

**JACKSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
POLICY**

Subject: Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP)

JSCC Policy Number: 2.03.01.02

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JSCC Policy Chapter: Academic Affairs

Approved By: Dr. Carol Rothstein

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Office Responsible: Financial Aid

Purpose:

Per the federal Title IV regulation CRF §668.34, “an institution must establish a reasonable satisfactory academic progress policy for determining whether an otherwise eligible student is making satisfactory academic progress in his or her educational program and may receive assistance under Title VI, HEA programs.”

This Jackson State policy addresses the guidelines prescribed by the Code of Federal Regulations: [CRF §668.34](#).

Definitions:

Satisfactory Academic Progress - Federal and state regulations require that students meet specific academic standards to be eligible for financial aid.

Appeal. Appeal means a process by which a student who is not meeting Jackson State’s satisfactory academic progress standards petitions the institution for reconsideration of the student’s eligibility for Title VI, HEA program assistance.

Financial aid probation. Financial aid probation is a status assigned by Jackson State to students who fail to make satisfactory academic progress and have had their eligibility for aid reinstated for one semester after an appeal.

Financial aid warning. Financial aid warning means a status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress at Jackson State that evaluates academic progress at the end of each payment period.

Maximum timeframe – Maximum timeframe at Jackson State means a period that is no longer than 150 percent of the published length of the educational program, as measured in credit hours.

Pace of Completion – The completion rate of all classes attempted at JSCC and/or accepted transfer coursework; PACE is calculated by dividing the overall earned hours by the overall attempted hours.

Policy/Guideline:

Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards:

Federal and state regulations require students to meet specific academic standards to be eligible for financial aid (reference [§668.34, Satisfactory Academic Progress](#)). The basic Satisfactory Academic Progress standards are:

A student is in violation of maintaining satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes if the student meets a condition in Standard 1 or fails to meet any of the additional standards (2-4) outlined below.

Standard 1: Academic Status

- On academic probation or academic suspension
- Has a 0.0 GPA for the last semester/term attended.

AND/OR

Standard 2: Qualitative (GPA)

Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average based on the number of credit hours attempted at the college in order to maintain satisfactory progress toward graduation (§ 668.34, (a) (4) (i)). This includes college level, English as a Second Language (ESL), and learning support courses. This does not include transfer credit or credit by exam (AP credit).

AND/OR

Standard 3: Quantitative/PACE of Completion (Overall Attempted vs. Overall Earned Hours) (§ 668.34, (b))

Students must maintain at least a 66.67% overall class completion rate (PACE) of all classes attempted at the college and/or transfer courses accepted. Grades of W, I, X, F, WF, NR, FA, FN and AU do not count as completed courses for the student. Repeats of previously passed courses can cause a student's completion rate to decrease.

To determine completion/PACE percentage:

Take the total number of overall earned hours divided by overall attempted hours. For example, a student attempted 45 hours and earned 25. The student would take the 25 earned hours and divide by the 45 hours attempted (25 / 45 = 55%). The completion rate is 55%, and the student is not eligible for financial aid because the rate is below the required 66.67% completion rate.

In this same scenario, a student should have earned at least 30 hours in order to remain eligible for financial aid. (30 / 45 = 66.67%)

AND/OR

Standard 4: Maximum Time Frame (MTF)

Students must complete their program of study within 150% of the published length of the program.

For most associate degree programs, students are allowed to receive Title IV aid up to their first 90 hours attempted or at the point in which it is determined they cannot complete programs within the maximum timeframe. Students enrolled in Title IV eligible certificate programs may receive aid up until 150% of the individual program length. The college will consider a student to have reached this limit at the end of the semester in which he or she reaches or exceeds the maximum hours. Transfer credit and repeated coursework count toward the attempted hours. All college coursework and transfer coursework accepted is included in this measurement even if it does not apply to the student's current program of study. At any point, when it becomes mathematically impossible for a student to complete their program of study within the MTF, the student will become ineligible for all federal financial aid programs, and applicable state aid programs.

This timeframe limitation does not include remedial or developmental courses for which the maximum federal limitation is thirty (30) attempted credit hours.

Mathematically Impossible Scenario

A student's degree requires 60 credit hours. He or she attempted 52 hours and earned 16 hours. There are 44 additional hours required for degree completion. The remaining hours along with attempted hours applicable to the student's degree program exceed 90 hours.

Required Hours for Degree:	60
Earned Hours:	<u>- 16</u>
Remaining Hours to Complete Degree:	= 44
Total Attempted and Remaining Hours:	(52 + 44) = 96

In this scenario it is mathematically impossible for the student to complete the degree within the 150% timeframe.

Additional Guidelines:

Academic Fresh Start

Students granted [Academic Fresh Start](#) remain accountable for all work on their records. The hours attempted will still be considered when evaluating for MTF. The forgiveness of previously completed coursework will result in a lowering of completion rate (PACE).

