



TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

**PROCEDURE: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**  
**Number: 4.3.2.1**

Responsibility: Student Affairs (Financial Aid)  
Last Updated: November 1, 2023  
Related Policy: 4.3.2 – Satisfactory Academic Progress

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President

**Purpose:**

Students receiving financial assistance through a federal program or S.C. Need Based Grant must be making satisfactory academic progress toward a degree, diploma or certificate. The financial aid office must monitor the progress of all students to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward completion of their program in a reasonable period of time. This procedure is in addition to the academic standards required by the College. The cumulative review determines the student's eligibility for financial assistance based on his or her academic history. Whether the student has received financial assistance previously is not a factor in determining eligibility.

**Procedure:**

**Communication with Students**

1. SAP status will be evaluated after each semester in which the student is enrolled.
2. The student will be notified via TCL email if their status changes.
3. The student must review emails and Self-Service regularly to ensure they have the latest information about their financial aid and SAP status.

**Qualitative Standard (Completion Rate and Grade Point Average)**

1. The minimum completion rate requires students to earn at least 67% of the cumulative credit hours attempted.
2. Courses with grades of F, W, WF, I, U, WP and NC are not considered completed courses.
3. Students are also required to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0.
4. Students are placed on financial aid warning if the completion rate is less than 67% or if the GPA is less than 2.0. (See [Warning section](#).)

### **Quantitative Standard (Length of Eligibility)**

1. Students may receive financial aid for 1.5 times the published length of the program of study. For example, a student enrolled in a 60 credit hour program is eligible until 90 credit hours are attempted ( $60 \times 1.5 = 90$ ).
2. Transfer hours are added to the total hours attempted at TCL to assess the length of eligibility.
3. Students may repeat a course, but repetitions will count toward the length of eligibility.
4. Once the maximum number of hours is attempted, students are placed on financial aid suspension.
5. To reestablish eligibility, students must have an approved appeal. (See [Appeals section](#).)
6. Remedial Courses: Remedial courses are defined as zero level and 100 level courses.
  - a. A student may only attempt or count for enrollment status purposes up to 30 remedial hours.
  - b. Remedial courses will not count for SAP purposes in the GPA or length of eligibility calculation.
  - c. Remedial courses will count for SAP purposes in the completion rate calculation.

### **Warning**

1. The minimum credit hour completion rate and the GPA standard are assessed at the end of each semester. If students do not earn the minimum grade point average and/or complete the minimum number of credit hours required, they are placed on financial aid warning for the next semester attended.
2. Financial aid eligibility continues during the warning period.
3. During the warning period, students must take at least 6 credit hours, complete 100% of the attempted hours and have at least a 2.0 term GPA. If students do not meet these stipulations, they will be placed on financial aid suspension. (See Suspension for Failing to Meet Warning Stipulations section.)
4. If students meet the warning stipulations, have a minimum 2.0 GPA and have a completion rate of at least 67% of the cumulative hours attempted, they will be removed from financial aid warning and must continue to meet this policy.
5. If students meet the warning stipulations and the GPA is less than 2.0 or the completion rate is less than 67 percent of the cumulative hours attempted, they will be placed on financial aid suspension.

### **Suspension for Failing to Meet Warning Stipulations**

1. To reestablish eligibility students must submit and have an approved appeal after completing a semester at TCL without financial assistance (excluding Lottery Tuition Assistance). During the semester attended without financial assistance, a student must take at least 6 credit hours, complete 100% of the attempted hours and have at least a 2.0 term GPA.
2. Exceptions to this policy will only be allowed if the student encountered some type of extenuating circumstance during the warning period that hindered him or her from meeting the stipulations.

- a. Examples of acceptable extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to: prolonged hospitalization during the warning period, death in the family during the warning period or change in work hours that conflicted with the class schedule during the warning period.
  - b. Extenuating circumstances must be verified with third-party documentation. Acceptable documentation must verify the circumstances and be date specific to the required term. Examples of acceptable documentation are: medical records or doctor's letter, court documents, employer or supervisor's letter, death certificate, obituary or funeral program (name and relationship must be outlined in obituary or funeral program), etc. Third-party letters must be on official office or company letterhead.
3. Because a student is aware prior to the warning period that he or she must meet the stipulations, extenuating circumstances do not include being a single parent or working full-time while attending school.
  4. Students are advised to solve their difficulties prior to registering for a warning period.

### **Appeals**

1. Appeals for suspension of financial aid are reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid.
2. The number of appeals will be limited to three (3) per student and forms may be obtained on the website at [www.tcl.edu/FinancialAid](http://www.tcl.edu/FinancialAid) under "Financial Aid Forms."
3. If the committee determines that justifiable evidence of extenuating circumstances exists, a student may receive an extension of financial aid eligibility.
4. Appeals for length of eligibility should include a program evaluation showing the total number of hours attempted in the current program of study and the number of remaining classes needed to complete the program of study.
5. Appeals because stipulations were not met during a warning period must explain why the SAP policy is not being met and include an explanation of what has changed that will allow the SAP policy to be met.