SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

In accordance with Federal and State regulations, these guidelines apply to all students requesting Title IV funds regardless of whether the Student has previously received Title IV aid. Financial aid recipients are required to meet Fullerton College’s Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements. SAP provides qualitative, quantitative and incremental standards by which the college can determine that students receiving federal financial aid funds are maintaining the satisfactory academic progress required for their course of study. Failure to maintain SAP will result in loss of financial assistance (other than the fee waiver).

Effective July 1st, 2011, new Federal regulations went into effect that significantly changed the SAP Policy. All students Must meet the new SAP beginning on that date. Among the changes are the removal of Probation 1 and Probation 2 from the SAP calculation. There are no exceptions to these new regulations.

The financial aid office reviews academic progress each semester for Fullerton College (which includes attempted units at Cypress College). All attempted units are counted, irrespective of whether or not financial aid was received. We count all incompletes (I’s), Withdrawals (W’s), Credit/No Credit, Pass/No Pass and all repeated coursework. Academic Renewal is not recognized for financial aid purposes, and is always counted in units attempted, GPA calculation, and maximum time frame, even when a more favorable grade was subsequently received, both attempts would be counted.

We will pay for failed courses and count the units in SAP, up to the maximum allowed by the College. Once a student passes a course, however, we will only pay for one subsequent attempt. Both attempts, even if aid was not received, will count in the SAP calculation.

If a student transfers in course work from other institutions, we will count all attempted units accepted in SAP calculation, for both progress and maximum time frame. Any student who contests units as not degree applicable, would need to follow the maximum time frame appeal process as outlined below.

When a student is not meeting SAP, Fullerton College will offer 1 semester (maximum) of financial aid warning before aid is disqualified for progress. There is no financial aid warning for maximum time frame.

Financial Aid Warning: Students who fail to complete SAP standards for progress (indicated above) will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. This is a warning to students and will not affect their financial aid. If, while on Financial Aid Warning, students fail to meet the SAP standards for the second time they will be placed on Disqualified status and all aid for the term will be cancelled. (With the exception of the BOG Fee Waiver.)

Attempted Maximum Time Frame: (generally 90 Units or more for most AA/AS programs, but maybe less): Students who have attempted 90 units (the maximum time frame limit of 150%) or more, are required to appeal each semester/school year to receive financial aid. Individual certificate programs have their own maximum time frame. To identify the maximum time frame, 100% of units required are taken plus an additional 50%. For example, a 30 unit certificate program has a maximum time frame of 45 units. It is critical that students take the correct classes required for their degree, as even passing one’s classes with a high GPA, does not ensure the student will be able to graduate within the 150% maximum time frame. Taking courses not required for one’s degree, may result in the student being cut off from receiving financial aid (see below.)

Important Information: If at any point in time it is determined that the Student cannot complete their course of study within the 150% timeframe (90 units for AA/AS, other certificate programs will vary), they will be immediately disqualified from future financial aid (with the exception of the BOG Fee Waiver), for the remainder of their program, even if currently meeting the SAP standards.

Remedial and ESL Courses: Financial aid may be received for remedial (basic skills) courses if the remedial courses are a prerequisite for entrance into a regular college program. Aid cannot be received for more than 30 attempted units of remedial coursework. ESL coursework must be part of an eligible program of study to receive financial aid. ESL coursework is not an approved program in itself. A student enrolled in ESL classes, who is not in an eligible program of study, is not eligible for financial aid funds. ESL and remedial coursework will count toward the 2.0 GPA and 67% units completion requirements (SAP Standard). However, ESL units will not count towards the maximum time frame limit and a maximum of 30 attempted remedial units will be subtracted from the total; when maximum time frame units are being counted.

Regaining Eligibility: Students who are DISQUALIFIED from receiving aid can regain their eligibility by meeting the SAP standards which would be to complete the required 67% of the attempted units and raise the cumulative GPA to at least 2.0, and be under the maximum time frame for their program.

