

# Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy Effective January 2013

## **POLICY EXPLANATION**

In accordance with U.S. Department of Education regulations, Chicago State University (CSU) is required to establish Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for Federal and State financial aid recipients. These minimum standards ensure that only those recipients demonstrating satisfactory progress toward the completion of their educational objective continue to receive financial assistance.

\*This policy is effective spring 2013 and replaces all prior Satisfactory Academic Progress policies at CSU. However, if a student was determined ineligible under any SAP policy prior to spring 2013 the suspension is still in effect. A student has the right to appeal a previous suspension.

## **POLICY STANDARDS**

The following are "minimum standards" required for a student to be eligible for financial assistance:

### **Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average Requirement**

Undergraduate students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (2.0=C), or better, on a 4.0 scale, as determined by the University.

Teacher Certification students and Second Bachelor's candidates must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5, or better.

Master's and Doctorate students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (3.0=B), or better.

Professional/Pharmacy students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 (2.0=C), or better.

### **Minimum Completion Rate Requirement (credit hours attempted vs. completed)**

All students must successfully complete at least 67% of cumulative attempted hours by the end of each term.

### **Maximum Time Frame Requirement**

Students may receive financial aid for a maximum of 150% of the credit hours required to receive an undergraduate and/or graduate degree. Transfer hours from other institutions accepted by the University will count toward the maximum attempted credit hour limit. If a student is nearing the maximum attempted hours a warning letter will be sent.

### **Typical Maximum Time Frames**

- Undergraduate - 180 hours for a 120 hour degree (degree requirements may vary)
- Graduate – 45 hours for a 30 hour degree (degree requirements may vary)

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON MINIMUM COMPLETION RATE STANDARDS

All students must comply with the minimum standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress Completion Rate. Satisfactory Academic Progress Completion Rate refers to the percentage of cumulative hours completed in relation to cumulative hours attempted. Attempted hours include all transfer credit, exam credit, hours with A, B, C, D, F, W, WP, WF, I (incomplete), X (missing grade), repeated hours, and remedial hours. Completed hours are those classes for which there is a letter grade of A, B, C, D, F, P, P1, I/F all accepted transfer credit(s) and exam (CLEP) credit(s).

\*Example: A student who has attempted 28 hours at the end of spring semester must have completed a minimum of 19 hours to reach the 67% completion rate.

All courses numbered 090-0990 are considered developmental courses, and will be deducted from an undergraduate student's 180 credit hours limit. Undergraduate students may receive financial aid for an additional maximum of 30 credit hours of attempted course work, if the 30 hours are classified as developmental.

Students who have changed majors can request to have their credits and grades reevaluated. Credits and grades that do not count towards the new major will not be included in the satisfaction progress determination. Once an undergraduate student pursuing his/her first bachelor's degree has reached 180 hours they may only change their major once.

The Office of Student Financial Aid is NOT notified when a student finishes an incomplete class or receives a grade change. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Student Financial Aid when incompletes are finished and/or grade changes are made. Hours determined to be remedial shall count as completed if passed even though not applicable to graduation requirements.

### REVIEW PERIOD

At the end of each semester, the record of every student will be reviewed to determine if the student has made progress according to the minimum standards set by this policy.

Students not meeting SAP at the end of a semester **and** who have an existing academic plan must have their academic progress reviewed by their academic advisor. The review will determine if the student's financial aid is reinstated.

Academic advisors are to submit completed review forms along with the student's academic plans to the Office of Student Financial Aid.

### FINANCIAL AID WARNING

If a student is not making progress according to minimum standards under this policy, he/she will be placed on Financial Aid Warning and allowed a following semester of enrollment to achieve the minimum standards, without having to file an Appeal. Students are eligible to receive financial aid during their warning period. If at the end of that warning semester the student has not achieved satisfactory progress, the student's financial aid will be suspended.

**Please Note:** A student will be placed on Financial Aid Warning the first time they are in violation of the SAP Policy. In the event that a student had once been placed on warning, but subsequently met compliance guide lines within the SAP policy, and then, in a future semester violated the SAP Policy, the student would once again be placed on Financial Aid Warning.

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## FINANCIAL AID PROBATION

Any student who has not maintained Satisfactory Academic Progress as defined by this policy after one semester on Financial Aid Warning will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and not eligible to receive Federal and State financial aid funds. Students on Financial Aid Probation may continue to attend Chicago State University at their own expense or until they once again meet SAP criteria or submit a SAP Appeal that is approved.

## REINSTATEMENT

There are two ways a student's eligibility can be reinstated:

- Meet minimum standards as set forth in this policy by the end of next enrollment period
- File a successful SAP Appeal, which must include an approved Academic Plan

## APPEALS PROCESS

A student who fails to meet the CSU Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements may submit a written appeal to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeals Committee ("Committee"). [Appeal form \(pdf\)](#) is available on the Office of Student Financial Aid website and must be completed within 30 days after the start of the semester for which the appeal is requested or 30 days after the receipt of notice of cancelation, whichever is later. Appeals must clearly explain and provide proof (if warranted) of why Satisfactory Academic Progress standards were not met. Proof can include injury, illness, death of a relative, or other special circumstances. Other circumstance might include transfer hours accepted that will not apply to degree or change in major. Students with "incomplete" hours may ask instructors to provide the following information: percentage of work completed to date, grade on work submitted to date, and projected date for final grade.

As a part of the SAP Appeal process undergraduate students must meet with their academic advisor, and graduate students must meet with advisors in their major department, to develop an academic plan that successfully meets the requirements of both their academic program and the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy. If after completing an academic plan, a student wishes to modify the plan, any change must be approved and dated by the student's advisor.

Completed appeals will be submitted to the Office of Student Financial Aid and must include an academic plan. Appeals are reviewed each semester on an individual basis. Students are notified by the Office of Student Financial Aid of the decision of the Committee. The decision of the Committee is final.

## PLEASE NOTE

- Hours attempted/completed under a financial aid consortium agreement, with another school, are subject to CSU's SAP Policy.
- Students who have changed majors and have provided a reevaluation of their degree audit from the academic advisor in the new major, will have their financial aid reset, so that only credits and grades which apply toward the new major are included in SAP evaluation/review.
- GPA and completion rate may be affected by incomplete grades, withdrawals from courses, repeat courses and transfer credits.