Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

Purpose

All recipients of financial assistance are required to meet satisfactory academic progress (SAP) according to Federal regulations and policies set by Randolph Community College (RCC). The intent of these policies is to ensure that students who are receiving financial assistance are making measurable progress toward completion of an approved degree, diploma, or certificate program in a reasonable period of time and within a reasonable number of credit hours attempted in their program of study.

Scope

Regulations require a student's progress for financial assistance purposes to meet both the Grade Point Average (GPA) and Pace of Progression standards. In addition to a student's cumulative grade point average, students are also required to pass a percentage of all attempted coursework, and to complete their program of study within the maximum timeframe established by the institution. To reasonably measure a student's academic progress for financial assistance, the student's academic record will be evaluated including credit hours earned at other post-secondary institutions and transferred into the student's program of study at RCC. This requirement applies to all students who apply for financial assistance from Federal, State and Institutional aid.

Standards of Progress

To receive financial assistance, the student must maintain satisfactory academic progress toward an eligible program of study. There are two standards in the Office of Financial Assistance standards of progress that students receiving financial assistance must meet in order to maintain satisfactory academic progress:

Grade Point Average (GPA) Standard

The minimum **cumulative** grade point average (GPA) requirement the student must maintain to receive and/or continue receiving financial assistance is **2.0**. This includes all degree, diploma and certificate programs.

Pace of Progression Standard - 67 % Completion Rate and 150% Maximum Timeframe

The student must maintain the minimums as listed below:

Completion Rate Requirement:

The student must successfully complete 67% of the cumulative credit hours attempted to meet the minimum requirement. Example: if the student attempts 60 credit hours during enrollment, the student must successfully complete 40 credit hours (60 hours attempted x 67% = 40 hours). **For purposes of rounding, students who achieve a completion rate of 66.7% or higher are considered to have met the 67% completion rate requirement.** Successful completion is defined as receiving a grade of "A", "A*", "B", "B*", "C", "C*", "D", "P", "P1", "P2", or "P3".

Note: In response to the national emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, RCC added two new grades to the curriculum grading schemes, the Incomplete Emergency (IE) and Withdraw Emergency (WE) grades. A student given an Incomplete Emergency "IE" with an expectation that coursework will be completed within a period specified by the college, a maximum of one year, to avoid receiving a failing grade for a course that a student is unable to complete given the unique nature of a national emergency. Students who need to withdraw at any point during a semester as a result of a national emergency (e.g. COVID-

19 pandemic) may request a Withdrawal Emergency (WE) to avoid grade penalty. The Office of Enrollment Management will assist the student in this process to ensure appropriate documentation is obtained and processed in a timely manner, and this grade is not counted against the student's qualitative or quantitative components of SAP.

Maximum Timeframe:
The maximum timeframe for a student to complete a program is 150% of the published length of the program. Example: if 75 credit hours are required to complete a degree, the student may attempt a maximum of 113 credit hours before the student exceeds his eligibility for financial assistance (75 credit hour program x 150% = 113). One academic year of credit (30 credit hours) may be added for required remedial coursework.

If a student is pursuing more than one program of study, maximum timeframe standards of 150% will be applied, toward each program, for all attempted hours. Students may receive financial assistance for two programs of study while attending RCC. If the student should need additional periods of enrollment to complete the additional program(s) or if the student has a valid reason for pursuing an additional program of study, appeal procedures noted within this satisfactory academic progress policy may be applied.

Treatment of Selected Grades:

Withdrawals: Credit hours in which a student receives a grade of "W", "WF", "FW", or "AW" are included in the number of attempted hours, but do not count toward successfully completed hours. A grade of "WF" or "FW" also affects a student's GPA. This is considered an unofficial withdrawal. Students who withdraw may have difficulty meeting the satisfactory academic progress requirements.

Incompletes and Failing Grades: Credit hours in which a student receives a grade of "I" or "F" are included in the number of attempted hours, but do not count toward successfully completed hours. In addition, grades of "F" negatively affect GPA. Students with "incompletes" may have difficulty meeting the satisfactory academic progress requirements at the time of evaluation, but may request reevaluation upon completion.

Transfer Credit: Students transferring from another college will be considered making satisfactory progress at the time of enrollment at Randolph Community College. In addition to being factored into the completion rate requirement as attempted and completed credits, a student's maximum time to receive financial assistance will also be reduced by the equivalent transfer of credit hours towards his/her degree. All transfer credit hours and grades accepted from other institutions will be included in the calculation

Audit and No Show: Grades for audit "Y" or no show "NS" are not considered attempted coursework. Neither of these are included in the grade point average or completion rate determinations. A student cannot receive financial assistance for courses that he or she audits or is considered a no show (Y or NS).

Proficiency (Credit by Exam): While a credit by exam "X" is not included in the enrollment hours for purposes of awarding financial assistance, the credits will be counted in each component of the student's academic progress.

Repeat Courses: For financial assistance purposes, all hours attempted will continue to be counted in each component of the student's academic progress.

Developmental/Support Courses: Courses numbered less than 100 (i.e., MAT 001, ENG 002, MAT 010, ENG 011, etc.) are included in GPA calculations, as well as when calculating the 67 % Completion Rate. One academic year of credit (30 credit hours) may be added for required developmental coursework when calculating the 150% Maximum Timeframe.

Emergency Grades:
In response to the national emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, RCC added two new grades to the curriculum grading schemes, the Incomplete Emergency (IE) and Withdraw Emergency (WE) grades. A student given an Incomplete Emergency "IE" with an expectation that coursework will be completed within a period specified by the college, a maximum of one year, to avoid receiving a failing grade for a course that a student is unable to complete given the unique nature of a national emergency. Students who need to withdraw at any point during a semester as a result of a national emergency (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic) may request a Withdrawal Emergency (WE) to avoid grade penalty. The Office of Enrollment Management will assist the student in this process to ensure appropriate documentation is obtained and processed in a timely manner, and these grades are not counted against the student's qualitative or quantitative components of SAP.