BA/BS Degree Students:

Students who have already completed a BA/BS program and are enrolled in an AA/AS program at Fullerton College will be unable to appeal for Title IV aid. Only those students enrolled in a certificate program will be allowed to submit their BA/BS “Official Sealed” transcripts to the Financial Aid Office for review by the department granting the certificate.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Fullerton College Financial Aid Office will be participating as an experimental site with the United States Department of Education. As an experimental site, the Fullerton College Financial Aid Office is participating in three initiatives:

- Pell Grants for students with a prior BA degree, who are enrolled in an eligible certificate program.
- Early disbursement for Direct Stafford loans for Study Abroad students.
- Single term disbursement for Direct Stafford loans for one semester Study Abroad students.
Not every student who meets criteria will be awarded aid under these initiatives. Interested students will be selected at random by the United States Department of Education. Students with additional questions may contact the Financial Aid Office directly.

Eligibility
To become eligible to receive financial aid at Fullerton College, Students must: submit a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to the Department of Education (DOE) to establish eligibility; complete a Financial Aid File, and adhere to the following requirements:
1. Enroll in a Title IV eligible program for the purpose of completing an Associate Degree, an eligible certificate program, or transfer requirements.
2. Maintain a Fullerton College cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above.
3. Complete 67% of the total number of units attempted cumulatively at Fullerton College, irrespective of if aid was received.
4. Complete an educational program within the maximum timeframe (150%) of the published program’s required units at Fullerton College.

Pace of Progression:
Student must complete an appropriate number of units each semester in order to complete their program within the maximum time frame, or 150%. A guideline to assist you is as follows:

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Note: SAP status at Cypress College is carried over and shared with Fullerton College, ie. Units are added together when determining the maximum timeframe limit.

Financial Aid Disqualification
Students who do not meet the SAP standards listed above will be subject to disqualification from receiving further financial aid (other than the BOG Fee Waiver.) SAP standards are checked and verified each semester. Generally, a student who is disqualified from financial aid must meet SAP standards by completing at least a successful semester without financial aid, and meet all SAP eligibility criteria to regain eligibility.

Appeal Process
Before students can appeal for financial aid, it is MANDATORY they attend a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Workshop. Please log onto the FC Financial Aid Website to view dates, times and instructions on how to sign-up for a mandatory SAP Workshop at http://financialaid.fullcoll.edu, click “2014-2015 SAP Workshops” Limited seats are available. It is also required that any student appealing for their aid, must have completed a financial aid file.

Appeals: Students may not meet SAP for the following reasons:
- Students have reached the maximum time frame of their program. 90 units have been attempted (unit count varies for certificate programs).
- Did not complete with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or better.
- Did not complete 67% of attempted units cumulatively.

Once the student reaches their maximum time frame, and/or does not meet the SAP Policy after one semester of financial aid warning, they will be disqualified from receiving additional assistance other than the BOG fee waiver.

Under certain conditions, a student may be eligible to appeal for reinstatement of aid, without meeting the SAP Policy. Each institution has the option of allowing or not allowing appeals and if allowed, must explain what options are available and who is eligible for an appeal. At Fullerton College, appeals are offered in the fall and spring semesters only, during a specified period of time. Students who are disqualified will receive notification of their option to appeal via myGateway, and will include the time period that appeals will be accepted during a given semester.

Such reasons a student may be eligible to appeal include:
- BA/BS Degree completed. Not eligible for grants, loans only. Student must document that they have enrolled in a certificate program and provide documentation as to why they cannot seek employment in their prior field of study. All prior coursework must be evaluated first by the department granting the certificate, to determine what units are applicable to the new course of study. Those applicable units must be below the maximum time frame for the current program in order for the appeal to be approved.
- Disqualified student extenuating circumstances (beyond the student’s control) that prevented him/her from meeting SAP standards (documentation substantiating statements must be submitted.) A SEPP form (or Student Educational Program Plan) would not be required.
- Change in major or program of study. In order for an appeal to be approved, the new unit count (once all non degree applicable attempted units are backed out) must be under the new maximum time frame. A SEPP form (or Student Educational Program Plan) would be required. A formal change of major with Admissions and Records must be submitted prior to completing the appeal process.
- Student has reached the maximum time frame of attempted units, but a portion of the unit total is comprised of remedial coursework, which would reduce the unit attempted total. A SEPP form (or Student Educational Program Plan) would not be required.
- Student has reached 90 units, completed their program, and is working on transfer units. A SEPP form (Student Educational Program Plan) would be required. (Note: Only
students completing a program at Fullerton College, and completing transfer requirements in order to transfer to a 4 year institution will be considered for reinstatement. A student coming to Fullerton College from a university, taking classes, and then returning to a university would not be eligible for Title IV funds at Fullerton College. A SEPP form (Student Educational Program Plan) would be required. The student must indicate remedial/ESL coursework on their appeal.

