

## Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards

Federal and state regulations require that students meet certain academic standards to be eligible for financial aid. The basic Satisfactory Academic Progress standards are:

- 1) Maintain a 2.0 cumulative grade point average for all JSCC courses;
- 2) Successfully complete at least 66.67% of attempted credit hours;
- 3) Must be seeking a first associate degree.

Grades are evaluated to determine Satisfactory Academic Progress at the end of each term. There is a process for appealing to the financial aid committee if requirements are not met. The deadline to appeal is seven (7) days prior to the start of the term being appealed. The following provides more information on each one of these standards:

### **GPA: Cumulative Grade Point Requirement**

Students must maintain a **2.0 cumulative GPA** for all JSCC credit hours attempted. This GPA includes both undergraduate level and Learning Support level courses. Grades for transfer courses from another institution will not be included in this GPA. Students who do not maintain the required 2.0 GPA will be placed in a financial aid **warning status**. This means the student is one semester away from losing their financial aid. The student remains eligible for financial aid during the warning semester. If the 2.0 cumulative GPA is not met after the warning semester, the student will be on Financial Aid Suspension.

### **Pace of Completion: Measurable Progress Requirement**

Students are expected to maintain progress toward the completion of their degree. Therefore, students must have an overall completion rate of 66.67% of all hours attempted. This includes repeated courses and transfer credit hours from other institutions. This does not include Learning Support courses from other institutions. The Pace of Completion is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of hours earned by the cumulative number of hours attempted. Repeated and previously passed courses can cause a student's Pace of Completion to decrease. Students who do not meet this standard will be placed in a financial aid warning status which means the student is one semester away from losing their financial aid. The student remains eligible for financial aid during the warning semester. If the Pace of Completion is not met after the warning semester, the student will be on Financial Aid Suspension.

### **Warning Status:**

Students who do not meet the **GPA** or **Pace of Completion** standards will be placed on financial aid warning status and may continue to receive financial aid for one semester without an appeal. This applies to transfer and readmitted students. A student who meets the standards at the end of the warning semester will return to good standing. A student who fails to meet the standards at the end of the warning semester will be on Financial Aid Suspension.

### **Financial Aid Suspension / Unsatisfactory Academic Progress**

Students who do not meet the **GPA** or **Pace of Completion** standards for two consecutive terms are determined to not be making Satisfactory Academic Progress. Failure to make Satisfactory Academic Progress results in the loss of eligibility to receive federal aid, which includes the work-study program, as well as state funds from the TSAA and HOPE Lottery scholarship programs. Once a student becomes ineligible for aid due to Unsatisfactory Academic Progress, they are not eligible to receive financial aid until the standards have once again been met. Students may attend classes and pay for them from their own resources until satisfactory progress has been re-established.

Loss of financial aid eligibility may be appealed in writing to the Student Aid & Awards Committee. The appeal process is outlined below.

### **Maximum Time Limit: Reasonable Length of Time Requirement**

**Pace of Completion** is important because financial aid does not last forever. A reasonable length of time for completion of a degree is defined as "no longer than 150% of the length of the program". For example, a student enrolled in a degree program that requires 60 credit hours must complete all requirements by the time they have attempted 90 hours (60 hours x 150% = 90 hours). Students will not be considered to have reached the 150% hour maximum until after the semester in which they reach or exceed the attempted hours allowed. However, students will be immediately suspended from all federal aid upon determination that it is not possible to meet graduation requirements within the 150% limit. All transfer credit hours count

toward the attempted hours, including withdrawals. Learning Support hours are excluded from this limit. Once the required credit hours to earn a degree have been completed, students are no longer eligible to receive aid.

### **Learning Support Limit**

Students can receive aid for up to 30 attempted credit hours of Learning Support (remedial or developmental) coursework. Examples include Math Lab or Reading Lab. Learning Support courses transferred into JSCC will be included in the 30 total hours of eligibility. This 30-credit hour limit cannot be appealed.

