

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is a federal mandate established by the U.S. Department of Education under the Higher Education (HEA) Act of 1965 requiring students to maintain specific academic standards to receive financial aid. The law requires institutions to develop policies regarding satisfactory academic progress (SAP) which include consequences to the student if progress is not achieved. The (SAP) policy at Alamance Community College (ACC) is at least as strict as the institutional academic standards policy for students who are not receiving assistance under Title IV, HEA programs. ACC also provides for consistent application of standards to all students within categories of full-time and part time status enrollment.

Alamance Community College students who wish to be considered for financial aid must maintain satisfactory progress in their selected course of study as set forth in this policy. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is calculated at the end of every semester consisting of Fall, Spring and Summer payment periods. Students are evaluated on the basis of grade point average, credit hour completion, and maximum time frame limitation. The awarding and continuation of assistance is dependent upon the students ability to perform academically in a satisfactory manner. The policy defines both qualitative and quantitative measurements as shown below:

- **Grade Point Average (Qualitative Progress)**

The quantitative measurement focuses on the quality of grades. Financial Aid recipients must have at least a “2.0” average at Alamance Community College to be eligible to continue to receive aid at ACC. The overall grade point average must be at least 2.0 or higher.

Any student whose cumulative quality point average falls below the minimum 2.0 required as shown is placed on financial aid warning or academic probation category.

- **Credit Hour Completion (Quantitative Progress)**

The quantitative measurement focuses on incremental progress where the pace of completion is measured.

Students must complete at least 67% of the classes for which they enroll. At least sixty-seven percent of all attempted hours must be completed to remain

eligible. Attempted hours versus completed hours are calculated to determine completion rate.

- **Maximum Time Frame - Degree Completion (Quantitative Progress)**

Students are also subject to a quantitative measurement of progress. Financial aid recipients may only receive financial assistance for 150% of the length of the program.

Students who graduate one program and enter another will begin eligibility again. At the time a student reaches maximum time frame and has not earned a diploma or degree, if the student has any remedial classes (below 100 except EFL) on the student's transcript, remedial hours will be subtracted from the attempted hours up to 30 remedial hours to see if the student regains eligibility to continue receiving Title IV aid.

Max Time Frame is the maximum time a student is given to complete a degree or diploma. Typically the time period is three years in a two-year degree program and two years in a diploma program to complete graduation requirements. Totals of 105 hours attempted are allowed for most associate degree programs and 60 hours are allowed for most diploma programs. Check the General Catalog for the exact hours for program requirements. Students are allowed 150% of the credits required for the program of study.

How Academic Progress is Measured

At Alamance Community College, a recipient is given three years in a two year degree program and two years in a diploma program to complete graduation requirements. Totals of 105 hours attempted are allowed for most associate degree programs and 60 hours are allowed for most diploma programs. Financial Aid will cover all Associates degree programs, two diploma programs and three certificate programs.

- The diploma programs are Dental Assisting (D45240) & Computer Integrated Machining (D50210).
- The certificate programs CNC Machining Certificate (C50210C) and Medical, Coding, Billing & Insurance Certificate (C25310C) and Practical Nursing (D45660) programs.

At the end of each semester, the financial aid office will email an updated satisfactory academic progress (SAP) status to the students' ACC email address and the updated status will also show in the self service portal under the financial aid tab. [Click here](#) to see the definition of the SAP status.

Grade point average, completion rate, and all attempted hours are monitored each semester for continual awards. Recipients will be given every opportunity to retain eligibility with assistance from the advising and coaching staff.

Warning Status A student who fails to meet the minimum academic requirements is placed on "Warning" the next semester of attendance. During the semester on warning, the student is required to obtain extra help, if necessary, to improve their academic standing.

If the student has not earned 67% of the credit hours attempted at the end of any semester/term, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. The student will be allowed one more semester/term to re-establish satisfactory academic progress. If the student fails to re-establish satisfactory academic progress, financial aid will be terminated with the option to appeal. Financial aid will remain suspended until the student either meets satisfactory academic progress standards or has an approved Financial Aid Appeal on file and has signed the academic improvement plan with an advisor, along with the approval contract.

Qualitative Measure Qualitative satisfactory academic progress is measured every semester/term. If the student does not have at least a cumulative 2.0 GPA at the end of each semester/term, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. The student will be allowed one more semester/term to re-establish satisfactory academic progress. If the student fails to re-establish satisfactory academic progress, financial aid will be suspended. Once standards are reestablished, or conditionally approved by way of appeal; eligibility will be reinstated for the subsequent academic term.

Quantitative Measure Students receiving financial aid must earn 67% of the total cumulative credit hours attempted. The number of hours attempted is defined as the total cumulative number of credit hours for which the student was enrolled at the general 10% point of each course. The total number of hours earned is defined as the total cumulative number of credit hours from each term at Alamance Community College and includes any transfer credit accepted at Alamance Community College. Quantitative satisfactory academic progress is measured every semester/term.

