

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

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A student is required to maintain satisfactory academic progress to remain eligible for financial aid. Augusta Technical College uses the following standards to monitor a student's progress toward his or her diploma, certificate, or degree program.

Guidelines for Academic Progress

The academic year at Augusta Technical College consists of Fall, Spring, and Summer enrollment periods. The academic year begins with Fall and ends with Summer. The measurement of academic progress is made at the end of each enrollment period and the status is effective during next enrollment period.

Students enrolling at Augusta Technical College for the first time (including transfers) are considered initially to be meeting SAP. The measurement of academic progress will be made at the conclusion of the first enrollment term and will include all acceptable transfer credit that the Augusta academic record contains.

Students who have been academically suspended from Augusta Technical College and who are readmitted are not eligible for financial aid unless meeting the SAP standards. Students who are readmitted may follow the appeal policy if consideration for financial aid is desired.

Satisfactory academic progress is measured in terms of three components:

- Maximum Timeframe; Length of time to complete the program (150%)
- A quantitative component (Pace of Progression, 2/3 or 66.66%)
- A qualitative component (2.0 GPA) ***GPA-Grade Point Average***

It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of SAP standards and his or her respective status.

Maximum Timeframe

There are a maximum number of hours that students may attempt in pursuing their current program of study. Students may not exceed 150% of the hours needed to complete the program of study they are currently enrolled in, excluding Learning Support courses. This does include transfer coursework that has been accepted as credit toward the student's current program of study. Once a student has attempted 150% of the minimum number of credit hours necessary for completing the program requirements, the student will not be eligible to receive

financial aid. (Example: program requires 63 hours to complete; $63 \times 1.5 = 94.5$ hours allowed to complete program).

Quantitative (Pace of Progression)

In order for students to graduate within the maximum “time frame” of hours, at the end of each term they are expected to have cumulatively completed at least $\frac{2}{3}$ or 66.66% of their credit hours attempted. A student, who, at the end of any term, has not successfully completed 66.66% of their cumulative hours attempted, will be placed on Financial Aid Warning for their next term of enrollment. This will allow the student one term to increase the cumulative completion rate to the satisfactory level. If, after one term, the cumulative completion rate remains below 66.67% the student will be placed on Financial Aid Termination and eligibility will be lost until the cumulative completion rate has been brought back to at least 66.67%. Students may receive aid while on Financial Aid Warning but the student will not receive aid while on Financial Aid Termination.

Students may re-establish good standing when they have cumulatively completed $\frac{2}{3}$ or 66.66% of their attempted credit hours. The following grades (see Grading System) do not count toward successfully completing a course: “F”, “I”, “W”, “WF”, “WP”, “IP”, and “Z”. For all courses, any combination of these results in no progress, and will be calculated in the completion rate when computing eligibility for financial aid. Repeat courses will be considered as any other class and both grades will count in the GPA. Grades of “F” and “WF” will be counted in computing your GPA.

Learning Support courses are graded on an A* through F* scale. A grade of A*, B*, or C* will be considered satisfactory completion of a learning support course. A grade of D* or F* will be considered unsatisfactory. Grades received for learning support courses are included in the $\frac{2}{3}$ or 66.66% hours attempted completion rate, but not in the GPA calculation.

Example: A student completes his first year at Augusta Technical College with the following grades:

30 cumulative attempted credits with
18 credits of passing grades (these credits count as attempted and completed)
12 credits of failing grades (these credits count as attempted but not completed)

The student’s completion rate is 60.00% (total completed divided by total attempted – $18/30 = 60.00\%$)

The student in this example did not meet the quantitative (completion rate) SAP standard and is at risk of losing financial aid.

