

Satisfactory Academic Progress (Revised January 2020)

POLICY:

The federal government mandates that students must be making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward a degree or certificate in order to maintain financial aid eligibility. Satisfactory academic progress is measured by qualitative (grade-based) and quantitative (time-related) standards set forth by the federal government and shall be used to determine eligibility for participation in financial aid programs at Washtenaw Community College.

Qualitative Standards:

Cumulative grade point average: Students pursuing a course of study leading to a degree or certificate must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0.

Students who are in a program of study greater than two academic years in length must have a cumulative GPA of a 2.0 at the end of his or her 4th semester.

Quantitative Standards:

Academic progress is quantified in two ways:

1. **Pace:** Students must maintain a cumulative pace of completion of 67%. Pace is defined as the total number of earned credits divided by the total number of attempted credits.

The student must complete, with a passing grade, 67% of all credit hours attempted at Washtenaw Community College, as well as credits transferred to WCC, whether or not financial aid was received for those attempted credit hours. Transfer credits are included as attempted and earned credits at the end of the semester in which the credits are transferred to WCC. Remedial credits are used in the pace calculation.

2. **Maximum Credit:** The maximum time frame for a student to complete his/her academic program (degree or certificate) cannot exceed 150% of the published length of the program. See examples below:

Program Requirement	Maximum Attempted Credits Allowed
23 credit hours	34.5 ($23 \times 1.5 = 34.5$)
32 credit hours	48 ($32 \times 1.5 = 48$)
60 credit hours	90 ($60 \times 1.5 = 90$)
72 credit hours	108 ($72 \times 1.5 = 108$)

The student should review the Washtenaw Community College website or consult with an academic advisor/counselor to find the number of credits required for his/her program; multiply that number by 1.5 to determine the maximum number of credits he/she can attempt and receive financial aid. Remedial and ESL coursework is included in the number of attempted hours. The student will be denied financial aid when he/she has attempted 150% or more of the credit hours required for his/her program.

If a student changes his or her program or pursues a second degree or certificate, the maximum number of credits will be calculated based on the student's current program of study and the courses needed for that program.

The following credits are included in the maximum time frame calculation:

- All attempted credits, even if the student withdrew or did not receive a passing grade
- All attempted credits, even if the student was not receiving financial aid
- All credits transferred in from another college

Course Repeats

Per the Washtenaw Community College's Academic Policies and Procedures, WCC treats repeat grades as follows:

Whenever a course is repeated on a credit basis, the best grade and credits earned are used in computing the grade-point average. All entries remain a part of the permanent academic record.

- The GPA (qualitative) will have used the best grade in the calculation.
- For pace (quantitative), all attempts and credits are counted.

Remedial and English as a Second Language (ESL) Courses

Remedial and ESL courses are treated as all other college-level courses in both the qualitative and quantitative standard.

Unsuccessful Grades

Courses in which a student receives an I, IX, U, NP, W, F or AU (given as a final grade) will not be counted as earned hours for SAP purposes, but will be counted in attempted hours. Unsuccessful grades (except an F grade) are not considered when calculating the grade point average.

Incomplete Grades

SAP will not be recalculated retroactively when the incomplete is changed to a grade. The new grade will be factored into the student's SAP calculation the next time the SAP process is run by the Financial Aid Office.

Withdrawals

Withdrawals (W) are considered attempted credits but are not earned credits. W's are not included in the GPA calculation. A W is the result of the student withdrawing or a W may be issued by the faculty as a grade. Please note information under unsuccessful grades above.

Grade Changes

If a grade is changed due to an error or correction by the faculty, SAP will be recalculated using the corrected grade. This will only be done if it is feasible to correct the student's financial aid for a changed SAP status. If the grade correction occurs for a grade that is several semesters or years in the past, the student's SAP status may be updated, but the corresponding aid may not be corrected.

Attempted/Earned Hours

Attempted hours include all courses with successful and unsuccessful grades.

Earned hours include those courses with successful grades for which credit was earned.

Academic Forgiveness

Academic forgiveness does not impact SAP. WCC does not allow a student to request academic forgiveness until three years have passed since the poor academic performance. SAP will not be recalculated for those enrollment periods that have been forgiven. WCC will not remove forgiven hours from the total attempted hours for the student.

SAP Status

Students who have attended the semester and have a status other than GOOD, will receive notification of their status either through their WCC email and/or paper letter.

Good Standing: Students who meet the academic progress standard will be in good standing and eligible to receive future financial aid.

Financial Aid Warning: New students and students in good standing who earn at least one (1) credit during the semester but fail to meet the academic progress standard will be placed on Financial Aid Warning and will be allowed one additional

semester to meet the minimum requirements. Students on Financial Aid Warning are eligible to receive financial aid.

Financial Aid Probation: Students who have appealed to the Financial Aid Committee, had their SAP Appeal approved, and can meet pace and GPA requirements within one semester, will be placed on a semester of probation. Students on Financial Aid Probation are eligible to receive financial aid.

FA Academic Plan: Students who have appealed to the Financial Aid Committee and had their SAP Appeal approved, but cannot meet pace and GPA requirements within one semester, will be placed on an academic plan that will last until the student can meet pace and GPA requirements. Students are eligible to receive financial aid if meeting the requirements of their academic plan.

FA Maximum Credit Plan: Students who have appealed to the Financial Aid Committee and had their Maximum Credit Appeal approved will be placed on an academic plan that will last until the student completes their program. Students are eligible to receive financial aid if meeting the requirements of their academic plan.

