

## SECTION 12: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

### 12.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities

To be eligible for Title IV aid, a student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Federal regulations require Grayson College (GC) to establish and apply reasonable standards of satisfactory academic progress for the purpose of the receipt of financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA). The law requires institutions to develop policies regarding SAP. Each institution must design criteria which outlines the definition of student progress towards a degree and the consequences to the student if progress is not achieved. GC students who wish to be considered for financial aid must maintain SAP in their selected course of study as set forth in this policy.

Students who receive federal and/or state funds administered by the GC Financial Aid Office (FAO) must demonstrate SAP. The student's academic record at GC is used to measure SAP and all periods of enrollment at GC must be counted, including any semester in which the student did not receive financial aid. If a student attended other colleges, the courses completed that are accepted as transfer credit by GC will be considered in the evaluation of SAP. There are three standards for SAP: cumulative grade point average (GPA), successful completion of courses (Pace), and max time frame.

### 12.2 Same As or Stricter Than

#### Policies

The Department of Education requires GC to establish a reasonable policy for determining whether an otherwise eligible student is making Satisfactory Academic Progress in his or her educational program and may receive assistance under the title IV, HEA programs. The Secretary of Education considers the institution's policy to be reasonable if it is at least as strict as the policy the institution applies to a student who is not receiving assistance under the Title IV, HEA. GC complies with this requirement.

#### Resources

668.16(e)  
668.32(f)  
668.34  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-9  
2013–14 *FSA Handbook*, p. 2-50

#### Resources

668.34(a)(1)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-9  
2013–14 *FSA Handbook*, p. 2-50

## 12.3 Evaluation Timeframes

### Policies

Students' progress will be reviewed at the end of each long semester. December for students enrolled in the Fall semester; May for students enrolled in the Spring semester; August for students enrolled in the Summer semester. Notification of a student's financial aid eligibility status will be posted on his or her MyViking student portal account and they should access MyViking student portal to verify status. Additionally, a paper letter is sent to the home address as listed in the student account and an email is sent to the student Viking email for students who are placed on Warning, Suspension or continuing on an academic plan.

#### 12.3.1 Financial Aid Warning

Financial Aid Warning occurs when the cumulative GPA is less than 2.0 and/or less than 67% of attempted cumulative course work is successfully completed. Financial Aid Warning also occurs if the student receives all F's for attempted classes in a semester. There is no need to appeal Financial Aid Warning. Students will receive financial aid the next semester they attend for one semester; this includes student loans, while on financial aid warning. If, by the end of the semester that the student is on financial aid warning, the student is not meeting SAP, they will be placed on financial aid suspension. There is no warning period for exceeding the max time frame of 150%.

#### 12.3.2 Financial Aid Suspension

Financial Aid Suspension occurs when students fail to meet the requirements of SAP at the end of the warning period or have reached 150% of the max time frame of the published length of their academic program. The student must successfully complete at least 67% of the cumulative hours they have attempted (Pace) and their cumulative GPA must be 2.0 or higher. When this is accomplished, the student will be removed from suspension and be eligible for financial aid. Students cannot regain eligibility with max time suspension without an approved appeal.

### Resources

668.34(a)(3)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-10

### Resources

668.34(a)(8)(i)  
668.34(b), *Financial aid warning*  
668.34(c)(1),(2)(i)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, pp. 1-11 to 1-12

### **12.3.3 Financial Aid Probation**

Financial Aid Probation is a period that only occurs if a student has an approved appeal. The period is not to exceed one long semester then, if necessary, the student is placed on an Academic Success Plan. During the probationary status the student will receive financial aid but must meet the conditions of their probation as stated in a letter they receive upon the appeal approval. If the student is on probation, the student must maintain at least a 2.5 semester GPA and 75% semester Pace. The FAO will reassess eligibility for financial aid at the end of the probation semester.

