

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress Effective Spring 2017 (12/16/16):**

Joliet Junior College is required by law to formulate standards to measure a student's progress toward completion of a program of study while receiving financial assistance through federal or state student aid programs by applying both qualitative and quantitative measurements to academic work [34 CFR 668.34]. Colleges are required to monitor that students are meeting certain academic standards to receive financial aid, which is commonly referred to as Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). SAP is cumulative in nature and takes into account all degree and certificate eligible classes attempted at Joliet Junior College, as well as any transfer hours and military credit accepted by JJC.

SAP assessments are performed at the end of each term of enrollment for students in degree or certificate programs. Every student's progress is measured at each evaluation period for the following:

- Qualitative Progress (GPA)
- Quantitative Progress (Pace of Completion and Maximum Timeframe)

**These criteria evaluate: the quality and quantity of the academic work the student completes and progress toward completion of the academic program. The satisfactory academic progress requirements listed below are minimum standards. Students are encouraged to exceed all of the requirements whenever possible.**

#### *Qualitative Progress Requirement*

1. ➤ Students' cumulative Joliet Junior College grade point average (GPA) will be evaluated each semester. Student must maintain an academic standing that is consistent with the graduation requirements for his/her program and must maintain a minimal grade point average as indicated in the following:

<b><u>Hours Attempted</u></b>	<b><u>Minimum Cumulative GPA</u></b>
0-12	1.75
13-32	1.85
33-48	1.95
49-above	2.00

#### *Quantitative Progress Requirement*

- At the end of each semester, a student must have satisfactorily completed 66.667% of cumulative attempted hours, including any accepted transfer credits. Joliet Junior College calculates the pace at which a student is progressing by dividing the total number of hours the student has successfully completed (including transfer credits) by the total number he/she has attempted.

Note: Attempted credit hours are those courses for which any grade appears on the student's transcript, including transfer credits, remedial courses, and repeated courses.

### Maximum Time Frame Requirement

➤ Students' must progress through their program to ensure that they will graduate within the maximum timeframe. The maximum timeframe for which an undergraduate student may receive financial assistance may not exceed 150% of the published length of the student's academic program measured in credit hours, whether or not federal aid was received by the student during this time. A student is ineligible for financial aid when it becomes mathematically impossible for him/her to complete his/her program within 150% of its published length.

For instance, if the published length of an academic program is 64 credit hours, the maximum time frame during which the student will be eligible to receive financial aid must not exceed 96\* credit hours, note this will include any accepted transfer hours and military credits.

*\*64 credit hours X 150% = 96 credit hours.*

Funds affected by this policy include all applicable federal, state, and college funds including but not limited to Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Direct Loans, Federal Direct PLUS (Parent) Loans, Federal Work Study, State and Grant programs.

### *The Impact of Enrollment Actions and Types of Courses on SAP*

#### **Incompletes**

An incomplete (I) grade may be given to a student who, because of illness or other unique circumstances, has not been able to complete a course in the prescribed amount of time. A student receiving an "I" grade from an instructor will have 8 weeks into the following semester (excluding summer) to complete the work. For students receiving financial aid the "I" will temporarily be calculated as an "F" until a final grade is assigned. Incompletes do lower the student's pace percentage until they are changed to an earned letter grade of D or higher. Incompletes are included in the maximum timeframe calculation.

#### **Repeated Courses**

Students are only allowed to repeat courses to replace previously passed courses one (1) time and receive Title IV funds. When a course is repeated, the grade given at the end of the repeated course becomes the official grade. Both grades will remain on the permanent record, but the second grade is used to compute the GPA in the calculation of a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress status. Each repetition will count towards the attempted hours; however, only the course(s) being counted in the GPA calculation will be counted in completed hours for SAP.

**Withdrawal from a Course**

Courses that a student withdraws from after the refund period are considered in “hours attempted” toward the maximum time frame as well as in cumulative attempted hours used in calculating completion rate.

*Administrative Withdrawals:* Administrative Withdrawals are not included in the cumulative GPA calculation. However, Administrative Withdrawals do lower the student’s pace percentage and are included in the maximum timeframe calculation.

**Transfer Credits**

Transfer credit hours that have been accepted by Joliet Junior College toward your current degree are subject to the Satisfactory Academic Progress measurements. CLEP and other proficiency examinations are counted as transfer credits. Joliet Junior College calculates the pace at which a student is progressing by dividing the total number of hours the student has successfully completed (including transfer credits) by the total number he/she has attempted.

**Remedial/ESL Courses:** Remedial (developmental) and ESL courses are included in the GPA calculation and pace percentage. Remedial/ESL courses are also included in the Timeframe calculation as attempted and completed credit hours.

**Audited Courses:** Audited courses (AUD) are not included in the GPA, pace percentage, or maximum timeframe calculations.

