

**Office of Financial Assistance  
Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

**Effective Fall 2011 for all Financial Aid, Scholarships, and Veteran's Benefits**

The purpose of Sauk Valley Community College's policy on "Satisfactory Academic Progress" is to ensure that all students meet the federal, state, and local financial aid / veterans benefits' program requirements for eligibility. (Title 34, Section 668.34 Federal Regulations, July 1, 2011). This policy is published by the Coordinator of Financial Assistance in compliance with federal regulations and is reviewed once a year. This policy may be viewed on the SVCC web site. All students are e-mailed a copy at the time their financial assistance is completed for each year of attendance.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at SVCC is evaluated by the Coordinator of Financial Assistance at the end of each academic semester and at the time benefits are awarded. The Office of Admissions posts grades at the end of each semester. The Office of Financial Assistance uses an electronic program to access grades to determine the students' current standing. The students file is documented and if required, the student is notified of a failure to meet the Standard of Progress via e-mail to their student e-mail account. The student will be notified of either Financial Assistance Warning 1 or 2 and the requirements for reinstatement. The SAP policy consists of a completion requirement (Quantitative Standard), a maximum time frame requirement (Quantitative Standard), and grade point average requirement (Qualitative Standard). This policy supersedes all previous policies.

**Completion Requirement (Quantitative Standard)**

SVCC students must complete at least 67% of their hours attempted each semester and cumulatively. A student who fails to complete 67% of their hours attempted during either the semester or cumulatively will be placed on Financial Aid Warning 1 for the next semester they attend. They will be notified by e-mail of the requirements to reinstate themselves to the SAP. If the student fails to complete at least 33% of the attempted hours in either the semester or cumulatively, the student is placed on Financial Aid Warning 2. The student will be notified of the loss of financial aid and what is required for reinstatement. A student's completion requirement is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of hours the student has completed by the cumulative number of hours the student has attempted. Below 100 level courses (remedial/developmental courses), transfer credit, and pass/fail courses count in the attempted hours.

**Maximum Time-Frame Requirement (Quantitative Standard)**

**NOTE: The maximum time frame requirement is a Title IV requirement only. This rule does not apply to veteran's benefits.**

The maximum time frame a student has to complete their degree is equal to 150% of the credit hours required for the completion of the degree or certificate. All attempted hours are counted for all terms, including part time, even those for which the student did not receive financial aid, as well as those usually waived under academic amnesty policies. Students will be placed on Financial Aid Warning 1 when they have attempted 125% of the maximum hours required for their program (calculated as program length x 1.25). Student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning 2 when they have attempted 150% of the maximum hours required for their program. As a general rule, the associate degree has a maximum of 96 hours attempted. In this instance, the student would be placed on Financial Aid Warning 1 when his/her attempted hours exceed 80 hours. This student would be placed on Financial Aid Warning 2 after attempting 96 hours. Hours transferred to SVCC from previous institutions are included in this requirement.

Hours attempted include all aid eligible courses. For the purposes of this policy, completion is defined as grades of A, B, C, D, G, P, or Q. Hours attempted with grades of F, W, or I are not considered successfully completed grades.

**Grade Point Average Attempted Requirement (Qualitative Standard)**

GPA Hours Att.	0 - 1.49	1.5 – 1.74	1.75 - 1.99	2.0 - 4.0
0 - 11	Warning 1	Warning 1	Warning 1	Good
12 - 29	Warning 2	Warning 2	Warning 1	Good
30 – 60+	Warning 2	Warning 2	Warning 2	Good

Only grades and classes attempted/earned at SVCC are counted in this requirement. Grades are calculated for all eligible courses, including repeated courses. Below 100 level courses (remedial/developmental courses) and pass/fail, are used in calculating the GPA. The Grade Point Average Requirement evaluates the student’s entire academic career at SVCC. The minimum requirement at SVCC for a student in his or her second academic year is a “C” average or standing consistent with graduation.

