

Delaware Valley University Office of Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Graduate Students

The purpose of this policy is to provide graduate students with information on Delaware Valley University's Satisfactory Academic Progress standard for Federal Title IV sources of aid. These sources of aid are Federal Direct Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan and Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans. This document describes the qualitative and quantitative standards that make up this policy, how standards are measured, and how financial aid is reinstated if eligibility is lost during enrollment.

Overview

The Office of Financial Aid is required in accordance with Federal Title IV regulations to monitor satisfactory academic progress for students who receive federal financial assistance. In order to continue to receive financial aid while enrolled at Delaware Valley University, graduate students must maintain the minimum standards as defined below. The satisfactory academic progress standards for financial aid that are listed below are either the same or stricter than the individual colleges' academic policy for students enrolled in the same academic program who are not receiving financial assistance.

Students must make both quantitative and qualitative progress towards their educational goals each academic year to receive federal financial assistance. The Office of Financial Aid reviews each student once per academic year at the end of the spring semester for quantitative and qualitative progress.

Qualitative Standard

Graduate students and doctoral students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 calculated at the end of the academic year in order to be considered a student making satisfactory academic progress for financial aid consideration. Only credits earned at Delaware Valley University will affect the cumulative GPA calculation. The grade point average from transfer coursework at a previous college or university will not affect a student's Delaware Valley University grade point average.

Quantitative Standard

Students must pass the minimum number of credit hours during the academic year that is associated with their enrollment status for that academic year. For example if a student is enrolled half-time in the Delaware Valley University Policy Studies graduate program, which is a minimum of 3 credit hours per semester, then the student must complete at least 6 credit hours for the academic year. Doctoral candidates must complete 18 credits per academic year.

Credits are considered successfully completed when a grade of A, B, C, or D is earned. **Failures ("F") Incompletes ("I"), Withdrawals ("W) are not successfully completed credits.**

****"In Progress" exception for students pursuing a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership.**

The "IP" or "In Progress" grade given for Dissertation or Dissertation Research is an indication that the student who receives this grade is making satisfactory progress towards completing his/her doctoral dissertation.

Repeated Coursework

As defined by the U.S. Department of Education, Delaware Valley University will include and fund any repeated coursework previously taken by the student in his or her enrollment status one time. The institution will only allow a student to retake previously unpassed 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 a graduate/doctoral student is repeating the same course for thesis or dissertation continuation, this can be counted towards academic progress. There are no other exceptions.

Pace (Maximum Timeframe)

Within the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, the institution is required to establish a maximum time frame in which graduate and doctoral students must complete their program of study in order to remain eligible for financial aid funds. The maximum time frame for graduate/doctoral degree completion at Delaware Valley University is 6 years for a Graduate degree and 8 years for a doctoral candidate.

Once a student reaches the maximum amount of credits attempted as specified by the program(s) for graduation, the student will be ineligible to receive further Federal Title IV aid. Students in this category may submit appeals in accordance with the Appeals section of this policy.

Measuring Academic Progress

Academic Records are reviewed by the Office of Financial Assistance at the end of each spring term after final grades are entered. Measurement begins with the Fall semester and ends with the last summer session. Students who were enrolled during the Fall, Spring and who failed to meet the qualitative and/or quantitative requirements for academic progress can attempt to complete additional credits and raise their cumulative GPA during the summer sessions. Upon completion of additional credits, a new determination of academic progress will be made.

All financial assistance applicants are subject to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards regardless of whether or not they received financial assistance previously.

When the Minimum Standard of Academic Progress is Not Achieved

A student who does not make satisfactory academic progress will be placed on financial assistance suspension until the requirements are met. During this suspension, a student is denied Federal aid. The student will be notified in writing of the financial assistance suspension.

Appeals

If a student has failed to achieve satisfactory academic progress, the student can appeal the decision to the Office of Financial Aid. The appeal must be submitted in writing 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 should also be submitted at this

time. The Office of Financial Assistance may request additional documentation and/or require a personal interview with the student.

Students must appeal within three weeks of receiving a notice from the Office of Financial Aid of the financial aid suspension. Appeals will not be accepted after the three 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 Aid within four weeks of receipt of their appeal.

A student who is denied assistance based on qualitative or quantitative standards will be considered for assistance when standards have been achieved.

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 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 Satisfactory Academic Progress standard at a specific point in time as determined by an appropriate academic official.

Financial Aid Probation

The institution 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 Aid 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 funds for one semester. The student will be required to meet the institution'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 Aid 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.

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 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 should also 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.