

## Art Institute Graduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy Jan 2015

Revision Effective Date – 5/15/15

### The Policy:

The Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy ensures that all students are maintaining satisfactory academic progress towards successful completion of their academic programs. Completing courses with C or better grades indicates academic progress. Receiving D or lower grades and/or withdrawing from classes may put students at risk. The evaluation points and milestones contained in the policy are meant to identify problems for which actions of early intervention and/or remediation can be taken. Most critical to this policy is a student's ability to enroll in and complete courses on a consistent and successful manner. This ability is measured in three ways:

- cumulative grade-point-average (CGPA);
- incremental completion rate (ICR); and
- Within a maximum time frame (MTF).

**Failure to complete courses successfully for any reason may negatively affect a student's satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and are considered to be punitive grades. Failing courses, being suspended or terminated from courses, or withdrawing from courses could result in the loss of financial aid and/or veterans education benefits and academic dismissal.** In order for a student to graduate, the minimum requirements are a CGPA of 3.00, ICR of 66.67%, pass the Thesis Committee review, meet portfolio or other requirements as outlined by the student's degree program, and completion of the program in no more than 150% of total program credits and 5 years beginning with the first day of class. Refer to the Metrics of SAP section below for additional information regarding the calculation of CGPA, ICR and MTF.

Periods of attendance when a student does not receive Title IV aid are included in determining Satisfactory Academic Progress. Periods of Non Attendance are not included in determining SAP. While the terms Academic Warning/Financial Aid Warning and Academic Probation/Financial Aid Probation are used, the statuses apply to all students whether receiving financial aid or not.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress Policies in the Pre-Thesis/Capstone stage

1. For **all quarter evaluations** a student must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.00 and an incremental completion rate (ICR) of 66.67%. A student not achieving these minimum standards (and **has not reached** the thesis/capstone stage of his or her program) is placed on **academic warning/financial aid warning** for the next quarter. If a student who is already on **academic warning/financial aid warning** fails to achieve these milestones the following term, s/he will be academically **dismissed** from the graduate program.
2. The student has **one quarter to improve** his or her CGPA or ICR to the mandatory level of at

least 3.00 CGPA or ICR 66.67%. If a student fails to do so, the result is **dismissal** from the graduate program.

**NOTE:** If a student is on academic/financial aid warning for failing to meet the CGPA and ICR requirements, it will be very difficult for him/her to meet the CGPA and ICR milestones of 3.00 and 66.67%. In some cases the student may have to successfully complete all the courses attempted. A student should consult with his/her academic advisor or academic counselor on the exact requirements.

### ***Passing the Mid-program Assessment/Approval to Thesis/Capstone Stage.***

1. A **mid-program assessment** (typically, within the first three quarters of the program) of each student takes place to determine whether they will be accepted into the Thesis/Capstone stage of the program. This assessment occurs separately from a particular class and involves faculty from throughout the department. **Students must successfully** complete their mid-program assessments (as determined by the program director) prior to being accepted into the thesis/capstone stage of their programs. Unacceptable assessments will result in **academic warning/financial aid warning** for the following quarter.
2. The student has one quarter to resubmit and successfully complete the mid-program assessment. If at the second attempt, the student's assessment is still unacceptable, the result is an immediate **dismissal** from the graduate program.

### ***Allowable Academic/Financial Aid Probation***

Students may be on an **academic warning/financial aid warning status once and academic probation/financial aid probation only once, after successful appeal during their enrollment.** Students not meeting the minimum SAP requirements will be notified in writing by the campus registrar and a meeting with the Dean of Academic Affairs. Students on academic warning/financial aid warning or academic/financial aid probation status are eligible for financial aid.

### **Thesis/Capstone Stage**

***Thesis/Capstone stage*** of any graduate program refers to the point at which a graduate student has assembled and is working with an approved thesis committee on the written and/or project portion of his or her thesis. This stage usually commences after the mid-program review but may vary per program.

1. For **all quarter evaluations** a student must achieve a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.00 and an incremental completion rate (ICR) of 66.67%. A student

not achieving these minimum standards (and **has not reached** the thesis/capstone stage of his or her program) is placed on **academic warning/financial aid warning** for the next quarter. If a student who is already on **academic warning/financial aid warning** fails to achieve these milestones the following term, s/he will be academically **dismissed** from the graduate program.

