

## **ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy**

Federal and state regulations require that students at Elizabeth City State University maintain a certain level of academic performance in order to be eligible for financial aid. This policy is known as Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

All students who wish to qualify for financial aid must meet three standards known as SAP. These standards include:

- 1. Earn a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 as an undergraduate student; 3.0 as a graduate student;**
- 2. Successfully complete at least 67% of all attempted credit hours;**
- 3. Attempted credits do not exceed 150% of the maximum time frame for degree/program(s) of study.**

These standards are used to judge academic progress including all periods of enrollment, even periods in which the student did not receive federal student aid funds. All prior coursework, attempted and earned, is reviewed in the determination of SAP. Students who have been re-admitted or transfer students are still subject to SAP standards for all attempted coursework at ECSU.

The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships will measure a student's academic performance at the end of every term, including summer. Students who fail to meet one or more of the SAP standards at the time their academic progress is reviewed will be given a Financial Aid Warning with one additional semester to meet the standard. Students will be allowed to receive financial aid during this Financial Aid Warning period. Those who do not meet the standard after the warning period are not eligible for financial aid. Ineligible students may appeal the decision.

Eligibility to receive aid may be reestablished by remedying all deficiencies. Procedures for re-establishing financial aid eligibility are described in this policy statement (see How to Re-establish Eligibility).

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS REQUIREMENTS

### I. Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)

In order to receive federal financial aid or other need-based aid, a student's cumulative GPA must meet the minimum requirement as defined below:

- a. Undergraduate Students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0.
- b. Graduate Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0.

### II. Minimum Credit Hour Completion Rate (also known as Pace)

All students must earn a minimum of 67% of the credit hours that they have attempted.

#### Example A:

The student below has earned 73 credits at ECSU, transferred in 47 credits, and has attempted a total of 123 credit hours. Divide 120 (earned credit hours) by 123 (attempted credit hours). This student's credit hour completion rate is 98%.

	<b>Attempt Hours</b>	<b>Passed Hours</b>	<b>Earned Hours</b>	<b>GPA Hours</b>	<b>Quality Points</b>	<b>GPA</b>
<b>ECSU:</b>	76.000	73.000	73.000	73.000	283.00	3.877
<b>Transfer:</b>	47.000	47.000	47.000	0.000	0.00	0.000
<b>Degree:</b>	123.000	120.000	120.000	73.000	283.00	3.877

#### Example B:

The student has attempted a total of 48 credit hours during his entire attendance at ECSU. In order to meet the minimum credit hour completion rate requirement and be eligible for financial aid for future semesters, the student must have earned 32 of those credit hours ( $48 \times 0.67 = 32$ ). In this case, the student has only earned 24 credit hours and is **NOT** meeting the minimum credit hour completion rate (24 divided by 48 = 50%). This student is not eligible for financial aid.

Adopted: 06/14/05  
 Amended: 03/07/06  
 Amended: 03/08/07  
 Amended: 06/12/12  
 Amended: 06/11/13  
 Amended: 03/08/16  
 Amended: 12/13/16  
 Amended: 12/12/17  
 Amended: 03/15/18  
 Amended: 06/11/19  
 Amended: 06/22/20

	<b>Attempt Hours</b>	<b>Passed Hours</b>	<b>Earned Hours</b>	<b>GPA Hours</b>	<b>Quality Points</b>	<b>GPA</b>
<b>ECSU:</b>	48.000	24.000	24.000	24.000	60.00	2.500
<b>Transfer:</b>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
<b>Degree:</b>	48.000	24.000	24.000	24.000	60.00	2.500

**Earned/Unearned Hours:**

All transfer credit hours accepted toward the ECSU degree count as earned and attempted hours in the SAP calculation.

Earned Hours are comprised of the following grades: A, B, C, D, P

Unearned Hours are comprised of the following grades: F, I, IF, IP, W, WA, WD

Graduate students who earn IP grades for dissertation/thesis research credits will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis separate from the initial SAP review process.

**Withdrawals (W):**

Courses for which a student has withdrawn and a grade of "W" is posted on their transcript are counted as attempted but not earned credit hours.

**Course Repeats:**

If a student repeats a course, both the original and the repeated courses will count toward the earned and attempted credit hours. Students may only receive federal financial aid for one repeat of a course that has been successfully completed with a grade of "D" or higher.

**Incomplete Grades (I):**

Courses for which a student earns a grade of Incomplete (I) are counted as attempted but not earned credit hours. Once a grade is received, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Financial Aid for further review.

Adopted: 06/14/05  
Amended: 03/07/06  
Amended: 03/08/07  
Amended: 06/12/12  
Amended: 06/11/13  
Amended: 03/08/16  
Amended: 12/13/16  
Amended: 12/12/17  
Amended: 03/15/18  
Amended: 06/11/19  
Amended: 06/22/20

**Remedial or English As a Second Language Coursework:**

Remedial and ESL coursework are treated the same as other course work for financial aid purposes. Both the attempted and earned hours count in the calculation of completion ratio and maximum allotted hours.

**III. Maximum Credit Hours**

To remain eligible for financial aid at ECSU, students must complete their degree program requirements within 150 percent of the published length of their degree program. All attempted hours are counted, including transfer hours, whether or not financial aid was received.

**Undergraduate Example:**

If an Undergraduate degree program requires 120 semester credit hours to complete, then a student is eligible for financial aid during the first 180 attempted credit hours as an Undergraduate.

( $120 \times 150\% = 180$  maximum attempted credit hours for financial aid eligibility).

