Satisfactory Academic Progress
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)?
Institutions of higher education are required by the federal government to monitor the academic progress of all students receiving financial aid. Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress toward their academic objective become ineligible for further aid, as required by federal guidelines.

What are the standards for failing to make SAP?
- Below required grade point average: Your IU Program GPA is less than 2.0 as an undergraduate or less than 3.0 as a graduate student.
- Inadequate completion of attempted course work: You have successfully completed less than 67% of your attempted coursework.
- Too many credit hours for your degree objectives: You have attempted more than 150% of the published semester-hour credits required for your program.

How often will I be evaluated for SAP?
Students are evaluated annually to determine whether or not they meet SAP standards. The timing of this evaluation is dependent upon the date that we receive your completed FAFSA information. Evaluation begins in May of each year once grades have been posted to your transcripts for the Spring semester and continues weekly for the remainder of the upcoming academic year. If you filed your FAFSA before spring grades are recorded your SAP status will be determined in May. If you file later, once your FAFSA information has been received, you will be evaluated for SAP within the next 7 days. If your progress brings you above the minimum SAP standards, you may request a reevaluation from the Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships. If you are in fact above the standards, no further action is required and we will change your status.

How do I know if I have been selected for not meeting the SAP standards?
A notification will be sent to your IU email account notifying you if you have been selected as not meeting the minimum SAP standards. It will direct you to your OneStart account to determine why you did not meet the standards and give instructions on how to file an appeal.

What should I do if I receive a letter stating that my financial aid has been suspended?
If you want to appeal the loss of your financial aid eligibility, go to our website -- http://www.iun.edu/sap/sap-appeal-form/index.htm -- where you will answer a series of questions to determine the appeal form you need to complete. Please make sure that you are using the correct appeal form and that you include all necessary information. An incomplete appeal can delay review and thus delay the availability of your financial aid award.

What happens if I do not appeal?
If you do not wish to submit an appeal, financial aid will not be awarded until eligibility has been reestablished. The only way to do this without submitting an appeal is to bring your GPA and/or completion rate above the minimum standards of a 2.0 IU Program GPA (undergraduate) or 3.0 (graduate) and at least a 67% completion rate. Please note that if you were selected for exceeding the 150% rule, you cannot correct that status by taking additional credit hours.

What are the components of a complete SAP appeal?
A complete SAP appeal includes the following components:
1. A completed appeal form including an academic plan and your advisor’s signature. Your academic plan will vary depending on the reason you did not meet SAP standards. Specifically:
   - If you were “sapped” for **Low GPA**, your plan should include a calculation of the average GPA you will need to earn to achieve the necessary Program GPA over a particular period of time and an indication of any classes that you plan to FX to increase your GPA.
   - If you were “sapped” for **Completion Rate**, your plan should include a signed statement that you will not fail or withdraw from any classes and your plan for resolving any Incompletes on your transcript.
   - If you were “sapped” for **Excessive Credit Hours**, your plan should show how you will complete the requirements for your degree indicating exactly which classes will be taken and when in the upcoming academic year.

2. A typed statement explaining the circumstances that contributed to your unsatisfactory academic progress during all periods of enrollment regardless of whether or not you received financial aid for those terms and any supporting documentation. Your statement should also include any behavioral modifications you have made or will make to ensure you can be academically successful in the future.

   For the following situations, supporting documentation should include:
   - Medical condition – a physician’s (or health care provider’s) statement confirming your medical condition and that (s)he supports your decision to continue your enrollment
   - Death of family member – a copy of the death certificate or obituary
   - Divorce/Separation – court document
   - Military service – official military orders

3. A copy of your unofficial transcript – available through OneStart

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**Can I come in and talk to someone in the Financial Aid office to discuss my situation?**
Yes use email faidsap@iun.edu

**Should I appeal?**
You should appeal the suspension of your financial aid if, 1) you believe that there were circumstances beyond your control that contributed significantly to your making unsatisfactory academic progress, AND/OR, 2) you believe that there were concrete things that you could have done differently that would have helped you to make satisfactory academic progress, AND/OR 3) if the circumstances of your situation have changed, e.g., you plan to pursue a different academic program or you have reduced the number of hours you are working. In either case, your argument should be strong enough to convince the University that you can overcome past difficulties and fulfill the requirements to complete your degree.

