# FINANCIAL AID OFFICE
## 2018-19
## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY (SAP)

Federal and state financial aid regulations require Southwestern College (SWC) to establish, define, and apply standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for all financial aid applicants, regardless of previous financial aid history. These standards are created to help students successfully achieve their program of study within the Federal maximum time allowed. SWC reviews its SAP policy prior to each new award year.

SAP is evaluated for financial aid applicants every academic year for students that have attempted 12 or more units and measures both a qualitative standard (cumulative GPA), and quantitative standards (completion rate/pace and maximum time frame). Students enrolled in a program of less than two years (approved Certificates of Achievement) will be reviewed for SAP after the end of every semester. All periods of enrollment at Southwestern College and transferable units from other colleges attended (determined from official transcripts on file at SWC) will be included as part of the SAP review.

Southwestern College's SAP policy for students receiving financial aid is stricter than the College's institutional Academic Disqualification policy. Please refer to the college catalog for detailed information.
SAP standards apply to all the following federal and state funded programs:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Subsidized and unsubsidized federal Direct Loans
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Work-Study Program (FWS)
- State Cal Grant Program (B & C)
- Student Success Completion Grant
- State Chafee Grant Program
- State Child Development Grant Program

**Academic Year Definition**

Southwestern College's academic year, for federal student aid purposes, is comprised of two 16-week semesters (fall and spring), which meet the federal minimum academic year definition (30 weeks of minimum instructions). SWC also offers a selection of courses during the summer term and may also offer a winter Intersession term.

A student's enrollment status is based on the total number of units the student is officially enrolled according to the course census date. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all course adds and drops have been promptly and accurately been posted to his/her record.

**Eligible Program of Study**

Recipients of financial aid must be enrolled in a program of study which leads to an approved Certificate of Achievement, an Associate's Degree, or a transferable program that leads to a Bachelor's Degree. Certificate of Proficiency programs are not eligible for aid. It is the student's responsibility to have an eligible academic program of study declared at Southwestern College. Students without an approved program of study cannot be evaluated for SAP and will have their file placed on HOLD. To resolve this matter, the student must update his/her major on WebAdvisor and notify the Financial Aid Office of the change by submitting the FA Major Update form online at www.swccd.edu/famajorupdate . The student's SAP status will be reevaluated after the major change is confirmed.

Students should also meet with an academic counselor to create an updated Student Education Plan (SEP), which outlines the required courses to be taken to complete their correct academic program.

**Qualitative Standard: Grade Point Average (GPA)**

Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 or better to achieve satisfactory SAP status. This cumulative GPA includes any evaluated, transferable work from other colleges or universities.

**Quantitative Standard: Completion Rate (Pace)**

Students must maintain a satisfactory completion rate of all course work attempted. Students must complete a minimum of **67%** of the units attempted to maintain a satisfactory SAP completion rate. The completion rate – or pace - is measured by dividing the cumulative number of units the student has successfully completed by the number of units the student has attempted.

| Examples of Completion Rate of 67% | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Enrollment Status** | **Attempted Units** | **Minimum Completed Units (67%)** |
| Full-Time | 12 | 8.5 |
| ¾ Time | 9 | 6.5 |
| ½ Time | 6 | 4.5 |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Grades included in the completion rate calculation:** | A, B, C, D, F, W, P, NP |
| **Grades considered successfully completed:** | A, B, C, D, P |
| **Total attempted units include grades of** | A, B, C, D, F, W, P, NP |

Courses with a grade of I, IP, MW or RD are not included in this calculation.

**Quantitative Standard: Maximum Time Limit (progression)**

The maximum timeframe allowed for a student to maintain satisfactory academic progress is 150% of the minimum required units to complete his/her academic program. All transferable units from other colleges attended (determined from official transcripts on file at SWC) will be included as part of the calculation of maximum time limit.

For example, 60 units is the standard length of completion for an Associate's Degree at Southwestern College. Therefore, 60 units x 150% = 90 units, which is the maximum units that student is allowed to attempt and still be eligible for financial aid. However, not all academic programs are 60 units in length, such as Certificates of Achievements and specialized technical programs. The maximum time limit is calculated specifically for each individual academic program.

| Maximum Units Time Frame - Examples | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **Units Required to Complete Program** | **Maximum Units for FA eligibility** |
| AA/AS or ADT | 60 | 90 units (60 units x 150%) |
| Certificate of Achievement – Biotechnology (example) | 30 | 45 units (30 units x 150%) |
| Specialized Program - Dental Hygiene (example) | 89 | 133.5 units (89 units x 150%) |

- Repeated courses will count toward the 150% maximum units allowed.