## **12.4 Measures of Satisfactory Academic Progress**

### **12.4.1 Qualitative - Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0. Grades of A, B, C, D, and F contribute toward the cumulative GPA, while grades of W, P, I, AU, U and G do not. Students who do not have any post-secondary academic history (first time college enrollment) will be assumed to be making satisfactory academic progress at the time of first enrollment. Developmental course work is not included in the cumulative GPA. Students may be funded for a repeated course but only if the student previously received an unacceptable (F, W, U, I) grade and for one time for a better grade or unless the repeated course is required to achieve the students educational goal.

### **12.4.2 Quantitative - Successful Completion of Courses (Pace)**

Students must successfully complete each term with at least 67% of all hours attempted at GC. This includes college level course work as well as transfer courses accepted. Successful completion is measured by grades of A, B, C, D, and P. Grades of F, W, U, and I are counted toward the total hours attempted but not successfully completed each semester. At GC, for financial aid purposes, being enrolled in a course for credit beyond the official census deadline counts as an attempt.

### **12.4.3 Max Time Frame**

Federal regulations specify that the maximum time frame for program completion may not exceed 150% of the published length of the program.

#### **Resources**

668.34(a)(8)(ii),  
668.34(b), *Financial  
aid probation*  
668.34(c)(2)(ii),  
(3),(4),(d)(2)  
2014–15 *FSA  
Handbook*,  
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

All college level credit hours attempted at GC, including transfer credit hours accepted at GC, are counted toward the maximum time frame limit. For example: if the GC Catalog lists a major which is 60 hours, then a student will automatically be placed on suspension after the student has attempted 90 hours, which is 150% of the 60 hours required for the major. Students who exceed the 150% maximum time limit will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

The student is allowed to appeal to request financial aid for additional hours above the number required in the program if: the classes apply toward the student's program, changing their program, or earn a second degree at GC. After exceeding the max time frame the student cannot regain eligibility, they may only be placed on an Academic Success Plan with approved appeal and must complete their program within the conditions set therein.

## 12.6 Appeals

### Procedures

Students placed on Financial Aid Suspension may appeal the denial of financial aid due to an unusual or extraordinary situation that affected the student's progression toward the successful completion of his or her program of study. Examples of unusual circumstances include: injury or illness of the student, death of a relative of the student, or other special circumstances.

The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Financial Aid Office and should include: an explanation of the reason(s) why the minimum SAP standards were not achieved and a copy of all supporting documents. The student must also supply a statement of how things have improved to allow the student to reach their educational goals.

Students must provide an Academic Appeal Agreement form that has been signed by an academic advisor. If the appeal is reviewed and subsequently approved by the Appeals Committee, the student's financial aid status will be changed to Probation.

The Director of Financial Aid has authority to place conditions upon the receipt of any financial aid for those cases where aid is reinstated. If an appeal is denied, the student will be required to regain eligibility at their own expense and:

- Raise their cumulative GPA to 2.0 or higher

### Resources

668.34(a)(9),  
668.34(b), *Appeal*  
668.34(c)(3)(ii),  
(iii), (d)(2)(ii), (iii)  
668.42(c)(2)(ii)  
2014–15 *FSA*  
*Handbook*,  
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

- Successfully complete at least 67% of all courses attempted, while attempting no more than 150% of the total published credit hours in their program

The GC website contains information on the SAP policy.

### **12.6.1 Documentation**

#### **Policies**

As with any use of Professional Judgement (PJ), adequate documentation is critical. A student who appeals must submit information explaining why he or she failed to meet SAP standards and what has changed in his or her situation which will allow him or her to be meeting SAP standards by the next evaluation. Additionally, third parties may be used to document the mitigating circumstances surrounding a SAP appeal. Examples might include:

- ◆ Newspaper obituaries or death certificates to substantiate deaths
- ◆ Physician's written statement to substantiate illness or accident
- ◆ Written statement from clergy, family member, or other third party who knows the student's situation
- ◆ Written statement from academic advisor or professor

