

**(For Title IV Financial Aid Applicants only, to determine continued eligibility for Federal, State, and/or Institutional Need-based Aid)**

The U.S. Department of Education has regulations concerning “satisfactory academic progress” for Title IV financial aid recipients. These regulations outline requirements for each institution to establish a policy for monitoring the academic progress of each student receiving Title IV financial aid. The intent of this policy is to fulfill this requirement established by the Department of Education. This policy in no way infringes upon or replaces UNCSA’s current policies for institutional probation.

### **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY**

The requirements of this policy apply to all students as one determinant of eligibility for aid. According to federal regulations, this policy has qualitative measures (GPA) and quantitative measures (Completion Ratio and Maximum Timeframe). Financial aid recipients must maintain satisfactory progress in all areas according to this policy for all periods of enrollment, regardless of whether aid was received during all periods of enrollment.

A student’s Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be reviewed at the end of each academic year (after the completion of Spring semester). At that time, any student who is not making satisfactory academic progress will be placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) **Suspension** for the next academic year. A student on SAP Suspension will be denied all federal financial aid, as well as other need-based aid, and will be required to use other options for covering their costs of attending school for the academic year. At the end of the academic year in which the student was on SAP Suspension, if the student is determined to be progressing satisfactorily according to this policy (i.e., “meeting SAP”), the student’s eligibility to receive aid will be reinstated for the following academic year. If the student is not meeting SAP after an academic year without aid, they will remain on SAP Suspension for another academic year. A student has the right to appeal Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension using the appeal process described later in this policy.

### **Students Not Continued in their Program**

Students in the degree or certificate programs must achieve certain standards to be continued in their program at UNCSA. Students not meeting these standards may receive warning letter(s) from their arts school and/or temporarily be placed in a probationary status; these students may continue to be eligible for Title IV and other need-based financial aid if their cumulative GPA is at least 2.0, and they meet both of the Quantitative Measures for SAP, when SAP is reviewed (See details under [“MEASURES OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS”](#) later in this policy.) Students dismissed, suspended, expelled or otherwise not continued in their program will not be eligible to receive Title IV and other need-based financial aid.

If a student who was not continued in their program reenrolls at a later date, that student will be subject to the same Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy as enrolled students at that time. Furthermore, to be eligible for aid when reenrolling, this student must have been meeting SAP at the end of the last semester in which they were

enrolled; the student must continue to meet SAP using the current SAP Policy in effect at the time of each evaluation.

### **New, Transfer, and Returning Students**

UNCSA has several categories of students, as follows:

1. Undergraduate
  - a. Degree
  - b. Arts Certificate (4-year)
  - c. Arts Certificate (2-year)
2. Graduate
  - a. Degree
  - b. Performing Artist Certificate
3. Full-time
4. Part-time

Undergraduate certificate students are not eligible for Federal aid or need-based aid.

Full-time and part-time students are treated equally, except where noted otherwise.

## **MEASURES OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

### **1. Qualitative (Grade Point Average)**

Students must meet UNCSA's Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements consistent with the academic standard for graduation in the program in which they are enrolled. The achievement of acceptable GPAs will be monitored and administered by the arts schools and the Division of Liberal Arts, in conjunction with the University Registrar. GPAs include all course work at UNCSA.

Note: If students are continued in their program but temporarily placed in a Probationary Status for reasons that may include GPA, they may retain financial aid eligibility if their cumulative GPA is at least 2.0, and they meet both of the Quantitative Measures outlined below, when SAP is reviewed. The UNCSA Office of Student Financial Aid will monitor for this GPA "floor" of 2.0.

A student who does not maintain the minimum GPA of 2.0 will be placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension for the next academic year. The student will not be reinstated for aid until satisfactory academic progress is established. A student has the right to appeal Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension using the appeal process discussed later in this policy.

### **2. Quantitative**

To be progressing satisfactorily, a student must meet two types of quantitative measures.

#### **a. Completion Ratio**

Students must achieve and maintain a cumulative Completion Ratio of at least **67%** to remain eligible for financial aid.

The Completion Ratio will be calculated by dividing the cumulative number of total credit hours successfully **completed** by the cumulative number of total credit hours **attempted**. Credit hours successfully **completed** at UNCSCA are for all courses in which a student receives a non-failing letter grade (A – D), S (Satisfactory), or P (Passing). Credit hours **attempted** at UNCSCA include credit hours for all courses in which a student was enrolled on the census date (the tenth day of class each semester or the second day of class each summer session). Credit hours from other institution(s) accepted toward a student’s program at UNCSCA are added to both **attempted** and **completed** hours. (See Section 3, [Additional Information](#)).

A student who does not maintain the minimum Completion Ratio of 67% will be placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension for the next academic year. The student will not be reinstated for aid until satisfactory academic progress is established. A student has the right to appeal Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension using the appeal process discussed later in this policy.

**b. Maximum Timeframe**

Students must complete their program within the maximum timeframes outlined below. A student who does not complete his/her program within the maximum timeframes stated below will be placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension for the next academic year. The student has the right to appeal using the appeal process discussed later in this policy.

