

PIEDMONT UNIVERSITY

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Form

Financial Aid Office PO Box 10, Demorest GA 30535
(706) 776-0114 Fax: (706) 778-0708 finaid@piedmont.edu

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE YOU COMPLETE YOUR APPEAL

These instructions are for the use of students who have been placed on financial aid suspension under the Piedmont University's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy. By following the steps outlined, a student may appeal their financial aid suspension. The SAP policy is found in the college catalog online at the following links:

[Undergraduate SAP Policy](#)

[Graduate SAP Policy](#)

The Piedmont University's SAP policy is based on U.S. Department of Education regulations. This policy measures a student's performance in the following areas:

1. Qualitative (GPA): The minimum cumulative GPA for undergraduate students is 2.0 (equivalent to a C average) and 3.0 for graduate students.
2. Quantitative (Pace): Federal and state student aid recipients must show measurable progress toward earning a degree by successfully completing at least sixty-seven percent (67%) of all courses required by the program of study. For example, a student who has attempted 16 credits must successfully complete at least 12 credits to meet the 67% required minimum completion rate.
3. Maximum timeframe (150% rule). The 150% rule stipulates the maximum allowable timeframe for receiving financial aid is equal to 150% of the length of your program. For example, if you are pursuing a bachelor degree, you will reach the maximum timeframe after attempting 180 credits.

The SAP policy applies to all students applying for or receiving federal, and/or state funds. The intent of this policy is to ensure that students who are receiving financial aid are making measurable progress toward completion of a degree program or teacher certification program within a reasonable time frame. If a student is placed on financial aid suspension, the student is ineligible to receive federal and state aid. An appeal may be submitted if the student can demonstrate the failure to meet the minimum standard was caused by **extenuating or unusual circumstances beyond the student's control**.

The following scenarios are NOT extenuating circumstances and are not an acceptable justification for appealing;

- Youthfulness, immaturity, or lack of focus
- Difficult coursework or attempted too many credits and couldn't handle the workload
- Student/Instructor conflicts
- Transportation issues
- Poor time management
- Financial aid processing late or delayed
- Medical reasons that were known to you prior to the start of the semester, unless you can document unforeseeable complications
- Work conflicts, unless you can document an unexpected, unavoidable, and involuntary change to your work schedule that directly hindered your academic success
- Lack of childcare, unless you can document an unexpected, unavoidable, and involuntary change to your childcare situation along with an explanation of why it could not be resolved in a timely manner

NOTE: If you have been academically excluded and wish to appeal that status, you should contact the Registrar's Office for instructions. There are two separate appeal processes for academic exclusion and financial aid suspension. Your financial aid appeal will be held until you resolve your academic exclusion and are readmitted to your degree program. The appeal of your financial aid suspension will not correct your academic exclusion. Likewise, being academically reinstated will **not** automatically remedy your financial aid suspension. Please contact your academic advisor for assistance.

GUIDELINES FOR AN APPEAL

A successful appeal will contain complete explanations of the items listed below, as applicable. You must compile and attach significant documentation to justify your appeal. The Financial Aid Office will only review the materials that you provide; therefore, it is your responsibility to provide sufficient documentation to thoroughly support your appeal.

1. Contact a support staff member in the Piedmont University Student Success Center to complete your SAP Appeal Form and create an Academic Success Plan that you will follow until you are able to meet SAP requirements or graduate. Submit your plan with the appeal form.

Student Success Center: <https://www.piedmont.edu/success-center>

Location: Demorest Campus Lane Hall 706-778-8500 ext. 2826

2. Include a written statement describing the reasons for and circumstances surrounding your lack of sufficient progress. These circumstances must be extenuating or unusual that were beyond your control. Your attention should be focused on the particular academic term(s) and/or course(s) for which you registered but did not successfully complete. Be specific and concise in your explanation since incomplete information may cause a denial or a delay in the review of your appeal. You may use the space provided on the first page of the appeal form or attach a separate letter if more space is needed.
3. Include a detailed explanation of the measures you have taken to ensure that your academic performance will improve and/or actions you have taken to correct the circumstances that prevented your prior lack of academic progress. For example, if you are appealing due to an illness, you must explain why the illness you experienced will no longer affect your ability to succeed academically.
4. Attach supporting documentation. All letters must be signed and those from professionals must be on letterhead. Additional documents may be required if determined necessary. Students who have exceeded the maximum timeframe (150% rule) due to prior degrees or change of major do not need to provide additional documentation but must clearly explain their circumstances. Examples of documentation that should be included with your appeal if pertinent to your situation: doctor's letter, letter from supervisor, legal documentation, police report, obituary, etc.
5. **Do not discuss your need for financial aid as part of your rationale for reinstatement of federal aid.** It is assumed that any student filing an appeal is doing so based upon financial need.
6. Academic Success Plan, SAP Appeal Form and supporting documentation must be submitted within two weeks after the start of the term for which aid is being requested. Processing may take several weeks so be sure to submit your appeal as quickly as possible.

