

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY
FOR STUDENT FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENTS AT CSCU COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

Federal regulations require that a student receiving financial aid under the Title IV programs make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in accordance with the standards set by the Board of Regents, and the US Department of Education pursuant to 34 CFR 668.34. The contents of this policy were approved by the Board of Regents on April 7, 2016 and are effective for periods of enrollment subsequent to the Spring 2017 semester. Questions concerning this policy should be addressed to the Director of Financial Aid Services at the attending Connecticut Community College.

POLICY

Recipients of financial aid under the Title IV programs or other financial aid programs directly administered or certified by the college must maintain satisfactory academic progress towards the completion of a certificate or degree program. Students must be cognizant when selecting a program that certain certificates are not eligible for financial aid. The progress standards within are determined in accordance with a student’s current primary curriculum in a certificate or degree program.

Satisfactory academic progress for financial aid recipients in both certificate and degree programs is determined using a student’s cumulative academic history at the college, by means of Cumulative Grade Point Average (qualitative) and Cumulative Pace (quantitative) components. A student must successfully complete the designated pace percentage (earned credits/attempted credits) according to their program of study. For financial aid purposes, all attempted credits resulting in either an academic grade or administrative transcript notation will be included in the quantitative calculation. Incomplete courses, course withdrawals, course repetitions, noncredit remedial courses (with appropriate credit equivalency evaluation), and ESL courses are also included in this assessment. Transfer credits are counted as both attempted and earned credits in the calculation for determining satisfactory academic progress.

For students who change majors or change between certificate and degree programs, a cumulative academic history is still considered and assessments will be performed based on the primary program of study. A student's cumulative academic history will be evaluated at the end of each payment period and prior to the subsequent term’s financial aid disbursement. This policy will be used to evaluate all students uniformly, regardless of their enrollment level. In order to graduate, a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 is required in all courses that are applicable to the program of study.

Standards for Certificate Seeking Students

Credits Attempted	Minimum Cumulative GPA	Minimum Completion Pace
0 – 11.99	0.0	0.00%
12 +	2.0	67.00%

Standards for Degree Seeking Students

Credits Attempted	Minimum Cumulative GPA	Minimum Completion Pace
0 – 11.99	0.0	0.00%
12 - 30.99	1.7	50.00%
31 - 49.99	2.0	50.00%
50 – 59.99	2.0	60.00%
60 +	2.0	67.00%

Advising Requirement

For students falling below a cumulative GPA of 1.7 and/or a minimum completion pace of 50%, they will be required to meet with advising staff prior to continuing to receive financial aid.

Repeat/Audit Coursework

Financial aid recipients are limited to one repetition of a previously passed course in their program of study. The second repetition of a previously passed course will not be eligible for financial aid payment. Audit courses are not financial aid eligible.

Communication

Students will receive notification prior to the start of a period of enrollment via postal mail or email that will describe any changes to the status of their academic progress. Updates to academic progress status will also be made available to students through myCommNet (<http://my.commnet.edu>).

Maximum Credit Hours

Students may receive financial aid for any attempted credits in his/her program of study that do not exceed 150% of the published length of the student's educational program at the college. For example, students enrolled in a 60 credit degree program may receive financial aid for a maximum of 90 attempted credit hours. Similarly, students enrolled in a 30 credit certificate program may receive financial aid for a maximum of 45 attempted credit hours. Any attempted credits at the college must be included in the calculation. The 150% maximum credit hours rule is applicable to students who change majors, programs, or who pursue a double major.

Financial Aid Warning

Students who fail to meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress standard will be placed on Financial Aid Warning only once during their academic career at the college. Students on Warning may continue to receive financial aid for one payment period despite a determination that the student is not maintaining satisfactory academic progress. The Warning period will be the student's next semester or period of enrollment at the college. Those students who achieve Satisfactory Progress after a Warning period but fail the academic standards at a later date will have an Unsatisfactory Progress status. The college will communicate the Warning status to these students and inform them that they must meet

the academic progress standard by the end of the subsequent enrollment period in order to maintain eligibility to participate in the financial aid programs at the college.

Unsatisfactory Progress

Students who fail to meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress standard at the end of the Warning period will become ineligible from the financial aid programs at the college. The college will communicate a status of Unsatisfactory Progress to students and inform them of the available Reinstatement and Appeal processes.

Reinstatement Process

A student's financial aid eligibility will be automatically reinstated at such time as the student meets the minimum satisfactory academic progress standard. Reinstatement to the financial aid programs may also occur upon a successful appeal by the student (see Appeal Process below).

Financial Aid Probation

Any student who fails to meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress standard at the end of the Warning period will become ineligible from the financial aid programs at the college. Ineligible students have the opportunity to file an appeal regarding their unsatisfactory progress within the assessment for financial aid programs. Students that have failed the academic progress standard and have been approved with a successful appeal will be considered on Financial Aid Probation. The terms of Financial Aid Probation are set by the college during the Appeal Process.

Appeal Process

Students may request consideration for reinstatement to the financial aid programs through the following Appeal Process:

If a student feels their failure to meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress standard was the result of an unusual or extraordinary situation that affected successful progression, the student may appeal to the Financial Aid Office. Examples of personal mitigating circumstances could include illness or injury of the student or dependent of the student, a death in the family, or other undue hardship as the result of special circumstances. An appeal form is available in the Financial Aid Office.

To provide consistency in decision-making, a designated administrator or committee at the attending institution will make all appeal decisions in a timely manner upon review of the appeal form and any applicable documentation. The student must:

1. In writing, explain the extenuating circumstances causing the non-compliance;
2. In writing, give a detailed explanation of specifically what has changed that will allow satisfactory progress to be demonstrated at the next evaluation; and
3. Substantiate it with third party documentation (i.e. physician's note).

Should an appeal be approved and the student is not mathematically able to return to satisfactory academic progress at the conclusion of the subsequent enrollment period, a designated administrator or committee at the attending college will devise an appropriate academic plan for the upcoming semester with the student. For example, the terms of an academic plan may be as follows:

1. Register and successfully complete a minimum of six (6) credits; and
2. Successfully complete these courses with a minimum GPA of 2.0.

At the end of the semester, grades will be evaluated. If the student has met the required terms of the academic plan, the student may remain on Financial Aid Probation and continue to receive financial aid the following semester. If the student fails to meet the terms of the academic plan in any subsequent semester, the student will become ineligible to participate in all financial aid programs until the student is able to once again meet the minimum requirements for academic progress. Student progress will continue to be monitored at the end of each semester with the same terms in place until the student is in compliance with this policy.

If the student's appeal is denied and the student is already registered for the upcoming semester, the student is responsible for any monies owed to the college. If the student pays for the next semester and successfully completes all classes with a GPA of 2.0 or better, the student may appeal again after that semester.

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