

III 07 03 FINANCIAL AID STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Policy:

Each institution of higher education disbursing Title IV funds must establish standards of satisfactory academic progress in order to comply with federal regulations related specifically to Title IV funds.

Procedures:

Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Volunteer State Community College has the following standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress applicable to all Title IV funds. These funds include Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work-Study Program (FWSP), and Federal Direct Student Loans. The following institutionally awarded state funds are subject to the same Satisfactory Academic Progress standards, Tennessee Student Assistance Award, Tennessee Educational Lottery Scholarships, and Access and Diversity Grants. The TN Promise and TN Reconnect scholarships have individual standards of satisfactory academic progress and are not subject to those standards set forth in this policy.

Federal and state regulations require that students maintain adequate academic progress toward receiving a degree or certificate in order to continue eligibility for Title IV financial aid programs. The following standards are for the Title IV financial aid purposes only and neither replaces or overrides VSCC Academic Status and Retention Standards as published in the VSCC catalog.

Criteria Requirements

1. Qualitative: Cumulative Grade Point Average Requirement

Maintain a minimum grade point average based on the number of credit hours attempted at VSCC (including remedial, developmental and learning support classes). Transfer credits and the grades received in those courses are not considered in this GPA calculation. The following chart outlines the cumulative GPA a degree or certificate seeking student who is receiving Title IV funding must maintain according to the number of institution combined GPA hours attempted.

Associated Degree GPA Requirements:

Institutional Overall Combined Hours Attempted 0-14	14.1	26.1	40.1	48.1	56.1	
Cumulative GPA	-	1.0	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.0

Certificate Programs GPA Requirements:

Institutional Overall Combined Hours Attempted 0-6	6.1	13.1	20.1	27.1	
Cumulative GPA	-	1.0	1.5	1.9	2.0

2. Quantitative: PACE – Measurable Progress Requirement

Student must complete, with a passing grade, 66.7% of all classes attempted including transfer hours. Grades of W, I, K, YC FA or F are considered in this calculation and will negatively impact the student where measurable progress is concerned.

3. Maximum Time Frame (MTF)

Students must complete their program of study within 150% of the published length of the program. For associates degree programs, students are allowed to receive Title IV financial aid up to the first 90 hours attempted. When it is first determined that a student cannot complete the credential by the MTF limit, a notice that the student is off aid will be sent. Students enrolled in Title IV eligible certificate programs may receive aid through completion of 150% of the individual program length. Transfer credit and repeated coursework will negatively impact the student. All VSCC coursework is included in this measurement even if it does not apply to the student's current program.

4. Learning Support Time Limit

Students are limited to 30 attempted hours of learning support coursework. All attempts including withdrawals and repeats count toward the maximum number of hours attempted. Federal Aid for a student who has exceeded this maximum will be based on college level coursework only. This time limit cannot be appealed.

Financial Aid Warning and Probation

The Financial Aid Office will evaluate each of these measurements at the end of each academic term (including summer term). Students, who do not meet the standards of the GPA or PACE will be placed on **Financial Aid Warning**.

- Students in this status may continue to receive Title IV financial aid for one additional term. At the end of that term if they have not met the GPA and/or PACE requirement, they will be placed on **Financial Aid Probation (suspension)**.
- Students on **Financial Aid Probation (suspension)** will be ineligible to receive any Title IV financial aid (including loans) and must take classes at their own expense until GPA and/or PACE meet the standards outlined in this policy.

Students who do not meet the Maximum Time Frame (MTF) measurement are not eligible for a Financial Aid Warning Period and immediately become ineligible for Title IV financial aid.

Warning Zero Status

Students earning zero credit hours with a 0.00 GPA during any term which enrolled will be placed on Warning Zero status. When placed on Warning Zero status for the first time, the student will be permitted to receive aid for the upcoming term and encouraged to work with the

assigned academic advisor or professional advisor to review the proposed course load and to also determine the most productive path to reaching the status of good standing. The student will still be evaluated for Title IV aid eligibility based on the Federal PACE, GPA, and Maximum Time Frame (MTF) requirements as listed above.

Procedures for Appeal Title IV Federal Aid and Other Applicable Programs

Students may file a Financial Aid Appeal to regain eligibility. Students placed on Financial Aid Warning or Probation/Suspension status will be prevented from receiving Title IV financial aid, Access and Diversity Grant, and Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship.

Appeals should be submitted by the priority dates provided by the Office of Financial Aid. Students must anticipate a minimum of three weeks for the Appeals Committee to review the appeal and make a decision on their request. Failure to provide required supporting documentation will delay the appeal process. Students who have filed an appeal at the beginning of the semester are responsible for fee payment pending the review of their appeal.

To appeal the student must:

1. Complete a Financial Aid Appeal Form. The student must provide an explanation of the circumstances which caused their past unsatisfactory performance during the previous two semesters and documentation of the extenuating circumstance.
2. The student must also state how the issues have been corrected or list the steps they are currently taking to ensure that the circumstances do not reoccur. The Appeal Form and required documentation must then be returned to the Office of Financial Aid for processing. All requests will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee.
3. On an individual basis, the Financial Aid Appeals Committee may recommend the student be placed on a Financial Aid Academic PLAN for the subsequent semesters at VSCC. The Financial Aid Academic PLAN requires the student to complete a PLAN form with their academic advisor to map out all of the required remaining courses through the completion of the credential. The student must adhere to the PLAN until regaining Financial Aid good standing. Students placed on a Financial Aid Academic PLAN will be individually monitored by the Office of Financial Aid. Any unauthorized change to the PLAN will result in the student returning to Financial Aid Suspension status.
4. Any changes to the PLAN must be approved by the assigned academic advisor. A revised PLAN form must be forwarded to the Office of Financial Aid for approval.
5. Students who have exceeded the Maximum Time Frame (MTF) may have their limit extended by an amount equal to any transfer credit work applied to academic history that does not apply to their current program of study or the number of hours remaining to graduate. In order to appeal MTF, the student must complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form and provide documentation where required. Based on the review of this request by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee and the student degree audit, students may have their MTF limit extended.
6. To appeal the decision of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, a student must submit a written appeal to the Vice President for Student Services within five business days from

the date of notification of the committee's decision. If further action is deemed necessary, an appeal of the decision of the Vice President for Student Services should be made in writing to the President.

VSCC Source: Former III:07:01, July 5, 1989, April 30, 1990, September 27, 1990, April 8, 1999, President; November 26, 2007, President; November 7, 2011, President's Cabinet; August 7, 2017, President's Cabinet; January 28, 2019, President's Cabinet