



ATLANTA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

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The U.S. Department of Education requires institutions of higher learning to establish standards of satisfactory academic progress for students receiving financial aid. Students must declare a major and be working toward the completion of that major to receive financial aid. Failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will result in the loss of federal and state aid after the probationary terms.

This SAP policy applies to all students regardless of status, e.g., full-time, part-time, undergraduate and education programs established by Atlanta Technical College. To receive aid, a student must be making SAP regardless of whether he or she has previously received aid. *NOTE: New students and/or transfer students are making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).*

Students who wish to receive financial aid from Atlanta Technical College must be making satisfactory academic progress, as outlined below.

Students are responsible for maintaining an acceptable level of progress regarding quality, quantity, and time frame of work. Satisfactory Academic Progress will be reviewed at the end of every semester. Records are reviewed after grades are posted at the end of each semester.

SAP includes three components:

1. **Qualitative Grade Point Average (GPA) (Cumulative):** Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0. The GPA is computed by the Registrar's office on a scale of 4.0. The GPA is cumulative (includes entire Academic history). Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 when they transfer programs to receive financial aid for the new program.
  - a. All attempts of repeated courses are included in the GPA calculation. Grades for Learning Support courses are not included in the GPA calculation for financial aid purposes. Grades included in the GPA calculation for SAP purposes are: A, B, C, D, F, and WF. Transfers of credits that are accepted into a student's education program are counted as credit hours attempted and earned in the calculation.
  - b. Credit hours for which a student earns a grade of I, IP, W, and WF are counted as hours attempted for SAP purposes. Incomplete grades, withdrawals, and failures are considered unsuccessful completions.
  
2. **Quantitative Hours Completed (Cumulative):** To receive financial aid, students must have passed at least 67% of all credit hours attempted at Atlanta Technical College to maintain satisfactory progress. The completion rate is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of credit hours the student has successfully completed by the cumulative number of credit hours the student has attempted. This calculation is

performed in Banner after final grades are posted by the Registrar at the end of the semester.

- a. All periods of enrollment at Atlanta Technical College are included when calculating completion rate, including terms in which the student did not receive financial aid. Credit hours for all prior terms of enrollment at Atlanta Technical College are included in the calculation, as this is a cumulative measure. All attempts of repeated courses are considered attempted hours in the completion rate calculation. Credit hours for which a student earns a grade of I, IP, W, and WF are counted as hours attempted for SAP purposes. However, Learning Support hours are not counted in the quantitative measurement for SAP. Incomplete grades, withdrawals, and failures are considered unsuccessful completions.
  - b. Transfers of credit are counted as credit hours attempted and earned in the calculation of completion rate. Exemption exam credit, credit for previous experience, grades for audited courses, and articulated credit are NOT included in the completion rate calculation. Grades which are considered successful completions for financial aid SAP purposes are: A, B, C, D, TR, and S. Grades which are considered unsuccessful completions for financial aid SAP purposes are: F, W, WP, WF, I, IP, and U.
3. **Maximum Time Frame 150%:** The purpose of the Federal Title IV financial aid programs is to assist students in meeting their educational expenses while they progress toward timely completion of their educational objectives. For that reason, federal regulations require that students must complete their educational objective within a maximum time frame of one and one-half times the length of the program in which they are enrolled. Program length is measured in credit hours and is determined by the number of credit hours required for completion of the program.
- a. Maximum time frame is calculated by multiplying the number of credit hours required to complete the program by 150%. For example, if a student is enrolled in a diploma program that takes 100 semester hours to complete, that student may receive financial aid (if eligible) for 150 semester hours before financial aid is suspended.
  - b. If it is determined that a student cannot mathematically complete his/her program of study within 150% of the program's length, then he/she will become ineligible for financial aid. In this situation, an appeal would be possible.
  - c. Once a student is found to have exceeded the maximum time frame allowed, he or she will be ineligible for all federal and state aid programs. Students may appeal a loss of financial aid eligibility due to maximum time frame requirements if extenuating circumstances prevented them from completing their program within the specified time frame. If a student has extenuating circumstances, and are within 1-2 semesters of graduating, an extended appeal will be granted.
  - d. If a student graduates from one program and re-enrolls in another program, the maximum time frame will not be reset.

## **Financial Aid Warning**

Students who fail to maintain either a 2.0 cumulative GPA or 67% cumulative completion rate will be placed on financial aid warning. Students on financial aid warning will continue to be eligible to receive financial aid for one term only. Students on financial aid warning must meet all SAP requirements by the end of their warning period to receive financial aid in subsequent terms. Students placed on financial aid warning who fail to raise their cumulative GPA to a 2.0 or higher and their completion rate to 67% or higher by the end of their next term of enrollment will be placed on financial aid suspension and will be ineligible for all forms of financial aid.

## **Financial Aid Suspension**

Students who fail to meet one or more SAP requirements for at least two consecutive terms of enrollment are placed on financial aid suspension and are not eligible for any form of financial aid. Students have the right to appeal a financial aid suspension if there are extenuating circumstances that have prevented them from meeting the SAP requirements.

## **Reinstatement of Aid**

A student who has been placed on financial aid suspension will regain eligibility for financial aid when he/she has met the minimum cumulative requirements for SAP. Not enrolling for a term or paying for tuition does not automatically reinstate a student's eligibility for financial aid.

Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements must be met, or an appeal must be approved to receive aid.

## **Right of Appeal by Students Placed on Financial Aid Suspension**

Financial aid recipients who have failed to meet SAP and who have been placed on Financial Aid Suspension may appeal in writing to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. Appeals must be written, specifically addressing the extenuating circumstances, and must be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid by the published deadline posted on the OFA website and SAP email notification of the failure to make satisfactory progress. Appeals will be considered for extenuating circumstances only, which may include, but are not limited to, the death of a family member, an injury or illness of the student or their immediate family member, or other special circumstances that are generally outside of the control of the student. Supporting documentation must be provided or the appeal will be denied. All appeals will be considered on a case by case basis. All students are required to submit an academic plan to the SAP committee along with their appeal. If the SAP appeal is approved, students are required to follow the academic plan to ensure that the student can meet SAP standards. The decision of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee is final.

Students who have been denied because of "no supporting documentation" will be allowed to resubmit an appeal 1 additional time. If a student chooses to re-submit an appeal with the appropriate supporting documents, he or she will still be reviewed at the next schedule SAP appeals committee meeting.

If a student was denied due to “no mitigating circumstances,” this does not constitute as a reappeal. The decision will stand, and the student will be responsible for paying tuition and fees out of pocket until all SAP standards have been met.

### **Approved Appeals**

For all appeals that are approved by the committee, OFA changes the student SAP status to Academic Plan (AP). During the semester, students in AP status must be enrolled in courses outlined in the Academic Plan, maintain a 2.0 GPA and a completion rate of 67%. Withdrawing during the Academic Plan status will change your status automatically to denied status. Students who fail to meet the requirements of the AP will be denied all forms of financial aid and will be required to pay out of pocket until the student meets all SAP requirements.

### **Notification of SAP Status**

All students who fail to meet SAP requirements will be notified of their SAP status at the end of the term in which they failed to make SAP via ATC email account. SAP is evaluated at the end of each term after final grades have been posted by the Registrar. Students who appeal a financial aid suspension will be notified via ATC email as soon as a decision is reached by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee regarding their status. The appeal process is explained within the notification as well as the ATC OFA website.