



COLLEGE
of
the DESERT

College of the Desert

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

Standards for SAP Policy & Procedures



Last Updated: October 31st, 2024

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Policy Overview

College of the Desert (COD) Community College, Financial Aid Office (FAO)'s Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy is designed to measure a student's academic progress toward a degree, certificate, or transfer requirements. All enrolled students applying for or receiving financial aid are required to meet all the SAP standards. Federal and State regulations require that the College of the Desert review the academic progress of students receiving financial aid. The review process evaluates whether a student is "*making measurable progress toward completion of their course of study to continue receiving federal financial aid.*" All credits attempted are evaluated, from the first semester of enrollment whether or not federal financial aid was used.

At College of the Desert (COD), Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is evaluated at the end of each semester (June, September, and January run). If a student submits a financial aid application after the evaluation period, their SAP status will be reviewed at the time the financial aid application is received and/or when the Financial Aid Office receives all required verification documents from the student.

If it is determined that the student is not meeting satisfactory academic progress, the student will receive an e-mail notification indicating that they have been placed on *WARNING* or *SUSPENSION*. The student must respond to all notifications from the Financial Aid Office promptly to ensure proper processing of their financial aid. A deadline to appeal will be available each semester.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards must be met by students receiving Federal Student Aid (FSA), under Title IV programs, and state aid including the *Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study, Cal Grant, Student Success Completion Grant, Chafee Grant, and Direct Loans.*

The California College Promise Grant has its standards that must be met separately from this policy. The Admissions and Records Office at College of the Desert runs the standards and informs students if they are no longer meeting eligibility for this grant.

SAP Standards

Financial Aid recipients are expected to make reasonable and timely academic progress toward a degree, certificate, or transfer requirements. The Financial Aid Office used a combination of quantitative (PACE) and qualitative (GPA) components when evaluating a student's SAP status.

Progress is measured using the following three (3) SAP standards:

- **Standard 1 – *The GPA Standard***
 - Meet the minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA); ***GPA < 2.0.***
- **Standard 2 – *The Pace of Progress Standard***
 - Satisfactorily complete at least ***67%*** of all cumulative hours attempted.
- **Standard 3 – *The Maximum Time Frame***
 - Complete the degree/certificate program within the ***150% maximum time frame (MTF); units based*** on the student's declared (active) degree/certificate.



Standard 1 – The GPA Standard

Standard 1, the GPA standard, is calculated using all courses taken at College of the Desert. All attempts, whether completed or failed, will be counted toward a student's cumulative GPA calculation. ***A student must meet a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0.***

Note – transfer units are EXCLUDED from the GPA calculation (standard 1 ONLY).

Standard 2 – Pace of Progress

Standard 2, the Pace of Progress, is calculated using ALL courses transferred and/or taken at College of the Desert. The Pace of Progress is measured by comparing the *total number of credits completed* with the *total number of credits attempted*. A student must complete at least ***67% of all courses attempted***, whether completed or failed.

Example – A 2nd-year student has attempted 32 units and completed 28 units. The Pace of Progress is measured by units attempted (32 units) divided by units completed (28 units) – (32 units / 28 units = 87.5%).

Standard 3 – Maximum Time Frame (MTF)

Standard 3, Maximum Time Frame (MTF), is calculated using all courses transferred and/or taken at College of the Desert. A student is eligible to receive financial aid, specifically Title IV aid, for a maximum number of overall attempted credits for their primary (active) program of study. A student must complete their degree/certificate program within ***150% of the published degree length***.

Students who have reached their maximum time frame (150%) are immediately ineligible for federal financial aid and do not receive a warning semester. To obtain additional federal financial aid a student must submit a completed SAP Appeal and meet with their academic advisor/counselor to create a SEP (Student Educational Plan).

Example – An Associate's Degree (AA) is typically 60 units. A student must complete that AA degree within 150% of the published degree length (150% of 60 units = 90 units).