**Normal Length of Undergraduate Program:**

120 credit hours or more

**Maximum Time-Frame to Complete Undergraduate Program:**

180 credit hours (or 150% of the credit hours required to the complete the program, if the published length of the program is more than 120 credit hours)

For undergraduate students, Maximum Timeframe will include credit hours accepted as transfer credit and credit hours earned at UNCSCA. *Note: Transfer credit hours for academic courses from a student’s previous college work may substitute for academic courses that could be taken at UNCSCA as part of the Bachelor’s degree requirements, but these transfer hours do not escalate the pace at which a student can progress through their core arts curriculum. The same concept applies to Summer Session academic courses taken at UNCSCA.*

**Maximum Time-Frame to Complete Graduate Program:**

150% of the published length of credit hours required to the complete the program.

**3. Additional Information**

Grades of “F” (Fail), “W” (Withdrawal) and “U” (Unsatisfactory) are considered hours attempted but not successfully completed, therefore, they negatively impact the Completion Ratio. “F” will also negatively affect the GPA.

Grades of “I” (Incomplete) are considered hours attempted but not successfully completed, which will negatively impact the Completion Ratio, until or unless the work is completed and a grade is given to replace the “I”. However, if an “I” is given at the end of the Spring term, the course will not be included in the Completion Ratio for that academic year. An “I” for a course becomes an “F” after one full term, if the work has not been completed for a passing grade to replace the “I”.

Example: John receives an “I” for a course taken in the Fall Term. At the end of the following term, John has not satisfied the requirements to upgrade the “I” to a letter grade. The grade for the course then becomes an “F” and will negatively impact the GPA and the Completion Ratio.

Course repetitions will be included in both the GPA and Completion Ratio. However, if a student applies for and is granted permission to replace a grade for an academic course under the School’s “Grade Replacement Policy”, only the replacement grade will count in the GPA, but the credit hours for both attempts will be included in the Completion Ratio. Non-credit remedial courses and audited courses will not be used in determining satisfactory academic progress.

At UNCSCA, student success is determined by the results of attempted and completed coursework while attending UNCSCA. For Satisfactory Academic Progress, GPA will begin with courses taken at UNCSCA. Completion Ratio will be calculated based on courses at UNCSCA, plus credit hours for courses taken at other institutions which are accepted toward a program at UNCSCA, which will be counted in the Completion Ratio as both attempted and completed hours. Maximum Timeframe will consider the credit hours from the beginning of enrollment at UNCSCA, plus any accepted transfer credits.

Students who change programs to a different arts school before completing their original program must have been meeting SAP before the change, to be eligible for continued financial aid in the new program. Because of the prescribed arts curriculum, Maximum Timeframe for these students will include the credit hours in their new program, plus any credits in their previous program which apply to the new program, as well as any accepted transfer credit.

When SAP is monitored at the end of each academic year (after the completion of Spring semester), the student’s cumulative record will be reviewed for Completion Ratio, Maximum Timeframe, and GPA “floor” of 2.0 higher. (Students enrolled in Summer Session academic courses will have their cumulative records reviewed again after the completion of Summer, before Fall semester begins.)

A student who officially withdraws from UNCSCA and later reenrolls, will be monitored for satisfactory progress upon reentering UNCSCA, based on their cumulative records at the time. For reenrollment, SAP will be based on the results of satisfactory academic progress monitoring from the most recent full academic-year increment from their previous enrollment. SAP will not include courses with an official withdrawal status (“W”) in the term in which they withdrew from the institution as part of their Completion Ratio.

#### **4. Appeals Process**

Any student placed on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Suspension has the right to appeal. An appeal must be made, in writing, to the Director of Student Financial Aid. The appeal must include a

detailed description of **extenuating circumstances** that occurred during the academic year in which the student failed to meet SAP. These circumstances may include an injury or illness of the student, the death of a relative, the serious illness of an immediate family member, or other individual special circumstances. The appeal must also include documentation to support the existence of circumstances described in the appeal and evidence that the **circumstances have been resolved or changed to allow the student to progress satisfactorily** by the **end of the following semester**.

If the student will not be able to meet SAP standards by the end of the next semester, the student should consult with their arts school advisor and/or the Dean or Assistant Dean of the Division Liberal Arts to create an **“academic plan”**. The plan should include steps and standards for the student to follow to meet the SAP standards and academic standards for graduation by a **specific point in time**.

The appeal will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, consisting of staff and faculty. The Director of Student Financial Aid will be the non-voting chair of the committee. The committee will review the student’s written appeal and documentation. The committee may vote to approve the appeal and place the student on Financial Aid Probation for one semester; if an academic plan is submitted, the student will be monitored for meeting the steps of the plan. A student who is granted approval may be required to seek assistance/counseling to help overcome obstacles hindering satisfactory progress. The decision by the committee will be final. The committee will convene in a timely basis when needed.

#### **5. Reinstatement of Financial Aid**

To have federal financial aid reinstated after being on Satisfactory Academic Progress Suspension (i.e., the student failed SAP and did not have an appeal approved with or without an academic plan), the student must have continued in school without the benefit of federal and need-based financial aid for one academic year. At the end of that academic year, the student must notify the Office of Student Financial Aid that they wish to have their academic record reviewed for satisfactory academic progress. If satisfactory progress has been established at that time, aid will be reinstated for the upcoming academic year. If not, the student has the right to appeal.