

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements

The following information serves to clarify important aspects of the financial-aid program administered by Wallace State Community College.

To be eligible for FSA funds, a student must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for financial aid purposes, and Wallace State Community College (WSCC) has a reasonable policy for monitoring student progress. The U. S. Department of Education (USDE) considers a satisfactory academic progress policy to be reasonable if it meets both the qualitative and quantitative criteria explained in this section.

WSCC's SAP policy must be at least as strict as that for students who are not receiving Federal Student Aid (FSA) funds at our school, and it must apply consistently to all educational programs and to all students within categories, e.g. full-time, part-time, and undergraduate students. WSCC's policy requires an academic progress evaluation at the end of each payment period for students in programs lasting one year or less. For all other programs, SAP requires each student that is enrolled in a term receive a SAP evaluation at the end of the term once grades have been posted.

SAP will be measured each term at WSCC. Students are required under federal regulations to maintain certain standards of progress depending on the number of hours they have attempted in college and their program of study. It is the student's responsibility to read and understand all policies associated with financial aid funding. Students should regularly check their MyWallaceState account for the latest information regarding their account. Financial Aid Status can be found under the Financial Aid Tab. After accessing the Financial Aid Tab, click Financial Status to view any SAP status of good, warnings or suspension of financial aid. Click on the blue hyperlink of the SAP status from this page and a personalized explanation will be available to the student to explain their SAP status. Students that are currently enrolled for a term are notified at the end of the term of their SAP status. Once grades are posted and SAP is calculated the e-mail notification is sent and students can see the current status on their MyWallaceState account.

Title IV financial assistance programs including Federal Pell Grant, Federal Work-Study (FWS), Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Family Education Loans (Stafford and PLUS) are affected by SAP.

Grades and Pace of Completion

WSCC's SAP policy specifies that both the quantitative (time-based) and qualitative (grade-based) standards are reviewed at each evaluation point. The SAP policy outlines the quantitative standard (grade point average or GPA) that a student must have at each evaluation or, if GPA is not an appropriate measure, a comparable measure against a norm. Students enrolled in a program of more than two academic years must have a GPA of at least a "C" or its equivalent or must have an academic standing consistent with graduation requirements.

Transitional and Transfer Coursework must be included in the qualitative assessment of Satisfactory Academic Progress.

GPA requirements for long-term certificate and degree seeking students

- If the student has attempted 1-21 hours they must maintain a 1.5 GPA.
- If the student has attempted 22-32 hours they must maintain a 1.75 GPA
- If the student has attempted 33 or more hours they must maintain a 2.0 GPA.

Completion rate (attempted class hours) required by long-term certificate and degree seeking students

- If the student has attempted 1-21 hours they must maintain a 58% completion rate.
- If the student has attempted 22-32 hours they must maintain a 62% completion rate.
- If the student has attempted 33 or more hours they must maintain a 67% completion rate.

GPA requirements for short-term certificate (24-29 credit hours) students

- If the student has attempted 12 hours they must maintain a 1.5 GPA.
- If the student has attempted 24 hours they must maintain a 2.0 GPA.

Completion rate (attempted class hours) required short-term certificate (24-29 credit hours) students

- If the student has attempted 12... hours they must maintain a 58% completion rate.
- If the student has attempted 24... hours they must maintain a 67% completion rate.

Maximum Time Frame

- Maximum time frame (MAX) for an undergraduate program measured in credit hours is a period no longer than 150 percent of the published length of the program and for a program measured in clock hours, a period no longer than 150 percent of the published length of the program as measured by the cumulative number of clock hours the student is required to complete and expressed in calendar time.

(Note that a student in a clock hour program cannot receive aid for hours beyond those in the program; the maximum time frame applies to the amount of calendar time the student takes to complete those hours.)