Failure to Meet SAP Standards

Financial aid recipients are reviewed after each semester (Winter combined with Spring) to verify their continued eligibility to receive financial aid. Each recipient will receive an email informing them they are on warning and suspension along with possible impacts on their ability to continue to receive aid. Students can review the self-service portal at any time to review their current satisfactory academic progress status.

Each student will begin at Satisfactory and the status will update every term. Failure to meet one or more of the SAP Standards may affect whether or not the recipients can continue to receive aid.

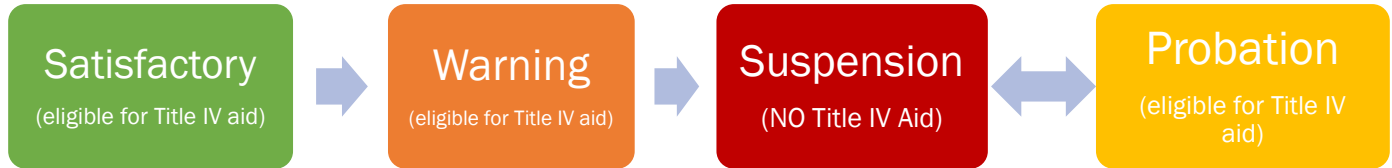
Note – Some students may be automatically **SUSPENDED** based on their previous academic history (transfer units). Students are automatically assigned to **SUSPENDED** status if they hit the maximum time frame. The maximum time frame does not have a warning semester.

Below are the possible SAP statuses:

- Financial Aid **SATISFACTORY**
 - *Eligible for Title IV aid*
- Financial Aid **WARNING**



- *Eligible for Title IV aid*
- Financial Aid **SUSPENSION**
 - *Suspension due to GPA or PACE*
 - *Suspension due to Maximum Time Frame (MTF)*
- If the Appeal is APPROVED, Financial Aid **PROBATION**
 - *Eligible for Title IV aid*
 - *Failing after probation results back to SUSPENSION.*



Financial Aid SATISFACTORY

It is the student's responsibility to read, understand, and adhere to the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy to remain eligible for financial aid. Failure to comply with this policy can result in the student's financial aid being terminated at the College of the Desert Community College.

Financial Aid WARNING

Each financial aid recipient will have **ONLY ONE semester** after failing one or more standards, as a **WARNING semester** before failure results in Suspension. All recipients will be notified via mycod.us email address.

During the WARNING semester, students are eligible for financial aid and are encouraged to re-evaluate their academic progress toward the completion of their course of study, obtain academic advising, and other academic support resources to support their academic success.

If a student **continues to fail** one or more SAP standards, they will continue to the **next SAP status, SUSPENSION.**

Financial Aid SUSPENSION

If a financial aid recipient continues to fail one or more SAP standards after their 'Warning' semester will result in financial aid SUSPENSION. Students who are placed on financial aid SUSPENSION will be ineligible to receive Title IV aid for the next term of enrollment unless they have an approved SAP appeal.

A student can become ineligible for the following reasons:

1. Student failed to meet Sap after their 'Warning' semester, ***and/or***
2. Student exceed the 150% maximum timeframe, specific to their program of study, ***and/or***
3. Student failed to meet the conditions of their probationary period/term.
 - *Students with an approved SAP appeal will be placed in a probationary term; each term appeal conditions must be met. See Financial Aid PROBATION for more details.*



Financial Aid PROBATION

Students who have been approved a SAP Appeal will be placed in a probationary status for the approved term, and their financial aid eligibility will be reinstated for one payment period (term). Future financial aid eligibility will be contingent on appeal conditions and/or the student's progress.

Once the SAP appeal is approved, an email notification will be sent via *Mycod.us* email address once the approval takes place.

Financial Aid Notification

Students who are placed on financial aid suspension or financial aid warning will be notified via their *mycod.us* email address of their financial aid status. Students are also able to view their current SAP status on the Financial Aid Self-Service Portal. Students who submit an SAP Appeal will also be notified via their *Mycod.us* email address of their appeal status, whether or not it was approved.

