

## Satisfactory Academic Progress

### I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to meet the federal requirements established by the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by Congress, for students receiving financial aid. 34 CFR 668.34

### II. Scope

This policy applies to all students receiving Title IV aid, applicable state aid programs, and all institutionally administered financial aid and scholarship programs.

### III. Policy

#### SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

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

- 1) students are expected to maintain a satisfactory grade point average;
- 2) students are expected to successfully complete at least 67% of the classes they attempt; (A grade of A, B, C, D, or P will be required for successful completion. Grades of W, I, E, AU, F or FA are not considered completions.)
- 3) students are expected to complete their program in a timely manner; and
- 4) students must also be working on their first associate degree or qualified certificate.

All coursework is evaluated for financial aid purposes whether or not financial aid was received for that work. These standards will be evaluated at the end of each semester. The following provides more information on each of these standards.

#### **Qualitative: Term Grade Point Average**

Students who do not earn any credits in any one semester will be considered to be making unsatisfactory academic progress. Additionally, these students may be responsible for repayment of federal aid received for that term. A warning period does not apply to these students.

#### **Quantitative: Cumulative Grade Point Requirement**

Students must meet the retention standards of the college in order to maintain eligibility and remain in good standing. A student must maintain a minimum overall GPA based on the number of hours attempted (including transfer and learning support studies, if applicable) on the following scale.

| DEGREE PROGRAMS                   |                               | CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS              |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Cumulative Hours Attempted</u> | <u>Minimum Cumulative GPA</u> | <u>Cumulative Hours Attempted</u> | <u>Minimum Cumulative GPA</u> |
| 0.0-14 –                          | no minimum                    | 1-6                               | 1.0                           |
| 14.1-26.0                         | 1.00                          | 7-13                              | 1.5                           |
| 26.1-40.0                         | 1.40                          | 14-20                             | 1.9                           |
| 40.1-48.0                         | 1.70                          | 21 or more                        | 2.0                           |
| 48.1-56.0                         | 1.90                          |                                   |                               |
| 56.1-above                        | 2.00                          |                                   |                               |

### Warning

Students who do not meet the retention standards will automatically be placed on financial aid warning and may continue to receive financial aid for one payment period. A student who meets the retention standards while on warning status will return to good academic standing.

### Pace: Measurable Progress Requirement

Students are expected to maintain progress toward the completion of their degree. Therefore, students must have an overall completion rate of 67% of all hours attempted. Hours attempted include all hours transferred in to Dyersburg State Community College and all hours enrolled in at Dyersburg State Community College *on the institution's official enrollment reporting date*. Class hours that are withdrawn, repeated, or earn incomplete grades after the institution's official enrollment reporting date **are included in attempted hours**. The completion rate is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of hours successfully completed by the cumulative number of hours attempted. Students who do not keep pace with this progression requirement will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress.

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

A reasonable length of time for completion of an associate degree program at Dyersburg State is defined as no more than 90 hours of college-level credit hours. A reasonable length of time for completion of a certificate program is defined as no more than 150% of the published length of the program. Once the required courses to earn a degree have been completed, students are no longer eligible to receive aid. Students must be working toward their first associate degree or certificate. Additionally, a student's eligibility may be determined earlier if it becomes mathematically impossible for the student to complete the program within the maximum timeframe.

Examples:

Michael is in a 60-credit degree, (150% of that equals 90) and he has attempted 55 credits but only successfully completed 25. He needs 35 more to graduate, and adding the 35 he needs to the 55 he has attempted equals 90. He has met the standard.

Mary is in a 60-credit degree, (150% of that equals 90) and has attempted 56 credits but only successfully completed 20. She needs 40 more credits to graduate, but adding the 40 to her 56 attempted credits equals 96. She has not met the standard.

### Learning Support

If a student is required to take learning support courses, he/she can receive additional financial assistance for up to 30 hours of coursework. Transfer credits will be included in the total hours of eligibility. All attempts including withdrawals, repeats, and E grades count toward the maximum number of hours attempted. Federal aid for a student who has exceeded this maximum will be based on college level courses only. This time limit **cannot** be appealed.

### Incomplete Grades

Courses for which an "I" grade is received will be processed with 0 quality points and 0 attempted hours until the incomplete grade is finalized.

### **Probation**

The status of Financial Aid Probation will be assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and *who has appealed* and has had eligibility for aid reinstated. Conditions may be imposed for a student's continued eligibility to receive Title IV aid. During this time, the student may receive aid for **ONE** payment period. After Financial Aid Probation, the student must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress or successfully following an academic plan. If not, the student will be suspended from aid. A student suspended from aid other than the maximum time limit may re-establish eligibility by attending at his/her own expense until he/she meets the minimum standards.

