

## Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress

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It is expected by the Department of Education (ED), Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), and Southeastern Illinois College that all financial aid recipients make reasonable academic progress. Students receiving federal, state, and veteran's educational benefits are required to meet the Financial Aid Standards of Academic Progress Policy as described below. All prior terms at Southeastern, transfer credits, consortium agreement credits, or dual credit classes are considered when evaluating your progress towards your certificate or degree program regardless if the student received financial aid. Satisfactory academic progress standards apply to all students, part-time or full-time, enrolled in both standard and remedial programs. Students' progress is evaluated at the end of every semester, which include fall, spring, and summer semesters.

Satisfactory academic progress is based upon three categories, which are explained in detail below:

1. Overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher
2. Completion Rate of 67% or higher
3. 150% Maximum Program Completion Time

Failure to meet these requirements results in financial aid warning period. Students are notified via email of their financial aid status at the end of each semester. A student may continue to receive financial aid while on warning status. Students have one semester to remediate their progress. Continuation for subsequent aid is contingent upon the warning period. Failure to meet the satisfactory academic progress guidelines during the warning period will result in financial aid suspension and disqualification from financial aid eligibility at Southeastern.

### **Programs Governed by This Policy**

#### Federal Student Aid Programs:

Federal Pell Grant  
 Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)  
 Federal Work Study

#### Illinois Grant Programs:

Monetary Award Program (MAP)  
 Illinois Veterans Grant (IVG)  
 Illinois National Guard (ING)  
 MIA/POW Scholarship

#### Southeastern Programs:

Varies by division or department

#### Third Party or Private Donor Programs:

Varies by donor's requirements

#### Veterans Benefits:

Chapter 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 1606, 1607

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students should only take required courses according to their program of study and the transfer institution (if applicable). Taking courses outside of their program of study will affect the student's maximum program completion time. Withdrawing, repeating, and failing courses, including remedial courses or dual credit, will also have an adverse effect on a student's cumulative completion and cumulative GPA. Students should seek advisement from an academic advisor during their warning period to remediate deficient credits and GPA.

### **OVERALL GRADE POINT AVERAGE**

The student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) is determined at the end of each semester. The institution's grading policies can be found in the college catalog. Students are expected to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of a 2.0. Students who do not maintain a cumulative GPA of a 2.0 or higher will be given a warning period. During the warning period, a student may receive financial aid. At the end of the warning period, the student must raise their cumulative GPA to a minimum of 2.0. Failure to do so will result in suspension status and will not be eligible for financial aid.

Example: During the fall semester, Melissa enrolled in 12 credit hours and earned a GPA of 1.9 during her first semester at Southeastern. The following semester, Melissa is placed on probation and able to receive financial aid. Melissa attends in the spring and earns an OGPA of 1.9. She would then be placed on suspension and disqualified to receive financial aid. Transfer credit is not transferred into student's GPA.

### **COMPLETION RATE**

Students must progress toward completion of their current academic program at an acceptable rate. Satisfactory academic progress standards require students to successfully complete (pass), with a GPA of 2.0 or better and 67% of attempted semester hours. Students not successfully completing (passing) 67% of semester hours attempted will be given a warning period. During the warning period, a student may receive financial aid. At the end of the warning period, the student must raise their completion rate to a minimum of 67%. Failure to do so will result in suspension status and will not be eligible for financial aid.

Example: Melissa recently completed her first academic year of classes. The first semester she attempted 12 hours and completed 6 hours ( $6/12 = 50\%$  completion rate). Melissa did not complete the minimum 67% completion rate and therefore would be placed on financial aid probation. She is allowed to receive financial aid for the subsequent semester. The second semester she attempted 15 hours but only completed 9 hours. Her cumulative completion rate would be 15 completed hours (6 from first semester and 9 from second semester) divided by 27 attempted hours ( $15/27 = 56\%$  completion rate). Melissa would be placed on financial aid suspension for failing to meet the 67% requirement and disqualified from receiving further financial aid.

Grades of A, B, C, D, or P are considered completed courses. Grades of E, I, W, or WA are not considered complete and are unsatisfactory for maintaining this policy.

Repeats: Southeastern considers the highest grade received to calculate the cumulative grade point average. Each course is included in the cumulative attempted hours calculation.

Withdrawals: Courses dropped with a full refund or grades of "WX" or "WZ" are not counted in the calculation of attempted hours. Courses dropped after the full refund period and grades of "W" or "WA" are calculated in attempted hours.

Pass/Fail: Courses taken on a Pass/Fail basis do count as attempted semester hours.