Below are the possible email notifications:

1. SAP Status – Meeting SAP (*Satisfactory Status*) (Ex: [Appendix B](#))
2. SAP Status – *Warning Status* (Ex: [Appendix C](#))
3. SAP Status – *Suspension Status* (Ex: [Appendix D](#))
4. SAP Status – Appeal APPROVED (Probation Status) (Ex: [Appendix E](#))
5. SAP Status – Appeal DENIED (Ex: [Appendix F](#))
6. SAP Status – *Probation NOT Met (back to Suspension)* (Ex: [Appendix G](#))

Re-Establishing Aid Eligibility

There are two ways a student can re-establish their aid eligibility; however, it depends on which standards are not being met.

- (1) **Meeting on Your Own** – A student can re-establish their aid eligibility on their own by improving their grades and successfully passing courses attempted. Once a student is meeting all standards, their SAP status will revert to Satisfactory.
 - a. *This option is best for a student failing Standard 1 (GPA) and/or 2 (Pace of Progression).*
- (2) **Submit an Appeal** – A student can submit an SAP appeal to re-establish aid eligibility. Typically, students who are not able to meet on their own can appeal their SAP status, and if approved, will re-establish their aid eligibility.
 - a. *This option is best for students with extenuating circumstances that led to failure, AND/OR*
 - b. **Failing SAP due to Maximum Time Frame** – These students MUST appeal to re-establish aid eligibility.



SAP Appeal Process

Students may appeal the suspension of their financial aid by documenting any extenuating and/or mitigating circumstances that may have led to their inability to maintain satisfactory academic progress. ***Students who submit a financial aid appeal are not automatically reinstated for federal financial aid.*** The Office of Financial Aid considers the students' written appeal, other supporting documentation, and federal regulations when making a final determination of financial aid reinstatement.

- Only ONE (1) appeal per student per term
- Appeal instructions are available in the Financial Aid Office and sent to the student via email. The student will be notified of the appeal decision by the Appeals Committee 45 days from when the completed appeal is submitted to the Financial Aid Office. Please note that submission of an appeal does not guarantee approval.
- Students will be notified of their approval or denial of their appeal to their mycod.us email. Denials are subject to the second review process should a student request a second review. Students may request a second review by emailing FAO@collegeofthedesert.edu. The second review process will be completed by the VP of Student Services.

If the student's appeal is approved by the Appeals Committee, the student will be placed on "Probation" and will be paid for courses listed on their Student Educational Plan. During this probationary period, the student is eligible to receive financial aid.

Note – The student will be switched to "**Monitoring**" at the end of the semester and a review will take place to ensure the student is following their "SAP Probation Contract." If the student is not meeting the contract, the student will be placed back on "Suspension." If the student meets the contract, they will be placed back on "Probation" for the coming term. If the student is now meeting all satisfactory academic standards, the student will be placed back on "Satisfactory."

Example of Circumstances:

If you have justified circumstances that led you to not meet minimum SAP standards, we would encourage you to appeal before the semester deadline (posted below).

Examples of justifying circumstances include, **but are not limited to:**

- Injury or illness, including, but not limited to, behavioral health conditions, of the student or a relative or other significant person
- Death of a relative or other significant person
- Pregnancy or birth of a child
- Homelessness
- Loss of childcare
- Loss or change in employment
- Loss of access to personal or public transportation
- Being a victim of a serious crime, including but not limited to, domestic abuse, even if the crime was not reported or did not result in criminal prosecution or civil liability



- Natural disaster
- Change in Major
- Personal difficulties
- Military Services

Impacts of Grades & Coursework

As mentioned earlier, each student's SAP status is reviewed at the end of each term to evaluate whether the student remains eligible for Title IV aid. To evaluate a student's grades and coursework, the system evaluates grades using the following:

