

# Section Twenty: Satisfactory Academic Progress

## 20.1 Institutional Policy

Federal law requires students receiving federal student aid to maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the institution and Department of Ed. Federal student aid administered by Piedmont Community College includes the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, and Federal Work-Study. Satisfactory Academic Progress will also apply to North Carolina State grants. PCC is required to apply reasonable standards for measuring whether a student is maintaining satisfactory academic progress in their chosen program of study. The school's Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic policy must include a **(1) qualitative measure** and a **(2) quantitative measure**. Satisfactory Academic Progress is cumulative and covers all periods of enrollment including those for which the student did not receive funds from Title IV programs. Financial Aid does not exclude any grade attempts when calculating Satisfactory Academic Progress. Effective Fall 2011, satisfactory academic progress is measured every semester/term.

### 20.1.1 Qualitative Measure

Students receiving financial aid must maintain a cumulative grade point average at or above 2.0.

### 20.1.2 Quantitative Measure

Students receiving financial aid must earn 67% of the total cumulative credit hours attempted. The number of hours attempted is defined as the total cumulative number of credit hours for which the student was enrolled at PCC. The total number of hours earned is defined as the total cumulative number of credit hours from each term at PCC for which the student received a passing grade. Only grades of A, B, C, D, P, P1, P2, P3 or CE (Credit by Exam) will be considered as earned hours. Grades of F, I (Incomplete) W (Withdrawal), WP (Withdrawal Passing), WF (Withdrawal) and NC (No Credit) will not be counted as hours earned.

### 20.1.3 Maximum Time Frame

Students receiving financial aid will have a maximum time frame in which

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they are expected to complete their program of study. The maximum time frame at Piedmont Community College is 150% of the published length of the program of study per the student handbook/catalog.

### 20.1.4 Remedial Course Work

Students who have been accepted into a degree program and required to take remedial course work are limited to 30 semester hours of remedial course work. Remedial course work is not considered when determining maximum time frame but is considered in both qualitative and quantitative calculations for financial aid students.

### 20.1.5 Transfer Students

Students transferring from a school other than PCC will be considered making satisfactory academic progress at the time of their enrollment. Transfer credits applicable to the program of study are included in the maximum time frame calculation and quantitative standard.

### 20.1.6 PCC Returning Students

Returning students' qualitative and quantitative calculations will continue based on the last satisfactory academic progress calculation. This is in accordance with regulations stating that satisfactory academic progress standards must cover all periods of the student's enrollment, including those periods for which the student did not receive aid from Title IV funds.

### 20.1.7 Changing Programs of Study

Students changing programs of study will assume the new time limit for the program. Previous program(s) attempted hours will be reviewed to determine if the hours are applicable to the new program of study.

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## 20.1.8 Incompletes

A course for which an incomplete grade is received must be completed by the end of the next fall or spring term, or the grade becomes a permanent F on their academic transcript. The incomplete grade is treated as an F for satisfactory academic progress purposes. Incompletes count towards both qualitative and quantitative measures of satisfactory academic progress.

## 20.1.9 Repeats

Repeats are included in the qualitative and quantitative calculations for financial aid students.

## 20.1.10 Incomplete Emergency (IE) and Withdraw Emergency (WE)

In response to the national emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, PCC has added two new grades to the curriculum grading schemes, the Incomplete Emergency (IE) and Withdraw Emergency (WE) grades. IE and WE grades are not included in the quantitative component of the Satisfactory Academic Progress calculation.

## 20.2 Institutional Procedures

Students are notified of the SAP Policy in the PCC General Catalog and Student Handbook and available on the Financial Aid page of the PCC website. In addition, the policy is available on the student portal.

### 20.2.1 Warning

Students who fail to meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements after any semester/term are placed on financial aid warning and are considered to be making unsatisfactory academic progress. Students in

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this category may continue to receive financial aid for one additional term. A student will be placed on warning if the following occurs:

1. Failed to achieve a cumulative 2.00 grade point average
2. Failed to complete 67% of cumulative credit hours attempted

### 20.2.2 Suspension

1. Students on Financial Aid Warning may be denied assistance if any of the following occurs:
  - a. The student's GPA is below the minimum requirements as defined in Section 20.1.1
  - b. The student does not make the incremental progress as described under Section 20.1.2
2. Student reaches the maximum time frame for completion of his/her program of studies as defined in Section 20.1.3

### 20.2.3 Consequences of Suspension

Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress lose eligibility for financial aid until satisfactory academic progress is met.

### 20.2.4 Appeal Process

Students on financial aid suspension may appeal their satisfactory academic progress if they have mitigating circumstances. Examples of mitigating circumstances may include injury to student, illness of student or immediate family member, death of a relative or undue hardship due to special circumstances beyond a student's control. Students should submit their Satisfactory

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Academic Progress Appeal Request form, along with their supporting documentation to the Financial Aid Office. The Appeals Committee reviews the student's appeal and the Financial Aid Office notifies the student in writing of the committee's decision. Students on appeal must complete an Academic Plan. Students on an Academic Plan must achieve a 100% pass rate of all courses and a GPA of 2.5 or better during their terms on the plan. If they do not meet the requirements of the appeal, they will be placed back on financial aid suspension. Students with extreme mitigating circumstances during their term(s) on appeal may submit a second and final appeal to the Dean of Enrollment Services.

If an appeal is denied, a student may follow the school's grievance procedure if the policy has not been applied correctly.