



**SAN DIEGO  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
DISTRICT**

**Satisfactory Academic Progress**



## SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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CITY COLLEGE | MESA COLLEGE | MIRAMAR COLLEGE | COLLEGE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

*Educational Services*

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

All student's eligibility for financial aid will be determined using these Standards.

The standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress for financial aid applicants (Title IV or Non-Title IV aid applicants) are effective with the Summer 2023 semester and supersedes all previous standards. These standards will be equally applied to all students regardless of the enrollment level and academic plan. 34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(1), 34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(2)

Please note that the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) has changed. The SAP standards have been strengthened, and the appeal process has been enhanced to comply with Federal guidelines.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Federal regulations require that colleges set standards that the student must meet to be eligible for financial aid and to keep it from one academic year to the next. Even if the student has never applied for or received financial aid, their overall history in college will be reviewed annually before being awarded financial aid to make sure the student is meeting these standards. To be eligible for aid, the student must comply with all standards regarding maximum time frame, completion rate (quantitative), and cumulative GPA (qualitative). 34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(3)

#### **A. DECLARATION OF YOUR MAJOR**

A student must declare a specific major area of study within two primary semesters (Fall and Spring). A student may choose an Associate's degree or Bachelor's, certificate, or transfer program. Our catalogs list the requirements for all academic programs. If a student is undecided about a major course of study, we suggest the student discuss their educational objective with an academic counselor within two primary semesters (Fall and Spring).

#### **B. ACADEMIC PLAN**

We recommend that students obtain an Educational Plan (comprehensive or abbreviated) based on your declared major from your Academic Counselor. An Educational Plan is an outline of the courses a student will need to complete for their major. The student will use it as a guide to see how many credits and required courses they have completed and how many more credits and required courses they will need to complete their educational objective.

### **C. STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM ANOTHER COLLEGE**

Please refer to your College Catalog sections: Admission and Registration, Academic Requirements, and Graduation. 34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(6)

Credits from Other Regionally Accredited Institutions Credits from other regionally accredited institutions may be accepted for transfer credit after evaluation by District evaluators. We will not accept the transfer credits from another institution if the evaluation by the college evaluators determines that the credits received from another accredited institution do not meet the equivalent standards for a similar course taken at one of the San Diego Community Colleges. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is college credit awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom. Credit for prior learning may be earned for eligible courses approved by the faculty for students who satisfactorily pass an authorized assessment.

### **D. MAXIMUM ATTEMPTED UNITS (Quantitative Standard)**

34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(6)

The number of units to complete a Certificate or Associate's Degree varies based on the major. Federal regulations allow for a maximum time frame not to exceed 150% of the published length of the academic program.

For example: (Academic program of 60 units x 150% = 90 units for the Maximum Time Frame.

Completion of the Baccalaureate Degree Program in Health Information Management at San Diego Mesa College, Cyber Defense and Analysis Security at San Diego City College (effective Fall 2024), or Public Safety Management at San Diego Miramar College (effective Fall 2025) normally requires 120-semester units. Based on federal regulations, a student admitted into any of these programs (per effective date) is allowed a maximum completion time frame not to exceed 150% of the published length of the educational program 120 units x 150% = 180 units.

- a. A student may receive aid until they have attempted the Maximum Attempted Units based on the current Academic Plan. This includes units attempted within the SDCCD and all transfer units counted by the SDCCD.
- b. A maximum of 30 units of remedial coursework are not included in calculating the maximum time frame.
- c. ESOL and ELAC classes are not counted as remedial coursework.
- d. EW (Excused Withdrawals) with a COVID-19 reason will not be included.
- e. The maximum time frame will be adjusted for a change of major.
- f. Repeated coursework will be included in the quantitative measurement maximum time frame.
- g. Academic renewal/ amnesty procedures do not apply to the Financial Aid standards and the calculation of units attempted and completed. If a student does not have any SDCCD credits attempted then any transfer credit that has been posted to the record will be used.

### **E. COMPLETION/PACE RATE (Quantitative Standard)**

34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(6)

In order to be making satisfactory progress, a student must complete at least 67% of all units attempted within the SDCCD colleges.

For example: (30 units completed/42 units attempted = 71.42%).

- a. Units completed are "A" through "D" grades or "P" passing with credit.
- b. Units attempted but not completed are "F" grades, "W" Withdrawal, "I" Incomplete, "NP" Not Passing.
- c. Incomplete grade units are included in the quantitative measurement.
- d. Remedial courses and repeated courses will be used in the determination of academic progress (completion rate).
- e. Grade changes approved for the current aid year for which SAP calculation was already completed will not be recalculated until the next aid year.
- f. Repeated coursework will be included in the quantitative measurement maximum time frame.

