



Category

3-13 Satisfactory Academic Progress For Federal Financial Aid

Approval

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Responsible Party: Vice President of Student Services

Policy Statement

The U.S. Department of Education requires institutions of higher education to establish standards of satisfactory progress for students receiving federal aid. Students must have declared a program of study and be working toward the completion of their program in order to continue receiving aid. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress will result in the loss of federal (Pell) and state grants, scholarships, and loans. The Satisfactory Academic progress is reviewed three times a year and at the end of each academic semester (fall, spring, and summer).

Satisfactory Academic Progress

There are three areas to be considered to maintain satisfactory academic progress:

1. Grade Point Average (GPA): Financial aid recipients are expected to maintain at least a minimum cumulative GPA of **2.0**. I, U, W, and S are not included in determining overall GPA.
2. Quantitative Hours Completed (Pace): Financial aid recipients must have earned and passed at least 67 percent of all hours attempted (cumulative). Hours attempted include all hours. F, I, U, and W are “unsatisfactory” for financial aid purposes. If a student chooses to transfer hours into WATC, those hours count towards this calculation. Remedial classes also count towards the hours a student attempts.
3. Time Frame/Pace: Students may receive financial aid for 150 percent of the number of hours, as stated in the Wichita Area Technical College catalog, required to earn the degree or certificate. For example, if a student is enrolled in an eligible program that takes 64 hours to complete, that student may receive financial aid (if eligible) for 96 attempted hours before financial aid is revoked. In addition the student must maintain a satisfactory “pace” in which he earns/attempts hours toward his degree. This pace calculation (item #2 above)

will tell whether or not it is mathematically possible for a student to complete his program within the 150% timeframe.

Note: If a student changes major/program the total hours attempted and earned will count toward the 150% maximum timeframe. If the 150% maximum is reached students may appeal to the Financial Aid Review Committee to have maximum hours extended when a new program is started. If the appeal is granted students must establish and adhere to an academic plan until the program is completed.

Financial Aid Warning

Students falling below satisfactory academic progress guidelines for the *first time* will be put on “Financial Aid Warning”. Students have one semester in which to meet satisfactory academic progress standards before being placed on financial aid suspension. “Financial Aid Warning” is a warning period only - students are still eligible for aid during this period.

Students who are on financial aid warning and continue to fail satisfactory academic progress standards during the semester are then placed on financial aid suspension. Withdrawing during the warning period changes the student’s status to financial aid suspension. ***Students on financial aid suspension are not eligible for financial aid.***

Students placed on financial aid warning will be invited, encouraged, referred by coaches or instructors to attend a workshop or take advantage of other resources offered by the college. Those students who are placed on financial aid probation or an academic plan will be required to attend a workshop offered by the college. **Students on financial aid probation or an academic plan who fail to attend a workshop will not receive financial aid.**

Note: Students will be notified of their satisfactory academic progress status change within one week of the previous semesters official end date.

Right to Appeal Financial Aid Suspension

Financial aid recipients who have failed their satisfactory academic progress check and who have been placed on financial aid suspension may submit an appeal in writing with required supporting documentation to the Financial Aid Review Committee.

- The Financial Aid Review Committee consists of five members: The Director of Financial Aid, Assistant Director of Financial Aid (non-voting), Registrar, Career Services Coordinator, Vice President of Marketing, Recruiting and Advancement and one faculty member appointed by the faculty representatives on the Leadership Council.
- The committee will determine a deadline each semester in which the student must submit the appeal for review. Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis for any appeal submitted after the deadline.

- Only extenuating circumstances will be considered for appeal. Extenuating circumstances must be unexpected circumstances that are beyond the student's control. Typical adjustments to college life such as underestimating the time required for studying, failing to manage one's time wisely, or failing to attend class on a regular basis without documented hardship will not be considered as extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances must be adequately documented and the documentation must be included with the appeal.
- If the appeal is approved, the Financial Aid Review Committee may set specific terms for the reinstatement of financial aid, which may include registering for a limited number of credit hours, creating an academic plan, attending a student success workshop, meeting GPA standards, etc.
- Students who successfully appeal will be put on "Financial Aid Probation". If a student fails to meet satisfactory academic progress during the suspension period, the student will be placed back on financial aid suspension and will be ineligible for financial aid.
- Students denied by the Financial Aid Review Committee may request a personal appearance to the committee if they can provide additional information or documentation that was not included in their initial appeal. A request to appear in front of the committee must be made within ten days of the committee's written notification of the denial. The student will be issued a decision within five days of the meeting. The committee's decision is final.

Course Withdrawal and Financial Aid

Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress to remain eligible for financial aid. If the student withdraws from school or drops below full-time status, financial aid awarded will be prorated according to federal guidelines.

- Withdrawing from one or more course counts as attempted hours. Even though a student has not completed the course to earn a grade, these hours count toward the maximum number of hours for which financial aid will pay toward a degree.
- All hours attempted, including withdrawals, count toward the total attempted hours.
- Withdrawing from courses in a degree or certificate program increases the student's percentage of unsuccessful hours for satisfactory academic progress.

Repeated Coursework

- A course previously completed and passed is eligible to be repeated and included in enrollment status one time for financial aid purposes.
- A course previously attempted with a grade of F or W is eligible to be repeated and included in enrollment status two times for financial aid purposes.
- All repeated courses will count toward the student's total attempted hours but only the most recent grade earned is used to calculate cumulative GPA.

Pell Grant

- The Federal Pell granted is prorated. The award offered amount changes according to the number of hours for which a student registers and attends.
- If a student has received a Pell award and withdraws from WATC or is considered to have never attended a certain class, there is a possibility that they will be billed, depending on last date of attendance. In the case of non-attendance (“no-show”), Pell must be recalculated and an overpayment may be created, which students must repay to the Department of Education before they are eligible for additional financial aid.
- Failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress puts Pell Grant and other aid in jeopardy.

Direct Loans

- Satisfactory academic progress affects student loans. Withdrawing from courses may cause the repayment process to begin.