

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Criteria for Determining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

34 CFR § 668.34

All Rhodes State College student academic records are reviewed to verify that a student is meeting the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards. This includes all transfer credit hours being accepted by Rhodes, developmental courses, and English as a Second Language courses taken at Rhodes State College. Those students who are receiving federal student aid are required to maintain SAP standards to remain eligible for federal aid. Please be aware that being eligible to enroll in classes does not mean that the student has an eligible SAP status and can be awarded federal student aid.

If a student is not in compliance with the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, they are ineligible to receive the following:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Direct Loans
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
- Federal Direct PLUS Loans
- Federal Work-Study
- Student Worker Wages

A student may still receive various scholarships if he/she meets the eligibility and requirements for such scholarship awards.

The SAP status is reviewed after each semester's grades are posted.

All Rhodes State College student records will be reviewed, regardless of enrollment status, even if the student did not receive financial aid during their periods of enrollment at Rhodes. Once the SAP status is determined, students will receive notification via their Rhodes State College email indicating if they are not meeting the SAP requirements.

The criteria used in determining student academic progress at Rhodes State College include:

- A. Grade Point Average (GPA)
- B. Credit Hours Attempted/Completed (Completion Rate)
- C. Maximum Timeframe/Credit Hours for Program Completion

A. Qualitative Measures of Satisfactory Academic Progress

At Rhodes State the qualitative measurement of satisfactory progress is the grade point average (GPA).

To receive federal student aid (Title IV) a student must maintain a minimum cumulative 2.0 GPA. The GPA will be checked after every semester. Students will be placed on warning status when they drop below the required Minimum Cumulative GPA hours. Failure to achieve Minimum Cumulative GPA in the subsequent semester will result in the suspension of all federal financial aid and/or State/Institutional aid.

B. Quantitative Measures of Satisfactory Academic Progress

At Rhodes State the quantitative measurement of satisfactory progress is credit hours attempted/completed.

To receive federal student aid (Title IV) students must successfully complete at least 67% of all credit hours attempted each term. Financial aid hours are set on the 15th day of the semester called the "freeze" date and all attempted hours after that time will be calculated in the completion rate. An unsuccessful completion of a course is one that has been dropped, audited or ultimately failed with a grade of "E". To calculate your completion rate, you will divide your successfully completed hours by the total number of credit hours attempted. Financial Aid does not round percentages (i.e 66.67% does not round to 67%).

Students will be placed on warning status the first term in which their cumulative completion rate drops below the required 67%. Failure to meet the minimum completion rate in two consecutive terms will result in the suspension of all federal financial aid. Successful completion is defined as receiving a letter grade "D" or better or an "S".

For example, if Craig registers for 12 credit hours in the Fall term and passes only 8 hours, he would be placed on warning status for the Spring term as the student did not successfully complete at least 67% of his course work ($8 \text{ passed hours} / 12 \text{ registered hours} = 66.67\%$). Therefore, Craig must achieve the minimum 67% completion rate for his Spring term. If Craig does not successfully complete at least 67% of registered credit hours for the Spring term, his federal financial aid will be suspended for the next term Craig enrolls.

C. Maximum Timeframe/Credit Hours for Program Completion

Students must complete the degree requirements within 150% of the required hours for their degree program. Students lose eligibility for future awards after the term in which they exceed the maximum hours. All hours attempted at Rhodes State (not just for your current program) and any transfer credits from other institutions are considered when determining financial aid eligibility; whether or not financial aid was received.

To determine the maximum allowable hours for a specific program of study (major) refer to the Rhodes State College Catalog, note the total hours required for the program and multiply that figure by 1.5.

For example, if a student is enrolled in a program that requires 60 credits to graduate, the student cannot attempt more than 90 credits, or his/her financial aid will be suspended.

An attempted credit includes all credits that you are enrolled in after the add/drop deadline for the course and all courses that appear on your transcript. These may include courses for which you earn a regular letter grade, a "W" to show withdrawal, and pass/no pass grades. Regardless of where the hours were attempted (transfers from other institutions, or at Rhodes State College) Rhodes State College Satisfactory Academic Progress policy will apply. These hours include developmental courses, repeated courses, transfer courses and courses from which a student withdraws. Students transferring to Rhodes State will have their eligibility determined after all transfer credits have been applied to their academic record.

Notification of Satisfactory Academic Progress

A student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress during a term will receive a warning status letter. The letter informs the students that failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress in any

subsequent term will result in the suspension of federal aid. If, after one term of warning status, the student still has not corrected the SAP deficiencies, a suspension letter will be mailed informing the student that his/her financial aid has been suspended.

Repeating Courses

The Department of Education will allow for repeating coursework previously taken in a program. Students CAN receive financial aid:

- To repeat a course that has already been passed (D- or higher) only one additional time. Any repeated attempts after that will not be eligible for financial aid. Note that this applies even if you earn a failing grade (E) or withdraw (W) during the second attempt.
- As many times as necessary to repeat a course in which the only previous grade earned has been a failing grade (E).

Auditing

Prior to the 15th day of the term, audited hours will not receive federal financial aid. After the 15th day of the term, students who change to an audit will be subject to a return of Title IV Funds. Auditing a course (s) is not considered successful completion of the course(s) and may affect a student's financial aid status.

Incomplete

An "I" indicates that the work of the student in the course is satisfactory but that for legitimate reasons a small portion of the course remains to be completed.

