

SECTION 12: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

12.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities

To be eligible for Title IV aid, a student must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Federal regulations require GC to establish and apply reasonable standards of satisfactory academic progress for the purpose of the receipt of financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. The law requires institutions to develop policies regarding satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Each institution must design criteria which outlines the definition of student progress towards a degree and the consequences to the student if progress is not achieved. GC students who wish to be considered for financial aid must maintain satisfactory academic progress in their selected course of study as set forth in this policy.

Students who receive federal and/or state funds administered by the Grayson College (GC) Office of Financial Aid must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress. The student's academic record at GC is used to measure satisfactory academic progress and all periods of enrollment at GC must be counted, including any semester in which the student did not receive financial aid. If a student attended other colleges, the courses completed that are accepted as transfer credit by GC will be considered in the evaluation of SAP. There are three standards for satisfactory academic progress: cumulative grade point average (GPA), successful completion of courses (Pace), and max time frame.

Last updated: January 2015

12.2 Same As or Stricter Than

Policies

The Department of Education SAP policy for which GC's OFA is required to follow for Title IV students is stricter than the school's standards for students enrolled in the same educational program who are not receiving Title IV aid. The Department of Ed SAP policy does not allow the OFA to override the GPA of a student who receives a "Fresh Start" by the institution.

Last updated: January 2015

12.3 Categories of Students

Policies

Students' progress will be reviewed at the end of each long semester. December for students enrolled in the Fall - Fall I and/or Fall II semester(s), May for students enrolled in the Spring, Spring I and/or Spring II semester(s), and August for students enrolled in the Summer, Summer I and/or Summer II semester(s). Notification of a student's financial aid eligibility status will be

Resources

668.16(e)
668.32(f)
668.34
2014–15 FSA
Handbook, p. 1-9
2013–14 FSA
Handbook, p. 2-50

Resources

668.34(a)(1)
2014–15 FSA
Handbook, p. 1-9
2013–14 FSA
Handbook, p. 2-50

Resources

668.34(a)(3)
2014–15 FSA
Handbook, p. 1-10

posted on his or her Campus Connect account and they should access Campus Connect to verify their status.

Last updated: September 2014

12.3.1 Financial Aid Suspension

Financial aid suspension occurs when students fail to meet the requirements of SAP at the end of the warning period or have reached 150% or the max-time frame of the published length of their academic program. The student must successfully complete at least 67% of the cumulative hours they have attempted and their cumulative GPA must be 2.0 or higher. When this is accomplished the student will be removed from financial aid suspension and therefore be eligible for financial aid. Students are responsible for notifying the Office of Financial Aid when they have regained eligibility for aid. Students cannot regain eligibility with max-time suspension without an approved appeal.

12.3.2 Financial Aid Warning

Financial Aid Warning occurs when the cumulative grade point average is less than 2.0 and/or less than 67% of attempted cumulative course work is successfully completed for any semester a student receives financial aid. Financial Aid Warning also occurs if the student receives all F's for attempted classes in a semester. The Director of Financial Aid also reserves the right, through professional judgment, to place a student on Financial Aid Warning. There is no need to appeal financial aid warning. Students will receive financial aid the next semester they attend for one semester; this includes student loans, while on financial aid warning. If, by the end of the semester that the student is on financial aid warning, the student is not meeting satisfactory academic progress, they will be placed on financial aid suspension. There is no warning period for exceeding the max time frame.

12.3.3 Financial Aid Probation

Financial aid probation is a period that only occurs if a student has an approved appeal. The period is not to exceed one long semester then if necessary the student is placed on an Academic Success Plan. During the probationary status the student will receive financial aid but must meet the conditions of their probation, stated in a letter they will receive upon approval. If the student is on probation the student must maintain at least a 2.5 semester GPA and 75% semester Pace. At the end of the semester while the student is on probation, their progress will be re-evaluated by the Office of Financial Aid.

12.4 Qualitative Measure

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0. Grades of A, B, C, D, F and WF contribute toward the cumulative GPA, while grades of W, P, I, AU, U and G do not. Students who do not have any post-secondary academic history (first time college enrollment) will be assumed to be making satisfactory academic progress at the time of first enrollment. Remedial course work is not

Resources

668.34(a)(8)(i)
668.34(b), *Financial aid warning*
668.34(c)(1),(2)(i)
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*,
pp. 1-11 to 1-12

Resources

668.34(a)(8)(ii),
668.34(b), *Financial aid probation*
668.34(c)(2)(ii),
(3),(4),(d)(2)
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*,
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

included in the cumulative GPA. The last grade earned for a repeated course is included in the student's GPA. Students may be funded for a repeated course but only if the student previously received an unacceptable (F, W, WF, U, I) grade or unless the repeated course is required to achieve the student's educational goal. At this time transfer grades are not included in the GC GPA calculation.

12.5 Quantitative Measure

12.5.1 Successful Completion of Courses (Pace)

Students must successfully complete each term with at least 67% of all hours attempted at GC. This includes both developmental and college level course work as well as transfer courses accepted. Successful completion is measured by grades of A, B, C, D, and P. Grades of F, W, WF, U, and I are counted toward the total hours attempted but not successfully completed each semester. At GC, for financial aid purposes, being enrolled in a course for credit beyond the official census deadline counts as an attempt.

