PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

I – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICIES

I – 113.0 SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Policy #:	**I – 113.0**
Effective:	**August 2011**
Revised:	**March 2022**
Responsible Dept.:	**Instruction and Student Services**

Purpose

To define Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as it impacts financial aid status for students to meet federal, state, and institutional requirements.

Policy and Procedures

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is a policy required by the U.S. Department of Education that measures a student's grade point average (GPA), completion rate, and time frame in a program. PVCC measures SAP according to the below standards and evaluates student progress at the end of each semester. Students wishing to obtain federal student aid, state aid, and school-based aid must meet the below standards.

EVALUATING SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

GPA Requirements
To remain eligible for financial aid, students must meet minimum **cumulative** grade point average (GPA) requirements based on the number of credits taken. Only non-developmental courses with grades of A, B, C, D, and F are included in this calculation. Withdrawal (W) grades are included in the total number of credits taken, and transfer credits are excluded.

Credits Taken	Min. Cumulative GPA Requirement
1-15	1.5
16-30	1.75
31+	2.0

Completion Rate (67% Rule)
Students must successfully complete two-thirds (67%) of cumulative credits they have taken. The completion rate calculation includes all developmental, ESL, and credit coursework. Earned credit includes classes where a student earned grades of A, B, C, D, S, or P. Transfer credits are included as credits attempted and earned.

Completion rate formula: **Earned Credits ÷ Total Credits Taken = Completion Rate**

Example: Henri enrolled in an associate degree program at PVCC. View Henri's competition rate for his first three terms.

Term	Earned Credits	Credits Taken	Completion Rate	SAP Status
Fall 2019	12	12	100%	Meeting
Spring 2020	18	24	75%	Meeting
Summer 2020	18	30	60%	Warning

Maximum Credit Hours (150% Rule)
To continue to receive financial aid, a student cannot earn more than 150% of the total credits required for their degree or certificate. This excludes up to 30 credits of developmental courses. ESL coursework credits are not limited if the student meets the other SAP requirements. Attempted credits from all enrollment periods and all accepted transfer credits are counted. All terms of enrollment are included in the calculation regardless of when the coursework was taken or whether the student received financial aid for the coursework.

Example: Nicholas enrolled in a certificate program at PVCC. Nicholas must either complete or be projected to complete the certificate program within the timeframe allowed.

> **36** Minimum Total Credit Hours to Complete the Certificate Program
> x **150%** Timeframe Allowance
> = 54 Credits Maximum to Complete

If circumstances beyond the student's control are responsible for not meeting the above standard, a student can submit an appeal to re-establish their financial aid eligibility. Please see the **150% Reset Policy** below.

150% RESET POLICY
All periods of the student's enrollment count when determining Satisfactory Academic Progress, even periods in which the student did not receive Federal Student Aid (FSA) funds. A student changing a program of study can submit an appeal requesting a timeframe reset to re-establish aid eligibility. A student may only be approved for a reset one-time and must be meeting all other SAP requirements. Students will be notified regarding approved resets and the conditions of their appeal.

Developmental and ESL Courses
Students may receive financial aid for up to 30 credit hours of developmental coursework. The courses must be required as a result of the placement process, or as part of their program of study. Students in an eligible program of study may attempt and complete unlimited ESL credits if they meet other SAP requirements.

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID STATUS

I. **Financial Aid Good Standing**
   A student is making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) by successfully completing attempted courses, maintaining a minimum GPA, and meeting timeframe requirements.

II. **Financial Aid Warning Status**
   Students who fail to meet SAP for the first time will be automatically placed in a Warning Status for one (1) semester and are expected to meet SAP requirements by the end of that semester. Students who fail to meet SAP requirements by the end of the warning semester will lose their financial aid eligibility.

III. **Financial Aid Suspension Status**
   Students who do not meet the completion rate, the cumulative GPA standard, or who fail to meet the requirements of their probationary semester or academic plan will be placed in suspension status and are not eligible for financial aid, unless there is proof of extenuating circumstances for why they did not meet SAP. In this case, a student must submit a SAP appeal form.

IV. **Financial Aid Probation Status**
   Students who are approved for an SAP exception are placed on probation. During probation, students are eligible to receive financial aid for one (1) semester, after which they must meet SAP or the requirements of an approved academic plan.

V. **Financial Aid Academic Plan**
   Students who need more than one semester to meet SAP must create an academic plan with the Student Success Office. Students will maintain financial aid eligibility if they adhere to their academic plan. Academic plans may include conditions like meeting with a Student Success Advisor periodically throughout the semester and/or utilizing PVCC's academic resource centers (i.e., The First Quadrant Math Center, Writing Center, and Library). Failure to meet the conditions of the academic plan can result in financial aid ineligibility. The academic plan is included with the SAP exception decision.

REPEATED COURSEWORK

Assuming a student meets SAP requirements, there is no limit for re-taking failed or withdrawn courses until they are successfully completed. Students may re-take a passed course only once to earn a higher grade. Repeated coursework is included in the completion rate and maximum credit hour calculations. The highest grade is included in the cumulative grade point average.

SAP APPEAL PROCESS

Students who fail to meet SAP standards and lose financial aid eligibility can appeal their financial aid suspension. Students must submit the SAP appeal form, proof of extenuating circumstances and, in some cases, an academic plan. Issues with an instructor, coursework, job or childcare conflicts or transportation problems do not constitute extenuating circumstances. All SAP appeals are reviewed and processed by the Financial Aid Office. Failure to follow the appeal conditions or academic plan will result in financial aid ineligibility at PVCC.

- If an SAP appeal is denied, students may submit an appeal with additional information for review by the Financial Aid Director.
- If the appeal is denied by the Financial Aid Director, the student may appeal to the Dean of Student Services.
- Students who are denied by the Dean of Student Services may appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Panel. The Financial Aid Appeals Panel includes three students, three persons chosen from the faculty, administrative or classified ranks, and the Dean of Student Services who will serve as Chair of the panel. Selection of the panel will be made by the Vice President for Instruction and Student Services, with approval by the President. Decisions of the Appeal Panel are final. Students must make their appeals in writing and be willing to meet with the panel. Students must complete the Financial Aid Exception Application. Students should appeal within seven (7) business days of notification of suspension.