Incompletes: Incomplete "I" grades are counted as attempted hours, though not calculated in the cumulative grade point average.

Remediation: Non-credit remedial courses are included in a student's program of study and therefore are included in calculation of OGPA and course completion rate.

Academic Amnesty: Academic amnesty courses are included in calculation of earned grades and attempted hours.

Transfer Credits: Any transfer of credits from another institution will be calculated in both attempted and completed hours.

### **150% MAXIMUM PROGRAM COMPLETION TIME**

Students must complete their current academic program within expected reasonable time. A student may not exceed more than the 1.5 times the number of credit hours required for the degree/program. Changing degree or program major, repeat courses, failing or incomplete grades prolong the total amount of time required to graduate. Students who exceed the maximum program completion time will not qualify for further financial aid. Students may change their major or program of study up to three times during their career and may receive more than one certificate and/or degree at Southeastern within consideration of the student's cumulative hours attempted and cumulative GPA. Prior to beginning a second degree, students must appeal with the Director of Financial Aid if their hours exceed the maximum program completion time.

Example: Melissa is enrolled in an academic program that requires 30 semester hours to complete. The maximum number of semester hours Melissa is allowed to attempt is 45, which is determined by multiplying 1.5 times 30 ( $1.5 \times 30 = 45$ ). If Melissa has already attempted 50 hours and has not yet completed her academic program, she will be placed on financial aid suspension and disqualified from receiving further financial aid.

Hours attempted for courses not acceptable for any certificate or degree of greater than 16 credit hours in length are excluded in this calculation (i.e. CNA, FOS, etc.)

### **FINANCIAL AID ACADEMIC PROGRESS EVALUATION**

Students will be evaluated for compliance with satisfactory academic progress standards at the end of each semester including fall, spring, and summer semesters, regardless of major, period of enrollment, or enrollment status (part-time, full-time, etc.) Through this evaluation, students not meeting the satisfactory academic progress standards will be placed on warning status. As stated in the policy, students on warning status are eligible to receive financial aid. Students on warning status who failed to meet satisfactory academic progress at the time of evaluation will be placed on financial aid suspension and will not qualify for further financial aid. All students receiving financial assistance in the programs previously stated in the policy will be notified via email of their standing at the end of each evaluation period or semester of enrollment.

### **APPEAL PROCESS FOR FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION**

Students have the right to appeal suspension status to the Director of Financial Aid. Students who wish to exercise this right are required to complete a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form and

follow the formal documentation requirements provided by the college. Students should provide the Director of Financial Aid with specific details that fully explain the extenuating circumstance (ie. Death in the family, illness or injury to the student) cause(s) preventing the student from achieving satisfactory academic progress requirements and complete an academic plan with an academic advisor. Appeals are accepted case-by-case. If the appeal is accepted, the student's financial aid will be reinstated, along with a probationary period, whereby the director will outline specific requirements that will be used to bring the student's academic progress within standards.

A student who submits an appeal due to minimum cumulative completion rate and/or cumulative GPA requirements and is denied by both the director must meet the minimum cumulative completion rate and/or cumulative GPA requirements as set forth in this policy and will not receive further financial assistance until minimum requirements are met. Decisions made by the Director are final.

A student who submits an appeal due to maximum hours attempted and is denied by the Director will remain on permanent financial aid suspension. The Director will not accept any further appeals.

### **APPEAL PROCESS FOR MAJOR CODES REQUIRING PREREQUISITES**

Students enrolled in special programs including but not limited to CPN, DALs, ADN, etc. have prerequisite courses added into the 150% maximum completion time requirement, causing the student to be placed on suspension. These students will be placed on financial aid suspension; however, their appeal forms will be submitted once for the entire year. The Financial Aid Director will evaluate each student at the end of every semester to ensure progress is being made. If the student falls below good standing after their appeal has been submitted, the student will be required to submit a subsequent appeal form for the immediate semester/term indicating the reasons for falling below good standing.

### **FINANCIAL AID REINSTATEMENT**

Once a student is placed on financial aid suspension, there are two options for students to continue receiving financial aid:

1. The student must meet the minimum cumulative completion rate and/or cumulative GPA requirements set forth in this policy; or
2. The student must submit an appeal that is approved by the Director of Financial Aid in which the student is granted financial aid probation.

### **REGAINING ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL AID**

If, in a regularly scheduled evaluation, it is determined a student once again meets the standards outlined in this policy, the student will be placed in good standing. Otherwise, once placed on suspension status, the suspension status remains unless determined otherwise through the appeal process.

Adopted: February 16, 2016

Amended: August 16, 2022

Legal Ref: