

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

### **Graduate students in the Online HRD or MPA Program**

Federal regulations require that an institution establish, publish, and apply reasonable standards for measuring whether a student, who is otherwise eligible for aid, is maintaining satisfactory academic progress in his or her course of study. The standards must be the same or stricter than the institution's standards for a student enrolled in the same academic program who is not receiving financial assistance. Listed below is the complete statement of Minimum Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Recipients.

**Maximum Time Frame for Degree Completion** - Students are expected to complete their program of study (degree) in 150% of the time indicated by the program administrator.

**Quantitative Standards** - Students must successfully complete a minimum of 70% of credit hours attempted each academic year.

**Qualitative Standards** - Students must maintain a Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least a 3.0 calculated at the end of the academic year in order to be considered a student in good standing.

#### **Repeated Coursework**

As defined by the U.S. Department of Education, Villanova University will include and fund any repeated coursework previously taken by the student in his or her enrollment status one time. Villanova University will only allow a student to retake previously passed coursework one time and count the coursework in the student's enrollment status (e.g., the student is retaking the coursework in an attempt to meet an academic standard such as a better grade) for financial aid consideration.

A student may not receive Federal funds to retake previously passed coursework if the student is required to retake the course due to the student failing other coursework. For example, if the student is enrolled in two classes in the Fall I term and fails one of those courses, the Program Director may require the student to repeat the previously passed course along with the course that the student failed. If the student retakes the two courses in the spring, only the course that the student failed may be counted toward the student's enrollment status.

#### **Measurement of Academic Progress**

Academic progress will be measured once a student has completed one full year of study, starting with the student's first term of enrollment. All financial aid applicants are subject to the satisfactory academic standards regardless of whether or not they received financial aid previously. Failures and withdrawals are courses attempted but not completed. Incompletes are not counted toward credits completed until after the coursework is successfully completed and posted by the Registrar.

**When Minimum Standards of Academic Progress Are Not Achieved** - A student who does not make satisfactory academic progress will be placed on financial aid suspension until the requirements are met. The student will be notified in writing of the financial aid suspension.

#### **Appeals**

If a student has failed to achieve satisfactory academic progress, the student can appeal the decision to the Office of Financial Assistance. The appeal must be submitted in writing along with an academic plan using the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy form found on the Office of Financial Assistance website and specify the extenuating circumstances which prevented the student from achieving academic progress. The

following types of mitigating circumstances may be considered when a student appeals: injury or extended illness of the student, death in the family, or a change in educational objectives. Mitigating circumstances do not include the withdrawal from classes to avoid failing grades, pursuing a second major or a second degree. The student must explain what has changed that will allow him/her to make satisfactory academic progress by the end of the semester. A copy of the student's academic plan developed in conjunction with the student's faculty advisor, academic dean or his/her representative also must be submitted. The Office of Financial Assistance may request additional documentation and/or require an interview with the student.

Students must appeal within two weeks of receiving a notice from the Office of Financial Assistance of the financial aid suspension. Appeals will not be accepted after the two week period has passed and the student will be responsible for all charges on their student account. The student will receive a reply from the Office of Financial Assistance within two weeks of receipt of their appeal.

### **Academic Plan**

The academic plan is a written document developed by the student and his/her college that ensures that the student is able to meet the University's Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards by a specific point in time. It could include qualitative and quantitative requirements necessary to achieve that plan. The academic plan could take the student to completion of their program rather than meeting the University's Satisfactory Academic Progress standard at a specific point in time as determined by an appropriate academic official.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

Villanova University will assign this status to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has successfully appealed and had eligibility for aid reinstated. If the Office of Financial Assistance determines that the Academic Progress Standards can be waived for one semester, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation. As part of the student's Financial Aid Probation, the office requires a student, along with their academic advisor, to develop and submit an academic plan that includes a strategy of improving progress and reaching the student's educational goals. A student placed on Financial Aid Probation may receive Federal and Villanova University funds for one semester. The student will be required to meet the University's Satisfactory Academic Progress standards at the end of the semester or meet the terms and conditions of their academic plan as well as the plan established by the academic advisor.

At the end of the probationary semester, the Office of Financial Assistance will determine if academic progress requirements have been met or if the student continues on the path of the designated academic plan. If requirements have been met, the probationary status will be removed. If academic requirements have not been met, and the student has deviated from the academic plan, the student may not receive Federal funds for the following semester.

A student may only be granted one semester of Financial Aid Probation during their academic career.

### **Reinstatement of Financial Aid**

Once financial assistance has been discontinued, it will be reinstated provided:

- The student has successfully achieved the required number of credits and cumulative grade point average; and,
- The student has requested reinstatement in writing.

Reinstatement is not automatic. The student is responsible for making certain that the grades and credits completed have been properly posted with the Office of the Registrar prior to requesting reinstatement of financial assistance. Students are encouraged to file all financial assistance application forms by Villanova University's established deadline so that once reinstatement has been achieved, he or she can be considered for assistance as quickly as possible.

**Students Returning After a Year or More**

If a student previously left the university after failing to make satisfactory academic progress and returns to the university, the student is required to appeal his/her status. The student must submit an academic plan. If the appeal is granted, the student is placed on financial aid probation for one semester. The student's academic status will be reviewed after the semester to determine if the student successfully made satisfactory academic progress.