- Example: Students are only allowed 150% of the programs length to complete the degree or certificate. General Studies is 60 - 64 credits. Students are allowed 150% or 96 attempted credits to complete the program successfully. If the student does not complete his/her program in the allotted time frame the grant will be suspended. Every program is different; students should check the catalog or Degree Works for the number of hours required for completion of their program and multiply 1.5 x time number of hours for graduation = MAX Time frame on ATTEMPTED credit hours. Students who submit an appeal for MAX should have completed a degree or certificate. WSCC cannot approve a SAP appeal for MAX if the student has not graduated from a certificate or degree program. If they have graduated from a program, we can evaluate the appeal to determine if any hours can be excluded from the attempted hours that do not count in any way toward the new program of study.

Additional Regulations

ALL prior coursework at WSCC and transfer work that has been evaluated and added to the student's transcript is included in the SAP calculation. This includes all the programs of the student if the student has changed programs of study while attending WSCC. If a student does not meet any of the requirements listed at the end of their first term, the student will be given one warning semester in which he will be eligible to receive aid. At the end of the second term of enrollment, a student not making SAP will have the financial aid suspended. They will not be eligible for Pell Grant, Direct Loans, SEOG or Federal Work Study until they are current on SAP.

There is no warning period for MAX time frame as that situation cannot be improved. Example: New students who attend their first semester and do not meet the above criteria on GPA and completion rate will be given one warning semester to receive financial aid. Students who have attended multiple semesters in the past under the old SAP policy, who are currently not meeting SAP, are not given a warning semester as they have already received aid for one semester when they had not made SAP. If financial aid funds are suspended, the student may file an appeal based on any mitigating circumstances that caused the student to be unsuccessful in their coursework.

GPA and course completion can be affected by course incomplete, withdrawals, repetitions and transfer credits from other schools. WSCC is not allowed to exclude courses in which a student remains past the add/drop period and earned a grade of “w” (or its equivalent), nor can we routinely exclude certain hours attempted, such as those taking during a summer session from the SAP calculation. Generally, all periods of the student’s enrollment count when assessing progress, even periods in which the student did not receive FSA funds.

A review of SAP is not complete until both the qualitative and quantitative measures have been reviewed. If a satisfactory progress check shows that a student does not have the required GPA or is not maintaining the required pace, they become ineligible for FSA funds unless they are placed on financial aid warning or PLAN (after a successful appeal), as explained below.

Satisfactory Progress Definitions

- **PASS** (PASS) - Student is in good SAP standing to receive financial aid.
- **GPA** - Student is behind on their required GPA to be making SAP based on their program and the number of hours attempted. The student’s financial aid has been suspended.
- **GPAPCE** - Student is behind on the percentage attempted/passed and GPA based on their program of study and number of hours attempted. The student’s financial aid has been suspended.
- **MAX** - Student has attempted 150% of the number of hours required to complete their current program of study. The student’s financial aid has been suspended.
- **PLAN** - Student was approved on SAP appeal and is currently following a designated plan for graduation in the program of study and the terms of their appeal.
- **DEND** - SAP appeal was denied for this term. The student’s financial aid has been suspended.
- **PACE** - Student is behind on the completion rate of hours attempted to hours earned. The student’s financial aid has been suspended.
- **NEW** - Student is a new student and their SAP status has not been reviewed yet. Check status at a later time for updates.
- **ERROR** - Student has been previously enrolled at WSCC and the student’s status will have to be reviewed to determine their current standing. Check status at a later time for updates.
- **FAIL - P** - Student did not meet the terms of their Financial Aid Appeal and they have voided the terms of the appeal. The student’s financial aid has been suspended.
- **WRNALL** - Student is not currently meeting the terms of their passage rate and/or GPA. Student has been placed on warning semester for their next term of enrollment. If the student’s progress does not meet SAP at the end of the second term of enrollment their financial aid will be suspended.
- **WRNGPA** - Student is not currently meeting the required GPA based on their program and the number of hours attempted. They have been placed on a warning semester for their next term of enrollment. If the student’s progress does not meet SAP at the end of the second term of enrollment their financial aid will be suspended.
- **WRNPCE** - Student is not meeting the completion rate based on their program and the number of hours attempted. They have been placed on a warning semester for their next term of enrollment. If the student’s progress does not meet SAP at the end of the second term of enrollment their financial aid will be suspended.
- **CLSMAX** - Student is close to the Max Time Notice
- **PLAN-R** - Student was approved on SAP appeal is pending review after term grades have posted.
- **MTHMX** - Student will be unable to comply with MAX timeframe component with hours attempted before graduation in their program.

Appeals, Financial Aid Probation and Academic Plans

Financial Aid Warning - Only schools that check SAP at the end of each payment period may place students on Financial Aid Warning as a consequence of not making SAP. A school may use this status without or any other action by the student. Warning status lasts for one payment period only, during which the student may continue to receive FSA funds. Students who fail to make satisfactory progress after the warning period lose their aid eligibility unless they successfully appeal and are placed on probation. Schools do not need to use the warning status; they can instead require students to immediately appeal to be placed on probation.

When a student loses FSA eligibility because they failed to make satisfactory progress, he/she may submit a Financial Aid Appeal if they can provide documented proof of mitigating circumstances. Mitigating Circumstances are those that are beyond the student's control. Examples could be student or family member's illness, death in the immediate family, divorce, etc. These circumstances should relate to the terms where the student had issues with grades. Lack of focus, lack of transportation or working too many hours are not considered mitigating circumstances. When students register for classes there is an understood expectation that attendance is required.

Students must submit the appeal form and all documentation pertaining to the appeal, by the published deadline. Submitting a Financial Aid Appeal is NOT an automatic approval. The Financial Aid Committee will meet each term to review the Financial Aid Appeals.

Students will be notified of the decision made by the committee by e-mail/letter. Students must follow the terms of their appeal if approved or their Financial Aid will be suspended. Students must follow the Academic Plan in the appeal to progress toward completion of their program that is approved in the appeal.

Program changes are not allowed while a student is currently on an appeal. Students who fail to pass all attempted hours while on an appeal, withdraw from a class or fail a class will void their appeal. These terms are outlined on the appeal form and in the e-mail/letter the student receives if approved for an appeal. Students in this situation will not be eligible to receive aid until their progress is current by their own means. Student cannot be paid financial aid for prior semesters when they were not meeting SAP. Students do not regain SAP eligibility at WSCC by sitting out a semester or by paying cash alone for their next term of enrollment. SAP eligibility can only be regained after a student is meeting the current SAP for the number of attempted hours at WSCC for their program of study. Grades and attempts on coursework made while the student was still enrolled in high school as a dual enrollment class, still counts in the SAP. Students who receive an 'I' for a grade in a course will be considered as not completing the course and it will be calculated in the SAP process and an F until it is complete.

Appeal - A process by which a student who is not meeting SAP standards petitions the school for reconsideration of his eligibility for FSA funds.

Students who have exceeded their 600% Pell Grant Lifetime Eligibility are not eligible to file an appeal to receive a Pell Grant. Their appeal will be considered for Direct Loans only. Students who have met the 150% Direct Loan Sub limit are not allowed to appeal the rule. SAP appeals are only for grades/progress only. Financial Aid Appeals are not to challenge a rule in the administration of Federal Student Aid.

Lifetime Financial Aid Limits and Appeals

Students who have exceeded their 600% Lifetime Pell Eligibility (LEU) are not allowed to appeal for Pell Grant. SAP appeals granted for a student in these circumstances are only approved for student loans. Students who have met their Subsidized Direct Loan Eligibility aggregate loan amount for their program at WSCC would only be eligible for unsubsidized loan eligibility if approved on appeal. These two federal limits are not items that can be appealed. Financial Aid appeals cannot challenge the rules in the administration of Financial Aid that are mandated by the USDE. Students who are at MAX time frame can only appeal if they have completed another degree or certificate. Those

situations will be reviewed on an individual basis to determine which coursework may be excluded from the prior completed degree or certificate. Students approved on appeal will be required to follow their graduation plan on MAX. Failure to follow the plan will result in voiding the appeal.