

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (GRADUATE STUDENTS)

Federal regulations state that in order to maintain eligibility, students receiving federal financial aid must be making satisfactory progress toward the degree. The three criteria for continued eligibility for federal funds are as follows:

Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA)

After the completion of each semester (regardless of the number of credits accrued), graduate students must maintain the required cumulative GPA of 3.0 to receive federal financial aid. Students in programs that do not receive letter grades must receive a Pass (P) in all courses taken.

Completion Rate

Students must complete 75 percent of credits attempted each year to maintain satisfactory academic progress. The percentage of completion is determined by dividing the total number of credits successfully completed by the total number of credits the student has attempted.

Maximum Time Frame

Students must complete their educational program within a timeframe no longer than 150% of the published length of the educational program. The maximum time frame for completion of the graduate degree requirements at Goucher is set forth for each program in the student's curriculum plan. No student shall receive any financial aid for study beyond the maximum time frames.

For example, if the graduate degree program is 40 credits the student must complete their program after attempting a maximum of 60 credits (including accepted transfer credits).

Consequence of failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress

Goucher will not process federal financial aid for a student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress, unless the student is on financial aid warning or financial aid probation.

Incompletes/Extensions

Incompletes or extensions will initially count as attempted, but not completed, courses until the incomplete grade is replaced with a permanent grade and academic progress can be re-evaluated. Incompletes are not included in the GPA calculation.

Repeated Courses

Financial aid does not count repeated courses when evaluating eligibility, except for failed courses and one repeat of a passed course.

Transfer Credits

Credit hours from another institution that are accepted toward the student's educational program will count as both attempted and completed hours. Transfer credits are not included in the GPA calculation.

Withdrawals (W)

Withdrawals after the drop period are treated as attempted, but not completed, credits. Withdrawals are not included in the GPA calculation.

Monitoring satisfactory academic progress

The Office of Student Financial Aid will evaluate the student's cumulative records for satisfactory academic progress at the end of each semester.

Financial Aid Warning

Students who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress at the end of any semester will, on the first occasion, be automatically placed on financial aid warning. Federal/state funds may be disbursed while a student is on financial aid warning. Students who fail to meet the minimum requirements in a subsequent semester will be then placed on financial aid restriction.

Financial Aid Restriction

Students not making satisfactory academic progress will be placed on financial aid restriction and will lose eligibility for federal financial aid. Some state aid also requires satisfactory academic progress. Goucher is not obligated to replace federal/state funds with institutional funds.

Financial Aid Probation

At the end of the term during which the student is on financial aid warning status, the student may be placed on financial aid probation if:

- i. it is determined that the student did not make satisfactory academic progress during the period the student was on financial aid warning;
- ii. the student appeals the determination (see below); and
- iii. (A) The Financial Aid Appeals Committee approves the appeal; and (B) the student and academic advisor develop an academic plan for the student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet Goucher's satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time.

In accordance with federal regulations, students may appeal the finding that they failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress under subparagraph (ii) above in the event of the death of a relative, an injury or illness of the student or other special circumstance. In the event of illness or injury, the student must submit documentation from a doctor or other health care provider stating that the condition prevented the student from attending classes. An appeal under subparagraph (ii) must be submitted in writing within two weeks of the time of notification to the student of financial aid probation status and must include, at a minimum, the reason why a student failed to meet satisfactory academic progress and what has changed that will allow the student to make satisfactory academic progress at the end of the next semester.

Re-establishing Student Aid Eligibility

In order to re-establish student aid eligibility, a student must achieve the above standards. If the student fails to meet the standards again, he or she will again be placed in financial aid warning status and the procedures outlined above will be followed.