



Office of Financial Aid

2008-2009

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Federal Regulations require institutions to establish policies to monitor the academic progress of students who apply for and/or receive financial aid. These standards apply to the following financial aid programs: Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), Federal Work-Study Program (FWS), Federal Stafford Loan Program (subsidized and unsubsidized), Federal Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), Ohio Instructional Grant (OIG), Ohio Opportunity Grant (OCOG), Nurse Education Assistance Loan Program (NEALP), and other programs as determined the Office of Financial Aid.

PLEASE NOTE: The Federal Government requires institutions to monitor the academic progress of non-recipients, too. Be aware that academic progress during any quarter in which financial aid is not received will be a factor in determining eligibility for aid in subsequent quarters. Students applying for financial aid must be making satisfactory progress as outlined in this policy prior to the initial awarding or certification of financial aid. **It is the student's responsibility to understand and adhere to these standards to continue receiving aid at COTC.**

Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) are measured using the following criteria:

- I. Grade Point Average (GPA)
- II. Completion of Attempted Credit Hours
- III. Maximum Time Frame (MTF) for completion of degree or certificate

I. Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement

Students **must** maintain a minimum quarterly *and* cumulative **GPA of 2.0** which will be monitored every quarter.

II. Credit Hours Completed Requirement

Students **must** maintain a **67% credit hour completion ratio** for hours attempted. Credit Hour Completion Ratio will be monitored quarterly and cumulatively. Hours attempted include hours for which there are grades/notations of E, I, K, R, U, W, or "forgiven" hours. 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.

Successful completion of course work is defined as a letter grade/notation of **A, B, C, D, K, S or X**. (K = transfer and X = proficiency are used in the calculation of total attempted and completed grades.) Any of the following grades are considered **unsuccessful: E, I, U, R (Audit), or W**. Courses for which a student receives an incomplete grade, drops or repeats will be counted in the hours attempted at COTC which will cause the credit hour completion ratio to decrease. ***It is the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Financial Aid when an Incomplete course (I) has been completed successfully.***

NOTE: Two consecutive quarters of a total withdrawal during the first two weeks of the quarter will result in automatic CANCELLATION status.

III. Maximum Time Frame (MTF) Measurement Requirements

Students **must** complete their academic program within 150% of the published length, expressed as credit hours, needed to graduate. (This is the definition of **Maximum Time Frame**.) **All** classes attempted at COTC and transferred in from another institution are included in the **MTF** calculation which also includes proficiency credits and the credits "forgiven" by Freshman Forgiveness or Fresh Start. Progress will be assessed quarterly after grades are posted. **NOTE:** Classes taken that are not on the published Plan of Study (POS) will be counted in SAP. It is very important that the student follow the POS to maintain eligibility for financial aid. Taking courses not on your plan of study will cause you to reach MTF faster and unlikely to be appealable.

IV. Consequences of not meeting SAP

Academic progress will be evaluated each quarter according to the criteria listed above.

- a. The first quarter a student fails to meet the quarterly and/or cumulative minimum GPA or completion ratio criteria set in the policy, he is placed on **Conditional Status** and sent a “conditional” email.
- b. Failure to meet the quarterly and cumulative minimum GPA and/or completion ratio while on Conditional Status will result in the student being placed on **Cancellation Status** and sent a “cancellation” email. While on cancellation status, the student is ineligible for federal, state, and most institutional financial aid.
- c. Once a student has attempted 100% of the published number of hours to complete his program, the student will be placed on Warning Status (WE, WC, WA, WP) and sent a “warning” email. Once the student has attempted 150% of the published number of hours, he will be placed on **Cancellation Status** which is defined as MTF and sent a “cancellation” email. NOTES: 1) All classes attempted at COTC and all transfer credit hours are counted in the number of hours attempted when calculating MTF. This includes all classes attempted as a high school student, audited, completed, failed, dropped, incomplete, and proficiency credits. 2) It is possible for a student to be on Warning Status and Conditional, Cancellation or Probation status at the same time.
 - i. **Warning Eligible (WE)** means the student has attempted at least 100% of the published number of hours for the program and is meeting the GPA and completion ratio standards.
 - ii. **Warning Conditional (WC)** means the student has attempted at least 100% of the published number of hours for the program and did not meet the GPA and/or completion ratio standards for one quarter.
 - iii. **Warning Cancellation (WA)** means the student has attempted at least 100% of the published number of hours for the program and did not meet the GPA and/or completion ratio standards for two consecutive quarters.
 - iv. **Warning Probational (WP)** means the student has attempted at least 100% of the published number of hours for the program and did not meet the GPA and/or completion ratio standards for two consecutive quarters but filed an appeal and the appeal was approved.
- d. **Students on conditional, cancellation, probation, or warning status for SAP will not have aid released for the subsequent quarter until all current quarter grades have been posted and academic progress has been reviewed. Therefore, fees may not be paid, and refunds may not be available on the intended refund days.**

V. Reestablishing Eligibility

Once on Cancellation Status, a student will not be eligible for student aid until he is meeting all minimum SAP standards.

