PROCEDURE: 6.6.4.p1.L
WGTC Satisfactory Academic Progress

Revised: April 20, 2021
Last Reviewed: May 21, 2020, June 3, 2015, November 21, 2014, February 24, 2020
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Purpose
Federal and state regulations require institutions of higher learning to establish standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for students receiving federal and state financial aid. SAP measures whether students applying for financial aid are in good academic standing and making SAP toward completion of their program of study. The SAP policy must contain three components: a qualitative measure (GPA); a quantitative measure (pace of progression); a maximum timeframe (maximum number of hours a student may attempt). Dual Enrolled (DE) high school students and Joint Enrolled high school students are subject to the SAP policy for state aid with specific provisions directly related to DE students as governed by Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) regulations.

Students who are not DE students must declare a major and be working toward the completion of that major in order to receive financial aid. Eligible DE students must be in an approved eligible core academic area course(s) as listed in the Dual Enrolled Course Directory; or be pursuing a major under the HOPE Career Grant program.

SAP is evaluated at the end of each semester for all students, regardless of the receipt of financial aid. Students are expected to know and understand the SAP policy. Students are notified if there is a change in their eligibility. The Financial Aid Office uses the Wiregrass student e-mail as the primary means of communication. Students may check their SAP status on BannerWeb at any time. Students are not excused from financial aid warning or suspension status nor exempt from appealing in a timely manner even if notification was missed.

Qualitative Standard (Grade Point Average):
The minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) allowed is 2.0 to remain in good SAP standing. Financial Aid GPA's will be monitored at the end of each semester. All periods of enrollment at Wiregrass Georgia Technical College are included when calculating GPA for SAP even terms in which the student did not receive financial aid. Students falling below the minimum at the time of review will be placed on financial aid warning and will have one semester to remove themselves from that status by completing the required number of semester hours of coursework to achieve a cumulative 2.0 or higher GPA. Students who do not attain the 2.0 GPA at the end of the warning semester are placed on financial aid suspension and their financial aid award is terminated. Students on financial aid suspension must pay for and successfully complete the required number of semester hours to achieve a cumulative 2.0 GPA and a 66.66 percent earned rate to have aid reinstated.

Quantitative Standard (Earned Rate)
Financial aid recipients must successfully earn at least 66.66 percent of the credit hours attempted to remain eligible for financial aid. The earned rate is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of credit hours the student successfully completed by the cumulative number of credit hours the student has attempted. Cumulative and earned hours include accepted transfer credit. Grades of A, B, C, and D for Learning Support courses are included in Earned Hours for the Quantitative Standard. Students who receive a "Z" grade for a qualifying emergency will have those credits excluded from the attempted hour calculation. Credit hours for all prior terms of enrollment at Wiregrass' merged colleges, East Central Technical College and Valdosta Technical College, are included in the calculation. Students falling below the 66.66 percent earned rate at the time of review are placed on financial aid warning. Students placed on financial aid warning must complete the warning semester with the required number of semester hours of coursework to achieve a minimum 66.66 percent earned rate. Failure to do so will result in financial aid suspension. Students on suspension must pay for and successfully complete the required number of semester hours to achieve a cumulative 2.0 GPA and a 66.66 percent earned rate to have aid reinstated.

Maximum Time Frame (MTF)
Students must complete their educational program within a maximum time frame of one and a half (150 percent) times the length of the program in which they are enrolled. For example, if a program is 36 credit hours, the maximum time frame is 54 attempted hours (36 X 1.5 = 54). This means that students will no longer be eligible to receive financial aid once they have attempted one and one-half times the number of credit hours required for graduation in the program in which enrolled. All periods of enrollment are included when calculating maximum time frame, even terms in which the student did not receive financial aid. Under extenuating circumstances, the student may submit an appeal for maximum time frame. Students graduating from one program and beginning a new program will have their 150% maximum time frame restart for the new program. Completion of additional programs will be approved on a case by case basis. Students admitted to a program of study and required to enroll in learning support courses may receive federal aid for those courses up to a maximum of 30 semester hours. Learning support coursework is excluded from the maximum time frame calculation. Credits for "Z" grades due to a qualifying emergency will be excluded from the Maximum Time Frame calculation.DE students are exempt from the MTF component of SAP as allowed by GSFC Satisfactory Academic Progress provisions.

Grades
Grades included in the Earned Rate and GPA calculation are A, B, C, D, and F. Grades of "I"," IP", "W", and "Z" are not included in calculating a student's SAP GPA. Grades of "I", "IP" and "W" are counted as coursework attempted and will be used to determine SAP status for attempted hours. Students who receive all "Z' grades will maintain their last completed SAP assignment. If the SAP status was "Warning", the SAP assignment for the upcoming semester will be "Warning." If the SAP status was "Suspension", the SAP assignment for the upcoming semester will be "Suspension." If this is the first SAP term, the student will be evaluated at the end of the next SAP evaluation.