- **Grades – A, B, C, D, P, and CR**
 - Considered completed credits/courses; and calculated in a student's cumulative GPA, Pace of Progress, and Maximum Time Frame.
- **Grades – F and FW**
 - Not completed credits/courses, but count in student's cumulative GPA, Pace of Progress, and Maximum Time Frame.
- **Grades – W, I, IP, NC, NP, RD, MW, and EW***
 - Not considered completed credits/courses, but counts toward student's overall attempted units, and Maximum Time Frame.
 - **Excused Withdrawal (EW) was not part of the calculation during the COVID-19 National Emergency; however, any EW grades assigned after May 27th, 2023 will count towards SAP calculations.*
- **Grades – RD and P**
 - Considered completed credits but not calculated in a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA).
- **Non-Degree/ESL Coursework – Any grade**
 - Up to a maximum of 30 units
- **Remedial Coursework – Any grade**
 - Included in the overall assessment of a student's SAP status.
 - Up to a maximum of 30 units.
- **Transfer Credits – Any grade**
 - Included as attempted/completed units in the overall (EXCLUDED from GPA).
- **Repeating Coursework**
 - Considered completed credits/courses, and calculated in a student's Pace of Progress (completion rate) and Maximum Time Frame.
 - *When courses are repeated, only the earned units associated with the most recent attempt will be counted in the completion rate calculation as completed units. If there are two equal*



grades, only the earned units from the earlier course will be included as completed units in the completion rate calculation.

- *If the student repeats the course three times, the two most recent grades will be averaged in the GPA calculation.*
- *The student may repeat a course twice, and receive aid for a passed course twice.*

Note – Students who have earned a semester grade point average of 0.0 (zero) by receiving grades failing grades of F or W, with Incomplete (I), and/or a combination of failing grades and/or withdrawals (W) will be automatically placed on a financial aid 'Warning' status for the following semester. Students may only be on 'Warning' status for one term.



Appendix A – How to Submit SAP Appeal

Review your SAP status via your Financial Aid Self-service portal

Welcome to Financial Aid!

Use Colleague Self-Service Financial Aid to assist in managing your Financial Aid package from submission to completion.

Select an Award Year: 2018/2019 Academic Year

Your most recent Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) evaluation has a(n) Satisfactory status. Please contact your Financial Aid Counselor if you need further assistance.

Financial Aid Checklist Complete!
Congratulations! You've completed your Financial Aid checklist.
You successfully completed all the items on your Financial Aid checklist.

Average Aid Package
This chart represents the average financial aid award per student at the University. Depending on a number of factors, your aid package may vary.

- \$0.00 in Loans
- \$1,329.00 in Scholarships
- \$3,704.00 in Grants

Checklist

Resource

Form List



College of the Desert's SAP Online Appeal Session

Appeal Deadline:

FALL
December 2, 2022
SPRING
May 12, 2023
SUMMER
July 13, 2023



Step 1: Visit our GetSAP site at collegeofthedesert.get-counseling.com/sessions

Step 2: Take the following GetSAP counseling session:

- An Overview of the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Financial Aid Appeal Process

Step 3: Print out your certificate and attach to any other Appeal documents

Step 4: Complete the Appeal form at collegeofthedesert.verifymyfafsa.com



Appendix B – SAP Email: Meeting SAP (Satisfactory)

Effective as of Summer 2024 moving forward.



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Dear Roadrunner,

Congratulations! You're meeting SAP!

The Financial Aid Office has completed the review of your most recent grades and has updated your Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status.

As a result, your updated SAP status is now **SATISFACTORY** for the upcoming term.

Understanding your Status

Students who are on SAP Satisfactory are eligible to be considered for federal and state aid if other eligibility criteria are met. For more information about our SAP policy, visit our [SAP Webpage](#).

Remember, the Financial Aid Office will monitor your grades at the end of each active term. Students eligible for financial aid must continue to:

1. Meet the *minimum 2.0 GPA, and*
2. Meet the *minimum 67% completion rate (Pace of Progression), and*
3. Must *complete* your educational objective (major) *within your specific Maximum Time Frame* (150% of the program of study).

