

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policies

(Note: This Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy is subject to change at any time due to federal and state regulations and/or requirements established by Financial Aid Services)

Federal and state financial aid regulations require schools to set minimum standards for satisfactory academic progress and to hold students accountable for meeting the standards. Satisfactory Academic Progress is checked prior to awarding aid, even if students did not receive financial aid in past quarters. It is also checked at the end of every quarter aid is received. **Satisfactory Academic Progress is measured three ways: 1) Qualitative; 2) Quantitative; and Maximum Time Frame to complete degree/certificate program.** This document outlines the requirements for financial aid satisfactory academic progress at Tacoma Community College (TCC) and is subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to read and understand the standards for satisfactory progress. Students will be notified of all satisfactory progress issues via the email address used when completing the FAFSA, unless the student has provided the college with a preferred email address.

Faculty and staff other than financial aid staff are not required to know financial aid policies.

Tacoma Community College is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate. See full statement at <https://www.tacomacc.edu/about/policies/nondiscrimination-and-harassment-policy-and-grievance-procedure>.

FINANCIAL AID SAP DEFINITIONS

- **QUALITATIVE SAP STANDARDS:** Refers to SAP requirement to maintain a minimum of a 2.0 cumulative GPA (see Qualitative Standards section below for more information)
- **QUANTITATIVE SAP STANDARDS:** Refers to SAP requirement to maintain a rate of 67% or greater cumulative credit completion rate (see Quantitative Standards section below for more information)
- **FEDERAL AID:** Refers to Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Direct Loans and Federal Work Study.
- **STATE AID:** Refers to TCC Grant, Washington College Grant, College Bound, Washington Bridge Grant (program ends 2024-25), Passport to College, National Guard Grant, and State Work Study.
- **WARNING:** Students on warning are eligible for financial aid. A student placed on warning must successfully complete cumulative quantitative and qualitative SAP standards by the end of their next quarter. Failure to do so will result in a suspension and the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid funds.
- **SUSPENSION:** Students in suspended status are not eligible to receive financial aid funds. Review "Earning Reinstatement" in this document for information on how to submit an appeal if you were suspended due to extraordinary circumstances or qualify for self-reinstatement.
- **PROBATION:** Students on probation are students who have been suspended from financial aid and have had an Appeal for Financial Aid Reinstatement approved. Students reinstated to probation are required to follow specified conditions to maintain good standing. Conditions are discussed at the time an appeal is approved. Failure to meet these conditions during the probationary period will result in suspension of student financial aid for all future quarters.
- **PACE OF PROGRESSION:** Refers to student's rate of progression toward completing the degree requirements at TCC. This pace is determined based upon reviewing cumulative/total credits **earned** versus cumulative/total credits **attempted**. Earned credit describes all coursework where a grade above a 0.0 is received and credit is earned. Attempted credits include transfer/assessment credits and classes for which no grade was earned.

QUALITATIVE (GRADE POINT AVERAGE) STANDARDS

~Quarterly and/or self-reinstatement review~

All students must be in good standing with the college and maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better at the end of each quarter. Students wishing to begin financial aid for the first time must also be meeting this standard to be eligible for aid. Students failing to meet this standard may be placed on “warning” status for one quarter. A failure to regain a 2.0 cumulative GPA after the warning period will result in a suspension of financial aid eligibility for future quarters.

QUANTITATIVE (PACE OF PROGRESSION) STANDARDS

~Quarterly and/or self-reinstatement review~

Students must complete at least 67% of the cumulative/total credits **completed/earned** versus cumulative/total credits **attempted**, including transfer/assessment credits and classes for which no passing grade was earned, to meet **pace of progression** requirements. Pace of progression is reviewed upon initial awarding of the file for the award year (an award year runs Fall to Summer quarter) **and** at the end of each quarter using the following calculation:

Total number of credits completed/earned at TCC

(Including transfer credits*)

÷

Total number of credits attempted at TCC

(Including transfer credits*, assessment credits and classes for which no passing grade was earned)

Grades of “E” (Not considered passing. No credit earned), “I” (incomplete), “IP” (course in progress), “N” (audit), “U” (unsatisfactory), and “W” (official withdrawal) do not count as completed credits. Only credits completed by the end of the scheduled quarter will count as “completed” for Satisfactory Academic Progress.

