

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 his or her 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.**

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.

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 (effective Fall 2013) and Math 376 (effective Spring 2014) are not eligible for funding.

EDUCATIONAL GOAL

To be eligible for financial aid, students must be enrolled as a regular student in an eligible program. A regular student is defined as a person who enrolls for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate, or a transfer program. Students must declare an educational goal and be taking courses toward an eligible A.A. degree, Certificate of Achievement or a transfer program. Not all programs are eligible for financial aid funding, particularly short-term programs.

ACADEMIC REVIEW PROCESS

Your academic progress will first be determined at the time you apply for financial aid, and it is evaluated each term thereafter (after grades have been posted). **Remember that you could be eligible one term and not the next, so you must plan accordingly.** Academic Renewal is not recognized for financial aid academic progress purposes. All grades and units including repeated courses will be used in the SAP calculation.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS STANDARDS

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

- A) Once you have attempted* 3 units or more at CR, you must:**
- **earn a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or better**
 - **successfully complete 67% of all units attempted (see below for definition of attempted units)**

*Attempted Units include the units that you complete as well as the units that you drop (after census date) or otherwise fail to complete. Units considered attempted, but not completed are: “W” (Withdrawal), “F” (Failing Grade), “NC” (No Credit), “NP” (No Pass), “I” (Incomplete), “RD” (Report Delayed), “IP” (In Progress). It is the student’s responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office if an ‘incomplete’ grade is changed.

- B) Unit Limit / Pace toward completion: You must meet your educational objective before attempting 125% of the number of units required for your academic program and/or transfer.**

i.e. a Certificate of Achievement in CIS Networking is 31 total units—your maximum would be 38 units

i.e. many A.A. Degrees are 60 units—your maximum would be 75 units

Units from all prior college coursework that have been evaluated and apply toward your program will be included in the unit limit calculation.

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.

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 requirements 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 academic progress requirements. 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 payment period only. At the end of your ‘warning’ term, your academic progress will be re-evaluated:

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

Suspension (low GPA/completion rate)– you did not meet the requirements 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 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 payment period. At the end of your ‘probation’ term, your academic progress will be re-evaluated:

- If you are meeting the cumulative SAP requirements at that time, your SAP status will be satisfactory.
- If you are not meeting the cumulative requirements and you are not meeting the term requirements specified by your assigned academic plan, your SAP status will be unsatisfactory and your aid will be suspended.
- If you are not meeting the cumulative requirements, but you did meet the term requirements specified by your assigned academic plan, 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 Board of Governor’s (BOG) fee waiver, if otherwise eligible (subject to change pending state legislative action).

APPEAL PROCESS GENERAL INFORMATION

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

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 no later than the 10th week of the term for which you are appealing (including secondary appeals). 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.

Appeals for specific situations:

A) 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. Additional requirements may be requested. 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 requirements, as specified by your academic plan, each semester for continued eligibility.

If your appeal is **denied**, you may regain eligibility for future terms by bringing your 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 in section B above).

B) Students who have reached the unit limit

You may appeal if you have reached the maximum attempted unit limit but have not yet completed your educational goal 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 payment period 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 attempted or completed, you have changed your major several times, you are on a waiting list for a program but have met all the requirements, etc.