



Category
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS – 3:01:00:01
Approval
Leadership Council Approved: November 4, 2016
Effective Date/Approved: January 1, 2017 for the Academic Year 2017-2018. Provisions related to warnings and academic plans are effective spring 2017.
Revised: March 22, 2016; November 4, 2016
Responsible Party: Dean of Students

I. PURPOSE

Federal regulations require Motlow State Community College to establish and apply reasonable standards of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) for the purpose of awarding financial assistance under the Title IV programs authorized by the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended (CFR 668.34).

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Motlow State Community College complies with SAP requirements by monitoring each student's grade point average (GPA), pace toward graduation (Pace), and maximum time frame for completion of the student's program of study (MAXHRS). Motlow State Community College also evaluates continuing financial aid eligibility following the completion of a degree as identified in the student's official academic record.

III. APPLICABILITY

- A. The Satisfactory Academic Progress policy is applicable to Federal Title IV Programs, State Programs including the Tennessee Student Assistance Award and the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship, and may apply to various other scholarships.
- B. The following measurements apply whether or not a student received financial aid during the period(s) being measured.
- C. This policy is used to determine satisfactory academic progress for financial aid.
- D. Other federal, state, private, and institutional assistance programs may follow the same requirements outlined in this policy or may follow their own requirements not outline in this policy.

IV. REQUIREMENTS

- A. Transfer students must have all academic transcripts from each post-secondary institution attended after high school fully evaluated by the college before the Financial Aid Office can determine satisfactory academic progress. Transfer students entering Motlow State Community College with an unsatisfactory progress status for financial aid will not be eligible for a warning status during the first semester of enrollment at Motlow.
- B. Transfer students may appeal suspension by following the process delineated below.

V. STANDARDS

- A. Satisfactory Academic Standards are as follows:
(NOTE: Students may be deficient in one or more of the following standards.)
 - 1. Federal law requires that the financial aid academic standard must be at least as strict as the school's standard for students enrolled in the same educational program who are not receiving Federal Title IV assistance.
 - 2. All standards are evaluated using the inclusive combined grade point average (GPA), attempted hours, and earned hours. Transfer course work (recorded by the college) and developmental learning support coursework are included in these calculations.
- B. Six areas to be considered to maintain satisfactory academic progress are the following:

Inclusive Combined Minimum GPA	Inclusive Combined Minimum % Credits Passed
2.00	67%

- 1. Grade Point Average (GPA):
 - a. Beginning with the end of the summer 2017 semester and all future semesters, in order to maintain the minimum scholastic requirements for financial aid eligibility for GPA, students must maintain a minimum, inclusive combined GPA of 2.0.
 - b. Students are evaluated each semester on the above GPA standards.
 - c. Warning: This status is assigned to students in good standing whose GPA has fallen below the required financial aid GPA standards.
 - i. During the semester that students are in a "Warning" status, they remain eligible for financial aid.
 - ii. Students will change from a "Warning" status to a "Suspension" status if the required GPA is not achieved by the end of the "Warning" semester.
 - d. Suspension: Students on a "Warning" status who have not achieved the appropriate GPA requirements outlined above by the end of the semester will be suspended from financial aid for subsequent semesters. Students may still be eligible for other college funds during periods of suspension from financial aid.
- 2. Pace Standard (Percentage of Credit Hours Passed):
 - a. Pace is progression toward completion of the student's program of study.
 - b. Federal law requires that students must progress toward completion of the eligible program of study at a percentage rate that will allow the student to complete the program of study within the Maximum Timeframe allowed for the program of study. At Motlow State Community College, this limitation also applies toward some state and institutional scholarship programs.
 - c. Students must minimally pass 67% of all cumulative credits attempted to remain in "Good Standing" for financial aid.
 - d. Grades of "A", "B", "C", "D", "P", "S", etc. count as credit hours passed.