Need additional help? Contact the Financial Aid Office via phone (760) 773-7428 OR email us at FAO@collegeofthedesert.edu with your student ID and question(s). Check out our webpage for our current [Hours of Operation](#).

Sincerely,

Financial Aid Office

Have questions? [Ask Roadrunner!](#)

This message was sent from a 'notification only' email address that cannot accept incoming email messages. Please do not reply to this email.



Appendix C – SAP Email: Warning Status

A recent review of your Satisfactory Academic Progress, has resulted in you being placed on warning for financial aid for the 2018-2019 academic school year, due to the issues listed below:

* Our records indicate that you have not met the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standard and, as a result, have been placed on financial aid WARNING.

To meet the SAP standard you must:

- Have a Cumulative Qualitative Grade Point Average of a 2.0 (GPA).
- Have a Cumulative Pace of Progression of 67%.
- Complete your Program of Study within the 150% Maximum Time Frame of your specific Program of Study(major)

It is strongly recommended that you:

- Enroll in courses as indicated on your Student Educational Plan.

It is recommended that students that have been placed on warning should have a current official comprehensive Student Educational Plan (SEP). To make an appointment to meet with an Academic Counselor to complete an SEP please call (760) 773-2521. Student Educational plans must be created using official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended.

Being placed on warning means you will continue to receive most types of financial assistance for the duration of the warning period (one semester), but you MUST meet the cumulative SAP standard by the end of this semester to return to a Satisfactory status. If you do not attend this semester your warning status will be carried over to the following semester in which you attend. If you do not meet the SAP standard by the end of your warning period your financial aid will be SUSPENDED.

It is our hope that you are successful in improving your academic record. It is recommended that you:

1. Seek assistance from the Tutoring & Academic Skills Center
2. Enroll in courses listed on your Student Educational Plan.
3. Complete all attempted courses with a "C" or better.

Please visit the following link to review our Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy:
<http://collegeofthedesert.edu/SAPPolicy> or visit us in the Financial Aid Office.

Thank you,

Financial Aid Office
(760) 773-2532



Appendix D – SAP Email: Suspension Status

A recent review of your Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) has resulted in you being ineligible for financial aid for the 2024-2025 academic school year due to the reason(s) listed below: *(This is a sample email; actual reasons will be included in official email).*

Suspended students can submit a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal form if extenuating circumstances caused the failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), or if there is a valid reason for exceeding the maximum time frame for your program.

If you are working in the Federal Work Study Program you must stop working immediately pending an appeal decision. If approved, you must contact the Financial Aid office to see if you may return to work.

If you wish to appeal, you must obtain an SAP Appeal Form by contacting our office at 760-773-2532. Once your appeal is completed and reviewed by the Appeals Committee, we will notify you by email of the results of your appeal to your [MyCOD](#) email within 45 days from when the appeal is completed. Approved appeals will be awarded for the semester in which the appeal was received and approved. If you appeal and your appeal is denied, you may request a second review to your appeal with the VP of Student Services. To request a second review to your denied appeal, please email FAO@Collegeofthedesert.edu.

If you do not wish to appeal, you may regain your eligibility by fully meeting the SAP standard of the minimum requirements of 2.0 cumulative GPA, 67% cumulative pace of progression (attempted units versus completed units), and not have exceeded the 150% maximum time frame.



Appendix E – SAP Emails: Appeal APPROVAL

Your Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status is Probation. This means that although you were not meeting the SAP standard, your appeal was APPROVED to receive financial assistance for the courses on your Student Educational Plan only.

The Financial Aid office will monitor or check all grades at the end of each semester for students whose status is now Probation. Your award could be rescinded should you not achieve the requirements on your signed Probation Contract and as outlined below:

--Earn the minimum Qualitative Grade Point Average of a 2.0 (GPA) each semester.

