Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP)

GRADUATE DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE STUDENTS

General Information

The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Program Integrity Regulations, effective July 1, 2011, mandates that institutions of higher education establish a standard of satisfactory academic progress for students who receive federal financial aid under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (referred to in this policy as "Federal Student Aid"). Therefore, to be eligible to receive Federal Student Aid, including Perkins Loans, Federal Work-Study, and Federal Direct Loan Programs (Stafford, PLUS, and Grad PLUS), graduate and certificate students must meet SAIC’s financial aid satisfactory academic progress standards ("FASAP") as outlined in this policy. SAIC will also use FASAP to determine a student’s eligibility to receive SAIC need-based financial aid.

FASAP looks at two factors: whether the student is in good standing and the student’s pace of completion. FASAP will be measured three times a year, after the completion of the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters. For those graduate programs that are longer than two years in length, FASAP will also be measured at the end of the participating student's second year.

It is important to note that FASAP is calculated separately from Academic Standing. Students are responsible for being familiar with both of these policies. Questions can be directed to Academic Advising or Student Financial Services, as applicable.

Standards

1. **Financial Aid Good Standing (Qualitative)**

Graduate and certificate students are considered to be in financial aid good standing when they successfully complete all credit hours attempted each semester.

SAIC adheres to a credit/no credit grading system. Successful completion of a course will result in a grade of CR for Credit or IP for In-Progress and will count toward the student’s degree. Grades of NCR for No Credit, W for Withdrawal and INC for Incomplete represent unsuccessful completion of a course, and will not count toward the student’s degree. For purposes of determining a student’s financial aid standing and pace of completion (discussed below), credits attributable to repeated courses (discussed below) will be included in the evaluation, but transfer credits accepted by SAIC will not be. Transfer credits accepted by SAIC are also included in this equation as both hours attempted and hours completed.

2. **Pace of Completion/Maximum Time Frames (Quantitative)**
At the completion of the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters, each student will be reviewed to determine whether he or she has received a grade of CR or IP in 100% of the classes attempted by the student on a cumulative basis.

A student is considered to be failing to maintain pace of completion if the student receives a grade of NCR, W or INC in any course attempted. A student who receives one or more grades of NCR, W or INC will be placed on Financial Aid Warning (defined below), unless the student exceeds the following Maximum Time Frames, in which case the student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension (defined below).

**Maximum Time Frames**

- The student exceeds 66 credits in graduate degree or certificate programs requiring 60 credit hours for completion (examples: MFA, MAAT, MSHP)

- The student exceeds 72 credits in graduate degree or certificate programs requiring 66 credit hours for completion (examples: MAAD/MAAT dual degree)

- The student exceeds 54 credits in graduate degree or certificate programs requiring 48 credit hours for completion (example: MAAA)

- The student exceeds 42 credits in graduate degree or certificate programs requiring 36 credit hours for completion (examples: art history certificate, MAAH, MAAE)

- The student exceeds 36 credits in graduate degree or certificate programs requiring 30 credit hours for completion (examples: art education certificate, postbaccalaureate certificate)

- The student exceeds 111 credits in graduate degree or certificate programs requiring 102 credit hours for completion (example, MARCH, MDES)

Students who change degrees will be expected to maintain the pace of progression and complete the degree within the maximum time frame of the degree into which they transfer.

**Administration**

1. **Notice**

Students will be notified by email or in writing if they fail to achieve good standing or maintain pace of completion after FASAP is reviewed. Students who are not in good standing or maintaining pace of completion and who have received an INC grade(s) will be reviewed again
after the end of the add/drop period of the next term (i.e., once a final grade of CR/NCR has been awarded).

2. **Financial Aid Warning**

A student on Financial Aid Warning is eligible to receive Federal Student Aid and SAIC need-based financial aid for the next term in which they enroll (Fall, Winter, Spring, or Summer) provided that the student enrolls in more than six (6) credit hours. To return to financial aid good standing and/or resume pace of completion, however, the graduate degree or certificate student must receive a CR or IP grade in all courses attempted in that following term.

3. **Financial Aid Suspension**

A graduate degree or certificate student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension if the student (i) failed to receive a CR or IP grade in all courses attempted while he or she was on Financial Aid Warning, or (ii) exceeded the Maximum Time Frames permitted for aid. A student who is on Financial Aid Suspension is no longer eligible to receive Federal Student Aid and SAIC need-based financial aid.

4. **Appeal of Financial Aid Suspension**

A graduate or certificate student may appeal their Financial Aid Suspension with the Student Financial Services Office if the student believes that extenuating circumstances exist. Appeals must be made in writing and be received at least one week prior to the first day of classes of the following semester. The student’s appeal must include why they failed to make satisfactory academic progress (i.e., death of a relative, injury, illness or other circumstances) and what has changed that will allow the student to make satisfactory academic progress by the end of the next payment period. Prior to submitting an appeal, it is recommended that the student meet with his/her Student Financial Services Advisor. The decision of the Student Financial Services Office with respect to the student’s appeal will be final and the student will not be entitled to amend and re-submit his or her request for appeal.

5. **Financial Aid Probation**

If a graduate or certificate student successfully appeals his or her Financial Aid Suspension, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and will be expected to meet financial aid good standing and/or resume pace of completion by the end of the next payment period. SAIC has three payment periods: Summer, Fall and Winter/Spring. Alternatively, a student on Financial Aid Probation may be placed on an academic plan that will ensure that the student is able to meet satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes by a specific point in time. An academic plan will be coordinated with an Academic Advisor to ensure success. If the student does not successfully meet the previously listed terms of their Financial Aid Probation, they will return to Financial Aid Suspension and will no longer be eligible to Federal Student Aid and SAIC need-based financial aid.
Repeated Courses

Students may repeat a course and receive federal financial aid only once in the case of a passed course, except for institutionally approved repeatable courses. Students may receive federal financial aid for repeat of failed courses until the course is passed, subject to the eligibility requirements noted above.

Second Degree Students

Students seeking a second graduate degree are subject to the maximum time frame as outlined earlier in the policy. Students pursuing a second graduate degree are eligible for federal student loans and federal work-study through the federal financial aid programs.

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