

# Harper College

## Financial Aid - Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Education and State of Illinois student aid regulations, Harper College is required to establish minimum Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards to qualify for federal and state financial aid. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that students are making progress toward the completion of their educational program of study. The following standards apply to students receiving federal or state financial assistance, including grants, loans, scholarships, and federal work study. Students who do not attend or withdraw from classes, defer grades and perform poorly will not maintain satisfactory academic progress toward completion of their program of study and will become ineligible for financial aid. Minimum standards are subject to change in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education and State of Illinois regulations.

Important: This Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy is separate from the Harper College Standards of Academic Performance (SOAP) Policy.

### **MINIMUM ACADEMIC STANDARD REQUIREMENTS:**

#### **1. Grade Point Average Standard**

Students must achieve and maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 in all credit courses attempted throughout their entire enrollment at Harper College; whether or not financial aid was received. This grade point average standard does not include developmental courses, and for repeated courses it only includes the highest earned grade.

#### **2. Cumulative Completion Rate**

Students must complete at least 67% of the credit courses attempted throughout their entire enrollment at Harper College; whether or not financial aid was received. The percentage is found by dividing the successfully completed credit hours by the number of credit hours the student attempted. Successfully completed credit hours include the following grades: A, B, C, D, AR, BR, CR, DR and P.

#### **3. Maximum Time Frame (Credit Hours) Standard**

Students must complete their program of study within 150 percent relative to the published length of the program of study. For example, a student enrolled in an educational program that requires 60 credit hours cannot receive financial assistance after 90 attempted credit hours. If during the SAP review it becomes clear that a student cannot mathematically complete his/her program within the maximum time frame (credit hours), he/she will become ineligible for financial assistance.

### **IMPORTANT:**

For the purposes of financial aid satisfactory progress only, the following grades count as ATTEMPTED but NOT COMPLETED: NP, F, W, FR, WR, X, IP and FG.

All attempted credit hours at Harper College will be counted toward Cumulative Completion Rate standard (#2) and the Maximum Time Frame standard (#3) requirements. These include:

Developmental	In Progress
Repeated courses	AP courses
Withdrawn courses	ESL courses
CLEP	Courses that have grades forgiven
Audit courses	Courses that are transferred to Harper
Proficiency	

A student can only receive financial assistance for up to 30 credit hours of developmental courses including ESL.

If a course is repeated, only the highest grade is used in the calculation of the cumulative GPA but all will remain on the transcript and all are counted toward attempted for financial aid purposes.

## REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS STANDARDS

A Financial Aid Assistant, Manager or Director determines compliance with the academic standards for financial aid recipients by reviewing a student's cumulative academic record at the conclusion of every semester: fall, spring and summer. Students who have an academic record at the College, including classes transferred to Harper College, and are applying for financial aid for the first time at the College will be evaluated according to the minimum academic progress requirements and placed in the appropriate status at the time of first award.

When evaluated, students who do not meet the minimum academic progress requirements will be placed on Warning or Suspension status. An explanation of consequences is defined here.

- **Warning Status:** When financial aid applicants fail to meet one or more of the standards of academic progress, they are placed on **Warning** status. Students on **Warning** status may receive financial aid for one more semester if they meet all other financial aid eligibility requirements.
- **Suspension Status:** After a student has been placed on Warning status and fails to meet one or more of the standards of academic progress a second time, he/she is placed on **Suspension** status. Students on **Suspension** status will have all financial aid cancelled for future terms (if already awarded) and will no longer be eligible to receive financial assistance.

Important: Students who fail the Maximum Time Frame (Credit Hours) Standard are automatically placed in **Suspension** status; they do not get a **Warning** period.

## APPEAL PROCEDURES

Students who are on **Suspension** status because of failure to maintain academic progress have a right to appeal. All appeals must be complete, provide detailed information and supporting documentation about mitigating circumstances. Mitigating circumstances include injury or illness of the student or death of an immediate family member. Students should not assume that appeals will be approved.

A student must submit the following three items as part of the appeal process:

1. A SAP Appeal Form with detailed explanation:
  - a. Explain why the student failed to complete the academic progress requirements and what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress.
  - b. Describe the student's educational objectives.
  - c. Provide a schedule to indicate how these objectives will be achieved.
2. Documentation:

Submit third party documentation supporting the reason(s) why the student failed to maintain academic progress; i.e., a letter on official letterhead from a mental health professional or police officer, medical or legal documentation, death certificate, etc.
3. Probation/Academic Plan:

Students are required to complete a Probation/Academic Plan with a Student Development counselor.

Students who have their appeal and academic plan approved will move to **Probation/Academic Plan** Status and will be eligible to receive financial assistance for the approved semester. The student must meet all requirements set forth in the SAP probation approval letter in order to maintain eligibility. The student must:

- meet all the requirements outlined in the Academic Plan that the student developed with their counselor;
- achieve a grade point average of at least 2.0\* in all credit courses attempted; and
- complete 100% of the courses in which the student is enrolled.

\* A GPA calculator is available in the student portal.

Students who do not meet all of the requirements above will go to **Cancellation** Status and will lose financial aid eligibility. The student may regain eligibility when the student meets the Financial Aid Minimum Academic Standard Requirements set forth in this policy.

**DEADLINE DATE**

Appeals must be submitted in the semester that the student is seeking financial assistance. Appeals will be reviewed by the SAP Committee and the student will be notified of the decision within three weeks.

**NOTIFICATION OF STATUS**

The Office of Student Financial Assistance will notify students when they are on Warning, Suspension, Probation/Academic Plan, and Cancellation status. However, it is the student's responsibility to know their academic progress status, academic plan, and how it affects financial aid eligibility.

**NOTICE**

The Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy is subject to change without notice to comply with federal or state regulations. For the most current Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, visit our web page at: <http://goforward.harpercollege.edu/registration/financialaid/sap/index.php>.