SOD Satisfactory Academic Progress

Purpose and Accountability

The following policy is based on academic standards of the UCSF School of Dentistry that apply to all students enrolled in the School. Since federal law and regulations require that all students receiving financial assistance maintain satisfactory academic progress, this policy describes how application of the School’s academic standards and procedures that affect students receiving financial aid, including Federal Direct Student Loans. For more information, visit the UCSF Financial Aid website.

Definition

Satisfactory Academic Progress is determined by measuring a student’s performance in three areas:

- Completion rate: percent of courses or credits attempted that must be completed each term
- Grade Point Average (GPA): a calculation of the average of a student’s grade in a course, term or all terms (cumulative GPA); and satisfactory progress or completion of P/NP coursework: PC (Pass) or SP (Satisfactory Progress) in all P/NP courses
- Maximum time frame: number of terms or years allowed to complete the program of study (pace)

The academic requirements for the Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree, Certificate of Completion in a Postgraduate Program (CCPG) and Dental Hygiene master's degree include satisfactory completion of the curricula, as assessed by the faculty, within the normal time frame of one, two, three or four academic years or four, eight, 12 or 14 quarters (depending on the program). The seven Student Status Committees will meet at least once each quarter to assess the current and cumulative progress of each student. Particular attention will be paid to students whose records indicate any of the following:

- Students earning three or more units of not passing in-progress or final grades
- Students on academic probation not meeting terms of probation
- Students repeating one or more quarters

Financial Aid Probation

When a student fails to meet the School of Dentistry’s standards of satisfactory academic progress, the Student Status Committee will place him or her on academic probation and establish specific "terms of probation" that the student is expected to meet. At that time, a student will also be placed on financial aid probation.

Upon the recommendation of the Associate Dean for Education or designee, a student who has been placed on academic and financial aid probation may continue to receive financial aid. In order to receive financial aid, a student must meet the terms of probation established by the Student Status Committee.

A student who meets the terms of probation will continue to be eligible to receive financial aid. However, if the Committee's evaluation shows that the student did not meet the terms of probation, he or she will be suspended from financial aid eligibility and will not receive financial aid for the following quarter. Financial aid will be reinstated in the quarter after the Student Status Committee’s academic assessment indicates that the student is meeting the terms of probation.

Exceptions

A student may occasionally require more than one, two or four years to complete the curricula (depending on the program) because of academic or personal difficulties. In such cases, the Student Status Committees may specify a schedule for the student that departs from the norm and may require repeating all or part of a year of study (as a result of incomplete or unsatisfactory course work or an approved leave). In such cases, the number of units which must be completed at the end of each enrollment period will vary according to the portion of the curriculum that must be repeated. A student approved to repeat course work is meeting the school’s standards for satisfactory academic progress as long as he or she meets the individual standards established by the Student Status Committee.

The normal DDS, DH or CCPG curricula constitute full-time programs. When a student is required to repeat work, the School of Dentistry will determine, on an individual basis, what constitutes full-time attendance.

Appeals

The school is ready to respond to mitigating circumstances which may arise in individual situations. A student may appeal loss of eligibility for financial aid to the Director of Student Financial Aid. The Associate Dean for Education and, in the Associate Dean's absence, Chairs of the Student Status Committees, will notify the Director of Student Financial Aid of mitigating circumstances that offer justification for altering customary standards of academic progress.

Maximum Time (Pace)
A student required by the School of Dentistry to repeat course work or extend their program may receive financial aid for a maximum of two, three or five years or eight, 12 or 18 quarters of enrollment (depending on the program). This limit includes any quarter the student was enrolled beyond the quarterly census date, whether or not the student received financial aid. If a student temporarily withdraws from school, the quarter in which (or after which) the student withdraws will be considered a quarter of enrollment if the student attended long enough to keep his or her financial aid. If the student was not enrolled long enough to keep his or her financial aid, it will not be considered a quarter of enrollment.

Students who voluntarily extend their program beyond the normal time may not receive campus-based aid but may receive a Federal Direct (Stafford) Student Loan or an alternative loan for a maximum of three, four, or five years of enrollment (depending on the program), provided they are making satisfactory academic progress.

A student may be granted 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 maximum time frame in which an individual student will be expected to complete the program.

Concurrent Degree Programs

For a student who pursues the DDS and PhD degrees concurrently, the maximum time period will be the sum of enrollment periods established by the School of Dentistry for the DDS degree and the Graduate Division for the PhD degree.

Implementation

The Director of Student Financial Aid and the School of Dentistry will have joint responsibility for implementation and enforcement of this satisfactory academic progress policy for a student receiving financial aid. The Director will notify each student about the policy at the time of initial enrollment and the School of Dentistry will publish the policy on the School of Dentistry student website. A student placed on academic probation will be notified of financial probation in the academic probation letter. The School of Dentistry will monitor the students’ academic performance and will notify the Student Financial Aid Director, in writing, of any student who is placed on academic probation and whether or not a student previously placed on probation is meeting the terms of his or her probation. The Director will notify a student that he or she has been placed in financial aid probationary status, or that his or her financial aid eligibility has been suspended or reinstated. The School of Dentistry will receive a copy of the financial aid status letter for the student’s file.