

# Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for Student Financial Aid

The following academic progress policy for undergraduates applies to all students who receive federal financial aid and/or Agnes Scott College need-based grants. State regulations require that GTEG, HOPE, and/or Zell Miller recipients be subject to this policy as well.

Maximum time frame: To quantify academic progress, a school must set a maximum time frame in which a student is expected to complete a program. For an undergraduate program, the maximum time frame cannot exceed 150 percent of the published length of the program measured in credit hours attempted. Undergraduate programs require 128 hours for graduation. The maximum time frame for students in these programs, based on attempted hours, is 192 attempted hours ( $128 \times 150\% = 192$ ). As stated in terms of years, students are normally expected to complete an undergraduate degree by the end of four years of full-time study. Therefore, students will forfeit their eligibility to participate in federal financial aid programs after six years of full-time enrollment, or 150 percent of the normal expected time frame.

## Academic rules governing the policy

- Transfer credits accepted for the student's academic program or degree are counted when measuring the maximum time frame to complete the degree or program.
- Pass/Fail Courses: These hours do count within the total of attempted and completed hours.
- Withdrawals/Incompletes: Grades of W and I are counted as courses attempted and count toward the maximum time frame.
- Audited Courses: Students do not earn any academic credits for audited courses. They do not count in the calculation of "attempted hours."
- Double Majors and/or Minors: Students who pursue a double major/minor will normally be expected to complete all degree requirements before reaching 192 attempted hours to continue receiving federal financial aid.
- Change in Majors: Students who change their majors will normally be expected to complete all degree requirements before reaching 192 attempted hours to continue receiving federal financial aid.
- 2nd Bachelor's Degree: A student who has already been awarded a bachelor's degree may apply for a second degree only if approved by the college to do so.
- Students working towards a second bachelor's degree are no longer eligible for Federal Pell Grants or Federal SEOG Grants.
- Undergraduate students are limited in how much they can borrow under the Federal Stafford Loan Program. These limits are not increased for students working on a second bachelor's degree.

## Satisfactory Progress Definition

To earn an Agnes Scott College undergraduate degree, students must successfully complete 128 credit hours. For a student to be considered as progressing normally, their ratio of earned hours to attempted hours (or pace toward degree completion) must be no less than 75 percent of all hours attempted. Attempted hours are those hours for which students were still officially registered beyond each semester's published last date to drop without a W grade. Withdrawals are counted as attempted hours.

## Qualitative Standards—Grade Point Averages

At each evaluation point, a student must have achieved a specific cumulative GPA based on their class standing to remain eligible for federal financial assistance. First-year students must have at least a 1.600 GPA; sophomores must have at least a 1.800 GPA; juniors must have at least a 1.950 GPA; and seniors must have a 2.000 or higher.

In addition, in accordance with federal regulations, by the end of the second calendar year of enrollment the student must have at least a GPA that is consistent with the college's graduation requirements to be considered making satisfactory progress for continued participation in federal

aid programs. Students who do not meet this test will be ineligible to participate in federal financial aid programs until this deficiency is corrected.

## **Grade Changes**

Students must report any grade changes that impact their aid eligibility directly to the Office of Financial Aid. Grade changes must be submitted by October 1 for fall semester aid applicants and by February 1 for spring semester aid applicants. Students must notify the Office of Financial Aid once their final grades have been posted.

## **Procedures**

Each aid recipient's record will be evaluated at the end of Spring semester each year to determine that the student is meeting the standards described above. If the student has reached the maximum number of scheduled hours without earning a degree, the student will no longer be eligible for further participation in federal financial aid programs.

Federal regulations require that these standards apply to all students, even to first-time aid applicants who have previously enrolled at Agnes Scott College, or to those who have not been formally placed on probation under a prior policy.

## **Financial Aid Probation**

If a student loses eligibility after the end of the Spring semester review and seeks to have their aid reinstated, they must appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee. If the student has not reached the maximum number of scheduled hours and the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, after confirming that the student has fallen below the completion ratio standards for satisfactory progress or the required minimum GPA, approves the appeal, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and notified of the decision.

A student on financial aid probation will receive a separate letter that will outline the academic requirements they must meet in order to receive aid for the following semester. If they then meets the terms of the probation, they will be permitted to continue to participate in the federal financial aid programs for a subsequent semester. Students who have been placed on probation shall be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress for the purposes of receiving financial aid as long as they continue to meet the academic requirements outlined in their probationary letter. The Office of Financial Aid will review the records of students who are on financial aid probation at the end of each semester. If the student does not meet the terms of the probation, the student will forfeit eligibility for all federal and state financial aid programs.

## **Loss of Eligibility Due to Lack of Satisfactory Progress**

A student who has lost eligibility to participate in federal student aid programs for reasons of academic progress can regain that eligibility only by enrolling at Agnes Scott College at their own expense and demonstrating that they are capable of completing a semester without any failures, incompletes, or withdrawals and showing the ability to complete their degree requirements.

Students who have withdrawn or have been academically dismissed from the college but who are subsequently given permission to re-enroll are not automatically eligible to continue to participate in federal, state, or institutional aid programs. Admission decisions are totally separate from financial aid decisions.

## **Right to Appeal**

Students have the right to appeal their loss of federal financial aid. Appeals must be filed within 30 days of notification that aid eligibility has been lost or 30 days after a semester begins (whichever comes first). A letter of appeal must be sent in writing to the Office of Financial Aid. The appeal may not be based upon the student's need for the assistance or lack of knowledge that the assistance was in jeopardy. An appeal would normally be based upon some unusual situation or condition that prevented the student from passing more of their courses, or which necessitated that they withdraw from classes. In addition, in their appeal the student should indicate ways they

have sought assistance from various academic and other support services. Examples of possible situations include documented serious illness, severe injury, or death of a family member. Students must also complete a SAP Academic Plan with their SUMMIT Advisor which will form the basis for their probation plan.

## **Appeal Approval Conditions**

Appeals can only be approved if the Financial Aid Appeals Committee determines that

- the student will be able to meet the college's satisfactory academic progress standards after the next payment period; or
- the student has agreed to follow an academic plan that, if followed, will ensure that the student can meet the college's satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time.

Students whose appeals are granted will receive aid on a conditional basis for one semester. The conditions will typically be as arranged with their SUMMIT Advisor on the SAP Academic Plan. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will review the student's record at the end of the semester to determine their status for the following semester. Students who fail to meet the conditions outlined in their individualized academic plan during their conditional semester will not be able to submit a subsequent appeal.

If there are no grounds for an appeal, or if the appeal is denied, the student may still be able to regain eligibility for future semesters. This would require enrolling at Agnes Scott College at their own expense without financial assistance until they meet the satisfactory academic progress standards.