If the student had completed 21 credits with passing grades, they would have met the quantitative SAP standard. ($21/30 = 70.00\%$)

Qualitative (Grade Point Average)

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.0 to remain in good standing. Financial aid GPA's will be monitored at the end of each term. A student whose cumulative GPA falls below a 2.0 is placed on Financial Aid Warning for their next term of enrollment. This will allow a student one term to increase the GPA to the satisfactory level. If, after one term, the GPA remains below 2.0, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Termination and eligibility will be lost until the cumulative GPA has been brought back to at least a 2.0 level. Students may receive aid while on Financial Aid Warning, but will not receive aid while on Financial Aid Termination. Transfer coursework is not counted in the cumulative GPA calculation. Remedial coursework taken by a student is included in the qualitative measurement.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades are designated as an "I" (Incomplete) or "IP" (In Progress) are not calculated in the GPA but are calculated in the attempted hours completion rate. Once the "I" or "IP" grades are updated to actual grades, the cumulative GPA will be checked at that time. If a student does not meet the standards after recalculation and has received funds for classes, the funds will have to be repaid by the student.

Z-Grades

Effective for Spring 2020 semester, the Z grade (withdrawal due to the COVID-19 pandemic) was implemented. Z grades are not calculated in attempted hours for SAP purposes; however, for State Programs (HOPE Grant, HOPE Scholarship, Zell Miller Grant, Zell Miller Scholarship), the Z grade counts in attempted and paid hours.

Treatment Transfer Hours

Transfer students accepted by Augusta Technical College, but not previously at Augusta Technical College, will be classified as maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress for the first term of attendance. After the first term, the student's grades will be measured in accordance with Augusta Technical College's Satisfactory Academic requirements. Students who previously attended Augusta Technical College, transferred to another school, then returned to Augusta Technical College, will have all of their course work reviewed. If a student fails to meet the qualitative or quantitative standards at the end of a term, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. The student will continue to receive aid while on Financial Aid Warning. However, if the student does not meet the qualitative and quantitative standards by the end of the warning term, he/she will be placed on Financial Aid Termination. The student can continue taking courses while on Termination at the student's expense.

Changing of Programs

Students who have graduated a program at Augusta Tech and wish to pursue a different program of study are still limited to the number of Maximum Total Attempted Hours applicable to the current

Effective Fall 2020

Revised: March 2021

program of study; the Minimum 66.66 % Pace of Completion, and the Minimum Overall Grade Point Average (GPA) will continue to be calculated using all attempted hours accepted for transfer credit plus all hours attempted at Augusta Tech. Changing your program of study does not instantly change your SAP Status. Your SAP status will be recalculated at the end of your next enrolled term in the new program.

SAP Notification

SAP notices to students in Warning and Termination categories are sent in batch via institutional email every semester after grades are posted. Students who submit SAP appeals are also notified of the Appeals Committee's decision via institutional email. Students' status can also be viewed online via the student information system, SmartWeb.

Financial Aid Warning:

A student who fails to meet SAP (excluding maximum timeframe) at the end of an enrollment period will be automatically placed on "financial aid warning," not to exceed one enrollment period. During the "financial aid warning" enrollment period, the student may receive federal financial aid despite the determination that the student is not meeting SAP standards. The student must meet SAP standards at the end of the financial aid warning period or will be suspended from further financial aid until such time as the student meets SAP standards (student must pay for any additional course enrollment after the financial aid warning period through personal or private funds) or the student must appeal and have the appeal granted.

Financial Aid Termination:

A student becomes ineligible for all federal student aid funds if a SAP review indicates he or she does not meet the required GPA, is not maintaining the required pace, or has exceeded the permitted maximum time frame. Students who lose their aid eligibility have an opportunity to appeal.

Financial Aid Probation:

"Financial aid probation" is the status assigned to a student who fails to meet SAP standards and who has appealed and had the appeal granted. A student on financial aid "probation" may receive financial aid for one enrollment period. At that point, the student must meet SAP standards. If the student was given academic performance stipulations as a condition of the approved appeal or placed on an academic plan, the student must satisfactorily complete all hours attempted in order to receive future financial aid. Academic plans will remain in place until the student gets back in good standing, or graduates from his/her current program of study. Academic performance of students on Probation is monitored after end of term grading.

