

**Columbia School of Business**  
**POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**  
**FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) RECIPIENTS**  
**[As of 4/1/25]**

**1. SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) must be maintained by a student to receive funds administered by the Financial Aid Office at Columbia Business School (CBS). In accordance with state and federal regulations, CBS has established standards of SAP for all students checked officially on an academic year basis. These standards apply to all merit-based awards and loan programs administered by the Financial Aid Office. The purpose of these regulations is to encourage the timely and successful completion of an eligible degree. When accepting disbursement of a financial aid award you are entering into a contract with the Financial Aid Office agreeing to maintain satisfactory academic progress. It is important that you read and understand the following financial aid standards for maintaining SAP.

**2. “AT LEAST AS STRICT...”**

The financial aid requirements for SAP are indeed as strict as the school’s academic progress policies. Students are held to the same academic standards regardless of their status as federal aid recipients.

**3. CONSISTENT APPLICATION**

Satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards are the same for all categories of graduate students, including those students registered with Disability Services. Students registered with Disability Services should take advantage of suggested accommodations in order to meet SAP requirements. Failure to register with Disability Services will not be considered an extenuating circumstance.

**4. REGULAR EVALUATIONS**

An official review of SAP will happen once per academic year (after 2 semesters for MBA, MS, PhD (while enrolled in graded classes), and EMBA-NY Friday/Saturday and after 3 semesters for EMBA-NY Saturday and EMBA-Global programs) to determine federal aid eligibility. In addition to this evaluation, our office will work with the academic area of each program (MBA, EMBA, MS and PhD) to identify students that could benefit from a notification of their status.

**5. MANUAL ADJUSTMENTS DUE TO SYSTEM LIMITATIONS**

In cases in which there are any other limitations or nuance of a student’s academic records in the Student Information System (SIS), or any other system in use for the storage of academic records, such that what is reflected in the system does not fully represent what CBS is utilizing for the measuring of academic progress in accordance with its own academic policy, the Office of Financial Aid will accept the decision of advisors in the Office of Student Affairs and Office of Academic Records and Registration as overriding the data in the Student Information System. This includes, but is not limited to, GPA, pace of completion, maximum time frame, inclusive, as well as any additional scenarios that may be added to this document at a later date.

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**6. GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)**

All students are required to hold a GPA of [5.5 to graduate](#). During the academic review process at the end of each semester, the Office of Student Affairs monitors the academic performance of all students and makes available a support system for those in need of assistance.

Students whose cumulative GPAs fall below the minimum requirements are subject to probation or dismissal.

Minimum cumulative GPA requirements for [Good Academic Standing](#), Academic Probation, and Academic Dismissal are below:

Good Academic Standing	GPA equal to or greater than 5.5000
Academic Probation	GPA less than 5.5000 and greater than or equal to 3.7000
Academic Dismissal	GPA less than 3.7000

**7. MAXIMUM TIME FRAME AND PACE OF COMPLETION**

For all programs, students are required to achieve a minimum pace of 67% of the required number of credits at the time of SAP evaluation as stated in section 1.3.

**MBA, EMBA, and PhD:** The maximum allowable timeframe for receiving aid is equal to 150% of the length of your academic program. If you are a student in the full-time MBA program, which requires 60 credits for graduation, you would reach the maximum timeframe at 90 credits attempted. Except for EMBA Global which requires 61.5 credits for graduation, therefore, the maximum timeframe is reached at 92.25 credits attempted. Finally, if you are a student in a dual-degree MBA program, which requires 45 business school credits for graduation, you would reach the maximum timeframe at 67.5 credits attempted.

**MS:** The maximum allowable timeframe for receiving aid is equal to 150% of the length of your academic program.

If you are a student in the **MSFE** program, which requires 48 credits for graduation, you would reach the maximum timeframe at 72 credits attempted.

If you are a student in the **MSMK** program, which requires 30 credits for graduation, you would reach the maximum timeframe at 45 credits attempted.

If you are a student in the **MSAA** program, which requires 33 credits for graduation, you would reach the maximum timeframe at 49.5 credits attempted.

**PhD:** The maximum allowable timeframe for receiving aid is nine years in full time status per the policy in [GSAS](#). This supersedes the 150% timeframe.