2. There **are no academic appeals for dismissals allowed** during the thesis stage.
3. If a student is in the thesis/capstone stage of the program, the student **may not receive a grade less than a "B."** The result of a grade lower than a "B" will be the requirement to retake the course.
4. At the end of the program, each student is required to make a thesis presentation to his or her thesis committee.
5. Students have a maximum time limit of **five years** to complete their programs **from the first day of attendance** and 150% of the program length in credit hours whichever is less, to complete their programs.

#### **Appeal Process for Academic Probation/Financial Aid Probation.**

A student who is dismissed for violating Satisfactory Academic Progress must appeal in writing to the Dean of Academic Affairs for re-entry before the start of the quarter in which he/she wishes to return. The written appeal must state the mitigating circumstances that contributed to the dismissal. The written appeal must be supported with appropriate documentation of the mitigating circumstances with an explanation on how the circumstances have been remedied or changed to ensure that he or she will be able to meet satisfactory academic progress if re-admitted.

The result of the appeal (appeal granted or appeal denied) must be provided to the student and catalogued in the Student Information System as well as the student's academic file. As part of the appeal the student must document in writing why he or she did not meet SAP and what in the student's situation has changed that will allow he or she to meet SAP according to a written academic plan.

If the student's appeal is granted, he or she will be placed on Academic Probation/Financial Aid Probation for **one quarter** due to the shorter length of the program. Students are eligible to receive Title IV aid while on Academic Probation/Financial Aid Probation if he or she is otherwise eligible. Failure to meet the minimum CGPA and ICR milestones following the Academic Probation/Financial Aid Probation period will result in a **permanent dismissal**.

If a student appeals and is denied the appeal, he or she must remain out of school until one year after the quarter in which the appeal was denied. The appeal procedure described in this section will apply. The student must demonstrate resolution to the mitigating circumstance(s) and demonstrate that he or

she will be able to meet satisfactory academic progress if re-admitted. The applicants will have to include describing why they failed to meet satisfactory academic progress before and what has changed to ensure that he or she will be able to meet satisfactory academic progress if re-admitted. Should the student have his or her appeal denied a second time, the student will be **permanently dismissed** from the institute. Students cannot be on academic probation/financial probation more than once during their enrollment.

The result of the appeal (whether granted or denied) will be provided in writing to the student and recorded in the student's academic file by the school.

Any student who is on Academic/Financial Aid Dismissal can no longer attend school nor get Title IV at the Institution.

### **Mitigating Circumstances for Appeal**

Following is a comprehensive list of events that indicate there may be a **Mitigating Circumstance** which has negatively impacted academic progress:

- Death of an immediate family member
- Student illness requiring hospitalization (this includes mental health issues)
- Severe Illness of an immediate family member where the student is a primary caretaker
- Illness of an immediate family member where the family member is the primary financial support
- Abusive relationships
- Divorce proceedings
- Previously undocumented disability
- Natural disaster
- Family emergency
- Financial hardship such as foreclosure or eviction
- Documentation from the School Counselor and/or a Professional Counselor
- A doctor documented illness of the student for a significant period of time.
- Military Deployment
- Military Permanent Change of Station (PCS)
- Special Circumstances

Students should understand that by having a mitigating circumstance it does not automatically mean the appeal will be approved. The Appeal Committee will review that the student sufficiently providing documentation of the mitigating circumstance (as outlined above) and that the student has resolved the mitigating circumstance.

Students who have an appeal denied can reapply however the passage of time by itself does not impact the Appeal Committee's decision.

Deans of Academic Affairs are responsible for determining the appropriateness of the mitigating circumstance in regards to severity, timeliness, and the student's ability to avoid the circumstance. Any consideration of conditions outside of the list provided should be discussed with The Ai VPAA. Student life issues and making the transition to college are not considered mitigating circumstances under this policy. For purposes of SAP, a family member means the students; spouse, father, mother, sibling or child.

