

Policy Title: Satisfactory Academic Progress

Approved By: Medical Education

Date Approved: April 13, 2021

Review Period: Every 3 years

Responsible Office or Committee: School of Medicine Financial Aid

LCME Affiliated Elements: 10.3

Policy Statement:

Federal law and regulations require that students at Case Western Reserve University maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress to retain eligibility for federal and institutional aid consideration.

Purpose of Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student meet academic requirements and make timely progress towards earning their MD degree, as mandated by federal regulation and institutional guidelines.

Scope of Policy:

This policy applies to all students enrolled in the School of Medicine.

Policy:

Federal law and regulations (General Provision CFR 668.34) require that students at Case Western Reserve University maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress to retain eligibility for federal and institutional aid consideration. The academic requirements for the MD degree include the satisfactory completion of the MD curriculum at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine; this includes the 4-year University Program and 5-year Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine. The progress of each student working toward the MD degree is monitored carefully and the determination of satisfactory academic progress is reviewed every semester. At the end of each academic year, students must have an academic standing consistent with Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine's curricular and graduation requirements.

Federal law and regulations require that all students receiving financial assistance maintain satisfactory academic progress. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the successful completion of degree requirements according to established increments that lead to awarding the degree within published time limits. The following policy delineates the standards for SAP as it applies to all matriculated students, whether they are recipients of financial aid or not.

Qualitative Measures of SAP

Each student at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine is required to successfully complete all of the School of Medicine's required courses, clerkships, examinations, and scholarly projects in order to graduate with the degree from their designated program. The university programs do not measure academic progress by means of a cumulative grade point average, but rather with grades meets expectations or unsatisfactory. For all programs, coursework receiving a grade that is not remediable is counted as courses attempted but not earned and counted toward the maximum time frame. Transfer credit hours (accepted for the student's academic program or degree) are counted as credit hours attempted when measuring the maximum time frame to complete the degree. Any term in which a student has enrolled and earned zero credit hours will be included in the evaluation of hours attempted and hours earned for completion rate. All instances of repeated coursework will be factored into the calculation of the completion rate. Courses graded on a Pass/Fail basis will be included in the calculation of completion rate. Financial assistance is not offered for audited courses and those hours will be considered in the Satisfactory Academic Progress review.

Maximum Time Frame

The normal time frame for completion of required coursework for the MD degree is four academic years for the University Program and five years for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine. Due to academic challenges, personal difficulties, or scholarly enrichment activities, a student may require additional time. In such situations, an academic plan will be established for every student that departs from the standard curriculum. This includes situations where an individual student may be asked to repeat any part or all of a year of study (i.e., to remediate incomplete or unsatisfactory course work or an approved leave). In order to qualify for satisfactory academic progress, students must complete the first two years of the curriculum by the end of the third year after initial enrollment in the University Program and Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine; the remaining requirements of the curriculum must be completed by the end of the fifth year after initial enrollment for the University Program and sixth year for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine. Requests for exceptions to these expectations are subject to review and approval by the Committee on Medical Students for University Program students (COMS; see below) and Medical Student Promotion and Review Committee for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine students (MSPRC). The maximum time permitted for completion of the MD degree is six years. A student is eligible for institutional financial aid for a maximum of five years of enrollment for the University Program and six years for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine, excluding time spent on approved leave of absence.

SAP and Leaves of Absence

A student may be granted a personal or medical leave of absence for a variety of reasons. The period of leave for which the student has been approved may be excluded from the maximum time frame in which an individual student will be expected to complete the program. Under no

circumstances will a student be allowed to take more than 10 years from the time of matriculation to complete the requirements for the MD degree, including leaves of absence. More information concerning leaves of absence can be found in the student handbook section of leaves of absence.

Review and Notification of Lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress

The annual review of each student's SAP is collectively performed by the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine Registrar's Office, Student Affairs or Society Deans, and Assessment Director (or Medical Student Promotions and Review Committee for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine). The progression to the next academic year is based upon a review of all grades, including withdrawals, incompletes, and unsatisfactory grades. Any student who has not achieved a minimum of a satisfactory grade in all core courses/clerkships cannot progress to the next year.

The Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine COMS, Society Dean, Registrar's Office, and Director of Financial Aid, in consultation with the Vice Dean for Medical Education for the University Program and the MSPRC, Student Affairs Dean, Physician Advisor, Registrar's Office, and Financial Aid Officer for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine will annually notify, in writing, all students who have not met the standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress outlined above (Qualitative Measures and/or Maximum Time Frame). The notification will indicate the nature of the deficiency, any methods that may be available for correcting the deficiency, and any consequences that have resulted or may result. Consequences include: A student who fails to meet one or more of the standards for SAP (qualitative and/or time frame) is ineligible for financial aid beginning with the term immediately following the term in which the SAP requirements were not met, pending the results of the appeal process outlined below.

Appeals

Eligibility for continued financial aid will only be re-established if the student subsequently meets Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements, or if the student successfully appeals the decision to the COMS (University Program) or MSPRC (Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine). The appeal must state the reasons for failing to meet SAP requirements, including, if applicable, special circumstances that contributed to the student's failure to meet satisfactory academic progress (e.g., the death of a relative, injury or illness of the student, or other special circumstances), and the changes in circumstances that will allow the student to demonstrate Satisfactory Academic Progress at the next evaluation.

The assistance of the student's Society Dean may be sought in preparation of the appeal; for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine, assistance of the student's Physician Advisor and Dean Student Affairs may be sought in the preparation of appeal. A student may also be required to submit a course plan and/or letter from the Academic Society Dean (University Program) or Student Affairs Dean (Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine). All relevant materials will be presented to the COMS (University Program) and MSPRC (Cleveland Clinic Lerner College

of Medicine). If the COMS or MSPRC determines that the student's appeal should be approved, the student's aid will be reinstated.

Financial Aid Probation

Once an appeal has been approved, a student is placed on financial aid probation and is eligible for financial aid. The Society Dean in conjunction with the student and the Registrar (University Program) as well as the Physician Advisor and Student Affairs Dean with the student (Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine) will develop an academic plan for the student that will ensure, if followed, that the student is able to meet Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine's SAP standards by a specific point of time. Ordinarily, this time frame will be for a full academic year. The student is eligible for financial aid during the time frame stated in the academic plan. At the end of the time frame stated in the academic plan, the student must have met the SAP standards. A student who does not comply with each SAP standard by the end of the financial aid probationary period is suspended from financial aid eligibility. A student shall be reinstated for financial aid eligibility when he/she has satisfactorily completed sufficient coursework to meet the standards of progress within the maximum time frames delineated above.

Withdrawal

Students who are withdrawn from Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine are not making satisfactory academic progress and are not eligible to receive financial aid.

Enforcement

The Offices of the Registrar and Financial Aid, the Academic Societies (Physician Advisor and Student Affairs Dean), the Committee on Medical Students (University Program) and the MSPRC (Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine) collaboratively shall have the responsibility for monitoring and enforcing Satisfactory Academic Progress. The Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine Registrar will notify the Committee on Medical Students of any students who are not making satisfactory academic progress and communicate academic sanctions decisions as determined by COMS to the Financial Aid Office. The Society Dean (University Program) and Physician Advisor (Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine) will determine whether academic sanctions are warranted and will inform the student thus. The Student Affairs Dean for the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine may refer the student to the MSPRC or Student Behavioral Committee. The Financial Aid Office will inform any student whose financial aid has been impacted.