

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Federal, state, and institutional regulations require students receiving financial aid to maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Financial aid includes, but is not limited to, the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Direct Student Loans, Federal Work Study, all South Carolina State grant programs, and all institutional aid programs. The institution's SAP evaluation must include two major components: 1) a qualitative measure and 2) a quantitative measure (comprised of progression rate, maximum timeframe, and developmental coursework). These components are explained below. Individual programs may have additional or varying requirements as stipulated by the guidelines of that program. Both the qualitative and quantitative standards are cumulative and include all curriculum classes and periods of enrollment at Spartanburg Community College (SCC) even those for which the student did not receive financial aid funds.

Qualitative Measure

A student receiving financial aid at SCC must maintain a financial aid cumulative grade point average (FA-GPA) at or above a 2.0. The cumulative FA-GPA will be evaluated at the end of each academic term. Any student having a cumulative FA-GPA that is below 2.0 shall be placed on financial aid warning during the next term they attend, consecutive or otherwise. The student will be notified of his/her warning status by the Financial Aid Office via an email sent to their SCC email account. The student may receive financial aid during the warning term of enrollment. If the student's cumulative FA-GPA does not meet to the 2.0 requirement by the end of the warning term, he/she will be placed on financial aid suspension and all federal aid will be terminated until he/she regains the minimum required cumulative FA-GPA.

Please note the following conditions:

- For the qualitative measure, the FA-GPA will be cumulative and all grades for classes in which the student was enrolled as of the census date of each academic term will be counted including remedial courses.
- Cumulative FA-GPA is computed by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total credit hours attempted for which the student received grades of A, B, C, D, F, or I. No quality points are earned for grades of F or I. For financial aid purposes, an incomplete grade (I) is treated as a failing grade until proven otherwise.
- Classes in which the student has been listed as a "Never Attend" have no grade value and therefore will not be included in the FA-GPA calculation.
- If a student repeats a course, the higher grade will be used in the calculation of the FA-GPA. Each time a course is repeated the credit hours will be counted towards the student's maximum time frame (see Quantitative Measures).

Quantitative Measures

1. Maximum Time Frame (previously referred to as Length)

Any student receiving financial aid will have a maximum time frame (MTF) in which he/she is expected to complete¹ a program of study. Regulations require that the time frame be no more than 150% of the established length of the program. At SCC, the 150% time frame will be measured in terms of credit hours attempted². Once the student has attempted 150% of the credit hours allowed in his/her program, he/she is no longer eligible for federal financial aid at SCC. Remedial courses are excluded from this calculation. If a student changes their major, they are responsible for adhering to the 150% maximum time frame of the new major.

Example: If a program requires 60 credit hours to complete, then a student must complete their program within 90 attempted credit ($60 \times 150\% = 90$).

¹ In order for a program to be considered complete the student must complete all required hours for the program, submit an application for graduation, and have that application approved by the Registrar's Office.

² For the quantitative measure, credit hours attempted will be cumulative and all hours for which the student was enrolled as of the census date of each academic term and received a grade of the following: A, B, C, D, F, I, or W will be counted.

2. Progression Rate

Students are also required to successfully complete 67% of the cumulative credit hours attempted. Grades of A, B, C, D, E, and TR will be counted as hours attempted and successfully completed. Grades of F, I, and W will not count as hours successfully completed, but will count as hours attempted. A grade of AU (audit) will not be counted as attempted hours or hours successfully completed. Remedial courses are excluded from this calculation.

Quantitative progress will be evaluated at the end of each term. Any student not successfully completing 67% of the cumulative credit hours attempted shall be placed on financial aid warning during the next term they attend, consecutive or otherwise. The student will be notified of his/her warning status by the Financial Aid Office via an email sent to their SCC email account. The student may receive financial aid during the warning term of enrollment. If the student is not back within acceptable standards by the end of the warning term, he/she will be placed on financial aid suspension and all federal aid will be terminated until he/she has successfully completed 67% of the classes being attempted.

