Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy – Candler School of Theology

Federal regulations require that students receiving financial assistance maintain satisfactory academic progress. The Office of Financial Aid is required to monitor a student aid recipient’s academic progress. Aid recipients must meet certain quantitative and qualitative measures and complete their programs within a maximum time frame. All students who receive financial aid, whether from federal, state or Emory-funded sources, must be enrolled degree candidates in good standing to retain financial aid awards. Academic records will be evaluated each semester as follows.

Grade point average (GPA), time to degree completion, and percentage of courses passed will be evaluated at the conclusion of each semester. Students must meet the following minimum grade requirements to meet satisfactory academic progress standards.

- Master of Divinity: Must maintain a 2.0 current GPA each semester and an overall 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- Master of Theological Study: Must maintain a 2.0 current GPA each semester and an overall 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- Master of Religious Leadership: Must maintain a 2.0 current GPA each semester and an overall 2.0 cumulative GPA.
- Master of Theology: Must maintain a 3.0 current GPA each semester and an overall 3.0 cumulative GPA.
- Doctor of Theology in Pastoral Counseling: Must maintain a 3.0 current GPA each semester and an overall 3.0 cumulative GPA.
- Doctor of Ministry: All courses are taken on a pass/fail grading basis, and students receiving Unsatisfactory grades will receive a one term warning. Students receiving Unsatisfactory grades in two consecutive semesters will be disqualified from receiving aid.

Any student who fails for two successive semesters to pass two-thirds of the hours taken shall be automatically excluded regardless of any previous average.

All students are expected to complete their degree programs within a maximum time frame. The maximum time frame for graduate students is 150% of the hours required to complete their degree program. Time to degree completion is calculated for all credit hours for which the student enrolls or receives credit at Emory and any of the following grades are assigned: A, B, C, D, F, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory. A course assigned an Incomplete, In Progress or Withdrawal is also counted toward attempted credits. Audited classes are not considered attempted credits.

- Master of Divinity: 126 maximum attempted credit hours based on an 84 credit hour degree requirement.
- Master of Theological Study: 72 maximum attempted credit hours based on a 48 credit hour degree requirement.
- Master of Religious Leadership: 72 maximum attempted credit hours based on a 48 credit hour degree requirement.
- Master of Theology: 36 maximum attempted credit hours based on a 24 credit hour degree requirement.
- Doctor of Theology in Pastoral Counseling: 75 maximum attempted credit hours based on a 50 credit hour degree requirement.
- Doctor of Ministry: 47 maximum attempted credit hours based on a 31 credit hour degree requirement.
Special Courses

Contextual Education, Chapel Choir, Candler Singers, Emory Concert Choir, Ministry Internship, Clinical Pastoral Education, Teaching Parish, Atlanta Theological Association cross-registration, Directed Study, Thesis, transfer credit, and summer courses are all included in the Satisfactory Academic Progress calculations.

Monitoring Eligibility: Disqualification, Probation, Suspension and Conditions of Reinstatement

Students whose academic records fall below the minimum standards stated above will be disqualified from receiving future financial aid payments. Disqualified students may be approved to receive financial aid after successfully appealing their case. Students who successfully appeal are placed on Probation. During the probationary period students remain eligible for financial aid. Students who, at the conclusion of the probationary period, are making satisfactory academic progress will have their financial aid reinstated unconditionally for the next award term. Students on probation must receive a GPA of at least 2.0, and are not permitted to receive grades of F, U, W, WF, WU, I, IF, or IU. Students who receive aid on probation and fail to meet probationary conditions will be ineligible for future financial aid payments. Students who become ineligible for financial aid or fail to meet probationary terms can re-establish their eligibility by attending classes at their own expense or with the help of private resources from outside the University. Once minimum standards are met, financial aid funding may be reinstated.

An appeal for extenuating circumstances should be submitted by the first day of class for the semester you are appealing to ensure adequate time to prepare for any impact to the student account. Failure to submit your complete appeal by this date may result in your probationary term being postponed to a future semester.

A Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form should be submitted with supporting documentation of any mitigating circumstances that negatively impacted academic progression. Please contact your financial aid advisor if you have questions specific to your case.

Generally, the Office of Financial Aid will only approve one appeal per academic degree. This policy may be waived on a case-by-case basis where extenuating circumstances can be documented.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Satisfactory Academic Progress?

Satisfactory Academic Progress is the method in which the University tracks the movement of successful and timely completion of degree requirements associated with programs of enrollment. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress to receive financial aid.

2. How is Satisfactory Academic Progress measured?

There are qualitative and quantitative measurements. The qualitative measurement consists of current and cumulative grade point averages. The quantitative component consists of your attempted credit hours and completion rate.
3. How often is Satisfactory Academic Progress calculated?

   Satisfactory Academic Progress is calculated each semester following the posting of grades.

4. Are summer enrolled hours included in the calculation for attempted credits?

   Yes, all attempted credits including those credits attempted in summer semester are included in the calculation for maximum attempted hours.

5. What happens if I withdraw from a class? Are hours withdrawn from included as “attempted” in the Satisfactory Academic Progress calculation?

   Yes, classes withdrawn from resulting in a W, WF, or WU are counted in the Satisfactory Academic Progress calculation as attempted hours.

6. I have received a warning email from the Office of Financial Aid regarding my Satisfactory Academic Progress status. What should I do?

   This email is provided to students who may be in danger of falling below minimum standards. Students may wish to review their course or program plans with their academic advisor after becoming familiar with the policies for continuation.

7. I have been notified by the Office of Financial Aid that I have been disqualified because my academic record does not meet minimum standards. What options do I have?

   You may submit an appeal which details your circumstances and addresses a corrective action plan. Please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form for additional details on this process.