

University Policy 3.01.05 Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress

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POLICY STATEMENT

Federal regulations require that all learners who receive financial aid maintain financial aid satisfactory academic progress (FASAP). Learners must meet minimum FASAP requirements to qualify for financial aid, as described in the program requirements sections of this policy and related procedures. Failure to maintain FASAP may result in financial aid warning, financial aid probation, or financial aid ineligibility. Learners who Capella determines are able to meet the minimum FASAP requirements by the end of their program may appeal financial aid ineligibility pursuant to the procedures described in this policy.

Undergraduate Degree Program Requirements

Undergraduate learners are required to maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher and complete a minimum of two out of every three attempted credits (course completion ratio of 67 percent of cumulative attempted credits), regardless of payment source.

FlexPath learners are required to earn a standard of “Basic” or better on all competencies within each course and complete a minimum of two out of every three attempted program points (course completion ratio of 67 percent of cumulative attempted program points), regardless of payment source.

Additionally, undergraduate learners will not be eligible for federal financial aid for any attempted credits or program points that exceed 150 percent of the undergraduate degree requirements described in their catalog.

Graduate Degree Program Requirements

Graduate learners are required to maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher and complete a minimum of one out of every two total attempted credits (course completion ratio of 50 percent of cumulative attempted credits), regardless of payment source.

FlexPath learners are required to earn a standard of “Proficient” or better in all competencies within each course and complete a minimum of one out of every two attempted program points (course completion ratio of 50 percent of cumulative attempted credits), regardless of payment source.

Additionally, graduate learners will not be eligible for federal financial aid for any attempted credits or program points that exceed 200 percent of the graduate degree requirements described in their catalog.

Doctoral learners engaged in the advanced doctoral phase of their program must meet additional requirements described in the procedures section of this policy.

RATIONALE

Federal regulations require that all learners who receive financial aid maintain financial aid satisfactory academic progress (FASAP). Learners must meet the minimum FASAP requirements to qualify for financial aid. Learners may only use financial aid for a maximum number of credits or program points attempted for their degree or certificate level. This policy outlines the requirements and procedures for evaluating financial aid eligibility based on FASAP and the total number of attempted credits or program points.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Program

An academic program is any credentialed academic offering and its components, including but not limited to a degree, specialization, minor, concentration, certificate, or delivery model in which a learner is enrolled.

Advanced Doctoral Phase

The advanced doctoral phase begins after a learner has completed all didactic coursework and residencies. An advanced doctoral learner's requirements include any remaining courses in the comprehensive examination, dissertation, or doctoral capstone course sequence, and any additional program requirements as published in the *University Catalog*.

Career

Career is the term used to identify a learner's degree program(s) as either undergraduate or graduate.

Certificate

A certificate is a non-degree credential at a specific level that is awarded upon successful completion of coursework and learning experiences in an academic or professional field.

Degree Program

A degree program is a specific set of coursework and learning experiences in a field of study that, upon successful completion, results in the conferral of a degree or credential.

Didactic Coursework

Didactic coursework refers to academic courses that focus predominantly on instruction of theories, facts, and competencies.

Financial Aid Ineligibility

Financial aid ineligibility is a federal financial aid status that indicates a learner is not maintaining financial aid satisfactory academic progress pursuant to the terms of this policy, and

is ineligible for federal financial aid. The learner may not receive federal financial aid until they are meeting the financial aid satisfactory academic progress requirements.

Financial Aid Probation

Financial aid probation is a federal financial aid status that indicates a learner is not maintaining financial aid satisfactory academic progress pursuant to the terms of this policy, but has been approved through appeal to remain eligible for federal financial aid.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP)

FASAP is a federal financial aid status that indicates a learner is maintaining good academic standing pursuant to the terms of this policy.

Financial Aid Warning

Financial aid warning is a federal financial aid status that indicates a learner is not maintaining financial aid satisfactory academic progress pursuant to the terms of this policy but remains eligible for federal financial aid for one active term prior to being re-evaluated.

