

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP)

Rock Valley College

Minimum Standards for ALL Financial Aid Students - This includes all Grants, some scholarships, Loans, ALL Veteran Programs and ALL Work Study Programs

All students receiving financial aid (whether or not they have received financial aid in the past) must make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward the completion of course requirements in an approved certificate or degree program. The Financial Aid Office will consider students to be making satisfactory academic progress if they meet all of the following criteria:

Completion Rate Requirement

- Students must complete 67% of all attempted credits each fall and spring semester.
- In addition, students must maintain an overall completion rate of 67% of all semesters attended. (See examples at end of policy).
- Attempted credit hours include: classes with a grade of 'D' or higher, withdrawn courses, failures and incompletes.
- Remedial and repeated courses are counted toward credit hour completion.
- Audits, proficiency tests, and non-credit courses are not included in attempted credits.

Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement

Students must maintain a Financial Aid Warning or Satisfactory GPA in order to continue receiving financial aid. Undergraduate **AND** Remedial credits are counted toward GPA.

GPA	0 – 1.49	1.5 – 1.99	2.0 – 4.0
Hours attempted 1-12	Financial Aid Warning	Financial Aid Warning	Satisfactory
Hours attempted 13-24	Financial Aid Suspension	Financial Aid Warning	Satisfactory
Hours attempted 25 +	Financial Aid Suspension	Financial Aid Suspension	Satisfactory

- **NOTE:** Even if classes are not eligible for financial aid, or classes were paid out of pocket, they are included in financial aid hours attempted and GPA. For example: NAD 101 (Certified Nursing Assistant) classes are not covered by financial aid but are included in financial aid hours attempted and GPA.

Maximum Time Frame Requirement

Students are expected to complete their program of study in a reasonable time period. Students may receive financial aid for 150% of the published length of their program at Rock Valley College, even if financial aid was not received for all attempted courses. For example, if a student is attempting an Associates of Arts Degree, the published length of the program is 64 credits. Applying the 150% maximum timeframe rule to this program would limit a student to 96 attempted credits (64 credits X 150% = 96 maximum credits). Please note that this maximum timeframe is specific to the student's chosen program, and in some cases may be more or less than 96 attempted credit hours. Attempted hours include:

- Any Remedial courses (less than 100 level – i.e.: MTH 093) beyond 30 attempted credits
- Repeated courses
 - When a student repeats a course, the total attempted hours will increase with each repeat, but the student may only earn hours for a successfully completed course once. Therefore, repeating courses will affect the student's ability to satisfy maximum timeframe measures.

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- Withdrawn courses
 - If the student withdraws from a course (after the tuition refund period) for any given semester (e.g., student receives a grade of W for the course), the course credits are included in the count of attempted credit hours. Thus, withdrawn courses are calculated in the maximum timeframe measures.
- Non-completed courses (incompletes – grade of I)
 - Credits for an incomplete course (e.g., student receives a grade of “I” for the course) are counted as credits attempted for maximum timeframe measures; but only included in the credits completed when the “I” grade is replaced with a passing grade. The “I” grade is treated as an “F” in the qualitative measure (i.e., cumulative GPA calculation) until the incomplete grade is replaced with a passing grade.
- Transfer courses accepted for credit at RVC are included in the maximum timeframe calculation, both as attempted and completed credits
 - Courses with grades of A, B, C, D, F
- **Note:** If a student changes majors, the credits the student earns at Rock Valley College will be included in the calculation of qualitative, quantitative and maximum time frame measures. If a student successfully completes a degree and enrolls in a subsequent degree program at the college, the student's SAP eligibility remains the same as it was when the student finished the first degree. All of the credits taken during the first degree will be counted to determine if there is any remaining eligibility for the second degree. In many cases, the student may not have remaining eligibility because of the maximum timeframe.
- **Note:** *These limits apply regardless of whether or not the student has received financial assistance during prior semesters.*

(SAP Policy Continued)

Consequences

Satisfactory progress is evaluated after grades are posted for the spring and fall semesters (summer semester calculated with fall). Evaluations will be based on courses completed and attempted at Rock Valley College, as well as credits transferred into RVC.

- Financial Aid Warning Status– Financial aid warning lasts for one payment period only and does not require action (such as an appeal) by the student. Students may continue to receive financial aid for one more semester while on Financial Aid Warning Status. If after that ‘warning’ semester the student is not back in good standing, they may appeal (see Appeal Section for details later in this policy).
- Financial Aid Suspension Status – If a student does not meet the SAP standards at the end of the Financial Aid Warning period, that student is placed on Financial Aid Suspension. The student will be denied future financial aid at Rock Valley College until they obtain a satisfactory status by paying for their own classes (or see appeal process below)
 - This does not prohibit a student from attending and paying for classes on their own. Any financial aid the student is eligible to receive will be reinstated once the student is again making satisfactory academic progress and if the student has a completed financial aid file.
- Financial Aid Appeal – An institution that permits appeals may allow students to appeal the Financial Aid Suspension decision. Students may appeal their eligibility for financial aid to the SAP Appeals Committee based on extenuating circumstances. Pay close attention to the deadline for submitting an appeal.
- Financial Aid Probation - A student who fails SAP must successfully appeal to be placed on Financial Aid Probation. At the end of one payment period on Financial Aid Probation, the student must make SAP for that current semester and must be meeting the requirements of the academic plan.

