



Sam Houston State University

Financial Aid and Scholarships Office

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the term used to describe a student’s successful completion of coursework toward a certificate or degree. Ineligible programs, such as certain certification programs, are not eligible for aid. Financial Aid & Scholarships must monitor the academic progress of each student in order to meet federal and state guidelines.

There are three components to SAP: Minimum SHSU Grade Point Average (GPA), Minimum Cumulative Completion Rate, and Maximum Credit Hours. If you do not comply with any component, you may lose aid eligibility. Evaluations occur after each **Fall, Spring, and Summer term**.

Degree Program	Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) (Qualitative)	Minimum Cumulative Completion Rate (Deficit Hours) (Quantitative)	Maximum Credit Hours (Excessive Hours)
Undergraduate Student	2.0	Students must successfully complete at least 67%* of all credit hours attempted. This percentage includes all credit hours attempted at Sam Houston State University and any other college/university, regardless of whether or not financial aid was received. Grades of W, F, I, U, NC, IP, Q, X, WQ and repeat courses for which credit is not earned are not considered successfully completed.	Students must not exceed 180 attempted credit hours.
2nd Bachelors	2.0	Requirements are the same as Undergraduate; however, only coursework attempted for the 2nd bachelor’s program will be reviewed.	Any hours from the 1st Bachelor's that count toward earning the 2nd Bachelor's are counted toward this maximum credit limit. Not to exceed 60 hours once admitted to 2nd Bachelor's.
Preparatory Students	2.0	Requirements are the same as Undergraduate; however, only coursework attempted for the Preparatory program will be reviewed.	12 consecutive months beginning with 1st enrolled semester.
Graduate	3.0	Requirements are the same as Undergraduate; however, only coursework attempted for the graduate program will be reviewed.	The minimum hours required to receive a Graduate or Doctoral degree range from 30 credits to 36 credits, depending upon the type of degree plan.
Graduate Certificate	3.0	Requirements are the same as Graduate; however, only coursework attempted for the graduate certificate program will be reviewed.	The maximum hours allowed to receive a Graduate Certificate is 27 hours.

Three Evaluation Components

Minimum SHSU GPA:

At the end of every semester, you must have earned a minimum **SHSU** GPA to remain eligible for financial aid. The GPA requirements are indicated on page one of this policy.

Minimum Cumulative Completion Rate:

To receive financial aid, you must complete **67%*** of your attempted coursework for your degree or certificate. Attempted coursework includes transfer hours and courses for which you received no financial aid. To calculate your completion rate, take the total of your overall passed hours and divide that figure by your overall attempted hours. Your overall hours are viewable in your Unofficial Transcript. Attempted hours include all registered hours whether you earned a grade or received credit (including any courses you attempted that are covered under Academic Fresh Start).

- **Effective April 1, 2024: SHSU will round up a Completion Rate of 66.5% or higher to 67%. For example, a 66.667% Completion Rate will round up to 67%.*
- **Before April 1, 2024: SHSU does not round up your Completion Rate. For example, a 66.89% Completion Rate does not round up to 67%.*

Maximum Credit Hours (Excessive Hours):

Undergraduate and Graduate/Doctoral students are eligible to receive financial assistance for a limited period of time while pursuing a degree. The number of credit hours a student attempts cannot exceed 150% of the credit hours required for graduation in the chosen program of study, as published in the University catalog. Credit hours are cumulative; thus, students working towards obtaining more than one degree in the same category (e.g., two Masters) will likely exceed the maximum allowed hours. All attempted hours are considered in this evaluation, including transfer course work and courses for which aid was not received.

Remedial courses: Students who have attempted 10 remedial courses (30 credit hours) and are enrolled in or are required to enroll in additional remedial hours are not eligible to receive federal financial aid.

Failing SAP

Warning Semester:

Undergraduate students seeking a 1st bachelor's degree who are not in compliance with Minimum SHSU GPA and/or Minimum Cumulative Completion Rate requirements will be given a warning semester. At the end of the warning semester, students who fail to regain compliance with the SAP policy are not eligible for financial aid. First-time transfer students are automatically denied if SAP is not met prior to entry semester: however, an appeal may be considered with mitigating circumstances and supporting documentation. Graduate students are not eligible for any warning semester.

Loss of Financial Aid Eligibility:

If you do not meet the SAP requirements by the end of your warning semester, you will be placed on financial aid suspension. Once you are on financial aid suspension, you will not receive financial aid until you meet the requirements or have an approved SAP appeal.

Notification of Financial Aid Suspension Status:

You will be notified via your SHSU email in the event you are placed on financial aid suspension.