**What information should be included in my appeal?**
*If you have had a successful appeal in the past you merely need to print out a current transcript, meet with your advisor, and write an essay discussing your academic progress, or lack thereof, since your last appeal.*
If this is your first SAP appeal, you should give us a thorough explanation of why you believe the University should support continued investment in your education. You should include any and all information that will help us make a well-informed decision. **Successful appeals generally include not only an explanation of past circumstances, but also a detailed plan for how you will achieve academic success in the future.** In other words, your appeal should outline the specific changes you will make to insure future academic success. You may also include supporting documents, although they are not required, e.g., letters of support from professors and/or employers.

If the reasons for your poor performance were medical in nature, please provide documentation from your physician or therapist. The documentation should indicate that, according to his or her professional opinion, the medical issues that impaired your success and/or the psychological challenges that you confronted are under control and will not be a problem in the future. If applicable, your physician or therapist should identify the treatment plan that he or she recommends to insure your future success.

If you are currently enrolled in classes, ask your professors to provide you with a progress report that states what your grade is in the class at that point in the semester. If your professors tell us you’re doing well, it will help your appeal. Otherwise, we may have to wait until your final grades are recorded to make a decision about your appeal.

**Where should I send my appeal?**

Appeals can be hand-delivered to Hawthorn 111 when the office is open, faxed to 219-981-5622, or sent by mail to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, Hawthorn 111, Indiana University Northwest, 3400 Broadway, Gary, IN 46408.

**Are there deadlines for submitting an appeal?**

Appeals should be submitted by July 1 for fall 2014, December 1 for spring 2015, and April 17 for summer 2015. We recommend submitting a complete appeal as soon as possible as appeals received and approved after these deadlines may be limited in the types of financial aid available.

**Who will determine the outcome of my appeal?**

Appeals are decided by SAP Appeals Committee. The Committee meets on a weekly basis during the summer months and as needed during the academic year.

**Can I meet with the committee in person to plead my case?**

No. SAP Appeals Committee meetings are not open to students. If the Committee requires additional information from you we will contact you.

**How will I know what the decision was on my appeal?**

Once the review of an appeal is complete, you will be notified of the decision at your IU email account.

**If I had a successful appeal for fall aid, do I have to appeal again for spring or summer?**

No, your fall appeal covered financial aid for the entire academic year. If you are still eligible to receive federal financial aid and you don’t use your entire award for the fall and spring semesters, you may use what’s left to enroll in summer classes.

**If I appeal, what are the chances that my appeal will be granted?**
It is impossible to say. Appeals are examined on a case-by-case basis. The more concrete your plan, however, and the closer you are to making satisfactory academic progress, the better the chances that your appeal will be granted and your eligibility for aid will be reinstated.

How soon will I get a response to my appeal?
You will be notified by email on the day a decision is made.

Do I need to do anything if my appeal is denied?
If you have enrolled for classes for the upcoming semester, you should withdraw from those classes within the 100% refund period, unless you have an alternate way to pay for school. If your appeal is denied after the 100% refund period, you will have to find an alternate way to pay for those classes.

How do I go about having my eligibility for financial aid reinstated if my appeal is denied?
If your appeal was denied due to completion rate or GPA issues, you may reestablish eligibility by taking classes and paying for them on your own in order to bring your GPA or completion rate up to the minimum SAP standards. As noted earlier, you are evaluated on an annual basis. However, you may request a SAP review at the end of any semester of enrollment.

If my appeal is denied, can I re-appeal?
Because the decision on your appeal is final, it is very important that you provide ALL possible supporting documentation when you initially submit your appeal. If new information becomes available, you are welcome to submit it for reconsideration, although there are no guarantees.

If my re-appeal is denied, who do I need to talk to next?
A student whose appeal is denied by the SAP Appeals Committee who believes they have properly documented that they meet the guidelines for reinstatement of financial aid may request review by the Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships. The Director of Financial Aid’s decision is the final opportunity for review.

What if the answer to my question is not on this list?
If you have a question that isn’t answered above, contact the Financial Aid office at faidsap@iun.edu. In most cases, your question will be answered by the next business day.