SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)
POLICY FOR FEDERAL AND STATE
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Statement of Purpose - Students who apply for federal and state financial assistance (including student and/or parent loans) are required by federal regulations to make satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree or certificate program. Failure to meet the minimum standards outlined in this policy will result in a loss of financial aid eligibility.

Minimum Requirements

- **Cumulative Grade Point Average** - Cumulative grade point average is calculated by the Registrar at the end of Fall, Spring, and Summer terms using all credits attempted at USI in which a letter grade of A through F is earned. Students must meet the following GPA requirements for the degree level at which they are classified:
  
  Undergraduate Student Requirements:
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Attempted Hours (including transfer hours)</th>
<th>1-59</th>
<th>60+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required USI Cumulative GPA</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  Graduate Student Requirements:
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required USI Cumulative GPA</th>
<th>3.00</th>
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</table>

  Note: students who are academically dismissed are ineligible for financial assistance.

- **Successful Completion Rate** – Completion rate reflects the pace at which students must progress to ensure they are able to complete their degree/certificate program within the maximum timeframe allowed. It is calculated by taking the total number of credit hours a student successfully completes (passes) divided by the total number of credit hours a student has attempted. All students must earn at least 67% of all hours attempted. This cumulative calculation includes all hours that a student is enrolled in at the end of the 100% refund period (census date). Hours added after census date will be included in the number of financial assistance attempted hours for the term. Note that for completion rate purposes, attempted and earned hours used in the calculation also include transfer hours that have been accepted by USI from other institutions.

  Note: A student who applies for financial assistance and fails to earn any academic credit for a term will have aid eligibility suspended at the end of the term. This includes students who withdraw from a term after applying for financial assistance.

- **Maximum Timeframe for Completion of Degree/Certificate** – The maximum timeframe for a student to complete their degree/certificate and receive federal aid cannot exceed 150% of the published length of their academic program. Note: Indiana State grant programs are an exception to the 150% rule. State grant programs are limited to four years or eight semesters of full-time enrollment. **All prior enrollment periods are considered including those in which students did not receive federal or state financial assistance.** Normal standards for maximum timeframe attempted hour limits are:

  Most Baccalaureate Degree Programs 180 Attempted Hours
  Most Associate Degree Programs 90 Attempted Hours
  Dental Assisting Certificate Program 67 Attempted Hours

  o For programs that deviate from normal standards, see appropriate program information listed in Bulletin.
  o An evaluation will be required for students seeking BA/BS degrees once they have reached 160 attempted hours to ensure degree completion.
  o Students working on their second undergraduate degree/certificate or teacher certification are limited to 150% of their remaining required coursework, not to exceed 231 attempted credit hours including all previously attempted credit hours.
  o Maximum timeframe limits for graduate students are calculated by taking 150% of the published length of your program. Students pursuing subsequent graduate degrees are limited to 120 attempted hours including hours attempted for prior graduate studies.
Additional Information You Need To Know

- **Incomplete Grades** – At the time of evaluation, incompletes (grade/s of “IN”) do not influence a student’s cumulative GPA, but do count as credit hours attempted for both Completion Rate and Maximum Timeframe calculations. Incomplete grades do not count as earned. Students are responsible for notifying Student Financial Assistance of any grade changes, including the receipt of a grade for a previous incomplete grade.

- **Repeated Coursework** - Students are allowed to repeat a previously passed course and have it count toward their enrollment status for financial aid eligibility only once. There is no limit on the number of times a student may retake a course that has not been successfully completed, however, regardless of whether the student received financial aid or not, all occurrences of a repeated course must be counted as attempted credits for completion rate and maximum timeframe calculations.

- **Enrollment in Degree or Certificate Program** - Financial aid recipients may only receive financial aid for courses that apply to their degree/certificate program. An exception is made for non-credit developmental courses that are recommended or required by USI. Courses which are audited and credits which are earned through CLEP testing do not count toward students’ enrollment status for financial assistance. After earning 60 or more cumulative hours (including transfer credits), students must have a declared major and be admitted to the appropriate college at USI. Please note that while students may choose to work towards two degrees, only one degree will be considered in the maximum attempted hours component. Students may choose to change majors before completing the original degree, it will not change the formula for calculating compliance. Compliance with this policy will be checked at the end of the fall, spring and summer semesters.

  Note: Graduate students enrolled in prerequisite undergraduate courses may qualify for financial aid at the senior class, undergraduate level Direct loan limit for a maximum of 12 months. Undergraduate courses must be approved by the student’s graduate advisor and a copy of the approval be submitted to Student Financial Assistance.

- **Fresh Start Program** - Financial assistance is not available to students currently in the Fresh Start Program. A student may submit an appeal to request reinstatement of financial aid eligibility upon successful completion of the Fresh Start Program. ALL hours, even those taken prior to the student’s Fresh Start participation WILL count in the number of attempted hours used in the financial aid maximum timeframe and completion rate calculations.

**Evaluation and Notification of Eligibility** - Satisfactory progress is evaluated at the end of each fall and spring term and at the end of the combined summer period. Students who do not meet the above standards will be placed on financial aid warning status for one term. Failure to be in compliance with this policy by the end of the warning term will result in financial aid suspension. Students’ eligibility status is posted on their myUSI accounts and those with a warning or suspension/terminated status are sent a letter notifying them of their status.

**Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility** – Students may make up a deficiency in earned hours and/or GPA at their own expense. Transfer coursework accepted into a student’s USI programs can be used to make up completion rate deficiencies; however, cumulative GPA deficits can only be made up by taking USI coursework. After students have made up deficiencies, they are responsible for submitting an appeal form for a review of their compliance with this policy, it is not automatic (see the next section for deadlines for appealing).

**Appealing The Loss of Financial Aid Eligibility** - If a student’s failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress is a result of illness, family circumstances, or other mitigating conditions beyond the student’s control, students may appeal to the Financial Assistance Appeals Committee for a waiver of this policy. The appeal is to be submitted to Student Financial Assistance, Attn: Appeals Committee, 8600 University Blvd, Evansville, IN 47712 and must include the appeal form (available at www.usi.edu/finaid/sfaforms.asp), a typewritten letter explaining the circumstances that prevented the student from meeting SAP requirements and all documentation supporting the claims in the letter. The appeal must address the following: 1) what the problem was; 2) when did the problem occur; 3) how long did the problem last; 4) how did this affect his/her ability to complete coursework and; 5) the steps taken to ensure your academic plan is successful and will meet minimum standards at the next evaluation. All appeals must be submitted before sixty percent (60%) of the term has elapsed. For fall and spring terms the end of the ninth week marks the 60% point of the semester. Appeals received after the 60% point will be evaluated for the following term of enrollment. Appeals will NOT be considered for a term that has already ended. Students will receive a written response to their appeal within 45 days. If your appeal is approved, you may be placed on financial aid probation. During your probation period, you are eligible to receive financial aid provided you meet the terms of the academic plan during your probationary period. If your appeal is not approved, students may request at the time of appeal that their full class schedule (in term following suspension of aid eligibility) be canceled at the 100 percent refund rate.