

Office of Student Financial Aid Services

May 2022 Podcast

Hernan:

Hello Huskies,

Yes, it's me again, Hernan Cortez, a financial aid officer, here at the Storrs Campus.

I know it has been a while since our last Podcast, but hey we're back.

So today we are going to share a few items that are important to you. One is Satisfactory Academic Progress, also known as SAP, Academic Engagement, and things graduating students need to know.

So, to start us off I want to introduce Kathryn Satagaj is here to discuss Satisfactory Academic Progress and Academic Engagement.

So, Kathryn welcome aboard, can you tell our listeners a little about yourself?

Kathryn:

Sure! So, I will be very brief because we have a lot to get to. I work in the processing unit of the financial office and have been here for almost 6 years. Spend most of my time working on the back end, so verifying files, adjusting financial aid offers, and administering the SAP and Academic Engagement processes.

Hernan:

There you go. A lot to do for sure. A lot of backroom operations to do. Thank you, Kathryn.

So, Kathryn can you share with our listeners the important things they need to know about Satisfactory Academic Progress?

Kathryn:

Yes, so SAP measures the student's successful completion of coursework towards a degree. There are essentially three thresholds that the student must meet:

The first one, is the more well-known one, it's related to the Grade Point Average (GPA)

- For an undergraduate student with less than 24 credits, their minimum GPA should be 1.8 or higher
- For Undergraduate students with 24 or more credits, should have a 2.0
- For Graduate students, they should have a 3.0 GPA

Hernan:

Ok

Kathryn:

The second threshold is that students must maintain a pace requirement, what that means is that they must earn a minimum of 67% of their cumulative attempted credit hours – this includes credit hours that are transferred to the university. Some examples of grades that count as attempted and not earned include F grades, W's, Incompletes, NRCs, essentially anything where a student does not have a passing grade.

The third measure that doesn't impact as many students is maximum timeframe. So, all students are expected to complete their programs within a specific timeframe as measured in credit hours. So, for example Undergraduate students are expected to complete their program in a timeframe of no longer than 150% of its published length.

Hernan:

Thank you. Is there anything they need to know about appealing if something comes up?

Kathryn:

Yes. So, all students are going to be evaluated for SAP on May 17th, once the semester concludes and grades are posted we run our process.

Students who are not meeting the thresholds, will receive an email providing them with next step instructions. Because of this, I would encourage all students to monitor their emails for this important information, and to carefully read and follow any instructions in the event they are cited.

There are several reasons why students may not have met the SAP standards throughout the year. Students who experienced academic difficulties due to extreme or unusual circumstances are encouraged to appeal. So, this appeal, they'll get instructions in the email, has to be submitted by May 31st. And that includes the appeal form itself and the third-party documentation.

Failure to submit a complete appeal will result in the cancellation of their future aid eligibility. So, this means if an appeal is not submitted by the deadline and then is not approved, their financial aid for the upcoming academic year will be cancelled. And also, if they are enrolled for summer classes and have aid, if their summer aid is not disbursed yet that aid will also be cancelled.

Hernan:

So, it's really important for them to view their emails and take action. Based on what the email says.

Kathryn:

Yes, always monitor your email. Always, always, always.

Hernan:

Great, anything else on SAP? Or can we go onto the next one?

Kathryn:

I think just location of the SAP form. Just for reference we do have that housed on our website. Students will need to navigate to our 2022-2023 Forms Portal and submit the SAP form that way.

Hernan:

OK, awesome ok. Thanks a lot. I'm gonna again ask you to keep chatting with us. Because now I'm going to ask you to give us some insight about Academic Engagement, which is a little different than Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Kathryn:

Yes.

Hernan:

Again, you're on.

Kathryn:

Ok, so Academic Engagement a lot of times gets confused and mixed up with the SAP process, but they are two different processes. Our office is required to comply with Federal Title IV regulations to ensure that recipients of federal student aid complete academic credit for which their aid was awarded.

So, what that means, is for students who don't receive any passing grades during the spring semester, who have been awarded federal aid, will need to, will be cited for academic engagement on May 17th. So same day of SAP. They will all receive an additional email from our office informing them that they have been cited and must submit an Academic Engagement appeal in order to remain eligible for their spring 2022 aid. So, it's aid that has already been disbursed to their account. If they do not submit an appeal or are not able to prove they were academically engaged, then we will be revising the Spring 2022 aid.

Hernan:

OK, they will also receive notification via email?

