

**SIoux FALLS SEMINARY**  
**FINANCIAL AID POLICIES – 2016**

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

Academic progress is monitored by the Office of Enrollment Management, to ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree. In addition, students on federal financial aid are monitored to ensure that they are meeting additional standards set forth by federal regulations (Section 668.34).

#### Type and Frequency of Measurement

Sioux Falls Seminary (SFS) measures Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at the end of each semester. For financial aid purposes, SAP is measured by **grade point average** (qualitatively) and by **pace of progression** (quantitatively).

Any course in which an F grade is received may be repeated, and must be repeated if it is a required course. When a course is repeated, both grades will remain on the transcript, but only the later grade will be computed in the grade point average. For students who repeat a course, the higher grade earned is used in the GPA calculation. For federal aid purposes, an incomplete is regarded as a failing grade until the course is completed. If a grade is changed, the GPA is recalculated at that time.

Students in the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts programs (except M.A. in Counseling) are expected to maintain an overall cumulative grade point average of 2.25. Students in the MACO programs are expected to maintain an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0. Students in the MACO programs who receive two “C’s” in their academic courses or practica will be placed on probation.

The pace requirement is that a student must complete at least 70% of credits attempted. Attempted credits include all transfer credits and credit by portfolio assessment in addition to all credits attempted while enrolled at Sioux Falls Seminary. (Sioux Falls Seminary does not offer noncredit remedial courses.) In addition, students who exceed 150% of the published program length will be ineligible for financial aid. This criterion is determined based on completed credit hours, as follows.

#### Maximum Time Frame

The maximum time frame for federal financial aid mirrors the academic limits for each degree

program. Master of Divinity program – 126 credits

Master of Arts in Christian Leadership program – 56 credits

Master of Arts in Bible and Theology program – 93 credits

Master of Arts in Counseling program – 93 credits

Appeal of the maximum time frame limit will be considered for the following:

- Concurrent majors, change of majors, or pursuit of a second degree
- Change of degree program
- Transfer credits that do not apply to degree program

### Federal Financial Aid Warning Status

A student who does not maintain a 2.25 grade point average or receives a grade of F and/or demonstrates serious difficulty in supervised ministry or supervised therapy, interpersonal relationships, or personal maturity may be placed on probation. Normally probation lasts for at least one semester and provides an opportunity for a student to give serious attention to problems that may adversely affect graduation and performance as a professional.

Students who are placed on academic probation by the Office of Enrollment Management due to cumulative GPA may be placed on financial aid warning status at that time.

A student may continue to receive financial aid for one semester while on warning status. Students on warning status will have their academic standing reviewed at the end of the warning term. Students who have met the required GPA and pace of progression levels by the end of the term will be removed from warning status. Those who do not meet the requirements will be placed on financial aid suspension and will not be eligible for financial aid until the GPA and pace levels are met.

### Appeals and Financial Aid Probation Status

A student placed on financial aid suspension may file an appeal with the Office of Enrollment Management. Reasons for appeal may include, but are not limited to, situations involving serious medical issues, death in the family, significant interpersonal issues, difficulties in balancing school, work, and other demands, etc. An appeal must include information regarding why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress as well as what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory progress at the next evaluation. The appeal must also include a course completion plan.

An Appeals Panel consisting of the Chief Academic Officer and Dean, a representative from the Office of Enrollment Management, and the Chief Financial Officer and VP of Operations will reevaluate the student's academic progress. The decision of the panel is final.

If approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation status and will be allowed to receive aid for one term. Sioux Falls Seminary may grant an appeal only if it determines that the student will be able to meet SAP standards after the subsequent payment period; or the student's academic plan, if followed, will allow the student to meet SAP standards at a specific point in time. Failure to meet either the GPA or the pace requirement may be appealed.

A student who is on financial aid probation will have his or her progress evaluated at the end of each term. If the student has met the conditions of the academic plan set forth, the student is considered to be eligible for financial aid the following term. If the student has not met the conditions of the academic plan, financial aid will be suspended.

## Refunds

### SFS Refund Policy

For students who withdraw from the institution, tuition will be refunded 100% during the first calendar week of the term, less a \$100 administrative fee. Beginning with the eighth calendar day of the term, tuition will be recalculated on a prorated basis based on the day the student drops the course. The proration is determined by dividing the number of calendar days completed in the term by the total number of calendar days in the term, not including breaks of more than five days. No refund is made after 60% of the term has passed.

For students who are less than full time and who drop a class, the refund will be prorated on the same basis. For January term and other short-term classes, the refund will be prorated; no refund will be made after 60% of the class is completed.

	FALL 2016	SPRING 2017
Last Day of 100% tuition refund	09/02/16	01/27/17
Last day of ANY refund	11/01/16	03/28/17
Number of days in the term	92	92

### Return to Title IV (R2T4) Policy

This policy describes the conditions under which Title IV funds (federal student aid, which includes Unsubsidized Direct Loans, Perkins Loans, and Direct Graduate PLUS loans) need to be returned to the U. S. Department of Education. Title IV funds are awarded under the assumption that the student will attend school for the entire period for which the assistance is offered, so federal regulations mandate the return of financial aid funds if a student withdraws within a certain time frame during the enrollment period.

