



## 2011-12

# Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Undergraduates

These policies apply to undergraduate students who receive federal, state and/or some institutional financial aid at WOU. Private student loan lenders, private scholarship donors and WOU scholarships may have different academic requirements.

Students receiving financial aid are required to maintain quantitative and qualitative requirements and also to graduate within a reasonable amount of time. Federal regulations define a reasonable amount of time as 150% of the program length. At WOU, a student could earn an undergraduate degree with 180 credit hours; the maximum allowable timeframe to complete that program as per federal regulations is 150% or 270 attempted credit hours. Students are also expected to make adequate pace as per federal regulations and are required to satisfactorily complete at least 67% of their attempted credit hours. In addition, three-term (fall, winter and spring terms), full-time students at WOU will be expected to satisfactorily complete at least 30 credit hours each year; part-time students will be expected to satisfactorily complete a pro-rated amount. Letter grades of F, W, NC, I, X and AU do not apply toward the satisfactory completion of the credit hour minimums.

### **Annual SAP review**

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be evaluated on an annual basis at the end of each spring term and again, separately for summer term.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements**

#### **1. Minimum credit hours required (all undergraduates)**

Three-term (fall, winter and spring terms), full-time students will be expected to complete at least 30 credit hours each year. Three-term (fall, winter and spring terms), three-quarter time students will be expected to complete at least 18 credit hours each year. Three-term (fall, winter, spring terms), half-time students will be expected to complete at least 12 credit hours each year. Students who do not meet the minimum credit hour requirement will be ineligible for financial aid.

#### **2. Making pace (all undergraduates)**

Federal regulations require students to complete 67% or more of their attempted credit hours. Transfer credits hours will be included in the attempted credit hours for this calculation. Students who do not meet this standard will be ineligible for financial aid. Pace is calculated

by dividing cumulative earned credit hours by cumulative attempted credit hours. See example below:

	<b>Attempted hours</b>	<b>Earned hours</b>	<b>Pace: earned hrs/attempted hrs</b>
<b>Institution (WOU):</b>	60	36	
<b>Transfer:</b>	8	8	
<b>Overall:</b>	68	44	65%

In the above example, this student is not making pace because he/she is completing only 65% of his/her attempted credit hours.

**3. Students with less than a 2.0 GPA**

All students must have a 2.0 or higher WOU GPA.

**4. Nearing maximum credit hours (excessive hours)**

Because a WOU student could receive a degree with 180 credit hours, students who have 220 attempted credit hours or more will be considered ineligible for financial aid. Transfer credit hours will be included in the attempted credit hours.

**5. Failure to comply with previous appeal requirements**

Students who do not meet conditions from prior appeal decisions will be considered ineligible for financial aid.

## **Special considerations**

### **Treatment of incompletes, withdrawals, repeated coursework and transfer credit hours**

Incompletes, withdrawals, repeated coursework and transfer credit hours are included in the student's attempted credit hours.

### **Repeated coursework**

As per the federal regulations, a student may retake a course for which he/she received a failing grade. He/she may retake a course one time for a course in which he/she received a passing grade. This will be reviewed throughout the year and students' aid packages will be adjusted as necessary.

### **WOU academically suspended students**

Undergraduate students who are academically suspended must be readmitted to WOU before their financial aid will be disbursed.

### **X grades**

If a student receives all X grades or does not attend class, he/she may be required to repay some or all of his/her financial aid. If a student does not attend any classes or receives all X grades, he/she will be required to repay all aid disbursed during that term. If the student receives some X grades in addition to other grades, he/she may be required to document his/her class attendance.

If the student is asked to document his/her class attendance, his/her professor(s) can provide written documentation (either hard copy on WOU letterhead or via email to [finaid@wou.edu](mailto:finaid@wou.edu)) of the student's class attendance. The WOU Financial Aid Office will provide written instructions on how and when class documentation must be submitted.

