Federal Satisfactory Progress

Satisfactory progress is the minimum progress required toward the completion of a degree and must be maintained to receive federal and institutional financial aid (grants, loans, and work-study) as well as some Private Educational Alternative Loans. Satisfactory progress is evaluated using both quantitative (percentage of credits earned) as well as a qualitative (cumulative grade point average) measure.

Guidelines to Maintain Satisfactory Progress:

- In order to meet the quantitative measure of satisfactory progress, students must be earning 2/3 of all credits attempted. This measure is cumulative and includes all credits attempted at CommonwealthU. Transfer credits accepted by Commonwealth University will count as both credits attempted and credits earned.
- Students must be meeting the qualitative provision for satisfactory progress by maintaining a 2.0 grade point average (GPA). Any student with a cumulative grade point average below 2.0 after their second academic year is ineligible for federal financial aid. Graduate student qualitative measures require a 3.0 GPA after the spring semester.
- An incomplete grade, a failing grade, or withdrawal from a course will count as zero credits earned. When an incomplete grade is finalized, it will be factored into the student's SAP calculations at the time of the next formal evaluation.
- Course repeat grades will only be counted toward the minimum satisfactory progress standard if credits were actually earned. A repeat of any passing grade will not be counted as credits earned in two different semesters. However, it will be counted as credits attempted for each session in which the course was taken. Credit will only be awarded during the semester in which the grade was first earned. Federal regulations will permit payment of federal aid for only the first repeat of a previously passed course.
- Exceeding the maximum number of allowable repeats and/or withdrawals will adversely affect the student's ability to meet satisfactory progress standards for financial aid purposes. Prior to withdrawal from a course, students should contact the Office of Financial Aid to determine what implications this may cause to current and future financial aid eligibility.

Maximum Time Frame for Completion of Degree:

- Undergraduate students requiring 120 credits for degree completion are required to complete this degree within 180 attempted credits. Undergraduate students requiring 60 credits for degree completion are required to complete this degree within 90 attempted credits. Developmental credits taken which do not count toward degree completion will be excluded from the attempted credit calculation. All transfer credits will count as credits attempted for this purpose.

- Graduate students maximum time frames will vary by degree completion requirements. The maximum standard will be set at 150 percent of the minimum number of credits needed to complete the graduate degree.

Students enrolled in a non-degree program must also meet these satisfactory progress standards to obtain financial aid in subsequent semesters.

Students who are academically eligible to continue their enrollment, but do not meet the satisfactory progress guidelines, may attend classes at their own expense until they are eligible to receive financial aid. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid to discuss possible ways to regain satisfactory progress as well as options that do not require satisfactory progress.

The Office of Financial Aid will assess satisfactory progress in yearly increments after the spring semester.

Any student whose financial aid has been cancelled because of unsatisfactory progress will be notified via email within two weeks of the end of the semester.

Appeals

Students may appeal unsatisfactory progress by submitting a satisfactory progress appeal online at commonwealthu.studentforms.com. The financial aid professional staff will evaluate specific situations for the appeal as well as supporting documents.

Common situations that may cause a student to fail to meet SAP standards include:

- Student or dependent illness/injury;
- Family difficulties, such as divorce or illness or death;
- Interpersonal problems with friends, roommates, significant others;
- Difficulty balancing work, athletics, family responsibilities, etc., and school; and
- Financial

Professional staff may solicit additional information form the student or other pertinent individuals (professor, counselor, etc) prior to rendering a decision regarding the acceptability of the appeal.

If the appeal is denied, the student will be informed via email and financial aid will be cancelled. If the appeal is accepted, the professional staff will create an academic plan and communicate this to the student. This will allow a student who has not met Commonwealth University's satisfactory academic progress standard to continue receiving Title IV aid. An academic plan will be valid for one payment period and all satisfactory academic progress plans will be re-evaluated at the end of the semester. If a student is meeting the terms of the plan, eligibility for aid will continue under the terms of a new academic plan. If a student does not meet the terms of their plan, aid will be cancelled unless extenuating circumstances which prevented completion of the plan are identified.

Grading Scale

The grades earned at Commonwealth Universtiy with their commensurate quality points are defined as follows:

A = 4.00
A- = 3.67

B+ = 3.33
B = 3.00
B- = 2.67
C+ = 2.33
C = 2.00
C- = 1.67
D+=1.33
D = 1.00
F = 0.00

The grades earned by each student for academic credit at Commonwealth University are assigned by those faculty who are responsible for the courses in which the student is enrolled. Grades are given based on the criteria specified during the first week of the academic term.

Calculating Grade Point Average

The Grade Point Average (GPA) is computed from the record of courses taken at Commonwealth University using the assigned grades of A through F as listed above. The computation is as follows:

Multiply the number of semester hours for each course by the number of quality points for the grade in the course, and add the products.
Divide the sum obtained in the first step by the total number of semester hours represented by the courses.

A "Semester GPA" is computed by including only the courses of a single semester. The "Cumulative GPA" is that computed by including all courses taken to date at Commonwealth University.

If a course has been successfully repeated, the credits are counted only once in the computation. The most recent grade (regardless of whether it is higher or lower) will be the grade used for the GPA calculation. If a course is successfully repeated at another accredited institution of higher education, the credits for the course initially taken at Commonwealth are deleted from the computation.