

COLLEGE OF SEQUOIAS

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY

Effective Fall 2017

The U.S. Department of Education requires, as a condition of receiving Title IV federal student aid, that students be making satisfactory academic progress toward an associate degree, vocational certificate of at least sixteen units, or transfer to a four-year college or university. This policy is also applied to state student aid.

At College of Sequoias (COS), students are considered to be meeting the satisfactory academic progress standards if the following four requirements are met:

1. **2.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average:** A student must maintain a 2.0 *cumulative* grade point average (GPA). This includes all GPA units at COS and those from other regionally accredited colleges and universities that have been evaluated by the COS Admissions & Records Office and applied to the student's academic record. GPA units are those with grades of A, B, C, D, or F.
2. **67% Cumulative Pace of Unit Completion:** A student must complete at least 67% of the total number of units they attempt (passed hours divided by attempted hours). All courses with grades of A, B, C, D, or F, as well as W, EW, I, NC, NP, NG, and repeated courses will be counted towards the total attempted units. Units from regionally accredited colleges and universities that have been evaluated by the COS Admissions & Records Office and applied to the student's academic record will be counted.
3. **Degree Earned:** The student has not earned an associate degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university.
4. **Maximum Attempted Unit Timeframe:** A student has not exceeded the maximum attempted unit timeframe allowed for the completion of their educational program. The units required to complete a vocational certificate vary. Completion of an associate degree normally requires 60 units. Based on federal regulations, a student is allowed a maximum attempted unit timeframe not to exceed 150% of the length of an educational program. Example: 150% of a 60-unit program (60 x 1.5) equals 90 attempted units, at which time the student would be disqualified. All courses, including remedial, ESL, repeated courses, and courses taken while pursuing other majors, with grades of A, B, C, D, or F, as well as W, EW, I, NC, NP, NG, will be counted as attempted units applied to the maximum attempted unit timeframe allowed. Courses from other regionally accredited colleges or universities that have been evaluated by the COS Admissions & Records Office and applied to the student's academic record will also be counted toward the maximum attempted unit timeframe.
5. **Academic Renewal/Excused Withdrawals:** Federal Student Aid regulations do not allow academic renewal procedures through which a student can apply to have credits attempted and grades earned in previous semesters excluded from the grade point calculation of the student's grade point average. Therefore, COS Financial Aid must always include courses applicable to a student's major (whenever taken) in evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress (both GPA and Pace components).

Additional Requirements

- All financial aid students are required to meet with an academic counselor to develop a Student Educational Plan (SEP) that lists their current major.
- Students must only register for courses that are required for their eligible educational program. Click [here](#) to view the Eligible Programs list or go to the Financial Aid website at www.cos.edu/financialaid.
- Repeated coursework: Federal regulations allow for students to receive federal student aid for one repeat of a previously passed course. A grade of D or better is considered passing. W's do not count as repeats.
- Transcripts from all regionally accredited colleges or universities attended must be submitted to COS.
- During any term of attendance, if it is determined by COS that the student is not actively attending classes and/or does not have a reasonable probability of receiving passing grades, eligibility for financial aid may be forfeited.

Financial Aid Status

The College of Sequoias Financial Aid Office will evaluate students' academic progress at the end of each term (fall, spring, and summer) following the official posting of grades by the COS Admissions & Records Office. The financial aid academic progress status will then be assigned from those listed below and posted to BANNER WEB.

- **Good Progress:** Students will be awarded and disbursed financial aid, if otherwise eligible.
- **Warning:** Students who fail to meet the 67% cumulative pace of unit completion and/or 2.0 cumulative GPA will be placed on financial aid warning status and continue to receive financial aid in the following term, if otherwise eligible.
- **Disqualified-Poor Progress:** Students who fail to meet the 67% cumulative pace of unit completion and/or 2.0 cumulative GPA requirement for two consecutive terms will be disqualified, and not receive financial aid.
- **Degree Earned:** Students will not receive additional financial aid unless they are granted a financial aid appeal because of additional time needed to complete their educational goal.
- **Degree Earned and Poor Progress:** Students will not receive additional financial aid because of having earned an associate degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university and having failed to meet the 67% cumulative pace of unit completion and/or 2.0 cumulative GPA requirement.

