Satisfactory Academic Progress

Information for Syracuse University College of Law Students

This policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress relates specifically to law students who are receiving Federal Student Aid (including Federal Direct Loans and Federal Work Study).

Federal regulations require that we monitor the academic progress of all law students who receive any type of federal financial aid, including Federal Direct Loans. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for aid recipients must be the same as or stricter than standards for non-Title IV recipients. All law students must also meet the academic standards described in the College of Law Academic Handbook.

Satisfactory Academic Progress is defined as earning a minimum number of credits over a specific number of semesters and maintaining a minimum grade point average (GPA).

Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements

- J.D. students (full-time J.D. residential students, JDinteractive students, and reduced load, part-time J.D. students) must maintain a cumulative Law Grade Point Average of at least 2.50 to be considered in good standing. LLM. students must maintain a 2.20 GPA to be considered in good standing.
- Students must earn at least 67% of all credit hours attempted (cumulative, including transfer credits). Transfer courses are counted as both attempted and completed hours when measuring SAP (Pace) progress. Attempted credits include:
  1. Earned credit (grades of A-C-, and/or HH, H, P)
  2. Repeated courses—both attempts
  3. Withdrawals (WD)
  4. Failures—Failed (F), Unsatisfactory (U)
  5. Incompletes
  6. All accepted transfer credits (including consortium agreements and Study Abroad courses) toward the degree program.
- Law students must complete the degree program in a maximum time frame of no more than 150% of the average length of the program. For example, the credit hours required to complete the Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree at Syracuse is 87 credits. The maximum time frame for degree completion is 131 attempted credit hours.

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be reviewed every term. If a student fails to achieve satisfactory academic progress, the student will be placed on Warning status and may receive financial aid for one term only to provide an opportunity to regain eligibility. Should the student continue to fail satisfactory academic progress after this one term on Warning status, Syracuse University may not award and disburse future federal/private loan funds to the student.

Students who are readmitted to the program will be reviewed at the time of readmission or upon return from a leave of absence to determine if SAP standards are met. Students who do not meet SAP for the first time will be placed on 'Warning' status. Those who left while on Financial Aid Probation or SAP Failure will be placed in 'Not Meets' status and will not be eligible for federal aid until they are back in compliance.

Regaining Eligibility

Students may regain financial aid eligibility by enrolling in and completing sufficient credits and achieving and maintain the required academic and grading standards described in the above policy without the benefit of federal financial aid.

SAP Appeal Process

Any student who falls below the standard to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress may submit a written petition to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards Committee (in care of the College of Law Office of Financial Aid, Suite 100, Dineen Hall) to initiate an appeal for a waiver. The appeal must address the reasons for the student’s academic performance or circumstances that necessitated withdrawal from classes as well as the resources and plan for progress moving forward rather than the need for financial assistance.

Financial Aid Probation

Students whose petitions are approved by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards Committee will be considered for a financial aid waiver and placed on financial aid probation for one semester. Students must adhere to the requirements of the academic plan set by the Academic Standards Committee and/or the Office of Student Affairs. Students who meet SAP requirements will be eligible to receive financial aid in the subsequent semester.

Students repeating classes need to be aware of the impact repeating classes may have on their federal financial aid in addition to Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements of meeting pace. Repeated courses can be funded with federal aid if the student has not passed the course previously while attending Syracuse University College of Law. All attempts are counted in the overall review. Only one repeated course can be funded with federal aid if the student has previously passed the course. Both attempts are counted toward attempted however only one passed course is counted towards the total earned.

Students with questions are encouraged to contact the College of Law Office of Financial Aid at (315) 443-1962 or LawFinAid@syr.edu.
Law students must complete all degree requirements within the ABA required time frame of seven years of their start date, regardless of part-time status, leaves of absence, failed courses, repeated courses or other delays.