Appeal Information

Students who fail to maintain SAP due to an extenuating/mitigating circumstance (e.g. medical reasons, death in the family, etc.) may submit a written appeal with supportive documentation after they have received official notification of denial. Appeals will be evaluated as soon as possible. Any student submitting an appeal will receive a written response within ten (10) working days of the documentation arrival. If an additional appeal is desired, the student may request an appeal hearing to provide additional documentation to support their appeal. Any student who has been denied financial aid due to deficient SAP must be prepared to pay registration costs regardless of any pending appeal status. The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office will not recommend any extension of payment deadlines for these students.

Appeal Categories for Deficient Completion Rate, Deficient SHSU GPA, and/or Financial Aid Academic Plan:

Extenuating/mitigating circumstance examples:

- Serious illness/injury: Please provide dates and an explanation of the illness/injury to you or an immediate family member (parent, spouse, sibling, child) which caused inability to attend or prepare for class for an extended time.
- Supporting documentation examples: notes or other documentation from doctors, a police report, etc.
- Death of an immediate family member: Please provide dates, the name of the individual, and proof of relationship to you. Supporting documentation examples: photocopy of a death certificate, funeral program, obituary, etc.
- Significant trauma/unexpected events in your life that impaired your emotional/physical health: Please provide dates and an explanation of the trauma or unexpected events. Supporting documentation examples: notes or other documentation from doctors, counselors, psychiatrists, etc.
- Other unexpected circumstances beyond your control: Please provide dates and an explanation of the circumstances. Supporting documentation examples: notes or other documents from educators, social workers, police, etc.

Important: Students who do not meet one of the above categories are not eligible for an appeal.

Note:

- *Appeals based solely on financial and/or emotional needs without sufficient explanation or documentation will not be accepted.*
- *Work is not considered a hardship since financial aid is viewed as a supplement to the student's income in order to help reduce the number of hours the average student would have to work in any given week.*
- *It is the responsibility of the student to successfully complete all classes enrolled. Please remember that dropping a class, failing a class, withdrawing from a class, or repeating a class for which credit was previously earned is a personal decision made by the student.*

Maximum Credit Hour Appeal:

Degree plan changes may be considered. Degree Works must accurately reflect your plan toward graduation. An appeal for Maximum Credit Hour will only be completed one time. Maximum Credit Hour appeals decisions are final and cannot request a Committee Appeal Hearing.

If you are a graduate student, you must contact your graduate counselor to determine your eligibility for appeal.

How to Appeal

The following documents and information must be completed and submitted to the Financial Aid & Scholarships Office:

- 1) Financial Aid SAP Appeal Form
- 2) Personal statement from the student, either typed or legibly written, providing the following information:
 - An explanation of your extenuating/mitigating circumstance(s) for **all** semesters (including those attended at another university/college) that caused you to not meet SAP, along with **why** the circumstance prevented you from meeting SAP completion rate, GPA or Financial Aid Academic Plan.
 - What has changed that will allow for satisfactory academic progress in the term of appeal and future semesters?
 - For a maximum credit hour appeal, provide details on changes in major, including dates.
 - To update a previous grade of X, submit the appeal with a brief statement
- 3) Provide supporting documentation of the cause and of any changes that will solve the issues for the term of appeal. Documents can be death certificates, birth certificates, statements from doctor or counselors, police reports and any other pertinent documents. The documents provided must support the timeframe being reviewed.

Submit all documents together to the Financial Aid & Scholarships Office via **one** of the following:

1. **In person:** Estill Building 201
2. **Email from your SHSU email:** fadocuments@shsu.edu
3. **Fax:** 936.294.3668
4. **Mailing address:**
Financial Aid & Scholarships Office
Box 2328
Huntsville, TX 77341-2328

Appeal Decisions:

After you submit an appeal with documentation, you will get a decision to your SHSU email within ten (10) business days.

- Approved appeals will result in student being placed on an academic plan. The plan will be designed for meeting minimum SAP requirements within a specified timeframe. Students who do not meet the requirements of the academic plan will not be eligible for financial aid and all remaining aid will be cancelled. Subsequent appeals of the same nature are not permitted. The only way to regain eligibility for financial aid is to meet the SAP minimum requirements.
- If your appeal is denied, you can provide more documents to help your appeal or you can ask your counselor for a Committee Appeal Hearing if in Deficient Completion Rate and/or SHSU GPA . Please note that Committee Appeal Hearing Decisions are final. If you have lost financial aid due to lack of SAP, you must pay any account balance regardless of a pending appeal status. There will be no extension of payment deadlines.