Documentation from a professional counselor should not breach the student/counselor relationship and should remain confidential. A memorandum or letter on school or organizational letterhead indicating a counselor's opinion that student issues may be accommodated to ensure that the student will be able to meet satisfactory academic progress will suffice as proof of mitigating circumstances as well as a student's ability to meet satisfactory academic progress with accommodations from the institution.

**Students are NOT allowed to appeal dismissals for violating the 150% completion rate.**

### **Other Reasons for Dismissal**

Students may be dismissed from The Art Institutes for other reasons than those stated above if the institution determines that the student cannot satisfactorily meet the academic, professional, or ethical expectations, or other expectations of the program. Dismissal normally occurs when the Chief Conduct Officer or his/her delegate makes a decision for dismissal and communicates that decision to the student.

It is the responsibility of all students to be familiar with The Art Institute Student Conduct Policy in the student handbook (see Section Three, Reach and Section V, Disciplinary Offenses).

Any student who ceased attendance or withdrew from the institution will be evaluated against the minimum standards of the Satisfactory Academic Progress for grades and credits attempted as of the time of withdrawal in his or her last quarter of attendance. Any student who did not meet the minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress at the SAP evaluation point must go through the same appeal process should the student want to be readmitted. The appeal procedure described in the preceding section applies.

### **The Metrics of SAP**

#### **Academic Grading System**

The grading system incorporates letter grades, equivalent numeric values and letter codes as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.4
B	3.0

B-	2.7
C+	2.4
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
F	0.0 *

\*F does compute in the CGPA and does count as credit attempted.

Other Grade Codes worth Zero Quality Points:

<b>CR = Credit through examination</b>	Credits Earned/TR grade does not affect ICR/CGPA.
<b>S = Suspension</b>	Affects ICR/MTF/CGPA( Computes as an F)
<b>NP = Not passing/Fail</b>	Does not affect ICR/CGPA This grade designation is utilized to indicate that a student did not acceptably complete a non credited course
<b>P = Proficiency Credit by Exam or Portfolio</b>	Does not Affect ICR/MTF/CGPA
<b>PA = Pass</b>	This grade designation is utilized to indicate that a student acceptably completed a non credited course. Does not affect ICR/MTF/CGPA.
<b>SP or SA = Satisfactory/Pass</b>	This grade designation is utilized to indicate that a student acceptably completed a non credited course. Does not affect ICR/MTF/CGPA.
<b>T = Termination from course</b>	Affects ICR/MTF/CGPA (Computes as an F)
<b>TR = External Transfer Credit</b>	Grade designation utilize for transfer credits. This does not affect CGPA. They do impact ICR and MTF.
<b>U = Unsatisfactory</b>	Indicates that a student unsuccessfully completed a non-credited course. Does not affect ICR/MTF/CGPA.
<b>UF = Unearned F</b>	Students who failed the course AND did not complete the final assignments in the course. Final assignments include, but are not limited to a final exam, final project, final paper, portfolio presentation, capstone project or

any other assignment due in the last week of the course. If a student completed some or all of the other requirements in the course but did not complete the final assignment of the course and failed the course, the F grade will be considered unearned. An unearned F grade will be reflected as a "UF" grade on the transcript. The course's instructor will award this grade when appropriate. Does compute in GPA and CGPA and does count as credit attempted.

**W = Withdrawal**

When a student withdraws from the total program of study by the end of the ninth week of the quarter or from individual classes after drop/add but before the end of the ninth week of the quarter. The "W" is not used in the calculation of the GPA or CGPA but is considered attempted credits but not earned credits.

**WF = Withdrawal Fail**

When a student withdraws from individual classes or a total academic program of study after the ninth week of classes. The "WF" is calculated as an "F" in the GPA and CGPA. The "WF" also counts as attempted credits and not earned credits.

**WV = Waiver**

Commonly used when waiving a remedial courses and does not affect ICR/MTF/CGPA

**WX = Course was registered for but never attended**

Self-explanatory and does not affect ICR/MTF/CGPA

Students receive grades at the end of each quarter. The grade report contains both the grade point average for the quarter (GPA) and cumulative grade point average (CGPA) for the program. When a course is repeated after failure, the grade earned upon repeating the class replaces the original grade in determining the grade point average, though the failing grade will still appear on the transcript.