If your appeal is approved, you will be placed on financial aid probation. While on probation you must follow your academic plan and continue to complete all classes successfully in order to continue to receive financial aid. Failure to comply with your academic plan (i.e. pass all of the courses you attempt) will result in suspension of future financial aid. Subsequent appeals will most likely be denied.

1. Students who are placed on financial aid probation due to academic reasons (cumulative grade point average and/or cumulative completion rate) who bring their SAP back into conformity by meeting the minimum SAP standards will have their financial aid eligibility reinstated.
2. Students who are placed on financial aid probation because they have exceeded the maximum timeframe allowed for their program will remain on probation until they graduate or fail to comply with the terms of their probation.

NOTE: An appeal is a request for an exception to the SAP policy. Approval is not automatic and is not guaranteed. Please remember that you (the student) are responsible for paying any tuition and fees that become due to Piedmont University while your appeal is in process.

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Student Name: _____ Phone: _____ Student ID: _____

Semester for which you are appealing: Fall Spring Summer Year: _____

Intended semester of graduation: Fall Spring Summer Year: _____

Current Degree & Major: _____

Reason(s) for Appeal: Please check all applicable:

- A. I FAILED TO MAINTAIN A 67% CUMULATIVE COMPLETION RATIO
- B. I FAILED TO MAINTAIN A CUMULATIVE GPA OF 2.0 FOR UNDERGRADUATES OR 3.0 FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS
- C. I ATTEMPTED MORE THAN THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CREDITS REQUIRED FOR MY DEGREE (150% RULE)
- D. I FAILED TO MEET THE CONDITIONS OF MY PROBATION AFTER HAVING AN APPEAL PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

***You must meet with the Academic Success Center* to complete this SAP Appeal Form**

In the space below, explain why you failed to meet the requirements of Piedmont University SAP policy, exceeded the maximum number of credits required for your degree, and/or failed to meet the conditions of your probation. (Attach a separate letter if more space is needed)

Initial the following statements to acknowledge your understanding of the requirements of submitting this SAP Appeal form:

_____ *I have read and understand Piedmont's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy.*

_____ *I understand that the SAP Appeal process is for students impacted by extenuating or unusual circumstances (circumstances unforeseen and beyond the student's control).*

_____ *I understand that official supporting documentation is required for all academic SAP appeals (as explained in the attached instructions) as proof of the circumstances stated above. (Not required for appeal reason C above.)*

_____ *I understand that the following additional documentation is required in support of my appeal (as applicable):*

- Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form, completed in full and signed by the Academic Success Center and myself.
- Academic Success Plan submitted with Appeal Form (created by Academic Success Center)

_____ *I understand that I must be fully admitted to a degree program or teacher certification program and that I am only permitted to register for courses that are required by my current program, and that I must comply with the Academic Success Plan.*

_____ *I understand that, if my appeal is approved, I will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and **must successfully complete requirements set by the Financial Aid Office to avoid suspension of my financial aid. While on probation, I am responsible to coordinate with my Academic Advisor to ensure an Academic Success Plan is created listing my courses for each semester attended, and to comply by taking only courses listed on the Academic Success Plan. (Students who are on probation because they have exceeded the maximum timeframe (150%) allowed for their program will be maintained on probation until they graduate or fail to comply with the terms of their probation.)***

In the space provided, please explain how your situation has improved and your plan to successfully complete all future coursework. If appealing due to the 150% rule, you need only explain your plan to stay on track to complete your degree program. (Attach a separate letter if more space is needed)

I certify that all the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that submitting this appeal is not a guarantee that my aid eligibility will be reinstated and that I am still responsible for all accrued debts not covered by financial aid, including any late fees that may have been incurred during the review process.

Student Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

The deadline to submit an appeal is two weeks after the start of the semester in which aid is requested.

FOR STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER USE ONLY:

**Cumulative GPA (minimum satisfactory GPA is 2.0 for Undergraduate Students or 3.0 for Graduate Students)*

I, _____, have reviewed this student’s appeal for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility and have identified coursework applicable to their current degree program and collaboratively created an Academic Success Plan for the student to submit with the appeal. Additionally, I have encouraged the student to utilize available Piedmont University resources and to make informed decisions which best serve the student’s educational, personal, and career developmental needs.

Additional Comments: _____

SSC Signature: _____ Date: _____ Phone: _____

Please email me the appeal decision at the following email address: _____

FA OFFICE ONLY	Processor Initials	Date	Appeal Decision	Grade Level	Updated Colleague