

# Tri-County Technical College Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Policy

Students receiving federal financial aid must be making satisfactory academic progress towards a degree, diploma, or certificate. Students receiving financial aid through state programs will, at a minimum, meet the same standards when specific criteria are not prescribed.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is a federal government requirement and is measured by a number of factors, including the following:

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

- A student must maintain an institutional grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 (C) or better to remain eligible for Federal Financial Aid.
- At the end of the first term that a student's institutional GPA is less than 2.00, the student will be placed on Federal Financial Aid Warning for one term. A student may still receive Federal Financial Aid during their warning term.
- If a student decides to appeal, he/she is required to meet with his/her academic advisor during the warning term to complete an Academic Improvement Plan in Degree Works.
- If the institutional GPA falls below a 2.00 (C) during the warning term, the student will be placed on Federal Financial Aid Suspension. A student will not receive Federal Financial Aid while on suspension.

## Completion Rate - (Quantitative Measure)

- A student must successfully complete 67% of all attempted hours, including remedial and transfer credits.
- Students who do not complete at least 67% of all attempted hours will be placed on Federal Financial Aid Warning for one term. A student may still receive Federal Financial Aid during their warning term.
- If a student decides to appeal, he/she is required to meet with his/her academic advisor during the warning term to complete an Academic Improvement Plan in Degree Works.
- If the student fails to complete 67% of all attempted hours thereafter, he/she will be placed on Federal Financial Aid Suspension. A student will not receive Federal Financial Aid while on suspension.
- Attempted hours are not considered passed if a student receives a W, I, WF, or an F. These grades factor into the 67% completion calculation requirement.

## Maximum Timeframe (MTF) - (Quantitative Measure)

- A student may only receive financial aid for a limited number of credit hours. Eligibility for Federal Financial Aid is terminated after a student has attempted 150% of the hours required for his/her program of study.
- The attempted hours include all coursework including remedial and transfer credits accepted by the college.
- There is a possibility that a student may be ineligible for Federal Financial Aid, based on academic progress and performance, before the student applies. The college considers a student's complete enrollment history when establishing eligibility, including dual enrollment and transfer hour credit.
- If a student decides to appeal, he/she is required to meet with his/her academic advisor during the warning term to complete an Academic Graduation Plan in Degree Works.

## Exceptions/Appeal/Reinstatement

Exceptions to this policy will be reviewed based on an appeals process. The appeals process is under the umbrella of professional judgment. Students with documented appeals may be given exceptions on a case-by-case basis. An appeal with all necessary components must be submitted and approved for reinstatement of Federal Financial Aid.

- Students are limited to two Federal Financial Aid SAP appeals.
- A student on Federal Financial Aid Suspension may appeal by:
  - Completing a Financial Aid Appeal Form (available on the college's website under Financial Aid Forms), indicating unforeseen circumstances that were beyond the student's control and provide an explanation of why he/she did not meet the SAP standards.
  - Completing an Academic Improvement Plan or an Academic Graduation Plan.

- Providing official documentation of the extenuating circumstances mentioned in the appeal response.
- Acceptable reasons for an appeal include circumstances the student could not have foreseen at the beginning of the term and which are completely beyond his/her control. Examples of such circumstances may include:
  - Personal/Family illness
  - Family difficulties
  - Death of a loved one/family member
  - Other: Contact the Financial Aid Office for clarity
- Incomplete appeals will not be accepted and could result in an automatic denial.
- The appeals deadline will be posted prior to the beginning of each term. A notification of suspension will be sent to students via eTC email.
- Appeals must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office no later than the published deadline for the term in which the student is requesting aid. Late appeals will not be accepted.
- Appeals are reviewed by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Coordinator and/or the Director of Financial Aid to determine whether to grant the appeal. If necessary, the appeal will be forwarded to the SAP Appeal Committee.
- Appeal decisions will be made prior to the start of classes, and students will be notified via eTC e-mail.
- Students may have their federal financial aid reinstated with the approval of an appeal. Students reinstated by appeal approval will have to adhere to specific terms and conditions, outlined with the notification of approval.
- Approved appeals in which a student will go into Good Standing after one term are considered probationary.
- All appeal decisions are final and cannot be appealed. Students whose appeals are denied must regain eligibility prior to receiving additional federal financial aid.

### **Summary**

- It is the student's responsibility to monitor his/her Satisfactory Academic Progress status. This can be done using the student's eTC account. The status is updated at the end of each term once grades are finalized by the Student Records Office.
- At the end of each term, the Financial Aid Office will review the GPA, completion rate, and MTF for every student enrolled. Students on warning or suspension will be notified via eTC email; Students who are suspended will also be notified via the U.S. Postal Service. Students should check their status regularly as appeal times may be limited due to the start date of the upcoming term.
- Students on suspension will be ineligible for all federal financial aid, including Federal Stafford Loans. State financial aid may also be affected.

### **Withdrawing from a Term**

Students who receive financial aid and withdraw, officially or unofficially, regardless of circumstances, may fall under the "Return of Title IV Funds Policy," depending on their last date of attendance. See section titled "Earned Aid Policy" for additional information.