

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Title IV Federal Student Assistance

Federal regulations (General Provision CRF 668.1) require that Muhlenberg College review the academic progress of students before a student receives federal financial aid to make sure the student has met and continues to meet some basic academic progress standards. The Federal Government requires a student receiving Federal Aid to complete their degree within 150% of the published length of the program. For traditional Muhlenberg College undergraduate students, programs are 4 years in length or 8 semesters.  $4 \text{ years} \times 150\% = 6 \text{ years}/12 \text{ semesters}$ . There are no appeals allowed for the maximum time frame regulation. As a reminder, Muhlenberg College only offers institutional grants and scholarships for up to 8 semesters. These standards have been developed so that a student earns the minimum number of units each academic year and achieves a GPA that is consistent with meeting graduation requirements.

This policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress relates specifically to full-time undergraduate students who apply for and/or receive Title Federal IV and/or Muhlenberg College need-based scholarships and grants.

### Title IV Federal Aid Programs

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Work Study (FWS)
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Direct Student Loan (subsidized and unsubsidized)
- Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

### Annual Evaluation

At the conclusion of each of the student's academic years, once all final grades have been posted to Capstone, (this does include summer classes if applicable), the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards will be applied. Students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress based on qualitative standards as defined by GPA and quantitative standards defined as units attempted and units earned.

- **Withdrawals:** Grades of W are counted as courses attempted and count toward the maximum time frame.
- **Audited Courses:** Students do not earn any academic credit for audited courses. They do not count in the calculation of "attempted units"
- **Pass/Fail Courses:** These units do count in the units attempted and units earned
- **Transfer Courses:** Courses that have been accepted towards completion of the student's academic program/degree are counted when measuring the maximum time frame for completion of a degree.
- **Repeated Courses:** Repeated Courses may only count if the first time the course was taken the student received a failing grade. Courses repeated at Muhlenberg College (or repeated at another institution and transferred in) to improve the grade in the class may not count as units attempted and earned and may not count in the GPA. Therefore,

students repeating classes should make sure they have enough “NEW” units to meet the required minimum satisfactory academic progress standards needed.

- **Incomplete Courses:** Students who have an incomplete grade in one or more classes will not have financial aid processed until those courses are completed and a grade has been assigned. This includes students who have studied abroad and whose coursework has not transferred in yet.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress

Muhlenberg College students receiving Title IV Federal Financial Aid and Muhlenberg College Need-Based scholarships and/or grants must meet the minimum requirements:

MUHLENBERG COLLEGE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS  
First-time Financial Aid Recipients  
(as of August 25, 2010)

<u>Attempted</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Cumulative GPA</u>
2	1	1.5
3	2	1.5
3.5	2.5	1.5
4	3	1.5
5	3.5	1.5
6	4	1.8
7	5	1.8
8	6	1.8
8.5	6.5	1.8
9	7	1.8
10	8	1.8
11	8.5	2.0
12	9	2.0
13	10	2.0
14	11	2.0
14.5	11.5	2.0
15	12	2.0
16	13	2.0
17	14	2.0
18	15	2.0
19	16	2.0
20	17	2.0
20.5	17.5	2.0
21	18	2.0
22	19	2.0
23	20	2.0
24	20.5	2.0
25	21	2.0
26	22	2.0
26.5	22.5	2.0

27	23	2.0
28	24	2.0
29	25	2.0
30	26	2.0
31	27	2.0
31.5	27.5	2.0
32	28	2.0
33	29	2.0
34	30	2.0

Students should be aware that they may have to take courses at their own expense in order to regain eligibility for federal, state and/or institutional need-based aid. Students wishing to take courses at another institution should complete paperwork with the Muhlenberg College Registrar's Office to ensure the class will transfer. The class will be included in course units attempted and earned but will not be included in the GPA.

### **Failing to Meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards**

Students who fail to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards will lose their financial aid eligibility. They will be notified in writing by the Office of Financial Aid. Students may reestablish eligibility by successfully completing the required number of units and by attaining the overall required grade point average by the end of the next semester.

### **Appeal Process**

Students may appeal the decision and the loss of federal and/or institutional financial aid to the Director of Financial Aid. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid to request the "Academic Plan for the Appeal of Financial Aid Eligibility". This form and any additional appeal information must be submitted in writing within 2 weeks of being notified by the Director of your aid ineligibility. The appeal may not be based upon your need for assistance OR your lack of knowledge that your assistance was in jeopardy. An appeal should be based upon some extenuating circumstances or condition that prevented you from meeting the Standard Academic Progress Standards. Examples of extenuating circumstances are personal injury or illness or the death of a relative. The appeal must include the following:

- Supporting information about any extenuating circumstances (Doctor's note, Death Certificate or obituary, Letter from Professor or other documentation to support your situation)
- Request for reinstatement of financial aid based on:
  - The fact that the extenuating circumstance has been resolved  
AND
  - A plan of how the student plans to achieve the academic standards and graduation requirements (may be done in conjunction with the student's academic advisor or Dean of the College for Academic Life).

Each appeal case will be reviewed individually by the Appeals Committee. Waivers of the academic progress policy may be granted based on the extenuating circumstances, level of deficiency (i.e., can a

student meet the satisfactory academic progress guidelines by a specific point in time) and merit of appeal. These students will be placed on ***“Financial Aid Probation”***.

If you do not have grounds for an appeal or your appeal is denied, you may still be able to regain eligibility for future semesters. This can be done by enrolling in future semesters or summer school at Muhlenberg College at your own expense and creating an academic plan with your academic advisor or the Dean of the College for Academic Life that will create conditions under which eligibility may be restored.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

Students who have not met the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards but for whom the Financial Aid Appeals Committee has placed the student on Financial Aid Probation will have their financial aid reinstated for **one semester**. Students on financial aid probation will receive a separate letter that will outline the academic requirements the student must meet in order to receive aid for the following semester. If the student on financial aid probation meets the terms of the probation, the student will be permitted to continue to participate in the federal and institutional aid programs for the subsequent semester. Students who have been placed on Financial Aid Probation will be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress for the purposes of receiving financial aid as long as the student continues to meet the academic requirements outlined in their probationary letter. If the student does not meet the terms of the probation, the student will forfeit eligibility for all financial aid programs. A student who has lost eligibility to receive financial aid funding may enroll at Muhlenberg College at their own expense and are not eligible to submit any subsequent appeal.

Students who have been academically dismissed from the college but who are subsequently given permission to re-enroll are not automatically eligible to continue to participate in federal, state or institutional aid programs. Re-admission decisions are separate from financial aid funding decisions.