

Yale Law School Policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress

Title 34 Part 668 of the Code of Federal Regulations (34 C.F.R. § 668.34) requires institutions to establish reasonable Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for “determining whether an otherwise eligible student is making satisfactory academic progress in his or her educational program and may receive assistance under the Title IV, HEA programs.” SAP is the successful satisfaction of degree requirements according to published increments that lead to degree completion within published time limits. The following standards apply to all Yale Law School students, whether or not they are financial aid recipients.

1. Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

Students must maintain SAP in both quantitative (pace) and qualitative terms. The quantitative and qualitative measures for each degree program are described below.

Degree programs that include course work have a required “completion rate.”

- The completion rate is equal to the number of completed credit hours divided by the number of attempted credit hours.
- “Completed credit hours” include all credit hours for which the student has earned a final mark of H, P, LP, or CR. Courses for which the student has not received a final mark or has received a mark of F or a notation of NCR, INC, or EXT shall not count as completed credit hours but shall count in the calculation of the completion rate.
- “Attempted Credit Hours” include all credit hours for which the student is enrolled or was enrolled in previous semesters, at the point that the SAP assessment is made.
- Transfer credits will be included in both the attempted and completed credit hours.
- Joint-degree credits are not calculated in the completion rate for the law degree. Joint-degree credits are awarded upon petition by the student after the completion of the credit hours at the joint-degree school for a student to meet residency requirements and overall credit hour requirements.

Detailed information on all degree requirements is included in the *Bulletin of Yale Law School*, which is published annually in August.

Juris Doctor (JD) Degree

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be assessed at the end of each academic year for JD students.

Quantitative (Pace) Measures:

- i. To maintain SAP, each student in the JD program must complete a minimum of 83 credit hours over the course of six semesters in residence (or the equivalent).
- To maintain full-time status in good standing, each student must be enrolled in the four required courses in the first semester (16 credit hours) and in 12 to 16 credit hours in each

subsequent semester, generally averaging 13 or 14 credit hours per semester over the five semesters after the first semester in residence.

- Enrollment beyond six semesters, or at less than full time, is approved by the dean only in extraordinary circumstances.

The maximum time frame for a student to complete JD requirements is 84 months from the date the student matriculated in law school, including semesters on leave. Students who have not completed their degree requirements will be withdrawn from the Law School 84 months from the date of matriculation or 24 months after their sixth semester, whichever occurs first.

ii. To maintain SAP, each student in the JD program must complete 75 percent of the credit hours attempted by the end of the first year of study and 75 percent of the credit hours attempted by the end of the second year of study.

iii. One of the two writing requirements, the Substantial Paper or the Supervised Analytic Writing Paper, must be completed and certified before a student may register for his or her penultimate semester in the JD program.

- A. Qualitative Measures: Students will be disqualified as JD candidates and will not be allowed to continue in the School if they receive
- (a) two Failures in any one semester;
 - (b) a total of three Failures;
 - (c) Low Pass or Failure in four or more courses by the end of the third semester;
 - (d) Low Pass or Failure in five or more courses by the end of the fourth semester;
 - (e) Low Pass or Failure in six or more courses by the end of the fifth semester; or
 - (f) Low Pass or Failure in a total of seven or more courses.

A student who has been disqualified as a JD candidate for not maintaining satisfactory grades will not be readmitted without a vote of the Faculty in Executive Session.

Master of Laws Degree (LLM)

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be assessed each semester for LLM students.

Quantitative (Pace) Measures:

i. To maintain SAP, each student in the LLM program must complete a minimum of 24 credit hours over the course of two semesters in residence.

- To maintain full-time status in good standing, each student must be enrolled in 12 to 16 credit hours each semester.

LLM candidates are expected to complete all degree requirements by the end of the spring semester of the academic year during which they matriculate. Each student must complete 100 percent of all credit hours attempted by the end of the second semester unless, in extraordinary circumstances, an extension has been approved by the Graduate Policy

Committee. In the event of such an extension, all LLM work must be completed successfully by December 1 of the calendar year in which the student was to have graduated.

