

National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators Presents ...

Satisfactory Academic Progress

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NASFAA

FALL TRAINING

2011-12

 **N·A·S·F·A·A**
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS

Goals of Workshop

- Understand the basic principles of the new Federal SAP regulations effective July 1, 2011
- Evaluate your institutional SAP policy and make appropriate changes
- Evaluate your institutional SAP business procedures and make appropriate changes
- Identify opportunities for cross-campus collaborations to strengthen institutional compliance

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Agenda

- Regulatory changes
- Reviewing SAP and the appeal process
- Inclusion of transfer hours
- Repeat coursework
- SAP policies at different types of institutions
- Informing students of changes
- Rewriting/Writing your SAP policy
- Case studies will be presented throughout the workshop

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Section I

Regulations and Changes

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Introduction

- Basic components of a Satisfactory Academic Progress policy
- Regulatory information
- What differs from last year?

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Basic Components: SAP Policy

- Qualitative Standard – Is student at a high enough grade point average to reach graduation standards?
- Quantitative Standard (Pace) – Is student completing enough hours to finish program within maximum time frame?
- Maximum Time Frame – Will the undergraduate student complete the program within 150% of requirements?
- Evaluation schedule – How often will SAP be reviewed?

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Statutory Authority

- All SAP regulations are now included in CFR 668.34
- 668.32(f) includes SAP with other eligibility requirements
- 668.16(e) refers to SAP as “reasonable policy”

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What Differs from Last Year?

- New SAP regulations clearly outline required elements that must be present in an institutional SAP policy
- Institutions that monitor SAP each payment period have more flexibility

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What Differs from Last Year?

- Appeal process
 - Financial aid warning, financial aid probation, pace
 - Requirements of an academic plan
- Inclusion of transfer hours
- Repeat coursework

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Questions

The Satisfactory Academic Progress regulations became effective July 1, 2011. Does this mean that the institution must measure SAP after a summer 2011 payment period using the new regulations?

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Section II

Reviewing SAP and the Appeal Process

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Introduction

- Financial Aid Warning
- Financial Aid Probation
- Academic Plan
- Pace

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Determining Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students must be reviewed at regular intervals to determine if satisfactory progress requirements are being met

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Financial Aid Warning

- Can only be used if checking SAP each payment period
- Financial aid warning status is assigned automatically and student is still eligible to receive aid during the financial aid warning term. Students do not need to appeal to be given financial aid warning status.
- If SAP standards are not met during financial aid warning term, an appeal can be filed

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Financial Aid Probation

- If SAP is checked annually, student may appeal to have a financial aid probation term to meet minimum requirements
- If SAP is checked each term, student may appeal if after financial aid warning term SAP standards are not met
- Financial aid probation may be for one term or multiple terms based on an Academic Plan

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Academic Plans

An Academic Plan for an approved appeal may state specific conditions that must be met such as:

- Register for fewer credit hours
- Certain term grade point average required
- May only take certain courses

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Academic Plans

- May be as simple as a calculation or as detailed as a class by class schedule
- May require buy-in from other offices on campus such as Academic Advising/Counseling
- Examples of academic plans

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Case Study: Academic Plans

Case Study 1: John Low Grades

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Pace

- Pace is defined as the student's progression to ensure completion within the maximum time frame
- Pace must be measured at each evaluation
- A graduated pace standard is still permitted; i.e., 1st term – 50%; 2nd term – 60%; 3rd term – 70%

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Calculating Pace/Quantitative Progress

$$\frac{\text{Cumulative number of credit hours completed}}{\text{Cumulative number of credit hours attempted}} = \text{Pace/Quantitative Progress}$$

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Case Studies: Pace

Case Study 2: Survivor University

Case Study 3: Happy Days Community
College

Case Study 4: I-Phone University

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Questions

- What constitutes a SAP review? Is an institution required to review both the qualitative (grade-based) and quantitative (time-based) SAP measures?
- Must schools adopt the new terminology, such as financial aid warning and financial aid probation, used in the new regulations?

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Questions

- Can the SAP pace requirements be different for students at different points in their academic program?
- If a student is on SAP probation when the new SAP regulations became effective, when must the student be evaluated?

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Questions

- If an institution reviews SAP each payment period, must it also review SAP after summer term?
- If a student successfully appeals and is placed on probation under the new regulations, when must the student be reviewed?

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Questions

- A student is on an academic plan for failing to meet SAP standards. When is the student reviewed?
- When is SAP measured for a clock-hour program?

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Questions: Appeals

- How many times may a student appeal a failure to make SAP?
- What documentation is required for a student appeal?

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Questions: Appeals

- Can a student appeal the 150% maximum timeframe?
- May an institution's SAP policy include automatic "academic amnesty" in certain circumstances, such as, after a student has not attended for a certain number of years?

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Questions: Warning Status

- How long is the financial aid warning period?
- Is there a limit to the number of financial aid warnings a student can receive during his or her enrollment?

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Questions: Probation Status

- Under what circumstances would a student be placed on SAP probation?
- If, after one payment period on probation, the student is still not making SAP, can the student be automatically placed on an academic plan, or must the student appeal again?

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Questions: Probation Status

- At an institution that permits appeals but does not use the financial aid warning status, is probation required for a student who is not making progress?
- How many times may a student be placed on probation for failing to meet SAP standards?