### **12.6.2 Academic Plans**

#### **Policies**

Academic plans are used for all students on Financial Aid Probation. Students are required to have a plan evaluated and signed by an academic advisor. The student will not be allowed to change the approved plan and will not be allowed to enroll in classes not listed within the plan without prior approval. If a student insists on enrolling in a course not listed on their plan, they will immediately

668.34(a)(9)(iii)  
2014–15 FSA  
*Handbook*, p. 1-13

668.34(c)(3)(iii)(B),  
(d)(2)(iii)(B)  
*Federal Register*,  
10/29/10, p. 66886  
2014–15 FSA  
*Handbook*,  
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

forfeit their Title IV eligibility. The FAO will monitor students who are on Financial Aid Probation/Academic plan each semester.

## **12.7 Regaining Eligibility**

### **Policies & Procedures**

A student not meeting SAP may reestablish eligibility on his or her own, either because an appeal was denied, or because he or she did not submit an appeal. It is the student's responsibility to inform the FAO if they have regained a 2.0 or 67% Pace. Students who have met the max time limit cannot regain eligibility.

### **Resources**

668.34(a)(9)(i),(10)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-13

## **12.8 Completion of Degree Requirements**

### **Policies**

A student who has completed all coursework for his or her degree or certificate but has not yet received the degree or certificate cannot receive further Title IV aid for that program.

### **Resources**

2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-10

### **Procedures**

At the end of each semester the registrar provides a report of all financial aid recipients who have fulfilled all degree or certificate requirements. These students are placed on financial aid suspension.

## SECTION 12: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

### 12.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities

To be eligible for Title IV aid, a student must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Federal regulations require GC to establish and apply reasonable standards of satisfactory academic progress for the purpose of the receipt of financial assistance under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act. The law requires institutions to develop policies regarding satisfactory academic progress (SAP). Each institution must design criteria which outlines the definition of student progress towards a degree and the consequences to the student if progress is not achieved. GC students who wish to be considered for financial aid must maintain satisfactory academic progress in their selected course of study as set forth in this policy.

Students who receive federal and/or state funds administered by the Grayson College (GC) Financial Aid Office must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress. The student's academic record at GC is used to measure satisfactory academic progress and all periods of enrollment at GC must be counted, including any semester in which the student did not receive financial aid. If a student attended other colleges, the courses completed that are accepted as transfer credit for the students program of student will be considered in the evaluation of SAP. There are three standards for satisfactory academic progress: cumulative grade point average (GPA), successful completion of courses (Pace), and max time frame.

### 12.2 Same As or Stricter Than

#### *Policies*

The Department of Education SAP policy for which GC's FAO is required to follow for Title IV students is stricter than the school's standards for students enrolled in the same educational program who are not receiving Title IV aid.

#### Resources

668.16(e)  
668.32(f)  
668.34  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-9  
2013–14 *FSA Handbook*, p. 2-50

#### Resources

668.34(a)(1)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-9  
2013–14 *FSA Handbook*, p. 2-50

The Department of Ed SAP policy does not allow the FAO to override the GPA of a student who receives a “Fresh Start” by the institution.

## 12.3 Categories of Students

### Policies

Students’ progress will be reviewed at the end of each long semester. December for students enrolled in the Fall - Fall I and/or Fall II semester(s), May for students enrolled in the Spring, Spring I and/or Spring II semester(s), and August for students enrolled in the Summer, Summer I and/or Summer II semester(s). Notification of a student’s financial aid eligibility status will be posted on his or her MyViking student portal account and they should access MyViking student portal to verify their status.

### 12.3.1 Financial Aid Suspension

Financial aid suspension occurs when students fail to meet the requirements of SAP at the end of the warning period or have reached 150% or the max-time frame of the published length of their academic program. The student must successfully complete at least 67% of the cumulative hours they have attempted and their cumulative GPA must be 2.0 or higher. When this is accomplished the student will be removed from financial aid suspension and therefore be eligible for financial aid. Students are responsible for notifying the Financial Aid Office when they have regained eligibility for aid. Students cannot regain eligibility with max-time suspension without an approved appeal.

