aid and State of Ohio Grant. Institutional need-based scholarships and grants recipients must meet the requirements stated on the scholarship stipulations. If no stipulations are stated then this policy is in effect.

Review schedule

- Rio Grande reviews SAP at the end of each term for completion rate and GPA for all students.
- Pace of completion (Maximum timeframe) is reviewed each term for all students.
- Students who regain conditional eligibility due to appeal will be given strict standards and monitored each term on the student's academic progress.

SAP Measurements

The Qualitative [(all credit hours attempted/credit hours earned (completed successfully))] and the Quantitative (Cumulative GPA) measures are shown in the table below:

Total Credit Hours Attempted:	Cumulative GPA Required:	Minimum Completed Percentage Required:
1 - 15	1.50	65%
16 - 31	1.80	65%
32 - 52	1.90	70%
53 - Graduation	2.00	70%

Grade notations counted in attempted for completion rate:

- **Successful completion** means a student has received an **A, B, C, D, P, or S**.
- Grades of **F, I, NF, U, NG, and W** are not considered successfully completed courses.
- **Courses not included in the calculation of completion rate for SAP** are courses which the student takes as an audit (Spring 2020 exceptions listed below).
- **Transfer credits** appearing on a student’s transcript are counted as attempted hours to determine completion rate.

**** Hours attempted includes *all* hours pursued, earned, dropped, and failed. All of these hours are counted as attempted even if the student did not receive aid.**

Spring 2020 Only: Courses dropped after March 5, 2020, as a result of Covid-19 will not count as attempted or completed. These grades are designated on the transcript as “IC”.

Spring 2020 Only: Courses with a grade of “I” (Incomplete) as a result of Covid-19 related circumstances will not count as attempted or completed.

Pace of Completion (Maximum timeframe) measure: the maximum timeframe for all students is defined as 150% hours attempted of the published program length.

- Undergraduate students are measured based on all attempted credits (defined by the same grade notations as listed under the quantitative measure) and cannot exceed 150% of the number of credits required for each student’s primary major.
- The maximum timeframe for graduate students is based on the degree level a student is pursuing.
- Students pursuing master’s degrees are allotted a maximum of 60 attempted credit hours to complete a master’s degree.

Treatment of Special Coursework

- **Transfer Credits:** Transfer credits appearing on the URG transcript are counted for completion rate and maximum timeframe.
- **Remedial Coursework:** undergraduate students can take up to 30 hours of remedial coursework, and these hours are considered in the calculation based on the SAP grade notations previously listed
- **English As A Second Language (ESL) Courses:** students taking these courses as part of a declared major will have them included in their SAP calculations based on the SAP grade notations previously listed
- **Consortium Agreements:** coursework taken at other institutions via consortium agreements are assigned “Academic Affairs” courses, will be assigned grades, and will be counted for completion rate and max timeframe

- **“I” GRADES:** An “I” (incomplete) will be considered an “F” until a letter grade is assigned in its place. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office of the grade change. (Spring 2020 exceptions listed above)
- **SEEKING ADDITIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS-** Title IV federal financial aid is generally awarded to undergraduate students for the completion of one degree. Students who are seeking an **additional degree** may do so at the student’s own expense. However, if the student has just-cause that validates his/her decision to seek an additional degree, the student may **appeal** to the Financial Aid Office to request federal aid for an additional degree/certificate. Students may only appeal **once** to receive aid for an **additional** degree/certificate program.
- **REPEATED COURSES-** Repeated courses which were previously failed are counted in hours pursued and, if successfully completed, hours earned.

SAP Statuses:

- **Eligible:** meeting all requirements for SAP
- **Suspension:** assigned to students who fail to meet the required GPA and/or completion rate at the time of their annual SAP review. Students on suspension are not eligible to receive Title IV aid.
- **Probation:** assigned to students who regain financial aid eligibility due to an appeal and who can reasonably be expected to meet SAP standards by the end of the subsequent payment period. Probation is also assigned to students who regain eligibility due to an appeal. These students will be provided a GPA and completion rate goal that will let them know what is required of them to be making progress at the next review.
- **Warning:** Students who do not meet the Completion Rate or Minimum GPA required will be on *one semester warning period*. If the Completion Rate and/or GPA is still below the SAP requirements after the warning period, then the student’s financial aid will be suspended.
- **Nearing Max Timeframe:** status assigned to students who are within 30 credits of reaching their maximum timeframe.
- **Maximum Timeframe Suspension:** assigned to students who meet or exceed their maximum attempted hours. Students on suspension for maximum timeframe are not eligible to receive SAP affected aid.

Warning and Probationary Status

- Probationary and warning students will be advised to enroll in a *Focus on Success LA10303* course, which is designed for “at-risk” students to help develop a strategy towards becoming a successful college student.

Regaining Eligibility

- Students who are suspended due to GPA or completion rate remain ineligible for SAP affected aid until both their GPA and completion rate are at or above the minimum levels. Ineligible students continue to be monitored annually, and will be returned to “Eligible” if they are meeting all standards at the time of a review.
- Students who self-correct during a term that SAP is not reviewed can be returned to “Eligible” only if they self-report.
- Students can also have their aid reinstated upon an approval of a SAP appeal.

Types of SAP Appeals

- SAP Appeal for Additional Maximum Time Frame Hours Only – to be used by students who have reached their maximum timeframe ONLY due to changing majors, having multiple majors, having a large number of transfer hours or having a previous bachelor’s degree.

- Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal – to be used by students who are not meeting the minimum GPA and/or completion rate set forth by Rio Grande, and as a result have lost their financial aid eligibility.

Appeal Requirements

- **SAP appeal for Maximum Time Frame**
 - A letter of appeal must address (a) why the student has been unable to complete your program within the maximum number of credit hours allowed AND (b) the student’s current program of study and career goal(s).
 - Complete the table provided with the appeal form that shows the courses the student has left to take and when the student plans to take the required courses for the degree.
 - **Students who plan to appeal must be ACCEPTED into a program of study or taking classes that ARE REQUIRED FOR THE DECLARED DEGREE.**
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal**
 - A letter of appeal must address and provide documentation of the **extenuating circumstance** leading to the failure to meet the required standards.
 - Only appeals that document the following reasons will be considered
 1. Personal illness or injury
 2. Death of an immediate family member
 3. Other extreme situation that is out of the students control
 - Appeals will NOT be approved more than Twice.
 - Special consideration will be given to students who have been away from Rio Grande longer than three academic years.
 - **Appeals stating the cause of suspension is related to lack of transportation or one term of self-pay are no longer considered a valid reason to appeal.**
 - Appeal deadlines will be set before the beginning of each semester by the Financial Aid Office and posted on the Financial Aid Office Website Calendar.
 - An appeal form is required to be completed and submitted along with the letter of appeal to the Director of Financial Aid.
 - A SAP committee comprised of staff from other departments related to student services, will review all SAP appeals and make recommendations on the approval or denial of a student’s SAP appeal.

Approved Appeals

- Students who successfully appeal their suspension due to GPA or completion rate will be monitored and required to meet the standards outlined in the SAP approval letter by the next review. These students will be provided, with specific term requirements for completion rate and GPA to give them an understanding of how they must do minimally each term to be within standards by the next SAP review. Students are required to complete EVERY course successfully with a “C” or better.
- Students who successfully appeal their suspension due to GPA or completion rate and can reasonably be expected to meet SAP standards by the end of the subsequent payment period are placed on probation for one term.
- Students who successfully appeal their suspension due to maximum timeframe will be given additional hours to complete their program and will be assigned “Eligible” status. Only those courses required for program completion will be covered by financial aid.

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