PROCEDURES

- I. Factors Impacting Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) for All Learners
 - A. Grades

No Grade (“NG”), Withdrawal (“W”), Incomplete (“I”), In Progress (“IP”), Satisfactory (“S”), and Not Satisfactory (“NS”) grades are included in the course completion ratio but do not impact the learner’s grade point average (GPA). Military Withdrawal (“MW”) grades do not impact a learner’s course completion ratio or GPA.
 - B. Repeated Courses

When a course is repeated, the grade considered for the credit and GPA calculations will be the higher of the two grades earned. Each attempt will be used in evaluating course completion ratios. Refer to university policies *2.02.02 Course Registration*, *3.04.07 Grading*, and *3.04.08 Incomplete Grades* for more information.
- II. Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) Process for All Learners
 - A. FASAP is measured for all learners who receive federal financial aid. In addition to minimum FASAP requirements, there are undergraduate-, graduate-, and FlexPath-specific requirements, as described in sections III.A, III.B, VI.A, and VI.B.
 - B. FASAP Requirements for All Learners
 1. FASAP is evaluated only following quarters or payment periods during which the learner is registered in one or more courses. A learner’s financial aid eligibility will not change following a quarter or period of academic inactivity.
 2. A learner’s current FASAP status remains on record until there is academic activity for evaluation.
 3. The initial evaluation begins after the first full quarter or payment period of academic activity.

Examples:

Learners who initially register during a monthly start will be measured at the end of quarter two based on activity from their initial start date through the end of quarter two.

Learners who register at the beginning of a quarter will be measured at the end of quarter one based on activity from their initial start date through the end of quarter one.

FlexPath learners who have an extended payment period beyond the 24-week mark will be evaluated at the end of the extension.

4. All requirements are thereafter evaluated following each quarter or payment period there is academic activity.
5. Learners who receive a grade change in a previous quarter or payment period will have their current FASAP status re-evaluated using the new information at the end of the term or payment period in which the grade change occurs.
 - a. FASAP is not calculated retroactively for grade changes made for prior terms or payment periods, but learners whose re-evaluation changes their eligibility for the current quarter or payment period may reach out to the Financial Aid Support Team for more information regarding the possibility of a reinstatement of funds
 - b. Learners who receive a grade change due to an Incomplete (I) grade in a previous quarter will be evaluated following the next quarter or payment period.
6. The minimum FASAP requirements are grade point average (GPA) and course completion ratio. The undergraduate- and graduate-specific GPA and ratio requirements are described in sections III.A, III.B, and VI.A.
7. Transfer credits
 - a. Transfer credits applied toward a learner's degree program reduce the number of credits required for the completion of that degree program. Transfer credit that is not accepted cannot be applied toward the completion ratio of a learner's degree program.
 - b. The number of transfer credits applied toward a learner's degree program affects the cumulative attempted credits or program points in the learner's course completion ratio. Transfer credits count toward both earned and attempted credits or program points when calculating the course completion ratio.
 - c. The number of transfer credits affects the learner's maximum limit of earned credits required, as follows:
 - i. Example: A BS requires 180 earned credits; the learner transfers in 70 credits, resulting in 110 credits remaining.
 - ii. In the above example, the degree program requirements are based on the number of earned credits remaining for a learner to complete their degree program, in this case 110 earned credits.
 - iii. The number of earned credits remaining is the basis for the maximum attempted credits calculation, as defined in sections III.A, III.B, and VI.C.
- C. Learners whose total number of attempted credits or program points exceeds the limit for their degree or certificate program will become ineligible for financial aid for all future quarters or payment periods.
- D. Notification of financial aid status

Learners will receive an email notification from the Financial Aid Office when they have been placed on financial aid warning or probation or become ineligible for financial aid. However, it is the learner's responsibility to know these requirements, and failure to receive the notification does not nullify the financial aid status.

