

POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
FINANCIAL AID OFFICE
STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS
GRADUATE PROGRAMS
POLICY, PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress establish the evaluation criteria to determine if a student is making satisfactory academic progress, which is one of the eligibility requirements to participate in student financial aid programs from the Title IV of the Federal Department of Education as well as from State, Institutional and Private funding programs. This policy applies to all graduate programs and to all graduate students, even those who are not receiving federal student aid funds.

The minimum federal components to review the student's satisfactory academic progress require the following three measures: qualitative, quantitative, and maximum time to receive Federal aid. These three elements provide a reasonable measurement to determine whether a student is making satisfactory academic progress towards the completion of his/her educational program.

Evaluation Criteria

A. Qualitative Measure

This element establishes the minimum grade point average (GPA) that a student must have at each evaluation based on the total earned credits. This element evaluates the quality of academic work using the student's grades. This measure is cumulative meaning that all coursework, from the first academic period to the last academic period, will be considered.

The Financial Aid Office adopts the retention rate (qualitative measure) according to the following chart:

Transferred Credits* (1)	Completed Credits at PUPR (2)	Total Earned Credits (1+2)	Minimum Required Grade Point Average (GPA)
		0 - 9	2.50
		10 - 18	2.80
		19 +	3.00

* Credits transferred from other colleges are not taken into consideration to calculate the grade point average but will be considered to calculate the student's level or year.

B. Quantitative Measure

This element establishes the pace at which a student must progress through the educational program to ensure that he/she will graduate within the maximum timeframe. The quantitative measure calculates the student's progress by dividing the cumulative number of credit the student has successfully completed by the cumulative number of credits the student has attempted. The student must successfully complete at least the 66% of all the credits attempted at PUPR.

C. Maximum timeframe to receive federal financial aid funds

A student must complete the graduation requirements of his/her educational program within a period no longer than the 150% of the published length of the program degree. The maximum timeframe will be based on the total credits hours required to complete the educational program. Students who have reached the maximum timeframe do not qualify for financial aid.

Example:

Student in Master in Business Administration – Accounting

Credits required to complete the educational program = 39 credits

Maximum time = 58 attempted credits (39 crds. x 150%)

- Preparatory courses will not be considered in the evaluation of the maximum time, but all courses attempted at PUPR will be considered.
- All attempted credits, even those in which the student did not receive financial aid, count towards the established maximum timeframe.
- Transferred courses will also be considered when determining the maximum timeframe.
- This policy also includes and measures students who are enrolled half-time.
- If a student changes of Major or School (e.g. from Engineering to Business Administration), will be measured under the new program requirements (total of required credits). All courses taken at PUPR, including credits from previous Major/School, credits from the new Major/School, as well as transferred credits, will be included.
- The student is ineligible when it is determined that it will be mathematically impossible for him/her to complete the program within 150% of the length of the educational program not at the point when the student actually reaches the maximum timeframe.
- A student who completes the academic requirements for a program but does not yet have the degree is not eligible for further additional student aid funds for that program.

Academic Progress Review Process

The Financial Aid Office will review the satisfactory academic progress annually for those students enrolled in any period during the academic year. This evaluation is completed at the end of the academic year (Summer period). In each academic progress review, the Financial Aid Office will measure all three evaluation criteria established in “*Section A*” of this policy.

The student will lose his/her eligibility for student aid programs if he/she does not meet the requirements for satisfactory academic progress as established in this policy. The Financial Aid Office will notify the student about the results of the satisfactory academic progress review and how his/her eligibility has been affected.

A student who loses his/her eligibility for student aid due to failing to make satisfactory academic progress can appeal to the Academic Progress Committee for reconsideration.

Eligibility Reinstatement

A student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress can restore his/her eligibility for financial student aid funds. Eligibility can be restored by:

- successfully appealing to the Academic Progress Committee and complying with the established academic plan; or
- taking the appropriate actions which bring him/her into compliance with the Standards of Satisfactory Progress Standards.

After we confirm that the student meets the requirements of the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress again, and if qualified, the student will get his/her eligibility for student financial aid reinstated for the next academic period.

Appeal Procedure

Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico allows the student who is not making satisfactory academic progress to appeal on the basis of mitigating circumstances (e.g. serious injury or illness, death of immediate family members, or other special circumstances) that affected his/her academic progress. The Academic Progress Committee will meet to evaluate all appeals received by the established deadline. The decision of the Academic Progress Committee is final. This process will apply to appeals allowed under federal and state regulations.

