

## FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Federal regulations (CFR 668 – Student Assistance General Provisions, Sections 668.32(f), 668.16(e), and 668.34) require that all students receiving financial assistance from Federal Title IV funds maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) according to both qualitative and quantitative measures. The West Virginia Medical Student Loan Program also requires that a student be making satisfactory academic progress.

The academic requirements for the D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine) degree include the satisfactory completion of the curriculum designated by the institution and approved by the American Osteopathic Association Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation. The student's entire academic history, including transfer credits, must be considered when determining SAP status.

The progress of each student working toward a D.O. degree is monitored carefully and evaluated by the Student Promotions Committee on an individual or yearly basis. Any deviation from the normal progression should be reported to the Financial Aid Office by the Registrar or the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean.

### Qualitative (Grade Point Average)

Students are expected to make continuous and successful progress toward the requirements for graduation (Institutional Policy E-27) throughout the curriculum. Evaluation of course work is indicated by letter grade, numerical grade, and/or pass/fail. Students must maintain a grade point average of 70.0 or higher, after any required remediation, to maintain financial aid eligibility.

### Quantitative (Time Frame)

The nominal time frame for completion of the required course work for the D.O. degree is four academic years. A student, due to academic or personal difficulties, fellowships or COMLEX preparation, may require additional time to complete the curriculum. Students may borrow federal funds for a maximum of six years to complete the course work.

A student may be granted a leave of absence per Institutional Policy E-26. The period of time which a student has been approved for a leave of absence shall be excluded at the dean's discretion from the maximum time frame in which they will be expected to complete the D.O. degree. The student will return from the leave of absence with the same progress status with which he/she left.

Students who are permitted by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean to remediate or complete the COMLEX prep track within the initial assigned time frame (30-90 days). A student must not exceed 180 days in a prep track for any one test or this will result in a loss of federal financial aid for failure to progress. The student shall maintain adequate performance to finish their degree within the designated number of years (6) or who are given a time frame extension by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean for those six (6) years and are meeting the school's standards for satisfactory academic progress as long as they are meeting the terms set forth by the Dean.

A student who repeats or fails a course including a prep track or a rotation will be placed on a warning status for one payment period and continue to receive Title IV aid with no appeal necessary. At the end of the payment period, the progress is reviewed, if the student is not making satisfactory progress will be placed on financial aid suspension at this time.

Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress for federal financial aid may make a written appeal to the Director of Financial Aid. Financial aid probation status may be assigned by the Director upon demonstration of mitigating circumstances which must be documented to the satisfaction of the director along with a written letter of appeal from the student (professional judgment). Appeals will be reviewed within ten (10) working days of receipt. Examples of mitigating circumstances and appropriate documentation include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Serious illness of student--statement from physician that illness interfered with student's ability to meet SAP along with written letter of appeal from student.
- Serious illness of immediate family member--statement from a physician along with written letter of appeal from student.
- Death of an immediate/close family member--statement from a minister, nearest relative, or an unbiased concerned adult along with written letter of appeal from student.
- Disruptive internal family problems—legal/court documentation from lawyer, statement from parents, minister, or an unbiased concerned adult along with written letter of appeal from student.

The student must also submit, as part of the appeal, information regarding what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate SAP at the next evaluation.

A student who has successfully appealed shall be placed on financial aid probation and have eligibility for federal financial aid for one payment period. The financial aid office must notify the student in writing of the probation. The student must follow the academic plan given to them by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean. At the conclusion of this period, the student must have achieved compliance with the SAP. A student who does not achieve compliance with the SAP by the conclusion of the probation period is suspended from financial aid eligibility. Title IV funds affected by this policy at WVSOM include Federal Direct Stafford Loan, Federal Direct Graduate Plus Loan and Federal Work Study Program. A student may be reinstated for financial aid eligibility once they have met the standards of the SAP.

The Director of Financial Aid shall have the primary responsibility for enforcement of this policy. Any appeals to this policy should be made in writing to the Vice President for Finance within five (5) working days from the date of the occurrence. The Vice President for Finance will follow the steps set forth in **ST16: Student Complaints**.

*Approved March 19, 2019 by the WVSOM Financial Aid Committee*