### 12.3.2 Financial Aid Warning

Financial Aid Warning occurs when the cumulative grade point average is less than 2.0 and/or less than 67% of attempted cumulative course work is successfully completed. Financial Aid Warning also occurs if the student receives all F’s for attempted classes in a semester. The Director of Financial Aid also reserves the right, through professional judgment, to place a student on Financial Aid Warning. There is no need to appeal financial aid warning. Students will receive financial aid the next semester they attend for one semester; this includes student loans, while on financial aid warning. If, by the end of the semester that the student is on financial aid warning, the student is not meeting satisfactory academic progress, they will be placed on financial aid suspension. There is no warning period for exceeding the max time frame.

### Resources

668.34(a)(3)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*, p. 1-10

### Resources

668.34(a)(8)(i)  
668.34(b), *Financial aid warning*  
668.34(c)(1),(2)(i)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*,  
pp. 1-11 to 1-12



### **12.3.3 Financial Aid Probation**

Financial aid probation is a period that only occurs if a student has an approved appeal. The period is not to exceed one long semester then if necessary the student is placed on an Academic Success Plan. During the probationary status the student will receive financial aid but must meet the conditions of their probation, stated in a letter they will receive upon approval. If the student is on probation the student must maintain at least a 2.5 semester GPA and 75% semester Pace. At the end of the semester while the student is on probation, their progress will be re-evaluated by the Financial Aid Office.

## 12.4 Measures of Satisfactory Academic Progress

### 12.4.1 Qualitative - Grade Point Average (GPA)

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0. Grades of A, B, C, D, F and WF contribute toward the cumulative GPA, while grades of W, P, I, AU, U and G do not. Students who do not have any post-secondary academic history (first time college enrollment) will be assumed to be making satisfactory academic progress at the time of first enrollment. Remedial course work is not included in the cumulative GPA. The last grade earned for a repeated course is included in the student's GPA. Students may be funded for a repeated course but only if the student previously received an unacceptable (F, W, WF, U, I) grade and for one time for a better grade or unless the repeated course is required to achieve the students educational goal. At this time transfer grades are not included in the GC GPA calculation.

### 12.4.2 Quantitative - Successful Completion of Courses (Pace)

Students must successfully complete each term with at least 67% of all hours attempted at GC. This includes both developmental and college level course work as well as transfer courses accepted. Successful completion is measured by grades of A, B, C, D, and P. Grades of F, W, WF, U, and I are counted toward the total hours attempted but not successfully completed each semester. At GC, for financial aid purposes, being enrolled in a course for credit beyond the official census deadline counts as an attempt.

### 12.4.3 Max Time Frame

Federal regulations specify that the maximum time frame for program completion may not exceed 150% of the published length of the program.

All college level credit hours attempted at GC, including transfer credit hours accepted at GC are counted toward the maximum time frame limit. For example: if the GC Catalog lists a major which is 60 hours, then a student will automatically be placed on suspension after the student has attempted 90 hours, which is 150% of the 60 hours required for the major. Students who exceed the 150% maximum time limit will no longer be eligible for financial aid. After exceeding the max time frame the student cannot regain eligibility, they may only be placed on an Academic Success Plan and must complete their program within the conditions set therein.

Developmental classes count toward the 150% maximum time frame. The student is allowed to appeal to request financial aid for additional hours above the number required in the program if: the classes apply toward the student's program, changing their program, or earn a second degree at GC.

### Resources

668.34(a)(8)(ii),  
668.34(b), *Financial aid probation*  
668.34(c)(2)(ii),  
(3),(4),(d)(2)  
2014–15 *FSA Handbook*,  
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

## 12.6 Appeals

### *Procedures*

Students placed on financial aid suspension due to lack of satisfactory progress may appeal the denial of financial aid due to an unusual or extraordinary situation that affected the student's progression toward the successful completion of his or her program of study.

