POLICY ON SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS – EFFECTIVE FALL 2021

The Office of Student Financial Aid has established the following policies and procedures stated to fulfill the requirements expressed in the Higher Education Act (HEA). The Satisfactory Academic Progress policies and procedures of Washington College are reviewed when changes at the federal or institutional level require review to ensure compliance with Federal Regulations. All Washington College students applying for Title IV federal and selected other types of assistance must meet the criteria stated hereafter regardless of whether or not they previously received aid.

Satisfactory Academic Progress for financial aid eligibility should not be confused with the College's academic progress policy. These are two distinct and totally separate policies. It is entirely possible to fail to meet minimum standards of one policy and pass the minimum standards of the other.

Policy Requirements – The HEA revised section 668 contains updated regulations concerning Satisfactory Academic Progress. Section 668 requires that an institution establish, publish and apply reasonable standards for measuring a student's ability to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. Such standards must meet the following qualifications:

1. Contain standards that are the same as or stricter than the institution's standards for a student enrolled in the same educational program who is not receiving assistance under a Title IV, HEA program.
2. Include both a qualitative (grade-based) element and a quantitative (time-based) element.
3. Evaluate student progress in both elements annually, at a minimum.
4. Provide specific procedures under which a student may appeal a determination that the student is not making satisfactory progress including documentation of extenuating circumstances.
5. Provide specific procedures for a student to re-establish that he or she is maintaining "satisfactory progress."
6. Describe the pace at which a student must progress toward a degree to complete degree requirements within the allowed timeframe providing measurement at each evaluation.
7. Describe how GPA and pace of completion are affected by transfer credit.
8. Require that if the student is not making satisfactory academic progress, the student is no longer eligible to receive aid.
9. Notify students of the results of the evaluation at the end of the annual review as to whether the student has met the qualitative and quantitative components.
10. Define terms used in discussing the evaluation of satisfactory academic progress including the terms appeal, probation, academic plan, and maximum timeframe.
11. Provide for consistent application of standards to all students within categories of students, e.g., full-time, part-time, undergraduate, and graduate students and educational programs established by the institution.

The programs governed by these regulations are:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant
- Federal Work-Study (FWS)
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
- Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
- Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

Satisfactory Academic Progress standards include three elements:

1. Maximum time frame within which a degree or certificate must be granted,
2. Minimum completion percentage, and
3. Minimum cumulative grade point average.

SAP Definitions – HEA section 668 requires that Washington College define various terms related to the evaluation of SAP.

SAP GPA – The SAP GPA is calculated using all grades the student has earned. There are no provisions in the federal regulations for academic amnesty so the SAP GPA may be different than the academic GPA.

Maximum Timeframe (MTF) – The required length of time it will take a student to complete a degree program or certificate based on the appropriate enrollment status. Federal regulations allow a student to be eligible to receive aid up to 150% of the time that it would normally take to complete a degree. All credit hours in which a student enrolls or transfers to Washington College are included in the maximum time frame calculation, regardless of the number of degrees a student chooses to obtain. Grades that are considered credit hours attempted and completed in the calculation of maximum time frame include: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, I, W.

Minimum Completion Percentage (MCP) – The percentage of coursework that a student must earn during enrollment. Washington College requires students to earn passing grades in 67% of the hours in which they enroll during the evaluation period. Grades that are considered hours earned include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, P.

Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average – The minimum GPA a student must have earned at the end of the evaluation period. A 2.0 SAP GPA is required.

Incomplete grades – students with a grade of 'I' or 'Incomplete' will not be recalculated if the incomplete is made up before the end of the next term.

SAP Notifications

Students will be notified of their SAP progress at the end of every term. Students will be directed via email to check Student Self Service. Students who comply with Federal Regulations will receive their financial aid award for the upcoming term. Correspondence will be sent to students via email.

SAP Satisfactory – students who are meeting minimum standards are found to be satisfactory and eligible for federal aid.

SAP Warning – Students who are unsatisfactory after being satisfactory will be given one term of warning to get back to meeting SAP standards. If they fail to meet the standards by the end of that warning term, they will be unsatisfactory and no longer eligible for federal aid.

SAP Unsatisfactory –Students who were previously unsatisfactory or did not meet the terms of their academic plan will no longer be eligible for federal aid. Aid can only be reinstated through a successful, documented appeal or by resolving all deficiencies.

SAP Academic Plan – through a successful appeal, students will be given either one or two terms to get back into good standing. The terms of the plan will be communicated to the student via email and Self Service.

SAP Appeal Procedures

Washington College will consider appeals for any student that meets one or more of the following:

- Serious physical or mental illness of the student
- Serious physical or mental illness of the student's immediate family member
- Death of the student's immediate family member
- Other extreme circumstances

Appeals must include;

1. SAP Appeal Form
2. Letter of Explanation
3. Supporting Documentation
4. Program Evaluation (only in cases of maximum timeframe)

There is no secondary appeal process. If an appeal is denied, students can only be reinstated for aid eligibility if they are back in good standing. If an appeal is approved and the student does not fulfill the terms of the academic plan, the student will not be eligible for federal aid.