

# SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS & YOUR FINANCIAL AID

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for Financial Aid (not to be confused with a school's Satisfactory Academic Standards)**

A student's eligibility for financial aid will be determined using these Standards.

The POLICY FOR STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENTS is effective with the Summer 2018 semester and supersedes all previous standards.

Please be aware, the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy has changed. The SAP standards have been strengthened and the appeal process and the reinstatement process are now enforced more rigorously.

## INTRODUCTION

Federal regulations require that colleges set standards that you must meet in order to be eligible for financial aid and to keep it from one academic year to the next. Even if you have never applied for or received financial aid, your overall history in college will be reviewed before you are awarded financial aid to make sure you are meeting these standards. To be eligible for aid, you must comply with all standards regarding maximum time frame, completion rate and cumulative GPA.

## A. DECLARATION OF YOUR MAJOR

You must declare a specific major area of study. You may choose an Associate degree or transfer program. Our catalogs list the requirements for various majors. If you are undecided about your major course of study, we suggest you discuss your educational objective with an academic counselor.

### San Diego Mesa College Baccalaureate Pilot Program:

You may declare that your major is the Health Information Management (HIM) Program only after being admitted into the program.

## B. ACADEMIC PLAN

We strongly recommend that you obtain a counselor-approved Academic Plan\*. Your Academic Plan is an unofficial outline of the courses you need to complete your major. You use it as a guide to see how many credits and required courses you have completed at all colleges, and how many more credits and required courses you need to complete your educational objective.

\*To get an Academic Plan, you must make an appointment with an academic counselor at your campus.

## C. STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER COLLEGE

If you transferred from a college outside the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD), you must request an official academic transcript from the college(s) you attended to have an Academic Plan developed. Transcripts will be reviewed by the District Student Services staff to determine the transferable credits. Transferable units are defined as those containing a letter grade with the exception of any "W's". These units, including "F" grades, will be used to determine if you have exceeded the Maximum Time Frame (Section D) and the Completion Rate (Section E) in SAP calculations.

## D. MAXIMUM TIME FRAME

The number of units to complete a Certificate or Associate Degree varies based on the major. Federal regulations allows for a maximum time frame not to exceed 150% of the published length of the academic program. For example: (Academic program of 60 units x 150% = 90 units for the Maximum Time Frame.

Completion of the **Baccalaureate Degree** in Health Information Management (HIM) at San Diego Mesa College normally requires 120 semester units. Based on federal regulations, a student admitted into this program is allowed a maximum

completion time frame not to exceed 150% of the published length of the educational program (HIM) 120 units x 150% = 180 units.

- You may receive aid until you have attempted the Maximum Attempted Units based on your current Academic Plan. This includes units attempted within the SDCCD and all transfer units counted by the SDCCD.
- You may receive financial aid for up to 30 attempted units of remedial course work. A maximum of 30 units of remedial course work will be excluded in the calculation of the maximum time frame.
- ESOL classes are not counted as remedial coursework.
- The maximum time frame will be adjusted for a change of major.
- Repeated courses will be included in determining the maximum time frame.
- Academic renewal does not apply to the Financial Aid standards and the calculation of units attempted and completed.
- If you do not have any SDCCD credits attempted then, any transfer credit that has been posted to your record will be used.

## E. DETERMINATION OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS (COMPLETION/Pace RATE)

In order to be making satisfactory progress you must complete at least 67% of all units attempted within the SDCCD colleges. For example: (30 units completed/42 units attempted = 71.42%).

- Units completed are "A" through "D" grades, or "P" passing with credit.
- Units not completed are "F" grades, "W" Withdrawal, "I" Incomplete, "NP" Not Passing or "RD" Report Delayed.
- Remedial courses and repeated courses will be used in the determination of academic progress (completion rate).

Your academic progress will be evaluated once each year at the end of the spring semester. A year is defined as summer, fall and spring. Using our professional judgment, we may monitor your SAP on a case by case basis once a semester.

Exception: If you are enrolled in a Certificate program that does not lead to an Associate Degree, your academic progress may be evaluated every semester.

## CUMULATIVE GPA (GOOD STANDING)

In order to be making satisfactory progress you must maintain a minimum GPA from all units attempted within the SDCCD colleges. Your cumulative GPA progress will be evaluated once each year at the end of the spring semester. A year for Satisfactory Academic Progress purposes is defined as summer, fall and spring. To be in Good Standing:

- You must have a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or higher at the end of each year.
- If you have all "P" grades with a 0.00 GPA, you will be considered to be making SAP.

## DISQUALIFICATION

You will be disqualified if, at each cumulative, yearly evaluation period, you:

- Have completed less than 67% of the total cumulative units attempted
- Have not met the 2.0 cumulative GPA Progress standards
- Have attempted more than 150% of the maximum attempted units based on your current academic plan
- Have earned a Bachelor or higher degree (includes 1<sup>st</sup> Professional, Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate degrees). This includes degrees from all colleges in the United States or from foreign countries.

## F. APPEALS

If you are disqualified and you have documented extenuating circumstances such as injury or illness, death of a relative or other special circumstances, you may submit an appeal to your campus Financial Aid Office for the Appeal Committee's consideration.

Appeals will be considered in the date order in which they are received. Your appeal and any supporting documents must be received in the Financial Aid Office no later than the third Friday before the end of the semester or your last day of classes, whichever comes first, for the semester that you are filing an appeal.

Note: To submit an appeal, you **MUST** obtain and submit a counselor-approved Academic Program Plan. In your appeal, you must include the following:

- Why you failed to make Satisfactory Academic Progress
- What has changed or what steps you have taken that will allow you to make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- If you have a Bachelor Degree or higher, please explain why you are enrolled at a community college and the purpose of returning to a two year or less academic program.

If your appeal is approved, you will be placed on "Financial Aid Probation" for one payment period (one semester) only and you must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and comply with any specific conditions in your appeal decision. If you do not make SAP or meet the conditions in your appeal decision, you will be disqualified again and you must meet the reinstatement conditions as described in Section G to be considered for further aid.

**The decision of the appeal committee is final.**

## G. REINSTATEMENT FROM SECOND DISQUALIFICATION

You may apply again for financial aid after complying with all the specific conditions in your previous appeal decision and you must be enrolled in at least six applicable units or in the remaining units required to complete your current degree or program. We will evaluate your enrollment and progress at the end of the semester and after final grades have been posted to determine if you have followed these conditions and are therefore, under federal regulations, eligible for one additional semester of aid under "Financial Aid Probation". If it is determined that you did not follow all the conditions, you will be sent a notification of your disqualification.

You may need to submit a new appeal for every academic term you want to be considered for further financial aid. Reinstatement is not an automatic process and is not guaranteed.

## APPLICABILITY OF THESE STANDARDS

These standards apply to the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work Study (FWS), Federal Direct Loan Program, Cal Grant programs and any other Federal or State programs that may be required to follow these standards. These standards supersede all previous standards.

The "Policy for Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Recipients" was approved by the San Diego Community College District Student Services Council on November 29, 2018.

**MAKE THE GRADE**

*Keep the Aid*

**SAP**

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID**

⇒ 2.0 Cumulative GPA

⇒ Complete/Pass 67% of all Courses Attempted

⇒ 90 Cumulative Unit Maximum