

Instructions for Preparing a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Form

Mississippi State University, as required by federal regulations, monitors minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as it relates to a student's eligibility to receive federal student aid funds, including grants, loans, work-study, and the Sumner's grant. The **SAP policy** can be viewed at <http://www.sfa.msstate.edu/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress/>.

Students who have failed to meet the minimum SAP policy standards and have been placed on **Financial Aid Suspension**, may request to have their financial aid reinstated by submitting a SAP Appeal Form. **Students are limited to three appeals**, regardless of the outcome of the appeal decision.

Students can **check the status of their SAP** by logging into their myState account (my.msstate.edu). Under the *Financial Aid Menu*, select *Satisfactory Academic Progress*. The SAP status will indicate if you are making satisfactory progress or if you have been placed on financial aid suspension, warning, or probation.

SAP Appeal Deadlines		
Refer to SAP Appeal Form for specific appeal deadlines http://www.sfa.msstate.edu/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress/		
Term	Final Deadline to Appeal	SAP Appeal Forms available online
Summer	May	March – May
Fall	August	June – August
Spring	December	October – December

SAP Appeal Form

SAP Appeal Forms are available at <http://www.sfa.msstate.edu/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress/>. Students must type their information in the space provide, and then meet with their academic advisor/official for review and approval. Completed SAP Appeal Forms must be submitted to the MSU Financial Aid Office (Garner Hall) by the final deadline indicated on the SAP Appeal Form.

Reasons to Appeal

SAP Appeals will only be considered if there are extenuating circumstances that prevented a student from making satisfactory academic progress. Students may attach supporting documentation to substantiate their circumstance (medical reports, obituary, police report, etc).

Typical adjustments to college life, financial hardship or job interference are **not** considered extenuating circumstances.

Examples of extenuating circumstances may include:

1. Medical illness (physical or mental)
2. Serious illness of student
3. Serious accident or injury of student
4. Death of immediate family member of student
5. Exceeding maximum time-frame to complete degree
6. Other extenuating circumstances

Excessive Withdrawal Hours

Excessive withdrawal hours indicate a lack of progression towards a degree. Students who have been placed on Financial Aid Suspension for exceeding the maximum number of withdrawal hours can only regain eligibility for aid by submitting a successful SAP Appeal.

Exceeded Maximum Time-Frame

Federal regulations state that the maximum time-frame a student has to complete a program cannot exceed 150% of the program's published length. Students who have exceeded the maximum allowable time to complete their degree program are no longer eligible to receive financial aid and will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension.

Federal regulations also state that a student becomes ineligible for financial aid whenever it becomes mathematically impossible for them to complete their degree program within the maximum time frame.

Students who have been placed on Financial Aid Suspension for exceeding the maximum time-frame to complete their degree can only regain eligibility for aid by submitting a successful SAP Appeal.

Calculation of maximum time-frame example: 120 credit hours (length of program) X 150% = 180 credit hours (maximum hours allowed)

How to Appeal

1. Complete the SAP Appeal Form (information must be typed – not handwritten). Print completed form.
2. Meet with your academic advisor/official to approve academic plan and other required information.
3. Submit SAP Appeal Form to the MSU Financial Aid Office (Garner Hall) by final deadline.

Students must meet with their academic advisor/official before submitting the appeal. Appeals submitted without a signature will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the appeal is complete and submitted by the established deadline.** If the appeal is held by the academic department and is submitted to the Financial Aid Office after the established deadline, the appeal will be considered late and will not be reviewed.

SAP Appeal Decisions

The committee will work expeditiously to review appeals, however, appeal decisions may not be available until after classes have begun for the appeal semester. Students are responsible for the payment of all MSU tuition/fees regardless of the outcome of the appeal.

Students will be notified via their official MSU email account once the committee has reached a decision. Students can also check the status of their appeal by logging into their myState account (my.msstate.edu). Under *Financial Aid Menu*, select *Eligibility Requirements*. Select SAP Appeal status (received, incomplete, approved, or denied).

Students with an approved SAP Appeal will be placed on **Financial Aid Probation** and will be granted one semester of financial aid (if otherwise eligible). Additional information about the probation semester can be viewed at <http://www.sfa.msstate.edu/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress/>.

Students whose SAP Appeal is **denied** will remain on **Financial Aid Suspension** and will not be eligible to receive federal financial aid or the Sumner's grant until the SAP policy requirements have once again been met. Any federal student aid and/ or Sumner's grant awarded for the appeal semester and any future semesters will be canceled.

