

MARION TECHNICAL COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY/PROCEDURES

AP 431 Financial Aid: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Established 4-15-97

Approved 3-23-21

POLICY:

- (A) The Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 requires institutions of higher education to establish minimum standards of academic progress for students receiving Title IV Federal financial aid funds. Students receiving financial aid at Marion Technical College must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in an eligible degree or certificate program. Federal regulations require a student's entire academic record be reviewed for SAP, including terms in which financial aid is not received. These standards are established only for those students who are receiving financial assistance from one or more of the following programs: Pell Grants, College Work-Study Program, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study and Direct Loan Programs, and are reviewed each academic term.

- (B) SAP review.

The Financial Aid Office will review all three requirements of satisfactory academic progress for students receiving financial aid at the end of each academic term. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of his or her SAP status for financial aid. If any one of the three requirements is not met, the Financial Aid Office will notify the student in writing of his or her financial aid warning or suspension status. Due to the limited time between terms, it is not always possible to notify a student of his or her warning or suspension status before the start of the subsequent term.

- (C) SAP requirements.

A student shall be considered to be maintaining SAP if he or she meets all the following requirements:

- (1) Qualitative Requirement – Maintain the required cumulative grade point average (GPA), AND
- (2) Quantitative Requirement – Satisfactorily complete the necessary number of credit hours (67%) per term, AND
- (3) Maximum Time Frame – Will graduate within 150% of the credit hours required to complete his or her program of study.

- (D) Qualitative progress.

A student must maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA as determined by the College to retain eligibility for federal aid. GPA will include all courses taken at MTC. Hours transferred

in from another college, incompletes (I) and withdrawn courses (W) do not affect the student's GPA.

(E) Quantitative progress.

Students **must** maintain a **67% credit hour completion ratio** for hours attempted. Credit Hour Completion Ratio will be monitored at the end of **each semester (including summer) and cumulatively**. Hours transferred in from another college will be included in the hours attempted and successfully completed. (The *completion ratio* is calculated by dividing the number of hours successfully completed by the number of hours attempted and is not rounded up – i.e. 66.6% does not meet the 67% completion ratio).

Successful completion is defined as receiving any of the following grades: A, B, C, D or S (Satisfactory). The following grades are NOT considered successful completion of a course: F, FN (failure non-attendance), W (Withdraw), U (Unsatisfactory), I (Incomplete)¹ or R (Audit)². For example, a student attempting 12 credit hours must successfully complete 9 credit hours. The attempted credit hours include developmental coursework and hours the student may have attempted even if federal aid was not received. Courses that a student remains in past the add/drop date and earns a grade of “W” (or equivalent) are included in SAP calculations.

(F) Maximum timeframe.

A student must complete his or her program of study within a timeframe not exceeding 150% (in credit hours) of the published program length. For example, for an academic program of 70 credit hours, the maximum timeframe for the program may not exceed 105 credit hours.

- (1) Change major/degree. If a student changes majors, he or she is still required to complete the degree or certificate within the maximum timeframe. For SAP purposes, a student may only change majors one time.
- (2) Second degrees. A student receiving federal student aid at MTC shall be limited to pursuing no more than two degrees at MTC. Seeking a second degree may cause the student to go directly into cancellation status, requiring an appeal and resulting in additional stipulations for the student.
 - (a) All credits attempted at MTC and those transferred in from other institutions must be included in the total number of credits attempted at MTC when calculating the credit hour completion ratio and the maximum timeframe calculation.

¹Incomplete (I) grade will be treated the same as a failing until changed to a letter grade. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office when this occurs.

²Audits (R) - Audit courses receive no credit and do not influence GPA. They are not counted in credits attempted.

- (3) A student becomes ineligible of maximum timeframe at the point in time that it becomes mathematically impossible for the student to complete the program in 150% of the published program length in credit hours
- (4) All current financial aid recipients will have their completed credit hours and grades monitored at the end of each term, Fall Spring and Summer, to see if they have met the requirements stated above.

PROCEDURE:

(G) Consequences of not meeting SAP.

(1) Financial aid warning.

If a student fails to meet any of the above criteria in a term, the student will be placed on financial aid warning and notified in writing. A student on financial aid warning may receive financial aid for the next academic term of enrollment. He or she will be monitored during the next term of attendance. To regain SAP status, the student must satisfactorily complete all courses for which he or she is registered. Withdrawing from a course is not considered satisfactory completion. A student who is on financial aid warning and does not meet SAP will be suspended from federal financial aid.

(2) Financial aid suspension.

A student who does not meet SAP requirements after being placed on financial aid warning will have his or her financial aid suspended resulting in the termination of all financial aid. A student who has his or her financial aid suspended will be notified in writing and required to pay his or her tuition/fees. A student who is suspended may appeal his or her suspension.

