



Policies and Procedures

TITLE: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID STUDENTS

POLICY NO: 1-6

EFFECTIVE DATE: 08/16/90

VCCS POLICY NO: N/A

REVISED DATE: 11/29/11

I. Purpose:

To establish eligibility criteria for receiving financial aid funds based on academic performance at the college.

II. Definitions:

Documentation: for the purpose of appeals, includes but is not limited to, letters from physicians, licensed counselors, clergy, or other professionals not related to the student. It should be legible, be on official letterhead, and reference a time period that corresponds with semesters where the student had academic problems.

III. Policy:

Financial aid recipients at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College are expected to progress through the program(s) in which he/she is enrolled in an acceptable manner. In compliance with federal and state regulation, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College will assess financial aid recipients' academic progress toward their degrees or certificates.

In assessing students' eligibility for financial aid, the following provisions apply:

- Academic progress will be assessed at the end of each semester or term prior to the awarding and/or disbursement of funds in the subsequent semester/term.
- The criteria used to judge academic progress are cumulative and cover all periods of a student's enrollment, including those periods in which the student did not receive financial aid or where the student was enrolled in prior/previous programs at the college.

This policy applies to all federal, state, and institutional funds that are administered by the Financial Aid Office, and begins with the student's first term of enrollment.

A. Academic progress standards

Academic progress is measured by comparing a student's performance to standards for the following: a) cumulative grade point average (qualitatively); b) the number of credits earned in comparison to the number of credits attempted (quantitatively); and c) the total number of credits attempted by a student in his or her program.

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1. Qualitative Standard – Cumulative Grade Point Average: Students must meet minimum cumulative grade point average requirements based on a progressive scale. The scale is as follows:

Total Number of Credits Attempted	GPA Requirement
1 – 15	1.50
16 – 30	1.75
31+	2.00

Only non-remedial courses with grades of A, B, C, D, and F are included in the cumulative grade point average calculation. Transfer credit and grades are excluded from this calculation. The college reserves the right to place a transfer student on probation in the event that the student has a history of unsuccessful academic performance at his/her previous institution(s).

2. Quantitative Standard – Completion Rate: At a minimum, a student must successfully complete sixty-seven percent (67%) of the total number of credits he/she has attempted. Successfully completed courses are courses in which a student receives a grade of A, B, C, D, S, or P. For the purpose of this policy, the total number of credits attempted includes all credits attempted at the college, and all credits completed at another college that are successfully transferred into a student’s program. Audited courses are excluded from this count. Both developmental and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses are included in this calculation.
3. Quantitative Standard – Maximum Hours (150% Rule): Students shall remain eligible for financial aid if he/she completes his/her program before attempting 150% of the total number of credits required for the program. For example, if the length of a program is published in the college catalog as 60 credit hours, then the maximum attempts allowed for that program is 90 credit hours ($150\% \times 60 = 90$). Students who have previously completed or attempted another degree or certificate at the college will have the credits from the previous degree or certificate included in the total number of credits attempted. Transfer credit officially accepted as coursework for the program in which the student is enrolled will be included in this calculation. Developmental and ESL coursework are excluded from this calculation.

While developmental coursework is not included in this calculation, students required (by way of placement test results) to enroll in developmental coursework are subject to a maximum of 30 credits as allowed by federal regulation. ESL credits are unlimited provided the student is enrolled in an eligible program and he/she is meeting academic progress guidelines.

Additional consideration for both completion rate and maximum hours standards:

- Withdrawals (W grades) that are recorded on the student’s permanent academic transcript will be included as credits attempted and will have an adverse effect on the student’s ability to meet the requirements of the completion rate for financial aid.

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- Courses that are assigned an incomplete (I) grade are included in cumulative credits attempted. These cannot be used as credits earned in the progress standard until a successful grade is assigned.
- Students can repeat courses with financial aid until successfully completed but repeating courses adversely affects the student's ability to meet completion rate requirements. Financial aid can be considered for successfully completed classes that are repeated to achieve a higher grade but for only one additional attempt. Only the latest attempt will count toward the cumulative grade point average.

