

# **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY & APPEAL INFORMATION**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is measured at the end of each semester of enrollment at Central Alabama Community College (CACC). Students are required under federal regulations to maintain certain standards of progress based on the number of hours attempted in college. It is the student's responsibility to read and become familiar with all policies associated with financial aid funding.

## **Qualitative Standard – Grade Point Average (GPA)**

GPA requirements for degree-seeking students:

- After attempting 1-21 hours, students must maintain a 1.5 GPA.
- After attempting 22-32 hours, students must maintain a 1.75 GPA.
- After attempting 33 or more hours, students must maintain a 2.0 GPA.

## **Quantitative Standard – Completion Rate/Pace of Progression (PACE)**

Completion Rate/Pace of Progression (PACE)\* requirements for degree-seeking students:

- After attempting 1-21 hours, students must maintain a 58% Completion Rate.
- After attempting 22-32 hours, students must maintain a 62% Completion Rate.
- After attempting 33 or more hours, students must maintain a 67% Completion Rate.

\*Standard rounding rules apply.

## **Quantitative Standard – Maximum Timeframe**

The Maximum Timeframe for the completion of an undergraduate degree program is defined as no more than 150% of the normal timeframe required to complete the degree program. For example, if the Associate in Science degree requires 64 credit hours to graduate, the Maximum Timeframe of completion for this degree would be 96 credit hours (64 x 150%). Students failing to complete their degree program within this timeframe will lose financial aid eligibility.

All courses attempted by the student are included in the Maximum Timeframe calculation including transfer hours accepted by the College. The Maximum Timeframe will not reset with a change of program. However, students may appeal if extenuating/mitigating circumstances or circumstances beyond a student's control exist. Students should be aware that appeals may require supporting documentation. Students who have previously graduated (bachelors, associates, or diploma/long-term certificate) may request to be reviewed for Maximum Timeframe based on the credit hours attempted in the current program of study. Students who have previously graduated who receive a review of Maximum Timeframe will be reviewed based on the hours attempted in the student's current program of study as listed in the College Catalog and Student Handbook excluding any prerequisite courses for entry into the student's program. Students who are over Maximum Timeframe and have earned three (3) or more degrees from CACC will lose financial aid eligibility and may appeal.

## **Warning Semester**

If a student fails to meet the Qualitative Standard – Grade Point Average (GPA) and/or the Quantitative Standard – Completion Rate/Pace of Progression (PACE) for Satisfactory Academic Progress, the student will be placed on "warning" for one semester. During this warning semester, the student will be eligible for financial aid; however, the student must be meeting all GPA, Completion Rate/Pace of Progression, and Maximum Timeframe requirements at the end of the warning semester to continue to receive financial aid. There is no warning semester for Maximum Timeframe.

## Additional Information Regarding SAP Calculation

The following information explains how repeated courses, incompletes, withdrawals, academic bankruptcies, course forgiveness, developmental courses, transfer credits, and grade changes are treated in a student's SAP calculation.

- Repeated courses are factored into the GPA, Completion Rate/PACE and Maximum Timeframe calculations. The first repeat course will not be calculated into the GPA requirement; however, the course will be calculated as an attempted and unearned course for Completion Rate/PACE and Maximum Timeframe calculations. Students can only repeat a successfully passed course using federal aid one additional time. Repeats may affect a student's Completion Rate/PACE and Maximum Timeframe.
- Incomplete grades ("I") are factored into the Completion Rate/PACE and Maximum Timeframe requirements. When an "I" is updated to a final grade, the final grade received will be factored into the SAP calculation at the time of the next scheduled evaluation. SAP calculations for all other grade changes instituted for prior terms will be recalculated at the time of the grade change.
- Withdrawals (courses receiving a grade of "W") are not factored into the GPA calculation; however, withdrawals are included in the Completion Rate/PACE and Maximum Timeframe calculations.
- Transfer credits accepted by the College will not be factored into the GPA calculation, but all accepted credits are included in Completion Rate/PACE and Maximum Timeframe calculations. Following acceptance of transfer credits, an official SAP review of these transfer credits will be completed at the end of the semester of enrollment at CACC.
- Academic Bankruptcy will be factored into the GPA, Completion Rate/PACE, and Maximum Timeframe calculations.
- Developmental courses are factored into the GPA, Completion Rate/PACE, and Maximum Timeframe calculations. A student may receive federal aid for up to 30 developmental hours.
- Courses dropped during the add/drop period (unless the dropped courses result in a full withdrawal as above) are not factored into GPA, Completion Rate/PACE or Maximum Timeframe calculations
- Audit courses are not considered credits attempted or earned; therefore, students cannot receive federal aid for audited courses. Audited courses are not considered in the SAP calculation.
- Completion Rate/PACE calculations are rounded based on traditional rounding rules (e.g., 66.5% = 67%).
- Students who are on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Suspension may be able to regain eligibility by paying for courses out of their pocket or using other funding to meet requirements for GPA and Pace/Completion Rate. If a student is on Maximum Timeframe suspension, the student cannot gain eligibility unless the student has an approved appeal.

## Financial Aid Appeal

In some cases, a student's failure to be in compliance with one or more areas of SAP may be due to an extenuating/mitigating circumstance. An extenuating/mitigating circumstance is defined as a situation beyond the student's control, an undue hardship as a result of special circumstances, or other circumstances. Some examples of extenuating/mitigating circumstances may include: serious illness or injury to student that required extended recovery time; death or serious illness of an immediate family member; significant trauma in student's life that impaired the student's emotional and/or physical health; or other documented circumstances.

A student who experiences an extenuating/mitigating circumstance may submit a financial aid appeal. If a student files an appeal due to the Maximum Timeframe, he/she should be meeting the other two components (GPA and Completion Rate/PACE). An appeal cannot be approved for a prior term.

Financial aid appeals should be received in the Office of Financial Aid by close of business at least one week prior to the first day of classes. Submitting a financial aid appeal is NOT an automatic approval.

The decision of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee will be electronically delivered via OneACCS / MyCACC and/or CACC e-mail to the student from financial\_aid@cacc.edu. The decision of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee is final. Students may also view their Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status in their OneACCS / MyCACC Self-Service Banner (SSB) account.