Summer Session:
Credit hours attempted during a summer session will be included in the calculation of satisfactory academic progress, just as any other enrollment period.

Complete academic record:
In order to measure a student's satisfactory progress toward degree, diploma, or certificate requirements, the student's total academic record at RCC must be evaluated whether or not the student received financial assistance for the entire time of enrollment. This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken through dual enrollment and the Randolph Early College High School. When students complete course work for more than one program, college and financial assistance academic progress standards must be met for all programs to receive financial assistance.

Returning Students:
Returning students are evaluated on a continuing basis from the first enrollment at RCC, unless an extenuating circumstance is considered. Returning students who were previously enrolled under an academic progress policy other than the current academic progress policy will be required to meet the standards of the current policy upon returning.

Changes of Major or Program of Study:
Students receiving financial assistance are permitted to change majors, but may have difficulty completing the program within the Maximum Timeframe of 150% if the programs are not similar in course requirements. If a student graduates from an associate degree, diploma, or certificate, they can pursue a second degree, less applicable courses required for the second program of study. If the student reaches 150% of the program length, they can request an evaluation of the program to determine the number of credits available to complete the second program of study.

Academic Amnesty:
Satisfactory academic progress regulations do not provide for the concept of academic amnesty whereby students apply to have credits attempted or grades earned excluded from the institutions GPA calculation. All credits attempted and grades earned will be included in the students GPA and pace of progression standards.

Eligibility Status:

Satisfactory: This status is achieved when all criteria explained above are met. Satisfactory progress will be examined at the end of each semester to determine if the student met the standards of progress and is eligible to continue to receive financial assistance.

Warning: A student (who is not currently on Warning status) will go from satisfactory to warning status if they fail to maintain the required 2.0 cumulative GPA and/or the required 67% completion rate. The warning period will last for one semester, unless the student fails to enroll, they would be at a warning status upon their return.

Suspension: Students on Warning status who have not attained at least the required 2.0 cumulative GPA and/or the required 67% completion rate, will have their financial assistance suspended at the conclusion of the Warning period.

Probation: If a status of Suspension is appealed and approved, a status of Probation is assigned. This status requires students to maintain both a term GPA greater than or equal to 3.00 and a term completion rate equal to 100%. In order to achieve a completion rate equal to 100%, a student must successfully complete each course enrolled for the term. If a student withdraws or fails a course during a term dropping the term completion rate below 100%, or does not maintain a term GPA greater than or equal to 3.00, the appeal is terminated and the student will return to a financial assistance Suspension status.

Warning Near Maximum Timeframe: Students who have attempted approximately 100% of the maximum allowable credit hours for their program of study will receive a courtesy notification status of Warning Near Maximum Timeframe. Students receiving this status will continue to receive financial assistance until they reach 150% of their program of study, at which time they will have their financial assistance suspended and be assigned a status of Maximum Timeframe.

Maximum Timeframe: Students who have attempted the maximum allowable credit hours, 150% of their program of study, will have their financial assistance suspended.

Notification of Financial Assistance Warning, Suspension, Probation, Warning Near Maximum Timeframe or Maximum Timeframe: The Office of Financial Assistance will send correspondence to any student who is placed on financial assistance Warning, Suspension, Probation, Warning Near Maximum Timeframe or Maximum Timeframe.

Regaining Eligibility: Students who attend RCC (with or without federal financial assistance) may regain financial assistance eligibility by meeting the GPA and pace of progression standards of this policy. A student may request reconsideration of eligibility for financial assistance by submitting an appeal to the Office of Financial Assistance once all requirements are met.

Appeal of Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards:

Suspension: Students who have been suspended from receiving financial assistance may appeal to the Office of Financial Assistance to waive the academic progress requirements where there are extenuating circumstances or when a period of ten years or more has passed since the student was last enrolled. A student may submit written documentation to the Office of Financial Assistance by completing the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Request form that explains the extenuating circumstances that have affected academic performance and what has changed that will allow them to make satisfactory academic progress. Supporting documentation must be submitted with the appeal. Circumstances may

include, but are not limited to illness or injury, the death of a family member, or other extenuating circumstances.

If a status of Suspension is appealed and approved, a status of Probation is assigned. This status requires students to maintain both a term GPA greater than or equal to 3.00 and a term completion rate equal to 100%. In order to achieve a completion rate equal to 100%, a student must successfully complete each course enrolled for the term. If a student withdraws or fails a course during a term dropping the term completion rate below 100%, or does not maintain a term GPA greater than or equal to 3.00, the appeal is terminated and the student will return to a Suspension status.

Maximum Timeframe: Students who exceed the maximum timeframe to complete a program of study must appeal and provide the documentation required on the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Request form. They may appeal based on a change in academic program or a previous graduation from a program at RCC. If a status of Maximum Timeframe is appealed and approved, a status of Warning Near Maximum Timeframe is assigned and remaining eligibility is determined.

The process for appeal is as follows:

1. A student may appeal in writing to the Office of Financial Assistance using the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Request form explaining why satisfactory academic progress requirements were not met and what has changed that will allow him/her to make satisfactory academic progress. Documentation of extenuating circumstances is required and specified according to the student's situation on the Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Request form.

2. If a student disagrees with the determination by the Office of Financial Assistance, the Standard Grievance Procedure in the College Catalog must be followed.