



UNIVERSITY OF SAINT MARY of THE LAKE

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Recipients of student financial assistance are required to make satisfactory academic progress toward a specific educational objective or degree. The federal government's Department of Education has mandated that the University of Saint Mary of the Lake (USML) monitor and enforce these standards which are consistent with the educational mission of the university. This policy applies to all students receiving assistance from any financial aid program administered by the Office of Financial Aid at USML. This policy is administered separately from the institution's academic probation and suspension policy. The term 'respective Dean' below refers to the academic Dean of Mundelein Seminary and the Dean of the School of Parish Leadership and Evangelization. Each oversees academic matters for their area.

Maximum Time to Completion

Students must complete all Master of Arts degree requirements within five years of beginning their first course as a degree-seeking student at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake. For the Master of Divinity and the Doctor of Ministry degrees, students must complete the requirements within seven years of beginning their first course as a degree-seeking student at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake.

Qualitative and Quantitative Measure

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) is measured by both a qualitative and a quantitative standard. The qualitative standard is based on meeting the minimum cumulative GPA required for the number of hours attempted. The quantitative standard requires the student to have completed the required minimum percentage for the number of credit hours attempted. USML considers 9 credits per semester to be full time. During the summer term 6 credits is considered full-time. The Office of Financial Aid determines on an annual basis (at the end of spring semester) the eligibility of the student for continued financial aid based on the standards established under the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.

GRADUATE LEVEL:

Hours Attempted	Minimum % Of Completion	Minimum Cumulative GPA
All (1+)	66%	2.000

Loss of Eligibility

Students who fail to complete the required minimum percentage of credit hours as listed above and/or who do not meet the minimum grade point requirements during any applicable academic year will receive a letter from the respective Dean that they are not making satisfactory academic progress and that they are on financial aid suspension.

Appeal Process to Regain Eligibility

A student who has lost eligibility can appeal by contacting the respective Dean to develop an Academic Plan that will grant the student *SAP Probation* for up to a year. In the appeal, the student must explain why they failed to make SAP. The student must also explain what has changed in the student's situation that will allow them to meet SAP requirements at the next evaluation.

Probation status lasts for one payment period, during which the student may continue to receive FSA funds. Conditions that the student must meet by the end of the probationary period are documented in an Academic Plan. Students who fail to make SAP, or meet the established conditions, at the end of the probation period lose their aid eligibility. A student has 30 days from the date of the notification of suspension to contact the respective Dean and develop the Academic Plan. The Academic Plan needs to spell out when and how SAP will be achieved by citing the number of credit hours planned for each semester and the minimum grades for each course. Once completed, the Academic Plan should be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid.

Once achieving these requirements, the student must request that SAP be reviewed. Financial aid will be reinstated if the student has been found to be meeting the SAP requirements.

If the student is not meeting this prescribed plan when SAP is reviewed again, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension until SAP has been achieved and there will not be another probationary period granted.

If a student cannot develop an Academic Plan with the respective Dean that will allow them to meet the SAP requirements when SAP is reviewed again, the student will have to pay for courses at their own expense. Any credits taken, whether receiving financial aid or not, are counted towards maximum time frame, credit hours attempted, and credit hours completed.

Appeal Process if Academic Plan Not Met

A student who has not met the requirements of the academic plan that was devised with the respective Dean may appeal the continuing SAP failure if there were mitigating circumstances. Circumstances eligible for consideration include:

- I. Death of immediate family member of student
- II. Injury or illness of student or immediate family member
- III. Military activation of student or student's spouse
- IV. Other extenuating circumstances

A student wishing to submit an appeal must do so in writing detailing the circumstance and include any supporting documentation within 30 days of being notified that SAP standards have not been met. The appeal will be reviewed by the Provost for SPLE students and by the Dean of Formation for seminarians. The result of the appeal will be either to uphold the initial decision of the dean, or to approve the appeal in which case the student is granted SAP probation for 1 semester only. The decision at that point is final.

If the appeal was approved, the student will devise an academic plan with the Dean for that one semester. The Academic Plan needs to spell out when and how SAP will be achieved by citing the number of credit hours planned for the semester and the minimum grades for each course. If the student does not meet this prescribed plan when SAP is reviewed again at the end of the appealed semester, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension until SAP has been achieved and there will not be another probationary period.

Courses and Transfer Credits

Academic Work Elsewhere

Apart from initial transfer credit, once enrolled at USML, the approval of the respective Dean is required to gain credit for work done in another school while in residence at USML. Students transferring from another School of Theology may receive credit for courses they have taken, if in the judgment of the respective Dean, these courses are considered equivalent to similar ones offered at USML. The grade for these courses must be "C" or better.

The following table indicates the effect each letter grade has on the credit hours students attempt and the credit hours students completed.

Grade Received	Grade Counts Toward Attempted Hours	Grade Counts Toward Completed Hours
Passing Grades- " A+," " A," " A-," B+ " "" B," "B-," " C+," " C ", " C- "	Yes	Yes
Repeated Course Previously Passed	Yes	No
Repeated Course Previously Failed	Yes	No
Fail - "F"	Yes	No
Withdrawal - "W"	Yes	No
Incomplete – "I"	Yes	No
Credit - "P"	Yes	Yes
Withdrawal Passing - "WP"	Yes	No
Audit - "AU"	No	No