Example: 13 cumulative credit hours attempted and the student successfully completed 9 of the attempted credit hours. Divide the numbers of hours successfully completed by the total number of hours attempted. i.e. $9/13 = .692 \times 100 = 69.2\%$ completion rate.

3. Remedial Coursework

Students who are required to take remedial courses, as determined by placement testing, may receive financial aid for up to 30 attempted credit hours of remedial course work. Once a student has attempted the maximum 30 credit hours, remedial credit hours will no longer be included when calculating the student's enrollment status. Grades earned in remedial courses will be included in calculating the financial aid grade point average for financial aid purposes. Remedial course work is not included in the Maximum Timeframe or Progression calculation.

Please note the following:

Courses not within the student's program of study that are taken as a prerequisite for a required course are considered remedial courses. These courses will be counted towards the student's 30 credit hour maximum for remedial course work. These courses will also count towards the student's maximum time frame and progression.

Effects of Previous Credits

1. Transfer Students – any student transferring from another college who has no previous SCC credit will be considered to be making satisfactory progress at the time of his/her enrollment. Credit hours accepted for transfer will be considered hours attempted and hours successfully completed. Transfer credit hours will be counted in the student's maximum time frame, but will not count towards the student's progression rate. Transfer classes are not assigned letter grades when transferred to SCC so they will not be used when calculating the student's FA-GPA.

2. SCC Returning Students – returning students will have their cumulative FA-GPA carried forward, subject to the institutional policy regarding transfer of credit within the institution. This procedure is in accordance with federal regulations stating that SAP standards must cover all periods of the student's enrollment regardless of whether they received financial assistance during those periods.

3. SCC Graduates – if a student graduates from a program at SCC and desires to pursue another degree, that student will assume the maximum time frame of the new program. All previously attempted credit hours will be included.

Procedure for Reinstatement of Financial Aid

Students who have had their aid terminated may reestablish eligibility for financial aid in one of two ways: 1) by enrolling in subsequent semester(s) at his/her own expense until satisfactory academic progress is achieved, or 2) by the appeals process, if approved (see below).

Procedure to Appeal Financial Aid Suspension

To appeal financial aid suspension, a student must be able to demonstrate the existence of mitigating circumstances. Mitigating circumstances are defined as, but not limited to, serious injury or illness of the student, death of an immediate family member (spouse, child, sibling, or parent), significant trauma in the student's life, or undue hardship caused by unusual circumstances. Documentation of the mitigating circumstance is required and the student's appeal request will not be considered without sufficient documentation. The student must prove that the mitigating circumstance(s) has been resolved and will no longer be a detriment to the student's performance. The student's prior academic performance and withdrawal rate will be closely scrutinized in the appeal process. The following steps shall be taken in the appeal process:

1. The student must complete the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form and return it to the Financial Aid Office along with supporting documentation. If the student is appealing as a result of Maximum Time Frame ineligibility they should complete a Maximum Time Frame Appeal form. The student must have a cumulative FA-GPA of 2.0 or higher and a cumulative completion rate of 67% or higher to be eligible to submit a Maximum Time Frame Appeal. Documentation to support the appeal is **REQUIRED** by both appeals. Incomplete forms or forms received without supporting documentation **WILL NOT** be reviewed.
2. The Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form along with the supporting documentation will be reviewed by a designated staff/faculty member to determine whether or not mitigating circumstances did exist and the appeal is justified. The student's transcript and past performance will also be reviewed to determine if the student can reasonably benefit from an additional term with the help of financial aid. The student will be advised of the decision via an email sent to the student's SCC email account. If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation with an academic plan for one term. The academic plan will specify what criteria must be met at the end of the probation term in order for the student to continue to receive financial aid for the next semester they attend. If the student fails to meet the specified criteria at the end of the probationary term, the student will be placed back in a suspension status and their aid will be terminated. The student may submit additional appeals if **NEW** mitigating circumstances exist. New documentation must be provided. Previously used mitigating circumstances cannot be used in a new appeal.