- a. Students may regain eligibility by taking classes and paying out of pocket until all minimum SAP standards are met. Once the student meets all minimum SAP standards, the student will go from Cancellation to Eligible Status and regain financial aid eligibility; or
- b. Students that have documentable **extenuating circumstances** (i.e.: illness/injury of student, death of close relative) may appeal their financial aid cancellation. If the appeal is approved, the student will be placed on **Probation Status** until meeting **all** minimum SAP standards. Once the student meets all minimum SAP standards and/or the terms of the Probation Status, the student will go from Probation Status to Eligible, Cancellation, or Warning Cancellation Status depending on MTF.

Transfer hours earned at another institution after **Cancellation Status** is imposed can be included in the completion ratio. However, the GPA earned at another institution can not be transferred to COTC. Please contact the Office of Financial Aid (OFA) if transfer hours need to be considered for SAP.

If aid eligibility has been cancelled and extenuating circumstances are involved, contact the OFA to ask about the appeal process. To appeal the cancellation of financial aid, **the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Form must be completed and returned with supporting documentation.** *It is extremely helpful to discuss the situation with a Financial Aid Advisor before starting the appeal process.* Directions included on the SAP Appeal Form require students to explain in detail the reason(s) for not meeting all the SAP standards, attach supporting documentation, and write a plan to maintain eligibility upon approval by committee. In general, the appeal process is not to be used to extend the student’s financial aid eligibility. Therefore, SAP appeals for Maximum Time Frame may be denied. Stop by, call the Office of Financial Aid at (740) 366-9435 or 1-800-9NEWARK, or send an email to finaid@cotc.edu for more specific information. **A student cannot have more than two approved Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals during their entire academic career at Central Ohio Technical College.**

The deadline to file an appeal is the first day of the quarter in which the student wants his aid reinstated.

Summer 2008	June 16, 2008
Autumn 2008	September 24, 2008
Winter 2009	January 5, 2009
Spring 2009	March 30, 2009

Students regaining eligibility through the appeal process will be placed on **Probation Status** and may have specific requirements to meet in order to regain and maintain financial aid eligibility. Students are required to sign and return a copy of their probation email stating that they understand the terms of probation. While on probationary status, students must meet the terms of their probation and **cannot appeal again** if the terms of probation are not met while on **Probation Status** regardless of the circumstances.

VI. Additional Institutional SAP Policies

- a. **Program Changes:** If a student changes their program during their enrollment at COTC, the Financial Aid Advisor will change the MTF hours to coincide with the new program. Changing programs may cause the student to go directly to Cancellation Status without having been on Warning Status. If this happens, the advisor will place the student on Warning Status for one quarter and Cancellation Status the subsequent quarter. NOTE: Per Federal Regulations, all classes attempted and those transferred in from another institution must be included in the total number of credits attempted at COTC when determining the denominator portion of the credit hour completion ratio. This includes incompletes, withdraws, audits, and repeated classes.
- b. **Freshman Forgiveness/Fresh Start:** Occasionally, a student uses "freshman forgiveness" or "fresh start"; the forgiven hours should be subtracted from the SAP *completed* hours but remain in the attempted hours. In both situations, the student's GPA could improve. However, the credit hour completion ratio may stay the same or decrease. Per Federal Regulations, all classes attempted and those transferred in from another institution must be included in the total number of credits attempted at COTC when determining the denominator portion of the credit hour completion ratio. This includes incompletes, withdraws, audits, and repeated classes.
- c. **Remedial Courses:** A student cannot receive aid if taking remedial courses solely in a remedial program because it is not an eligible program. COTC does not offer a remedial program; therefore, a student may receive aid for remedial courses for up to 45 credit hours of remedial coursework if enrolled in an eligible program as a regular student. COTC offers 39 credit hours of remedial courses; all of which are at high school level or equivalent. Five hours of ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) are offered at COTC which may not be counted against the 45 credit hours limitation. The remedial courses will be included in all SAP measurements.
- d. **Audit Course:** Financial aid funds cannot be used to pay for audited courses. If a student elects to audit a course BEFORE the financial aid freeze date, his aid will be adjusted to exclude the audited hours. If a student decides to audit a course AFTER the freeze date, aid will not be adjusted. However, all audited courses will be considered an unsuccessful attempt and will be counted against the credit hour completion ratio for SAP in both situations.
- e. **Second Degrees at COTC:** COTC Office of Financial Aid (OFA) policy states a student may pursue no more than two degrees and receive financial aid. If a student has already received a bachelor's or associate's degree, COTC will only allow financial aid eligibility for one more degree. (Certificates will not be counted as a degree.) When reviewing SAP for a student pursuing a second degree at COTC, the Financial Aid Advisor will calculate the MTF hours based upon the new program. Seeking a second degree may cause a student to go directly to Cancellation Status without having been on Warning Status. If this happens, the advisor will place the student on Warning Status for one quarter and Cancellation Status the subsequent quarter.
- f. **Double Degrees/Double Majors:** Some students seek two simultaneous degrees or majors from COTC. When reviewing SAP and determining program hours for MTF, the Financial Aid Advisor will use the program with the most required hours. [Definitions: Double Degrees: student is seeking a degree from two different programs at the same time (i.e. accounting and nursing). Double Majors: student is seeking two degrees within the same program (i.e. Drafting and Design: Architectural and Drafting and Design: Civil).]