The overall cumulative grade point average must be at least 2.0 or higher and at least 67% of all attempted hours must be completed to remain eligible. Attempted hours versus completed hours are calculated to determine completion rate.

Example of Year One:

Hours Attempted		Hours Completed	
Fall 2025	16	Fall 2025	6
Spring 2026	14	Spring 2026	7
Total Hours Attempted	30	Total Hours Completed	13
30 hours attempted / 13 hours completed= (13/30 = .43) therefore a 43% completion rate			

Only grades of A,B,C,D,F,P,R,PA,PB,PC or CE (Credit by Exam) will be considered as earned hours. Grades of, I (Incomplete) and WP, W, WF (Withdrawal) will not be counted as hours earned, but will count as hours **ATTEMPTED**. Students are given one semester to convert an I into a grade. At the next evaluation period, the Financial Aid Office will review the student record including the new grade. If a student is on Continuing Probation by way of an approved appeal, the Financial Aid office will withhold funding until the I grade can be completed.

Quantitative Satisfactory Academic Progress is cumulative and covers all periods of enrollment including those for which the student did not receive funds from Title IV programs.

Max Time Frame Students must complete their primary program of study in a time frame not to exceed 150 percent of the published length of the program for full-time students. This will be measured in credit hours. Transfer credit hours accepted from other institutions are included in the calculation of the maximum time frame.

Students who have completed a Title IV eligible degree or diploma which has been posted to their official transcript will have the lesser of the maximum number of credits for that degree or diploma removed from their attempted hours for the max time frame calculation or the amount of credits earned at the time the degree or diploma was awarded. The remaining credits will be counted towards the max time frame for the new degree or diploma.

Remedial Course Work Students who have been accepted into a degree program and required to take remedial course work as determined by the colleges multiple measures of placement are limited to 30 semester hours of remedial course work. Remedial hours attempted in excess of 30 total semester credit hours cannot be counted toward Financial Aid enrollment status for Federal and State grants. The first 30 hours of allowable remedial coursework is not considered when determining maximum time frame but is considered in both qualitative and quantitative standards for financial aid students.

Transfer Students Students transferring from a school other than ACC will be considered making satisfactory academic progress at the time of their enrollment. Transfer credits are included in the determination of maximum time frame and quantitative standard.

Clock Hour Programs Credit Clock Conversion Policy: The following programs at Alamance Community College do not have an associate degree component so the federal aid program regulations require the College to base the awards on a special calculation to determine Title IV credit hours:

Example -Dental Assisting

To receive the amount listed on a student's award letter, he/she must be enrolled in 12 Title IV credit hours each semester for Federal aid and 15 Title IV credit hours each semester for North Carolina Community College state grants.

To determine Title IV credit hours, multiply the number of contact hours by 16 and divide by 30.

Example: Registered for 14 credit hours and 15 contact hours

$(15 \text{ contact hours} \times 16) \div 30 = 8 \text{ Title IV hours}$

If a student is enrolled in one of the above diploma level programs, the Federal Pell Grant will be prorated depending on the amount of contact hours he/she is taking:

- 23-28 contact hours = student will receive 100% of the award
- 17-22 contact hours = student will receive 75% of the award
- 12-16 contact hours = student will receive 50% of the award

- Less than 12 contact hours = student will receive 25% of the award

ACC Returning Students Returning students will have their cumulative grade point average (GPA) carried forward and hours attempted carried forward in accordance with regulations stating that satisfactory academic progress standards must cover all periods of the student's enrollment, including those periods for which the student did not receive aid from Title IV funds.

Early Registration Students who choose to register early for classes and then are determined to be ineligible for financial aid because of failure to meet satisfactory academic progress standards, will be responsible for payment of tuition, fees and expenses that may have been charged to Title IV funds. Changing majors, concurrent programs and consecutive programs will make an impact on student eligibility at some point. Therefore, students changing majors will assume the new time limit for the major but hours attempted in previous major(s) will count toward the number of hours attempted in the new major. Students that have exceeded the maximum time frame must appeal to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Committee to have the maximum time frame extended.

Incompletes A course for which an incomplete (I) grade is received must be completed by the end of the next fall or spring term, or the grade becomes a permanent F on their academic transcript. The incomplete grade is treated as an F for satisfactory academic progress purposes. Incompletes count towards both qualitative and quantitative measures of satisfactory academic progress. Failure to remove incompletes could prevent a student from meeting satisfactory academic progress.

Course Repeats are included in attempted hours for financial aid students. Repeats are calculated in the student's GPA. If a student has already earned a passing grade "D" or better for a course, you may only repeat the course one time and be eligible for Title IV aid. The new grade from the repeated course will be counted in GPA, completion rate and max time frame calculations. Financial Aid **MUST** include both the first and subsequent classes in the calculation.

Passed "P" classes are included in attempted hours for financial aid students. Passed classes are also counted as a 4.0 or A for the students GPA calculation.

Grade Forgiveness Federal regulations do not allow schools to exempt grades that have been forgiven. Therefore, Alamance Community College calculates forgiven grades in satisfactory academic progress calculations.

