

COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

SYSTEM PRESIDENT'S PROCEDURE

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID

SP 4-20d

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REFERENCES: Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 1 - Student Eligibility 2006
2007, Chapter 1; Volume 2 Institutional and Program Eligibility,
Chapter 3; National Association of Student Financial Aid
Administrators Monograph Series Publication, June 2003,
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APPROVED:

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Application:

This procedure applies to all Colorado Community College System (CCCS) institutions.

Background

Each institution of higher education that receives Federal Title IV Funds is required by the U.S. Department of Education to define and enforce standards of satisfactory academic progress. Satisfactory Academic Progress measures a student's performance in the following three areas: cumulative completion rate, cumulative grade point average (GPA), and maximum time frame. The Financial Aid Office at each Colorado Community College System college is responsible for ensuring that all students applying for or receiving federal, state of Colorado, or designated institutional financial aid funds, are meeting these standards. The Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress apply for all applicable financial assistance programs including Federal Pell Grant, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Work-Study (FWS), Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Family Education Loans (Stafford and PLUS), as well as assistance from the state of Colorado and the college.

Introduction

Each institution will review the cumulative academic progress of financial aid applicants enrolled in an eligible degree and/or certificate program. The purpose of this review process is to determine whether a student is making satisfactory progress towards their educational goal in both qualitative and quantitative measurements. The qualitative measurement consists of the cumulative grade point average as determined by the Colorado Community College System Standards of Academic Progress. The quantitative measurement contains two components: (1) the cumulative completion rate of credit hours completed versus credit hours attempted expressed as a percentage rate of completion and (2) the maximum timeframe allowed for a student to complete their certificate or degree program expressed as a percentage of total credits required. Review of Satisfactory Academic Progress will take place at the end of each semester. Federal regulations require that a student's entire academic record be reviewed for satisfactory academic progress, whether or not financial aid was received. This includes those institutions that offer academic amnesty programs that exclude previous grades from being calculated into their current GPA. All applicants will be evaluated in the same manner, whether or not they have previously received financial aid at that institution. (See Article VI for information on Review of Satisfactory Academic Progress for First Time Financial Aid Applicants).

Satisfactory Academic Progress Criteria

Section 4.01 In order to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements financial aid applicants and recipients must meet the qualitative and quantitative measurements outlined below.

(a) Cumulative GPA Requirement

- (i) Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 for all credits attempted.

(b) Cumulative Completion Rate

- (i) Students must complete at least 67% of cumulative attempted credit hours. The completion rate is defined as the percentage of the total number of credits completed divided by the total number of credits attempted over the entirety of a student's academic record at the school performing the calculation.

$$(Credits Completed / Credits Attempted) \times 100 = Completion Rate$$

- (ii) Transfer credits on the student's record are included when computing the student's completion rate.
- (iii) Remedial credits are also included in the calculation of the cumulative completion rate.

(c) Maximum Time Frame

- (i) Once students have attempted 110% of the number of credit hours required for their degree or eligible certificate program, they will be sent an alert

letter. This letter will explain to the student that they will be Ineligible for Aid when their total attempted credits are 150% of their total program credits.

- (ii) Federal regulations allow financial aid recipients to receive financial aid for a maximum number of attempted credits. Students attempting credits in excess of 150% of the required number of credits to complete their program of study will be ineligible for financial aid. If at any point in time it is determined that a student cannot complete their program of study within 150% of the program length, the student will be ineligible for financial aid.
- (iii) Transfer credit hours are included in the calculation of allowable maximum time frame.
- (iv) Attempted credit hours under all courses of study are included in the calculation of attempted and earned credit hours.
- (v) Clarification from the U.S. Department of Education (Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 1 - Student Eligibility 2006-2007, Chapter 1, p. 1-4) states that up to 30 credit hours of "for credit" remedial coursework are allowed when determining enrollment status. Therefore, as a policy statement of CCCS, up to 30 credit hours of remedial credits will not be included in the calculation when determining if the student has exceeded the maximum time length (150% of the hours required) for the declared program of study, provided that the courses are not applicable to the declared program of study.
- (vi) The U.S. Department of Education (Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 2 - Program Eligibility 2006-2007, Chapter 4, p.2-53) states that institutions are required to define the effect of ESL courses on SAP. As a policy statement of CCCS, ESL classes will only be ignored in the maximum time length (150% of the hours required) calculation for SAP.

Definitions of Satisfactory Academic Progress Status

Section 5.01 Review of Satisfactory Academic Progress will be done shortly after the stated due date for grades at the end of each academic term. Students who fail to meet either the quantitative or the qualitative criteria will be placed on financial aid Warning or Ineligible for Aid according to the following guidelines and will be notified electronically or in writing of their status.

- (a) *Good Standing.* Student is eligible to receive all types of aid
 - (i) Student has cumulative GPA at or above 2.0. Some scholarship programs may require a cumulative GPA higher than 2.0 for continued eligibility.
 - (ii) Student has cumulative completion rate at or above 67%.