The grade "I" shall be temporarily recorded on the student's grade report. The student must complete and submit the coursework no later than the sixth Friday following the start of the semester or term subsequent to the one in which the "I" was received. Upon the request of the student to the instructor, within the six-week period, the Vice President for Academic Affairs may allow a student additional time in which to complete the work. Generally, this shall not be longer than the end of the semester following the semester in which the "I" was received.

If the student fails to complete the coursework, the final grade will be determined by giving the student a zero on all remaining and unfinished work. These zeros will be used to calculate the final course grade. Students who are unsuccessful in a required competency (as defined in the syllabus) will receive an "E/U" grade.

Incomplete grades will be included in the calculation for both qualitative and quantitative measures. A student shall be placed on warning/suspension if the qualitative and quantitative measures do not meet SAP standards until such time that the incomplete is changed to a letter grade.

If coursework is not completed or if the incomplete grade becomes a failing grade (E), the warning/suspension status will remain in place. If coursework is successfully completed, the warning/suspension status may be removed if the qualitative/quantitative measures.

Options for Reinstatement of Financial Aid After Cancellation

1. If the failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) was due to extenuating circumstances, students will need to submit the following documentation to the Financial Aid Office:
 - I. A completed SAP Appeal Form. (found online or in the Financial Aid Office)

II. A typed, signed letter detailing the extenuating circumstances that caused you to unsuccessfully complete your classes. In addition, describe what has changed for you to be successful going forward.

III. Documentation showing the circumstances for which the student failed to meet the requirements.

IV. Meet with your academic advisor to determine if you can meet SAP within one semester. If it is determined that you cannot, you must submit an Educational Planning Form with your appeal documentation. The Educational Planning Form will list all the courses you need to bring yourself to good standing and/or are needed to graduate with your degree.

Note: Students are only allowed two (2) approved satisfactory academic progress appeals during their enrollment at Rhodes State College. Once these two appeals are met, any subsequent appeal will be denied.

2. If the failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) was not due to extenuating circumstances:

I. Successfully complete a minimum of three (3) credit hours required within your academic major. All courses for which you are registered must be successfully completed.

II. Achieve a term GPA of a 2.0 without the use of federal financial aid funds and bring cumulative GPA to minimum standards set forth by your program.

a. Both of the above mentioned options must meet the following conditions:

- I. Pass the class(es) with a minimum GPA of 2.0 for the term.
- II. Pay your bill in full by the end of the term without the use of federal funds. (Out of pocket, scholarships, payment plan, etc.)
- III. Submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Review Request Due to Student Achieving SAP without Title IV form (found in the Financial Aid Office) with a typed and signed letter stating the courses the student has taken and passed to determine if aid will or will not be restored.

Approval of Appeal: If the written appeal is granted, the student's eligibility for federal aid will be restored on probation status and the student must meet all SAP requirements after the term of probation.

Approval of Appeal with Education Plan: If the written appeal is granted but they may not meet GPA requirements after the term of approval, the student's eligibility for federal aid will be restored on probation status until specific requirements of the approved appeal are met for a maximum of two (2) terms.

Approval of SAP Review Request: If a student attends a term without the use of Title IV funding, the Review Request will be approved and financial aid will be reinstated if they meet reinstatement requirements (2 a i-iii).

Denial of Appeal or Review: If the appeal is denied, the student may submit additional written documentation or the student may follow option 2 as listed above as an alternative to having their federal financial aid restored.

Denial of Review Request: If the Review Request is denied, the student's federal aid will not be reinstated for the next semester enrolled. Student may attempt Option 2 again in the next semester.

With either an approval or denial of the student's SAP appeal or review request, the student will receive written/mailed notification and notification of any requirements that must be met to continue receiving federal student aid.

General Procedures for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeals

A student may successfully appeal satisfactory academic progress a maximum of two (2) times while enrolled at Rhodes State College

A student must submit the following to the Financial Aid Office:

1. A completed SAP Appeal form.
2. A typed and signed letter explaining the student's circumstances, and what has changed to ensure their success going forward.
3. Any supporting documentation relevant to the circumstances surrounding the events which lead to the unsuccessful completion.

Additionally, if the student will not be able to return to satisfactory standing within one semester, an Educational Planning Form must be created with an academic or faculty advisor and must prove that, if followed, the student will be able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time.

The extenuating circumstances listed below will be reviewed as possible causes which may have prevented the student from maintaining satisfactory academic progress, with appropriate documentation:

- Family difficulties (such as divorce, illness, hospitalizations)
- Interpersonal problems with friends, roommates, significant others
- Difficulty balancing school with work, athletics, family responsibilities, etc.
- Financial difficulties

If an appeal without an Educational Plan is approved, the student will be expected to return to satisfactory standing after the semester the appeal was granted for. If the student is unsuccessful, they will immediately return to Financial Aid Cancellation. Students who are approved financial aid appeals with educational plans will be placed on a probationary status for a maximum of two (2) semesters for GPA and four (4) semesters for maximum timeframe.

If an appeal with an Educational Plan is approved, the student will be expected to follow the Educational Plan exactly in order to continue making progress towards returning to satisfactory standards.

If the educational plan shows the student will be unable to meet reinstatement requirements after this time, the appeal will be denied. If the student fails to meet SAP requirements after this time, they will be placed on financial suspension and must pay for their next term without use of federal funding.

Successful completion of course work is defined as a letter grade. Acceptable grades for awarding federal financial aid are listed in the catalog under Registration in the student handbook. Unacceptable grades include: "W," "WP," "WF," "I," "E," "R," (Audit) or "U".

The GPA requirement for SAP is determined at the end of each term. Grade changes within a term will not change your SAP status but will determine your status for the next term of attendance.