### **Zero credit hours earned**

The Financial Aid Office will assume that students who complete zero credit hours (excluding students who receive all I or X grades) did not complete the entire term and these students will be considered as "unofficially withdrawn." The student will be considered as unofficially withdrawn as of the 50% point of the term and may need to repay some or all of his/her financial aid.

If the student is asked to document his/her class attendance beyond the 50% point of the term, his/her professor(s) can provide written documentation (either hard copy on WOU letterhead or via email to [finaid@wou.edu](mailto:finaid@wou.edu)) of the student's class attendance. The WOU Financial Aid Office will provide written instructions on how and when class documentation must be submitted.

### **WOU renewable scholarships**

WOU renewable scholarships will be monitored separately from financial aid and generally require students to complete at least 36 credit hours each school year.

### **Federal TEACH Grant**

The Federal TEACH Grant has additional academic requirements and generally requires students to maintain a 3.25 WOU GPA.

## **Appeal Process**

Undergraduate students who are not meeting SAP standards are considered ineligible for financial aid (federal, state, institutional) and must submit an appeal to regain eligibility for future financial aid. Private student loan lenders, private scholarship donors and WOU departments awarding scholarships may allow a student who is not meeting the WOU SAP requirements to receive those specific funds.

A student will be notified (usually via email) if he/she is not meeting satisfactory academic standards and is no longer eligible for financial aid. The student may appeal his/her financial aid ineligibility either via email or on paper. Factors for the basis of an appeal may include the death of a relative, an injury or illness of the student or other special circumstances.

The student must include with the appeal the following information:

1. Students' full name, WOU identification number and mailing address.
2. Statement detailing the reason(s) for not meeting satisfactory academic progress standards. (Supporting documentation may be submitted.)
3. Explanation of what has changed so satisfactory academic progress standards will be met in the future and what plan is in place to ensure success.
4. Students with excessive credit hours must explain why he/she has accumulated so many credit hours without attaining a degree and when he/she will complete his/her degree requirements. The student must submit with the appeal a completed Academic Plan for

Financial Aid (available at the Financial Aid Office or from the documents section of the Financial Aid Office web page). In addition, a student's on-line degree evaluation may be reviewed in making a determination on an appeal. Students need to be sure their online degree evaluation is current. To review the on-line degree evaluation, the student must access his/her Wolf Web account, click on Student Menu, Student Records, Degree Evaluation, Degree Requirements.

Western Oregon University has many resources to help students succeed. Students should refer to the "Services for Student Success" document on the Financial Aid Office webpage ([www.wou.edu/financialaid](http://www.wou.edu/financialaid)) under "Resources."

The student's first appeal will be reviewed by a financial aid officer. A second appeal will be reviewed by the Director or Associate Director or may be referred to the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Committee. A third or more appeal will not be approved unless there are exceptional circumstances. The appeal decision by either the financial aid officer or SAP Committee is final and cannot be appealed to another individual, group or U.S. Department of Education.

### **Regaining financial aid eligibility**

Ineligible students who appeal will be informed in writing of the appeal decision. The appeal decision will state whether or not the student is eligible for financial aid and/or what the student must do to regain financial aid eligibility if applicable.

If the appeal is approved, the student may have requirements that are more stringent than the general financial aid policies for regular, eligible students. Some requirements may include but are not limited to, increasing their WOU GPA, completing each term with a specific minimum GPA, completing a minimum number of credit hours and/or aid may be approved for a limited number of terms.

If the appeal is denied, the student may have conditions to meet before eligibility may be regained. Some conditions may include but are not limited to, increasing their WOU GPA, completing each term with a specific minimum GPA, completing a minimum number of credit hours either at WOU without financial aid or at another institution.

It may be determined that a student has not made satisfactory academic progress and would not be able to meet the 67% pace requirement and/or graduate within 150% of the program requirements. If that is the case, the student would no longer be eligible for financial aid at WOU.