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**8. EFFECT/TREATMENT OF “ATYPICAL” COURSES/SITUATIONS**

NA

**9. EFFECT OF INCOMPLETES**

Not counted in GPA calculation, but impact and are counted toward pace calculation.

**10. EFFECT OF WITHDRAWALS**

Not counted in GPA calculation, but impact and are counted toward pace calculation.

**11. EFFECT OF COURSE REPETITIONS**

If the student is allowed to remain in the program, a grade of F for a core class means that the student needs to repeat the course and both grades factor into the GPA calculation as well as pace. Occasionally, we might decide to dismiss a student from the program and readmit them at a later date. If this happens, prior course work which exists in the Student Information System will generate an inaccurate GPA. A new GPA calculation, which will be calculated manually, will then occur by the academic affairs team in this instance to ensure that the old grades do not count against the student.

**12. EFFECT OF DUAL DEGREES**

For dual degree students, the Business School GPA is determined by the grades received while in residence at the Business School and includes all courses taken in those semesters, even those offered by the student’s other school. Grades for Business School courses taken while in residence at their other school are not included in their cumulative GPA for the Business School.

**13. EFFECT OF ADVANCED STANDING**

NA

**14. EFFECT OF TRANSFERS OF CREDIT FROM OTHER SCHOOLS OR INSTITUTIONS**

NA

**15. EFFECT OF CHANGES OF MAJOR OR PROGRAM OF STUDY**

NA

**16. EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS AND UNIVERSITY-WIDE CHANGES**

In the event of a national or state-wide emergency, and/or where a pass/fail grading system is implemented University-wide:

Any courses graded as pass/fail will be counted in the total number of attempted hours. When a course is successfully completed and given a grade of “P”, the credits are added to the total number of attempted and earned credits hours; but the Pass grade is not included in the GPA calculation.

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When a course is not successfully completed and the student is given a grade of “F”, it will be treated as a standard grade of “F” and this will negatively impact the progression and GPA of the student.

Any student who fails a SAP assessment as a result of a qualifying emergency will be allowed to submit an appeal.

Any and all treatment of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) updates and changes will abide by existing statutory regulation on SAP, any temporary statutory relief provided by Congress, and any temporary guidance provided by the Department of Education (ED).

## **17. STATUS DEFINITIONS**

### **FINANCIAL AID PROBATION**

This status is assessed to students who are failing SAP and who successfully appeal the academic review. Eligibility for aid may be reinstated for one payment period or longer in accordance with an Academic Plan.

## **18. APPEALS**

Students are required to continue to make satisfactory progress towards the completion of the degree requirements as defined by their academic program. Students who are not meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) have the option to appeal. To begin the appeal process, students should complete the following steps:

Initiate the appeal process by submitting, to the Office of Financial Aid and their academic advisor, a written appeal detailing the circumstances that led to the loss of your financial aid eligibility (along with any supporting documentation). Examples of circumstances that could be appealed include (but are not limited to): the serious physical or mental illness of the student, the serious physical or mental illness of a student’s immediate family member, death of a student’s immediate family member, or other extenuating circumstances.

In consultation with an academic advisor, an Academic Plan will outline the action that the student will need to take in order to ensure that academic progress improves in the subsequent term.

If the appeal is approved, students will have one semester to meet the requirements listed in the Academic Plan in order to remain eligible for financial aid in the subsequent term.

## **19. ACADEMIC PLANS**

In consultation with an academic advisor, students must develop an Academic Plan that will outline the action that the student will need to take in order to ensure that academic progress improves in the subsequent term.

If the appeal is approved, students will have one semester to meet the requirements listed in the Academic Plan in order to remain eligible for financial aid in the subsequent term.

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**20. RESTORING ELIGIBILITY**

Students who are denied Financial Aid from a prior semester, may be eligible for reinstatement and regain eligibility for federal financial aid, upon regaining satisfactory academic progress, as defined by the academic affairs office.

Students who successfully appeal failure to meet SAP requirements will be reinstated as eligible for federal aid, provided they meet the associated Academic Plan requirements.

**21. NOTIFICATIONS**

A student who fails to maintain satisfactory progress will be advised in writing via their Columbia University email of both the academic deficiency and the required corrective steps to take and apprised of the consequences of failing to take those steps.