Repeat Courses

Students should refer to the academic regulations within the undergraduate catalog to determine how course repeats are counted in the institutional GPA calculation.

In relation to this policy, all attempted college level credit hours (including repeated coursework credit hours) are included in the quantitative/pace and MTF measurements. Additionally, all attempted remedial/developmental (R&D), also referred to as learning support courses, coursework (including repeated R&D credit hours) are included in the R&D thirty (30) attempted credit hour limitation.

A student may repeat a failed course until passed (depending on eligibility). However, for a passed course, a student may only be paid federal financial aid one additional time. Passed courses are any course with A, B, C, D, or P grades. Repeats of a passed course can impact a student's completion rate (PACE), as a student may only earn hours for the course once.

Change of Major, Double Majors, Minors

Students who change their majors or select multiple majors/minors thus requiring additional hours to complete degrees, must still complete the programs of study within the maximum timeframe allowed of 150%.

Second Degree

A second-degree student is defined as a student with a previous degree at the same classification. At JSCC, this would include students that have already obtained an Associates degree, and now wish to pursue an additional certificate or Associates degree. A student who completed a previous degree and is seeking a second degree may violate the 150% maximum timeframe rule.

A student that will violate the maximum timeframe rule due to seeking a second degree may appeal the decision. See appeal sections 5 and 6.

Learning Support Limit

Students can receive aid for up to 30 attempted hours of remedial or learning support courses. Transfer credits of learning support courses will be included in the total hours for eligibility. Federal aid for students exceeding this maximum is based on college level courses only. This limit cannot be appealed.

Grades of 'I'

In cases where a student is assigned a grade of 'I', the student will be evaluated accordingly. These grades do not impact GPA. These grades also do not count as completed or earned hours. If the grade is subsequently changed, the student's SAP status may be re-evaluated.

Readmit Students

Readmit students will be evaluated and brought in under the current SAP policy. All academic transcripts must be received and evaluated prior to determining the student's SAP status.

Transfer Students

Transfer students will be evaluated and brought in under the current SAP policy. All academic transcripts must be received and evaluated prior to determining the student's SAP status. Transcripts submitted with in-progress grades are not considered to be final transcripts.

Dual Enrollment Students

Students entering JSCC with dual enrollment credit hours immediately after receiving their high school diploma, or equivalent, will be coded as good standing for financial aid purposes. Upon completion of

the first term at JSCC, those dual enrollment credit hours will be included in the appropriate categories of Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Review and Notification:

Review for Continuing Students

A review of academic progress will be conducted at the end of each semester (fall, spring, and summer). At any point, when it becomes mathematically impossible for a student to complete their program of study within the MTF, the student will become ineligible for all financial aid programs.

Initial Review for Transfer Students

Transfer students' satisfactory academic progress standings are evaluated upon admission once all transcripts are received and reviewed. Eligibility will be calculated based on previously described standards. If a transcript has not been evaluated, a process is used to prevent aid disbursing until evaluation is complete and eligibility determined. If ineligible for financial aid after evaluation, an appeal may be submitted.

Initial Review for Readmit Students

Readmitted students who have not attended another institution since attending the college are evaluated for satisfactory academic progress upon readmission. Readmit students that have attended another institution will have their MTF and completion rate (PACE) evaluated based on all applicable coursework regardless of institution, but their GPA will only be calculated based on prior JSCC coursework.

Warning Status (§ 668.34, (a) (8) (i))

Current students who initially fail the qualitative or quantitative standards will be placed on Financial Aid Warning. Students in this status may continue to receive aid for one additional semester. At the end of that semester if they do not move into good standing, they will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. Students who fail the MTF measurement or are deemed to not be mathematically capable of completing within the MTF are not eligible for a Financial Aid Warning period and immediately become ineligible for applicable federal and state aid.

Unsatisfactory Academic Progress (Suspension) (§ 668.34, (c) (4))

Students in the suspension status are ineligible to receive any federal financial aid (including Federal Work-Study) and applicable state aid, and must take classes at their own expense until they are again in good standing. Students who fail the MTF measurement or are deemed to not be mathematically capable of completing within the MTF are not eligible for a Financial Aid Warning period and immediately become ineligible for aid. Appeals are accepted for students who fail MTF. See appeals sections 5 and 6.

Notification

Students are notified of their satisfactory academic progress standing at their JSCC email (at the end of each term of enrollment) and in their student portal (available any time). It is the students' responsibility to check their JSCC email and student portal for update notifications.

