

Piedmont Virginia Community College

Section IX – Student Affairs Policies

IX – 113.09 Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Effective Date: August 2011

Last Revised: March 2026

Responsible Dept.: Vice President of Student Affairs

1. Purpose

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

2. Policy Statement

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.

3. Definitions

N/A

4. Applicability

This policy applies to all PVCC students seeking financial aid of any sort.

5. Responsibilities

N/A

PVCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. View the full nondiscrimination statement and find contacts at pvcc.edu/nondiscrimination.

6. Procedures for Implementation

6.1 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.

- a) For 1-15 Credit Hours taken, the minimum cumulative GPA requirement is 1.5.
- b) For 16-30 Credit Hours taken, the minimum cumulative GPA requirement is 1.75.
- c) For 31+ Credit Hours taken, the minimum cumulative GPA requirement is 2.0.

6.2 Completion Rate Formula

The completion rate formula is: $\text{Earned Credits} / \text{Total Credits Taken} = \text{Completion Rate}$.
For example:

- In the Fall of 2019 the student enrolled in 12 credits and earned 12 credits, so their completion rate is 100%, which meets the SAP requirements.
- In the Spring of 2020 the student enrolled in 24 credits and earned 18 credits, for a completion rate of 75%, which also meets SAP requirements.
- In the Summer of 2020 the student enrolled in 30 credits and earned 18 credits, for a completion rate of 60%. This places the student in the SAP Warning category.

6.3 Maximum Credit Hours

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 for 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 time frame 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**. Under this 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 meet all other SAP requirements. Students will be notified regarding approved resets and the conditions of their appeal.

6.4 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.

6.5 Student Financial Aid Status

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) 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.
 - a) 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.
- d) 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.

6.6 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.

6.7 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.

- a) If an SAP appeal is denied, students may submit an appeal with additional information for review by the Financial Aid Director.
- b) If the appeal is denied by the Financial Aid Director, the student may appeal to the Dean of Student Services.
 - b) 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. The 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.

7. Sanctions for Violation of Policy

N/A

8. Other General Information

N/A