**Graduate Students:**

If a graduate degree program requires 36 semester credit hours to complete, then a student is eligible for financial aid during the first 54 attempted credit hours as a Graduate student.

( $36 \times 150\% = 54$  maximum attempted credit hours for financial aid eligibility).

**Second Degree-Seeking Students:**

Students pursuing a second undergraduate degree (or beyond) are eligible to receive financial aid for a maximum of 150% of the hours required for the additional degree up to a maximum of 270 hours (including hours for first degree). Two Hundred Seventy (270) attempted hours is the maximum that a student may receive financial aid regardless of the number of prior degree programs completed.

Adopted: 06/14/05  
 Amended: 03/07/06  
 Amended: 03/08/07  
 Amended: 06/12/12  
 Amended: 06/11/13  
 Amended: 03/08/16  
 Amended: 12/13/16  
 Amended: 12/12/17  
 Amended: 03/15/18  
 Amended: 06/11/19  
 Amended: 06/22/20

**Students Changing Majors after their Sophomore Year:**

A student who changes their major after their sophomore year in college is eligible to receive financial aid for a maximum of 150% of the hours required for the new academic program (maximum of 180 hours including hours for first major).

**Mid-Year Transfer Students:**

When a student transfers to the University, all of their transfer credit hours are counted towards the pace component of SAP as attempted and earned hours. Transfer grades are excluded from the GPA component. The GPA starts at 0.00 as a new transfer.

**IV. Definitions**

**Financial Aid Warning:**

A student will be placed on financial aid warning for one semester when the student does not meet all three SAP standards at the end of a semester, including summer sessions. Students with a status of financial aid warning may receive financial aid and enroll in courses.

A student on financial aid warning must meet all three SAP standards at the end of the next semester of attendance to be in good financial aid standing. Failure to do so will result in financial aid suspension.

**Financial Aid Suspension:**

A student is placed on financial aid suspension when the student does not meet all three SAP standards after the Financial Aid Warning semester. A student on financial aid suspension may NOT receive financial aid.

A student on financial aid suspension must meet all three SAP standards to return to good financial aid standing.

**Financial Aid Probation:**

A student who does not meet all three SAP standards at the end of their Financial Aid Warning period are placed on financial aid suspension, as indicated above.

Students who successfully appeal their financial aid suspension are placed on financial aid probation. The completion of an academic plan may be required.

## HOW TO RE-ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY

There are two ways a student can re-establish their eligibility for financial aid:

1. A student must bring his/her GPA and/or completion rate up to the minimum standards, as stated above, to regain financial aid eligibility. At the end of the term after meeting SAP standards, the student will regain financial aid eligibility. A student should consult with a Financial Aid Counselor to ensure aid eligibility is reinstated for the next period of enrollment.
2. Transfer credit accepted by ECSU that applies to the student's program can affect completion rate. If transfer credit is accepted by ECSU, the student should request a review of their satisfactory academic progress to determine if eligibility has changed.

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS APPEALS

If a student has experienced special circumstances during the most recent evaluation period that he/she did not meet standards of academic progress, an appeal to request reinstatement of financial aid eligibility can be submitted. These circumstances are limited to:

1. Personal illness or injury, family member illness or injury,
2. Death of a close family member,
3. Job related issues,
4. Victim of a crime, or
5. Other documented events
6. Maximum Time-Frame (CAP)

A completed appeal form and supporting documentation is required before the appeal will be reviewed. Acceptable supporting documentation is outlined on the [Financial Aid Appeal Form](#) found on the [Financial Aid website](#).

In some situations, an academic plan may be required. If the appeal request is granted, the student will be placed on financial aid probation for a minimum of one semester.

- A. **One Semester Probation** – The student is eligible for financial aid and is expected to improve and meet minimum standards by the next evaluation period to maintain eligibility.

Adopted: 06/14/05  
Amended: 03/07/06  
Amended: 03/08/07  
Amended: 06/12/12  
Amended: 06/11/13  
Amended: 03/08/16  
Amended: 12/13/16  
Amended: 12/12/17  
Amended: 03/15/18  
Amended: 06/11/19  
Amended: 06/22/20

**B. Multiple Semester Probation (Maximum of 3)** – A student who cannot meet the minimum standards by the next evaluation period is placed on probation for up to 3 semesters with an assigned SAP academic plan. The academic plan is designed to allow the student to meet minimum standards within a fixed number of evaluation periods. Progress is checked each semester and evaluated based on **minimum SAP requirements and the prescribed academic plan**. If a student meets the minimum SAP standards after a probation semester, their financial aid status is updated to eligible for their next semester of enrollment.

If the appeal request is **not** granted, the student will remain ineligible for financial aid until they meet all minimum standards. The appeal decision is final.

Undergraduate students in a four-year program are allotted a maximum of two approved appeals for the duration of their program; graduate students are allotted a maximum of one approved appeal.

Incomplete appeals will not be reviewed. If additional information is required, the student will be notified as well as a message posted on the Self- Service Banner System.

Once all required documentation is submitted, the appeal will be reviewed by the SAP Appeals Committee and students will be notified of the outcome of their appeal. Appeal decisions will also be updated on the Self-Service Banner system.

**Deadlines:**

Students are encouraged to submit appeals within 15 days from the date of their financial aid suspension letter. Appeals **must** be submitted one week prior to the first day of class for the semester in which the student is attempting to regain their financial aid eligibility. Specific deadline dates will be posted online on the financial aid website.

Appeals received after the deadline will be reviewed, but any decision may be effective for the start of the next academic semester. If the appeal is denied, the student will be responsible for paying that semester's tuition and fees out of pocket or with a private education loan (if eligible).