- **Exceeded Maximum Attempted Unit Timeframe:** Students will not receive additional financial aid unless they are granted a financial aid appeal because of additional time needed to complete their educational goal.
- **Exceeded Maximum Attempted Unit Timeframe and Poor Progress:** Students will not receive additional financial aid because of exceeding the 150% maximum attempted unit timeframe allowed for the completion of their educational program and failing to meet the 67% cumulative pace of unit completion and/or 2.0 cumulative GPA requirement.
- **Probation-Approved:** Student has submitted an appeal which has been approved, and will therefore receive financial aid if otherwise eligible. At the end of the term for which they are placed on probation, the student must be back in GOOD PROGRESS status or have met all conditions of their appeal. Students may not be placed on PROBATION status for the subsequent term if the appeal conditions were not met.
- **Probation Approved – Academic Plan:** Student has submitted an appeal which has been approved, and will therefore receive financial aid if otherwise eligible. The student will be placed on an academic plan because more than one payment period is required to meet satisfactory academic progress standards. The student’s progress will be reviewed at the end of each payment period to determine if the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan. If the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan, the student is eligible to receive Title IV aid. Students may not be able to continue on probation status if they are not meeting the terms of the academic plan.
- **Probation Approved – Academic Plan Contract:** Student has submitted an appeal which has been approved, and will therefore receive financial aid if otherwise eligible. The student will be placed on an academic plan contract because more than one payment period is required to meet progress standards, the student has changed major, and the student has excessive units. The student’s progress will be reviewed at the end of each payment period to determine if the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan contract. If the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan contract, the student is eligible to receive Title IV aid. Students may not be able to continue on probation status if they are not meeting the terms of the academic plan contract.
- **Appeal Denied:** Student has submitted an appeal that has been denied and therefore will not receive additional financial aid.

Appeals

In certain *documented* circumstances, students placed on any financial aid status that results in their loss of financial aid eligibility may file an appeal for reinstatement of financial aid. The appeal form can be found in the forms section of the COS financial aid website at www.cos.edu/financialaid. The following are the acceptable reasons for consideration of an appeal:

- Additional time needed to complete an educational goal beyond an associate degree
- Additional time needed to complete an educational goal and student has exceeded the maximum attempted unit timeframe of 150% that is allowed
- Serious physical or emotional illness of the student or immediate family member (documentation required)
- Death of an immediate family member (documentation required)
- U.S. military service orders (documentation required)
- Victim of a violent crime, natural disaster, accident, or injury to the student or immediate family member (documentation required)
- Disability, new or complications of existing, which affected academic performance (documentation required)
- Qualifying Semester: student made significant improvement during semester even though cumulative criteria did not meet SAP standards (e.g. enrolled at least in 6 units, completed all units attempted with a “C” or better). (documentation required)

When submitting an appeal, a student must:

- Attach a counselor-approved Student Educational Plan (SEP).
- Be currently registered for required courses in the term for which they are submitting the appeal.
- Have all transcripts from regionally accredited colleges or universities submitted to COS.
- Attach complete documentation of circumstances as specified on the appeal form instructions **OR**
- Have met the conditions of an appeal, if one was submitted and approved in the previous term.
- Have met the submission deadline of September 30th for the fall term, February 28th for the spring term, and the last day of instruction in June for the summer term.

An appeal will **NOT** be approved for a student with a change of program (*major or educational goal*) if they have exceeded the 150% maximum attempted unit timeframe allowed for the completion of an educational program, except in limited circumstances such as retraining due to medical reasons, and only after a *Change of Program Contract* has been signed by the student and approved by the COS Financial Aid Office.

Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility

- **Self-Reinstatement** - A student may have financial aid self-reinstated by earning a cumulative 2.0 GPA and by earning a cumulative 67% pace of unit completion but must not have exceeded the maximum attempted unit timeframe of 150% allowed for the completion of their educational program.
- **Approval of SAP Appeal with Resulting Probation Status** - A student may submit a SAP Appeal Form accompanied by supporting documentation (if required) and have his/her appeal approved. In this scenario, students are placed on Probation status for that term only, and must be in Good Progress status or have met conditions of their approved appeal by the end of that term.
- Students who have earned an associate degree or higher or have exceeded the 150% timeframe must appeal every term as all appeals are approved for one term only.

The SAP appeal decision will be sent to the student via the college district issued e-mail (giantmail.cos.edu) approximately four (4) to six (6) weeks after submission or prior term grades are officially posted, whichever is later.

ALL APPEAL DECISIONS ARE FINAL

College of the Sequoias Community College District		
Visalia Campus Sequoia Building – Room 105 915 S Mooney Blvd Visalia, CA 93277 (559) 730-3747	Hanford Center Vocational Building 925 N 13 th Ave Hanford, CA 93230 (559) 583-2511	Tulare College Center Building A – Student Services 4999 E Bardsley Ave Tulare, CA 93274 (559) 688-3013

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