A student's academic progress will be evaluated once each year at the end of the spring semester. For purposes of this standards, a year is defined as summer, fall, and spring. Using our professional judgment, we will monitor a student's SAP on a case-by-case basis once a semester if the student is on SAP probation.

Exception: If you are enrolled in a Certificate program that does not lead to an Associate's Degree, your academic progress may be evaluated every semester.

#### **F. CUMULATIVE GPA (Qualitative Standard)**

34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(6)

In order to be making satisfactory progress, the student must maintain a minimum GPA from all units attempted within the SDCCD colleges. A student's cumulative GPA progress will be evaluated once each year at the end of the spring semester once final grades are posted for the term. To be considered in Good Standing:

- a. Student must have a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or higher at the time we determine SAP.
- b. If a student has all "P" grades with a 0.00 GPA, the student will be considered to be making SAP.
- c. Grade changes approved for the current aid year for which SAP calculation already completed will not be recalculated until the next aid year.
- d. Incomplete grade units are not included in the qualitative measurement.
- e. Repeated coursework will be included in the qualitative measurement.

#### **G. GRADE PETITION**

34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(6)

Grade changes approved for the current aid year, which SAP already ran, will not be considered in quantitative and qualitative test overall SAP

#### **H. DISQUALIFICATION**

FR §668.34 (a)(11)

A student will be disqualified if, at the time of their SAP calculation, the student:

- a. Has completed less than 67% of the total cumulative units attempted
- b. Has not met the 2.0 cumulative GPA progress standards
- c. Has attempted more than 150% of the maximum attempted units based on the student's

- current academic plan
- d. Has earned a Bachelor's or higher degree (includes 1st Professional, Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate degrees). This includes degrees from all colleges in the United States or from foreign countries.
- e. The student will be notified via the mySDCCD student portal and a letter of notification

## I. APPEALS

34 CFR §668.34 (a)(9)(i) and (10), 34 C.F.R. §668.34 (a)(9)(ii),(b)

If a student is disqualified, they may submit an appeal to your campus Financial Aid Office by the established deadline for the Appeal Committee's consideration. If a student has extenuating circumstances such as, but not limited to following:

- a. illness of the student or family member;
- b. need to become a caregiver or first responder;
- c. economic hardship;
- d. added work hours;
- e. loss of childcare;
- f. inability to continue with classes via distance education; and
- g. inability to access Wi-Fi due to closed facilities.

Appeals will be considered in the date order in which they are received. The appeal must be received at the student's campus of record Financial Aid Office no later than the third Friday before the end of the semester or their last day of classes, whichever comes first, for the semester that they are filing an appeal.

Note: We recommend that the student obtain an Educational Plan (comprehensive or abbreviated) based on their declared major from your Academic Counselor.

In their appeal, they must include the following:

- h. Why they failed to make Satisfactory Academic Progress; the student may include any documentation that may assist in the review of the appeal
- i. What has changed or what steps they have taken that will allow them to make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) by the end of the aid year (the student may include any documentation that may assist in the review of the appeal)
- j. If they have a Bachelor's Degree or higher, please explain why they are enrolled at a community college and the purpose of returning to a two-year or less academic program.

**If the student's appeal is approved, they will be placed on "Financial Aid Probation" for one payment period (one semester) only, and they must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and comply with any specific conditions in their appeal decision. They must meet the reinstatement conditions as described in Section J below. THE DECISION OF THE APPEAL COMMITTEE IS FINAL.** 34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(8)(i), (b), and (c), 34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(8)(ii), (b), (c), and (d)

## **J. REINSTATEMENT FROM SECOND DISQUALIFICATION**

34 C.F.R. §668.34(a)(8)(ii), (b), (c), and (d)

A student may apply again for financial aid after complying with all the specific conditions in their previous appeal decision and they must be enrolled in at least six applicable units or in the remaining units required to complete their current degree or program. We will evaluate their enrollment and progress at the end of the semester and after final grades have been posted to determine if they have followed these conditions and are therefore, under federal regulations, eligible for one additional semester of aid under "Financial Aid Probation". If it is determined that they did not follow all the conditions, they will be sent a notification of their disqualification.

They may need to submit a new appeal for every academic term they want to be considered for further financial aid. Reinstatement is not an automatic process and is not guaranteed.

## **K. APPLICABILITY OF THESE STANDARDS**

These standards apply to the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work Study (FWS), Federal Direct Loan Program, Cal Grant programs, and any other Federal or State programs that may be required to follow these standards. These standards supersede all previous standards.

The "Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Recipients" was approved by the San Diego Community College District Student Services Council on **June 1, 2023.**