

## Satisfactory Academic Progress/Max Timeframe (Policy)

### Policy

Students who receive Title IV aid must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) to remain eligible for aid. Federal regulations require all institutions participating in Title IV programs to develop and implement a SAP policy for all aid recipients. Students must be able to complete their programs within the Maximum Timeframe Allowed (150% of the program length), which is why we measure completion rate; and with at least a 2.00 cumulative GPA (Lane's GPA required for graduation). If either of these become mathematically impossible, aid must be discontinued for that program. Lane's Financial Aid SAP policies and procedures have been designed to accommodate this requirement.

At Lane, evaluation of GPA and completion rate (SAP) is separate from the Maximum Timeframe Allowed (150%); however, they are both very much related. We have two separate processes for these and because of this, have listed them separately in this manual.

### Definitions for this Section

- **Cumulative Completion Rate** - Passed hours divided by attempted hours; includes Dual Enrollment credits that have been funded by Lane since summer 2011, as well as transfer credits that have been articulated.
- **Attempted Credits** - These are the credits in which a student attends at least one session and remains registered in after the published Refund Deadline. It also includes any transferred credits from another institution.
- **Passed Credits** - Any course in which a student earns an A, B, C, D (includes +/- combinations) or P.
- **Grade Point Average (GPA)** - Grades of A, B, C, D and F (includes +/- combinations), affect GPA. Lane uses a 4.0 GPA scale and requires a 2.00 for graduation. Dual Enrollment credits earned at host schools do not affect GPA.
- **Dual Enrollment** - If covered by a consortium agreement, Lane may fund dual enrolled students for their enrollment in courses at another institution, as well as their courses at Lane. Starting summer 2011, all credits we fund from the other school are counted in their completion rate, but do not affect their GPA.
- **Transfer Credit** - Credit hours from another institution that have been (or could be) accepted toward the student's program at Lane. The credits count as attempted and passed hours.

### Same As or Stricter Than

Financial aid academic progress standards must be as strict or stricter than standards applied to students in the same academic program who do not receive financial aid. Both the institution and the Financial Aid office use the same criteria (66.7% completion and 2.00 GPA) as a the minimum academic standard to measure student progress.

### Policy for All Students

To be in good academic standing at Lane, all students must meet the academic progress standards (APS) set forth in the Catalog. The online version of these standards are found at [www.lanec.edu/sites/default/files/collegecatalog/procedurespolicies.pdf](http://www.lanec.edu/sites/default/files/collegecatalog/procedurespolicies.pdf), also see COPPS policy for Academic Probation and Dismissal.

### **Prior Academic Performance**

All students who apply for financial aid at Lane must have their academic history reviewed to determine if their prior academic performance meets standards. All students are considered to be in Good Standing for financial aid purposes unless:

- The student has a SAP standing of FA Suspension or Probation in Banner.
- The student has been dismissed from Lane per the institutional APS Policy.

Students who have a prior SAP suspension, must complete the appeal process to be reinstated. If student did not meet SAP prior to the federal regulation changes of 2011 the SAP evaluation will be based on current federal regulations.

### **Frequency of SAP Evaluation**

The Financial Aid office evaluates SAP for all financial aid recipients at the end of every term. All periods of the student's enrollment count toward this SAP evaluation, even the periods in which the student did not receive aid. After grades post, we check cumulative completion rate and cumulative GPA. Students must meet the following requirements in order to meet SAP:

- 66.7% cumulative completion rate
- 2.0 cumulative GPA (after 17 + attempted credits)

At the end of each payment period (term), a new SAP Status is assigned:

