

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

AS APPLICABLE FOR TITLE IV FUNDING (US STUDENT LOANS)

To be eligible for Federal Student Aid (FSA) funds, a student must make satisfactory academic progress, and a school must have a reasonable policy for monitoring that progress. Vancouver School of Theology has a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy for use in determining Canadian and US Student Aid (FSA) awards (student loans), internal VST Bursary and Scholarships, as well as in VST's internal Academic Probation designation.

1. Consistent application: The SAP policies will be applied consistently to both full and part-time students in all degree programs.

2. Measuring SAP: Students will be evaluated at the end of each academic year (mid-May), using a transcript that shows all work to date. This will be done by the Faculty/Student Review Committee, and by referral from that committee to the Dean's Advisory Council (DAC) if there are any issues related to satisfactory academic progress. DAC will notify the student, in writing, of the outcome of this evaluation.

3. Academic requirements, Satisfactory Academic Progress, Academic Probation and Financial Aid Probation

- a. VST does not formulate a GPA. The minimum grade to receive credit for a course at VST is a B-. Any grade lower than a B- will result in the course being "Not Approved" (NAPP). No credit is earned for a NAPP course, and the student is required to re-take the course or its equivalent.
- b. Students who do not successfully complete 75% of their coursework within a given term or academic year will be placed on academic probation at the beginning of the term following. Students may also be placed on academic probation if they show a persistent pattern of withdrawals and incomplete courses such that they are at risk of not completing the degree within the maximum timeframe (see below).
- c. When placed on academic probation, the Dean's Advisory Council will set the conditions by which the student will be removed from academic probation.
- d. For students receiving Title IV funding, being placed on academic probation entails having their Title IV funding suspended until they re-establish SAP. *Note: VST Students may continue to apply for VST bursaries during their first term on academic probation. See the VST Financial Aid policy for details.*
- e. SAP may be re-established by successfully meeting the conditions DAC set for removal from academic probation in its initial communication with the student. *More information can be found on Probation and Required Withdrawal in the Student Handbook on the VST website.*

4. Appeals and Financial Aid Probation

Where the student is placed on academic probation, the student has the right to appeal if they can demonstrate academic failure due to exceptional circumstances such as an injury/illness of the student or the death of a relative. A letter of appeal must be submitted to the Dean within 14 days of notification of academic probation. Supporting evidence will be required.

- Student appeals must state the reasons for the failure to make SAP and also state how a change in circumstances will allow the student to make SAP in the future.
- If the appeal is not submitted within the 14 days, financial aid eligibility will be suspended unless there are extenuating circumstances that existed to prevent the submission within the timeframe; supporting documentation will be required.
- The student will be notified of the decision in writing within 14 days of the submission of all documentation needed for the appeal. This decision is binding.

If the student's appeal is successful, they will be placed concurrently on financial aid probation. Financial Aid Probation means that the student may continue to receive Title IV funds for one more term of study while they work to achieve SAP. The one exception is for those receiving Title IV funds who have surpassed the 150% maximum timeframe for completing the degree. The student must demonstrate SAP and be removed from academic probation to receive subsequent student loans and bursaries, after this one additional term. If they do not meet these conditions, they will remain on academic probation, their funding will be suspended, and no further appeals are allowed.

If the student's appeal is unsuccessful, the student will cease to be eligible for Title IV funding immediately.

5. Maximum timeframes for completing a program

To meet SAP requirements, the student must successfully complete their courses at a pace which ensures that they will graduate within the maximum timeframe. The length of time to complete each program is as follows:

Program	Number of Credits	Stated Length of Time of full-time studies	Maximum timeframe per VST	Maximum timeframe (150%) per US Regulations
MA programs	48 credits	2-3 years	Up to 7 years	72 credits (completed and attempted)
M.Div	90 credits	3-4 years	Up to 7 years	135 credits
Th.M	24 credits	1-2 years	Up to 5 years	36 credits

6. Pace of progress

To complete the program in the maximum timeframe per US Regulations to maintain Title IV eligibility, a student must successfully complete at least 75% of courses they have attempted for the period of enrollment. Withdrawals are counted as uncompleted courses, but courses left INC due to approved medical extensions are not. An INC course will be come NAPP (and hence, incomplete) if the student fails to meet the medical extension due date set by the Dean, at which point it will affect the 75% completion requirement.

Students that have exceeded the 150% time limit on the program cannot receive Title IV financial aid funds, even if they are still within the statute of limitations set by VST for the maximum timeframe to complete the degree.

7. Transfer Credits

Transfer credits are counted towards the number of required credits needed for the degree. To have a course accepted for transfer credit, the student must have received at least a B-average.