12.5.2 Max Time Frame

Federal regulations specify that the maximum time frame for program completion may not exceed 150% of the published length of the program. Earning a certificate or associate degree from GC automatically meets the max time a student is eligible for aid at GC.

All college level credit hours attempted at GC, including transfer credit hours accepted at GC are counted toward the maximum time frame limit. For example: if the GC Catalog lists a major which is 60 hours, then a student will automatically be placed on suspension after the student has attempted 90 hours, which is 150% of the 60 hours required for the major. Students who exceed the 150% maximum time limit will no longer be eligible for financial aid. After exceeding the max time frame the student cannot regain eligibility, they may only be placed on an Academic Success Plan and must complete their program within the conditions set therein.

Developmental classes count toward the 150% maximum time frame. The student is allowed to appeal to request financial aid for additional hours above the number required in the program if: the classes apply toward the student's program, changing their program, or earn a second degree at GC.

Last updated: May 2015

12.6 Appeals

Procedures

Students placed on financial aid suspension due to lack of satisfactory progress may appeal the denial of financial aid due to an unusual or extraordinary situation that affected the student's progression toward the successful completion of his or her program of study.

Resources

668.34(a)(9),
668.34(b), *Appeal*
668.34(c)(3)(ii),
(iii),(d)(2)(ii),(iii)
668.42(c)(2)(ii)
2014–15 *FSA*
Handbook,
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

Examples of unusual circumstances include: injury or illness of the student or family member, death of a relative of the student, maximum time limit exceeded, or other extenuating circumstances.

The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Office of Financial Aid and should include: an explanation of the reason(s) why the minimum Satisfactory Academic Progress standards were not achieved and supply a copy of all supporting documents.

Students must provide an Academic Appeal Agreement form that has been signed by an academic advisor. If the appeal is reviewed and subsequently approved by the Appeals Committee, the student's financial aid status will be changed to Probation.

The Director of Financial Aid shall also have the authority to place conditions upon the receipt of any financial aid for those cases where aid is reinstated. If an appeal is denied the student will be required to regain eligibility at their own expense by:

- Raising their cumulative GPA to 2.0 or higher
- Successfully complete at least 67% of all courses attempted, while attempting no more than 150% of the total published credit hours in their program

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the Office of Financial Aid that they have regained eligibility.

Students who obtain a certificate and choose to follow the same academic path pursuing another certificate or associate degree in the same program must file a Certificate Completion - Max Timeframe Continuation Appeal.

Students are notified of the SAP policy in the GC Catalog, each award year with Consumer Information Notification and it is posted on the GC Financial Aid webpage.

Last updated: May 2015

12.6.1 Documentation

Policies

As with any use of PJ, adequate documentation is critical. A student who appeals must submit information explaining why he or she failed to meet SAP standards and what has changed in his or her situation which will allow him or her to be making SAP by the next evaluation. Additionally, since third parties may be used to document the mitigating circumstances surrounding a SAP appeal, Some examples might include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Newspaper obituaries or death certificates to substantiate deaths

- ◆ Physician’s written statement to substantiate illness or accident
- ◆ Written statement from clergy, family member, or other third party who knows the student’s situation
- ◆ Written statement from academic advisor or professor

Last updated: January 2015

12.6.2 Academic Plans *Policies*

Academic plans are used for all students on Financial Aid Probation. Students are required to have a plan evaluated and signed by an academic advisor. The student will not be allowed to change the approved plan and will not be allowed to enroll in classes not listed within the plan. If a student insists on enrolling in a course not listed on their plan, they will immediately forfeit their Title IV eligibility.

668.34(c)(3)(iii)(B),
(d)(2)(iii)(B)
Federal Register,
10/29/10, p. 66886
2014–15 *FSA*
Handbook,
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

Last updated: January 2015

12.7 Monitoring Probation

The OFA will monitor students who are on FA Probation each semester.

12.8 Regaining Eligibility

Policies & Procedures

A student not making SAP may re-establish eligibility on his or her own, either because an appeal was denied, or because he or she did not submit an appeal. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the OFA if they have regained a 2.0 or 67% Pace. Students who have met the max time limit cannot regain eligibility. To have their aid reinstated, a student must submit a Financial Aid Reinstatement form to the OFA. Once the student’s Title IV eligibility is verified, the OFA will package the current semester Title IV funds.

Resources

668.34(a)(9)(i),(10)
2014–15 *FSA*
Handbook, p. 1-13

Last updated: January 2015

12.9 Completion of Degree Requirements

Policies

A student who has completed all the coursework for his or her degree or certificate but has not yet received the degree or certificate cannot receive further Title IV aid for that program.

Resources

2014–15 *FSA*
Handbook, p. 1-10

Last updated: January 2015

Procedures

At the end of each semester the registrar provides a report of all financial aid recipients who have fulfilled all degree or certificate requirements. These students are placed on financial aid suspension.

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