Students whose SAP Appeal has been denied may want to consider applying for an Alternative Private Loan (non-federal aid). These loans are not guaranteed and a credit application is required. More information can be viewed at <http://www.sfa.msstate.edu/loans/>.

Students who have been granted a probationary semester and are following all the conditions of their SAP Academic Plan may also be eligible for aid (refer to SAP Academic Plan at <http://www.sfa.msstate.edu/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress/>).

Supporting Documentation for your SAP Appeal

The following sections provide guidance for completing a SAP Appeal and documents that may be included with the appeal. Read and follow the instructions in each section that relate to the reason your financial aid was suspended.

1. GPA, Complete 67% of Courses Attempted, and Excessive Withdrawals

The nature of each circumstance will influence the content of your SAP Appeal and the appropriate supporting documentation you may wish to submit. Circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- A. **Medical problems** (physical or mental) – Identify the inception and duration of the illness, supported by appropriate medical reports. Your appeal and supporting documents should clearly state whether the medical condition is under control, thus allowing you to be academically successful. Supporting documents should include, but are not limited to, medical reports and letters from your doctor or professional counselor.
- B. **Accidents or Injury** – Identify the date of the accident and describe the resultant medical problems (see point A above). Supporting documentation should include, but are not limited to, police and medical reports.
- C. **Family problems** (divorce, separation, abuse, death, illness) – Identify your relationship to the family member(s) involved and the inception and duration of the problem. Clearly state what actions have been taken to control these problems, thus allowing you to be academically successful. Appropriate supporting documents should include, but are not limited to, police and medical reports, death certificates, and letters from a professional counselors.
- D. **Military Service** – Identify the dates and status of your military tours of duty. Appropriate supporting documentation would include military orders and discharge papers.

2. Maximum Time-Frame

The SAP Appeal should describe every circumstance you believe caused you to accumulate hours in excess of the number allowed, or length of time allowed (depending on your degree objective) by the SAP policy. Also indicate if you are pursuing a second degree; have changed your major; or if you have transferred credit hours from another school. The SAP Appeal must enable the SAP Committee to understand clearly the number of semesters that will be required for you to complete your degree.

Important Facts Concerning your SAP Appeal

1. Financial Aid policies are not directly related to policies for academic admission. Reinstatement to the university after academic suspension or dismissal does not ensure that your financial aid will also be reinstated. If you have been granted early readmission and you are also on Financial Aid Suspension, you would still need to submit a SAP Appeal.
2. The SAP Committee realizes that you may not be able to immediately continue your education without financial assistance, however, financial hardship is not an extenuating circumstance that can be considered by the SAP Committee.
3. If you were employed while attending the University, your employment may have had a negative impact on your academic performance. Similar to financial hardships, the impact of employment is not an extenuating circumstance that can be considered by the SAP Committee.
4. All documents to be included in the appeal should be submitted to the Department of Student Financial Aid (P.O. Box 6035, Mississippi State, MS 39762-6035). You can also deliver SAP appeals to the Financial Aid Office in Garner Hall. Documents submitted with your appeal will not be returned. Please make copies for your records.
5. You must provide answers to the two questions listed on the SAP Appeal Form as well as consult with your academic official to review your Academic Plan before your appeal will be reviewed by the SAP Committee.
6. SAP Appeals are due by the specified deadline on the SAP Appeal Form. Late appeals will not be accepted. Incomplete appeals will not be reviewed.
7. Including supporting documents, such as medical records, although not required, may significantly increase the chance of your appeal being approved.
8. SAP Appeals are reviewed by the SAP Appeals Committee. The SAP committee's decisions are final.

9. The SAP Committee's decision on your appeal will be communicated in writing to your official MSU email address.
10. Ensure that your SAP Appeal materials are complete since the SAP Committee will only consider your appeal once during the semester.
11. Review the SAP Policy for additional information (<http://www.sfa.msstate.edu/policies/satisfactory-academic-progress/>).
12. SAP evaluations will be monitored at the end of each semester, including summer.
13. The SAP committee may not begin reviewing appeals until the beginning of the semester; therefore, you may not know the outcome of your appeal before classes begin.
14. If you decide to enroll in classes, you are responsible for the payment of all MSU charges regardless of the outcome of the SAP appeal.
15. Submitting an appeal does not constitute automatic reinstatement of your financial aid.

How to regain Financial Aid Eligibility

If you have been placed on Financial Aid Suspension, you can regain financial aid eligibility by meeting at least one of the following criteria:

1. Correct the SAP problem(s) and meet the overall SAP Policy requirements.
2. Submit SAP Appeal (limit of three). If your SAP Appeal is approved, you will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and you may be granted one additional semester of financial aid (if otherwise eligible).