



## Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

In accordance with Federal and State regulations, this policy applies to all students requesting Title IV funds, regardless of whether the student had previously received Title IV aid at San Bernardino Valley College or at any other college. Effective Fall 2015, Satisfactory Academic Progress will be checked for all students at the end of every semester, regardless of whether financial aid was received. Satisfactory Academic Progress is evaluated based on all courses taken within the San Bernardino Community College District. Additionally, any units evaluated by the Admissions and Records Office, from prior colleges may be taken into consideration when determining a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress.

For the purpose of determining eligibility to receive federal financial aid funds, San Bernardino Valley College requires students to meet both a qualitative and quantitative standards for academic progress. In order for students to receive Title IV financial aid assistance the following Satisfactory Academic Progress standards must be met:

1. **Qualitative Standard:** Students must maintain a minimum cumulative 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA Standard). *If all classes taken are credit/non-credit courses, the GPA requirement does not apply. Courses with grades of A, B, C, D, F are used to calculate a student's GPA.*
2. **Quantitative Standard:** Students are required to **complete a minimum of 67% of the number of units attempted** (Completion Rate Standard). *All Withdrawals (W), Incompletes (I), Failing (F), No Pass (NC or NP) and Report Delayed (RD) grades are considered units attempted. Repeated courses are also included in this standard.*
3. **Maximum Time Frame:** Student must have attempted less than 150% of the maximum cumulative units required for completion of their selected program of study. *Most degree programs at San Bernardino Valley College require 60 units for graduation. Thus, 90 attempted units is the maximum for which a student can receive financial assistance (60 attempted units x 150% = 90 attempted units).*

### **Attempted and Completed Units**

Completed units means that credit was received for the units enrolled. Courses in which a student receives a grade of "W", "I", "F", "NC", "NP", or "RD" will **not** be counted as completed units for Satisfactory Academic Progress purposes, but will be counted as units attempted for financial aid purposes. Academic Renewal is not recognized for financial aid purposes, and is always counted in units attempted, GPA calculation, and maximum time frame. In cases where a more favorable grade was subsequently received, both attempts would be counted for Satisfactory Academic Progress purposes.

Units completed from credit by examination courses are not covered by financial aid. It is the student's responsibility to enroll in courses that count toward his or her educational goal.

Transfer units from other institutions will be included as attempted and completed units in the SAP calculation.

### **Repeat Courses**

Financial aid assistance may be awarded to cover the cost of courses previously taken to improve a grade of "D", "F", "W", "NC", "NP" or "I". The Financial Aid Office will only pay for one subsequent attempt. However, repeated semester units will count toward the maximum units allowed.

## **Remedial and ESL Courses**

Federal regulations state that Financial Aid may be received for remedial (basic skills) courses if the remedial courses are taken within an eligible program of study. Student enrolled solely in a remedial program are not considered to be in an eligible program of study to received federal financial aid. Financial Aid cannot be received for more than 30 attempted units of remedial coursework. Similarly, a student enrolled in English as a second language (ESL) courses, who is not in an eligible program of study is not eligible for federal financial aid funds. ESL and remedial coursework will count towards the 2.0 GPA and 67% attempted units completed requirements. However, ESL units will not count towards the maximum unit timeframe standard.

## **Provisions**

The Financial Aid Office has the authority under federal regulations to place a student on warning, probation, or termination for future financial aid due to academic history indicating a pattern of inability or unwillingness to progress. A pattern of inability or unwillingness to progress may include continued or numerous withdrawals, failure to meet reasonable academic progress standards, or enrollment inconsistent with the student's educational objective. If grades are not yet posted, any financial aid award offered is tentative until the academic record is reviewed.

If at any point in time it is determined that the student cannot complete their course of study within the 150% timeframe they will be immediately disqualified from future financial aid.

## **Financial Aid Warning Status**

Students who have not earned a 2.0 cumulative GPA or did not complete 67% of all units attempted will be placed on automatic Warning status for the subsequent semester, during which time, they will maintain financial aid eligibility. There is no Financial Aid Warning status provided to students prior to meeting the maximum unit time frame. The following actions will be taken for students who are issued a Financial Aid Warning status:

1. On the first non-consecutive occurrence, the student will be sent a Financial Aid Warning Notification informing the student they did not meet the satisfactory academic progress standards. In order for students to continue receiving financial aid the following semester they must improve and meet the minimum requirements to avoid Termination.
2. On the second consecutive occurrence (while on Warning) the student will receive a Financial Aid Termination status notification indicating they failed to meet the terms of the Financial Aid Warning Notification and therefore will no longer be eligible to receive further financial aid (federal or state, with the exception of the BOG Fee Waiver).

Students who have been placed on Financial Aid Warning status must have their academic progress reviewed before their financial aid eligibility for the following semester is determined. Due to the short time period between semesters, there may be a delay in notification of eligibility. If determined eligible, any disbursements of student aid may be delayed as a result of the evaluation needed after the semester in which the Warning status was issued. *All students placed on Warning status are encouraged to seek academic counseling and should take advantage of all other student services available to ensure success while at San Bernardino Valley College.*

## **SAP Termination Status**

A student who does not meet the minimum standards, as stated in this policy, during their Warning status semester will be placed on SAP **Termination** status and will not be eligible to receive financial aid assistance while at San Bernardino Valley College. Additionally, students who have reached the maximum time frame for the program of study they have selected will automatically be placed on SAP **Termination** status and must follow the appeal process to be considered for financial aid in future semesters.