- Students who have not successfully completed the LLM requirements by this time will be withdrawn.

ii. To maintain SAP, each student in the LLM program must complete 60 percent of the credit hours attempted by the end of the first semester of study and 100 percent of all credit hours attempted by the end of the second semester.

B. Qualitative Measures: Students will be disqualified as LLM candidates and will not be allowed to continue in the School if they receive one Failure or more than one Low Pass during the two academic semesters.

A student who has been disqualified as an LLM candidate for not maintaining satisfactory grades will not be readmitted without a vote of the Faculty in Executive Session.

Master of Studies in Law Degree (MSL)

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be assessed each semester for MSL students.

Quantitative (Pace) Measures:

i. To maintain SAP, each student in the MSL program must complete a minimum of 27 credit hours over the course of two semesters in residence.

- Each student must complete successfully at least three of the First Semester courses during the fall semester (Civil Procedure, Contracts, Torts, and Constitutional Law).
- Each student must be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours each semester.

MSL candidates are expected to complete all degree requirements by the end of the spring semester of the academic year during which they matriculate. Each student must complete 100 percent of all credit hours attempted by the end of the second semester unless, in extraordinary circumstances, an extension has been approved by the Graduate Policy Committee. In the event of such an extension, all MSL work must be completed successfully by December 1 of the calendar year in which the student was to have graduated.

- Students who have not successfully completed the MSL requirements by this time will be withdrawn.

ii. To maintain SAP, each student in the MSL program must complete 75 percent of the credit hours attempted by the end of the first semester of study and 100 percent of all credit hours attempted by the end of the second semester.

C. Qualitative Measures: Students will be disqualified as MSL candidates and will not be allowed to continue in the School if they receive one Failure or more than one Low Pass during the two academic semesters.

A student who has been disqualified as an MSL candidate for not maintaining satisfactory grades will not be readmitted without a vote of the Faculty in Executive Session.

Doctor of the Science of Law (JSD)

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be assessed at the end of each academic year for JSD students.

Quantitative (Pace) Measures:

- JSD candidate must spend at least two semesters in residence at Yale Law School. This requirement may be satisfied by residence as an LLM candidate.
- The JSD dissertation must be completed and approved by the student's dissertation committee by May 1 in the fifth year after JSD admission.

D. Qualitative Measures: JSD candidates must demonstrate satisfactory progress toward completion of the dissertation in the annual Dissertation Progress Report (DPR). Each candidate shall submit a detailed report of his or her research, writing, and professional contributions at the end of each academic year. This report must be certified by each candidate's faculty advisor who must confirm that the candidate is making sufficient progress each academic year.

2. SAP Notice and Academic Plans:

SAP Notice: At the end of each assessment period, the registrar will send a degree progress report to each student. This report will include the number of in-progress credit hours and completed credit hours toward the degree requirements, as well as an indication of which specific requirements have been completed. The registrar will provide written notice to any student who is not making satisfactory academic progress.

Academic Plan: Any student who is not making satisfactory academic progress will be required to meet with the appropriate dean to establish an individual academic plan before the beginning of the next payment period. The academic plan will outline specific steps to improve the student's academic progress. It will also include specific benchmarks that the student must meet.

3. Financial Aid Denial:

The Registrar's Office will notify the Financial Aid Office at the end of each assessment period which students have failed to make satisfactory academic progress.

The Financial Aid Office will notify each such student in writing that, based on his or her failure to achieve satisfactory academic progress, he or she is not eligible for federal or institutional financial aid.

The student may appeal the loss of financial aid eligibility by submitting a written appeal to the Director of Financial Aid. The appeal should include (1) a detailed explanation of why the student has not made satisfactory academic progress, along with any supporting documentation; and (2) the student's approved academic plan.

The Director of Financial Aid will respond in writing within ten days of receiving the appeal. If the appeal is successful, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation. A student on Financial Aid Probation may continue to receive financial aid provided that the student is following her or his academic plan and meeting the specified benchmarks. A student on Financial Aid Probation who fails to meet the terms of her or his academic plan will not be eligible for financial aid in the following payment period.

Students may regain financial aid eligibility by meeting the satisfactory academic progress requirements.