E. Appeal of financial aid ineligibility

1. Learners who Capella determines are able to meet the minimum FASAP requirements by the end of their program or who Capella believes have had an administrative error made on their record may appeal their financial aid ineligibility. If it is determined that a learner cannot meet FASAP by the end of their program, then they are made ineligible without the option to appeal.
2. Learners may also appeal their financial aid ineligibility due to extenuating circumstances. To appeal their financial aid ineligibility, learners must complete and submit the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form.
 - a. Extenuating circumstances may include but are not limited to the death of a family member, job-required relocation, or severe physical injury or illness.
 - b. Third party documentation of the extenuating circumstance may be required to substantiate claims made in the appeal.
 - c. Learners must include an explanation of the extenuating circumstances surrounding their financial aid ineligibility and the impact the extenuating circumstances had on their academic progress. Learners must also indicate the steps they will take to meet the minimum FASAP requirements. The case will be determined on the documentation/evidence supplied by the learner.
3. Learners have 10 calendar days from the date the notification of their financial aid ineligibility was sent to submit their appeal. Learners who do not meet this deadline will remain ineligible for financial aid until they are meeting the minimum FASAP requirements.
4. The Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Committee will review the appeal and make a determination.
 - a. Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the appeal and any requested supporting documentation, the committee will review the appeal and issue a decision.
 - b. Learners will receive an email notification of the committee's decision and appeal results.
 - c. The committee's decision is final.
5. Appeal results
 - a. Learners whose appeals are approved will be required to adhere to a Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Plan developed by the committee that, when followed, will ensure the learner will be able to meet the minimum FASAP requirements by an established date.
 - b. Learners who meet the conditions of their Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Plan will remain eligible for financial aid for the subsequent quarter or payment period.
 - c. Learners who fail to meet the conditions of their Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Plan will remain ineligible for financial aid until they meet the minimum FASAP requirements.
 - d. Learners whose appeals are approved will be placed on financial aid probation and will remain eligible for financial aid for the current quarter or payment

period. At the end of the quarter or payment period, learners will be re-evaluated to see whether they are able to meet the minimum FASAP requirements.

- e. Learners whose appeals are denied will remain ineligible for financial aid until they meet the minimum FASAP requirements.
 - f. Learners in programs in the GuidedPath format whose appeals are denied must pay all outstanding charges within seven calendar days of being sent notification of their appeal denial. Learners who do not pay all outstanding charges will be withdrawn from all courses for which they are currently registered, and tuition charges for the quarter will be reversed.
 - g. FlexPath learners whose appeals are denied must pay all outstanding charges by the end of each billing session. Learners who do not pay all outstanding charges by the deadline will lose course access for current and future courses.
6. Removal of FASAP financial aid probation or ineligibility status
Learners will be removed from financial aid probation or ineligibility status upon meeting the minimum FASAP requirements described in sections III.A, III.B, VI.A, and VI.B.
7. Learners will receive an email notification from the Financial Aid Office when they have been removed from financial aid probation or ineligibility status.

III. Minimum Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) Requirements for Learners in Programs in the GuidedPath Format

A. Undergraduate Learners

FASAP for undergraduate learners is evaluated on two requirements. Learners must meet both to maintain FASAP.

1. FASAP requirements

a. Minimum cumulative GPA

- i. Undergraduate learners must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher.
- ii. The cumulative GPA is calculated for all undergraduate activity.

b. Minimum course completion ratio

- i. Undergraduate learners must complete a minimum of two out of every three attempted credits (course completion ratio of 67 percent of cumulative attempted credits).
- ii. The course completion ratio is calculated for all undergraduate activity. A learner's earned and attempted credits include any transfer credits applied toward their Capella program.
- iii. Example: A learner transfers in 25 credits to their Capella program and has completed 10 out of 60 attempted credits of Capella courses. This means they have attempted 85 credits and earned a cumulative total of 35 credits. Since the number of earned credits divided by the attempted credits is less than 67 percent ($35/85 = 41$ percent), the learner does not meet the course completion ratio requirement.
- iv. Learners will be notified by the Financial Aid Office when their course completion ratio is between 67–79.99 percent.

2. Maximum attempted credits

Undergraduate learners are not eligible for federal financial aid for any attempted credits that exceed 150 percent of the undergraduate degree program requirements.

- a. Example: If the number of earned credits required to meet degree program requirements (after applied transfer credits) is 110, the maximum number of attempted credits allowed is 165 (110 x 150 percent).
- b. Learners will be notified by the Financial Aid Office when they are within 18 to 24 credits of exceeding the 150 percent rule and placed on a Maximum Timeframe warning.
- c. Learners will become immediately ineligible for financial aid once they are determined unable to complete their program within the 150 percent rule or have exceeded the 150 percent rule.

