

## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

### SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) denotes a student's successful completion of coursework toward a certificate or degree. Federal regulations require the Student Financial Services to monitor the progress of each federal aid recipient's progress toward certificate/degree completion. Peirce College's academic year and certificate/degree completion requirements are defined in the Peirce College catalog. The SAP policy (defined herein) for financial aid recipients is the same academic standards for those students who do not receive federal Title IV aid.

A student who fails to complete his/her courses, fails to achieve minimum standards for his/her cumulative grade point average or fails to complete the certificate or degree - within the maximum timeframe, may lose his/her eligibility for all types of federal student aid administered by the Student Financial Services. SAP standards are applied to for all categories of students (i.e. full and part-time) and are reviewed at the conclusion of every spring semester regardless of the number of credits a student attempts.

### Aid Programs and SAP

The Satisfactory Academic Progress policy affects student eligibility for the following federal programs:

Federal Pell Grant  
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant  
Federal Direct Loan (subsidized and unsubsidized)  
Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Graduate (PLUS)  
Federal Work Study

**NOTE:** The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) has a separate policy regarding state grant funds and satisfactory academic progress.

### Requirements for maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress

To maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, a federal financial aid recipient must:

**1. Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA)**

The minimum for undergraduate students is a 2.0 (out of a 4.0 scale) cumulative GPA at the end of each spring semester. Your cumulative GPA includes all of the courses that you have attempted at Peirce College to date including those in which you received incompletes, withdrawals or were repeated from an earlier term. (GPA requirements for institutional scholarships may be higher.) A 2.0 cumulative GPA is required in order to graduate from Peirce College; and,

**2. Complete at least 67 percent of all credit hours attempted.**

At the conclusion of the spring semester, the total number of credits that a financial aid recipient has attempted at Peirce College will be compared to the total number of credits the recipient has completed.

Grades of A, B, C, D, and P count as coursework that was attempted and satisfactorily completed toward the percentage of credits earned.

Grades of F, W and I count as coursework that was attempted but not satisfactorily completed.

Grades of No Grade (NG\*) counts as coursework that was attempted but not satisfactorily completed.

(For example, an undergraduate student who enrolls for 12 credit hours and completes only 7 credit hours has completed 58.33 percent of attempted credit hours.) All attempted credits including failed courses, incompletes, withdrawals, repeated courses and credit bearing developmental courses will be included in this assessment; and,

**3. Complete a certificate or degree program in a maximum timeframe of no more than 150 percent of the average length of the program**

Maximum Credit Hours: A student may receive financial aid for attempted credits in their program of study; however, the number of attempted credits cannot exceed 150% of the College's published credit hours for the educational program in which the student is enrolled.

	<b>Certificate Program</b>	<b>Associate Degree</b>	<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>
<b># of Credits in degree</b>	30	60-63	121-123
<b>150% of length</b>	45	90-94	181-184

All credits attempted during the student's enrollment count when assessing the maximum time frame even those semesters in which the student did not receive federal financial aid funds.

**For transfer students:** The number of transfer hours accepted at the point of admission will be used to calculate the student's remaining eligibility under the 150 percent rule and will be included in the quantitative standard which includes number of credits attempted and completed. Transfer credits will be counted as attempted and earned credits in the calculation for determining SAP. See sample below:

<b>Summer 2020</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Spring 2021</b>
3 credits	15 transfer credits	15 credits	15 credits

The student transferred and registered for a total of 48 credits during summer, fall and spring. Based on 48 credits, the student needs to pass a minimum of 33 credits (48 attempted credits multiplied by 67% = 32.16 credits) to successfully meet the credit completion rate. A student's grade point average at Peirce College is not affected by the transfer credits as only the credits will transfer not the actual grade(s).

**Change of Program**

If a student changes his /her degree program or graduates and requests another degree program, his/her coursework will be evaluated to determine the credits that count toward the new major or program. After a degree audit has been evaluated, the count of credits attempted will be reset based upon the credits completed that satisfy requirements in the new degree program. For example, if a student has attempted 60 credits but only 30 (including transfer credits) will satisfy requirements in the new degree program, then the count of the attempted credits will be reset from 60 to 30. The student in this example would have a new maximum of 60 additional credits to complete the new associate's degree program. Further, this student would have a new maximum of 151 credits to complete a new bachelor's degree.

**PLEASE NOTE: A student who completes all the academic requirements for a certificate or degree but does not yet have a certificate or degree (or has not applied for graduation) is not eligible for further financial assistance for that certificate or degree.**

### **Change of Major**

A student must provide reasonable rationale for pursuing a new major if he/she has been on academic probation and the student is not making satisfactory academic progress. Such appeals will be reviewed in the conjunction with prior information obtained through the appeal process. Please consult the course catalog.

### **Reestablishing Eligibility**

Students who fail to meet the SAP requirements will be placed on financial aid suspension and as a result will not be eligible for continued assistance from the Title IV programs to pay for their classes. Ineligible students are required to meet the SAP standards detailed above in numbers 1- 3 in order to regain their eligibility for Title IV aid. When extraordinary circumstances have contributed to the failure to maintain the SAP standards the student may appeal as provided below.

