

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

This policy is for financial aid eligibility only and does not represent the academic requirements of the college.

The Office of Financial Aid is required by federal and state regulations to monitor the academic progress of financial aid recipients. Financial aid applicants must comply with the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy as a condition of continued eligibility. Academic progress of all financial aid applicants is required to be tracked from the first date of enrollment at Roxbury Community College, whether or not financial aid was received. SAP calculations include all coursework in your current academic career (i.e. changing programs on the undergraduate level does not start the calculations over, although a change in program can be considered a portion of an effective academic plan.)

The Office of Financial Aid evaluates student academic progress at the end of each fall, spring and summer semester. Students are evaluated on the basis of cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.), cumulative completion ratio (attempted vs. passed), and maximum time frame limitation. Financial Aid recipients are required to be in good standing and to maintain satisfactory academic progress toward their degree/certificate requirements for each semester in which they are enrolled. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress may result in the cancellation of financial aid awards.

The Office of Financial Aid will consider students pursuing an associates degree to be making satisfactory academic progress if they meet all of the following criteria:

1. **Minimum cumulative GPA based on the number of credits attempted**

Number of credits attempted/earned	Minimum cumulative GPA required
1-12	1.50
13 – 30	1.70
31 and above	2.00

2. **Minimum Completion Ratio**

All students must maintain a cumulative minimum Completion ratio of 66.66% or better.

Progress is calculated based on cumulative total of (those earned at RCC as well as those transferred towards your degree or certificate) attempted credits, regardless of whether the student received aid in during enrollment. (Formula: Total credits earned divided by total credits attempted equals completion ratio.)

3. **Maximum Timeframe Limitation** Students must complete their educational program within a time frame no longer than 150% of the published length of the educational program, as measured by transfer and attempted credits. (For example, a student could receive federal financial aid for up to 90 credits while enrolled in a 60 credit undergraduate program)

Developmental Coursework

Developmental courses are not counted in the cumulative G.P.A. calculation, but will be counted toward cumulative completion ratio. Financial Aid eligibility for remedial courses is limited to 30 credit hours. Note: For financial aid purposes English as a Second Language classes do **not** count towards the 30 credit restriction, however all classes reduce the lifetime eligibility limits for the Federal Pell Grant Program.

Certificate Coursework

Certificate programs are focused academic training programs designed to assist degree and non-degree students seeking a targeted education to enhance employment skills and employment prospects. Students may pursue a certificate as a part of their degree study or by itself.

Students enrolled in a certificate as a specialization within their degree seeking program are evaluated for financial aid SAP policy according to the requirements of their degree program.

For students actively pursuing a certificate independent of a degree program the following standards apply.

- **Undergraduate Certificates 2.0 cumulative GPA**
- **Cumulative completion ratio of 66.66%**
- **Completion within 150% of timeframe** (example: 18 credits X 150% = 27 credits equals 150% of maximum timeframe).

Certificates that are less than one year in length (any that require 24 credits or less to complete) do not include a warning semester. Satisfactory Academic Progress will be reviewed at the end of the first semester of study. Due to the length of certificate programs students will be placed on academic review at the start of their program and are subject to suspension at the end of the first semester of study for failing to meet the above standards.

Certificate students will have the same option of submitting a SAP appeal when extenuating circumstances prevent them from successfully completing their course of study.

NOTE: While certificate programs are generally financial aid approved, financial aid is restricted to classes required for the specific certificate only. Aid cannot be given for classes that are not specifically listed as needed for the Certificate. Certificate students are also will not receive aid for retaking classes to improve a grade.

Withdrawals, Incompletes and Course Repeats

Attempted credits include grades of F, U, I, W, PS and WA as well as repeated courses. Students may repeat courses in order to improve a grade (students in degree seeking programs can retake prior successfully completed courses to improve grades one time, and receive aid for the retake.) However, credits for repeated courses will count as additional credits attempted for financial aid purposes. Incomplete grades are not included in the GPA calculation until they are converted to actual grades. These courses count as attempted credits that are not yet earned, and thus may negatively affect completion ratio.

Student who fail to meet the Standards

Warning - Students who fail to meet the minimum standard will be given one semester of warning (except certificate students, please see above). This warning period is meant to inform the student of existing academic problems and provide time for corrective action. Students given a warning are eligible to receive federal aid for their warning semester but will be reviewed at the end of the semester of warning.

At the end of the warning period students who are meeting the minimum requirements will be considered to be back in good standing and eligible for student financial aid.

Not Meets – Students who fail to meet the minimum standards at the end of the semester of warning will be suspended from financial aid eligibility, and all financial aid awards will be cancelled. Students who feel that there are extenuating circumstances that have caused them to fail to meet the minimum standards can submit an appeal to have their eligibility reinstated. For an appeal to be granted it must be realistically possible for the student to regain their eligibility and complete their degree.

Students who are ineligible for financial aid may appeal or may choose to continue to work on their program (subject to academic approval) without the benefit of aid, and reapply once they have brought all requirements to the minimum standards.

Appeal Process – The appeal process is designed to ensure that students granted an appeal:

- Understand in what way they are failing to meet the minimum standards for Academic Performance.
- Have explained and documented the extenuating circumstances that have led to the failure to meet standards.
- Understand the academic choices available to help them bring their performance up to the minimum standards.
- Develop a realistic plan, including a timeline and specific levels of performance goals necessary to regain acceptable satisfactory academic progress status in a reasonable period of time while working toward the completion of their degree.

Note: *student who can demonstrate that they can bring their cumulative GPA and/or Cumulative Completion ratio up to the minimum standards within one semester of enrollment, or who will be eligible to graduate with the successful completion of one semester may submit documentation of these goals instead of a formal academic plan.*

Students who successfully appeal their financial aid suspension, including developing and agreeing to an acceptable academic plan to achieve reinstatement, will have their financial aid eligibility reinstated on a probationary basis, called **an Academic Plan**. This probationary status will be reviewed at the end of each subsequent semester.

Academic Plan – Academic performance will be reviewed at the end of each subsequent period of enrollment. Students who meet the minimum standards at the end of any semester will have their probation ended and be fully reinstated.

Students who, after a semester review of their probation, **fall below the minimum cumulative standards, but have met the expectations outlined in their academic plan** will be continued on a probationary level while following the plan to regain satisfactory academic performance status and a subsequent appeal is not necessary as long as the expected progress is being made.

Students who, after a semester review of their probation, **fall below the minimum cumulative standards, and have also failed to meet the expectations outlined in their agreed upon academic plan** will be **suspended from financial aid eligibility**.

Students, who are suspended from Financial Aid eligibility and therefore not eligible to receive financial aid funds, **can regain eligibility** by bringing their cumulative GPA as well as cumulative completion to the minimum levels defined above without the benefit of financial aid funds.

Once eligibility is regained, financial aid will be available for further semesters provided the student continues to meet the overall minimum eligibility requirements.

Notices of Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress will be emailed to students at their RCC email address at the completion of each semester.

PLEASE NOTE: Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Appeals are completed with the Office of Financial Aid, and should not be confused with any Academic Appeal required by your program or Academic Advisor.

Office of Financial Aid

Location: Room 201 Administration Building

Email: Finaid@RCC.mass.edu

Phone: 617.541.5322

Fax: 617.933.7414