Students will be notified via RVC student email, shortly after the conclusion of the Fall and Spring Semesters if they are on Financial Aid Warning, Financial Aid Suspension or if they regain eligibility upon filing a Financial Aid Appeal.

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Appeal Process

- Students who have extenuating circumstances, such as, military activation, death of immediate family member or serious medical condition, may submit an appeal. The appeal and supporting documentation must be submitted by the deadline stated on the appeal form to be considered.
- Appeal forms are available on the RVC website. Remember that documentation of the circumstance must be submitted before an appeal will be considered. You may submit your appeal form electronically at www.rockvalleycollege.edu/financialaid. Documentation may be delivered in person, via US mail, e-mail (RVC-FIA@rockvalleycollege.edu) or fax (815-921-4169). Include your name and RVC ID number on all documentation. Please email/call to confirm your fax was received. Current students will be notified via RVC student e-mail account as to the results of the appeal.

Students should not assume that appeals will be approved. All appeals are considered on a case by case basis and the decision is final. Student is responsible for charges on their RVC student account during the appeal process. If the appeal is approved, the student will be reimbursed up to the amount of aid they are eligible to receive according to the Accounts Receivable refund schedule.

- When an appeal is granted the student MUST maintain a minimum of a 67% completion rate and a minimum 2.0 GPA for the next semester they attend or a renewal appeal (if needed) WILL NOT be considered. Students may also have to follow an academic plan as determined by an academic advisor.
- An appeal must be filed for each semester the minimum progress is not met and the student wishes to be considered for financial aid.
- The Financial Aid Office will work with the student to determine required documentation to support the appeal.

Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility if your Appeal is denied

If an appeal is denied, the student will be responsible for making Satisfactory Academic Progress on their own before Financial Aid can be reinstated. This means a student will need to pay for their classes on their own until their GPA is at or above a cumulative 2.0 average and is meeting the 67% minimum completion rate.

Academic Forgiveness/Tuition Appeal/Enrollment Appeal

Academic forgiveness (an undesirable grade is removed from your GPA), tuition appeals (refunds tuition), and enrollment appeals (a grade changed to a withdraw) are granted by the Registrar and do not automatically reinstate your financial aid. Contact the Records Department for more information on Tuition and Enrollment Appeals. If financial aid paid for the semester you are requesting a tuition appeal, a tuition appeal WILL NOT be approved. You must go through the financial aid appeal process as stated above for consideration of continued financial aid.

(SAP Policy Continued)

Examples for Reference Purposes:

- Student #1 enrolls in 9 credits for a semester and passes all credits however, has a GPA of 1.3. This is the student's first semester, so the attempted credits are 9. Student is on Financial Aid Warning – eligible for Financial Aid, but must improve completion rate and/or cumulative GPA to continue receiving financial aid.
- Student #2 enrolls in 12 credits for a semester, withdraws from a 3 credit class and passes the remaining credits. Student completed 9 credits, $9/12=.75$ (75%), student's progress is Satisfactory.

REMINDER: Student must meet BOTH criteria: completion rate AND minimum cumulative GPA.

- Student #3 has a 75% completion rate, student has attempted a total of 20 credit hours overall and has a cumulative GPA of 1.3, the student is on Suspension based on cumulative GPA.

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- Student #4 enrolls in 12 credits for a semester, withdraws from a 3 credit class, fails a 3 credit class and passes the remaining credits. Student completed 6 credits, $6/12=.5$ (50%), student is on Suspension.
- Student #5 has attempted 30 credits and has a GPA of 1.5. The student did not receive financial aid for the 30 attempted hours. The student is now enrolled in 12 credits and passes all credits, but has an overall GPA of 1.75. Student is on suspension. It does not matter if a student received financial aid in the past, all coursework is included in the calculation.
- Student #6 is enrolled in a program with a published length of 64 credit hours. The student has attempted 90 credits and has a GPA of 3.8. Student enrolls in 6 credits for a subsequent semester. Student passes all classes and maintains a 3.8 GPA. Student has now attempted 96 credits, therefore is no longer eligible for financial aid at Rock Valley College due the Maximum Timeframe Requirement.
- Student #7 is enrolled in a certificate program with a published length of 40 credit hours. The student has attempted 60 credit hours at Rock Valley. The maximum timeframe for the certificate program is 60 credits (40 credits X 150%), therefore the student would be on Permanent Standards, and would need to appeal their status to have their Financial Aid reinstated.

RVC's SAP policy is subject to change without notice to comply with federal and/or state regulations, or RVC Board of Trustees policy or action. For the most current Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, visit www.rockvalleycollege.edu/financialaid.