

Satisfactory Academic Progress

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to meet the federal requirements established by the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by Congress, for students receiving financial aid. 34 CFR 668.34

II. Scope

This policy applies to all students receiving Title IV aid, applicable state aid programs, and all institutionally administered financial aid and scholarship programs.

III. Policy

Federal and state regulations require that students maintain adequate progress towards receiving a degree in order to continue eligibility for financial aid programs. The following standards are for financial aid purposes only and neither replace nor override the college's academic policies. A student is reviewed for eligibility no matter if the individual received aid during the period reviewed.

This policy shall apply to all State, Federal Title IV or HEA approved programs requiring satisfactory academic progress. The Financial Aid Director, who will develop, revise and enforce the procedures for aid retention, will administer this policy.

The following standards are applicable to all students applying for and/or receiving assistance administered by the Financial Aid Office:

General Information

- To receive federal student aid, eligible students must be enrolled at least half-time (6 hours), with the exception of Federal Pell Grant.
- Special/non-degree students (as defined in the college catalog) will not be considered for aid.
- Students must meet both quantitative (Pace) and qualitative (GPA) standards to be eligible for aid.
- The entire academic record will be reviewed, to include courses that were part of a Fresh Start and transfer hours.

A student is in violation of maintaining satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes if the student meets a condition in Standard 1 or fails to meet any of the additional standards.

Standards

Standard 1: Academic Status

Students who do not earn any credits in any one semester will be considered to be making unsatisfactory academic progress. Additionally, these students may be responsible for repayment of federal aid received for that term. A warning period does not apply.

Standard 2: Qualitative (GPA)

Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average based on the number of credit hours attempted at the college in order to maintain satisfactory progress toward graduation. This includes college level, ESL, and learning support courses. This does not include transfer credit or credit by exam (AP credit).

Standard 3: Quantitative/PACE of Completion (Overall Attempted vs. Overall Earned Hours)

Students must maintain at least a 67% overall class completion rate (PACE) of all classes attempted at the college and/or transfer courses accepted. Hours attempted include all hours transferred in to Dyersburg State Community College and all hours enrolled in at Dyersburg State Community College on the *institution's official enrollment reporting date*. Class hours that are withdrawn, repeated, or earn incomplete grades after the institution's enrollment reporting date are included in attempted hours. Repeats of previously passed courses can cause a student's completion rate to decrease. A grade of A, B, C, D, or P are required for successful completion. Grades of W, I, E, F, FA, and AU do not count as completed courses for the student. **Standard rounding rules are used when calculating percentages under the 67% PACE requirement, i.e. 66.5% PACE percentage is rounded to 67%.**

To determine completion/PACE percentage:

Take the total number of overall combined earned hours divided by overall combined attempted hours. For example, a student attempted 45 hours and earned 25. The student would take the 25 earned hours and divide by the 45 hours attempted ($25 / 45 = 55\%$). The completion rate is 55%, and the person is not eligible for financial aid because the rate is below the required 67% completion rate. In this same scenario, a student should have earned at least 31 hours in order to remain eligible for financial aid. ($31 / 45 = 68\%$).

Standard 4: Maximum Time Frame (MTF)

Students are expected to complete the requirements for a degree within a reasonable timeframe. Students are evaluated each semester on whether or not they have reached the Maximum Timeframe limits. For this standard, the allowable time is based upon the number of hours each student attempts. The maximum number of hours a student is allowed to attempt for the first associate degree program and Title IV certificate programs is 150% of the minimum number of hours required to graduate in a specific major. For example: If 60 hours of coursework is required to complete the degree, then a student can attempt a maximum of 90 hours ($60 \times 150\%$).

The college will consider a student to have reached this limit at the end of the semester in which he or she reaches or exceeds the maximum hours. Transfer credit, repeated coursework, incomplete coursework and audit coursework count toward the attempted hours. All college coursework and transfer coursework accepted is included in this measurement even if it does not apply to the student's current program of study. At any point, when it becomes mathematically impossible for a student to complete their program of study within the MTF, the student will become ineligible for

all federal financial aid programs. This timeframe limitation does not include remedial or developmental courses for which the maximum federal limitation is thirty (30) attempted credit hours.

Mathematically Impossible Scenario

A student's degree requires 60 credit hours. He or she attempted 52 hours and earned 16 hours. There are 44 additional hours required for degree completion. The remaining hours along with attempted hours applicable to the student's degree program exceed 90 hours.

Required Hours for Degree: 60

Attempted Hours: 52

Earned Hours: 16

Remaining Hours to Complete Degree: 44

Total Attempted and Remaining Hours: $52 + 44 = 96$

In this scenario, it is mathematically impossible for the student to complete the degree within the 150% timeframe.

