



Satisfactory Academic Progress: Review and Roundtable

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SAP Compliance Concerns

- Failure to develop a policy that meets minimum Title IV requirements
- Misalignment of pace of progression and maximum timeframe
- Applying a different policy than the official written SAP policy
- Failure to comply with the Program Integrity regulations effective 7/1/2011
- Failure to properly monitor and/or document satisfactory progress



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SAP Concepts and Requirements



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SAP Policy Requirements

- Schools must have reasonable standards for measuring a student's satisfactory academic progress toward the degree or certificate
- A reasonable standard is in accordance with updated regulatory section 668.34





SAP Policy Requirements

- A reasonable standard of SAP
 - Is at least as strict as policy for non-Title IV recipients
 - Provides consistent application to all students within categories of students
 - Full-time or part-time
 - Undergraduate or graduate students
 - Monitors progress at least annually
 - Establishes a maximum time frame



SAP Policy Requirements

- SAP policy must describe how student's GPA and pace of completion are affected by:
 - Incompletes
 - Withdrawals
 - Repetitions
 - Transfer of credit from other institutions
 - Changes of major
- Accepted transfer credits count as both attempted and completed hours



SAP Policy Requirements

- Must specify that if a student is not meeting the standards he or she is not eligible to receive Title IV Aid
- Warning and probation statuses must be described if included in school's policy
- Students must be notified of determinations that impact their eligibility for Title IV



SAP Policy Requirements

- Institution must notify student of results of SAP review that impacts the student's eligibility for Title IV aid
- If institution has appeal process, must describe the specific elements required to appeal SAP
 - May specify how often and how many appeals are allowed
- If no appeal process, description of how student may re-establish eligibility for Title IV aid



SAP Requirement Changes

- Requirements implemented with final regulations published October 29, 2010
 - Specific GPA requirement
 - Pace requirement
 - Treatment of transfer credits
 - Options for schools that monitor progress each payment period
 - Financial aid warning definition
 - Financial aid probation definition





SAP Evaluation Process



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SAP Evaluations

- Each official evaluation must include evaluation of GPA and pace
- Warning and probation statuses only last for one payment period, no matter how frequently SAP is evaluated
- "Warning" and "probation" must have the same definitions as described in regulation
- Evaluations must be at end of payment period no matter how often progress is monitored
 - Clock hour schools – see Electronic Announcement June 6, 2011



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Clock Hour Evaluation Points

- Schools may monitor progress by selecting 1 of 3 options for all students in a program
 1. At the point where the student's scheduled clock hours for the payment period have elapsed, regardless of whether the student attended them
 2. At the point when the student has attended the scheduled clock hours
 3. At the point when the student successfully completes the scheduled clock hours for that payment period
- See Program Integrity SAP Q&A R-Q7



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GPA Requirement

- Specify GPA required at each evaluation point
- If GPA not an appropriate measurement, standard must be a comparable assessment measured against a norm
- For programs longer than two academic years, "C" average or equivalent required at end of second year, or academic standing consistent with the institution's requirements for graduation



Pace Requirement

- Replaces quantitative component
- Policy specifies the pace at which a student must complete in order to complete within maximum time to complete
- Pace calculation specified in regulation

Cumulative hours completed
Cumulative hours attempted



Maximum Time Frame (MTF)

- For undergraduate programs, must be no longer than 150% of published length of educational program
 - For credit hour programs, as measured in credit hours attempted
 - For clock hour programs, as measured in cumulative clock hours required to complete and expressed in calendar time
- For graduate programs of study, school defines the maximum based upon length of program



Clock Hour Pace Review: Option 1

- School reviews SAP based on scheduled hours
- Students scheduled to attend 30 hours per week
- At 450 scheduled hours the student has successfully completed 300 hours
- Both hours and weeks must be checked
 - Hours calculation – $300/450 = 67\%$
 - Weeks calculation – $10/15 = 67\%$



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Clock Hour Pace Review: Option 2

