

Minimum Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Applicants

Federal regulations require that an institution establish, publish, and apply reasonable standards for measuring whether a student, who is otherwise eligible for aid, is maintaining satisfactory academic progress in his or her course of study. The standards must be the same or stricter than the institution's standards for a student enrolled in the same academic program who is not receiving financial assistance. Listed below is the complete statement of Minimum Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Recipients.

The purpose of this policy is to provide undergraduate students with information on Villanova University's Satisfactory Academic Progress Standard for Federal Title IV Sources of Aid (Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant [SEOG], Federal Work Study, Federal Direct Subsidized Loan, Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan, and Federal Direct PLUS Loan), as well as other Federal and Villanova University Need-Based Aid (Federal Nursing Loan, Villanova University Grant, and Villanova University Endowed Scholarships). This document describes the qualitative and quantitative standards that make up this policy, how standards are measured, and how financial aid is reinstated if eligibility is lost during enrollment.

Process Overview

The Office of Financial Assistance is required, in accordance with Federal Title IV regulations, to monitor satisfactory academic progress for students who receive federal financial assistance. In order to continue to receive financial aid while enrolled at Villanova University, undergraduate students must maintain the minimum standards as defined below. The Satisfactory Academic Progress standards for financial aid, listed below, are either the same or stricter than the individual Colleges' academic policy for students enrolled in the same academic program who are not receiving financial assistance.

Students must make both quantitative and qualitative progress towards their educational goals each academic year to receive federal and Villanova University need-based financial assistance. Villanova University's academic year consists of two regular semesters (fall and spring) and the summer sessions.

Qualitative Standard

Undergraduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 calculated at the end of each academic year in order to be considered as a student making satisfactory academic progress for financial aid consideration. Only credits earned at Villanova University will affect the cumulative GPA calculation. The grade point average from transfer coursework at a previous college or university will not affect a student's Villanova University grade point average. Quantitative Standard. Students must pass the minimum number of credit hours during the academic year associated with their enrollment status for that academic year. If a student is full-time, the student would be enrolled in a minimum of 24 credits for the academic year and must complete a minimum of 24 credit hours. If a student is enrolled three-quarter time for the academic year (9-to 11 credits per semester) the student must complete at least 18 credits per academic year. If a student is enrolled half-time for the academic year (6-to 8 credits for the semester), then the student must complete at least 12 credits during the academic year.

Credits are considered successfully completed when a grade of A, B, C, or D is earned.

Failures (“F” and “NF”), INCOMPLETES (“N”), WITHDRAWALS (“W,” “WX,” “Y”), MISSING GRADES (“NG”), Grade of Audit (“AU”), Grades of “In Progress” (“IP”) are not successfully completed credits.

Repeated Coursework

As defined by the U.S. Department of Education, Villanova University will include and fund any repeated coursework previously taken by the student in his or her enrollment status one time. Villanova University will only allow a student to retake previously passed coursework one time and count the coursework in the student’s enrollment status (e.g., the student is retaking the coursework in an attempt to meet an academic standard such as a better grade) for financial aid consideration.

A student may not receive Federal or Villanova University funds to retake previously passed coursework if the student is required to retake the course due to the student failing other coursework. For example, if the student is enrolled in four classes in the fall semester and fails one of those courses, the Dean may require the student to repeat the previously passed three courses along with the course that the student failed. If the student retakes the four courses in the spring, only the course that the student failed may be counted toward the student’s enrollment status.

Pace (Maximum Timeframe)

Within the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, Villanova University is required to establish a maximum time frame in which students must complete their program of study in order to remain eligible for financial aid funds. The maximum time frame for degree completion at Villanova University for an undergraduate student as defined by the U.S. Department of Education is 150% of the student’s program(s) required credits.

Once a student reaches the maximum amount of credits attempted as specified by the program(s) for graduation, the student will be ineligible to receive further Federal Title IV aid. Students in this category may submit appeals in accordance with the Appeals section of this policy.

Note: The Villanova University Grant is only offered for a maximum of four academic years (eight semesters), excluding summer terms regardless of the fact that a student may still have remaining Federal Title IV eligibility.

Measuring Academic Progress

Academic Records are reviewed by the Office of Financial Assistance at the end of each academic year in May after spring grades are entered. Measurement begins with the Fall semester and ends with the last summer session. Students who were enrolled during the Fall and/or Spring semesters and who failed to meet the qualitative and/or quantitative requirements for academic progress can attempt to complete additional credits and raise their cumulative GPA during the summer sessions at Villanova University. Upon completion of additional credits, a new determination of academic progress will be made.

All financial assistance applicants are subject to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards regardless of whether or not they received financial assistance previously. When the Minimum Standard of Academic Progress is Not Achieved. A student who does not make satisfactory academic progress will be placed on financial assistance suspension until the requirements are met. During this suspension, a student is denied Federal and Villanova University aid. The student will be notified in writing of the financial assistance suspension. Appeals. If a student has failed to achieve satisfactory academic progress, the student can appeal the decision to the Office of Financial Assistance. The appeal must be submitted in writing and specify the extenuating circumstances which prevented the student from achieving academic progress. The following types of mitigating circumstances may be considered when

a student appeals, and are listed, as follows: injury or extended illness of the student, death in the family, or a change in educational objectives. Mitigating circumstances do not include the withdrawal from classes to avoid failing grades, pursuing a second major or a second degree. The student must explain what has changed that will allow him/her to make satisfactory academic progress by the end of the semester. A copy of the student's academic plan developed in conjunction with the student's faculty advisor, academic dean or his/her representative also must be submitted. The Office of Financial Assistance may request additional documentation and/or require a personal interview with the student.

Students must appeal within two weeks of receiving a notice from the Office of Financial Assistance of the financial aid suspension. Appeals will not be accepted after the two-week period has passed and the student will be responsible for all charges on their student account. The student will receive a reply from the Office of Financial Assistance within two weeks of receipt of their appeal.

A student who is denied assistance based on qualitative or quantitative standards will be considered for assistance when standards have been achieved.

Academic Plan

The academic plan is a written document developed by the student and his/her college that ensures the student is able to meet the University's Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards by a specific point in time. It could include qualitative and quantitative requirements necessary to achieve that plan. The academic plan could take the student to completion of their program rather than meeting the University's Satisfactory Academic Progress standard at a specific point in time as determined by an appropriate academic official.