### **Incomplete Grades**

In cases where a student is assigned a grade of "I", the student will be evaluated accordingly. These grades do not impact GPA. These grades also do not count as completed or earned hours. If the grade is subsequently changed, the student's SAP status may be re-evaluated.

### **Repeated Courses**

All credits from repeated courses will be counted toward maximum hours. Students may repeat a previously passed course once and be eligible for payment on the repeat. Students may repeat a failed course until it is passed and be eligible for payment. Repeated courses may impact a student's Pace of Completion.

### **Transfer / Readmitted Students**

Satisfactory Academic Progress is determined according to the policy in effect for the current semester. All academic transcripts must be received and evaluated by JSCC prior to determining satisfactory academic progress for financial aid. All transfer credit hours posted by the college will be counted as attempted hours for calculating pace of completion. Transfer/readmitted students who have attained an associate degree or higher, or reached the 150% maximum time limit, will be ineligible for financial aid.

### **Dual Enrollment Credit Hours**

Students entering JSCC with dual enrollment credit hours immediately after receiving their high school diploma, or equivalent, will be coded as good standing for financial aid purposes. Upon completion of the first term at JSCC those dual enrollment credit hours will be included in the appropriate categories of Satisfactory Academic Progress.

### **Academic Fresh Start**

Students granted an Academic Fresh Start remain accountable for all academic work on their record for financial aid purposes. The appeal process is available if necessary for aid. All attempted hours will still be considered when evaluating **Maximum Time Limit**.

### **Appeal Process**

Any loss of eligibility for financial aid because of this policy may be appealed in writing to the Student Aid & Awards Committee. In some cases, a student's failure to follow one or more of these requirements is due to events beyond the student's control. If unusual or extreme circumstances can be documented for a specific term(s) or relevant timeframe, the student may be able to submit an appeal to regain eligibility for financial aid. Examples of situations that may be considered beyond a student's control include, but are not limited to: the death of a relative; injury or illness of the student or a family member; family difficulties resulting from divorce, strained relationships, finances, work or balancing family responsibilities.

#### Appeal Process

Students must include:

- A signed and dated appeal letter explaining the circumstances that led to the student failing to make Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Appropriate support documents related to the event or circumstances
- A statement detailing the circumstances that have changed that will now allow the student to make Satisfactory Academic Progress during future terms
- A completed Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form
- An academic plan signed by the student and the advisor

### **Academic Plans**

The academic plan is a semester-by-semester list of all courses required for graduation in the student's current program of study. The student works with their academic advisor to create the academic plan. The college may void an approved academic plan if the student changes majors, deviates from the plan, or does not enroll for the initial term for which the appeal is approved.

### **Financial Aid Probation**

The status of financial aid probation will be assigned to a student who has had financial aid eligibility reinstated. Conditions may be imposed for a student's continued eligibility to receive aid. The student may receive aid for one semester, after which the student must be making satisfactory progress, or multiple semesters under an approved academic plan.

**Appeal Deadlines**

Appeals and supporting documentation should be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the start of the term for which the student is appealing. Appeals submitted after the deadline or without the required documentation may result in an automatic denial, or may be held until the next term for committee review. Students without an appeal decision at the beginning of the term are responsible for payment of their tuition and fees. No class schedule will be held due to a pending appeal decision.

**Notification**

It is the student's responsibility to stay informed of the satisfactory academic progress standards and to monitor their own progress. Students may check their status at any time by logging into their jWeb account. The Financial Aid Office will notify, by letter or email to the student's JSCC email address, any student that does not meet minimum satisfactory academic progress requirements as well as the results of any appeal. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the Records Office informed of their correct mailing and e-mail address.

The termination of eligibility to receive financial assistance has no effect on the right to enroll as a student at Jackson State. Students may enroll and pay with their own resources as long as they are not academically suspended as well. Appeals submitted for financial aid are separate from academic suspension. If a student has been academically suspended, they need to contact the Admissions and Records office.

Policy effective term: Spring 2023 SAP Review (for Summer/Fall 2023 eligibility status)