B. Financial aid status

1. Good standing: Students meeting the above criteria shall remain eligible, or in good standing (GS), for financial aid.
2. Warning status: Students who fail to meet the above criteria for the first time (excluding students who have already attempted 150% of the credits required for their programs of study) will be automatically placed in a warning status (WS) for one (1) term and are expected to meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements by the end of their next term of enrollment. Students who fail to meet SAP requirements at the end of the warning status term will be placed on financial aid suspension.
3. Probation status: Students who have successfully appealed financial aid suspension are placed in probation status (PS). Students in probation status (PS) are eligible to receive financial aid for one (1) semester, after which they must be in good standing (GS) or meeting the requirements of an academic progress plan that was pre-approved by the college Financial Aid Office.
4. Suspension status: Students who do not meet the credit progression schedule and/or the cumulative grade point average standard, or who fail to meet the requirements of their pre-approved academic progress plan, will be placed in suspension status (SS). Students in suspension status are not eligible for financial aid.

Students who do not meet the quantitative and/or qualitative requirements of this policy will become ineligible for financial aid. Removal from financial aid does not prevent students from enrolling at the college without financial aid if, based on their academic standing with the college, they are otherwise eligible to continue their enrollment. However, in the event that a student is suspended or dismissed from the college for poor academic performance, his/her eligibility for financial aid is suspended until he/she is eligible to enroll again at the college. For information regarding academic standing at the college, students should refer to the college catalog for guidance.

Unless extenuating circumstances exist and an appeal is granted (see section C. Appeals for additional information), a student in financial aid suspension should expect to continue classes at his or her own expense until satisfactory academic progress requirements are again met.

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Students who fail to meet satisfactory academic progress standards and who choose to enroll without benefit of student financial aid may request a review of their academic records after any term in which they are enrolled without the receipt of financial aid, to determine whether they have again met satisfactory academic progress standards. If the standards are met, eligibility is regained for subsequent terms of enrollment in the academic year. Students should consult a financial aid advisor for assistance in appealing any element of this policy or to determine how to regain eligibility for financial aid.

C. Appeals

Under certain circumstances, students who fail to meet SAP standards and lose eligibility for financial aid can appeal the financial aid suspension. Students must clearly state what caused the suspension and must also clearly indicate what has changed that will now allow the student to succeed. Appeals are encouraged if:

1. extenuating circumstances exist (i.e., student's serious illness or accident; death, accident, or serious illness in the immediate family; other mitigating circumstances), or
2. the student has successfully completed one degree and is attempting another, or
3. the student on suspension for other than maximum hours (150%), who has not yet met SAP requirements, has during suspension enrolled in and successfully completed at least 12 semester credits at the college with a minimum GPA of 2.0.

Students appealing a suspension must:

1. complete [JSRCC Form No. 30-0001](#), SAP Appeal form, in entirety,
2. attach documentation in support of the appeal, including an advisor statement showing remaining credits to graduation for 150% appeals, and
3. submit all items to the college Financial Aid Office.

Only completed appeal submissions, with documentation, will be evaluated by the Financial Aid Office. Depending on the circumstances, the student could be required to complete additional requirements (i.e., see a career counselor or another type of counselor, meet with an advisor to develop an academic progress plan for completion, limit enrollment, etc.) before an appeal is granted. The goal is to help the student persist toward graduation. The reasonableness of the student's ability for improvement to again meet SAP standards and complete the student's program of study will be carefully considered.

Appeals will be approved or denied, and the decision is final. Students who have appeals approved will be in probationary status for the coming term. During probationary status, the student must meet the conditions of the appeal as communicated to him or her by the Financial Aid Office, or the student will return to suspension. If an academic progress plan has been pre-approved by the Financial Aid Office, continuing to meet the requirements of that plan will put the student back into good standing.

IV. Procedures

- A. Upon submission of grades at the end of the semester/term, the Financial Aid Office will review all grades of financial aid recipients to determine academic/financial aid status.

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- B. Once completed, the financial aid status will be placed in the student center section of the Student Information System. In addition to posting this information, students on financial aid warning and financial aid suspension will be notified of their status by way of e-mail to their JSRCC student e-mail account.
 - C. Students who are placed on financial aid suspension status may complete [JSRCC Form No. 30-0001](#), SAP Appeal form, and submit the form to the Financial Aid Office.
 - D. Within ten (10) business days, the Financial Aid Office will notify the student of its decision.
- V. Other Information:
- [JSRCC Form No. 30-0001](#), Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form