**Transfer credits must be officially evaluated by submitting an official transcript to Enrollment Services to be counted.*

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS EXAMPLES

1) Student Ima Superstar

- Ima attempts 15 credits for Fall quarter at TCC
- Ima completes/earns 10 of the 15 credits attempted for Fall **and** finishes Fall with a 2.48 cumulative GPA
- Ima has 10 transfer credits from a prior school

Total number of **attempted** credits: **25** (15 from Fall + 10 transfer credits)

Total number of **completed/earned** credits: **20** (10 from Fall + 10 transfer credits)

20 earned credits = **80% cumulative pace of progression rate & 2.4 cumulative GPA**
25 attempted credits

Ima is completing her program with a pace of progression of more than 67% and 2.0 cumulative GPA and remains in **good standing**.

2) Student Rainey Days

- Rainey attempts 45 credits for Fall, Winter and Spring quarter at TCC
- Rainey completes/earns 15 of the 45 credits attempted for Fall, Winter and Spring and has a cumulative GPA of 1.6
- Rainey has 0 transfer credits from a prior school

Total number of **attempted** credits: **45** (45 from Fall, Winter, Spring)

Total number of **completed/earned** credits: **15** (15 from Fall, Winter, Spring)

15 earned credits = **33% cumulative pace of progression rate & 1.6 cumulative GPA**
45 attempted credits

Rainey is not completing her program with a pace of progression of more than 67% or more (for good standing), or 50% or more (for warning status), or a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or greater, and is **suspended from financial aid**.

CONSEQUENCES OF MEETING/NOT MEETING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE STANDARDS:

GOOD STANDING: Students meeting a minimum of a 67% cumulative credit completion rate **and** 2.0 cumulative GPA or better, as reviewed each quarter.

WARNING STATUS: Students who fail to meet the 67% pace of progression and/or cumulative GPA standard, but complete 50% or more of their cumulative credits, may be placed on “warning” status for one quarter. A failure to regain a cumulative 67% pace of progression and/or a cumulative 2.0 GPA after the warning period will result in a suspension of financial aid eligibility for all future quarters. Students who fall into a warning status for two quarters in a row will be suspended from aid.

SUSPENSION STATUS: Students completing fewer than 50% of their cumulative credits, as reviewed each quarter, are placed on suspension status and will be ineligible for aid in future quarters. Students may be placed directly on suspension status after their first quarter if they do not meet qualitative or quantitative standards.

ENROLLMENT LEVEL/“CENSUS” POLICY DEFINITIONS

Financial aid amounts are initially awarded assuming a full-time enrollment level (12+ credits). Financial aid is available at levels below full-time. Students **must** notify Financial Aid Services in writing, using the Credit Load Change Form, prior to the start of the quarter to avoid any delays in receiving a possible refund.

Beginning with the 2024-2025 aid year, the Federal Pell Grant, Washington College Grant and College Bound Scholarship will no longer be based on enrollment status. Instead, disbursement amounts will be calculated using **Enrollment Intensity** – which is a percentage value based on the number of credits a student is enrolled in (rounded to the nearest whole percent) at Census. The chart below illustrates how enrollment intensity is determined based on credit load:

Credit Hours	Enrollment Category	Enrollment Intensity
12 (or more)	Full-Time	100% of the award
11	Three-Quarter Time	92% of the award
10		83% of the award
9		75% of the award
8		67% of the award
7	Half-Time	58% of the award
6		50% of the award
5		42% of the award
4	Less than Half-Time	33% of the award
3		25% of the award
2		17% of the award
1		8% of the award

Eligibility for some **federal** and **state** grant aid is based on the type of aid and the number of credits enrolled in as of the end of the last day to add/drop classes for the quarter, or the number of credits a student is registered in when a financial aid award is made, if after the add/drop deadline for the quarter. The last day to add/drop classes can be found online at “[Important Dates](#)”.