For students who withdraw before completing 60% of the term, a portion of the federal aid received, excluding work study, must be returned. The amount which must be returned is determined by the Federal Formula for Return of Title IV Funds (Section 484B of the Higher Education Act). The amount to be returned is determined by dividing the number of calendar days completed in the term by the total number of calendar days in the term. This law also specifies the order in which funds are to be returned to the financial aid programs from which they were awarded. Funds will be returned in this order: Unsubsidized Direct Loans, Graduate Plus Loans.

The responsibility for returning unearned Title IV aid is shared between SFS and the student. Federal aid which has been disbursed to a student's account may need to be returned to the federal programs. In addition, a student who receives a cash disbursement of federal aid may need to repay all or a portion of that aid, as specified by law. If the amount of federal aid disbursed is less than the amount of federal aid which could have been disbursed, the student may be entitled to a post-withdrawal disbursement of federal aid.

Other non-Title IV aid may be contingent upon enrollment status and credit hours. These non-Title IV awards may be adjusted as a result of withdrawal, leave of absence, or less than part-time status.

### Determining Withdrawal Date

An official withdrawal date is set when a student submits a request to officially withdraw to the Office of Enrollment Management or starts the process to withdraw. A Return of Title IV funds calculation will be made within 45 days of an official withdrawal.

For the purpose of Title IV aid, a leave of absence during an enrollment period is considered an official withdrawal.

An unofficial withdrawal is automatically recorded if a student has not participated in a class (by attending class meetings or participating online) in the first four weeks of the semester. A drop date of the end of the fourth week of the semester will be used. Last day of attendance will be used at the end of the fourth week of the semester, as the return of Title IV funds calculation will be made within 45 days of an unofficial withdrawal.

If a student withdraws from a course during the first seven calendar days of the semester, the course will not be recorded on the student's transcript. However, after the first seven calendar days, a grade of W/P (withdrawn/passing) or W/F (withdrawn/failing) will be recorded, as reported by the faculty.

### Post-Withdrawal Disbursement

If a post-withdrawal disbursement includes loan funds, Sioux Falls Seminary must get the student's permission before it can disburse them. SFS does this through its award letter. Students may choose to decline some or all of the loan funds so that they do not incur additional debt. SFS may automatically use all or a portion of a student's post-withdrawal disbursement of grant funds for tuition or fees. SFS needs the student's permission to use post-withdrawal grant disbursement for all other school charges. If the student does not give permission, he or she will be offered the funds. However, it may be in a student's best interest to allow the school to keep the funds to reduce debt at the school.

If SFS is not required to return all of the excess funds, the student must return the remaining amount. Any loan funds that must be returned are to be repaid by the student in accordance with the terms of the promissory note. That is, the student shall make scheduled payments to the holder of the loan over a period of time.

Any amount of unearned grant funds that a student must return is called an overpayment. The maximum amount of a grant overpayment that a student must repay is half of the grant funds he or she received or was scheduled to receive. A student does not have to repay a grant overpayment if the original amount of the overpayment was \$50 or less. The student must make arrangements with SFS or the Department of Education to return the unearned grant funds.

The requirements for Title IV program funds when students withdraw are separate from any refund policy that SFS may have. Therefore, a student may still owe funds to SFS to cover unpaid institutional charges. The seminary may also charge the student for any Title IV program funds that it was required to return.

Questions about the Title IV program funds can be addressed by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FEDAID (1-800-433-3243). TTY users may call 1-800-730-8913. Information is also available on Student Aid on the Web at [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov).

## Definitions

The **date of a student's withdrawal** is the earlier of 1) the date the student officially withdraws or 2) the date the student begins the withdrawal process. The beginning of the withdrawal process is the date the student contacts the Office of Enrollment Management with notification of intent to withdraw. For a student who does not officially withdraw, the first date without refund eligibility will be used as the withdrawal date.

**Calendar days in the term** are counted starting with the first day of the term and ending with the final day of the term (inclusive). Scheduled breaks of five days or more are not counted.

**Calendar days completed** are counted starting with the first day of the term and ending with the date of withdrawal (inclusive). Scheduled breaks of five days or more are not counted.

SFS defines **institutional charges** as: tuition and fees and course or program fees.

SFS defines **non-institutional charges** as any charges except those listed under **institutional charges**, including but not limited to: books and supplies, parking fines, etc.

A **post-withdrawal disbursement** may be indicated if the withdrawn student was otherwise eligible to receive the "earned aid" portion of federal funds, and any loan application was certified prior to the withdrawal date. SFS shall notify the student of any post-withdrawal disbursements which could be made. The student will have fourteen days in which to respond to the offer, either accepting or rejecting the late disbursement of a loan.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Office of Enrollment Management at (605) 336-6588.