

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Financial Aid

David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Introduction

Federal regulations require that all students receiving financial aid from Title IV funds maintain satisfactory academic progress. To comply with this requirement the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA (DGSOM) has adopted a Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP) that applies to all medical students receiving financial aid. Students who fail to meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements become ineligible to receive Title IV (Federal loans and grants) and institutional aid (DGSOM scholarships and loans) until they are in compliance with these requirements.

Standard Requirements

The School uses both qualitative and quantitative standards to measure progress towards M.D. degree completion. The following standards are the same for all students enrolled in the M.D. program whether or not they are receiving financial aid. To be eligible for financial aid or to be considered in good standing, students must meet or exceed the following standards. Failure to do so may result in suspension of financial aid eligibility.

STANDARDS	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
Qualitative Standard	Complete coursework with passing grades <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-clinical years, grades are Pass/Fail • Clinical years, grades are a 4-tier system: Honors/High Pass/Pass/Fail
Quantitative Standard	Complete a minimum of 67% of cumulative coursework attempted for the <i>academic year</i> . For example, units completed divided by units attempted (66 units complete / 98 units attempted = 67%)
Maximum Time Frame	May not exceed 150% of the published length of the program.

Qualitative Standard

Each student is required to successfully pass all coursework, clerkships, examinations, scholarly projects, USMLE Step 1 and Step 2, Clinical Knowledge & Step 2, Clinical Skills in order to graduate with an M.D. degree. DGSOM does not measure academic progress with grade point average, but instead with Pass or Fail for the pre-clinical years, and Honors, High Pass, Pass, or Fail for the clinical years.

Quantitative Standard (Pace Requirement)

The normal time frame for completion of required coursework for the M.D. program is 4 academic years, or 8 semesters and 1 summer period. For normal academic progress, students are expected to complete satisfactorily the following requirements:

Med Year 1	After two semesters	Completion of blocks 1-5 of the Med Year – 1 curriculum. This corresponds to 72 units* of required courses.
Med Year 2	After four semesters	Completion of blocks 6-9 of the Med Year – 2 curriculum, which corresponds to 60 units* of required courses, <i>in addition</i> to the first requirement (above).
Med Year 3	After six semesters plus one summer period	Completion of 48 weeks of required clerkships, which corresponds to 96 units*, <i>in addition</i> to the two requirements set out above. Since Med Years 3 and 4 are considered as a clinical continuum some latitude is permitted. The student is also required to take Step I of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE). All students must take the USMLE Step 1 exam prior to being able to start MS4 electives.
Med Year 4	After eight semesters plus one summer period	In addition to the above requirements, completion of 32 weeks of required coursework (total of 60* or > units). The student is also required to take and pass Step 2, Clinical Knowledge and Step 2, Clinical Skills of the USMLE in the final year.

*The units cited above are for the current curricular requirements, and are subject to revision and change.

Remediating Courses

A student who does not satisfactorily complete all course requirements or who does not have academic standing consistent with graduation requirements may be permitted to remediate. The Academic Performance Committee (ACP) and Committee on Academic Standing, Progress, and Promotion (CASPP) are responsible for developing individualized remediation plans for students with deficiencies in meeting academic performance, professionalism, or technical standards set forth by DGSOM. The only acceptable grade for remediation is "Pass" in Med Year 1 and 2, and "Pass" and "High Pass" in the Clinical Curriculum. If the student repeats the course and receives a passing grade, the satisfactory re-evaluation will appear on the transcript with an astrick (*), a designation that the course was repeated.