- e. All courses for credit will be counted as hours attempted including withdrawals, incompletes, repeated coursework, and coursework graded as "IP", "NR", "F", "FA", "I", "IF", "U", and "AU", etc.
 - f. The 67% pass rate is determined by dividing the number of credit hours the student has passed by the number of hours the student has attempted.
 - g. Students are evaluated each semester on whether or not they have maintained the required Pace standards.
 - h. Warning: This status is assigned to students in good standing whose PACE has fallen below the required 67%. During the semester that students are in a "Warning" status; they remain eligible for financial aid. Students will change from a "Warning" status to a "Suspension" status if a PACE of 67% is not achieved by the end of the "Warning" semester.
 - i. Suspension: Students on "Warning" status who have not achieved an "overall combined" Pace of 67% by the end of the semester will be suspended from financial aid for subsequent semesters. Students may still be eligible for other college funds during periods of suspension from financial aid.
3. Zero Hours Completion Rate: Students that officially/unofficially withdraw from all coursework in the last semester attended or receive all failing grades in the last semester attended are automatically placed on financial aid suspension. Students may still be eligible for other funds during periods of suspension from financial aid.
 4. Maximum Timeframe Standard: Federal law allows students to receive Title IV assistance up to 150% of the program's published length. At Motlow State Community College, this limitation is also applied toward some state and institutional scholarship programs.
 - a. The maximum timeframe for the completion of an associate's degree is limited to 150% of the program's published length.
 - b. Most associate programs at Motlow State Community College require 60 credit hours. Therefore, the maximum attempted credit hours allowed is 90 credit hours.
 - c. The 90 credit hours include all transfer attempted credit hours and all Motlow State Community College attempted credit hours. All developmental learning support coursework will count in the 90 hour calculation.
 - d. Embedded certificates within an associate degree program are evaluated at the associate level.
 - e. Students are evaluated each semester on whether or not they have reached the Maximum Timeframe limits.
 - f. Max Time Alert: This status is assigned to students whose attempted hours are approaching 90 hours for associate degrees. Students may receive their first notice when their attempted hours reach 65 hours for associate programs.
 - g. Suspension: Students who have reached their Maximum Timeframe will be suspended from financial aid for subsequent semesters. Students may still be eligible for other college funds during periods of suspension from financial aid.
 5. Additional Degrees/Certificates: Students who have already earned a degree from Motlow State Community College or any other educational institution that is posted in the student record may be placed on suspension for financial aid purposes.
 - a. Students will have an opportunity to file an appeal for consideration to receive financial aid for an additional program.
 - b. If the appeal is granted, eligible financial aid will be reinstated for the approved semester with an appeal required for each subsequent semester until the additional degree/certificate is obtained.
 - c. The Financial Aid Committee may allow additional hours needed to complete an additional degree/certificate to the existing overall credit hours previously attempted for the previous degree/certificate.
 - d. Students are required to meet with a completion coach or learning support specialist to develop an academic plan for the additional degree.

Note: A student who has already earned an A.A., A.S., A.A.S., or A.S.T. will not be allowed to receive financial aid for an additional degree or concentration in the same

area. Consideration will only be given to students attempting to receive a degree in a different degree type. (Example: A student earning an A.A. degree can be considered by financial aid appeal for an A.S. or an A.A.S. degree – Maximum Time requirements still apply; but a student earning an A.S. degree in General Studies could not be considered for another A.S. degree in Computer Science).

- e. Students are evaluated each semester on whether or not they have earned a degree or certificate. Transfer degrees and/or certificates posted by the college count in the evaluation of this standard.
 - f. Suspension: Students who have earned a degree will be suspended from financial aid for subsequent semesters. Students may still be eligible for other funds during periods of suspension from financial aid.
6. Non-Appealable: Federal law requires that at the end of the second academic year, students must have a GPA of at least a 2.0 or its equivalent (regardless of how many credits they have accrued) or have an academic standing consistent with the requirement for graduation. Failure to meet the Non-Appealable standard will result in financial aid suspension with no opportunity to appeal.