Incomplete and in progress grades, transfer credit, exemption exam credit, credit for previous experience, grades for audited courses and articulated credit are not included in the financial aid GPA. Students who receive "I" or "IP" grades will have those grades factored in their attempted or earned rate when a grade has been assigned. The grade must be assigned by the next semester's SAP evaluation period unless the student falls under extenuating circumstances related to a national qualifying emergency. In such cases, official documentation must be submitted to the Registrar's

Office for evaluation. The student's financial aid award will not be retroactively affected for federal aid; however, the financial aid award will be affected going forward if the final grade(s) results in financial aid warning or suspension. The student's financial aid for state aid will be retroactively affected if the student falls below the 3.0 GPA for the Zell Miller Grant; or below 2.0 for the HOPE Grant if the student is at a 30 or 60 credit hour checkpoint. Grades received for Learning Support do not affect GPA, but the hours are calculated in the formula to determine the 66.66 percent earned rate. ESL coursework is excluded from the SAP requirements.

Termination of Financial Aid

Financial aid will be terminated when a student is determined by the Financial Aid Office to be ineligible, if the office has evidence that the student has falsified information on the application materials, or if federal or state funds are not provided to meet the award.

Appeal Process/Reinstatement of Aid

Students have the right to appeal the denial of financial aid if they have extenuating circumstances which prevented them from making satisfactory academic progress. The appeal must be made electronically explaining the extenuating circumstances, how these circumstances have changed, and their plan to maintain satisfactory academic progress if the appeal is approved. The student must complete the electronic form through wiregrass.verifymyfafsa.com and upload documentation such as medical records, birth or death certificates, obituaries, letters on official letterhead from third-party sources, or notarized letters from other individuals properly identifying their relationship to the student and their knowledge of the circumstances.

Dual Enrolled high school students will complete the paper appeal form and submit the form with supporting documentation to the High School Services Office. The Financial Aid Office will be notified electronically when the form is completed online or by the High School Services Office when a paper appeal has been submitted. The appeal will be submitted to the committee for review upon receipt. Financial aid appeals are reviewed by a committee of faculty and staff.

The committee will review all requests for appeals as they are submitted. Notification of the outcome of the appeal will be sent via student email and a text to check student email. Appeals of the committee's decision can be made to the Director of Financial Aid or the Vice President for Enrollment Management within 10 days of the notification of the committee's decision. Students who are approved for an appeal will be placed on financial aid probation for the semester the appeal was approved. Approved appeals are effective for the current academic year in which the appeal was submitted.

If an appeal is approved and the student meets SAP for the term in which the appeal was approved but does not meet SAP for their cumulative academic record, the SAP Academic Continuation Plan will be put in place for each term until the cumulative SAP measures are met. Students with an approved appeal for the 150 percent SAP measure will have a Graduation Plan put in place.

Academic Plan

Students who successfully appeal a financial aid suspension are placed on probation and are required to sign the SAP Academic Plan with their advisor upon approval of the appeal. Students who do not meet with their advisor to sign the SAP Academic Plan each term it is in place will be dropped from their classes.

Students on an Academic Plan are required to meet all the requirements of the Academic Plan each

term. Academic Plans are developed for each student as applicable on a case by case basis. The academic plan may consist of 100 percent pass rate for the term; a 2.0 or higher-grade point average; advisement with the Advising and Retention staff; a requirement not to take online classes, to enroll part-time, to repeat a specific course, to participate in in a specific workshop on campus, or any other activity or requirement that will enable the student to meet SAP Requirements. The Academic Plan will also include an estimate of the time required to be on the academic plan to be back in good standing. The student must have the Academic Plan reviewed by their Advisor and the Financial Aid Office at the end of each semester until the SAP standard is met.

Failure to meet all requirements of the Academic Plan will result in the student being placed on financial aid suspension. A student may appeal a financial aid suspension in this situation if there were extenuating circumstances that prevented the student from meeting the requirements of the Plan. Academic plans are developed with the goal of the students' successful completion of their current program of study in a timely manner. Student who change their program of study will be evaluated by the Financial Aid Office to determine if the academic plan should be repealed and the students placed back on financial aid suspension until they submit an appeal explaining how they will make SAP in the next term of enrollment with the new program of study.

Unofficial Withdrawal Policy
Students Who Receive All Failing Grades
If a student receives all failing grades (any combination F's and WF's), we must assume, for Title IV purposes, that the student has unofficially withdrawn, unless the college can document that the student completed the term. The date for determining the withdrawal will be determined using the last date of an academically related activity (LDA) as reported by the instructor or the midpoint of the payment period or period of enrollment. The Financial Aid Office will apply the federally mandated calculation for the return of financial aid funds. Unearned Title IV funds (aid) will be returned to the Department of Education and it is possible that the student will owe a repayment to the college.

Responsibility
The Director of Financial Aid has the overall responsibility of ensuring this procedure is implemented.

References
TCSG Policy 6.6.4. Satisfactory Academic Progress