- The maximum time frame will not be extended for students who change academic programs or have prior degrees or certificates.

Updated 1/10/19

- All ESL (English as a Second Language) course units will be excluded from the maximum unit limit

- Up to a maximum of 30 units of Basic Skills/Remedial courses will be excluded from the maximum unit limit.

- Students who are at between 70% and 99% of their **maximum** timeframe will receive a code of "SAM" (Satisfactory, Approaching Maximum) and an email advising them to meet with an academic counselor to ensure they will be able to complete their program within the maximum time frame. They will need to submit an updated Student Education Plan (SEP) and a completed Satisfactory Approaching Maximum Time Frame form. Students coded as SAM will receive their initial term aid, but spring aid will be on hold until the above requirements are met.

### Students with a Bachelor's degree or higher

Students who have a Bachelor's Degree or higher from an accredited domestic or foreign school will receive a SAP code of "SBA" and are not eligible for financial aid, with the exception of the California College Promise Grant (CCPG, formerly known as the Board of Governors Fee Waiver), Federal Work Study and federal student loans (if qualified).

### Disqualification

Any student who fails to meet any of the above listed SAP standards will be disqualified. Students that do not meet SAP standards will be notified via email of their disqualification status and will not be eligible to receive Federal or State aid, with the exception of a California College Promise Grant (CCPG), CCPG is exempt from normal SAP regulations but subject to academic standards of its own and income eligibility requirements set by the state legislature). Students will also be notified by email of their ability to appeal the disqualification.

### Re-establishing aid eligibility

There are two methods by which a student can re-establish eligibility for aid after losing eligibility due to SAP.

- Students who lose eligibility for financial aid can regain eligibility in the following semester by meeting the required GPA, completion rate, and progression. Students must then notify the Financial Aid Office of their improvement.

- Students may also choose to file a Satisfactory Academic Progress appeal. Students may appeal their SAP disqualification by first completing the SWC SAP Online Workshop and then submitting a completed appeal packet to the Financial Aid Office. It must include the following:

  o A statement indicating any extenuating circumstances that may have occurred that explains why the student failed to achieve SAP. Extenuating circumstances may include, but are not limited to, personal illness or injury, serious illness or death of a family member, auto accident or other situation beyond the control of the student, and,
  o A statement of what has changed in the student's situation and;
  o An explanation of how this change will ensure future academic success and;
  o A current Student Education Plan (SEP), dated the within one year, with fewer than three updates and;
  o Supporting documents (i.e. medical records, legal documents, death certificate) that may assist in justifying the student's situation/case.

Updated 1/10/19

o A copy of the confirmation page verifying successful completion of the SAP Online Workshop with a score of 75% or more.

Students must be enrolled for the semester for which they are filing an SAP appeal. Complete appeal packets are forwarded to an SAP Appeals Committee. The timeframe for processing appeals can take 2-4 weeks, or longer if additional information is needed from the student. Each appeal is reviewed by the SAP committee.

Appeal results will be sent to the student's SWC email. **All decisions made by the Financial Aid Appeal Committee are final.**

**Deadlines to submit SAP appeals are as follows:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Summer 2018 | Thursday, August 2nd |
| Fall 2018 | Friday, December 7th |
| Spring 2019 | Friday, April 12th |

**Important!** All information provided on SAP appeals is considered confidential. However, **all Financial Aid employees are considered Responsible Employees** and are mandated to report any incidents of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or abuse to the Title IX Administrator. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Dean of Student Services.

**Probation and Reinstatement**

If a student submits an SAP appeal and it is approved by the committee, the student will be on probation for the next semester and aid will be reinstated. During their probationary semester, the student will be placed on an academic plan, meaning must not receive grades of F, W, NP, or I, must maintain a semester GPA of 2.0 or better and follow their Student Education Plan. **SAP will be evaluated at the end of each probationary semester to determine future eligibility for financial aid.**

In order to remain eligible for financial aid, the student must comply with the conditions of the academic plan each semester, until they regain satisfactory SAP status or complete their program.

**The disbursement of subsequent financial aid may be delayed until grades are reviewed and an updated SAP status can be determined.**