Examples of unusual circumstances include: injury or illness of the student or family member, death of a relative of the student, maximum time limit exceeded, or other extenuating circumstances.

The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Financial Aid Office and should include: an explanation of the reason(s) why the minimum Satisfactory Academic Progress standards were not achieved and supply a copy of all supporting documents. The student must also supply a statement of how things have improved to allow the student to reach their educational goals.

Students must provide an Academic Appeal Agreement form that has been signed by an academic advisor. If the appeal is reviewed and subsequently approved by the Appeals Committee, the student's financial aid status will be changed to Probation.

The Director of Financial Aid shall also have the authority to place conditions upon the receipt of any financial aid for those cases where aid is reinstated. If an appeal is denied the student will be required to regain eligibility at their own expense by:

- Raising their cumulative GPA to 2.0 or higher
- Successfully complete at least 67% of all courses attempted, while attempting no more than 150% of the total published credit hours in their program

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the Financial Aid Office that they have regained eligibility.

Students who obtain their educational goal by obtaining a certificate and choose to follow the same academic path pursuing a higher certificate or associate degree in the same program must file a Certificate Completion - Max Timeframe Continuation Appeal.

### **Resources**

668.34(a)(9),  
668.34(b), *Appeal*  
668.34(c)(3)(ii),  
(iii),(d)(2)(ii),(iii)  
668.42(c)(2)(ii)  
2014–15 *FSA*  
*Handbook*,  
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

Students are notified of the SAP policy in the GC Catalog, each award year with Consumer Information Notification and it is posted on the GC Financial Aid webpage.

### 12.6.1 Documentation

#### Policies

As with any use of PJ, adequate documentation is critical. A student who appeals must submit information explaining why he or she failed to meet SAP standards and what has changed in his or her situation which will allow him or her to be making SAP by the next evaluation. Additionally, since third parties may be used to document the mitigating circumstances surrounding a SAP appeal, Some examples might include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Newspaper obituaries or death certificates to substantiate deaths
- ◆ Physician’s written statement to substantiate illness or accident
- ◆ Written statement from clergy, family member, or other third party who knows the student’s situation
- ◆ Written statement from academic advisor or professor

668.34(a)(9)(iii)  
2014–15 FSA  
*Handbook*, p. 1-13

### 12.6.2 Academic Plans

#### *Policies*

Academic plans are used for all students on Financial Aid Probation. Students are required to have a plan evaluated and signed by an academic advisor. The student will not be allowed to change the approved plan and will not be allowed to enroll in classes not listed within the plan without prior approval. If a student insists on enrolling in a course not listed on their plan, they will immediately forfeit their Title IV eligibility.

668.34(c)(3)(iii)(B),  
(d)(2)(iii)(B)  
*Federal Register*,  
10/29/10, p. 66886  
2014–15 FSA  
*Handbook*,  
pp. 1-12 to 1-13

## **12.7 Monitoring Probation**

The FAO will monitor students who are FA Probation each semester.

## **12.7 Regaining Eligibility**

### ***Policies & Procedures***

A student not making SAP may re-establish eligibility on his or her own, either because an appeal was denied, or because he or she did not submit an appeal. It is the student's responsibility to inform the FAO if they have regained a 2.0 or 67% Pace. Students who have met the max time limit cannot regain eligibility.

To have their aid reinstated, a student must submit a Financial Aid Reinstatement form to the FAO. Once the student's Title IV eligibility is verified, the FAO will package the current semester Title IV funds.

## **12.8 Completion of Degree Requirements**

### ***Policies***

A student who has completed all the coursework for his or her degree or certificate but has not yet received the degree or certificate cannot receive further Title IV aid for that program.

### ***Procedures***

At the end of each semester the registrar provides a report of all financial aid recipients who have fulfilled all degree or certificate requirements. These students are placed on financial aid suspension.

### **Resources**

668.34(a)(9)(i),(10)  
2014–15 FSA  
*Handbook*, p. 1-13

### **Resources**

2014–15 FSA  
*Handbook*, p. 1-10