



Standards for Academic and Student Financial Aid Programs

Washington County Community College is required to establish satisfactory academic progress standards for its federal and state financial aid recipients and all enrolled students in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education regulations. These standards ensure that only those recipients demonstrating satisfactory progress toward the completion of their educational programs continue to receive financial aid.

Whether a student is considered to be making satisfactory academic progress depends on successful semester completion of course (credit hours), cumulative grade point average (GPA), and maximum time limits to complete his or her course of study. Students must meet all the requirements listed below:

**Semester Completion Requirement** – A student must have earned hours equal to at least 66 percent of the total hours attempted for the semester to remain in good standing. Students earning less than 66 percent of the hours attempted will be placed on financial aid probation. Students not earning at least 34 percent of the hours attempted will be placed on immediate denial/suspension status for future financial aid consideration until such time as the student meets all satisfactory academic progress standards. Attempted hours are defined as the hours for which the student is enrolled past the Drop/Add period. Earned hours are defined as the sum of hours for which a student has earned a grade.

Students who have only one active program at WCCC may not receive financial aid if the total number of attempted credits in combination with accepted transfer credits is equal to or more than 150% of the credit length of their active program. Withdrawals are considered attempted credits.

Students who graduate from a WCCC program and enroll in a new program may not receive financial aid if the total number of attempted credits in combination with accepted transfer credits into their new program is equal to or more than 150% of the credit length of their new program.

**Grade Point Average Requirements**-Students must maintain the following cumulative GPA's in order to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements for continued enrollment and financial aid eligibility:

Attempted Credits	Probation (based on cumulative GPA)	Attempted Credits	Dismissal (based on cumulative GPA)
1-5	No probationary status	1- 5	No dismissal status
6-23	1.51-1.74	6-23	1.50 or less
24-35	1.75-1.90	24-35	1.74 or less
36 or more	1.91-1.99	36-47	1.90 or less
		48 or more	1.99 or less

**Probation Contract** – Academic support is mandated for students on academic probation. Students must meet with the support counselor or a designated academic advisor to discuss the factors interfering with their academic progress, determine an appropriate course selection

before registering for the next semester, and develop an individual plan/contract for academic success. The student must meet their terms of the probation plan/contract including a 2.0 GPA during the following semester and/or meet the minimum GPA for good standing. The Financial Aid Director will follow up with the student and the designated college personnel to determine whether the terms of the contract have been met.

**Probation Status** – Probation status will not prevent the student from receiving financial aid. The probationary semester is meant to inform the student of potential academic problems and provide time for corrective action. If a student does not meet the satisfactory academic progress standards after the probationary period, denial or suspension status will be imposed. A student may not have two consecutive probationary semesters.

**Suspension**- Denial or suspension status will prevent the student from receiving any Title IV, state, or institutional financial assistance for future enrollment until such time as the student meets all satisfactory academic progress standards. Students who have been suspended from the College may be considered for readmission following a minimum of one semester leave and after providing the College with evidence of increased potential for academic success. An application for readmission must be made through the Admissions Office and is contingent upon a review of the application and space availability. Readmitted students will be placed on academic probation for the first semester after they are readmitted.

**Appeal and Reinstatement** - Students may appeal their denial or suspensions status by submitting an Enrollment and Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Form to the Enrollment and Financial Aid Appeals Committee. The form can be found on the web as well as in the Financial Aid and Student Services Office. A student must appeal a dismissal from the fall semester for the following spring semester one week prior to the start of the semester. All other appeals must be received one month prior to the start of the semester. ***Appeals received after the deadline will be considered for the next semester.***

Some circumstances such as medical problems, illness, or death in the family, relocation, or employment changes can be considered for an appeal. The Committee will review the appeal and contact the student within one week. If the student finds the Committee's decision unsatisfactory, the student may appeal to the Academic Dean or their designee for further review. The Academic Dean or their designee will respond within one week. The student may appeal the Academic Dean's decision to the Office of the President. The President's decision on the appeal will be final.

***The policy does not preclude a student from enrolling in subsequent semesters as a non-matriculated student.*** Students may have their financial aid reinstated by the Financial Aid Office once all satisfactory academic progress standards are met.

**Maximum Time Limit Requirements** – A student's eligibility for financial aid will be terminated at the point where 150 percent of the total credit hours required, as stated in the College catalog, have been attempted for an associate degree, diploma, and certificate. Hours attempted are the sum of all Washington County Community College hours when it is on the student's enrollment schedule at the end of the official Add/Drop schedule whether or not financial aid was received plus all transfer and consortium hours accepted for credit. If a student changes majors, it will not include in the calculation of a student's SAP standing the credits attempted and grades earned that do not count toward the student's new major. ***Exception to this case would be if a student who had attempted more than two majors and had not graduated from either major. It may be determined to convene a review committee to***

***evaluate case by case evaluation with further information requested from the student. Denial of further aid may be the result of this evaluation until such time a credential is satisfied.***

**Academic Amnesty-** Credits for which students have been granted academic amnesty will be recorded and retained in the Student Data System in such a way that they will be included in both the qualitative and quantitative measurement of satisfactory academic progress.