**Earned Letter Grades:** Earned letter grades of A, B, C and D positively impact a student’s pace percentage and bring the student closer to completing his or her program within the maximum timeframe of the program. Although a D letter grade does not negatively impact a student’s pace percentage, it will contribute to lowering the student’s GPA to below the required 2.0 cumulative standard. Earning an F letter grade will negatively impact both the student’s pace percentage and GPA. All earned letter grades in remedial and college level courses are included in the maximum timeframe calculation.

**Deleted Courses:** If a course is deleted for the reason of non-payment or failure to meet the prerequisites, the course is not included in the calculation of GPA, pace percentage, or maximum timeframe.

**Cancelled Courses:** If a course is cancelled, it is not included in the calculation of GPA, pace percentage, or maximum timeframe.

**Changes in Major or Degree**

Students who want to change their major or degree must contact Joliet Junior College Counseling Office to request the change. The student is eligible to receive aid for no more than 150% of the credit hours required to complete a program of study. The 150% limit is applied to all credit hours earned by the student while enrolled at Joliet Junior College, and includes transferred credits accepted from previously attended institutions.

## **SAP Statuses with Conditions:**

Students who fail to make Satisfactory Academic Progress are initially given a Warning period during which time they may continue being awarded aid (if otherwise eligible). Students who do not meet the requirements by the end of the Warning period are denied future financial aid. A student may appeal the termination of financial aid due to exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances may include but are not limited to illness, death of an immediate family member, or traumatic events in the student's life.

### ***Financial Aid Warning***

If a student was in good SAP standing and fails to meet the cumulative GPA or pace percentage SAP standards in any term, he or she will be placed on Financial Aid Warning (FAW).

Students on SAP Warning who improve performance at the conclusion of the next term of enrollment and are again meeting the SAP standards will be placed back in good standing and may continue to receive financial aid if otherwise eligible.

FAW students who fail to meet satisfactory academic progress at the conclusion of the next term of enrollment will be placed on a Financial Aid Termination (FAT).

### ***Financial Aid Termination***

Students on Financial Aid Warning who fail to meet the GPA and/or pace percentage standards after a Warning period will be placed on Financial Aid Termination which cancels the student's financial aid.

### ***Basis for Termination Appeal:***

In order to appeal a Sap Termination, the student must demonstrate that he or she experienced mitigating circumstances that prevented the achievement of Satisfactory Academic Progress. For example, the student may have experienced the death of an immediate relative, a serious injury or illness, or other special circumstance.

Documentation is required to support the basis of the appeal. The student must also document what changes have occurred to remedy the mitigating circumstance that led to inadequate academic progress. The student must demonstrate that the mitigating circumstance directly contributed to poor academic progress in the term(s) that he or she did not meet standards. Mitigating circumstances are defined as events that are outside of the student's control that interfere with his or her academic progress and could not have been remedied by the student at the time they occurred. Additionally, a student cannot use the same mitigating circumstance or any variation of that circumstance in multiple appeals.

*Note: Circumstances related to the typical adjustment to college life such as working while attending school, financial issues related to paying bills and car maintenance/travel to*



*campus are not considered as extenuating for purposes of appealing termination of financial aid.*

Examples of extenuating circumstances to be considered for appeal:

1. Serious illness or injury to students or immediate family member that required extended recovery time
2. Death of an immediate family member
3. Significant trauma in students' life that impaired the students' emotional and/or physical health
4. Withdrawal due to military service
5. Other unexpected circumstances beyond the control of the student

*For this purpose immediate family member is defined as (parent, spouse, sibling, and child, grandparent (step or in-law respectively).*

**Appeal Process:** Students on Financial Aid Termination may submit an appeal by the published deadline for the term in which they are seeking financial aid. Students must complete the SAP Appeal Form and submit all corresponding documentation according to the instructions provided by Joliet Junior College. Late appeals will not be accepted. The appeal committee will review the appeal packet and notify the student of the decision in writing through the student's JJC email account. A prescriptive Academic Improvement Plan may be required as a part of the approval process.

**Note:** Per federal financial aid regulations, appeals are not automatically approved and may be denied based on the student's failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress standards, academic history at both JJC and other colleges, failure to follow a prior Academic Improvement Plan, and any perceived pattern of SAP-related issues. **If a student's appeal is denied, the student does not have the right to re-appeal unless he or she can provide new information on documented mitigating circumstances that contributed to poor academic progress.** If the student is permitted to re-appeal due to new information, the appeal will be resubmitted to the committee. No employee of Joliet Junior College will overturn the committee's decision. A student can regain financial aid eligibility if he or she enrolls in classes without the assistance of financial aid and performs well enough academically to again meet the cumulative GPA and pace percentage standards.