Additional Guidelines

Academic Fresh Start

Students granted Academic Fresh Start remain accountable for all work on their records. The hours attempted will still be considered when evaluating for MTF. The forgiveness of previously completed coursework will result in a lowering of completion rate (PACE). All courses that have been attempted and completed (including transfer hours) will count towards overall hours and will be part of the SAP evaluation (both quantitative and qualitative components). Therefore, it is possible for a student who has been granted academic fresh start to be placed on financial aid suspension.

Repeat Courses

Students should refer to the academic regulations within the college catalog to determine how course repeats are counted in the institutional GPA calculation.

In relation to this policy, all attempted college level credit hours (including repeated coursework credit hours) are included in the quantitative/pace and MTF measurements. Additionally, all attempted remedial/developmental (R&D), also referred to as learning support courses, coursework (including repeated R&D credit hours) are included in the R&D thirty (30) attempted credit hour limitation.

A student may repeat a failed course until passed (depending on eligibility). However, for a passed course, a student may only be paid federal financial aid one additional time. Passed courses are any course with A, B, C, D, or P grades. Repeats of a passed course can impact a student's completion rate (PACE), as a student may only earn hours for the course once.

Change of Majors

A student who changes his or her major thus requiring additional hours to complete degrees must still complete the programs of study within the maximum timeframe allowed of 150%. All credits attempted are calculated in the SAP evaluation (quantitative, qualitative, and maximum timeframe).

Second Degree

Students must be working toward their first associate degree or certificate. A second degree student is defined as a student with a previous degree at the same classification. A student who completed a previous degree and is seeking a second degree may violate the 150% maximum timeframe rule.

Learning Support Limit

Students can receive aid for up to 30 attempted hours of remedial or learning support courses. Transfer credits of learning support courses will be included in the total hours for eligibility. Federal aid for students exceeding this maximum is based on college level courses only. This limit cannot be appealed.

Grades of 'I'

In cases where a student is assigned a grade of 'I', the student will be evaluated accordingly. These grades do not impact GPA. If the grade is subsequently changed, the student's SAP status may be re-evaluated.

Readmit Students

Readmit students will be evaluated under the current SAP policy. All academic transcripts must be received and evaluated prior to determining the student's SAP status.

Transfer Students

Transfer students will be evaluated under the current SAP policy. All academic transcripts must be received and evaluated prior to determining the student's SAP status. Transcripts submitted with in-progress grades are not considered final transcripts. Students who have reached the 150% limit or achieved a degree will be ineligible for financial aid.

Review and Notification

Review for Continuing Students

A review of academic progress will be conducted at the end of each semester (fall, spring, and summer). At any point, when it becomes mathematically impossible for a student to complete their program of study within the MTF, the student will become ineligible for all federal financial aid programs.

Initial Review for Transfer Students

Transfer students' satisfactory academic progress standings are evaluated upon admission once all transcripts are received and reviewed. Eligibility will be calculated based on previously described standards. If a transcript has not been evaluated, a process is used to prevent aid disbursing until evaluation is complete and eligibility determined. If ineligible for financial aid, an appeal may be submitted.

Warning Status

Current students who initially fail the qualitative or quantitative standards will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. Students in this status may continue to receive aid for one additional semester without additional action by the student. At the end of that semester if they do not move into good standing, they will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. Students who fail the MTF measurement or are

deemed to not be mathematically capable of completing within the MTF are not eligible for a Financial Aid Warning period and immediately become ineligible for aid.

Unsatisfactory Academic Progress (Suspension)

Students in the suspension status are ineligible to receive any financial aid (including federal loans) and must take classes at their own expense until they are again in good standing.

Students who fail the MTF measurement or are deemed to not be mathematically capable of completing within the MTF are not eligible for a Financial Aid Warning period and immediately become ineligible for aid. Appeals are accepted for students who fail MTF. See appeals sections 5 and 6.

Notification

Students are notified of their satisfactory academic progress standing by email and on their student portal. It is the students' responsibility to keep their addresses updated with the Records Office. Notifications are not sent to students in good standing because no action is required.

Appeal Process

Students can file a Financial Aid appeal to regain eligibility if there were extenuating circumstances that warrant a student to continue receiving Federal Title IV and/or State aid. To successfully appeal, the student must:

1. Complete and submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form. The Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form is accessible in the MyDSCC Student Portal under Financial Aid requirements.
2. Attach a detailed, signed, dated statement outlining:
 - a. the extenuating circumstances that resulted in unsatisfactory progress during the semesters required standards were not met; and
 - b. explaining what circumstances have changed that make it possible for the student to be academically successful during future terms.
3. Attach appropriate documentation to support the circumstances outlined in the appeal. Documentation may include, but are not limited to; a physician's signed statement on official letterhead, copy of death certificate, accident report, and medical reports/records. *Appeals submitted without appropriate documentation will be denied.* Documents may be uploaded into the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form in the MyDSCC Student Portal under Financial Aid requirements.