- (iii) Student has not attempted more than 150% of required number of credits for enrolled degree or certificate program.
- (b) *Warning:* Student was previously in Good Standing but failed to meet one of the SAP criteria stated below. Student will continue to receive aid while on warning status.
 - (i) Student has cumulative GPA below 2.0 and/or,
 - (ii) Has cumulative completion rate below 67%
- (c) *Alert:* Student has attempted 110%, but less than 150%, of required number of credits needed for their degree or certificate program. Student is eligible to receive all types of financial aid.
- (d) *Ineligible for Aid:* Student has failed to comply with stated SAP criteria while on warning or probation. Student is not eligible to receive financial aid (federal, state or designated institutional financial aid).
 - (i) Student has failed to meet 2.0 GPA and/or 67% cumulative completion rate requirements.
 - (ii) Student has attempted more than 150% of required number of credits needed for degree or certificate program.
- (e) *Probation:* Student will be placed on probation if their status was Ineligible for Aid and their appeal has been approved. Student will be eligible to receive financial aid while on probation. At the end of the probationary term, the student:
 - (i) Must be making satisfactory academic progress, or
 - (ii) Must be successfully following an academic plan
- (f) *Academic Plan:* Student who has eligibility reinstated under an academic plan and is successfully following that plan is eligible to receive financial aid while following the approved academic plan.
 - (i) Students on academic plans will have their eligibility reviewed at the end of each term according to the approved academic plan.

Review of Satisfactory Academic Progress

Section 6.01 First time financial aid applicants who are found to not meet the cumulative GPA and/or cumulative completion rate criteria will immediately be placed on warning status for the first semester. First time applicants who are found to not meet the maximum time frame criteria will immediately be Ineligible for Aid and will be required to appeal for financial aid consideration.

Section 6.02 At the end of each semester the Financial Aid Office will review the student's academic history for: 1) cumulative GPA requirement 2) cumulative completion rate and 3) maximum time frame.

Section 6.03 Students who fail to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress criteria will be placed on financial aid Warning or Ineligible for Aid and will be notified of their status.

Section 6.04 Students who have attempted 110% of the required number of credits for their program will be sent an "Alert" informing them of their standing in terms of maximum time frame.

Section 6.05 Students on warning or probation who meet Satisfactory Academic Progress criteria in a subsequent term as outlined in Article V will be reclassified as "In Good Standing".

Section 6.06 The Financial Aid Office will review GPA and credit hours attempted/completed through consortium agreements.

Complete and Incomplete Credits/ Repeats

Section 7.01 Each institution will define assigned grades and their interpretations.

- (a) Grade symbols of A, B, C, D, S, S/A, S/B, and S/C earned during the Fall, Spring, and Summer will be considered acceptable for courses completed and for Satisfactory Academic Progress consideration.
- (b) Grades of F, U, I, W, AW, Z, U/D, U/F, SP, and AU earned during the Fall, Spring, and Summer will not be considered acceptable for Satisfactory Academic Progress.
- (c) Courses repeated by students are counted for all qualitative and quantitative measurements, as is coursework removed from the permanent transcript through the Academic Second Chance option.

Grade Changes

Section 8.01 Students are responsible for notifying the Financial Aid Office of all grade changes that might affect current or future financial aid eligibility. Students will be notified of this procedure via statements in the Financial Aid Handbook, website or by academic progress letters.

Section 8.02 A reevaluation of a student's status will be performed by the Financial Aid Office once the grade change has been communicated to the Financial Aid Office.

Student Financial Aid Academic Progress Appeals

Section 9.01 Each institution is required to have a primary and a secondary process for students to appeal their eligibility. All decisions made at the secondary level are final. The primary and secondary level will be defined by the institution. A student may appeal when they have been placed on Ineligible for Aid status. These appeals must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office with a completed appeal form and supporting documentation. An appeal form may be obtained from the Financial Aid Office or from the institution's website. The student is responsible for presenting sufficient information and documentation to substantiate the existence of extenuating circumstances.

Section 9.02 Appeals must include the following information:

- (a) Why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress
- (b) What has changed that will allow the student to make satisfactory academic progress at the end of the next term

Section 9.03 Appeals may be filed for extenuating circumstances, such as:

- (a) Medical problems (family illness)
- (b) Family emergency (death of a family member)
- (c) Other documented extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control

Section 9.04 Students may also appeal on the basis of:

- (a) Extension of the maximum allowable credit hours for the currently enrolled program, or
- (b) Funding for an additional degree and/or certificate

Appeals of this nature will require the student to meet with an academic advisor or counselor to discuss the number of attempted credit hours beyond the degree requirements and/or the educational purpose of a subsequent degree and/or certificate. A degree completion evaluation signed by an academic advisor or counselor must be submitted with the appeal. This evaluation must list only the courses needed for the student to complete the degree.

Section 9.05 Colleges may approve an appeal if the college:

- (a) Has determined the student will be able to meet SAP standards at the end of the subsequent term, or

- (b) Develops an academic plan with the student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time.

Section 9.06 Students will be notified of the outcome of their appeal. If classes are in session, the student with a successful appeal will be placed on probation for the current term. For appeals approved between terms, the student will be placed on probation for the next current term. Under no circumstances can probation be assigned to a prior term.

Section 9.07 Reinstatement of aid: Students who lose financial aid eligibility because they are not meeting the school's satisfactory academic progress standards will regain eligibility when they are again meeting the qualitative and quantitative standards as set previously in this policy. They will also regain eligibility by successfully appealing a determination that they were not making satisfactory progress. Upon successful reestablishment of eligibility, the student will be awarded financial aid based on the availability of funds at the time of reestablishment. Students may, or may not, receive all funds awarded prior to the loss of eligibility.