Institutional Procedures include student notifications at the end of every term of the SAP Policy in the ACC General Catalog and Student Handbook and the Alamance Community College website.

Financial Aid Suspension A student may be denied/suspended from Financial Aid if any of the following occurs:

- The student's G.P.A. is below the minimum requirements.
- The student does not make the incremental progress required.
- The student reaches the maximum time frame for completion of his/her program of studies. Students who fail to meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements after any semester/term are placed on financial aid warning and are considered to be making unsatisfactory academic progress. Students in this category may continue to receive Financial Aid for one additional term. A student will be placed on warning if the following occurs:
 - Failure to achieve a cumulative of at least 2.0.
 - Failure to complete 67% of credit hours attempted.

Appeal Process

Students on financial aid suspension may appeal their status by completing an (AIP) Academic Improvement Plan form that must be signed by a Success Coach or an Academic Advisor. Upon receipt of the dually (student/advisor) signed AIP plan, the financial aid officer will then send an appeal link/application form to the student ACC email. In the SAP appeal form, students must explain their poor past performance and state a plan for future success. Typically, a few circumstances exist in which the SAP Appeals committee can overturn the SAP decision.

Here are a few examples of situations that warrant a SAP appeal:

- Documented medical or emergency situation
- Documented death of a family member
- Drops occurred over 5 years ago and the student has since returned and completed
- 12 credit hours of excellent academic performance
- Student has an isolated semester of poor performance that can be explained
- Student at maximum time frame due to old credits or changing majors, has dropped or failed less than 15 hours and has less than 15 hours to complete their degree

Students CAN NOT be approved if they have been granted a previous SAP appeal and failed to comply with the Continuing Probation requirements.

The appeal decision is made by a committee of 5 members. Their decision is final. Students should make sure their appeal is accurate and has all of the supporting documentation needed when it is handed into the Financial Aid office. The documentation provided by the student is what the committee will base their decision upon along with review of academic history.

Students will submit their appeal form to the Financial Aid Office which will accompany their AIP plan and transcripts to form a packet for committee review. If a student has begun classes at the point the appeal is received, the appeal will be considered for the student's upcoming semester. The Appeals Committee reviews the student's appeal and outcome notifications are sent to the student in writing of their decision.

Appeal reviews can take up to two weeks for committee review

Appeal Outcomes

Financial Aid SAP appeals can have an outcome of approved or denied status. Appeal approvals and denials are defined below:

Appeal Denial

Typically, students are asked to complete 12 hours of course work and show marked improvement before they are able to file another appeal. The student may have to complete enough coursework to raise his/her GPA and Completion Rate. At that time, students may request a SAP review and if they meet the minimum standards, their SAP status will be updated and they will not have to complete another SAP appeal form.

A student who believes the decision of the SAP appeal committee is unfair must follow the Standard Grievance Procedure in the College Handbook.

Consequences of Denial

Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress will lose eligibility for financial aid until satisfactory academic progress is met. Once standards are reestablished, eligibility will be reinstated for the subsequent academic term.

Appeal Approval

Continuing probation students whose appeal is approved must achieve a 100% pass rate, a specified GPA of at least 2.0 or higher and only take courses in which pertain to their primary program of study. The student will have the timeline of two years to pull themselves out of the academic challenges and return to satisfactory status.

The approved student must also complete and sign a SAP approval contract in order to receive financial aid or have their aid reinstated. Under the terms of the contract, the student is required to:

- Pass all enrolled courses
- Enroll only in courses within their declared major
- Refrain from dropping any courses

Failure to meet any of these requirements will result in the student's financial aid status being returned to a suspended/terminated status.

Second and Third Appeals

A second appeal takes place with the student defaults on the approved appeal contract. A second appeal may be considered but the student will not be allowed to submit it for the same issue that led to the first appeal, such as the same medical condition. A student must have very unusual circumstances to warrant a second appeal.

A student may make an appointment with the Director of Financial Aid or complete the 2nd appeal application to ask for approval to file a second appeal. If the request is approved, the appeal will be delivered to the appeals committee in which their decision is final. As a result, very few second appeals are approved.

Third appeals are prohibited to prevent a repetitive cycle of appeals and to encourage sustained academic progress. Students seeking further consideration after a second appeal would be required to successfully complete a minimum of 12 credit hours at their own expense, without the use of financial aid, before becoming eligible for future consideration.

Loss of Eligibility

Students who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress will become ineligible for financial aid until they meet the required academic standards. Students who lose eligibility may choose to submit an appeal or pay for their courses out of pocket until satisfactory academic progress has been reestablished. Students can contact the cashier to learn more about payment options at Alamance Community College at 336-506-4141, email bizoffice@alamancecc.edu or make a payment here: <https://www.alamancecc.edu/finance/payment.php>

For additional information on Satisfactory Academic Progress, please contact the Financial Aid Office at 336-506-4340 or financialaid@alamancecc.edu.

Information is also available on the Student Aid website at www.studentaid.gov or [Satisfactory Academic Progress | Federal Student Aid](#)

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