(H) Appeal of financial aid suspension.

If a student feels there are extenuating circumstances (i.e., illness/injury of student, serious illness/death within the immediate family, or other circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student), he or she may submit an appeal (in writing) of the suspension to the Financial Aid Office. A student must complete the “Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form” and return it with all supporting documentation to the Financial Aid Office for review by the Financial Aid Director. The student will be notified in writing of the action taken on his or her appeal. The decision made on the appeal is final. If the appeal is approved and the student fails to meet SAP a second time, there is no second appeal. A student may also regain financial aid eligibility by completing coursework at his or her own expense until all conditions of SAP are met.

Required documentation for completing the appeal process:

1. A personal statement is required. Explain (on a separate sheet of paper – typed preferred) in detail the reasons that caused your suspension status.
 - What happened the term that caused you to go to warning/suspension status?

- State how you plan to improve upon past academic performance. How has the situation improved that you may now be able to successfully complete the classes attempted? Failure to provide a plan for improvement may result in your appeal being denied.
- 2. Provide documentation or statements that support your situation. Attach third party documentation on company letterhead to clarify/support your appeal such as: statements from academic advisors, faculty, employers, physician, attorney, copies of your plan of study, an obituary, insurance reports, or court filed documents. All documentation must be date specific and address the circumstances that occurred during the terms your academic performance did not meet minimum standards. Failure to substantiate your circumstances will result in your appeal being denied for lack of documentation.
- 3. An Academic Plan approved by your Advisor must also be submitted with this form.

❖ Deadline for submission of all appeals is the second Friday of the term. Appeals received after this deadline will be considered for reinstatement in the next term.

❖ If the appeal is approved and the student fails to meet SAP a second time, there is no second appeal.

(I) Approval of appeal.

A student on financial aid suspension whose appeal is approved will be placed on financial aid probation. A student on financial aid probation will be monitored to assure that all the conditions of SAP are met in the next term of attendance. If SAP terms are not met in the following term, the student's aid will be suspended.

(J) Courses not covered for financial aid.

Some courses, although for credit, may not be eligible for federal aid. Only courses that are required for a student's degree are covered for federal aid. For example, Human and Social Services (HSS) elective Nurse Aid Training (NUR1000) is not covered unless it is an approved elective for a student's area of study. Any course taken outside of a student's program (PDC) are not eligible for Title IV Federal funds.

(K) Remedial (developmental) course.

A student not enrolled in an eligible program of study may not receive aid if taking solely remedial courses. A student may receive aid for up to 30 semester hours of remedial coursework if enrolled in an eligible program as a regular student. The remedial courses will be included in all SAP measurements.

(L) Attendance.

Attendance is monitored for the receipt of federal aid. A student not in attendance is subject to adjustments of his or her financial aid. A student who never attend class(es) is

ineligible to receive aid for the class(es) in question. This includes an online class(es) where the student failed to submit assignments and/or tests to the instructor.

Nonattendance could result in the student being required to repay all or part of the financial aid received.

(M) Repeated coursework.

A student may receive financial aid for repeating courses. However, if retaking a previously passed course, financial aid can only be used for one repeat of the course even if the second attempt results in a lower grade. Any courses that are repeated will be used in the student's Satisfactory Academic Progress calculation. Each repetition will count toward the attempted hours; however, only the courses being counted in the GPA calculation will be counted in completed hours for SAP. The most recent grade earned will count toward GPA. Repeated hours may be subtracted from the *completed* hours but remain in the attempted hours for the SAP calculation. In both situations, the student's GPA could improve. However, the credit hour completion ratio may stay the same or decrease.

(N) Definitions.

- (1) Financial Aid Warning – A status the school assigns to a student who fails to make SAP. The school reinstates eligibility for aid for one payment period and may do so without a student appeal. This status may only be used by schools that check SAP at the end of each payment period and only for students who were making SAP in the prior payment period for which they were enrolled or who were in the first payment period of their program.
- (2) Financial Aid Suspension – A student who fails to make SAP while on warning or probation status, resulting in suspension of federal financial aid
- (3) Financial Aid Appeal – A process by which a student who has not met the school's standards of satisfactory academic progress requests reconsideration of his or her eligibility for federal financial aid. All appeal decisions are final.
- (4) Financial Aid Probation – A status the school assigns to a student whom the school identified as not meeting SAP and who has successfully appealed the school's finding.
- (5) Maximum Time Frame – A period that is not more than 150% of the published length of the academic program.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended
PRIOR EFFECTIVE DATES: 4-15-97; 4-16-02; 4-11-11; 1-11-12; 10-29-12; 12-4-13; 12-21-18