### **Transfer Coursework**

All prior grades and hours taken at other institutions must be reviewed prior to receiving financial aid at Dyersburg State Community College. Only transfer credits officially accepted by Dyersburg State Community College will be counted in the maximum number of allowable semester credit hours for financial aid eligibility. Students who have reached the 150% limit or achieved a degree will be ineligible for financial aid.

### **Repeated Coursework**

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.

### **Appeal Process**

The appeal is the process by which a student who is not meeting the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards petitions for reconsideration of eligibility for aid. In some cases, a student's failure to be in compliance with one or more of these requirements is due to events totally beyond the student's control. If such extreme circumstances can be documented for the specific term(s) when the deficiencies occurred, the student may submit an appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. **Appeals will only be considered for documented extreme circumstances.** Examples of situations that may be considered beyond a student's control include: the death of a relative, an injury or illness of the student, or other special circumstances. An appeal request must be submitted in writing to the Director of Financial Aid accompanied by appropriate supporting documents, which may include documents requested by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee makes recommendations to the President.

A student wishing to appeal the action of this committee should submit a written appeal to the Dean of Student Services within five calendar days from date of notification of the committee's decision. If further action is deemed necessary, an appeal of a decision of the Dean of Student Services will be made in writing to the Vice President of the College, and further appeal will be made in writing to the President, if desired.

Each of these appeals must be made in writing within five calendar days of notification of the previous appeal decision. A student may appeal following the warning period if there is a warning period. The appeal must include why the student failed to make satisfactory academic standards and what has changed that will allow the student to make satisfactory academic progress at the end of the next term or a designated point in time. All appeals must be accompanied by an academic plan signed by an advisor which outlines how the student will be able to get back on track for successful completion by the end of the next semester or by a specific point in time and appropriate documentation.

The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review the appeal and the academic plan and approve or disapprove the reinstatement of aid. If the student fails to follow the approved academic plan or the appeal is not approved, **all aid will stop until the student has re-established eligibility at his/her own expense.**

Failure to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards results in the loss of eligibility to receive federal aid which includes grant, loan, and work-study programs. Eligibility is also lost for the state grant program and may result in loss of eligibility for the lottery programs. These standards also apply to all programs administered by Dyersburg State Community College.

Students must anticipate a minimum of three weeks for the Appeals Committee to review the appeal and make a decision on their request. Failure to provide required supporting documentation will delay the appeal process. Students who file an appeal *within 3 weeks of or after the semester payment due date* are responsible for securing their classes via payment to the Business Office. An appeal filed during this period WILL NOT hold students in classes. Proper payment arrangements must be made timely with the Business Office. Any credit balances resulting from approved appeal awards will be refunded accordingly.

#### **Notification**

The Office of Financial Aid will notify by letter and/or electronic notification to the student DSCC email account any student receiving financial assistance that does not meet minimum satisfactory progress. This notice will be addressed to the student's most current local address on file with the Office of Financial Aid. It shall be the responsibility of the student to inform the Financial Aid Office of correct postal and email addresses.

#### **Repayment of Aid**

Students who officially or unofficially withdraw from the College during any semester will be expected to repay an appropriate amount of aid awarded. (Exception: Federal College Work-Study Program) Students should familiarize themselves with the Return of Title IV Funds Policy.

The termination of eligibility to receive financial assistance has no effect on the right of the students to enroll at Dyersburg State Community College.

Effective July 1, 2014

## **IV. Compliance**

All employees of Dyersburg State Community College are responsible for adhering to this policy.

## **V. Definitions**

**Appeal:** A process by which a student who is not meeting the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards petitions the institution for reconsideration of the student's eligibility for financial aid.

**Attempted Hours:** Hours attempted include all hours transferred in and all hours enrolled in at Dyersburg State Community College *on the institution's official enrollment reporting date*. Class hours that are withdrawn, repeated, or

earn incomplete grades after the institution's official enrollment reporting date *are included in attempted hours*.

- Maximum timeframe:** For an undergraduate program measured in credit hours, a period that is no longer than 150 percent of the published length of the educational program.
- Pace:** The pace at which a student must progress through his or her educational program to ensure that the student will complete the program within the maximum timeframe and provides for measurement of the student's progress at each evaluation.
- Probation:** A status assigned by an institution to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated.
- Warning:** A status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress at an institution that evaluates academic progress at the end of each payment period.

## VI. Revision History

Policy revised 7/25/18 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy revision approved by Administrative Council on 7/27/18.

Policy revised 3/24/14 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy revision approved by Administrative Council on 3/24/14.

Policy revised 12/05/11 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy revision approved by Administrative Council on 12/14/11.

Policy written 07/01/11 by Director of Financial Aid. Policy approved by Administrative Council on 7/29/11.