Federal regulations permit appeal approvals under the following conditions:

- It has been determined that the student will be able to meet SAP standards after the subsequent term.
- An academic plan is developed for the student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time.

Review of Appeals

Appeals should be submitted by the priority dates listed below. Students must anticipate a minimum of three weeks for the Appeals Committee to review the appeal and make a decision on their request.

Failure to provide required supporting documentation will delay the appeal process. Students who have filed an appeal at the beginning of a semester are responsible for securing their classes via payment to the Business Office. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee may limit the number of appeals on a case-by-case basis.

- Requesting aid for fall: July 15
- Requesting aid for spring: December 1
- Requesting aid for summer: April 15

The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review the appeal, make a decision, and notify the student. A student wishing to appeal the action of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee should submit a written appeal to the Dean of Student Services within five calendar days from date of notification of the committee's decision. The Dean of Student Services will review the appeal, make a decision, and notify the student.

Financial Aid Probation

Approved status is assigned to a student who fails to meet satisfactory academic progress guidelines, submitted an appeal, and the appeal was approved. A student may receive aid for one semester/term while on this status. An approved appeal does not allow retroactive financial aid payments.

Academic Plan

When a student's appeal is approved, but it is mathematically impossible to meet satisfactory academic progress standards within one semester, the student is placed on an academic plan with specific requirements. This status is also used in situations where MTF appeals are approved and the number of hours for degree completion extends beyond one term. The plan may include a higher GPA standard, a higher completion rate, or other requirement that helps ensure the student can return to good standing within a specific time period or graduate. If a student is on financial aid probation after having an appeal approved, the student's record will be reviewed at the end of each term to determine whether they meet the terms of the academic plan or whether they have come into compliance with the overall SAP policy.

Subsequent Violation Following Appeal Approval

The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review the appeal and the academic plan and approve or disapprove the reinstatement of aid. If the student fails to follow the approved academic plan, all aid will stop until the student has re-established eligibility at his/her own expense.

Denied Appeal

A student whose appeal was reviewed and denied remains on financial aid suspension and is not eligible to receive financial aid. A reason for denial will be provided, and the student may refer to this policy for regaining eligibility.

Reestablishing Eligibility

If a student's appeal is denied, he or she may regain eligibility for financial aid by taking the following actions:

- Earn the number of deficient credit hours (quantitative/pace standards)
- Earn the required GPA (qualitative standard)

A student must notify the Financial Aid Office when the deficient hours and GPA meet the compliance standards. If an academic review reveals a student will violate MTF prior to degree completion, the student will need to file an appeal to re-establish eligibility. The student may not regain eligibility unless a change in program or degree results in the student's ability to graduate within the maximum timeframe when considering attempted courses applicable to the new program.

Students may be required to complete a specific number of credits or enroll for a certain number of academic periods without receiving financial aid. However, neither paying for classes nor a period of non-enrollment re-establishes eligibility. Should students decide to pay fees out-of-pocket, there is no guarantee an appeal will be approved. If an appeal is approved, financial aid will be awarded based on eligibility, but retroactive financial aid payments will not be granted.

Students who officially or unofficially withdraw from the College during any semester will be expected to repay an appropriate amount of aid awarded. (Exception: Federal College Work-Study Program) Students should familiarize themselves with the Return of Title IV Funds Policy.

The termination of eligibility to receive financial assistance has no effect on the right of the students to enroll at Dyersburg State Community College.

I. Compliance

All Dyersburg State Community College employees are expected to adhere to this policy.

II. Definitions

Appeal:	A process by which a student who is not meeting the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards petitions the institution for reconsideration of the student's eligibility for financial aid.
Attempted Hours:	Hours attempted include all hours transferred in and all hours enrolled in at Dyersburg State Community College <i>on the institution's official enrollment reporting date</i> . Class hours that are withdrawn, repeated, or earn incomplete grades after the institution's official enrollment reporting date <i>are included in attempted hours</i> .
Maximum timeframe:	For an undergraduate program measured in credit hours, a period that is no longer than 150 percent of the published length of the educational program.
Pace:	The pace at which a student must progress through his or her educational program to ensure that the student will complete the

program within the maximum timeframe and provides for measurement of the student's progress at each evaluation.

Probation: A status assigned by an institution to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated.

Warning: A status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress at an institution that evaluates academic progress at the end of each payment period.

III. Revision History

Policy written 07/01/11 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy approved by Administrative Council on 7/29/11. Policy revised 12/05/11 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy revision approved by Administrative Council on 12/14/11. Policy revised 3/24/14 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy revision approved by Administrative Council on 3/24/14. Policy revised 1/24/22 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy revision approved by Administrative Council on 4/28/22. Policy reviewed and approved by Administrative Council on 4/30/26.