

## **STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY**

The U.S. Department of Education regulations for Federal Student Aid (FSA) Funds require that McHenry County College (MCC) establish and maintain a policy to measure whether students receiving FSA funds are making satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion. MCC has implemented the following Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy necessary to evaluate a FSA funds recipient's continued eligibility.

### **MINIMUM ACADEMIC STANDARD REQUIREMENTS**

- **Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)\***
  - Achieve and maintain at least a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 in all credit courses attempted throughout an entire enrollment at MCC, whether or not FSA funds were received.
- **Cumulative Completion Rate**
  - Complete at least 67% of the credit courses attempted throughout an entire enrollment at MCC, whether or not FSA funds were received.
- **Maximum Time Frame**
  - Complete an academic program before the total number of attempted credit hours exceeds 150% of the credits required to complete that academic program.

\*Veteran students not receiving FSA funds must maintain the SAP requirement of a GPA of 2.0 or above.

### **REVIEW OF ACADEMIC STANDARD REQUIREMENTS**

The Office of Financial Aid and Veteran Benefits determines compliance with the SAP standards for FSA fund recipients by reviewing a student's cumulative academic record at the end of every semester: fall, spring and summer. Students who have an academic record (including accepted transfer credits) at MCC will be evaluated according to the Minimum Academic Standard Requirements (above) and placed in one of the following statuses.

- **Warning Status**
  - The first semester a student's academic record falls below the minimum academic standard requirements a warning is given as an opportunity to regain **Satisfactory Status**. Students may receive FSA funds for one more semester, if otherwise eligible.
- **Warning Maximum Time Frame**
  - If a student's attempted credit hours are approaching the 150% allowed for their academic program a warning is given.
- **Suspension Status**
  - When a student previously placed in **Warning Status** fails to meet the minimum academic standard requirements at the end of their warning semester. Students will no longer be eligible to receive FSA funds without a granted appeal and/or academic plan, if required.
- **Maximum Time Frame Status (MTF)**
  - When attempted credit hours exceed the allowed 150% for the declared academic program a student is placed in Maximum Time Frame Status. Students will no longer be eligible to receive FSA funds without a granted appeal.
- **Satisfactory Status**
  - Students are meeting or exceeding the minimum academic standard requirements.

## APPEALS FOR A SUSPENDED or MAXIMUM TIME FRAME STATUS

All students in **Suspension Status** have the opportunity to report mitigating circumstances which impacted their performance. Students may submit the proper appeal form and relevant supporting documentation, outlined in the Appeal Process, to the Office of Financial Aid and Veteran Benefits. All appeals will be reviewed by The Office of Financial Aid and Veteran Benefits to determine whether individual situations merit an extended period of FSA funding approval.

If an appeal is **GRANTED** and it is determined a student should be able to meet the SAP standard requirements by the end of the subsequent semester, the student is placed on **Probation Status**.

- **Probation Status**
  - After an appeal has been granted, students may receive FSA funds for one more semester, if otherwise eligible.

If it is determined a student will require more than one semester to meet the SAP standard requirements, the student is required to complete and follow an academic plan before an appeal can be **GRANTED** and the student is placed in **Probation Status**. Students required to complete an academic plan as part of the appeal process will continue to be reviewed at the end of each semester.

- **Probation – 3**
  - The requirements of an individual academic plan were fulfilled after review of the first semester. No appeal is required.
- **Probation – 2**
  - The requirements of an individual academic plan were fulfilled after review of the second semester. No appeal is required. At the conclusion of the second semester review any student who has not achieved **SATISFACTORY** status will be placed in suspended status and will be required to appeal.

If a student fails to fulfill the requirements of their individual academic plan they will be placed in suspended status and will be required to appeal.

Students in **Maximum Time Frame Status** must complete the academic program they were pursuing at the time they exceeded the 150% requirement. Students may only change their academic program under special circumstances. Students will be placed in **Maximum Time Frame Status** and an appeal is required after the SAP evaluation each semester for FSA fund eligibility. If your appeal is **GRANTED** you will be placed in MTF Probation Status.

- **MTF Probation Status**
  - After an appeal has been granted students may receive FSA funds for one more semester, if otherwise eligible.

Awarded FSA funds for students placed in **Suspension Status** or **Max Time Frame Status** will be denied for the following semester until an appeal and/or academic plan are **GRANTED** and the student enters **Probation Status**.

Awarded FSA funds for students with a DENIED appeal will be denied while the student remains in **Suspension Status** outlined above. Students in **Suspension Status** can regain eligibility only by taking action that will bring their academic standing at or above the minimum academic standard requirements.

### **NOTIFICATION OF STATUS**

It is the student's responsibility to know their academic progress standing and how it affects their FSA fund eligibility.

After the SAP evaluation process at the end of each semester notification of statuses will be sent to students using their email address on file at MCC.

After reviewing an appeal, students will receive email notification of the decision or further instructions for completing an Academic Plan.

### **IMPORTANT**

For the purposes of SAP the following grades count as ATTEMPTED but NOT COMPLETED:

- F – Failed course
- I – Incomplete course
- W – Withdrawn course

All attempted credit hours at McHenry County College will be counted towards cumulative completion rates and maximum time frame requirements, these include:

- Developmental courses
- Repeated courses
- Withdrawn courses
- Transfer courses
- Courses that have grades forgiven
- Non-completed courses

A grade of incomplete (I) will require instructor confirmation, in writing, that the student is making successful progress and is on schedule for course completion.

Students can only receive FSA funds for up to 30 credit hours of developmental courses.

Students are allowed to use FSA funds for a onetime only repeat of previously passed coursework (i.e. repeating a course to meet an academic requirement for that particular course, such as a minimum grade.)

If a course is repeated only the higher grade is used in the calculations of the cumulative GPA.