

**UMASS GLOBAL**  
**FINANCIAL AID OFFICE**  
**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY**

**Introduction**

Federal law requires that financial aid recipients and applicants maintain satisfactory academic progress toward their educational objectives. The law compels students to maintain specified minimum grade point averages, satisfactorily complete a specific number of units over a defined time limit, and finish their educational objectives within a specific period of time. The law further requires that all periods of enrollment be considered, including periods in which financial aid was not received. Academic records are evaluated at the end of the spring trimester. Teaching credential and certificate students are also evaluated at the end of the fall and summer trimesters. The following are minimum academic standards that must be met.

**Qualitative Measure**

An undergraduate student must maintain a minimum UMass Global cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 in order to be eligible for assistance. Graduate students must maintain UMass Global cumulative grade point averages of at least 3.0.

**Quantitative Measure (Pace of Completion)**

Students must complete at least two-thirds of all program applicable credits in which they enroll from the time of first attendance at any school. Thus, a new student who enrolls in 9 units, withdraws from three units, and successfully passes the remaining six units would be meeting the quantitative measure requirement since the student would have passed at least two-thirds (6/9) of the units in which he or she enrolled. For students who change majors, credits that do not count toward the new major will not be included in the satisfactory progress determination.

This policy applies to cumulative units only. For instance, a student who successfully completes 21 program applicable credits without withdrawing from any classes and then enrolls in six units but drops them all would still be making satisfactory progress because the student would have completed 21 units out of 27 taken, which is greater than two-thirds.

All requirements for graduate degrees and credential programs, including courses accepted for transfer credit from other institutions, must be completed within a seven-year period. The seven-year period for University of Massachusetts Global courses begins at the end of the session in which the course was taken. Courses that exceed the seven-year limit will not be counted as completed in the next SAP evaluation (unless an exception is made by academic appeal) but will be counted as attempted.

### **Time Limit**

Students must complete their educational objectives within a reasonable period of time. To accommodate all students and their schedules, this “reasonable period” is not measured chronologically, but by the number of units in which a student originally enrolls. The time limit is based on the number of units required for graduation multiplied by 150 percent. For instance, 120 units is required for a baccalaureate degree, so students can apply for financial aid for the first 180 units in which they enroll (120 units times 150 percent). Graduate students have varying degree requirements, but their time limit is also established at 150 percent of the number of units required for graduation as specified in the university catalog.

This policy refers to all the program applicable credit hours in which a student enrolls. Thus, a student who enrolls in nine units but withdraws from three would be considered to have utilized nine units of the maximum number allowed.

Transfer students also are limited to 150 percent of the number of units they need for graduation. An undergraduate, for instance, who transfers 70 attempted program applicable credits to UMass Global, could apply for aid for up to 110 more units (120 units required for a bachelor’s degree multiplied by 150 percent equals 180 units. 180 units minus 70 units transferred equals 110 units of eligibility).

### **Grades**

The only grades that meet satisfactory academic progress standards for undergraduates are A, B, C, D, and P. For graduate students, acceptable grades are A, B, C and P. Withdrawal and incomplete grades are not passing grades. Challenge exams, audited courses, and non-credit enrichment courses are not considered. When a course is repeated, the highest grade is calculated into the cumulative GPA and all attempts are included in the quantitative measure.

### **Reinstatement**

Students who do not meet the foregoing standards are ineligible for financial aid but in many cases can be reinstated. Undergraduates ineligible for federal aid because their UMass Global grade point averages are below 2.0 will have their eligibilities renewed when their cumulative grade point averages equal or exceed 2.0. Graduate students with UMass Global GPAs below 3.0 will have their assistance reinstated when their UMass Global cumulative GPAs equal or exceed 3.0. Students who did not successfully complete at least two thirds of their units during an evaluation period will have their aid reinstated when they achieve completion of at least two-thirds. There is no automatic reinstatement for students who exceed the time limit; these students must petition for reinstatement.

All students may appeal for reinstatement of assistance if they, a spouse, or dependent children, have experienced illness that prevented class attendance for an extended period of time; they have experienced a death in the immediate family (parents, siblings, spouse, or dependent children); or they have experienced some extraordinary situation that prevented them from meeting the minimum standards. Such situations must be documented, exceptional and non-recurring in nature. The petition for reinstatement must explain the cause of the academic difficulty and how the situation has been resolved that will allow the student to meet SAP standards at the time of the next evaluation. The petition also must contain an academic plan approved by an academic advisor. If the cause of the student’s ineligibility relates to the qualitative or quantitative standards,

the academic plan must be designed to ensure that these federal standards are met within six sessions. If the time limit standard has not been met, more than six sessions can be taken to complete the student's academic program; however, the plan can only include classes necessary for graduation.

A petition for reinstatement must be made within 60 days of the date the notice of ineligibility is emailed to the student by the financial aid office. Students who are reinstated by petition will be held to the standards established by their academic plans. Students must appeal to change their academic plan. They must explain what has happened to make the change necessary and how they will be able to make academic progress. Any deviation will result in loss of financial aid eligibility without opportunity for further petition. Students are encouraged to keep a copy of their academic plans for reference.

Petitions will be heard by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee and must be in writing. In addition to the written petition, students may appear in person before the committee. The committee will meet as soon as practicable after a petition is submitted. The written decision of the committee will be emailed within one week of the hearing.

Once a student completes an academic plan with their advisor, disbursement of aid will be made for the current award period, provided the student meets all other financial aid eligibility requirements.