Being placed on SAP **Termination** status does not affect a student's eligibility for the BOG Fee Waiver or a student's ability to continue their education. For those students who did not meet the minimum standards during their Warning status semester and were placed on SAP **Termination** status as a result, must meet the terms of requalification to regain financial aid eligibility.

The terms of requalification include students reaching the minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA, completing 67% of all attempted units and not exceeding 150% maximum timeframe of the current active program of study.

Any financial aid previously offered, awarded, or reserved for ineligible students will be withdrawn. Withdrawn aid is not necessarily recovered even if the student's aid eligibility is later reinstated. San Bernardino Valley College will use the reinstatement date to determine availability of financial aid funds.

### **SAP Appeal Process**

Under certain conditions, student placed on SAP Termination status may file an appeal for consideration of reinstatement of financial aid eligibility if extenuating circumstances occurred that prevented the student from meeting the SAP standards. The following are examples of reasons a student may file a SAP Appeal:

- Death of an immediate family member
- Unable to complete their selected program of study within the maximum timeframe because of a change in academic major
- Documented serious injury, illness or medical condition requiring doctor's care
- Documented extenuating circumstances that were beyond a student's control

The Following are not considered extenuating circumstances beyond a student's control for SAP Appeal purposes:

- Personal problems not requiring professional intervention
- Poor time management
- Unaware of academic progress policies or other college requirements
- Not following an Academic Counselor's recommendations
- Child care problems
- Transportation problems

To file an appeal, the student must submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal by the deadline dates outlined on the SAP Appeal form. Students must also meet with an academic counselor to obtain a current Student Educational Plan (SEP), have the academic counselor complete and sign the academic certification section on the Appeal form, and provide a typed statement to the Financial Aid Office. The typed statement must indicate the circumstances that prevented the student from meeting the SAP standards and what has changed to allow the student to meet SAP standards at the next evaluation.

Supporting documentation must be submitted for any semesters where there was a lack of progress. In cases, where students have reached the maximum time frame for their current program of study and a change of major occurred, extraordinary circumstances must be present to be considered for approval. If an appeal is approved, the student may receive financial aid during the periods in which Probation was granted. If an incomplete appeal packet is submitted to the Financial Aid Office, it will be returned to the student.

Federal regulations prohibit students from appealing retroactively for prior terms. Any appeal submitted past the deadlines provided will not be eligible for aid for that semester. Each appeal will be reviewed, on a case-by-case basis, by the SAP Appeal Committee for approval or denial based upon the student's individual circumstances. Appeals considered for approval must demonstrate that the student will be able to meet the SAP Policy at the end of the financial aid Probation period. If a student's progress is such that there is no way they will be able to meet the SAP Policy at the end of the financial aid Probation period, their appeal may be denied. **Submission of a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal does not guarantee an approval.** All decisions made by the SAP Appeal Committee are considered final and there is no higher appeal.

### **Approved Appeal**

If the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal is approved, the student will be placed on **Probation** status and funding will only be disbursed for the semester in which they were approved and forward. Eligibility of federal, state and institutional funds will be determined after the appeal has been approved. Continued eligibility will be based on the following:

- Must maintain a 2.0 GPA or better each semester
- Student may not receive any substandard grades during the **Probation** period and must successfully complete 100% of all enrolled units
  - Substandard grades include: W, F, I, NC, or NP

- Student must be following the Student Educational Plan approved by the SAP Appeal Committee
- Must be enrolled in and attending an eligible program for the purpose of completing an AA/AS degree, transfer requirement, or certificate program.

If a student fails to meet the conditions of approval while on **Probation** status, they will become ineligible to receive financial assistance until they meet the terms of requalification.

Students who are on **Probation** status must have their academic progress reviewed before their financial aid eligibility for the following semester can be determined. Due to the short time period between semesters, there may be a delay in the notification of eligibility. If determined eligible, any financial aid disbursements may also be delayed.

### **Denied Appeal**

Students whose appeals are denied may regain eligibility by meeting the terms of requalification. Requalification can be done by meeting the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards without the assistance of financial aid. If after the successful completion of one academic semester a student is still not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress, a student may submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal form for reconsideration.

For additional information regarding financial aid eligibility requirements, please visit our website at [www.valleycollege.edu/financialaid](http://www.valleycollege.edu/financialaid) or you may contact the Financial Aid Office.

### **Methods of Communication**

The Financial Aid Office primarily communicates with student via their school email account. School email addresses will be used to notify students who fail to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards.

Decisions letters resulting from a SAP appeal will be mailed to the mailing address on file at the time the letter is prepared. A copy of the decision letter will be emailed upon request.

*Legislation and government regulations are continually changing the face of student financial aid. Information is subject to change without notice.*