

## DARDEN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

### SECTION ONE: GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

Maintaining satisfactory academic progress is one of many federally mandated criteria viewed in determining a students' eligibility for continued receipt of financial aid. To remain eligible, students must meet both a quantitative and qualitative standard. The standards measure students' performance in the following areas: maximum time frame to complete a course of study, credit hour completion rate, and cumulative grade point average (GPA).

The satisfactory academic progress standards apply to all Federal financial aid programs including Federal Direct loans (Subsidized, Unsubsidized and PLUS). Darden scholarships, outside scholarships, military education benefits, and private loans may have different eligibility requirements. Students should refer to the eligibility requirements for these programs to determine the standards to remain eligible for non-Federal financial aid programs.

In addition to the satisfactory academic progress standards for financial aid, the Darden Graduate School of Business has different definitions of what constitutes satisfactory academic progress. Students should consult the Darden section in the University's [Graduate Record](#) to determine the definition and possible sanctions. Students can be "in good standing" with Darden but not be making satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes.

**Evaluating students' satisfactory academic progress is required by federal regulation. The outcome of the evaluation and its impact on students' financial aid eligibility overrides all other University policies or statements regarding a student's academic standing.**

### SECTION TWO: QUANTITATIVE STANDARDS

#### Maximum Time Frame

Students are required to complete their program of study within a reasonable timeframe based upon the average length of their program. Financial aid eligibility will be suspended for students who fail to complete their program of study within 150% of the average program length. Maximum time frame is measured in two ways.

1. Semesters enrolled – semesters included in the semester count for maximum time frame include fall, spring, and summer. January term (J-term) is considered part of the spring semester. J-term is only included in the semester count if a student does not also enroll in the spring semester.
2. Credit hours attempted – with the exception of audited courses, all attempted hours are counted whether or not financial aid was received.

Credit hours included in the 150% maximum are comprised of all credits applied to a student's degree program including:

- All attempted coursework even if no credits were earned due to withdrawal, incompletes, unsatisfactory, no grade, or failing grades
- All courses attempted under all courses of study, even if the student changes majors, has multiple majors, minors and/or concentrations
- All repeated coursework
- Credit/No credit courses, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory courses

Courses not included in the 150% maximum:

- Audited courses
- Remedial courses, ESL courses



Office of Financial Aid

ACADEMIC PROGRAM	AVERAGE NUMBER OF SEMESTERS, AVERAGE NUMBER OF CREDITS	MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SEMESTERS, MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CREDITS
Full-Time MBA	4 semesters 60 credits	6 semesters 90 credits
MBA for Executives	5 semesters 60 credits	7 semesters 90 credits
Global MBA for Executives	5 semesters 60 credits	7 semesters 90 credits
Part-Time MBA	12 semesters 60 credits	18 semesters 90 credits
PhD	8 semesters 72 credits	12 semesters 108 credits

**Credit Hour Completion Rate**

The credit hour completion rate reflects the pace at which students must progress through their education program to ensure that they are able to complete their program within the maximum time frame. At the end of each financial aid academic year, students' academic progress will be measured by comparing the cumulative number of attempted credit hours against the cumulative number of credit hours earned. For all students, attempted hours are defined as all courses in which they are enrolled after the add/drop period has ended for the term and for which academic credit will be earned. This means that courses from which students withdraw after the add/drop period has ended will be considered attempted hours. All attempted hours will be counted whether or not financial aid was received.

Attempted hours also include the following courses:

- Withdrawals, incompletes, no grades, and failing grades
- Failing grades in pass/fail courses
- Grades of U in S/U courses (satisfactory/unsatisfactory)
- Courses taken as credit/no credit
- Repeated coursework

Attempted hours do not include remedial and ESL course work

All students, whether full-time or part-time, will be expected to complete 75 percent of cumulative credit hours attempted during all semesters of enrollment, including the summer semester.

**SECTION THREE: QUALITATIVE STANDARDS**

Please refer to the University’s [Graduate Record](#), and the Darden academic policies for additional information on the University’s grading system and how grade point averages are impacted by incompletes, withdrawals, and repeat courses.

Grade	Included in GPA
Credit or No Credit	No
Withdrawal	No
Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory	No
Audit	No
Incomplete	No
No grade or invalid grade	No

**Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Students are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.7 for all credit hours attempted.

**SECTION FOUR: EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

At the end of each financial aid academic year, students will be evaluated for satisfactory academic progress. Students who do not meet satisfactory academic progress will be notified of their status by email to their University email address. Please refer to the University’s [policy](#) on the use of email for official communication with students regarding the expectation for students to receive and read email communications in a timely fashion.

Financial Aid Suspension

Students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress at the end of the financial aid academic year will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension until they are able to meet the satisfactory academic progress standard. During Financial Aid Suspension, students are not eligible to receive federal financial aid. To re-establish their financial aid eligibility, students must successfully appeal their suspension status.

**SECTION FIVE: SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE APPEAL PROCESS**

Students who are on Financial Aid Suspension due to failure to meet the satisfactory academic progress standards and who have extenuating circumstances affecting their ability to meet the standards may appeal their status. Students may appeal their satisfactory academic progress status *once* per semester of enrollment. Extenuating circumstances include death in the family, serious personal illness or medical issues, emotional stress, and other special circumstances. Students who wish to appeal their Financial Aid Suspension must complete and submit the following:

1. Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal – made available by the Darden Financial Aid Office
2. Academic Dean Support form (page 2 of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal)
3. Academic plan developed by academic dean and student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet the satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time
4. If applicable, documentation from a third party to support your explanation (i.e., letter from physician or counselor)

Once the completed appeal is received, the information will be reviewed by the Darden Financial Aid Appeals Committee. Based upon the documentation submitted, the Committee will approve or deny the appeal. Students will be notified of the Committee’s decision by email no later than one month after the completed appeal is received.

Appeal decisions of the Darden Financial Aid Appeals Committee

1. The Darden Financial Aid Appeals Committee may deny a student's appeal. A student with a denied appeal will not be eligible for federal financial aid until the student is able to meet the satisfactory academic progress standards.
2. The Darden Financial Aid Appeals Committee may approve a student's appeal and place the student on financial aid probation. Financial aid probation lasts for one semester of enrollment and the student becomes eligible for financial aid for that semester. At the end of the semester during which a student is placed on financial aid probation, the student must meet the satisfactory academic progress standards to remain eligible for financial aid.
  - a. If the student does not meet the satisfactory academic progress standards at the end of the semester in which the student is on financial aid probation, the student is not eligible for financial aid until the student meets the satisfactory academic progress standards or successfully appeals their status.
3. The Darden Financial Aid Appeals Committee may approve a student's appeal based upon the academic plan developed by the academic dean and the student. In this case, the student will not be required to meet the satisfactory academic progress standards set forth in the policy but must follow the academic plan instead.
  - a. Once the student fails to follow the academic plan provided by the academic dean, the student is not eligible for financial aid until the student meets the satisfactory academic progress standards or successfully appeals their status.

***The Darden Financial Aid Appeals Committee will not limit the number of semesters during which students may appeal their satisfactory academic status. However, for each semester in which a student submits an appeal, the decision of the Darden Financial Aid Appeals Committee is final and cannot be appealed.***