

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Students Who Receive Federal Student Financial Aid**

As required by federal regulations, students will be eligible for federal student financial aid only if they maintain satisfactory academic progress (“SAP”) in accordance with this Policy.

### **SAP Review**

The Financial Aid Office reviews students’ academic progress at the end of each semester. (Students’ academic progress information is provided to the Financial Aid Office by the Registrar’s Office at the end of each semester.)

(1) a qualitative component that establishes a minimum cumulative grade point average (“GPA”) requirement; and

(2) a quantitative component that requires students to earn a certain number of credit hours per semester and to complete their program of study within a prescribed period of time.

Coursework from all semesters, including those semesters for which a student did not receive federal student financial aid, are included evaluation of a student’s academic progress under this Policy.

The Financial Aid Office will document in CampusVue its determination as to whether a student has or has not made SAP (including the reasons for that determination). The Financial Aid Office will also send a record of its SAP determination to the Registrar’s Office for inclusion in the student’s academic file.

### **Qualitative Component**

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 (the equivalent of a C average).

### **Quantitative Component**

Maximum timeframe. The maximum time period within which a full-time student must complete the requirements for a J.D. degree is five academic years. Part-time students must complete the requirements for a J.D. degree within a maximum period of six academic years. Students will not be eligible for federal student financial aid once they reach these maximum time limits.

Credit hour completion requirements per semester. To ensure completion of the J.D. program within the maximum time frames set forth above, this Policy requires full-time students to successfully complete at least 9 credit hours each semester and part-time students to successfully complete at least 7.5 credit hours each semester. A student successfully completes a credit hour if he or she receives a grade of “D-” or better, or in the case of a course that is graded pass/fail, a “PASS” or “P.”

### **Withdrawals, Incompletes, Pass/Fail Courses, Repeated Courses, Transfer Credits, and Audited Courses**

Withdrawals. A course that a student drops during the Drop/Add period is not included in the qualitative or quantitative SAP determinations. If a student withdraws from a course following the Drop/Add period, that course will be counted as an attempted credit under the quantitative component. If the student receives a W grade in the course, the grade will not be counted in the qualitative calculation. If the student receives a WF grade in the course, the grade will be counted in the qualitative calculation.

Incomplete Grades. An Incomplete grade will be treated as an attempted credit for purposes of the quantitative component and will not be included in the calculation of the student’s GPA for purposes of the qualitative component. An Incomplete may be expunged by taking an examination or completing other unfulfilled course requirements within such time as may be fixed by the instructor or the Associate Dean for Academics, as applicable, but in no event later than three months after the end of the examination period for the semester for which the Incomplete (“I”) was granted. A student who fails to expunge an Incomplete as described in this paragraph will receive an “F” for the course. The course will continue to be treated as an attempted credit and the “F” will be included in the calculation of the student’s GPA with a point value of 0.00.

Pass/Fail Courses. A student’s performance in a pass/fail course counts toward the quantitative component. A grade of “P” in a pass/fail course does not count toward the qualitative component. A grade of “F” in a pass/fail course will be included in the calculation of the student’s GPA for purposes of the qualitative component.

Repeated Courses. If a student repeats a course, both the original grade earned and the grade earned on repetition shall be computed as part of the student’s cumulative GPA under the qualitative SAP component. Both the original and repeat course will be counted as attempted credits for purposes of the quantitative component.

Transfer Credits. If authorized for transfer by the Associate Dean in accordance with the requirements of the Student Handbook, credits earned at another approved law school will be counted in the calculation of the quantitative SAP component. Grades earned in such courses will not be included in the qualitative calculation.

Audited Courses. Courses that are audited by a student do not count toward the qualitative or quantitative SAP components.

## **Consequences of Failure to Maintain SAP**

If the Financial Aid Office is notified at the end of a semester that a student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress, the Financial Aid Office will notify the student in writing that the student has been placed on federal financial aid probation for the subsequent semester. The student will be permitted to receive federal financial aid during the probationary semester. A student will be afforded only one semester of federal financial aid probation over the course of his or her entire enrollment at Charlotte School of Law.

If the student brings himself or herself into compliance with both SAP components by the end of the probationary semester, the Financial Aid Office will remove that student from probationary status. If the student fails to bring himself or herself into compliance with both SAP components by the end of the probationary semester, the Financial Aid Office will advise the student in writing that he or she no longer remains eligible for federal student financial aid. The student should consult Charlotte School of Law's Academic Rules and Regulations, set forth in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Manual, as well as the Registrar or the Associate Dean of Academics, to determine how, if at all, the student's academic performance affects his or her enrollment status at the institution.

## **Appeals**

A student who is found ineligible to receive federal student financial aid due to his or her failure to maintain SAP may appeal to the Admissions/Financial Aid Committee. The appeal must be submitted in writing within 10 calendar days of the date of the written notice that the student is no longer eligible for federal financial aid. The appeal must include a letter describing in detail the reasons for the appeal, provide appropriate supporting documentation regarding the mitigating circumstances identified in the student's appeal, and explain how the student intends to remedy his or her failure to make satisfactory academic progress.

An appeal by a student who failed to make satisfactory academic progress will be approved if the Admissions/Financial Aid Committee determines that mitigating circumstances justify such a result. Examples of mitigating circumstances that might warrant approval of an appeal include the death of a relative of the student, an injury or illness of the student, and other special circumstances. Depending upon the reasons identified in the appeal, appropriate supporting documentation might include, for instance, a published obituary or death certificate, a doctor's note regarding an illness or injury, a letter from a close family friend or confidant, or a letter from an academic advisor or instructor.

The Admissions/Financial Aid Committee will review the student's appeal and supporting documentation. The student must be available to speak with the Committee about the appeal upon the Committee's request. The Committee will notify the student in writing whether the appeal has been granted or denied. The Committee's decision is final.

If an appeal is granted, the terms of the student's financial aid probation agreement will remain in force for one semester and all conditions set forth in the agreement must be satisfied by the end of that semester. The student will also be required to comply with any additional conditions imposed by the Admissions/Financial Aid Committee.

### **Regaining Eligibility**

A student may re-establish his or her eligibility for federal financial assistance by bringing himself or herself back into compliance with both the qualitative and quantitative components of the SAP evaluation. For a student who has fallen below the minimum required GPA, regaining eligibility would mean raising his or her cumulative GPA to at least 2.0. For a student who has fallen behind in completed credit hours, re-establishing eligibility would mean successfully earning enough credit hours to correct any deficiency. The Financial Aid Office will monitor students' progress and advise a student in writing if he or she has regained eligibility for federal student financial aid. A student does not become re-eligible for federal student aid merely because he or she paid for his or her classes (without federal assistance) or withdrew from the J.D. program for a period of time.

### **Review of Policy**

The Financial Aid Office, in conjunction with the Academic Affairs Office, will review this Policy on an annual basis. Any proposed amendments to this Policy will be submitted to the Admissions/Financial Aid Committee for review and approval.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions regarding Charlotte School of Law's satisfactory academic progress policy, please contact the Financial Aid Office.

Sources: 34 C.F.R. §§ 668.16(e), 668.34; U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid Handbook, vol. 1, "Chapter 1: School-Determined Requirements," and vol. 2, "Chapter 10: Administrative Capabilities" (2008-2009); National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, "Satisfactory Academic Progress: A Balancing Act" (Revised February 2004).