Maximum Time Frame

A student may require additional time to complete the curriculum (beyond the normal 4 years) due to academic, administrative, or personal issues. The maximum time frame *for financial aid eligibility* is 6 years (150% of the 4 year program). The 6 year financial aid limit includes any semester or summer period the student was enrolled, regardless of whether or not the student received financial aid during that time. *A student may be approved a leave of absence for a variety of reasons and is not eligible for financial aid during such a leave.* The time period of an approved leave will be excluded from the 6 year maximum time frame. However, if a student ceases attendance (withdraws) from school *after* the first day of the term, the semester in which the student withdraws will count as a period of enrollment *for financial aid purposes.*

Combined Degree Programs and Articulated Degree Programs

The combined and articulated degree programs include:

- M.D. / M.P.H, M.D. / M.P.P, and M.D. / M.B.A. The UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, UCLA Luskin School of Public Policy, the UCLA Anderson School of Management, with David Geffen School of Medicine have programs designed to enable students to complete both the specific master's and the M.D. programs in 5 years. Therefore, the maximum timeframe for financial aid eligibility is 7.5 years (150% of the 5 year program). If the approved master's program is longer, the time period for financial aid eligibility is 150% of the sum of enrollment periods.
- M.D. / Ph.D. - Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP). The traditional course of study begins with the first two years of medical school, followed by PhD training, and concluding with the third and fourth years of medical school. The maximum time period for financial aid eligibility is 150% of the sum of enrollment periods established by MSTP and the David Geffen School of Medicine.

Review and Notification of Lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress

The Committee on Academic Standing, Progress, and Promotion (CASPP) of Medical Students is a standing subcommittee of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) of the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA (DGSOM). On behalf of the faculty of the DGSOM, CASPP promulgates standards and evaluates the academic performance, professionalism, and ability to meet the technical standards of each student on an ongoing basis from matriculation until graduation with an MD degree or the conclusion of enrollment at DGSOM. CASPP reviews the standards for academic performance for preclinical classes, clinical clerkships, and other academic programs of the school on an annual basis. Because the faculty conceives of the medical curriculum leading to the MD degree as a single course of study, CASPP oversees uniform standards of academic and professional performance across similar courses and clerkships and departmental boundaries.

These standards are monitored in consultation with the course or clerkship chairs and the Academic Performance Committee's, and are subject to review and approval by the FEC on an annual basis.

CASPP reviews the professional development and academic performance of each student on an annual basis or more often as needed. Each student is reviewed annually and considered for promotion to the next year of study. The recommendation for promotion of each student is made to the FEC and is based on the student's fulfillment of professional, academic, and technical standards, and successful completion of all requirements of the curriculum for the given academic year. In conjunction with the Student Affairs Office, the Financial Aid Office will monitor *at the conclusion of each academic year* the students that are not making satisfactory academic progress.

Suspension of Financial Aid

A student who fails to meet one or more of the standards for SAP (qualitative and/or quantitative) is ineligible for financial aid beginning with the term immediately following the term in which the SAP requirements were not met, pending results of the appeal process.

Financial Aid Appeals

A student who has had financial aid eligibility suspended for failing to maintain the standards for SAP may regain financial aid eligibility by coming into compliance with the qualitative components of academic progress standards, or successfully appealing to the Financial Aid Office. The appeal must state the reasons for failing to meet SAP requirements (e.g., injury or illness, death of relative, or other circumstance) and the changes in circumstances that will allow the student to demonstrate SAP at the next evaluation by providing an academic plan. Students who have exceeded the Maximum Timeframe may regain eligibility through the appeal process.

Financial Aid Probation

Once an appeal has been approved a student is placed on financial aid probation and is eligible for financial aid. The FAO will be provided with the student's academic plan that will ensure, if followed, that the student is able to meet the SAP Standards by a specific point in time (usually one academic year). Once a student has been placed on Financial Aid Probation, the FAO is required to monitor SAP at the end of each payment period. If the student has not met the SAP requirements, financial aid will be suspended. The student can again regain financial aid eligibility by *successfully* appealing (and again being put on probation) or by being in compliance with SAP standards.

Implementation

The David Geffen School of Medicine Student Affairs and Financial Aid Offices have joint responsibility for implementation and enforcement of this satisfactory academic progress policy for students receiving financial aid. The FAO will inform any student whose financial aid has been impacted. All notifications are kept in the student's financial aid file. DGSOM publishes this SAP policy under "Maintain Eligibility" on the FAO website.