3. A student who has been granted a probation term and successfully met the conditions of their academic plan will be placed on a Conditional Satisfactory status. The student will remain in this status as long as they are meeting the conditions of their academic plan or they have regained eligibility by achieving a cumulative FA-GPA of 2.0 or higher and a progression percentage of 67% or higher. If the student does not meet the conditions of their academic plan, the student will immediately be placed in a suspension status. The student may submit additional appeals if **NEW** mitigating circumstances exist. New documentation must be provided. Previously used mitigating circumstances cannot be used in a new appeal.
4. The Maximum Time Frame Appeal form will be reviewed by a designated staff/faculty member. The student's transcript and past performance will also be reviewed to determine if the student can complete their program within a reasonable amount of time. The student will be advised of the decision via an email sent to the student's SCC email account. If the appeal is approved, the student will be granted a limited amount of time where they can continue pursuing their degree with the help of financial aid, if otherwise eligible. If the student fails to complete their program within the designated amount of time or they fail to meet the stipulations of their academic plan during any given term, their federal aid will be terminated. The student may submit additional appeals if **NEW** mitigating circumstances exist.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Status Definitions

Listed below are the definitions of each of the Satisfactory Academic Progress statuses along with a brief description of the status. The code in parentheses is the code that appears in the college's computers system.

- **Satisfactory (O)** – The status assigned to students who meet or exceed the minimum FA-GPA, progression rate, and maximum time frame standards. Student is eligible to receive financial aid as long as all other aid eligibility requirements are met.
- **Warning (WG, WP, WB)** – The status assigned to students who fails to meet the minimum FA-GPA and/or progression rate standards. Student is eligible to receive aid during a “warning” term as long as all other aid eligibility requirements are met.
- **Suspended (SG, SP, SB)** – The status assigned to students who have been given a “warning” term, but have failed to regain eligibility by meeting or exceeding the minimum FA-GPA and/or progression rate standards. This status is also assigned to students who have been granted a “probation” term and have failed to meet the conditions of their Academic Plan. Student is not eligible for financial aid.
- **Probation (PG, PP, PB)** – The status assigned to students who have been placed on financial aid suspension, but have had aid eligibility reinstated as a result of a successful appeal. Student is eligible for aid for one subsequent payment period. A student given a “probation” term will be required to meet certain terms and conditions associated with an Academic Plan to continue to be eligible for financial aid.
- **Conditional Satisfactory (OC)** – The status assigned to students who have been granted a “probation” term and have met the conditions of their Academic Plan, but still fail to meet or exceed the minimum FA-GPA and/or progression rate standards. Students will remain in this status as long they continue to remain below the minimum FA-GPA and/or progression rate

standards, but continue to meet the conditions of their Academic Plan. Student is eligible to receive financial aid as long as all other aid eligibility requirements are met.

- **Maximum Time Frame Nearing (MN)** – The status assigned to students who have attempted 120% of the maximum number of credit hours allowed for their program of study. This status serves as a warning to the students that they are close to exceeding the maximum time frame allowed for their program. Student is eligible to receive financial aid as long as all other aid eligibility requirements are met.
- **Maximum Time Frame Exceeded (M, MG, MP, MB)** – The status assigned to students who have exceeded the 150% limit for attempted credit hours for their program of study. Students in this status are not eligible to receive financial aid.
- **Maximum Time Frame Probation (M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, M1G, M2G, M3G, M4G, M5G, M1P, M2P, M3P, M4P, M5P, M1B, M2B, M3B, M4B, M5B)** – The status assigned to students who have exceeded the maximum 150% attempted credit hour limit, but have regained eligibility as a result of a successful appeal. Student is eligible for aid for a prescribed number of terms based on their meeting the conditions of their academic plan. Students on maximum time frame probation must meet or exceed the minimum FA-GPA and progression rate standards.

These procedures are subject to change based on institutional, state, and federal guidelines.