- School reviews SAP based on attended hours
- Students scheduled to attend 30 hours per week
- The student attended 450 hours at the time 600 hours were scheduled
- Both hours and weeks must be checked
 - Hours calculation – $450/600 = 75\%$
 - Weeks calculation – $15/20 = 75\%$



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Clock Hour Pace Review: Option 3

- School reviews SAP based on successfully completed hours
- Students scheduled to attend 30 hours per week
- The student successfully completed 450 hours at the time 600 hours were scheduled
- Both hours and weeks must be checked
 - Hours calculation – $450/600 = 75\%$
 - Weeks calculation – $15/20 = 75\%$



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Implementation Issues

- Will you have fixed or graduated standards?
 - Fixed for one, graduated for the other? Both the same?
- How will you treat course incompletes, withdrawals and repetitions?
- How will you treat transfer credits?
- How will you treat remedial courses?
- How will you treat changes of major or program? Will these be limited?



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How Often Is SAP Evaluated?

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How Often is SAP Evaluated?

- Frequency of evaluation determines options
- School must evaluate SAP at end of each payment period for programs of study that are one academic year or less in length
- For programs of study longer than one academic year
 - School must evaluate at least annually to correspond with end of a payment period
 - School may evaluate at end of each payment period

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Evaluations by Payment Period

- Student is in compliance with SAP standards
- Student is not in compliance with SAP standards
 - Financial Aid Warning
 - Financial Aid Probation
 - Requires student appeal
 - Academic Plan
 - Warning and probation statuses are optional, as is use of academic plan
 - If financial aid warning and financial aid probation are used they must match the definitions in the regulations



Financial Aid Warning

- Status only available to students at schools that monitor progress at the end of each payment period
- Student may receive Title IV aid for one additional payment period
- Status may be assigned without student action or appeal
- Use of financial aid warning is optional



After Financial Aid Warning

- Student meets SAP standards and regains eligibility
- Student does not meet SAP standards
 - Student successfully appeals and is placed on probation or an academic plan
 - Student does not appeal, or appeal is denied, and school explains how student can regain eligibility



Annual Evaluations

- Financial Aid Warning status not available
- Probation requirements same as schools that evaluate at each payment period
- Student not making progress is not eligible for further Title IV assistance unless student successfully appeals



SAP Appeal

- Process by which a student who is not meeting SAP standards appeals for reconsideration of eligibility for Title IV aid
 - Policy must describe conditions under which a student may file an appeal
 - Appeal must include information from student explaining why the student failed to make SAP and what has changed that will allow the student to make SAP at next evaluation point
- Appeal process is optional and it can also be limited



SAP Appeal Approval

- School determines that student will be able to make SAP standards by end of next payment period
- OR
- Student is placed on an academic plan that will ensure the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time
 - If placed on a plan at this point, the first term on the plan is a probationary term



Financial Aid Probation

- Status available for a student not making progress who has appealed and had aid eligibility reinstated
- Student may receive aid for one additional payment period
- School may require student action while on probation
- Possible use of academic plan
- Student must be evaluated at the end of the probationary term even if the school normally evaluates less frequently

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After Financial Aid Probation

- Student meets SAP standards and regains aid eligibility
- Student does not meet standards
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Academic Plan

- Alternative to probation – available to all schools
- A plan that, if followed by the student, specifies a point in time at which the student will be able to meet the institution's SAP standards
- Student on plan is evaluated against the plan requirements, not regular SAP standards
- The first term after a successful appeal is always a probationary term even if the student is on a longer academic plan

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Implementation Issues - Appeals

- Will your policy permit appeals?
 - Will the number of appeals be limited?
 - Which criteria can be appealed?
- Who will review appeals?
- Will your policy permit academic plans?
- Who will develop, approve and monitor compliance with academic plans?





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Resources



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SAP Policy Resources

- FSA Assessments
 - <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/qahome/qassessments/sap.html>
- Program Integrity Q&A – SAP
 - <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/sap.html>



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| <i>NSLDS</i> | <i>Research and Customer Care Center</i> |
| <i>G5</i> | <i>Nelnet Total & Permanent</i> |
| | <i>Disability Team</i> |



SAP Chat!