Enrollment levels will be checked at the end of the last day to add/drop class(es) deadline (census date) for the quarter. Award amounts will be adjusted to reflect the correct enrollment level as of this deadline. Changes to a student’s schedule after this date can result in an increase of financial aid with the exception of Federal Pell Grant. If a student’s aid was disbursed at an incorrect enrollment level, paid toward classes that were not required to complete the student’s degree with TCC or the student did not attend classes, they will owe a repayment of financial aid to the college and will be billed accordingly. ***It is the student’s responsibility to check with the financial aid office to verify how schedule changes may affect their financial aid.*** Faculty and staff other than financial aid staff are not required to know financial aid policies.

* **Audit status, Running Start, High School Completion (HS 21+ and Fresh Start), ELA, ABE, Transitional Studies, and Continuing Education credits are not financial aid eligible and do not count towards a student’s enrollment level and funding amounts.**

MAXIMUM TIME FRAME REQUIREMENT

Federal and state financial aid regulations limit the amount of funding students may receive based on the number of credits attempted. Taking classes that are not degree requirements may result in a financial aid repayment and will cause students to reach their maximum time frame more quickly and may prevent them from completing their intended degree. Students close to this limit will be required to request an appeal to be considered for aid and meet with an academic advisor to create an academic plan that documents the number of credits remaining to complete their degree. Submitting an appeal does not guarantee that a student will be approved to take the remaining classes required with the benefit of financial aid.

(***A maximum time frame warning notification will be issued when a student has attempted 125% of the credits required for their declared program. Once a student has attempted 150% of the credits for their declared program, financial aid will be suspended.)

Bachelor Degrees/Associate Degrees/Certificate Programs:

All attempted courses are counted, including incompletes, withdrawals, unofficial withdrawals, failed courses, audit classes, repeated courses, and transfer/assessment credits.

Running Start credits, transfer credits accepted from other institutions or from one completed program of study at TCC to another and assessment credits will count toward the time frame requirement.

The following courses do not count toward the time frame requirement:

ABE, ELA, High School Completion (HS 21+ and Fresh Start), non-credit courses, and up to 45 credits of remedial courses (remedial courses are for-credit English, Math, and Writing courses below the 100 level).

REMEDIAL OR PRE-REQUISITE COURSEWORK

For financial aid purposes, “for-credit remedial courses” are English, Math, and Writing courses which are deemed below the 100 level.

Pre-requisite means any course above 100 level needed to enter into minimum degree requirements at TCC.

A maximum of 45 for-credit remedial/pre-requisite courses will be excluded from the maximum time-limit requirement.

Once 45 credits have been reached, financial aid will no longer pay for these courses. Remedial and pre-requisite course progress is included in GPA/qualitative and Pace of Progression/quantitative standards.

CHANGING YOUR PROGRAM OF STUDY

If a student chooses to stop pursuing one program of study and switch to another one, the attempted credit count will not start over. All previously attempted credits will count toward the maximum allowed for your new program of study. Therefore, it is very important that you discuss your changes with Financial Aid Services so you can become informed about how many attempted credits you have remaining.

Students who are within 20 credits (including credits currently enrolled in) of completing their current program of study will not be permitted to change programs with the benefit of financial aid until their current program is completed.

REPEATED COURSEWORK

The retake of coursework using financial aid may be permissible under certain circumstances. All coursework that is retaken must be a requirement to complete your intended degree at TCC.

A student may receive financial aid for any repetition of a course as long as the student has never passed the course. However, once a student has passed a course (regardless if financial aid was used), the student may receive financial aid for only one retaking of that course, except when a pre-requisite requirement of 2.0 is needed to advance to the next course in the sequence. A student may not receive financial aid for any second or subsequent repetition of passed courses.

