

# Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

## College of the Redwoods (CR) Financial Aid Office

Federal and state financial aid regulations require all colleges to establish policies to determine whether a student is making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in their program of study. The goal is to ensure students are making progress toward graduation. **These rules must apply to all students whether or not they were recipients of financial aid previously at CR or at other colleges. This means that while this may be your first time applying for or receiving financial aid, your previous academic activity will impact your current financial aid eligibility.**

Understanding and meeting the SAP standards related to financial aid eligibility is important in meeting your educational goals. This document is being provided to you so that you have information on these standards. We encourage you to read and keep it for future reference. Details are also available on our website at [www.redwoods.edu](http://www.redwoods.edu).

### REMEDIAL UNITS

Students are allowed to receive financial aid for remedial (i.e. CR course numbers 300-399) coursework, up to 30 attempted units, if the coursework is a prerequisite for entrance into a regular college program. Financial aid cannot be received for more than 30 attempted units of remedial classes. There is no appeal of the 30 unit limit.

In addition, coursework determined to be below the Secondary Level is not eligible for federal financial aid funding. Examples are Math 301, Math 372 and Math 376 are not eligible for funding. These units are still counted in GPA and Completion Rate calculations.

### MULTIPLE MAJORS/PROGRAMS

While students may declare multiple majors, SAP does not account for this. There is a maximum time frame/unit limit per student, determined by your declared active program with the most units. Regardless of your number of declared majors, or previously earned certificates or degrees, you can still exceed the maximum time frame even if you have not completed any of your degrees or certificates. Students should only declare one major/program and only takes classes required for completion of that major.

### ACADEMIC RENEWAL

Academic Renewal is **not** recognized for financial aid academic progress purposes. All grades and units including repeated courses will be used in SAP calculations.

Your initial SAP Status will be determined at the time you first apply for financial aid, and it is evaluated each term thereafter (after ALL grades have been posted). **You could be eligible one term and not the next, so you must plan accordingly.** You will be notified via your CR student email of your status usually within 30 days from the end of the term. Please note that you may not be notified of your SAP status until after the term starts if the gap between semesters is extremely short.

### SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS STANDARDS

There are several components to meeting the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards.

#### A) Qualitative Standards

Once you have attempted\* 3 units or more at CR, you will have the following calculations:

- 1. Grade Point Average (GPA)** –the average of your grade points divided by the number of units
  - Earn a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or better
  - Classes such as noncredit courses or those taken pass/no pass are not included in the GPA as they do not generate points
- 2. Completion Rate-** rate at which you are progressing toward your Unit Limit
  - Complete at least 67% of all units attempted
  - All units you have attempted are considered when calculating your Completion Rate.
  - Courses with a grade of A, B, C, D, P (pass), S (satisfactory), and SP are considered complete.
  - Courses with a grade of W (withdrawal/drop after census), EW (excused withdrawal), F (fail), NC (no credit), NP (no pass), I (incomplete), RD (report delayed), and IP (in progress) are considered incomplete and will hurt your Completion Rate. \*

**B) Maximum Time Frame/Unit Limit** - as you work on your certificate/degree, the Financial Aid Office keeps track of how many units you are attempting.

- You must complete your declared academic major before attempting 150% of the number of units included in the published program length for your academic program.
- Because of the unit limit, it is vitally important you decide on an educational goal early, and enroll in courses required to complete that goal. Counseling and advising services and career planning courses are available to help you decide on the educational goal which is best for you.
- Units from all prior college coursework that have been evaluated and apply toward your program will be included in the maximum time frame calculation.
- For example:
  - Certificate of Achievement is 31 total units—your maximum time frame would be 150% of 31 units, which is 46.5 attempted units
  - A.A. Degrees are 60 units—your maximum time frame would be 150% of 60 units, or 90 attempted units

*\* While the Financial Aid Office will reevaluate records when notified of grades changes by the Admissions & Records office, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office if an 'incomplete' or any other grade is changed so that a recalculation can be completed.*

**At the end of each term, your SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS will be re-evaluated and you will be notified of your new status by e-mail; however, students are responsible for knowing their academic status that could result in ineligibility and/or suspension of aid.**

#### **SATISFACTORY PROGRESS STATUS DEFINITIONS**

**Satisfactory** – you are meeting the standards and are eligible for financial aid (if otherwise eligible). At the end of each term your academic progress will be re-evaluated.

**Warning** – you did not meet the cumulative SAP standards. The next term you attend is a 'warning' term. You are eligible for financial aid (if otherwise eligible) during your warning term. You are placed on 'warning' for one term only. At the end of your 'warning' term, your academic progress will be re-evaluated:

- If you are meeting the cumulative SAP standards at that time, your SAP status will be satisfactory.
- If you are not meeting the cumulative standards at that time, your SAP status will be unsatisfactory and your aid will be suspended.