Financial Aid Denied: Students on warning who do not meet the satisfactory academic progress standard will be denied financial aid. Any student who earns zero (0) credits during the semester will be denied financial aid. Students who are denied financial aid may still continue to attend classes using their own funds for payment.

Financial Aid Maximum Credit: Students who have attempted 150% or more of the credit hours needed to complete his or her program are not eligible to receive financial aid regardless of whether or not they received aid for their attempted credits. Transfer credits from any other college(s) may be applied to their student record and will be subject to the above maximum time frame regulations.

Appeal Process

SAP Appeal: Appeals for re-establishing eligibility may be based on extenuating circumstances that prohibited the student from meeting SAP standards during the warning period. In the appeal, the student will explain why he/she failed to make SAP and what has changed that will allow him/her to make SAP the next semester. Extenuating circumstances should be supported by official documents whenever possible.

Examples of extenuating circumstances include:

- Death of a family member (must contain the relationship of family member to the student)
- Hospitalization or illness with dates (documentation of the health care provider's opinion as to readiness to return to school may be requested from the student)
- Major accident or illness (self, child or parent)

- Victim of a crime or unexpected disaster

Students should submit a SAP Appeal via their MyWCC account and submit documentation of the extenuating circumstance(s) to the Financial Aid Office. All documentation supplied must be dated and signed by the preparer, if applicable.

The Financial Aid Committee will read the appeal and make one of three decisions:

- 1. Denied:** The Committee may deny the appeal. If the appeal is denied, the student will not be eligible to receive financial aid at Washtenaw Community College. The student will be responsible for his/her tuition. If the denied student successfully completes credits in the future, he or she may submit another appeal to the Committee. Based on successful coursework, the Committee may reinstate the student.
- 2. Financial Aid Probation:** After reviewing the appeal and based on the student's extenuating circumstances, the Committee may feel the student deserves another opportunity to receive financial aid. If it is mathematically possible for the student to make SAP at the end of the next semester, the Committee will grant the student one additional semester of aid. During that semester the student will be on probation.
- 3. Financial Aid Academic Plan:** After reviewing the appeal and based on the students extenuating circumstances, the Committee may feel the student deserves another opportunity to receive financial aid. However, based on the student's past academic performance and expected enrollment, it will not be mathematically possible for the student to make SAP at the end of the next semester. These students will be required to meet with a counselor/advisor to establish an academic plan. This plan may include a limited number of credits to be taken by the student, enrollment in specific courses and/or other restrictions. The reinstatement will be for the number of semesters it takes for the student to meet SAP requirements. The student must abide by the plan every semester, not withdraw from classes and receive a C or better in all classes. Failure to abide by the plan will result in termination of the student's financial aid.

Maximum Credit Appeal: Students who are ineligible for aid based on reaching their maximum time frame may submit a Maximum Credit Appeal via their MyWCC account. Students are required to meet with a counselor/advisor to establish an academic plan. This plan will clearly lay out the number of courses needed to complete the student's program of study and the semesters that the student will take those courses. The counselor/advisor will need to approve the student's academic plan and it will then be forwarded to the Financial Aid Committee for review.

Students who reach their maximum time frame and do not have a 2.0 GPA and 67% pace of completion will have their Maximum Credit Appeal sent to the Financial Aid Committee for review before being allowed to see a counselor/advisor.

The Financial Aid Committee will review the appeal and make one of two decisions:

1. **Denied:** The Committee may deny the appeal. If the appeal is denied, the student will not be eligible to receive Financial Aid at Washtenaw Community College. The student will be responsible for his/her tuition charges.
2. **Approved:** The Financial Aid Committee may approve the appeal. This approval will be for a set number of semesters and the student will be expected to abide by the academic plan, not withdraw from classes and receive a C or better in all classes. Failure to abide by the plan will result in denial of the student's financial aid.

In all instances, the Financial Aid Committee's decision is final.

Other components of WCC's SAP policy:

- SAP will be calculated at the end of every semester on all students receiving financial aid.
- All attempted credits are considered for SAP even if the student was not receiving financial aid.
- All attempted credits count even if the student has changed academic programs.
- All transfer hours are included.
- Cumulative GPA will be evaluated at the end of the fourth semester for students who are in a program of study that is greater than two academic years. If the student's cumulative GPA is less than a 2.0, the student will be placed in a denied status.
- Pace of completion is monitored after each payment period. This ensures the student will be able to complete his/her program within the maximum timeframe for the program. Students who are not meeting pace are placed into the appropriate status based on SAP policy.
- It is the student's responsibility to enroll in courses required for his or her program. Federal financial aid eligibility will be determined using courses (credits) in the student's program of study. Students are strongly encouraged to see a counselor or advisor to develop an academic plan.
- Students, who are applying for financial aid for the first time, have an academic history at WCC, and have a cumulative GPA of less than 2.0 and/or a pace of completion less than 67%, will be given a Financial Aid Warning status for their first semester receiving financial aid.
- If additional information is received that could impact the student's SAP status, this information will be reviewed and SAP status will be corrected, if appropriate.

- A student is no longer eligible for financial aid once all course requirements are met for their program, regardless of whether or not the student receives the degree or certificate.
- Students will be notified via their WCC email of all decisions/outcomes of the SAP process and Financial Aid Committee's decisions.
- Washtenaw Community College offers programs in credit hours by semester. The academic year is defined as 30 weeks of instruction and 24 credit hours. Payment periods are semesters (terms). Full-time enrollment is 12 credit hours/semester.