Appeal Process (§ 668.34, (d) (2)):

Students can file a Financial Aid appeal to regain eligibility if there were extenuating circumstances that warrant a student to continue receiving Title IV and/or State aid. (§ 668.34, (a) (9) (ii))

To successfully appeal the student must:

1. **Complete and submit** a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form. An Academic Plan may also be required. Access the appeal by completing the following steps:
 - Complete the appeal form at www.jsc.edu/SAPappeal
2. **Include a detailed statement** outlining:
 - the extenuating circumstances that resulted in unsatisfactory progress during the semesters in which required standards were not met; **and**
 - explaining what circumstances have changed that make it possible for the student to be academically successful during future terms. (§ 668.34, (a) (9) (iii))
3. **Attach appropriate documentation** to support the circumstances outlined in the appeal. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, a physician's signed statement on official letterhead, copy of death certificate, accident report, and medical reports/records. ***Appeals submitted without appropriate documentation will be automatically returned to the student without being processed.***
 - **Letters of support from JSCC faculty or staff may only be used as supporting documentation when the faculty or staff member is acting in a professional capacity toward the student (advisor, instructor, etc.) and they have knowledge of the student's circumstances as outlined in the student's appeal letter.**
4. For students who reached or exceeded their allowable maximum timeframe or who are in situations where it is mathematically impossible to graduate prior to reaching the maximum timeframe, complete and submit the Academic Plan Form.

Federal regulations permit appeal approvals under the following conditions:

- It has been determined that the student will be able to meet SAP standards after the subsequent term.
- An academic plan is developed for the student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time.

Review of Appeals:

The appeal review is conducted by the Student Aid and Awards Committee. The committee makes every effort to review appeals in a timely manner. The decision of the committee can only be overridden by appealing directly to the Executive Vice President of Finance, Administration, and Student Services.

Financial Aid Appeal Deadlines

Completed appeals and supporting documentation should be submitted at least ten (10) business days prior to the start of the term for which the student is appealing. Appeals submitted after the 10th business day prior to the start of term, or without the required documentation, may result in an automatic denial, processing delays, or may be held until the next term for committee review. Students without a pending appeal at the beginning of the term are responsible for payment of their tuition and fees. No class schedule will be held without a completed or pending appeal. Students with a denied appeal, that are not eligible for any other state aid are responsible for the payment of their tuition and fees.

Financial Aid Probation

Approved status is assigned to a student who fails to meet satisfactory academic progress guidelines, submitted an appeal, the appeal was approved, and the student is projected to meet satisfactory academic progress standards or complete their degree within one semester. A student may receive aid for one semester while on this status. An approved appeal does not allow retroactive financial aid payments.

Academic Plan (§ 668.34, (d) (2) (iii) (B))

When a student's appeal is approved, but it is mathematically impossible to meet satisfactory academic progress standards within one semester, the student is placed on an academic plan with specific requirements. This status is also used in situations where MTF appeals are approved and the number of hours for degree completion extends beyond one term.

The plan may include a higher GPA standard, a higher completion rate, or other requirement that helps ensure the student can either return to good standing within a specific time period or graduate.

Subsequent Violation Following Appeal Approval

Students who successfully appeal their SAP status, but later fall below SAP standards again, must submit a new appeal to be reconsidered for financial aid eligibility. A student with a successful appeal can fall below SAP standards again by failing a course(s), withdrawing from a course(s), or switching to a different major other than what was approved.

Subsequent appeals typically cannot be filed for the same circumstances outlined in a prior appeal. However, if the circumstances are the same, the student must provide an updated letter and updated documentation indicating that their circumstances are ongoing.

Denied Appeal

A student whose appeal was reviewed and denied remains on financial aid suspension and is not eligible to receive financial aid. A reason for denial will be provided, and the student may refer to this policy for regaining eligibility. A student may file one (1) additional appeal in the same semester in which their appeal was denied. Students with a denied appeal, that are not eligible for any other state aid are responsible for the payment of their tuition and fees.

Reestablishing Eligibility:

If a student's appeal is denied, he or she may regain eligibility for financial aid by taking the following actions:

- Earn the number of deficient credit hours (quantitative/pace standards)
- Earn the required GPA (qualitative standard)

A student must notify the Financial Aid Office when the deficient hours and GPA meet the compliance standards.

If an academic review reveals a student will violate MTF prior to degree completion, the student will need to file an appeal to re-establish eligibility. The student may not regain eligibility unless a change in

program or degree results in the student's ability to graduate within the maximum timeframe when considering attempted courses applicable to the new program.

Students may be required to complete a specific number of credits or enroll for a certain number of academic periods without receiving financial aid. However, neither paying for classes nor a period of non-enrollment re-establishes eligibility. Should students decide to pay fees out-of-pocket, there is no guarantee an appeal will be approved. If an appeal is approved, financial aid will be awarded based on eligibility, but retroactive financial aid payments will not be granted.

Policy effective term: Spring 2026 SAP Review (for Summer/Fall 2026 eligibility status)