

## **PAYNE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

### **Satisfactory Academic Process Policy**

Payne Theological Seminary is required to determine if students are making measurable progress toward the completion of their degrees by these standards: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Maximum Time Frame in completing the degree. All credits counted toward the degree must be included in the calculations of each standard. The academic record (transcript) of all students is reviewed at the end of each academic semester. For purposes of financial aid, satisfactory grades are **A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, or P**; they are counted as attempted and earned credit hours. Unsatisfactory grades do not count as earned credit hours but as attempted credit hours. Unsatisfactory grades are **F, W, and I**. Repeat courses count as attempted hours each time they are taken and as earned credit hours when they are passed. To make Satisfactory Academic Progress each semester, students must earn satisfactory grades in at least 67% of the total credits attempted.

#### **Qualitative Standard**

Each graduate student in the Master of Divinity Program is expected to maintain a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5.

#### **Quantitative Standard**

Each graduate student in the Master of Divinity Program is expected to maintain a completion rate of at least 67% of attempted coursework. Withdrawals, incompletes, repeated courses, and courses with failing grades are not considered completed credits.

#### **Maximum Time Frame**

The maximum time limit for a student to receive financial aid is 150% of the published program length. Payne Theological Seminary requires 90 credit hours to complete a Master of Divinity degree. The maximum number of attempted credits for a full-time student may not exceed 135 and must not exceed seven (7) years. Completing the Master of Divinity degree, a part-time student may not exceed 135 attempted credits and must not exceed (10) years. Total credits to be counted include all attempted and earned credits at Payne Theological Seminary plus any transfer credits that are counted toward the Payne Theological Seminary's Master of Divinity degree regardless of whether the student was or was not on financial aid.

#### **Financial Aid Warning**

Satisfactory Academic Progress is checked at the conclusion of each semester. A student, who was previously making satisfactory progress, who then fails to meet SAP standards will be placed on **financial aid warning** and will be notified via email within 30 days of the completed semester of the consequences of not achieving the minimum standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress required to maintain financial aid eligibility. Students on **financial aid warning** continue to receive financial aid for the next semester in which he/she enrolls. A student who meets SAP standards at the end of the warning period will be removed from financial aid warning.

#### **Financial Aid Suspension**

If the student on financial aid warning fails to achieve minimum progress standards at the end of the semester, suspension of financial aid eligibility occurs. A student that loses eligibility for Financial Aid may appeal, in writing, their suspension to the Academic Review Appeals Committee and request to be put on Financial Aid probation. An appeal may be submitted for unusual or mitigating circumstances including (but not limited to):

- Serious illness or accident on the part of the student;
- Death, accident, or serious illness in the immediate family;

- Other extenuating circumstances - out of the student's control - that impact the student's ability to sustain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

A student who has been suspended from financial aid and who has not successfully appealed the suspension is responsible for all charges until he/she is able to achieve compliance with satisfactory academic standards.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

A student who has appealed his/her financial aid suspension successfully will be placed on financial aid probation. Students on financial aid probation must meet the qualitative and quantitative requirements at the next evaluation of academic standing. If it is determined that the student cannot achieve compliance with the satisfactory academic standards at the end of the semester, the student will instead be placed on probation with an academic plan that outlines specific benchmarks that should be met each semester and the estimated time it will take for the student to achieve Satisfactory Academic Progress.

### **Financial Aid Probation with an Academic Plan**

A student who is put on financial aid probation with an academic plan must be able to reasonably meet the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress in the time specified in the plan. The student must meet the completion rate of 67% and achieve a 2.5 grade point average each semester while on the plan. At the same time, the student's progression must be sufficient enough for him/her to bring his/her cumulative grade point average and completion rate up to Payne Theological Seminary's minimum compliance standards by the designated time. The academic plan must be approved by the Academic Review Appeals Committee and contain the student's written, signed, and dated appeal with the appropriate documentation.

### **The Appeals Process**

A student who is placed on financial aid suspension may appeal this decision. To appeal, a student must submit to the Financial Aid Office, a signed and dated letter of appeal explaining the unusual and mitigating circumstances that affected his/her ability to maintain the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress. This appeal should address and document the student's extenuating circumstances and explain how the student is addressing these issues.

The appeal, and all supporting documentation, should be addressed to the Academic Appeals Review Committee, Payne Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 474, 1230 Wilberforce-Clifton Road, Wilberforce, OH 45384 c/o the Financial Aid Office.

The financial aid office will forward the student's appeal, with all supporting documentation, to the Academic Appeals Review Committee. The Academic Appeals Review Committee will meet on an "as needed" basis to review appeals and academic plans previously in place. The committee is comprised of faculty and staff appointed by the Payne Theological Seminary Cabinet. All decisions of the Academic Review Appeals Committee are final and will be provided via email to the student within 30 days of the committee's decision.

An approved appeal will place the student on academic probation if it is determined that the student should be able to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards in one term. If it is not possible for the student to meet those standards by the end of the semester, the student may be approved for academic probation with an academic plan. A student granted probation with a plan must meet the standards according to the parameters and time table stated in their plan.

A student not awarded academic probation will be placed on financial aid suspension and considered ineligible for future financial aid until the student is in compliance with Payne Theological Seminary's standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress.