

ASSISTANTSHIP FELLOWSHIP OFFICE

STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING, ROOM 334
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Purpose

The Federal Government, the States, and Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIU) have invested large sums of money in order to provide financially needy students the opportunity to obtain a post-secondary education. Financial aid recipients are responsible for using the funds provided in an acceptable manner. Therefore, a graduate student who wishes to benefit from the receipt of financial aid funds must maintain “satisfactory progress” as defined in this policy.

Authority

The U.S. Department of Education Student Financial Aid regulations (34 CFR 668) require that institutions of higher education establish and maintain reasonable standards to measure whether students applying for financial aid are making satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion. A student who does not meet these standards is not eligible to receive federally funded financial aid. In most instances, SIU shall make these standards applicable to all state and institutional aid programs for the purpose of maintaining a consistent and reasonable financial aid policy. However, nothing in this policy shall be construed as a reduction of external requirements by other federal, state, public, or private agencies when they award or control financial aid. **Non-declared graduate students are only eligible to be considered for a Federal Direct Stafford Loan during one twelve-month period while preparing for admission into a graduate degree program.**

Satisfactory Progress Standards

SIU requires that graduate students must be making “satisfactory progress” toward a degree if he or she wishes to receive financial aid funds. A graduate student is making “satisfactory progress” toward a graduate degree by successfully meeting each of three academic standards:

1. **Minimum SIU Percentage of the Cumulative Attempted Credit Hours that must be completed:** A graduate student is expected to have completed a minimum of 67% of the cumulative attempted credit hours at SIU.
2. **Maximum Credit Hours Attempted:** A graduate student enrolled in a program leading to a Master’s degree is expected to complete the degree before accumulating seventy-five (75) credit hours attempted including both SIU and accepted transfer credit hours. A graduate student enrolled in a program leading to a Master’s of Fine Arts degree is expected to complete the degree before accumulating ninety (90) credit hours attempted including both SIU and accepted transfer credit hours. A graduate student enrolled in a program leading to a Doctoral degree is expected to complete the degree before accumulating one hundred (100) credit hours attempted including both SIU and accepted transfer credit hours.
3. **Minimum Grade Point Average:** A graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 at the end of each spring semester and be following the University’s policy concerning academic standing, grades, and grade point average as defined under the topic “retention” and all other provisions in the current Graduate Catalog. A graduate student who is academically suspended from the Graduate School is not making satisfactory progress.

The academic records of all aid recipients will be reviewed annually at the end of the spring semester to determine continued financial aid eligibility. A graduate student who does not meet any one of the three standards set forth above is not maintaining “satisfactory progress” toward a degree and will be determined ineligible for financial aid.

Notification of Status

It shall be the responsibility of the Graduate School to publish this policy and to notify by letter any graduate student who is no longer eligible to receive financial aid funds. Said notice shall be addressed to the student’s most current permanent address on file with the University. **IT SHALL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO INFORM THE UNIVERSITY OF A CORRECT PERMANENT ADDRESS AT ALL TIMES.**

Reinstatement

Graduate students will have their eligibility to receive financial aid reinstated after having reached the level of satisfactory progress required of them by this policy. They may achieve this status by receiving passing grades for courses previously incomplete or incorrectly recorded as withdrawals or failing grades and/or earnings sufficiently more than the required percentage of completed hours.

Appeals

Any graduate student shall have the opportunity to appeal, in writing, to explain “mitigating circumstances”. The appeal should be sent to the Graduate School, with the endorsement of the student’s academic program, within 30 days of the notice of termination. The Graduate School will review the “mitigating circumstances” documented in the appeal of both the student and the academic unit and provide a written decision within 20 days after the receipt of the appeal. The Graduate School will provide written notification to the Financial Aid Office concerning all graduate students who have been granted an exception for mitigating circumstances.

The appeal must be submitted to Grad School Assistantship Fellowship Office by the following deadline:

Spring:	January 18
Summer:	June 14
Fall:	August 26

Grad School office will review the “mitigating circumstances” documents in the appeal and provide a written decision after the receipt of the appeal. The Grad School office makes the final determination as to the validity of the mitigating circumstances.

Definitions

Attempted credit hours: shall be defined as the total SIU hours for which the student has been enrolled.

Maximum credit hours attempted: shall be defined as the total SIU hours for which the student has been enrolled at SIU and the total accepted transfer credit hours.

Credit hours completed: shall be defined as the total number of academic credit hours in which a student has completed. Failing grades, incompletes, withdrawals, audits, and remedial courses that do not count toward a degree shall not be considered as credit hours completed. Deferred grades count as credit hours completed.

Eligible students: shall be defined as those students who are admitted to the Graduate School and to a specific degree program. All other students are not eligible for financial aid except for non-declared graduate students who are only eligible to be considered for a Federal Direct Stafford Loan during one twelve- month period while preparing for admissions into a graduate degree program.

Mitigating circumstances: are the reasons that explain why the student has not met the Satisfactory Progress standards and can include medical reasons, family crisis, personal problems, or other circumstances, which adversely affected student performance.

Graduate student: shall be defined as a student who is seeking a Master’s or a Doctorate degree.

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