

**SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE****SUBJECT: Satisfactory Academic Progress for Federal Financial Aid Recipients****EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2000; Revised September 1, 2011; Revised February 19, 2013;****Revised June 2, 2022****Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is for the establishment of and the participation in student scholarship and financial aid programs at Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”).

**Terms and Definitions**

Academic Plan- An agreed upon plan developed by the student’s department, SAP Appeal Committee, or designee as a plan of action for the remainder of the student’s academic career.

Academic Year- A period of time that includes the Fall and Spring semesters.

Financial Aid Probation- The SAP status of students who have been placed on suspension and have an approved appeal.

Max Hours- The SAP status of students who have exceed over 150% of credit hours in the program of study.

SAP- Satisfactory Academic Progress qualitative standards and quantitative standards according to federal and state laws and regulations.

**Policy****Review of Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards**

All Southwest students receiving federal financial aid are required to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) qualitative standards and quantitative standards according to federal and state laws and regulations. The qualitative standards are measured by the student earning the required percentage of the cumulative hours attempted with a required Grade Point Average (GPA) at the end of the Spring semester. The quantitative standards are measured by the maximum time frame (Pace) in which the student must complete his or education program. The time frame cannot exceed 150% (maximum hours) of the published length of the program. SAP evaluation will be conducted at the end of the Spring semester.

Students failing to meet the minimum SAP standards must appeal to the SAP Committee. Students will be notified electronically via email of unsatisfactory academic process at the end of the Spring evaluation period. \*Students in certificate programs will be evaluated at the end of each payment period.

#### A. Maximum Time frame Requirement (Quantitative)

Based On:		Credit Hours Attempted
Associate Degree (2 years)	Based on 150% of 60 hours	90 credit hours
Certificates/1-year Programs	Based on 150% of 30 hours	45 credit hours

#### B. Qualitative Standards

Students	Minimum Percentage Hours Earned/Attempted	Minimum Cumulative GPA
Undergraduate	67%	2.0

#### Initial Review for Transfer Students

Transfer students' satisfactory academic progress standings are evaluated upon admission once all transcripts are received and reviewed. Accepted transfer hours will count in the attempted and earned hours and 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. All transfer hours will be counted toward the maximum timeframe rule (150%).

#### Review of Academic Progress Evaluation

In order to continue to receive federal financial aid, a review of a student's academic progress is conducted at the end of the Spring semester. The **entire** academic record is reviewed, which includes semesters of enrollment when a student did not receive financial aid, all developmental courses, incompletes, repeats, and transfer credits being accepted by the college.

Repeat courses are counted in the quantitative (attempted and earned percentage) and qualitative (GPA). The repeat course grade excludes the first grade and includes the second. Subsequent repeats of the same course average the last two grades in the GPA. For example, if the initial grade = D and repeat grade = C, the D grade is excluded and the C grade is included in the GPA. The student takes the course again and receives an A. The A and C are included in the GPA.

A student may not make SAP for any one of the following reasons:

#### **Reason 1: Failed Grade Point Average (GPA)**

A student's GPA at the end of the Spring semester is less than 2.0.

## **Reason 2: Failure to meet the 67% Rule**

At least, two-thirds (67%) of all credits attempted must be earned (passed). Grades of A, B, C, or D will be considered as hours attempted and earned. Grades of F, W, or I will be considered as hours attempted, but will NOT be considered as hours earned.

Examples:

- All credits earned/All credits attempted = 67% (how it is calculated)
- 25 credits earned/50 credits attempted = 50% (did not meet SAP)
- 40 credits earned/50 credits attempted = 80% (met SAP)

## **Reason 3: Over MAX Hours**

The number of credit/hours to complete a degree or certificate must not exceed 150% of the total credit/hours in the program of study. Transfer credits accepted by Southwest will be counted towards the 150% total and all credit/hours attempted including those from a change of major but **excluding developmental credit/hours**. Students are allowed to receive financial aid for a maximum of 30 cumulative attempted hours of developmental coursework. A student who is over MAX hours must file a Financial Aid Appeal Form with an attached degree audit at the end of the Spring semester.

### **Associate Degrees**

- Total of credit/hours in the program of study up to 150% of the program hours (not including developmental credits)

### **Eligible Certificates/1-year Programs**

- Total of credit/hours in the Program of Study up to 150% of the program hours.

### **Review of Appeal Process**

All students who do not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress will need to submit an appeal form, academic plan, and relevant documentation as a part of the appeal process.

If the appeal is denied, a student will be placed on financial aid suspension. The student will not be eligible for federal financial aid.

If the appeal is approved, a student will be placed on probation. During the probationary period, the student must meet all of the requirements of an academic plan set by the student's department, the SAP Appeal Committee, or designee.

Students, who meet the probation conditions will be eligible for federal aid until the next Spring semester.

Students who fail to meet the probation/academic plan conditions at the end of the next payment period will be declared ineligible for federal aid and may go through the appeal process or pay to regain eligibility.

This policy also applies to former students who are returning. There is no limit on the amount of times that a student may appeal.

### **Review of Appeal Procedure**

A student who fails to meet SAP (failed GPA, 67% Rule and/or Max Hours) will be contacted via e-mail and placed on Financial Aid Suspension. The SAP Appeal Committee will review the student's appeal form, academic plan, and supporting documentation to make a decision on the student's status. The appeal form, academic plan, and supporting documentation must be returned to the Financial Aid Office by the published deadline after grades are posted at the end of the Spring semester.

Documentation must be attached to substantiate the reason for the appeal. The appeal may not be based upon the need for financial aid assistance or the lack of knowledge that the financial aid assistance was in jeopardy. Only complete and legible appeals will be considered. Submitting an appeal form does not constitute approval nor will classes be held while the appeal is under review.

Appeals will be considered for the following reasons:

- Prolonged illness, medical condition, or injury to student or immediate family member
- Death of an immediate family member
- Family trauma which occurred during the semester in question
- Official grade change
- Circumstances beyond the student's control

Appeals must include the following information:

- Completed Financial Aid Appeal Form
- Circumstances and how the circumstances affected academic performance
- Dates and time periods involved
- Explanation of how your situation has changed and the steps you are taking to resolve the circumstances

Documentation may include:

- Physician's letters and hospital records (must include dates of illness and recovery time)
- Death certificate or obituary
- Court or law enforcement documents
- Letters from third party professionals on his/her letterhead
- Official grade change from the Registrar's office
- Students who have exceeded maximum hours must include a degree audit signed by an academic advisor

**Appeal Notification**

Students will be e-mailed an approval or a denial response.

**Appeal Denial**

If the SAP Committee denies a student's appeal, the student's financial aid will be suspended. The student may pay out of pocket for their next semester of enrollment. Financial aid will be reinstated the next semester of enrollment that the student meets both the 67% hours attempted AND the cumulative GPA requirements.

**Appeal Approval/Probation**

If the SAP Appeal Committee approves a student's appeal, the student will be placed on financial aid probation and will be required to adhere to the submitted academic plan, which will include a degree audit signed by an academic advisor and the student, indicating the number of hours needed to complete the current degree and intended graduation date. Students on probationary status will be placed in a "Meets SAP" category and will be evaluated at the end of the payment period. Students who fail to meet the requirements of the Academic Plan or the qualitative and quantitative SAP standards while on probation will be placed on suspension.

**Responsible**

Source of Policy: n/a

Administrator: VP of Student Affairs

TBR Policy Reference: 3.04.01.00

Related Policy: \_\_\_\_\_

TBR Guideline Reference: \_\_\_\_\_



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President

Date: June 2, 2022