**Degree Completion Requirements**

Once a student has completed all coursework for their degree or certificate and has not received their degree or certificate because they have not filed an intent to graduate will not receive further financial assistance for that program. A student seeking a second associate degree or certificate, who has not exceeded the maximum time frame requirement, will still have their hours from the first degree counted in their total hours attempted. For example, a student who completed an Associate in Arts Degree while attempting 70 hours at SVCC would start out with those same 70 hours attempted before taking a single class towards their second degree. This student would therefore be placed on Financial Aid Warning 1 after completing his/her first semester back as a full-time student.

**Non-punitive grades (withdrawals), repeated courses, audited courses, pass/fail courses, remedial/developmental, ESL, and incompletes.**

Once grades are posted by the Office of Admissions, the Office of Financial Assistance use an electronic program to identify non-punitive grades (withdrawals), repeat courses, audited courses, pass/fail courses, and incompletes. For the purpose of the SAP Policy non-punitive grades (withdrawals) and incompletes (I’s) are considered incomplete courses. Audited courses are not financial aid eligible. If an incomplete course for the semester is completed prior to the start of the next semester, the incomplete will be removed and SAP adjusted with the new grade. Pass/fail courses that receive any grade other than a “P” are considered incomplete.

The maximum number of remedial/developmental and ESL hours a student can attempt is 30 credit hours. The student will be notified in their student e-mail account that they have reached 80% of the 30 credit hours at the time that SAP is completed at the end of each semester. The SAP letter with Financial Aid Warning will be sent to the student stating that they have reached 80% of the allowable 30 credit hours of remedial/developmental and ESL hours.

A course previously completed with a passing grade may be repeated one time for proficiency as required for updating of their educational program. The repeats will be counted as attempted classes for your completion

requirement and both grades will be calculated for your GPA requirement.

### **Financial Aid Warning 1**

A student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning 1 for one semester. The student's electronic file will be annotated with Financial Aid Warning 1 for the next semester. If the student fails to meet good standing in their next semester of attendance, he/she is automatically placed on Financial Aid Warning 2. Financial Aid Warning 1 will not stop any funds from being placed on the student's account with the exception of direct loans.

Direct loans benefits may be limited on a case-by-case basis. Students who are identified as Financial Aid Warning 1 who wish to process a student loan for the next semester must submit an appeal for the Direct Loan to the Coordinator of Financial Assistance. The appeal should address the reason for the loan, the amount of the request, and how the loan is to be used.

NOTE: Students who are on Financial Aid Warning 1 may receive additional semesters if they are on Financial Aid Warning 1 for exceeding 125% of the cumulative hours attempted and still have not exceeded 150% of the hours required for the degree/certificates. If you have more than one semester exceeding 125% but less than 150% the letter that you will receive will have your current status as Second Alert. This status indicates that you are eligible for financial assistance.

### **Financial Aid Warning 2**

A student is ineligible for any type of educational benefits while on Financial Aid Warning 2. The student's electronic file will be annotated with Financial Aid Warning 2. This will prevent all financial aid funds from being placed on the student's account. The student may appeal the Satisfactory Academic Progress Financial Aid Warning 2 status (see student appeals).

### **Student Appeals**

A student may submit an appeal for their Financial Aid Warning 2 once a semester. An appeal may be submitted by:

- Completing an Appeal Form. This form may be obtained at the SVCC web site or at the Office of Financial Assistance. This form instructs the students of the required information needed for the appeal process.
- A letter may be written, dated, and signed to the Coordinator of Financial Assistance and include all required information.

All appeals should include student's identification number, a narrative explaining why the student failed to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy requirements, a description of what has changed and what the student will do to ensure he/she will regain good standing, and any other relevant supporting documentation.

Supporting documentation may include:

- Newspaper obituaries or death certificates to substantiate deaths
- Physician's written statement to substantiate illness or accident
- Written statement from clergy, family member, or other third party who knows the student's situation
- Written statement from academic advisor or professor

Appeals may be submitted via postal mail, in person to the Office of Financial Assistance or via e-mail to

[fa@svcc.edu](mailto:fa@svcc.edu). All appeals will be scanned and tracked in the students file and forwarded to the Coordinator of Financial Assistance for review. The Coordinator of Financial Assistance will notify student of the results from their appeal through their SVCC email within 3 business days.