**Unsatisfactory-** (low GPA/completion rate)– you did not meet the standards during your 'warning' term. You are not eligible for financial aid.\*

**Max Time Suspension** (over unit limit)– you have exceeded the number of units allowed. You are not eligible for financial aid.\*

**Probation** – you did not meet the standards, but you filed an appeal and it was approved. You are on 'probation' based on your approved appeal. You are eligible for financial aid during your probationary term (if otherwise eligible). You are placed on probation for one term. At the end of your 'probation' term, your academic progress will be re-evaluated:

- If you are meeting the cumulative SAP standards at that time, your SAP status will be satisfactory.
- If you are not meeting the cumulative standards and you are not meeting the term standards your SAP status will be unsatisfactory and your aid will be suspended.\*
- If you are not meeting the cumulative standards, but you did meet the term standards your SAP status will continue to be 'probation' for an additional term. It is possible that you could be placed on probation more than once in your academic career.

*\*You are not eligible for most financial aid programs, including federal/state grants, student loans, and federal work study. You are eligible for the California College Promise Grant (formerly known as the Board of Governors Fee Waiver, BOG), if otherwise eligible.*

## APPEAL PROCESS GENERAL INFORMATION

Financial aid suspension is SERIOUS and appeals are not automatically granted. You may not appeal in person. The completed GetSAP appeal video session, appeal form, supporting documentation, your overall progress toward your goal, and your past academic performance will all be evaluated together.

Appeals must include: documentation to support extenuating circumstances and must address why you failed to make SAP, and what has changed in your situation that would allow you to meet the standards. Types of documentation include death certificate, doctor/hospital bills, court orders, etc. Failure to provide this information will result in an automatic denial of the appeal.

- Appeals based solely on financial and/or emotional needs without sufficient explanation or documentation will not be approved; i.e. “*I need the money*” or “*I didn’t take my classes seriously*” and similar reasons are not accepted as extenuating circumstances for an appeal.
- Work is not considered a hardship since financial aid is viewed as a supplement to the student’s income in order to help reduce the number of hours the average student would have to work.
- It is the responsibility of the student to successfully complete all classes enrolled. Please remember that dropping a class, failing a class, or withdrawing from a class is a personal decision made by the student. Without documentation of extenuating circumstances, appeals will not be approved.
- **Appeals must be submitted 4 weeks prior to the end of the term (including secondary appeals). Please see the appeal form for the specific deadlines (Summer deadlines may vary). You will be notified by e-mail of the results of the appeal.**
- If your appeal is denied and additional information becomes available that was not considered during the initial review, you may appeal the decision by submitting the additional information and/or documentation to the Financial Aid Office. The Secondary Appeals Committee will review this appeal and make a final determination.
- Denied appeal notifications include reasons why your appeal was denied. You must address these reasons in your secondary appeal.

## APPEALS FOR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

### A) **Qualitative Standards- Students who did not meet the 2.0 GPA or 67% completion rate:**

You may appeal **if** there are extenuating circumstances that led to your failure to maintain SAP. Documentation of extenuating circumstances is required for each term in which the minimum standards were not met.

If the appeal is **approved**, you will be placed on a probationary status and your status will be re-evaluated each semester. While on probation, you will be eligible to receive financial aid for the semester in which your appeal was approved. However, you must meet the term standards each semester for continued eligibility.

If your appeal is **denied**, you may regain eligibility for future terms by bringing your cumulative academic record up to the Financial Aid SAP standards (a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, a cumulative 67% or higher completion rate and have not reached the unit limit as described above).

Examples of appeals that may be **denied**: you have a pattern of doing poorly without improvement; you have not made any changes to improve your performance, i.e. reduced course load, use of support services.

### B) **Maximum Time Frame/Unit Limit - Students who have reached or exceeded 150% of the program length**

You may appeal if you have reached the maximum attempted unit limit but have not yet completed your academic major/program due to extenuating circumstances such as a recent disability or job layoff that requires retraining or further education to a different career major. In general, changing majors does not automatically create cause for extending this limit.

If the appeal is **approved**, you will be placed on a probationary status for one term only. At the end of your ‘probation’ term, your SAP status will again be ‘max time suspension.’ If you meet the guidelines above, you may submit a new appeal.

Examples of appeals that may be **denied**: you have not been or are not taking required classes for your program, you have an excessive number of units, you have changed your major several times, you are on a waiting list for a program but have not met all the standards, etc.