

James Madison University

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Financial Aid

All undergraduate students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements to receive financial aid at James Madison University. Federal regulations require each institution to have a SAP policy, which establishes the minimum standards that must be applied consistently to all students. You will be denied financial aid if you fail to meet SAP requirements. If extenuating circumstances led to your noncompliance, you may submit an appeal to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for consideration. Our policy is designed to encourage students to improve their academic performance.

SAP includes both qualitative and quantitative components. Qualitative refers to grade point average. Quantitative includes both earned credits and maximum time.

Credit Hours Attempted (Includes transfer hours)	Minimum GPA Requirement (Cumulative JMU GPA at end of spring semester)
1-27	1.500
28-44	1.650
45-59	1.750
60-74	1.850
75-89	1.900
90-104	1.994
105-119	1.999
120 or above	2.000

Grade Point Average: The minimum GPA requirement is based on the number of credit hours attempted.

Earned Credits: You must earn at least 80% of your attempted hours. This calculation is performed by dividing the number of credit hours earned by the number of credit hours attempted.

Maximum Time: You may not receive financial aid for more than 150 attempted hours. If your program requires more than 150 hours and you have reached the maximum time limit, please contact the financial aid office for guidance.

Explanation of Attempted Hours

Attempted credits are calculated differently for each component of SAP. The financial aid office uses the university's academic suspension policy to evaluate your GPA. In compliance with federal regulations, financial aid developed procedures for evaluating earned credits and maximum time. The chart illustrates how we view attempted hours on your transcript.

* If you have dual enrollment or AP credits and feel they may affect your SAP status, please notify us.

** For repeat forgiveness, your most recent grade and credit(s) count toward your GPA.

Type	GPA	Earned	Max
Transfer/Transfer Equivalent	✓	✓	✓
Dual Enrollment	✓	*	*
Advanced Placement	✓	*	*
Withdrawals		✓	✓
Repeat/Forgiveness	**	✓	✓
Repeat Credit	✓	✓	✓
Incomplete		✓	✓

**Review your transcript on eCampus to determine your academic progress.
It is your responsibility to be aware of SAP requirements.
Contact us if you have any questions.**

Note: Some financial aid programs (e.g., Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program) have more stringent requirements than described in this policy. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships if you have questions.

Appeals Process

SAP is evaluated each year, following the spring semester. Financial aid denials are effective immediately. If mitigating circumstances contributed to your inability to meet SAP requirements, you may submit an appeal for consideration. Review the guidelines below before you prepare your appeal.

Mitigating or extenuating circumstances may include:

- ♦ Illness
- ♦ Death in the family
- ♦ Family problems (e.g., parents' separation or divorce)

To insure consideration of your appeal, you must submit the appeal form and supporting documentation within 30 days of the date of your denial letter.

In your appeal form, you should:

- ♦ Describe the extenuating circumstance(s) that led to your noncompliance.
- ♦ Explain your plan of action to ensure your future academic success.
- ♦ Describe the timeframe of your extenuating circumstance(s) for the period that you failed SAP.

In addition, to confirm your extenuating circumstance(s), you must attach documentation from an objective third party (e.g., physician, counselor, lawyer, social worker, teacher, religious leader, academic adviser, JMU Office of Disability Services, and JMU Health Center).

Your third party documentation must:

- ♦ Be submitted on official stationary or by e-mail from a valid JMU e-mail account.
- ♦ Verify that the extenuating circumstance(s) will no longer influence your future academic performance.
- ♦ Confirm the timeframe referenced in your appeal.

If you have exceeded 150 attempted hours, you must attach a statement from your academic adviser that outlines all remaining courses required for your program and your expected graduation date.

After reviewing your appeal form and supporting information, we may request additional documentation for clarification purposes.

Appeal Decision

We will review your appeal within 30 days of receipt and notify you in writing of its status. You will receive either our decision to grant your appeal, deny your appeal or a request for supporting documentation. If your appeal is granted and you have submitted all required financial aid materials, you will receive an award notice. If your appeal is denied, you may choose to apply for an alternative loan. Contact the financial aid office for guidance.

Graduate Students

Satisfactory academic progress standards for graduate students are described in the graduate catalog. Your department and the College of Graduate and Professional Programs will monitor your satisfactory progress.

FAQ's

♦ I withdrew from a class, does it count toward SAP?

Yes, it will affect the earned credits calculation and maximum time requirement.

♦ If I don't meet SAP, can I still get a Stafford Loan? Can my parents get a PLUS Loan?

No, but you may qualify for some alternative loans.

♦ I appealed my suspension and was granted permission to return to JMU, does this mean I qualify for financial aid?

No, admission to the university does not guarantee financial aid eligibility. The financial aid office will notify you if you fail SAP. A separate appeal is required.

♦ If I resolve my academic deficiency, can I receive financial aid?

Yes, but you must submit an appeal form requesting a reevaluation of your SAP status. Remember that your JMU transcript must reflect this change.

♦ Can I get financial aid for summer if I am not meeting SAP?

No, you would need to submit an appeal for consideration.

♦ If I qualify for the transfer equivalent policy, will you automatically reevaluate my transcript?

No, if you believe you meet SAP requirements because of this policy, you should notify the financial aid office of the change in your status. Remember that your JMU transcript must reflect this change.

