

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Federal Aid Eligibility

### David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

#### Introduction

Federal regulations require that all students receiving 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 federal financial aid. Professional students who fail to meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements become ineligible to receive Title IV (Federal loans) 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 regardless of whether they are receiving financial aid. To be eligible for financial aid, students must meet or exceed the following standards. Failure to do so may result in suspension of financial aid eligibility.

STANDARDS	MINIMUM REQUIREMENT
<b>Qualitative Standard</b>	Complete coursework with passing grades <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MS1-MS3 years are graded as Pass/Fail</li> <li>• Most MS4 Electives are graded on a 4-tier system: Honors/High Pass/Pass/Fail</li> </ul>
<b>Quantitative Standard</b>	Complete a minimum of 67% of coursework attempted for the academic year.
<b>Maximum Time Frame</b>	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, in order to graduate with an M.D. degree. DGSOM does not measure academic progress with grade point average, but instead by Pass or Fail for the following: MS1, MS2, and MS3 years. For the MS4 year, academic progress is measured by: Honors, High Pass, Pass, or Fail. Incomplete grades are excluded from measurement as the final grade, once updated, will be included in the next SAP measurement period.

**Quantitative Standard (Pace Requirement)**

The normal time frame for completion of required coursework for the M.D. program is 4 academic years, or 11 terms (8 fall or spring semesters and 3 summer semesters). For normal academic progress, students are expected to complete satisfactorily at least 67% of the following requirements for each year of medical school:

MS1	After two semesters and one summer term	Completion of Base Camp and the Foundations of Medical Sciences curriculum.
MS2	After four semesters and 2 summer terms	Completion of Intersessions 1-5 and 8 core clerkships, <i>in addition</i> to the first requirement (above).
MS3	After six semesters and 3 summer terms	Completion of Discovery year <i>in addition</i> to the two requirements set out above. The student is also required to take Step 1 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE).  All students must take the USMLE Step 1 exam prior to starting MS4 electives.

MS4	After eight semesters and 3 summer terms	In addition to the above requirements, the student is also required to take and pass USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge as well as any required MS4 coursework as directed for their program of study.
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**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 the student received financial aid during that time. A student may be approved for 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.

PRIME LA Program and Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP)

The combined and articulated degree programs include:

- PRIME-LA students are required to complete a MD + Master’s Degree. PRIME-LA students must complete their MD + Master’s Degree within 150% of the published program length.
- M.D. / Ph.D. - Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP). MSTP students are required to complete the MD portion of their degree within 150% of the published program length.

**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 Committees 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 Faculty Executive Committee (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 and Scholarships Office will annually evaluate a student's satisfactory academic progress at the end of spring semester.

### **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 most recent SAP annual measurement.

### **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 all components of the SAP standards, or by submitting a successful SAP appeal to the DGSOM Financial Aid and Scholarships 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 action plan that demonstrates the circumstances have been or will be resolved and the student can regain eligibility for financial aid (academic plan). Students who have exceeded the Maximum Timeframe may regain eligibility through the appeal process for a one-time appeal consideration.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

If a SAP appeal has been approved, a student is placed on financial aid probation and is eligible for financial aid for one term. DGSOM Financial Aid and Scholarships Office will monitor the student's progress to ensure 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, DGSOM Financial Aid and Scholarships Office is required to monitor SAP at the end of each term (payment period) to confirm whether student is now meeting the SAP standards. If the student has not met the SAP requirements, financial aid probation may be extended for another term as long as student meets the terms of their academic plan. If the student is not meeting the SAP standards or their academic plan, then student will be ineligible for financial aid for the following term. The student can again regain financial aid eligibility by again successfully appealing (and again being placed on probation) or by being compliant with SAP standards at the next measurement period.

### **Implementation**

The David Geffen School of Medicine Student Affairs and David Geffen School of Medicine Financial Aid and Scholarships Offices have joint responsibility for implementation and enforcement of this satisfactory academic progress policy for students receiving financial aid.

The DGSOM Financial Aid and Scholarship Office 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 DGSOM Financial Aid and Scholarship Office website and in the Medical Student Handbook.