

Maricopa Community Colleges
Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for Financial Aid Eligibility

Federal regulations (CFR 668.32(f) and 668.34) require a student to move toward the completion of a degree or certificate within an eligible program when receiving financial aid. Specific requirements for academic progress for financial aid recipients are applied differently than Scholastic Standards. Federal regulations state that Academic Progress Standards must include a review of all periods of enrollment, regardless of whether or not aid was received. Students will be evaluated using the standards described below. Failure to meet any of these minimum standards will result in loss of title IV, HEA program (federal financial aid) eligibility.

To remain eligible for federal and state aid programs, students must meet ALL of MCCCDC's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards regardless of whether a student has received financial aid in the past or not. These standards apply to a student's entire academic records at any MCCCDC college, including transfer credit hours accepted by the college.

1. Definitions and Terminology Pertaining to this Policy

- A. Summer: Enrollment in the summer semester includes all courses scheduled within the summer enrollment period with all coursework counted in the SAP evaluation.
- B. Non-Standard Session / Clock Hour: Sessions that do not follow the traditional start and end dates for the semester.
- C. Attempted Credit: Any credit for which a grade of A, B, C, D, F, I, IP, N, P, W, Y, or Z is received and courses not yet graded.
- D. CGPA [Cumulative Grade Point Average]: The MCCCDC grading policy is published in the administrative regulations at 2.3.3. The CGPA does not include credits accepted in transfer.
- E. Financial Aid Warning: status assigned to an eligible payment period for the next enrolled semester after failing SAP GPA (2.0) and/or Completion Pace ($\frac{2}{3}$). Students not meeting maximum timeframe evaluation are not eligible for a warning period.
- F. Appeal: A process by which a student who is not meeting the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards is eligible to appeal the institution for reconsideration of the student's eligibility for title IV, HEA program assistance based on extenuating circumstances.
- G. Extenuating Circumstance: A one-time (not on-going) circumstance that is beyond the reasonable control of the student.
- H. Financial Aid Probation: A status assigned by an institution to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated. A student in this status may not receive title IV, HEA program funds for the subsequent payment period unless the student makes satisfactory academic progress or the institution determines that the student met the requirements specified by the institution in the academic plan for the student.
- I. Academic Plan – A plan developed through the SAP Appeal Process which will lead a student to qualify for further title IV, HEA program funds and complete the program within 150% of published program length.
- J. Financial Aid Suspension – The status assigned upon failing to meet the minimum SAP standards or the terms of probationary status. Students in this status are not eligible to receive title IV, HEA assistance.

2. Federal regulations (CFR 668.32(f) and 668.34) require institutions of higher education to evaluate Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) using qualitative (GPA) and quantitative (pace of progression) standards.
3. Qualitative and quantitative measures of SAP are required to ensure students receiving Federal Student Aid are progressing towards the completion of a degree or certificate within an eligible program.
4. Specific requirements for academic progress for Federal Student Aid recipients are applied differently than Scholastic Standards. Federal regulations state that SAP Standards must include a review of all periods of enrollment, regardless of whether or not aid was received. Standards are applicable for all enrolled payment periods, including all levels of enrollment (full-time or part-time enrollment). Students will be evaluated using the standards described below.
5. Failure to meet any of the minimum standards outlined below will result in a student's loss of HEA, Title IV Federal Student Aid.

Evaluation Period

1. Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be evaluated at the end of each payment period. For credit hour programs, a payment period is a semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer). For clock hour programs, a payment period / evaluation will depend on the hours required in the program.
2. Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) are evaluated based on qualitative (GPA), quantitative (pace of progression), and maximum timeframe. Failure to meet any of these standards may result in the loss of eligibility for financial aid. Grades of F, I, N, W, Y, Z, and courses not yet graded are considered attempted, but not completed in evaluating SAP. Late grades will be recalculated and may change eligibility.
 - a. **Grade Point Average Qualitative Measurement:** Students must maintain a 2.0 cumulative Grade Point Average in order to meet SAP GPA requirements.
 - b. **Pace of Progression Quantitative Measurement:** Students must successfully complete 2/3 (66.67%) of all attempted course work. For clock hour programs, please refer to program attendance requirements.
 - c. **Maximum Time Frame Measurement:** Students must be able to complete their program within 150% of the published program length. Once students have attempted 150% of the published program length, they are no longer eligible for Federal Student Aid. For example, a 16 credit certificate program will allow up to 24 credit hours to complete the program. A 60 credit Associate's degree will allow up to 90 credit hours to complete the program.
3. Courses included in SAP evaluation:
 - a. All attempted coursework, regardless of enrollment status
 - b. Courses funded through a Consortium Agreement
 - c. All attempted remedial credits, including English as a Second Language (ESL) courses.
 - d. Repeated course work
 - e. All transferred coursework
 - f. Grades attempted, but not completed (F, I, N, W, Y, Z)
4. Course work included in the Maximum Time Frame evaluation:
 - a. All of those included in the Pace of Progression evaluation
 - b. Any Bachelor's degree (or higher) earned will be considered to have exhausted maximum timeframe eligibility
 - c. All coursework forgiven through the Academic Renewal Process

5. Course work not included in SAP evaluation:
 - a. Audited courses
 - b. Non-credit courses
 - c. Credit by examination
 - d. Credit for prior learning option (as outlined in the college general catalog)

Notification

Students who have applied for Federal Student Aid, but are not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements, will be notified via email of their FA Warning or ineligibility for financial aid. The notification will direct students to information regarding available college resources during the Warning Period and the appeal process in cases of extenuating circumstances.

Financial Aid Warning

Students are allowed a warning period upon failing Qualitative and/or Quantitative SAP standards. The warning period allows one (1) payment period (semester) of Federal Student Aid eligibility upon failing SAP. The warning period will follow the semester for which SAP was not met, meaning the next semester for which the student registers for classes. In order to receive the Warning period, students must be meeting Maximum Timeframe requirements.

SAP Appeal

Any student who has lost federal student aid eligibility due to a resolved, one-time extenuating circumstance may appeal to have their financial aid reinstated by completing a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form. The form must address:

1. what caused the student's work to fall below acceptable standards--specific explanations must be provided, including any supporting documentation,
2. each incomplete/failed course,
3. how the extenuating circumstance has been resolved, and
4. how the student will maintain good academic standards and progress toward the degree if the appeal is granted.

The outcome of the appeal will depend upon:

1. the nature of the extenuating circumstances (if the stated circumstance qualifies as such),
2. the quality of the documentation provided, and
3. how well the student has demonstrated the ability to progress towards degree completion within a reasonable time period.

All documentation submitted is confidential. All decisions are final and cannot be appealed. For assistance in completing the SAP appeal paperwork, including examples of supporting documentation, visit your college Financial Aid Office.

Students will be notified of the results of their appeal within ten (10) days of filing the appeal. Notification will include any restrictions or conditions pertaining to their appeal. The outcome of an appeal may include a probationary period. Appeals granted longer than one (1) payment period must include an academic plan, which must be followed. Failure to follow an approved academic plan will result in immediate suspension of Federal Student Aid. Students are responsible for any and all debt incurred as a result of this adjustment to financial aid.

Failure to successfully complete all conditions during the probationary period (as defined in the academic plan) will result in loss of future financial aid eligibility.

Regaining Eligibility

A student who has lost financial aid eligibility may only regain eligibility by meeting the minimum SAP standards. Transfer coursework taken at other colleges will be considered for reinstatement purposes.