

SECTION 11: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Last updated: 02/20/2009

11.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities

Satisfactory academic progress is managed by the Director of Financial Aid and is performed bi-annually following the Fall and Spring semesters. As an added measure, The Director continually monitors students enrolled in the faster paced Professional Studies program during the Fall, Spring and Summer semesters and sessions.

Students on sufficient progress who do not meet one of the criteria for satisfactory academic progress are notified of the problem and placed on financial aid probation. Their progress is then closely monitored for the following semester and reviewed at the end of the term. If the student once again fails to meet satisfactory academic progress, they are again notified of the problem and placed on financial aid suspension.

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11.2 Same As or Stricter Than

Policies

Students who receive institutional and private financial aid only are held to the same qualitative satisfactory academic progress standards as students who are receiving Federal financial aid. Students receiving Federal, State, institutional and private financial aid are held to a stricter standard than those who are receiving military or employment reimbursement or no financial aid. The academic progress policy is published in the catalog and online.

Procedures

The Director of Financial Aid is in charge of annually reviewing the Title IV satisfactory academic progress policy to ensure that it meets all federal requirements. This review is held over the summer following the rollover of the new fiscal year in July. The review includes a review of the school's academic policy managed by the Office of the Registrar to ensure compliance and compatibility.

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11.3 Quantitative Measure

Policies

All students must complete a minimum of 70% of the coursework that they begin. The following grades do not count as “completed coursework”: Audit (AU), Incomplete (I), Failed (F), Withdrawn (WD). Repeated and Pass/Fail courses are counted toward the quantitative requirement of satisfactory completion. Students pre-enrolling in future sessions in the Professional Studies program who are receiving Federal student loans must maintain a minimum of 6 credit hours to remain in satisfactory academic progress. Undergraduate students meeting satisfactory academic progress at Southwestern College must receive their bachelor’s degree before reaching a maximum of 186 credit hours. Graduates must receive their degree before reaching a maximum of 45 graduate credit hours. The quantitative measurement policies are published in the financial aid portion of the catalog and on the financial aid website.

Procedures

Qualitative and quantitative progress is measured bi-annually at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters. A report is generated from the PowerCAMPUS system and reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid for those outside of compliance. Students on financial aid probation or suspension are provided with written communication indicating the reason they have been placed on probation or suspension. In the case of financial aid suspension, the communication includes a suspension appeal form and the directions for the completion of the appeal process.

In addition to this bi-annual review, a weekly process is run integrating registration data between the PowerCAMPUS and PowerFAIDS system. An exception report is reviewed indicating those students who have either dropped or added courses since the last report was run. Each student on the report is individually reviewed for the need to be placed immediately on financial aid probation or suspension. Students in danger of being out of compliance are notified in writing of the problem and given up to 14 days to correct the situation.

The Director of Financial Aid is also immediately notified any time a student requests to withdraw from a class past the “no charge” deadline or when a student on financial aid will be receiving a credit check due to dropped classes. These students are also individually reviewed for the need to be placed immediately on financial aid probation or suspension. Students in danger of being out of

compliance are notified in writing of the problem and given up to 14 days to correct the situation.

A list of students on financial aid suspension is sent to the billing offices and a financial aid suspension stop is placed on the student's account. This stop alerts the student's advisor that the student is responsible for their own financial arrangements should they continue with coursework.

11.8 Treatment of Remedial, Enrichment & English as a Second Language Courses

Policies

At this time, Southwestern College does not have remedial courses. Students who are enrolled in English as a Second Language courses are not eligible for financial aid of any kind.

11.9 Treatment of Transfer, Consortium, Second Degree, & Second Major Courses

Policies

Students taking classes through a consortium agreement are monitored to ensure they are meeting both the quantitative and qualitative standards of satisfactory academic progress. Students continuing into second degree programs and second major programs are also reviewed to ensure that they are meeting satisfactory academic progress toward the second degree and/or major. These students are held to the same standards as students seeking their first degree program with a notable exception concerning maximum time to degree.

Procedures

Consortium agreements are added as a required form to a student's document tracking screen on PowerFAIDs. Students must submit a transcript to the Office of the Registrar of their consortium work when that work is finished. Reports are run using the document track to determine who is in a consortium agreement. Consortium students are individually monitored and evaluated for satisfactory progress.

Qualitative and quantitative progress of second degree and second major students is measured bi-annually at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters. A report is generated from the PowerCAMPUS

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system and reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid for those outside of compliance. Students who have exceeded the maximum time to degree of 186 credit hours but do have one bachelor's degree are monitored closely for relevant coursework and satisfactory grades.

11.11 Appeals

Policies

Students have the right to appeal their financial aid suspension and are invited to do so in the suspension letter. A copy of the appeal form is attached with the letter along with the reason for the suspension. Appeals are considered on an as-needed, rolling basis in the Professional Studies program and bi-annually for the main campus, semester program.

Procedures

Once an appeal for financial aid suspension is received, it is read and evaluated against the student's financial aid file, transcript and billing statements. The student's advisor is contacted concerning the appeal and the student's drive and/or ability to complete the coursework.

After all aspects of the student's file and appeal are considered, decisions concerning approval or denial are made and communicated in writing directly to the student. The student's file is placed back on financial aid probation and monitored closely for an additional semester.

When a student's financial aid appeal is approved, notification is also sent to the billing offices so that the financial aid suspension stop is removed.

Written notifications and appeal documents are kept in the student's electronic financial aid file for a period of three years.

11.12 Regaining Eligibility

Policies

Students on financial aid probation who successfully meet all standards for satisfactory academic progress in the semester following their probation reestablish full eligibility for Federal financial aid. Students on financial aid suspension who successfully meet all standards for satisfactory academic progress in the semester following

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their suspension reestablish eligibility for Federal aid, but are monitored for an additional semester.

Procedures

Students on probation are individually examined during the satisfactory academic progress review process. If they met the progress requirements, the probationary status is removed and the student is placed back on sufficient progress. Students on suspension who request a review of their file are examined for successful completion of at least one semester of half time work following their suspension status. If they met the progress requirements, their file is placed on financial aid probation and monitored closely for an additional semester before full eligibility is reestablished.