Kathryn:

Yes. They will receive a separate notification. Sometimes students are cited for both SAP and Academic Engagement. Sometimes they are only cited for one. Again, that email will go out on May 17th and similar to the SAP deadline, the deadline for Academic Engagement appeals is also May 31st.

This form will be found in our 2021-2022 Forms portal.

The form is considered incomplete without documentation. So just to provide some clarification, acceptable supporting documentation includes confirmation from a professor. So, there's a section on the form the professor can complete, and it has to be completed in ink or they have to send an email to our office confirming the student's attendance from their university email account. Another form of documentation includes a dated and graded assignment. So, if students have access to those, they should submit that along with their appeal. That must include the date of submission and the grade received. If the grade or date are missing or not clear, the appeal is considered incomplete, or it won't be reviewed.

Hernan:

Anything else you think they need to know?

Kathryn:

New this year we are accepting submission receipt from HuskyCT, those are sent to students email inboxes. I would suggest all students to keep those, just in case. It states the class, the date of submission for each assignment. So, we are able, if it's past the 60% point of the semester, which is March 28, we're able to take that as documentation along with their appeal form. Or another form of proof of engagement would be proof of participation in an online discussion. So, just a printout showing the date that you participated and that would be identifying for you.

Hernan:

And I think a lot of information you are talking about can be found on our site at financialaid.uconn.edu/academic-engagement.

Kathryn:

Yes.

Hernan:

And please always listeners if you have any questions at all, ever, regarding anything, not just these topics, always give us a call.

So now I'm going to give Kathryn a break from talking so much. Hopefully she can catch her breath. Now it's going to be my turn.

I'm going to talk about a little about what graduating students should know or perform or conduct.

And that's all students who have borrowed Federal Direct Student Loans are required to complete a document called Exit Counseling when leaving the university.

Again, for all the students who borrowed these types of loans you may remember at the beginning you might have completed an Entrance Counseling and Master Promissory Note when you first started. Now, you need to complete the Exit Counseling at the end of your career here at UConn.

So, the Exit Counseling document takes about 20-30 minutes to complete, and you can access it via StudentAid.Gov and then you log in with your FSA ID and password. The Exit Counseling is going to provide you an overview of information of next steps to prepare you for the repayment of your Federal Direct Student Loans.

A few things to know about Exit Counseling. The Exit Counseling document is required by law. You must complete this document to request your official transcript from the Registrar's Office and a hold will be placed on your account until it is completed. Exit Counseling will explain interest rates and how this is figured out into your monthly payments. All Federal Direct Student Loans have about a 6-month grace period, which means your loans will not go into repayment until 6 months after you leave school, so it is a great time to start preparing yourself for these payments and figure out what you need to do. And you do that by contacting the loan servicer and ask them different questions like maybe you want to lower your payment or on occasion you might want to delay your repayment of it. You definitely want to speak to the loan provider, not UConn. There are a variety of different repayment options available to you, so it is important for you to reach out to your servicer and set up an arrangement before the bill becomes due. So definitely contact them so that in this way you could have a successful repayment period. It is ok if you need to lower your payment amount, or you need an extension on your monthly payments, but again what we stress is to communicate that to your loan servicer.

You will not send Federal Student Loan payments to UConn, but you will be sending those payments to your servicer on your loan. Be on the lookout in your email account for updates from your servicer. All correspondence will be sent to the email you used on your original loan paperwork that's when you completed the Entrance Counseling and Master Promissory Note.

So, graduating students, this is definitely something you want to take action on. Complete it as soon as you can so that in this way if you need your official transcript, you will be able to get it.

But just a couple of more things I want to mention. That is if you, your file was selected for Verification, please submit those documents as soon as possible. Just want to send you a friendly reminder that your financial aid is considered an estimate until the verification process is complete. You can submit your PDF files through our website: financialaid.uconn.edu. Scroll down to the icon which reads SUBMIT DOCUMENTS and sign in using your NetID and it gives you instructions on how to download them and send them over to us.

Also, if you want another person to discuss your financial aid with us you need to give them a FERPA code. This can be done by you, going into ferpa.uconn.edu. Select the "Share My Information" tab and select "talk" icon. Ensure you select the Student Financial Information option and it'll prompt to give whoever you want to have access a four-character code.

So, this ends this month's Podcast. I want to thank Kathryn for participating.

And for the students who will be continuing on with us next year, we'll see you in the fall.

A major congratulations to students who are graduating this month. The best of luck to you in your new adventures! Take care.