C. Treatment of Repeated Course Work:

1. Students should refer to the academic requirements within the appropriate online “Catalog & Student Handbook” as related to how repeats are counted in the GPA calculation.
2. For the purpose of this policy, all attempted credit hours are used in the calculation of all SAP standards.
3. When determining a student's enrollment status for Federal Title IV purposes, Motlow State Community College may pay for repeated coursework through the financial aid programs. However, Motlow State Community College cannot pay for more than one repetition of a previously passed course.
4. The Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Program has additional rules located at www.tn.gov/collegepays/ as related to repeated coursework.

D. Academic Fresh Start and Financial Aid Eligibility:

1. The Department of Education addresses Academic Fresh Start as academic amnesty/renewal.
2. Federal financial aid regulations make no provision for this concept. Therefore, Academic Fresh Start at Motlow State Community College will not benefit a student in relation to financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

VI. FREQUENCY OF REVIEW

- A. The Financial Aid Office reviews each standard at the end of each semester (fall, spring, and summer) and for all incoming FAFSAs. Students who are suspended from financial aid as related to any of these allowable standards may appeal to the Financial Aid Committee.
- B. The decision of the Financial Aid Committee is final as related to Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards.

VII. STATUS NOTIFICATION TO STUDENTS

SAP statuses are posted to student MyMotlow accounts after the final grade processing each semester. Students will receive notification via their student email accounts for any status other than Good Standing.

- A. Good Standing: Students in “Good Standing” for financial aid are meeting all of the SAP standards and can receive any financial aid for which they are eligible.

- B. Warning status: Students on financial aid warning status are not meeting SAP standards for the first time but they can receive aid during this period. Students are granted one semester in which to meet SAP standards before being placed on financial aid suspension.
 - 1. During a Warning semester students are required to:
 - a. limit enrollment to 15 credit hours required in their declared major with consideration given to failed courses needed for the major.
 - b. consult with his or her completion coach, or learning support specialist, to maximize chances of regaining financial aid eligibility for the next semester.
- C. Students placed on warning status that continue to fail SAP standards during the semester are then placed on financial aid suspension. Students on financial aid suspension are not eligible for financial aid.
- D. Transfer students entering and/or reentering Motlow failing to meet the above SAP standards will not be eligible for a warning period during their first semester of enrollment and/or reenrollment and will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students on financial aid suspension are not eligible for financial aid. Transfer students may appeal this status using the criteria listed below in VII. Financial Aid Appeals.
- E. Suspension status: Students on a financial aid suspension status are not eligible for aid during this period.
 - 1. Students in the following situation will be assigned a suspension status:
 - a. Missing a SAP standard at the end of a warning period;
 - b. Missing both the GPA and Pace standard at the same time;
 - c. Reaching maximum time allowed;
 - d. Earning a degree; and/or,
 - e. Falling in a non-appealable status
 - 2. Student on suspension due to GPA, Pace, non-appealable status and/or issues during the warning period may regain eligibility after meeting standards and being in compliance with all other SAP standards. Students with extenuating circumstances may appeal to the Financial Aid Committee for eligibility consideration.
 - 3. Students reaching maximum time frame and/or earning a degree may appeal to the Financial Aid Committee for eligibility consideration if they have extenuating circumstances.
- F. Probation and probation with academic plan status: Students are considered on probation if they meet the requirements listed below and are approved by the Financial Aid Committee. Students are eligible for financial aid during this period. Students must comply with all conditions outlined in Section VII Financial Aid Appeals and meet the following:
 - 1. A student on probation status will be required to:
 - a. limit enrollment to 15 hours required in their declared major during that semester;
 - b. consult with his or her completion coach to maximize chances of regaining financial aid-in the semester the Probation was issued.
 - 2. A student on probation with academic plan status will be required to:
 - a. limit enrollment to 15 hours required in their declared major during that semester;
 - b. consult with his or her completion coach to maximize chances of regaining financial aid in the semester the Academic Plan was issued;
 - c. complete and submit an Academic Plan to the Dean of Students;
 - d. comply with all the conditions of the Academic Plan.
- G. Max Time Alert: A student on max time alert status will be required to:
 - 1. Limit enrollment to 15 hours required in their declared major during that semester;
 - 2. encouraged to consult with his or her completion coach to maximize chances of completing their degree within the 90 hour limit.

