

## Instructions for Preparing a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal

Reynolds Community College, as required by federal regulations, monitors minimum standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as it relates to a student's eligibility to receive federal student aid funds, including grants, loans and work-study. Students who have failed to meet the minimum SAP policy standards and have been placed on Financial Aid Suspension may request to have their financial aid reinstated by submitting a SAP Appeal.

### **Appeals will be considered for the following reasons:**

If extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control prevented him or her from making satisfactory academic progress, he or she may appeal to the Financial Aid SAP Appeals Committee for reinstatement of his or her financial aid. Examples of extenuating circumstances may include:

1. Medical problems (physical or mental)
2. Serious illness
3. Accident or injury
4. Death of family member
5. Exceeding Maximum Time Frame to complete degree (see Max Time Frame SAP Appeal information below)
6. Other extenuating circumstances

### **SAP Appeal Process**

A student placed on Financial Aid Suspension has the option to appeal. The student must submit Satisfactory Academic Appeal form to the Financial Aid Office at Reynolds Community College explaining, in detail, any extenuating circumstances (death of a relative, an injury or illness, or other special circumstances) that led to the student's Financial Aid Suspension. Any documentation supporting the student's case is strongly encouraged. The appeal form and any supporting documentation will be presented to the Financial Aid SAP Appeal Committee. Incomplete Appeals will not be considered.

Following an appeal, the student will be sent an email with the ruling of the Financial Aid SAP Appeal Committee. If the appeal is granted, the letter will explain any specific requirements the committee will require the student to fulfill. Failure to comply will result in the immediate suspension of financial aid. Financial aid disbursed based on the committee's decision may have to be returned.

If the student has been placed on Financial Aid Suspension for exceeding the maximum time frame to complete his or her program of study, he or she must also complete the appeal process. Federal regulations state that the maximum time frame a student has to complete a program cannot exceed 150% of the required hours for his or her program. However, if a student is on Financial Aid Suspension for multiple reasons (example: exceeding maximum time frame and failing to meet GPA), then he/she will need to address all the reasons in his or her appeal letter.

### **Supporting Documentation for a SAP Appeal**

The following sections provide guidance for writing a SAP appeal and collecting documents to be included with the appeal. The content of a SAP Appeal will depend on the reason for the Financial

Aid Suspension. Read and follow the instructions in each section that relate to the reason your financial aid was suspended.

**1. GPA and/or failure to complete 67% of hours attempted** – The nature of each circumstance will influence the content of a SAP Appeal and the appropriate supporting documentation. Circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a. Medical problems (physical or mental) – Identify the inception and duration of the illness, supported by appropriate medical reports. The appeal and supporting documents should clearly state whether the medical condition is under control, thus allowing the student to be academically successful. Supporting documents should include, but are not limited to, medical reports and/or letters from a doctor or professional counselor.
- b. Accidents – Identify the date of the accident and describe the resultant medical problems (see point A above). Supporting documentation should include, but are not limited to, police and medical reports.
- c. Family problems (divorce, separation, spousal abuse, death, illness) – The student should identify the relationship to the family member(s) involved and the inception and duration of the problem. It should be clearly stated what actions have been taken to control these problems, thus allowing the student to be academically successful. Appropriate supporting documents should include, but are not limited to, police and medical reports, death certificates, and letters from a professional counselor.
- d. Military Service – The student should identify the dates and status of the military tour(s) of duty. Appropriate supporting documentation would include military orders and discharge papers.

**2. Maximum Hours/Time** - A Maximum Time Frame SAP Appeal should describe every circumstance believed to cause the student to accumulate hours in excess of the number allowed. In addition, the student must also have the Degree Audit form completed by their academic advisor. The SAP Appeal must enable the SAP Committee to understand clearly the number of semesters that will be required for the student to complete his or her degree.

### **SAP Appeal Decision**

The decision of the SAP Appeal Committee decision will be emailed to the student. The committee's decisions are final.

If SAP Appeal is approved, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and will be offered a contract (requiring the student's signature) detailing a plan that will get the student back in SAP good standing. The plan will contain benchmarks the student will need to achieve. Failure to meet any one of the benchmarks in the specified time will result in the student returning to Financial Aid Suspension.

If SAP Appeal is denied, the student will remain on Financial Aid Suspension and will not be eligible to receive financial aid until the SAP policy requirements have once again been met. Any financial aid previously awarded for future semesters will be canceled.

However, there may be additional funding opportunities (non-federal aid) for a student through Alternative Loan programs. These loans are not guaranteed and a student must complete a credit application.