**Adding and Dropping Courses –** Students may ADD or DROP courses during the first 10 days of the semester (check your academic calendar for exact date), without academic or financial penalty. Add/drop forms (obtained from the offices of Student Services or individual academic advisors) must be completed, signed and submitted to the Student Services Office for processing. Financial aid awards will be adjusted to agree with the students’ registration at the end of this period.

Students who retain some enrollment may continue DROPPING courses without academic penalty through the midpoint of each semester. However, all costs associated with the dropped course will be charged according to the college’s Refund Policy. For students totally withdrawing, WCCC refund/Repayment policy applies. Letter grades will be reported for all courses carried after the midpoint of each semester.

**Audited and pass/fail courses** - Audits are considered to be attempted but not earned hours. Passing credits received for pass/fail courses are considered attempted and earned hours; failing grades in pass/fail course are considered attempted but not earned.

**Early Withdrawal-** Students who receive Title IV federal financial aid and completely withdraw from WCCC on or before the 60% of the term (in calendar days) are entitled to keep only the portion of Title IV federal student aid earned to the point of withdrawal from the College. If any federal aid was disbursed directly to the student he/she is responsible for returning unearned funds to the federal financial aid programs within a timely manner. Failure to do so may result in the student’s ineligibility for the future federal student aid. If a student receiving federal financial aid withdraws after the 60% point of term, he/she is considered to have earned all of their federal student aid for that semester. It is imperative that prior to the student leaving, he or she should be encourage to complete a withdrawal form and discuss this issue with a representative from the financial aid office.

**Incomplete Grades** –Students receiving grades of “Incomplete” for courses required for certificates, diplomas or degrees must make arrangements with faculty to complete course requirements. After instructors assign final letter grades, student grade point averages (GPA) will be recalculated to include the appropriate quality points, and their quantitative measurement will be adjusted to include the credits as “credits completed”. If cumulative grade point average remains within the published guidelines and the quantitative measurement falls within published guidelines students retain eligibility for financial aid. Until the grade is submitted, it is considered to be attempted but not earned hours.

**Nonpunitive grades and repeated courses-** Repeated courses due to failure, or having obtained a grade lower than is required for a particular subject affect satisfactory academic progress in the following manner: the course is included in both qualitative (*This institution uses grade point average (GPA) as a key indicator of academic progress for the qualitative component.*) and quantitative (*This institution has established a*

*maximum time frame not to exceed 150 percent of the published length of the program as measured in academic years, terms, and credit hours attempted.)* evaluation in the academic year in which it was taken. The subsequent grade, credit earned and removal of the original grade are evaluated qualitatively and the completion of the repeated course. The original credits attempted remain in the quantitative evaluation. In other words, a repeated course may improve the student's grade point average, but it does not extend the allowable attempted credits toward degree completion. A student is allowed to repeat a course only twice.

**Remedial courses** –Remedial work in developmental courses may qualify for financial aid if the courses are measured in credit hours and required as part of the student's planned program.

**Transfer and Consortium Credits**- Credits for which financial aid is received under a consortium agreement and transfer credit that is counted toward their degree will be recorded in the Student Data System to be included in completion percentage, and maximum time-frame calculations.

**Withdrawals and non attendance** Withdrawals is considered to be attempted but not earned hours

NOTE: If a student withdraws from the college in an academic term during which they are ineligible for financial aid due to not maintaining satisfactory academic progress, they remain ineligible for financial aid until such time that he or she once again makes satisfactory academic progress.

**Example 1:**

Sadie enrolled in her first semester at WCCC. She registered for 15 credits in the fall semester but does poorly in one class earning 12 credits and a grade point average of 1.75. Because Sadie completed 80 percent of the credit hours she attempted (i.e., 12 divided by 15=80%) and has a GPA above 1.74 for her first 15 credits attempted, she is considered to be in good standing at the end of the fall semester.

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Sadie registers for and completes 12 credit hours in the spring while managing to raise her GPA to 1.92. At the end of the second semester the aid officer determines that Kathy has met the minimum standards of satisfactory academic progress since she needed a minimum GPA of 1.75-1.90 after attempting 27 credits hours.

**Example 2:**

Sarah is a second year student at WCCC. During the first semester of her second year, she finds she must drop her four-credit hour biology class to maintain her GPA of 3.5. She completes 6 of 10 credit hours. Though Sarah's GPA meets the satisfactory academic progress standards, she is placed on financial aid probation at the end of the semester because her completion rate is below 66 percent (i.e. 6 divided by 10=60%).

In the second semester Sarah registers for and completes 12 credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 3.65. She returns to good standing at the end of the second semester because she has raised her completion rate above 66 percent (i.e., 18 divided by 22=82%).

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