B. Graduate Learners

FASAP for graduate learners is evaluated on two requirements. Learners must meet both to maintain FASAP. In addition, doctoral learners engaged in the advanced doctoral phase of their program must meet additional requirements related to timely completion of their comprehensive examination and dissertation or doctoral capstone requirements as noted in the Capella University *Doctoral Manual*.

1. FASAP requirements

- a. Minimum cumulative GPA
 - i. Learners must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
 - ii. The cumulative GPA is calculated for all graduate activity.
- b. Minimum course completion ratio
 - i. Graduate learners must complete a minimum of one out of every two attempted credits (course completion ratio of 50 percent of cumulative attempted credits).
 - ii. The course completion ratio is calculated for all graduate activity. A learner's earned and attempted credits include any transfer credits they have applied toward their Capella program.
 - iii. Example: A learner transfers in 25 credits toward their Capella program and has completed 10 out of 60 attempted credits of Capella courses. This means they have attempted 85 credits and earned a cumulative of 35 credits. Since the number of earned credits divided by the number of attempted credits is less than 50 percent ($35/85 = 41$ percent), the learner does not meet the course completion ratio requirement.
 - iv. Learners will be notified by the Financial Aid Office when their course completion ratio is between 50–59.99 percent.

2. Maximum attempted credits

Graduate learners are not eligible for federal financial aid for any attempted credits that exceed 200 percent of the graduate degree program requirements.

- a. Example: If the number of earned credits required to meet degree program requirements (after applied transfer credits) is 110, the maximum number of attempted credits allowed is 220 (110 x 200 percent).
- b. Learners will be notified by the Financial Aid Office when they are within 12 to 16 credits of exceeding the 200 percent rule and placed on a Maximum Timeframe warning.

- c. Learners will become immediately ineligible for financial aid once they are determined unable to complete their program within the 200 percent rule or have exceeded the 200 percent rule.

C. Advanced Doctoral Learners

1. Learners who are engaged in the advanced doctoral phase of their program are considered in compliance with this policy.
2. FASAP for learners engaged in the advanced doctoral phase of their program is evaluated by the successful completion of the comprehensive examination, dissertation, or doctoral capstone requirements within the prescribed deadlines described in the Capella University *Doctoral Manual*.

IV. Failure to Maintain Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) for Learners in Programs in the GuidedPath Format

This section does not apply to doctoral learners engaged in the advanced doctoral phase of their program. Doctoral learners engaged in the advanced doctoral phase of their program should refer to section V.

A. Financial Aid Warning

1. Criteria/Notification
 - a. Learners will be placed on financial aid warning status for one active term when they fail to maintain the minimum FASAP requirements described in sections III.A and III.B.
 - b. Learners will receive an email notification from the Financial Aid Office when they have been placed on financial aid warning status.
2. Removal of FASAP warning status
 - a. Learners will be removed from financial aid warning status after one active warning term upon meeting the minimum FASAP requirements described in sections III.A and III.B.
 - b. Learners will receive an email notification from the Financial Aid Office when they have been removed from financial aid warning status.

B. Financial Aid Ineligibility

1. Criteria/Notification
 - a. Learners will be placed on financial aid ineligibility status when they fail to maintain the minimum FASAP requirements described in sections III.A and III.B.
 - b. Learners will receive an email notification from the Financial Aid Office when they have been placed on financial aid ineligibility status.

V. Failure to Maintain Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) for Advanced Doctoral Phase Learners

Learners engaged in the advanced doctoral phase of their program who fail to maintain FASAP as defined in section III.C will be considered out of compliance with this policy and will be administratively withdrawn from the university pursuant to university policy 3.01.04 *Academic Standing*.

VI. Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) Process for FlexPath Learners

FlexPath learners must meet the minimum requirements for their course level as described in this section.

