



## OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID POLICY FOR SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Students who receive federal financial aid are required to make satisfactory academic progress in order to receive financial aid. Federal guidelines stipulate that the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy apply to all enrollment periods at South Arkansas Community College regardless of whether or not aid was received. SAP is defined as passing a required percentage of hours (quantitative) and maintaining a **minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0** on a 4 point scale (qualitative)

Students must be enrolled as an associate degree or technical certificate seeking student in an eligible program of study in order to receive financial aid. Students may receive financial aid while enrolled for a full or part-time course of study. Full-time students must enroll in at least twelve semester hours each semester, including summer. Students on financial aid are advised to consult with the financial aid staff before making any adjustments to their program of study &/or course load.

Students may receive financial aid for no longer than **150%** of the published length of the educational program. For example, a student must complete the requirements for a 60 hour degree or certificate by the time they have attempted 90 course hours. Upon completing a program, students may pursue another degree or certificate under the same guidelines. This type of “reset” may only be done a maximum of two times. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0.

Students must complete the following minimum pace percentage of courses to maintain SAP:

| Hours Attempted  | Completion Percentage Required of Hours Attempted |
|------------------|---|
| Up to 15 hours   | 55%   |
| 16 – 30 hours    | 60%   |
| 31 or more hours | 67%   |

A student’s official enrollment status will be determined based on the college’s official census records and aid will be awarded accordingly. A student who completely withdraws from the college at any point after they are locked in per those census records, are subject to the Return to Title IV Calculation and will be held responsible for the minimum percentage of hours for his/her official enrollment status. Refer to the Return to Title IV Funds Policy for further details. SAP will be reviewed at the end of each payment period/semester. SAP will be checked the first time aid is packaged for each academic year. At such time a student does not meet this policy, they will be notified in writing. This notification will be sent to the current address on file in the Financial Aid Office. Students who fail to make SAP after their first payment period/semester will be placed in a financial aid **Warning Status** and will be allowed one additional payment period/semester in order to meet requisite GPA and/or completion percentage. If after that additional payment period/semester the student still does not meet SAP, they will be placed on **Financial Aid Suspension** and will be ineligible to receive Title IV aid until such time the requisite GPA &/or completion percentage are met. Written notification of Warning or Suspension will be mailed to the student. Students on financial aid suspension must notify the financial aid office **in writing** when the GPA and/or completion percentages are met if they want to be re-considered for financial aid.

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS: SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. **Developmental/Basic Studies Courses** - Enrollment in these courses will be included in the total hour requirement for calculating financial aid awards, the calculating of cumulative semester hours of credit required, and in the calculation of cumulative semester hours attempted. Developmental/Basic studies courses do not earn a GPA and will not count toward the students overall GPA for academic progress purposes. Developmental/Basic Studies courses will be considered “completed” if the student earns a grade of “C” or better.
2. **Repeating Courses** - The last grade recorded in repeated courses is the grade of record at South Arkansas Community College and will be used in computing the student's grade point average. Both courses will count towards the number of hours attempted and the number of hours completed, if applicable. Financial Aid will pay for a previously passed course to be repeated only once.
3. **“I”, “W” and “WE”** – Courses where a grade of “I”, “W” or “WE” are assigned will count towards the students hours attempted but will not count towards the hours completed.
4. **Transfer Students** - Students must report to the Financial Aid Office and Admission's Office, ALL colleges, universities, and other schools in which they have enrolled prior to South Arkansas Community College, *including* courses while in high school. No financial aid awards will be made until all transcripts have been received and evaluated by the Financial Aid Office. Transfer students, which include concurrent credit students, are subject to the same policy regarding length of time and grade point average as native SouthArk students for those hours accepted at SouthArk.
5. **Audits** – Audited courses do not count toward hours attempted or hours earned. Students may not receive aid for auditing a course.
6. **Basic Studies Probation** – Students who are placed on Basic Studies Probation are not necessarily placed on Financial Aid Warning or Suspension. Students will be notified in writing if they do not meet this SAP Policy.
7. **Financial Aid Warning Status:** SouthArk reviews SAP at the end of each payment period. This status will be assigned to a student who was making SAP in the prior payment period but now, do not meet the standards. These students will receive aid for one additional payment period without having to file an appeal.
8. **Pell Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU)** – Students may receive pell grant funds for no longer than **600% or the equivalent of 12 full-time semesters** over the course of their educational career based up on the information found in the Pell Payment Data of NSLDS.
9. **Academic Forgiveness or Fresh Start:** These programs are not part of the federal aid provisions and therefore, will not be recognized for aid eligibility purposes. All hours and grades will be reviewed when checking SAP standards.

### ROUTE OF APPEAL

Students have the right to appeal their financial aid status if they do not meet the requirements of this policy. All appeals must be submitted in writing to the Director of Financial Aid with supporting documents/reasons for not meeting SAP as required. Students who appeal are encouraged to present at least one letter of support from their academic advisor or another faculty/staff member familiar with their situation.

Appeals will be considered by the Faculty and Staff Financial Aid Review Committee. This Committee will determine whether the student may continue receiving federal financial aid based on the documentation provided and that the student will be able to make SAP standards by the end of the next term enrolled. If the committee determines that a student cannot make SAP by the end of the next term of enrollment, then they can place the student on a written and agreeable academic plan in order to regain SAP within a specific and reasonable amount of time. These students are said to be on **Financial Aid Probation**. If at any time during this probationary period the student fails to follow this academic plan, they will automatically be denied continued financial aid. If an appeal is denied, the student must enroll without federal aid until such time as the requisite GPA and/or completion percentage are met. Appeals that are approved are not retroactive to previous semesters.

The Director of Financial Aid has the authority to exercise professional judgment in all cases as necessary.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in cancellation of federal aid &/or full or partial repayment of the federal aid.