Effective Fall 2020

Revised: March 2021

Students who violate their probation status and remain below the standards will be placed back in Financial Aid Termination and aid will be removed. In rare cases, some students may meet SAP standards regardless of unacceptable grade. These students will be placed in satisfactory status and become eligible for aid.

Categories of Students

- **New Transfer Students** – For the first term of enrollment at Augusta Technical College, transfer students will be considered initially to be meeting SAP. SAP standards will then be monitored after each term and will include all acceptable transfer credit that the Augusta Technical College academic record contains.
- **Dual Enrollment** – Students will be monitored after each term. Students are required to meet SAP standards set forth by Augusta Technical College. Dual Enrollment students cannot appeal financial aid termination.
- **Joint-Enrollment** – Students will be monitored after each term. Students are required to meet SAP standards as set forth by Augusta Technical College.
- **Learning Support Students** – Financial aid is available for thirty (30) attempted hours of learning support coursework (including Augusta Technical College attempted hours and transfer attempted hours). Students required to take learning support coursework will be monitored each semester after grading. Students who volunteer for learning support coursework are ineligible for Title IV aid. Any student who registers for learning support coursework, knowingly or unknowingly, in excess of the maximum allowable attempted learning support hours must repay all funds received.

Policy for Reinstatement of Eligibility for Financial Aid

1. A student whose GPA is classified as unsatisfactory can re-establish eligibility when the cumulative GPA reaches 2.0. Students may re-establish good standing when they have cumulatively completed 2/3 or 66.66% of their attempted credit hours.
2. The above requirements to re-establish financial aid will be at the student's expense unless a ***Financial Aid Appeal*** has been approved.

For more information about or graduation rates, the median debt of students who completed their program, and other important information, please visit our website at www.augustatech.edu

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Effective Fall 2020

Revised: March 2021



Financial Aid Appeal Process

Financial Aid Appeal Process

Students that did not meet the qualitative and/or the quantitative components will be notified via their Augusta Technical College's student Smartweb email account of their failure to make satisfactory academic progress at the end of every term after grades have been posted. If the student was placed on Financial Aid Termination and feels there were extenuating circumstances beyond his/her control that kept him/her from maintaining satisfactory progress, he/she may appeal in writing by completing the Financial Aid Appeal form (supporting documentation must be attached). Examples of extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to: death or extended illness of a family member, illness or injury of student, house fire, or victim of a violent crime. **Work conflicts are not extenuating circumstances.** Appeals must be submitted by the published appeal deadline for the semester in which the student is requesting reinstatement of financial aid. Only completed appeals will be considered as submitted. Students are only allowed 1 appeal every three years.

Filing a Financial Aid Appeal

In order to appeal your Termination, you must:

- Be accepted into a program of study
- Be enrolled in classes for the term for which you wish to appeal
- Have a completed FAFSA on file (all required documents are submitted)
-

If you meet the above requirements:

- Complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form
- Type your appeal statement
- Attach supporting documentation (no appeals will be accepted without valid documentation)
- Academic Plan
- Submit to the Financial Aid Office

Outcome of Appeals

Appeals are reviewed by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. Please note the decision is final and cannot be appealed to a higher authority at the college or to the Department of Education.

Effective Fall 2020

Revised: March 2021

Financial Aid Appeal Results

SAP Appeal Approved (Probation)

Academic performance of students on Probation is monitored after end of term grading. Students who violate their probation status and remain below the standards will be placed back in Financial Aid Termination and aid will be removed. In rare cases, some students may meet SAP standards regardless of unacceptable grade. These students will be placed in satisfactory status and become eligible for aid.

Denial

If your appeal is denied, you will remain on Financial Aid Termination Status and **will not** be eligible for any Financial Aid until the standards are met.

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Revised: March 2021