• Currently, we will only allow for a maximum of two program changes in order to receive aid, with certain caveats.

NOTE: Although some conditions (above) do not “require” a SEPP form, students are encouraged to see a counselor and develop a Student Educational Program Plan within completion of their first calendar year at Fullerton College, to ensure they are taking the appropriate required coursework for their program, so that they are not disqualified for continued financial aid assistance before they complete their program.

Extenuating circumstances must ALWAYS be documented or the appeal will not be reviewed. Extenuating circumstances are considered to be (but not limited to):

1. Serious illness, injury or medical condition requiring doctor’s care.
2. Death of an immediate family member or
3. Extenuating circumstances that were beyond the student’s control.

Submit a thorough and clearly written explanation online, indicating the extenuating circumstance that prevented the student from making SAP. Supporting documentation must be submitted to the financial aid office in order for the appeal to be reviewed. This must be documentation of extenuating circumstances for the semesters where there was a lack of progress, and must match up with the written explanation, OR a SEPP for a change of major. Students should be aware of why they are appealing and state that on the online appeal. Incorrect or contradictory appeals will be denied, and the student will not be able to resubmit their appeal during that semester. For this reason, it is mandatory that all students who are considering submitting an appeal, attend a SAP workshop beforehand.

On the appeal, students must provide the following information for consideration:

1. Why the student failed to meet SAP
2. What has changed to allow the student to make SAP at the next evaluation

Each appeal will be reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid and recommended for approval or denial based upon the student’s individual circumstances.

All decisions are final and there is no higher appeal.

Appeals approved will be placed on financial aid probation and receive payment for one semester.

Appeals considered for approval must pass the litmus test of determining that the student will be able to meet the SAP Policy at the end of the financial aid probation period. If a student’s progress is such that there is no way they will be able to meet the SAP Policy at the end of the financial aid probation, their appeal will be denied.

It is important to remember that generally, students become eligible for financial assistance again when they are once again meeting the SAP policy. The appeals process is designed to be the exception to the rule when extenuating circumstances exist outside the student’s control and/or a change of major occurred where the student is now under the maximum time frame for the new program. Students should identify why they were disqualified and what their reasons are before they consider submitting a formal appeal. For this reason, we offer SAP workshops each semester, and disqualified students are mandated to attend. Dates, times and locations are available on the Financial Aid Office website.

UNUSUAL ENROLLMENT HISTORY

As of 2013-2014, students who have enrolled at multiple schools in a brief period of time may be flagged on their Student Aid Report. If a student is flagged, in order to be considered for Federal Student Aid, the student would need to bring copies of official transcripts for all Institutions of Higher Education attended to the Fullerton College Financial Aid Office. Based on this information, the student may be automatically approved, or the student may need to appeal. If an appeal is required, the student will need to obtain and complete the appeal form from myGateway, and submit it to the Financial Aid Office with documentation to support the statements on their appeal. The appeal will then be reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid, and this decision is final. There is no higher appeal.

Appeal online form

Students who are disqualified from financial aid and have met the requirements to appeal will find the appeal form on line in myGateway. Upon submission of the form electronically, the student would be required to submit any required supporting documentation separately to our office, before the appeal will be reviewed. The student will receive no additional request to submit supporting documentation if they fail to do so. Complete appeals, with supporting documentation, are reviewed within six to eight weeks of submission. Students can log back into myGateway and click on the “Messages” tab in order to follow their status.

All appeal decisions from the Director of Financial Aid are FINAL.

Legislation and governmental regulations are continually changing the face of student financial aid. The information contained in this brochure is correct as of the time of this publication 3/2014. However, information is subject to change without notice.

Form written and developed by Greg Ryan
3/2014