



Sandhills Community College **Academic Progress Policy for Financial Aid Recipients**

Purpose

All financial aid recipients are required to meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP) according to Federal regulations and policies set by Sandhills Community College (SCC). The intent of these policies is to insure that students who are receiving federal and state financial aid are making measurable progress toward completion of an approved degree, diploma, or certificate program in a reasonable period of time and within a reasonable number of credit hours attempted in their program of study.

Scope

The regulations require a student's progress for financial aid purposes to be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. In addition to a student's cumulative grade point average, students are also required to pass a minimum amount of work by the end of each semester and to complete their program of study within the maximum time frame established by the institution. To reasonably measure a student's satisfactory academic progress for financial aid, the student's academic record will be evaluated including credit hours earned at other post-secondary institutions and transferred into the student's program of study at Sandhills Community College. This requirement applies to all applicants for any federal assistance, including Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study, the Federal Stafford and Unsubsidized Stafford Loans for students, and Federal PLUS Loan programs. These same standards apply to assistance from the State of North Carolina and all other aid that is administered by the Financial Aid Office.

Monitoring Process

To receive financial aid, the student must maintain satisfactory academic progress toward an eligible program of study. There are three criteria in the Financial Aid Office's standards of progress:

1. Quantitative Standard – The number of credit hours the student must earn each semester
2. Qualitative Standard - The minimum cumulative grade point average the student must maintain
3. Maximum Time Frame – The maximum length of time for which the student may receive financial aid

Students receiving financial aid must meet all three criteria requirements in order to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

Criteria #1 - Quantitative Standard

The student must earn passing grades in **two-thirds** of attempted hours each semester. Passing grades include A, B, C, and D. For examples, please see the following chart:

Initial Credit Hours in Semester

16 credit hours (full-time)

15 credit hours (full-time)

14 credit hours (full-time)

13 credit hours (full-time)

12 credit hours (full-time)

11 credit hours (3/4 time)

Student must earn:

11 credit hours

10 credit hours

9 credit hours

9 credit hours

8 credit hours

7 credit hours

10 credit hours (3/4 time)
9 credit hours (3/4 time)
8 credit hours (1/2 time)
7 credit hours (1/2 time)
6 credit hours (1/2 time)
5 credit hours (less than 1/2 time)
4 credit hours (less than 1/2 time)
3 credit hours (less than 1/2 time)
2 credit hours (less than 1/2 time)
1 credit hours (less than 1/2 time)

7 credit hours
6 credit hours
5 credit hours
5 credit hours
4 credit hours
3 credit hours
3 credit hours
2 credit hours
2 credit hours
1 credit hour

Students who withdraw from classes at SCC should understand their withdrawal will affect their eligibility for financial aid as determined by this policy. Students who unofficially withdraw or withdraw failing also will have difficulty meeting the SAP requirements.

Criteria #2—Qualitative Standard *Please note—entire section revised

The minimum **cumulative** grade point average (GPA) requirement the student must maintain to receive and/or continue receiving financial aid assistance is **2.0**. This includes all degree, diploma and certificate programs. Developmental course work and transferred credits are counted toward a student's cumulative GPA.

Criteria #3—Maximum Time Frame

Federal regulations set the maximum time frame in which a student must complete his/her educational program. This regulation defines the maximum time length as 150% of the normal length of the educational program, using the number of credit hours required to earn the academic credential to compute the 150% rate. A student is not eligible for financial aid when the cumulative number of all credit hours attempted is greater than 150% based on the current program of study. This is true whether financial aid was received for the classes or the student paid for classes from his/her own resources. Once the student reaches the maximum time frame, the student's eligibility for financial aid ends. **(Note: A student's credit hours transferred from other colleges or universities are counted as attempted hours, along with all courses attempted, repeated and/or completed. This includes grades of A, B, C, D, F, I, W, FW, WP, DR, CE and AU) for all types of students (curriculum, huskins, special, and dual-enrolled).**

Students enrolled in eligible programs of study may receive financial aid for required developmental classes. These students will be allowed to attempt up to 30 semester hours of developmental courses, which will not be counted towards the 150% total hours. **Attempted developmental hours in excess of 30 semester hours will be counted towards the 150% total hours.**

Financial Aid will cover course repeats when the student has not received a satisfactory grade for the program of study. Repeated courses will be counted towards a student's 150% timeframe. When a student repeats a course, the repeated course is included in: a) enrollment status computations (full, 3/4, 1/2, or less than 1/2), b) financial aid awards, c) 150% calculations.

Financial Aid Probation

The minimum **cumulative** credit hour completion requirement and the academic standards are assessed at the end of each term, including summer semester. If a student does not make the minimum **cumulative** grade point average (GPA) or pass the minimum number of credit hours required for his or her enrollment status during the term, the student is placed on ***financial aid probation*** for the next term attended. Financial aid may be received during this probationary term. Continued eligibility for aid is determined at

the end of the probationary term. If a student does not make the minimum **cumulative** GPA or pass the minimum number of credit hours required for his or her enrollment status during the probationary term, the student will be placed on *financial aid suspension*. **Please note that when a student repeats a course, the highest grade received is used to calculate the GPA.**

Financial Aid Suspension

Any student on *financial aid probation* who does not make the minimum **cumulative** GPA or pass the minimum number of credit hours required for his or her enrollment status will be placed on *financial aid suspension* from financial aid for the next term of enrollment and will not be eligible for financial aid until satisfactory progress is demonstrated. Students can not receive funds from any financial aid program while on *financial aid suspension*.

The college will notify the student of his/her status in writing when placed on financial aid probation or suspension. **However, it is the student's responsibility to track his/her progress and not totally rely on the school's notification.** Students on financial aid suspension are prohibited from using financial aid to pay any school expenses (i.e. tuition/fees/books); however, if the student is academically eligible to return, the student may pay charges using his/her own funds.

Reestablishing Progress after Financial Aid Suspension

To reestablish progress, a student must complete a term successfully without financial assistance (the student must assume all expenses). A student must complete at least six credit hours and meet all other financial aid satisfactory progress standards, including minimum cumulative GPA, within a single term to reestablish progress and upgrade to *financial aid probation* status. If the student demonstrates satisfactory progress, the Federal Pell Grant and other types of financial assistance (depending on the availability of funds) may be reinstated at the beginning of the next term of enrollment.

Financial Aid Appeals

A student who has become ineligible for financial aid may appeal the termination of financial aid to the Director of Financial Aid in writing indicating: a) reasons why he/she did not achieve minimum standards, b) reasons why his/her eligibility should not be terminated. **Written appeals** must be submitted with **supporting documentation** explaining unusual circumstances that caused the student's academic progress to be less than required.

Students may pick up a copy of the **Appeals Application** in the Financial Aid Office. All appeals, along with supporting documentation must be submitted to Financial Aid Office, Sandhills Community College, 3395 Airport Road, Pinehurst, NC 28374. Appeals will be considered for special circumstances including but not limited to an extended illness on the part of the student or the death of a relative. Remember, documentation will be required to substantiate the appeal. Note: Students on approved financial aid appeal are not eligible for the Federal Family Educational Loan Programs or for Federal Work-Study.

Special Note

In order to implement this revised policy, all students will be evaluated under the previously enforced GPA standards for the fall 2006 semester. This "grace period" is intended to allow those students who met the previous standard, but not the new higher standard, to increase their GPA to the required 2.0 level.

Effective Fall Semester 2006