**Please note:** A student **cannot** reestablish eligibility by taking a term (s) off and then returning from a break and/or reapplying to Peirce College.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Policy:**

All students placed on Financial Aid Probation due to failure to meet satisfactory academic progress have a right to appeal. In order for the Office of Student Financial Services to evaluate your appeal, please follow the guidelines below, providing as much detailed information regarding the circumstances of the appeal as possible. The details of the appeal must be thoroughly explained before your appeal will be evaluated. Appeals will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Instructions for Submitting an Appeal**

1. Complete the Satisfactory Academic Probation appeal form.
2. Attach a typed and signed letter. The appeal letter must explain the following:
  - a. A description of the unforeseen circumstance which may have prevented the student from meeting the SAP standards;
  - b. How the circumstance(s) have been resolved and;
  - c. How the circumstance(s) will not affect the student's future academic progress.
  - d. An academic plan (which has been created with your Peirce academic advisor and/or a Peirce faculty member)
3. Attach supporting documentation. **Documentation of circumstances described in your letter must be included with the written appeal.**

**NOTE: Additional documentation may be requested after your appeal has been submitted**

4. In order for an appeal to be considered, your circumstances must meet at least one of the criteria in the chart below.

<b>Circumstance(s) that apply:</b>	<b>Documentation needed (must include dates):</b>
Severe illness, medical condition or injury	Signed & dated letter from physician on official/office letterhead; legible copy of accident report
Death of a family member	Death certificate and/or official obituary
Traumatic life-altering event such as fire, hurricane, Covid-19, etc.	Evidence of such event such as an insurance claim or FEMA application
Other circumstances beyond the control of the student (must explain in detail the nature of the circumstance and dates of the unexpected circumstance)	Appropriate documentation which will verify the situation

The following scenarios are examples of **NON**-extenuating circumstances and are **not** an acceptable justification for appealing;

- Youthfulness, immaturity, or lack of focus
- Difficult coursework or attempted too many credits and couldn't handle the workload
- Student / Instructor conflicts
- Transportation issues
- Poor time management
- Financial aid processing late or delayed
- Medical reasons that were known to you prior to the start of the semester, unless you can document unforeseeable complications
- Work Conflicts, unless you can document an unexpected, unavoidable, and involuntary change to your work schedule that directly hindered your academic success

### **Appeal of Maximum Time Frame**

A student who is close to exceeding the maximum time frame may appeal that status if he/she believes that there are special or extenuating circumstances. Examples of special circumstances would be: injury, illness, death of a close relative, or other extenuating circumstances. A student may submit an application for appeal (see procedure above), with supporting documentation, to the Student Financial Services. The Student Financial Services will notify the student of the outcome of the appeal, and if he/she will be eligible for any additional time.

### **Monitoring the Status of Your Appeal**

It may take up to seven business days to review your appeal once it is submitted to the Student Financial Services before a decision is made. All decisions are final. A second review can only be requested if you can provide new information and documentation that may have been omitted from the initial appeal. If you have not submitted your initial or follow-up documentation within the timeframe allotted, you will be responsible for any potential balance and you can discuss your payment options with the Business Office.

### **Subsequent Appeals**

Students who submit appeals for subsequent semesters may not present the same extraordinary or extenuating circumstance more than once, unless it has recurred. The basis for all subsequent appeals must be fully documented in order to be reviewed by the Student Financial Services.

## **GRADUATE STUDENTS**

### **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the term used to denote a student's successful completion of coursework toward a certificate/degree. Federal regulations require the Office of Student Financial Services to monitor the progress of each student who matriculates toward certificate/degree program completion. Students who fall behind in their coursework, or fail to achieve minimum standards for grade point average and completion of classes, may lose their eligibility for all types of federal aid administered by the Office of Student Financial Services.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements**

There are three components in maintaining satisfactory progress. Failure to comply with any one requirement may result in a loss of Title IV Federal Aid eligibility. Each component is detailed below:

1. Maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0.
2. Maintain a minimum completion rate for attempted credit hours.
3. Complete a degree or certificate program in no more than 150% of the average length of the program.

While students are expected to complete all credits attempted for financial aid, each student must complete at least 75 percent of all credit hours attempted each term (fall, spring, and summer).

Students receiving financial aid are subject to the 150% Rule. According to this rule, students who attempt more than 150% of the credit hours needed to graduate from their program of study will be ineligible to receive financial aid. Under this rule, all credits, taken at Peirce or transferred to Peirce, are counted in this 150% rule calculation. Please note this rule applies to all courses taken regardless of how they were paid for (cash, financial aid, tuition reimbursement, etc.). The formula for the 150% rule calculation is as follows: career credits earned divided by career credits attempted.

At the end of each spring term, the Office of Student Financial Services will review the progress of each graduate student. Students who have not met all three of the requirements listed above will be notified in writing that they have not achieved Satisfactory Academic Progress. For more information about academic progress notifications, please see the Peirce College Academic Progress, Probation, and Dismissal policies.

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- b. How the circumstance(s) have been resolved
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  - d. An academic plan (which has been created with your Peirce faculty advisor and/or a Peirce faculty member)
3. Attach supporting documentation. Documentation of circumstances described in your letter must be included with the written appeal.

**NOTE: Additional documentation may be requested after your appeal has been submitted**

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You will receive written electronic mail notification of the decision made on your appeal. You can monitor the status of your appeal on Net Partner.

Below is a listing of the potential appeal statuses:

- Not Received: Based upon your current SAP status you are ineligible for federal financial aid and have not submitted an appeal.
- Received: Your appeal has been received, but not reviewed.
- Incomplete: Your appeal has been reviewed, but the Office of Student Financial Services has deferred a decision on your appeal pending the receipt of additional information. The Office of Student Financial Services will send an email to your Peirce College email address detailing the additional information or documentation needed.
- Approved: Your appeal has been approved, and you are on SAP probation. While on probation you must follow the requirements set forth within the terms of your academic plan. The Office of Student Financial Services will monitor your academic progress each term to ensure you are meeting your individualized SAP requirements.
- Denied: Your appeal was not approved based on the information you provided. You are not eligible to receive federal financial aid. If you intend to remain enrolled at Peirce College, you must pay your bill with other sources.

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