--Meet the minimum Pace of Progression of 67% each semester.

As indicated above, if you do not meet the terms of your probation contract each semester you will lose your Probation status and lose eligibility for financial assistance in the future. If you lose your eligibility for financial assistance, your status will be changed to Suspended.

NOTE: This is a reminder that you will receive financial assistance for the class(es) on your Student Educational Plan only. There may be times where you are required to repeat a class a third and/or a fourth time in an effort to graduate or transfer. Even though a class can be repeated up to a total of four times, Financial Aid regulations for Federal Aid states "If you have successfully completed a course at College of the Desert (a "D" Grade or higher), you can only receive financial aid for that course one additional time". If you choose to repeat the course for a 3rd time, you will not be eligible for federal financial aid or disbursement payment for that course". Currently, College of the Desert will allow a student to repeat a course up to three times.

It is recommended that you seek assistance from the Tutoring and Academic Skills Centers, enroll in the course(s) listed on your comprehensive Student Educational Plan, and complete all courses meeting the minimum Qualitative GPA and Pace of Progression requirements each semester. We also encourage you to work with an Academic Counselor, to help you meet your educational objectives.

--Counseling (760) 773-2521
--Tutoring and Academic Skills Center (760) 776-7241

If you have questions or require additional information regarding Satisfactory Academic Progress standard, you may access the Financial Aid website: www.collegeofthedesert.edu

Sincerely,

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Financial Aid Office



Appendix F – SAP Emails: Appeal DENIED

Your appeal was received, and the result of your appeal is:

DENIED, for one or more of the following reason(s):

- Documentation of extenuating circumstances was not submitted or is invalid.
- It was determined that Extenuating Circumstances did not occur.
- The reason stated for exceeding the maximum time frame is invalid
- A current Student Educational Plan was not submitted.
- You have exhausted your one appeal for this academic year.
- You have limited Pell eligibility for your goal.

To assist you in meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standard it is recommended that you seek assistance from the Tutorial and Academic Skills Center, enroll in the course(s) listed on your Student Educational Plan, and work with an Academic Counselor to help you meet your educational objectives. You may contact the tutorial department or make an appointment to meet with an Academic Counselor at the telephone numbers listed below:

- Counseling (760) 773-2521
- Tutoring & Academic Skills Center (760) 776-7241

For additional questions, please visit our website and view our consumer guide information. Go to www.collegeofthedesert.edu.

Financial Aid Office



Appendix G – SAP Emails: Probation NOT Met

Effective as of Spring 2024 moving forward.



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Dear Roadrunner,

The Financial Aid Office has completed the review of your most recent grades. Unfortunately, you did **NOT MEET the terms** of your Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Probationary Contract.

As a result, your updated SAP status is now **SUSPENSION** until you regain eligibility.

Understanding your Status

Students who were granted a Probationary Status, after a SAP appeal approval, are monitored after EACH SEMESTER. Based on our most recent review, you did not meet one or more of the following standards:

1. You must meet the *minimum 2.0 GPA and Pace of Progression of 67% completion rate.*
2. You must *enroll and successfully complete the courses* outlined in your approved Student Education Plan (SEP). If you have more than one major open, you will be paid for the major listed on your approved SAP appeal.
3. You must *complete your educational objective (major) within your specific Maximum Time Frame* (150% of the program of study).

What are my Options?

The following options are available to students:

1. **If you wish to appeal**, you must contact our office during the next semester you plan to attend.
2. **If you do not wish to appeal**, you may regain your financial aid eligibility by meeting all three SAP standards outlined in our [SAP Policy](#).

Need additional help? Contact the Financial Aid Office via phone (760) 773-7428 OR email us at FAO@collegeofthedesert.edu with your student ID and question(s). Check out our webpage for our current [Hours of Operation](#).

Sincerely,

Financial Aid Office

Have questions? [Ask Roadrunner!](#)

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