

# Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to be Eligible for Financial Aid

Federal regulations require students receiving federal financial aid to maintain satisfactory progress according to standards set by Central Piedmont and the federal government. This policy applies to students applying for or receiving federal and state funds. Failure to fulfill any part of the agreement may result in the cancellation of financial aid awards and students may be responsible for repaying any funds received. At Central Piedmont, Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards also apply to non-federal aid, including state funds, institutional funds, and Foundation scholarships. Students are expected to maintain at least a minimum level of progress toward the successful completion of course requirements for a degree, certificate or diploma. Progress is measured both qualitatively and quantitatively. As recipients of federal or state financial aid, students also have individual rights and responsibilities.

### Definition of Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is defined as passing 67% of all hours attempted (67% Rule) with a required grade point average of 2.0 (GPA Rule), not exceeding 150% of total attempted hours needed to complete an approved program defined by the Department of Education (150% Rule).

### Standards of Academic Progress (SAP)

The college also uses SAP Standards of Academic Progress to measure whether students are maintaining a 2.0 or higher cumulative grade point average; and a 67% course completion rate based on all attempted credits.

### Semester Increments

To ensure students make sufficient progress throughout their courses of study, a maximum time frame for completion, divided into increments, is required. At the end of each increment (semester), the college must determine whether students have completed a minimum percentage of work toward their educational objective, degree, or certificate for all semesters thus far completed. Progress is measured throughout the academic program by:

1. cumulative grade point average (qualitative measure) and
2. credits earned as a percentage of credits attempted, known as the "pace of completion" (quantitative measure).

### Evaluating Progress

Central Piedmont's Financial Aid Office evaluates Satisfactory Academic Progress before aid is awarded and again after grades are posted for every term, starting with the first semester of enrollment. To reasonably measure satisfactory progress toward completing a degree, diploma, or certificate, **a student's total academic record at Central Piedmont is evaluated, regardless of whether or not financial aid was received for the entire enrollment period.** Some career studies certificate programs are ineligible for student financial aid, but those credits *are* counted for all SAP requirements if the student enrolls later in an eligible program.

#### Qualitative Standard

**Cumulative GPA Requirements (GPA Rule):** To remain eligible for financial aid consideration, students must meet minimum cumulative grade point average requirements based on a progressive scale. The calculation includes grades of A, B, C, D, and F. The GPA evaluation excludes transfer credits.

#### Quantitative Standards or Pace of Completion

**Completion Rate (67% Rule):** Students must, at a minimum, receive satisfactory grades in 67% of all credits attempted. This calculation divides the cumulative total number of credits *completed* by the total number of attempted credits. All credits attempted at Central Piedmont are included, except any audited courses for which a status of 'AU' was received by the time of the class census date. All credits accepted for transfer count as both attempted and completed credits. Credits with satisfactory grades at the college are those for which a grade of A, B, C, D, or P was earned.

**Maximum Hours (150% Rule):** To continue receiving financial aid, students must complete their programs of study before attempting 150% of the credits required for a program. The 150% calculation excludes developmental coursework. Attempted credits from the entire enrollment period at Central Piedmont, plus all applicable transfer credits, are counted - regardless of whether or not financial aid was received for the whole enrollment period.

### Transfer Students

To calculate satisfactory academic progress, transfer students who apply for financial aid must request official transcripts from all other colleges attended. Official transcripts must be submitted directly to one of the campus Student Records Office. Credits officially accepted in transfer are counted in the 150% Rule in determining the maximum number of allowable credit hours for financial aid eligibility. The college has the option, on an individual student basis, to place transfer students on either Financial Aid Warning or Suspension status immediately upon evaluation for financial aid if academic history at previous colleges indicates a pattern of unsuccessful academic work.

### Changing Programs or Completing a Second Program

For students who switch programs or attempt a second degree or certificate, all credits earned from the first degree or certificate are included in hours attempted and completed. Depending on circumstances, an appeal may be warranted.

### Developmental Studies

Students may receive financial aid for a maximum of 30 semester hours of developmental courses, as long as all of the following criteria are met:

1. they are required to take developmental classes, based on their placement test results,
2. they are in a program of study eligible for financial aid, and
3. they meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements.

Developmental courses are included in the calculation of Satisfactory Academic Progress. Students enrolled in developmental courses must receive grades of A, B, or C to remain in good standing. Developmental hours beyond the required 30 semester hours cannot count towards enrollment status for federal and state grants, nor can they count toward the cost of attendance for any campus-based programs.

### Cumulative Credit Hours Attempted

Cumulative credit hours attempted are defined as all credit hours attempted at Central Piedmont and all credit hours transferred from other

institutions. Attempted credits include those for which grades of A through F, P, R, W, I/A, I/B, I/C, I/D, I/F, or I were earned.

#### **Cumulative Credit Hours Completed**

Cumulative credit hours completed are defined as those for which grades A through D, P, I/A, I/B, I/C, I/D, or I/F were earned. Credit hours not completed are defined as those for which I, I/F, F, R, or W were received.

#### **Repeated Courses**

Repeated courses are counted among hours attempted and also toward maximum credits allowed for each type of program for which financial aid is received. Repeated courses may enable students to achieve a higher cumulative grade point average. Students may repeat courses with financial aid until successfully completed, but repeating courses adversely affects the completion rate requirement. Financial aid will pay only once to repeat a completed class (grade D or higher) to achieve a higher grade. All attempts count toward the financial aid cumulative grade point average and cumulative completion rate.