Steps to submit an Appeal

1. The student must complete the Academic Progress Appeal Form available at Financial Aid Office website. It is very important to carefully read and follow the instructions.
2. The student must submit the completed Appeal Form and supporting documentation to the Financial Aid Office before the deadline. Incomplete appeals or appeals submitted after the deadline will not be evaluated.
3. Once submitted, the appeal will be evaluated by the Academic Progress Committee. The Committee has the right to request additional documentation if considered necessary. The student will receive written notification with the results of the appeal.
 - If approved – Continue to step #4.
 - If denied – The student will be placed on a Financial Aid Suspension status and will not be eligible for Federal, State and/or Institutional aid programs until he/she complies with the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress.
4. Plan to improve the student's academic progress:
 - Once the appeal is approved, the student will be referred to meet with his/her Mentor or Academic Advisor. The purpose of this meeting is to establish an academic plan for the next academic period.
 - The student and the Mentor or Academic Advisor will sign the established academic plan.
 - The student must submit copy of the academic plan to the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Office will place the student on a Financial Aid Probation status and will reinstate his/her financial aid for the next academic period.
 - At the end of the academic period, the student must meet with his/her Mentor or Academic Advisor to confirm if he/she complied with the established academic plan. The Financial Aid Office will determine if a student is eligible for subsequent payments.
 - If the student meets with the requirements for satisfactory academic progress, will be placed in a Good Standing status and will not be required (although it is encouraged) to establish a new academic plan for the next academic period.
 - If the student is in compliance with the academic plan but still is not meeting the requirements for satisfactory academic progress, an academic plan for the next academic period will be established. The student will continue to receive financial aid as long as he/she complies with the academic plan.
 - If the student did not comply with the academic plan, he/she will be placed on a Financial Aid Suspension status and will lose eligibility for subsequent payments until he/she reinstates his/her eligibility for financial aid.

DEFINITIONS

1. Attempted credits – Enrolled credits at UPPR in which the student has obtained grades of I, I (with grades), A, B, C, D, F or W, WF, NR, including all courses repetitions.
2. Transferred Credits - Credits taken at other Institutions of Higher Education recognized by accrediting agencies that were approved with A, B or C and which are accepted by the Department Director or by the authorized Dean in compliance with the standards of the PUPR.
3. Earned Credits - Credits of courses attempted at PUPR which obtained grades of A, B, C or D with the exception of specific cases defined by the Department.
4. Grade Point Average (GPA) - The measure of academic merit achieved by the student. It is calculated by dividing the total number of accumulated honor points by the number of credits in which the student has received final grades, including F's and WF's which have not been removed.
5. Repeated Courses –Undergraduate courses that the student repeats when he/she has obtained a qualification of D, F, W or WF. For the purpose of determining the Grade Point Average only the highest grade will be used. Repeated courses will be considered in the quantitative measure.
6. Academic Progress – Measure which demonstrates whether a student is completing the percentage (66%) of attempted credits versus completed credits and whether the grade point average (GPA) index is equal to or higher than the established retention index. (See chart in section A.1)
7. Academic year - Consists of three academic terms that begin in August and end in May. The summer term is optional.
8. Academic Term - Typical academic term during which the regular courses are offered, and which consists of 12 weeks beginning on the first day of school and ending on the last day of final examinations. In summer, the academic term is reduced to 6 weeks, doubling the weekly contact hours.
9. Provisional Grades (Incompletes) - If the Professor gives an incomplete in a course, the student must complete the requirements of the course within the established date during the next academic term. The Professor will remove the incomplete within the established date. If the incomplete is not removed, it will become the provisional grade until the professor changes the grade. Provisional grades are considered in the calculation of the qualitative and the quantitative measures.

10. Courses with grade W - Course from which the student withdraw official and voluntarily. These withdrawals must be authorized by the Financial Aid Office, Registrar Office, Counseling Office, and Finance Office. These courses will be considered in the calculation of the quantitative measure.
11. Preparatory courses (Remedial) - These are basic courses required by the program (includes courses in MATH, SCIE, ATUL, ENGL, SPAN, and others starting with 01xx and MATH 1330, 1340). These courses will be covered by federal financial aid up to a maximum of 30 credits.
12. Expired credits - Courses approved seven or more years ago in this or other institution will expire at the date of applying for re-admission with the exception of those validated by the Department Director and the Dean of Faculty. The student must repeat all courses declared outdated or must take an equivalent course from the existing curriculum with the approval of the Director of Department and the Dean of the Faculty. These courses are considered for the calculation of the quantitative measure.
13. Financial Aid Suspension - Students who at the end of the probation period do not overcome deficiencies with the qualitative and/or quantitative element, or do not comply with the established Academic Plan, will have his/her financial aid suspended. Federal financial aid will also be suspended if the student exceeds the maximum timeframe required to complete his/her program of studies. The maximum time is equal to 150% of the of the program credits. All the attempted credits and transferred courses will be taken into consideration.
14. No Satisfactory Academic Progress (NPAS - suspension) - Classification given to the student who at the end of his Financial Aid Probation period does not overcome the academic deficiencies or has not completed the Academic Plan as agreed. The student does not qualify for Federal, State or Institutional aid.

Last review: July 2016