

**STUDENT POLICY – STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR
FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY
EFFECTIVE SPRING 2017**

Policy:

Sitting Bull College, in compliance with federal regulations, established the following policies and procedures to ensure that students who receive federal financial aid (Pell, SEOG, FWS, SSIG) are making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward a certificate, associate degree or baccalaureate degree. Students who fail to meet these standards of satisfactory academic progress will not be eligible to receive federal financial aid until eligibility is once again established.

Measures of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP):

SAP standards are measured as qualitative academic standards (grade point average) and quantitative rate of progression or PACE of completion (number of credits completed divided by number of credits attempted) in the degree.

Grade Point Average or GPA (Qualitative):

Students are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.00 if they receive federal financial aid from any of the following programs at SBC: Pell Grant, Federal Work Study (FWS); Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG); or State Student Incentive Grant (SSIG).

- For purposes of determining financial aid eligibility, the cumulative GPA calculation will include transfer credits accepted towards degree or certificate at SBC.
- Remedial course honor points are included in the CGPA.

At the end of each semester, SBC shall evaluate the cumulative GPA for students who received federal Title IV aid in the semester. Any student who does not meet the 2.00 minimum CGPA standard will be placed on Financial Aid Warning for the next semester the student enrolls at SBC. Students on Financial Aid Warning have access to all financial aid programs for which they are eligible for during that semester. If the student does not earn a 2.00 cumulative GPA during the warning semester, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Disqualification which terminates financial aid eligibility. A disqualified student may file an appeal to reestablish eligibility for federal financial aid.

Completion of Attempted Credits or “Pace” (Quantitative):

Pace is measured in two increments:

- Completion of Attempted Credits: Students must successfully complete two-thirds (66.667%) of the cumulative credits attempted in the degree or certificate.
 - The percentage is calculated for the cumulative pace by dividing the total number of successfully completed credits by the total number of credits attempted in the degree or certificate. The number of attempted credits for the term shall be determined based on number of credits enrolled on the last day to add or change a class at 100% tuition refund rate.
 - When credits are first transferred in, the cumulative credit calculation on the academic transcript includes all transfer credits accepted by SBC plus all SBC credits attempted and completed.
 - Remedial course credits are not included in the 66.667% semester and maximum time frame calculations.

- **Maximum Time Frame:** All students are expected to complete the degree or certificate requirements within 150% of the published length of the program. For example, if a program requires 60 credits to complete, the student would be allowed 90 attempted credits (**60 credits x 150% = 90 attempted credits**). Similarly, a 16 credit hour certificate program would be allowed 24 attempted credits of Title IV eligibility.
 - A student will be placed on Financial Aid Disqualification if the student has not completed the degree requirements within the 150% maximum time frame. A student may appeal the disqualification status due to the 150% maximum time frame limitation.

Unofficial Withdrawals

Students who receive all failing or incomplete grades in a given semester are considered to have unofficially withdrawn from SBC and are subject to immediate placement on either Warning or Disqualification status. Federal regulations require that a refund calculation be completed for all students receiving federal financial aid unless SBC can document an official last date of attendance beyond the 60% point in one of the student's classes. If required to calculate a Return to Title IV (R2T4) calculation, the R2T4 calculation may result in the student owing a balance to SBC and/or the U.S. Department of Education. Federal financial aid recipients whose class activity cannot be verified may have to pay back all or a portion of their grant.

Successful Completions

Successfully completed credit hours include grades of A, B, C, D, and P (Pass). Credit hours that are **not** considered successfully completed include I (Incomplete), IP (In Progress), F (Fail), and W (Withdraw); however, these hours are included as attempted hours. If a grade is officially changed by the instructor, the student is asked to notify the Financial Aid Office.

Dropped Courses and Official Withdrawals

Classes that a student drops or withdraws from do not count toward the cumulative credits attempted if they are dropped or withdrawn from on or before the last day to add or change a class in the term at 100% tuition refund rate.

How are non-standard credits calculated in the SAP policy?

- Audit credits are not included in the GPA calculation and are not included in either the 66.667% or the maximum time frame calculations.
- Pass credits are not included in the GPA calculation but they are included in both the 66.667% and the maximum time frame calculations.
- Transfer credits accepted (A, B, C grades) are included in the cumulative GPA calculation as well as both the 66.667% and the maximum time frame calculations.
- Students may repeat a previously passed course once and have it calculated in federal financial aid payments. The highest grade of the two repeated courses is included in the GPA calculation.
- Each repeated course credit is included in both the 66.667% and the maximum time frame calculations.

Remedial Courses

Remedial course credit hours (# 010 courses) are not included in the 66.667%, and the maximum number of credit hours attempted or successfully completed when assessing SAP. Students are allowed to enroll in a maximum of 30 credit hours of remedial course work that can be included in the Pell grant payment.

Remedial course numbers changed from “100” to “010”, “011” etc in Fall 1997 term. Remedial course numbers changed again from “010” and “011” to “099” beginning Summer 2012 term.

Transfer Credits

SBC accepts transfer credits with letter grades A, B, or C. Transfer credits earned at another institution that are accepted by SBC shall be used in calculating the total credits attempted and earned as well as in determining the cumulative GPA in the degree in which the student is enrolled.

How is SAP calculated if a student reaches the maximum time frame before completing degree requirements?