- Good Standing: The student met both the completion rate and GPA requirement. He/she is eligible to receive grants, work study and loans.
- Warning: SAP status assigned to a student who failed to meet SAP requirements immediately following a Good Standing status. He/she is eligible to receive grants, work study and loans. However, must raise his/her GPA and/or completion rate to good standing within one term to avoid FA Suspension the following term.
- FA Suspension: SAP status assigned to a student who failed to meet SAP requirements immediately following a Warning or Probation status. These students are not eligible for aid until they resolve their status via the appeal process.
- Appeal Pending: SAP status assigned to a student who needs to provide additional information to complete their appeal.
- Appeal Approved on Probation: SAP status assigned to a student who failed to meet SAP requirements and who successfully appealed and had their eligibility reinstated. This status is manually assigned as the result of an approved appeal and functions the same as Warning (i.e. student is eligible for aid for the term, but must raise their completion rate and/or GPA to minimum standards to avoid a subsequent FA Suspension).
- Appeal Denied: SAP status assigned to a student who failed to provide adequate documentation to support their circumstances or it was not considered extenuating. Typically, the student will need to complete 6 credits using their own resources and appeal once the grades are posted.

### **Appeal to Reinstate**

To resolve a FA Suspension status, a student must appeal to be reinstated. Students are required to submit an explanation of the circumstances that prevented them from meeting SAP requirements, as well as, identify how those circumstances and/or barriers have been resolved, so that the same circumstances will not be repeated. An explanation is required for the last two terms where the student did not complete 100% of the courses they attempted and/or they earned a term GPA of less than a 2.0. Documentation is required for circumstances that can be reasonably documented, as is a signature.

## **Criteria for Approval**

A student may be reinstated if:

- A student can complete their program within the 150% Maximum Timeframe or has an approved MT extension.
- After being reinstated onto Probation status, they complete 100% of the classes they attempt with a 2.0 or higher, even though they may not be meeting cumulative requirements. Note: meeting this criterion does not guarantee approval.
- The student receives a grade change that sufficiently improves their status. The SAP status will be changed to the status that would have been appropriate had the current grade been posted at the time SAP was originally calculated.
- If they identify barriers to their success or had circumstances affecting their academic progress that were of sufficient duration and intensity, were beyond their control, and not part of a recurring pattern. (We may not consider future appeals related to the same circumstances.) Examples of circumstances that may be approved include:
  - Medical/psychological illness that prevented completion of coursework
  - Major illness or death in the immediate family that required extensive absence
  - Other family emergencies that prevented completion of coursework

Documentation of circumstances is required for any circumstance that can be reasonably documented. The documentation must be relevant to the terms the student did not meet SAP requirements (i.e. did not complete 100% of their courses and/or their term GPA fell below 2.0 leading up to the disqualification). Examples of documentation are statements from an objective third party such as health care providers, crisis counselors or social workers, police reports, obituaries, and/or court reports. In most cases, notes from family members or friends are not considered adequate documentation.

## **Reasons for Denial**

A student who does not meet the criteria for approval will have their appeal denied. Except in the case when a student cannot finish their degree within the maximum timeframe with a 2.0 GPA, FA will inform the student of the steps required to regain eligibility. In many cases, we will ask the student to prove they can be academically successful by completing 6 credits toward their program without the benefit of financial aid before we will consider reinstating them.

Examples of circumstances that may be denied include:

- Inability to complete program within the maximum timeframe with a 2.0 cumulative GPA
- Poor time management
- Issues related to circumstances considered in a prior appeal
- Taking the same steps to ensure academic success that were considered in a prior appeal

## **Proving Success (AKA Making up Credits)**

- A student must provide an appeal with a written statement explaining their situation in order to have the option of making up credits
- Generally, students are asked to make up 6 credits, depending on completion rate and/or number of prior poor terms. Amount required is up to FA Advisor discretion.
- The courses must be completed without financial aid
- The courses do not have to be completed in one term. In most cases, the courses should be taken at Lane Community College
- In most cases, the courses need to be completed with a 2.0 GPA; however, program requirements and/or prior academic performance could result in requiring a higher GPA
- The courses must apply toward student's program, be a required prerequisite, or be a necessary developmental

- course.
- Credits added to the transcript through Credit by Assessment (CBA) or Credit by Exam (CBE) do not prove the student can be successful in the college environment.
- CBA courses reflect on the transcript with a grade followed by an '@'.
- CBE courses reflect on the transcript with a grade followed by a '-'

### **Maximum Timeframe (AKA 150% Credit Limit)**

The maximum number of credits a student can attempt for completion of a program cannot exceed 150% of the published program length. As soon as it is clear the student cannot finish within this timeframe, they cannot receive further funding for any portion of their program. Exceptions can be made under limited circumstances.