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Questions: Academic Plans

- How should an institution develop an academic plan for a student who successfully appeals SAP ineligibility?
- What is the status of a student who has completed the probationary payment period and who is continuing to receive aid by meeting the requirements of the student's academic plan?

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Questions: Academic Plans

- Can the academic plan be the same for all students or the same by categories of students or must the plans be established individually for each student?
- Must the academic plan be mathematically set to graduate the student within the 150% maximum timeframe?

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Section III

Transfer Hours

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Introduction

Transfer Hours

- Now required to count transfer hours accepted at your institution as both attempted and completed hours in SAP
- Transfer students may now have slight advantage over other students

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Transfer Hours

Transfer credits in calculation of pace means all completed work for all students considered

Schools still free to set own policies related to number of changes in major allowed

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Questions

- How does the FAO know what transfer hours to apply to the student's program of study?
- How does your computer system track transfer hours?

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Case Studies: Transfer credits

Case Study 5: Joe at Close to Home
Community College

Case Study 6: Dilly at Dally University

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Questions

SAP regulations require credit hours accepted toward the student's educational program count as both attempted and completed hours when calculating GPA and pace for SAP purposes. Can an institution's policy include non-accepted credits as attempted credits for purposes of these calculations?

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Questions

- How should an institution handle changes of major?
- Can an institution limit the number of times a student may change majors?

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Section IV

Repeated Coursework

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Introduction

Repeated Coursework

- SAP rules do not require schools to allow course repetitions
- SAP rules do not require schools to limit the number of course repetitions
- SAP rules do address the treatment of repeats for measuring satisfactory progress

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Repeated Coursework and SAP

If institution allows repeat coursework:

- Unlimited repeated courses could be funded if student has not passed the course
- Only one repeat of course could be funded with Title IV aid if student has previously passed the course

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Questions to Consider

- How will the FAO track repeat coursework?
 - Manually?
 - Computer System?
- If SAP module, has your vendor provided updates?
- Is treatment of repeat coursework included in your consumer information?

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Be Aware!

- SAP rules must address the treatment of repeats to Title IV eligibility
- Repeat coursework is a separate topic, but directly related to SAP
- Information on repeat courses is found in 668.2(b)

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Case Studies: Repeated Coursework

Case Study 7: Pebbles at Bedrock University

Case Study 8: Barbie at Dreamland University

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Questions: Repeated Coursework

Music student must participate in specified number of years in band or orchestra. Student auditions with other students to be picked; selected students play in that ensemble for the entire year. The course number stays the same from semester to semester but the content, the music performed, changes each term. Does the fact that the course number does not change result in a student being considered to be retaking course work, and therefore ineligible for aid?

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Case Studies: Repeated Coursework

Case Study 9: Sandy and Danny at Rydell University

Case Study 10: Alex at Jeopardy University

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Section V

SAP Policy at Different Types of Institutions

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Section VI

Informing Students of SAP Changes

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Introduction

- Notifying students
- Student consumer information
- Updating materials/website
- Timing of communications

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Notifying Students

- Do we need to let students know the changes?
- How do we let students know what the changes are? Where will it be posted?
- Should we tell them everything at once? Or do we let them know a little at a time?
- What are the ramifications of not notifying?

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Updating Materials

- New SAP policy should be updated so that students are not surprised by any changes
- Can be done on-line or hard copy
- Example of written/on-line information:
 - www.finaid.umich.edu

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Section VII

Updating Policies and Procedures

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Maximum Time Frame

- Undergraduate
 - Quantitative standard – maximum time frame cannot exceed 150% of published length of program
- Graduate
 - Maximum time frame not specified
 - Number of credit hours not specified
 - School determines both and must publish and follow that determination

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Program Length

- Program less than 2 years
 - Must have standing consistent with graduation requirements
- Program longer than 2 years
 - Must have C average or equivalent at end of 2 years

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Who Needs to Be involved?

- Financial Aid Office
- Registrar?
- Admissions?
- Students?
 - Focus group to make sure they understand the requirements?
- Faculty?

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Other Items to Consider?

- Institutional mission statement – Do your policies reflect the mission of your institution?
- Division/department mission statements – Is there additional information in other areas that could influence your policies?

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General Questions

- How are remedial courses treated for SAP purposes?
- How are English as a Second Language (ESL) courses treated for SAP purposes?

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General Questions

- How does the qualitative portion of a SAP review relate to the requirement for a student to have a GPA of at least 2.0 or academic standing consistent with the institution's requirements for graduation?

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Section VIII

Conclusion

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Conclusion

SAP – what is required?

- Quantitative (Pace)
- Maximum time frame
- Qualitative (GPA)
- Transfer credits included
- All must be communicated to students

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Conclusion

What is optional? (if you exercise any of these options they must be clearly defined in your SAP policy)

- Allowing appeals to SAP
- Allowing repeated coursework
- Allowing a probationary period
- Creating an academic plan
- Granting a financial aid warning period

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Guidance on SAP

- Preamble to the Program Integrity Final Rule:
<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-10-29/pdf/2010-26531.pdf>
- Electronic Announcement:
[http://ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/060611SAPReviewfor StudentinClockHrs.html](http://ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/060611SAPReviewforStudentinClockHrs.html)
- Program Integrity Q&A:
<http://www2.ed.gov/print/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/sap.html>

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Resources

- NASFAA Self-Evaluation Guide
- NASFAA Policies and Procedures Tools



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