

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Your continuation as a graduate student at UW-Madison is at the discretion of your program, the Graduate School, and your faculty advisor. Any student may be placed on probation or dismissed from the Graduate School for not maintaining satisfactory academic progress, and this can impact your academic standing (detailed below), [financial aid](#), or funding (consult your sources of funding, as applicable). Our program has its own definition of satisfactory academic progress and related procedures that supplement Graduate School policy, as described in this section.

Definition

Information about how the Graduate School determines satisfactory academic progress can be found at [this policy page](#). In addition to the Graduate School's monitoring of satisfactory academic progress, this program regularly reviews the satisfactory academic progress of its students, defined as the following:

I. Criteria

- A. 3.0 + cumulative GPA at all times
- B. Direct Admitted MA Students: At least 8 credits toward program requirements by end of Semester I; At least 16 credits toward program requirements by end of Semester II; At least 24 credits toward program requirements by end of semester III; Overall program time limit of 2 years. For domestic part time students, this requirement is void.
- C. Transfer from Math Department VISP program: 8 credits toward graduate resident requirement and 24 credits toward program requirements by end of semester I (Including 15 transfer credits from VISP year); Overall VISP/MA program time limit of 2 years.
- D. 542/522 completed in the first year or waived.
- E. Meet with academic advisor on record at least once per semester.
- F. Holding an assistantship is not considered justification for failure to meet satisfactory progress criteria.
- G. Students are responsible for knowing program and university deadlines, as well as checking their departmental/university email and physical mailboxes regularly. Failure to check email or departmental mail is not an excuse for not responding to notifications of unsatisfactory progress or missing program deadlines.

II. Consequences

- H. Students not meeting satisfactory progress criteria are immediately placed on academic probation. Students will normally have one semester to clear the academic probation or be subject to program dismissal.
- I. If, in the judgment of the VISP/MA committee, it is not possible for a student to clear an academic probation in a single semester, such as for a very low GPA, or in serious cases of academic misconduct, a student may be subject to immediate program dismissal, rather than being placed on probation first.

- J. Students who are on probation are strongly discouraged from holding an assistantship or other outside employment.

III. Procedures

- K. Program Coordinator and Program Director verify satisfactory progress criteria every semester.
- L. Any student not in compliance is notified that they are not in compliance with satisfactory progress criteria, of the potential consequences, and that the faculty members of the VISP/MA Program Committee will discuss their case.
- M. Students are expected to meet with their advisor and Program Director within two weeks of notification to discuss the situation.
- N. Student meets with advisor and Director to formulate a request for an extension and/or a plan to return to compliance with the standard. Director transmits request/plan to the Program Committee for consideration.
- O. Faculty on the Program Committee meet to discuss the case and make a decision on whether to approve one semester probation period.
- P. If this is the first time that a student has fallen below the criteria and they are close to meeting the standard, the Program Director may issue a one-semester extension after notifying the committee by email.
- Q. Possible consequences:
 - 1. Program dismissal:
 - a) Serious cases of academic misconduct
 - b) Failure to conform to the standard after an initial probationary period
 - c) The committee deems it impossible for the student to conform to the standard after one semester.
 - 2. Probationary status for one semester. At the end of the probationary period, students are expected to return to compliance with the satisfactory progress criteria. Extensions of the probationary status past one semester will decide on a case-by-case basis and only granted in exceptional circumstances.
 - 3. One-time modification of satisfactory progress criteria, such as a one-semester extension of credit/course requirements or the overall program time limit.

IV. Further Extensions, Reconsiderations, and Appeals

- R. If a student reaches the end of an extension without meeting the relevant milestone, they may request a further extension from the committee by email to the [Director of VISP/MA program](#), with copy to the MA Program Coordinator. However, extensions beyond one semester are exceptionally rare. Such a petition should provide good evidence of plans and ability to return to conformance with the standard within one semester. Extensions of more than one semester will be granted only in truly extraordinary circumstances.



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Extensions will be granted formally with a note of explanation to be placed in the student's file.

- S. Students have two weeks following notification of a negative decision from the VISP/MA Committee to request a reconsideration. Requests should be directed to the VISP/MA Committee chair (normally the Director of VISP/MA Program). Reconsideration requests will be granted only when circumstances have significantly changed, appropriate protocols/policies were not correctly followed by the committee/chair, or the student is able to provide substantial new evidence not previously considered by the committee.
- T. Further requests must be directed to the Department Chair or handled through the [graduate school grievance process](#).