- Published program length can vary with program and catalog year. Values above are based on the shortest program offered at the college for each program type and are used for flagging purposes only.
- The count for attempted credits begins with the student's first term and includes all earned, unearned (I, \*, F, NP, U, Y and NC), repeated courses and transfer credits, regardless of whether or not the student received financial aid.
- Credits taken in developmental coursework do not count toward the 150% Maximum Timeframe.
- Credits taken in ESL coursework do not count toward the 150% Maximum Timeframe (nor will they count toward the Developmental Coursework Limitation).

### **Flag & Notification Policy**

- Students are automatically flagged to complete the appeal process when they are 15 credits or less from reaching the 150% Maximum Timeframe for their shortest declared program.
- Auto processes are run at time of initial FAFSA data load and at the end of every spring term (after grades post).
- Students are manually flagged to complete the appeal process if it appears they cannot finish their program within the 150% Maximum Timeframe due to a low completion rate and/or taking the wrong courses.
- Students are notified of their right to appeal for extension and/or need to continue without financial aid assistance should they choose not to appeal. Notifications are sent via e-mail. An unsatisfied requirement will also be placed on the portal under Student Requirements for the aid year.

### **Appeal Policy**

To request an extension of the 150% Maximum Timeframe, a student must complete the SAP Appeal form, following the Steps to Appeal Maximum Timeframe.

- Incomplete Appeal Submissions - Incomplete appeals will not be processed by the FA Office. Students will be required to submit the appeal in full and the new submission will not be back-dated to the original submission date.

### **Criteria for Approval**

- Must have award eligibility remaining
- Must be enrolled and accepted in a FA eligible program at Lane and be taking courses toward that program. If a student is taking pre-reqs for admission to a limited enrollment program and that program has a competitive admissions process, the student will only qualify for preparatory loan funding for a max of 12 consecutive months if he/she has not taken loans under this provision previously.
- The student identifies circumstances which prevented him/her from completing their program within the 150% Maximum Timeframe. Circumstances which can be considered include:

- Student changed their program of study to/from a Career Tech program and that change resulted in the need to take additional coursework.
- Student has been pursuing more than one program simultaneously (extends program length).
- Student's published program length is longer than the length used to flag them for the appeal process (see table above).
- Student has transfer credits which have been accepted by the Institution; however, those credits do not apply to their current program.
- Student has documented extenuating circumstances which prevented completion of required courses and those circumstances meet the criteria used to approve a Completion Rate or GPA SAP appeal.

### **Criteria for Denial**

- Student has insufficient award eligibility to complete their academic goals
- Student is not in a FA eligible program
- Student has changed programs repeatedly without completion
- Student did not follow a previous academic plan to completion
- Student is unable to achieve a cumulative 2.0 GPA within the number of request courses, even if the student earned all A's

### **Challenging an Appeal Decision**

Decisions are final and may not be appealed unless the student can demonstrate college error in the calculation of their Maximum Timeframe, academic record or has additional information to support their circumstances.

### **Conditions of an Extension**

Students are required to meet the conditions of the appeal in order for the extension to remain valid. Failure to meet the conditions will result in the immediate termination of aid. Conditions include:

- Student must maintain a 2.00 cumulative GPA and/or be able to mathematically achieve it by graduation.
- Student may only take the courses required to earn their approved degree or certificate. Optional courses must be pre-approved and cannot be funded with financial aid.
- Student may not begin taking courses for a new program without obtaining a new approval for that program.