**Repeating Courses, Withdrawals, and Transfer Credits**

Grades earned in repeated courses will replace grades of 'F', "UF", 'W', or 'WF'. Course credits with grades of 'F', 'UF', 'W', or 'WF' are included in the maximum time frame (MTF) and incremental completion rate (ICR) requirements as credits attempted but not earned. Credits from all repeated courses are included as credits attempted. Transfer credits count in the ICR, MTF but not in the CGPA, and count as attempted and earned credits.

## Changed Grade

When a final course grade has been established and recorded in the student record, the grade may not be changed without approval by both the Academic Department Director and the Dean of Academic Affairs. Only the final grade (not the original grade/code) will be computed in the grade point average. The final grade is the one that counts in the calculation.

## Calculations

The Art Institute measures and records academic performance by computing the Grade Point Average (GPA) and Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) for each student, using the letter grades, four-point scale and credit-hour values. GPA is the average of grade points a student earns during one quarter. CGPA is the cumulative average of all grade points a student has earned over all quarters at The Art Institute.

Here is an example of how GPA and CGPA are computed: Imagine that a student is taking a total of two courses during one quarter. One course has a four credit hours value and the student earns an A. The second course has a three credit hour value and the student earns a B. Remember, each letter grade carries a grade point value. Grade point values are multiplied by credit hours.

In this example:

**A = 4 grade points x 4 credit hours = 16 grade points earned**

**B = 3 grade points x 3 credit hours = 9 grade points earned**

To compute the GPA, divide the total number of grade points earned for the quarter by the total number of credit hours earned for the quarter.

In this example:

**16 grade points + 9 grade points = 25 total grade points**

**25 grade points earned divided by 7 total hours earned = student's GPA for the quarter, 3.571, which is rounded to 3.57.** Rounding occurs after the 4 digit of a CGPA is calculated and if the fourth digit is 5 or over, it is rounded up. If the fourth digit is less than 4 it is rounded down.

A student's CGPA is computed in the same way by dividing the student's total grade points earned from all quarters/semester at The Art Institute by the student's total credit hours earned from all quarters at The Art Institute.

**Incremental completion rate** is determined as follows (remedial credits do not count in this calculation):

<b>(EARNED CREDITS at the institution + TRANSFER CREDIT Accepted)</b>
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**(ATTEMPTED CREDITS at the institution + TRANSFER CREDITS Accepted)**

**The 150% MTF** Only the attempted courses required in the program for which the student is currently enrolled are used in determining the number of MTF credits remaining.

**The 150% MTF** is determined as follows:

**TOTAL CREDITS NEEDED TO GRADUATE FROM THE PROGRAM x 1.5 =**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF CREDITS ALLOWED TO ATTEMPT.**

**Milestones and Evaluation Points for Satisfactory Academic Progress Grid**

<b>Pre-Thesis/Capstone Stage</b>	<b>Evaluation Point</b>	<b>Milestones must be met</b>	<b>Required Action</b>
	End of every Quarter	< 3.00 and 66.67%	Warning (if 1 <sup>st</sup> time)/ Dismissal (if on Warning Before)
<b>Mid Program Assessment</b>	Depending on Program	Failure to Provide an acceptable mid program assessment.	Warning (if first time) Dismissed, if second unsuccessful submission
<b>Thesis/Capstone Stage</b>	Every Quarter during Thesis/Capstone Stage.	< 3.00 and 66.67%	Warning (if 1 <sup>st</sup> time)/ Dismissal (if on Warning Before)
		Earns a Grade lower than a 'B'	Required to repeat the course.

Throughout the entire Program			
	Length of the Program	Exceeds the 5 year time limit to complete the program including Thesis	Dismissal
	Anything in excess of 150% MTF		Dismissal

**Note:** Graduate students can only be on Academic Affairs Warning/Financial Aid Warning and Academic Affairs Probation/Financial Aid Probation once during their enrollment.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress for Educational Benefits which are not Title IV Funds**

Please note that in order to receive and/or retain certain education benefits from a source other than the Department of Education, it may require a higher cumulative grade point average and/or a higher incremental completion rate. Examples of these education benefits are State Grants, Veterans' Benefits, Department of Defense (TA) benefits or employee reimbursements. Please check with the Student Financial Service Office for details.