- H. Denied status: Students in this status have had an appeal denied by the Financial Aid Committee and will not be eligible for financial aid during the period. Students may be able to regain eligibility by taking classes at their own expense until the SAP standards are being met.
- I. Final Suspension: Students on a final suspension status will no longer be eligible for financial aid at Motlow. Students in the category may have exhausted all means of appeal and/or may be in a situation that it is mathematically impossible to meet the SAP standards within the allowable time.

VIII. REINSTATEMENT OF ELIGIBILITY

A student who has lost eligibility for financial aid due to suspension or a denied appeal may be reinstated once the student has subsequently completed coursework (Motlow State Community College and/or transfer) resulting in an appropriate financial aid GPA standard, Pace of 67% (assuming the student is otherwise eligible and also meets the Maximum Timeframe Standard and has not already earned a first degree).

IX. FINANCIAL AID APPEALS

- A. Appeal Filing Deadlines: The priority date for submitting an appeal is one week prior to the first day of classes of the subsequent semester with continued review of appeals through the 14th day of class for the full semester.
- B. Depending on the timing of when the appeal is submitted, the appeal may not be reviewed prior to when registration fees are due for the upcoming semester.
- C. Students may need to be prepared to pay registration fees.
- D. If the appeal is approved after the semester begins, the student will be considered for financial aid, if otherwise eligible.
- E. If the student pays registration fees out-of-pocket, there is no guarantee that the appeal will be approved.
- F. The Financial Aid Committee reviews financial aid appeals of students who have been suspended from receiving financial aid as defined by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards. Students will be notified by Motlow e-mail regarding the appeal decision.
- G. Students may appeal their suspension from financial aid based on the following items with appropriate documentation:
 - 1. the death of a relative;
 - 2. injury or illness of the student; and/or,
 - 3. military status, i.e. deployment
 - 4. other personal extenuating circumstances that can be documented.
- H. Students will be required to submit appropriate documentation of the circumstance(s) which caused the student to fail to meet SAP standards.
- I. Information regarding what may have changed in the student's situation that will allow the student to demonstrate SAP at the next evaluation should also be explained.
- J. The review of appeals is based on the merit of the written and documented extenuating circumstance(s).

- K. The Financial Aid Committee may request a student's appearance.
- L. If the appeal is approved without conditions, the student is placed on probation for one semester and becomes eligible for financial aid effective with the current semester (if enrolled) or for the next semester enrolled.
- M. If the student is not in good standing by the end of the probation semester, the student is suspended from financial aid.
- N. If the appeal is approved with conditions, the student is placed on an academic plan and becomes eligible for financial aid effective with the current semester (if enrolled) or for the next semester enrolled.
- O. The academic plan will be monitored by a completion coach or learning support specialist each semester to assure the student is in compliance. Failure to comply with the academic plan will result in suspension of the student's financial aid.
- P. If the appeal is denied, the student remains on financial aid suspension.
- Q. Exceptions: The college may suspend a student's financial assistance through the above mentioned programs resulting from unusual circumstances that are not accounted for in this policy. Students will be notified of this decision via their student email account. The instructions for completing a financial aid appeal and the appeal form is available at:
<http://www.mscc.edu/financialaid/SatAcadProg.pdf>.

X. Academic Standing for the College vs. Financial Aid SAP:

These are separate processes:

- A. The Admissions and Records Office monitors academic standing at the end of each semester.
- B. The Financial Aid Office monitors satisfactory academic progress at the end of each semester.
- C. Decisions of Academic and Financial Aid appeals are independent of each other.