If the student reaches the 150% maximum time frame before completing the degree or certificate, the student may appeal the 150% maximum time frame limit. Based on accepting the appeal, the student will be notified of the additional amount of credits allowed to complete the degree.

How is SAP calculated if a student wants to change their major or add another major?

If a student changes majors, the credits earned under the major he/she is pursuing that will apply to the new degree or certificate will be included in the calculation of attempted, earned, and maximum time frame. The maximum time frame will be adjusted if the student decides to switch majors or discontinue to pursue the second major.

How will I know what my SAP status is each term?

After grades are posted at the end of each semester, students will receive written notification of their SAP status (eligible, warning or disqualification) through the U.S. mail. This letter will come from the SBC Financial Aid Office.

What happens if you do not meet SAP requirements?

The first time a student does not meet the SAP requirements he/she will be placed on Financial Aid Warning for the next semester of enrollment. Students on warning status do not need to file an appeal.

- Financial aid may be received during the semester of warning. During the semester of warning status, students are encouraged to seek assistance from various SBC resources that may help them in meeting their educational goals i.e. the Student Support Services, the Center for Student Success, tutoring programs, Library Services.
 - Students who once again meet the SAP requirements at the end of the warning semester will automatically be removed from warning status.
- Students who do not meet SAP requirements at the end of the warning semester will be placed on Financial Aid Disqualification. **If the student had an extenuating circumstance that negatively impacted his/her academic performance, the student is advised he/she should appeal the disqualification.**
- Financial aid disqualification means the student has lost eligibility for federal student aid until:
 - he/she completes one term at SBC in which all SAP requirements are met, or
 - he/she has successfully appealed the financial aid disqualification status.
 - If the appeal is successful, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and/or Financial Aid Probation on an academic plan.

Note: Financial aid probation is **not** the same as **academic** probation.

- Financial aid probation means during the next semester of enrollment at SBC, the student may receive federal financial aid, but must meet all SAP requirements at the end of the semester.

- A student who is placed on Financial Aid Probation on an academic plan must pass 66.667% of attempted credits in the semester with a minimum 2.00 semester GPA.
- If he/she does not meet SAP requirements at end of term, the student will once again be placed on Financial Aid Disqualification for federal financial aid.
Note: Financial aid disqualification is **not** the same as **academic** suspension.
- If the student did not have an extenuating circumstance or does not wish to file an appeal, he/she may attend SBC at his/her own expense (unless suspended academically by SBC).
- If a student is on Financial Aid Probation and s/he does not meet SAP requirements at the end of that term, the student may file another appeal **IF** there is another extenuating circumstance that prevented her/him from meeting the SAP requirements in the term, and the extenuating circumstance is different than the previous circumstance in which the appeal was approved.

How can my financial aid be reinstated?

- To have financial aid eligibility reinstated, the student must make up the credit hour and/or GPA deficiencies without the receipt of federal financial aid; or
- If a student files an appeal for extenuating circumstances, he/she may be reinstated if the appeal is successful and the student is placed on financial aid probation. A student may be placed on financial aid probation with or without an academic plan,

What is the Appeal Process?

A student who is placed on Financial Aid Disqualification may appeal this status:

- if the student had an extenuating circumstance that negatively impacted his/her academic performance i.e. personal injury or illness/hospitalization of the student, depression, family difficulties (divorce, death, or illness); youthful indiscretion, job conflict, or other circumstances beyond the student's control); or
- if the student has exceeded the maximum time frame (i.e. he/she has transfer or SBC credits that do not pertain to the current degree or switched majors and credits earned do not apply to the new major being pursued).

A student who is placed on financial aid disqualification may complete an appeal form and submit all requested documents to the SBC Financial Aid Office. The student must indicate the reason why SAP standards were not achieved and what has changed that will allow the student to complete successfully. Students will be notified in writing of the decision of the Financial Aid Appeal Committee **within 30 days** of filing their appeal. The Financial Aid Appeal Committee shall consist of the Financial Aid Director, the Academic Counselor, and the Financial Literacy/Scholarship Coordinator.

The notification may include information outlining the student's responsibilities in attempting to regain eligibility for federal financial aid at SBC and will include, at the least, notification of one of the following status categories:

- Denied: The student's appeal may be denied due to insufficient documentation or incomplete information on the appeal form. Student will not be eligible for federal financial aid.
- Probation: The student may be placed on financial aid probation for one term if it is determined he/she can meet SAP standards (2.00 cumulative GPA, maximum time frame, or 66.667% credits completed) at the end of the probation term. A student who is placed

on financial aid probation will continue to qualify for federal financial aid if he/she meets all other federal financial aid requirements; or

- Probation on Academic Plan: The student may be placed on probation with an academic plan that outlines how he/she will continue to progress toward degree completion.
 - The academic plan will be developed between the student, advisor, the financial aid director, and the academic counselor.
 - The academic plan may include limitations on number of credits allowed for enrollment per term, expected semester GPA requirements, expected percentage of credits completed each term; and/or other criteria with the specific goal of successfully moving the student toward completion of degree requirements.
 - A student who is placed on financial aid probation will continue to qualify for federal financial aid if he/she meets all other federal financial aid requirements and continues to meet the requirements of the academic plan.
 - If needed, the academic plan may be revised through another appeal process.

If the appeal is denied, the student may request a review by the Dean of Academics whose decision will be final.