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SATISFACTORY PROGRESS POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE

Purpose

The Federal Government, the States, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) have invested large sums of money in order to provide financially needy students the opportunity to obtain a post-secondary education. Financial aid recipients are responsible for using the funds provided in an acceptable manner. Therefore, a student who wishes to benefit from the receipt of financial aid funds must maintain "satisfactory progress" as defined in this policy.

Authority

The U.S. Department of Education Student Financial Aid regulations (34 CFR 668) require that institutions of higher education establish and maintain reasonable standards to measure whether students applying for financial aid are making satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion. A student who does not meet these standards is not eligible to receive federally-funded financial aid. In most instances, SIUC shall make these standards applicable to all state and institutional aid programs for the purpose of maintaining a consistent and reasonable financial aid policy. However, nothing in this policy shall be construed as a reduction of external requirements by other federal, state, public, or private agencies when they award or control financial aid. **Non-declared graduate students are only eligible to be considered for a Federal Direct Stafford Loan during one twelve-month period while preparing for admission into a graduate degree program.**

Satisfactory Progress Standards

SIU requires that a student be making "satisfactory progress" toward a degree if he or she wishes to receive financial aid funds. A graduate student is making "satisfactory progress" toward a degree if successfully meeting each of three academic standards:

- 1. Minimum SIUC Percentage of the Cumulative Attempted Credit Hours that must be Completed:** A graduate student is expected to have completed a minimum of 67% of the cumulative attempted credit hours at SIU. Attempted credit hours shall be defined as the total SIU credit hours for which the student has been enrolled and includes completed courses with passing grades as well as courses that are incomplete or failed while attending SIU. This is calculated using total earned hours divided by total attempted hours at SIU.
- 2. Maximum Credit Hours Attempted:** Maximum hour rule consists of student completing degree program before reaching 150% of the number of credits need to complete degree program. A graduate student enrolled in a program leading to a Masters Degree is expected to complete the degree before accumulating seventy five (75) credit hours attempted including both SIU and accepted transfer credit hours. A graduate student enrolled in a program leading to a Masters of Fine Arts Degree is expected to complete the degree before accumulating ninety (90) credit hours attempted including both SIU and accepted transfer credit hours. A graduate student enrolled in a program leading to a Doctoral Degree is expected to complete the degree before accumulating one hundred (100) credit hours attempted including both SIU and accepted transfer credit hours. Repeated courses are counted in the "hours attempted" calculation for financial aid purposes and the repeat grade is treated in the cumulative GPA in accordance with University policy.
- 3. Minimum Grade Point Average:** A graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 at the end of each spring semester and be in compliance with the University's policy concerning academic standing, grades, and grade point average as defined under the topic "Retention" and all other provisions in the current Graduate Catalog. A graduate student who is academically suspended from the Graduate School is not making satisfactory progress.

The academic records of all aid recipients will be reviewed annually at the end of the spring semester (the selection will include all students who attended one or more credit hours during Summer 2015, Fall 2015 or Spring 2016) to determine continued aid eligibility. A graduate student who does not meet any one of the three standards set forth above is not maintaining "satisfactory progress" toward a degree and will be determined ineligible for financial aid. All periods of enrollment count (Fall, Spring and Summer) toward Satisfactory Academic Progress, including periods when a student does not receive Title IV financial aid. Student who receive WF (failed to complete the class and did not officially withdraw) or W (authorized withdrawal) grades will be counted in the Satisfactory Progress Standards. If a student has an INC (incomplete grade), a grade is changed from the original grade or repeated classes, these factors could also affect their satisfactory academic progress.

Notification of Status

It shall be the responsibility of the Graduate School to publish this policy and to notify by letter any graduate student who is no longer eligible to receive financial aid funds. Said notice shall be addressed to the student's most current permanent address on file with the University. **IT SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO INFORM THE UNIVERSITY OF A CORRECT PERMANENT ADDRESS AT ALL TIMES.**

Reinstatement

Students will have their eligibility to receive financial aid reinstated after having reached the level of satisfactory progress required of them by this policy. They may achieve this status by receiving passing grades for courses previously incomplete or incorrectly recorded as withdrawals or failing grades and/or earning sufficiently more than the required percentage of completed hours

Appeals

Any student shall have the opportunity to appeal, in writing, to explain “mitigating circumstances”. The appeal should be sent to the Graduate School, with endorsement of the student’s academic program, within 30 days of the notice of termination. The Graduate School will review the “mitigating circumstances” documented in the appeal and provide a written decision within 20 days after the receipt of the appeal. The Graduate School will provide written notification to the Financial Aid Office concerning all graduate students who have been granted an exception for mitigating circumstances.

Definitions

Attempted credit hours shall be defined as the total SIU credit hours for which the student has been enrolled and includes completed courses with passing grades, repeated courses, as well as courses that are incomplete or failed while attending SIU.

Maximum credit hours attempted shall be defined as the total SIU credit hours for which the student has been enrolled and includes completed courses with passing grades as well as courses that are incomplete or failed while attending SIU and the total accepted transfer credit hours.

Credit hours completed shall be defined as the total number of academic credit hours for which a student has completed. Failing grades, incompletes, withdrawals, audits, and remedial courses that do not count toward a degree shall not be considered as credit hours completed.

Eligible students shall be defined as those students who are admitted to the Graduate School and to a specific degree program. All other students are not eligible for financial aid except for non-declared graduate students who are only eligible to be considered for a Federal Direct Stafford Loan during one twelve-month period while preparing for admission into a graduate degree program.

Mitigating circumstances are the reasons that explain why the student has not met the Satisfactory Progress standards and can include medical reasons, family crisis, personal problems, or other circumstances which adversely affected student performance.

Graduate shall be defined as a student who is seeking a Masters or a Doctorate degree.

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