If the student, at the time the award is offered, fails to appeal the SAP policy by the deadline stated in the Financial Aid Warning letter 2, financial aid will not be applied to the students account. If Financial Aid Warning 2 letter was sent out at completion of semester, and the student fails to meet deadline, all financial aid will be removed. This includes all financial aid holds placed on registration.

NOTE: Any appeal received without proper documentation or documentation submitted without an appeal will be returned to the student unprocessed and/or student will be notified via telephone calls or email for further documentation.

If the appeal is granted the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation, their file will be electronically annotated, and the student will be sent an e-mail to advise them of the condition of their reinstatement to probationary status. The student status will be reviewed after each semester. The goal is that the student will complete all reinstatement requirements and regain good standing within the following semester. If the student does not regain good standing and/or fails to complete all reinstatement requirements within the next semester, the Coordinator of Financial Assistance has the discretion to place the student on Financial Aid Warning 2 again and deny all financial assistance for the next semester.

The appeal may be conditionally granted. An Academic Planning Worksheet may be required on a case-by-case basis by the Coordinator of Financial Assistance and the number of credit hours a student may attend may be specified. The student will be required to make an appointment with the Counseling Office to develop an Academic Planning Worksheet for their degree program if a current Academic Planning Worksheet is not on file. If the student is reinstated in a probationary status, it is the student's responsibility to follow his or her Academic Planning Worksheet. The intent of the Academic Planning Worksheet is to assist the student in obtaining SAP standards by a specific point in time. The Office of Financial Assistance will verify that the student is following the Academic Planning Worksheet at the end of each semester at the same time that SAP is completed. If the student fails to follow the Academic Planning Worksheet, all future financial assistance will be denied.

A student may change his/her degree program if approved by the Coordinator of Financial Assistance. This may only be accomplished in person by making an appointment to see the Coordinator of Financial Assistance.

### **Regaining Lost Eligibility**

If the initial written appeal is denied, the student may appeal by making an appointment with the Coordinator of Financial Assistance. All appeals made in person with the Coordinator of Financial Assistance are final. The student may regain eligibility on his or her own. This may be required if the student has lost eligibility due to SAP. The student may attend SVCC without financial assistance. If the student completes a following term with at least six credit hours achieving C's or better on all classes for that semester, the Coordinator of Financial Assistance will review an appeal at the end of a successful semester from the student. The student will be required to have a current Academic Planning Worksheet at the time of appeal and will be required to follow the guidelines for reinstatement if approved.

The Coordinator of Financial Assistance will review an appeal from a student who has not attended college for several years who is in denial. Depending on circumstances, a student who has had more than one semester of failing to meet the SAP policy will also be required to have a current Academic Planning Worksheet.

## **SVCC Academic Policy Verses Financial Aid SAP**

The SVCC Academic Policy and the Financial Aid SAP are two different policies. If a student is in Suspension or Academic Dismissal as a result of failing to complete the requirements of the SVCC Academic Policy they must follow the reinstatement guidelines in the SVCC catalog. A reinstatement under the SVCC Academic Policy is not a reinstatement to Financial Aid SAP. The Financial Aid SAP is equal to and or stricter than the SVCC Academic Policy. A student who fails to meet the requirements of both policies must complete appeals for Academic and Financial Aid policies.

## **Continued Enrollment**

A student may be allowed to enroll in classes at SVCC, even though he/she is on Financial Aid Warning 2 and has lost all financial assistance. This would necessitate that the student make arrangements with the Business Office for payment of all charges.

**NOTE: Satisfactory Academic Progress is an Office of Financial Assistance Policy, not a registration or admissions policy.** If a student is on Financial Aid Warning 2 status, and all financial assistance has been denied, he/she will not be automatically dropped from his/her classes. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from all classes, if they chose not to attend.

Sauk Valley Community College is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to an effective policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity in all employee and student relations. Except to the extent and subject to the exemptions permitted by law, no qualified employee or student shall be excluded from the employment or educational opportunity, be denied benefits, or be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation (as that term is defined in the Illinois Human Rights Act), marital status, handicap, military status or unfavorable discharge from military service classified as Re-3 or the equivalent thereof.