A reduction or repayment of financial aid may be required if it is determined that a student is repeating a course that does not qualify to be repeated.

Each time a class is repeated, whether or not financial aid paid for the course, the credits are counted again toward the maximum time limit requirement and/or the 45-credit limit for developmental courses.

ASSESSMENT CREDITS

Assessment credits refers to credits from Academic Credit for Prior Learning (ACPL), Advance Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or Portfolio credits (optional by department) accepted by the college toward your degree of study.

EARNING REINSTATEMENT AFTER BEING SUSPENDED FROM FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY

If you are suspended from financial aid eligibility for reasons other than having reached the maximum time frame requirement, you can earn reinstatement one of two ways:

a) Earn Reinstatement on Your Own (self-reinstatement)

Register and take classes/credits at TCC at your own expense (without the benefit of federal aid) until you meet the GPA/qualitative and Pace of Progression/quantitative requirements needed to complete your degree (see pace of progression standards above). For example, both your cumulative GPA is above a 2.0 and the total attempted credits versus your completed credits is 67% or greater. **Once a student meets the requirements to reinstate under this option, reinstatement is not automatic.** Students must notify the Financial Aid Services in writing, using an appeal form, stating they believe they have earned reinstatement. Reinstatement will not be granted until a complete review has been performed by Financial Aid Services. Financial Aid Services will also review the student's prior academic history and any other relevant information to make a decision on the appeal. A self-reinstatement student completing 67% or greater could still have an appeal denied if the student has a history of not successfully completing courses they have started.

b) Earn Reinstatement by having an "Appeal for Financial Aid Reinstatement" Approved

Submit, and secure approval of, a written documented appeal for reinstatement. The appeal should be based on unusual or extraordinary circumstances beyond your control that can be documented. Appeal forms are available online via the Financial Aid and Planning course on your Canvas page. If you were suspended after being on warning/probation, you can include in your petition any unusual or extraordinary circumstances, if applicable, that led to your being placed on warning/probation. If you submit an appeal and it is denied, you must earn reinstatement on your own (option "a", above).

NOTE: You cannot appeal any balance that is owing to the College as a result of Financial Aid Repayment/Return of Title IV Funds Policy or change in your enrollment prior to your census date. **Appeals for reinstatement are reviewed once per quarter. If you miss the appeal deadline for a particular quarter, your appeal will still be reviewed, but reinstatement of financial aid would be for future quarters. Appeals will only be accepted/reviewed once all balances are paid and requested documentation to complete your file is received.**

If you are suspended from financial aid eligibility because you have attempted the maximum number of credits allowed and would like to discuss this, please visit Financial Aid Services.

CONSORTIUM AGREEMENTS

Students who must take a required class at another college (the host college) must complete a Consortium Agreement which is signed by the host college's financial aid office prior to the start of the quarter in which a student is requesting the agreement. Consortia are only allowed once a student has met with an academic advisor and the advisor has determined that this is the only option for the student to meet their program requirements. The agreement and a copy of the registration from the host college must be submitted to our office. At the end of the quarter, grades from the host college must be submitted for our evaluation before any future financial aid will be disbursed.

CONCURRENT PROGRAMS VS. CONSECUTIVE PROGRAMS

Concurrent programs mean that a student is pursuing two programs simultaneously. At TCC, students may only pursue and receive financial aid for **one program of study at a time**. "Program of study" means either an associate's degree program or a certificate program that is 24 or more credits in length.

Consecutive programs mean that after completing one program, the student begins working towards a second program. Financial aid for the second program will not be awarded until the completion of the first program appears on the student's academic transcript. Students may only receive financial aid for 1 Associates (AA) degree program and 1 Associates in Applied Science-T (AAST) while at TCC. An education plan and degree audit are required and credits from the first program of study must be evaluated by an academic advisor for transferability to the second program. Financial aid will only fund remaining credits to complete the second degree per the education plan.

Note: All prior warning and suspension statuses will be carried forward to the new program of study, except when a student is accepted into a Bachelor's Degree program.