#### **Financial Aid Probation (FAP)**

Students who successfully appeal their Financial Aid Termination will have their financial aid eligibility reinstated and will be placed on Financial Aid Probation. During the probationary period, students must make progress under their Education Plan and may be required to complete a SAP appeal for each subsequent term until all SAP standards are met. Students who do not achieve the GPA or pace percentage standards or fail the conditions of the academic improvement plan will be placed back on Financial Aid Termination.

#### **Appeal Steps**

Students who wish to appeal their termination of financial aid must complete the following steps:

1. Submit a letter of appeal to the Standards of Academic Progress Committee.

2. Provide all required or requested documents, such as an updated plan of study provided by the academic advisor.
3. Provide supporting documentation with the appeal letter, such as grade changes, medical documentation, or other materials supportive of the appeal.
4. The Appeal letter and all documents should be received at Joliet Junior College Financial Aid/Veterans Office.

### **Outcomes of the Appeal:**

1. Aid continues to be terminated.
2. The aid may be reinstated for a probation limited period of one semester as determined by the Standards of Academic Progress Committee. The Standards of Academic Progress Committee makes final determination.

### ***Notification of Appeal Determination:***

Students are notified in writing through their student email if their appeal for reinstatement of financial aid is approved or denied.

### ***Student's responsibilities if appeal is granted:***

If a student's appeal is approved, he/she will be placed on Financial Aid Probation Limited status. While on Probation Limited, the student may receive financial aid for one semester. In order to be eligible for aid for subsequent semesters, the student must meet the terms of the appeal. For all Probation Limited students this includes:

- Successfully completing all the courses attempted during the semester with no withdrawals from classes or no final grade of "F", "I", or "W" to increase their cumulative completion rate to meet standards.
  - Increase cumulative GPA to 2.0 or higher after the Probation Limited semester.
- In addition, for students who are on Probation Limited due to the maximum timeframe rule, they must also:
- Complete their degree within the date listed on their appeal;
  - Follow the academic plan that was submitted with their appeal.

Additional requirements may be listed on the appeal approval notice.

### ***Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility:***

All appeal decisions are final. Neither paying for one's classes without financial aid nor sitting out (not attending) for any period of time affects a student's satisfactory academic progress standing. In order to regain Financial Aid Eligibility a student must successfully appeal their termination status or enroll in classes without the assistance of financial aid and perform well enough academically to again meet the cumulative GPA and pace percentage standards.

### **Maximum Timeframe**

A student must be on track to complete his or her academic program within 150% of the published length of the program in credit hours. Maximum Timeframe is based on total credit hours attempted in the student's academic career, even if financial aid was not received while enrolled in those credit hours. The calculation includes all attempted credit hours, including transfer credit hours, military credit hours, repeat courses and remedial/ESL .

Once a student has reached 85% of the program's published length in attempted credit hours, an **Approaching Alert indicator** will be placed to alert the student that he or she is reaching the limit of financial aid eligibility for his or her program. If a student is not on track to complete his or her academic program within 150% of the published length of the program in credit hours, a Maximum Timeframe Hold will be placed at the 150% to prevent further financial aid disbursements until the student successfully appeals the hold.

\*Once a student is beyond 125% of the length the program a manual evaluation may be done to determine if the student can complete the program within 150% timeframe.

### **Appeal Process for Maximum Timeframe Holds**

A student who receives a Termination Hold may file an appeal for the extension of financial aid beyond 150% of the published length of his or her program. The appeal committee will evaluate the student's mitigating circumstance to determine if the student may qualify to have additional credit hours covered by financial aid beyond the 150% maximum timeframe. Students may also seek a **One-Time Timeframe Appeal due to major and program changes**. At the committee's discretion, the granting of additional hours would be determined if certain credit hours may be excluded from the student's maximum timeframe calculation, such as (not limited to) credit hours awarded for military credit, transfer credit and/or credit hours that are not applicable to the student's current academic program.

Only the credit hours for courses needed to complete the current program will be approved. Students must submit an appeal explaining any mitigating circumstances that impeded the students' progress (along with applicable supporting documentation) and how they plan to successfully complete their educational goals. If the student is submitting an appeal for a one time reset, the appeal must explain why he or she should be granted additional credit hours to complete the new program and how the program will assist the student in achieving gainful employment or transferring to a four-year college. An education plan is also required along with the appeal form. Failure to adhere to your educational plan can result in the loss of financial aid eligibility.

### **Student Notification:**

Students who are meeting all SAP standards will not receive a communication regarding their standing. If a student is placed on Warning, Approaching Timeframe, Termination or Maximum Timeframe he or she will receive a notification through his or her JJC email account. If a student submits a SAP appeal, he or she will be notified of the outcome of that appeal through his or her JJC email account.