#### **Audited Courses**

Credit hours completed to audit a course (AU grade received) do not apply toward an associate degree, diploma or certificate program; therefore, credit hours with this designation cannot be included in determining enrollment status for financial aid or Satisfactory Academic Progress. An enrollment status change is made if students wish to have a grade changed to audit status (AU) after financial aid is disbursed. This change may result in a reduction of financial aid eligibility and a balance owed to the college.

#### **Incomplete Grades**

Courses with grades of I (incomplete) are treated as an F and are considered as credit hours attempted and not completed in the SAP calculations. Students who make arrangements with an instructor to finish required coursework are not required to re-register for the same class during the next semester to complete the work. If the unfinished course causes a student to be placed on financial aid probation or suspension, the student may appeal once the course is completed. A student may appeal for a re-evaluation of Satisfactory Academic Progress by completing Steps to Appeal. If the grade becomes final before the review, the actual grade, credits attempted, and credits earned are used to determine whether the student is making satisfactory progress.

***Students should contact the Financial Aid office before changing programs and withdrawing from any courses.***

#### **Course Withdrawals**

Students who withdraw from classes officially or unofficially should understand how withdrawals affect their eligibility for financial aid as determined by the Satisfactory Academic Progress procedure. A withdrawal (W grade status) counts as attempted, not completed, credits in the Financial Aid GPA calculation. Financial Aid recipients should discuss the possibility of withdrawing with a financial aid representative before doing so.

**NOTE: Reducing enrollment during a semester may create adverse consequences for financial aid recipients:**

1. Satisfactory Academic Progress may be affected.
2. **Students may be required to repay a percentage of financial aid received for the semester** in cases of complete withdrawals. (See Return of Title IV Funds.)

#### **Change of Major**

Students who change their major (program of study) still are responsible for maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress by the procedures

outlined. A review of Satisfactory Academic Progress is based only on students' current programs of study. Students changing from an associate program to a diploma or certificate program may lose federal and state eligibility immediately upon making the change.

#### **EFL-English as a Foreign Language Studies**

Allowable credits for EFL- English as a Foreign Language courses are limited, as long as they are taken as part of an eligible program and satisfactory academic requirements are met.

#### **Dual Enrollment**

Students may not receive federal aid from more than one institution at the same time. Students transferring to Central Piedmont from other schools must have any aid received at former schools canceled.

#### **Summer Session**

Credit hours attempted and earned during the summer session are included in the calculation of Satisfactory Academic Progress. Full-time status (12 credit hours) is the same for summer sessions as it is for fall and spring semesters.

## **Student Financial Aid Status**

#### **Satisfactory Status (S)**

Students who continue to meet all aspects of the satisfactory academic policy will continue receiving financial aid.

#### **Warnings**

##### **Warning/GPA Probation (WG)**

Students not meeting the 2.0-grade point average required for Satisfactory Academic Progress receive a probationary status of WG.

##### **Warning/Pass Rate Probation (WP)**

Students not meeting the 67% pass rate required for Satisfactory Academic Progress receive a probationary status of WP.

##### **Warning/GPA & Pass Rate Probation (WB)**

Students not meeting the 2.0 GPA nor the 67% pass rate required for Satisfactory Academic Progress are placed on a probationary status of WB.

#### **Suspension from Receiving Financial Aid**

Students who previously held a 'Warning' status and failed to meet financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress standards during the following semester are placed on financial aid 'Suspension' status. While on financial aid suspension, students cannot receive federal, state, or institutional financial aid during the next attending semester. Students placed on financial aid suspension may appeal the decision by completing the Satisfactory Academic Appeal Process (see below).

##### **Suspension/GPA (UG)**

Students who had a 'Warning' status and are now suspended from receiving financial aid for not meeting the 2.0 GPA required for Satisfactory Academic Progress are assigned a status of UG.

##### **Suspension/Pass Rate (UP)**

Students who had a 'Warning' status and are now suspended from receiving financial aid for not meeting the 67% pass rate required for Satisfactory Academic Progress are assigned a status of UP.

##### **Suspension/GPA & Pass Rate (UB)**

Students who had a 'Warning' status and are now suspended from receiving financial aid for not meeting the 2.0 GPA nor the 67% pass

rate required for Satisfactory Academic Progress are assigned a status of UB.

**Standards of Progress (SAP)**

The college also uses SAP Standards of Academic Progress to measure whether students are maintaining a 2.0 or higher cumulative grade point average; and a 67% course completion rate based on all attempted credits.

**After Financial Aid is Suspended**

Except for appeals granted for unusual or mitigating circumstances, students can reestablish eligibility only by taking action that brings them in compliance with the qualitative and quantitative components of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, including the maximum time frame requirement.

Students are notified through their student email when placed on 'Warning' or 'Suspension.' If students take necessary actions to comply with the qualitative and quantitative components of the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, the Federal Pell Grant, and other types of financial assistance (depending on availability of funds) are reinstated at the beginning of the next term of attendance, if they are otherwise eligible. When approved by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, the financial aid status upon reinstatement is 'Probation.'