SAP violation guidance

VCU Financial Aid can inform students that they are not making satisfactory academic progress (SAP). This is not something to necessarily be alarmed about, but it is something to be addressed quickly to prevent potential problems with PHD student support and financial aid to all students.

Here's how to address these:

1. A student that receives a notification from Financial aid should identify why they are considered as not making SAP by contacting VCU Financial Aid as needed.
2. If the student has been flagged for SAP because they have exceeded 150% of minimum credits, here's the process:
    a. Student should draft an appeal letter that addresses the SAP violation. The letter should state unequivocally (if appropriate) that all of the accumulated and anticipated credits are required for and will count toward the degree. Specific courses that the student will take should be listed along with the anticipated time-line to complete the degree. One page should be sufficient.
    b. Student should distribute the draft letter to the advisor and program director for input, revise, and send a final version to the advisor, program director and the Associate Dean for Graduate Education.
    c. The Advisor, program director and the ADGE will each write letters of support and send to the student. One page letters that align with and reinforce the student's letter should be sufficient.
    d. The student will assemble the letters and any other required information and submit the appeal per the instructions from financial aid.
3. If the student has been flagged for SAP because their cumulative GPA is too low, here's the process:
    a. The student should draft an appeal letter that describes what happened, how or whether the student has made academic progress recently (if appropriate), and what the plan is for the student to return to making SAP. The plan should include specific courses that the student will take and the time-line for taking those courses.
    b. Student should distribute the draft letter to the advisor and program director for input, revise and send a final version to the advisor and program director. A letter from the ADGE is not typically required for SAP violations related to GPA.
    c. The advisor and program director should each develop a letter that align with and reinforce the points addressed in the student's letter. One page letters should be sufficient.
    d. The student will assemble the letters and any other required information and submit the appeal per the instructions from financial aid.
4. If the student has been flagged for SAP unrelated to 150% credits or GPA, the program director should contact the ADGE for how to proceed.