- A. FASAP requirements for FlexPath learners who began their program before October 2022 and have not had a change of catalog, academic program, or billing structure effective October 2022 or later
 1. FASAP is measured at the end of each payment period for FlexPath learners who receive federal financial aid.
 2. Learners who are enrolled in the FlexPath option are required to successfully complete every competency within each course. Learners who fall below the minimum standard of performance for their course level on one course competency will be placed on financial aid warning. Failure to meet the minimum standard for two course competencies will result in financial aid ineligibility. Refer to section VII of this policy for more information.
 - a. Learners are required to perform at a minimum standard of “Basic” for every competency within an undergraduate-level course.
 - b. Learners are required to perform at a minimum standard of “Proficient” for every competency within a graduate-level course.
 3. Learners enrolled in the FlexPath option will be required to meet the competency completion ratios outlined below:
 - a. Undergraduate learners must complete a minimum of two out of every three program points attempted (competency completion ratio of 67 percent of cumulative attempted program points).
 - b. Graduate learners must complete a minimum of one out of every two program points attempted (competency completion ratio of 50 percent of cumulative attempted program points).
- B. FASAP requirements for FlexPath learners who started their program in October 2022 or later or who had a change of catalog, academic program, or billing structure that went into effect October 2022 or later
 1. Learners who are compliant with policy *3.01.04 Academic Standing* requirements are considered in compliance with this policy.
- C. Maximum attempted program points
 1. Graduate learners are not eligible for federal financial aid for any attempted program points that exceed 200 percent of the graduate degree program requirements.
 2. Undergraduate learners are not eligible for federal financial aid for any attempted program points that exceed 150 percent of the undergraduate degree program requirements.
- D. Repeating Courses

When a learner repeats a FlexPath course, the course in which the learner demonstrates all competencies at a level required for conferral will be the one used to determine completion of FlexPath requirements.

 1. Each course attempt appears on the transcript.
 2. All attempts are used to evaluate the learner’s completion percentage for evaluation of FASAP. Refer to university policies *2.02.02 Course Registration*, *3.04.07 Grading*, and *3.04.08 Incomplete Grades* for more information.
- E. Changing from the FlexPath option to the GuidedPath delivery model

1. When learners change from FlexPath to the GuidedPath model, performance evaluations for courses taken through the FlexPath option will be converted to the equivalent GuidedPath model grades.
 2. Program points attempted and earned in the FlexPath option will be converted into credits (1:2 ratio) to allow for completion rate review and maximum attempted credits to be calculated.
 3. Transfer credits will be converted from program points to credits for both attempted and completed courses.
 4. Courses repeated will fall under the repeating courses procedures outlined in university policy *2.02.02 Course Registration*.
- F. Changing from the GuidedPath delivery model to the FlexPath delivery model
1. Any current or former learner must meet the admission requirements for FlexPath and be in good standing for both university policies *3.01.05 Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress* and *3.01.04 Academic Standing* to request a change to the FlexPath option.
 2. Credits attempted and earned in the GuidedPath model will be converted into program points (2:1 ratio). This will allow for completion rate and maximum attempted credits to be calculated in FlexPath.
 3. Transfer credits will be converted from credits to program points for both attempted and completed courses.
 4. Information about repeating courses is outlined in section VI.D.

VII. Failure to Maintain Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (FASAP) for FlexPath Learners

- A. FlexPath learners who began their program before October 2022 and have not had a change of catalog, academic program, or billing structure effective October 2022 or later will receive an email notification from the Financial Aid Office when they have been placed on financial aid warning or become ineligible for financial aid for failure to meet the minimum FASAP requirements for their course level as outlined in section VI.A. They may appeal their financial aid ineligibility as described in section II.E.
- B. FlexPath learners who started their program in October 2022 or later or who had a change of catalog, academic program, or billing structure that went into effect October 2022 or later may appeal their financial aid ineligibility and Academic Standing status within 14 days of notification through university policy *3.01.04 Academic Standing* section IV.D.

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: Financial Aid Office

Operations Owner: Financial Aid Office

RELATED DOCUMENTS

University policy 2.01.01 Admission

University policy 2.02.02 Course Registration

University policy 2.02.07 Changing Academic Program

University policy 3.01.04 Academic Standing

University policy 3.04.01 Academic Readiness
University policy 3.04.07 Grading
University policy 3.04.08 Incomplete Grades

REVISION HISTORY

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