

Financial Aid

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standards

In order to maintain eligibility for receiving financial aid, federal regulations require that all Title IV aid recipients make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward achieving a certificate or degree. Progress is measured at the end of each term by evaluating the student's cumulative grade point average, credits earned in relation to attempted hours (Pace), and the length of the academic program. These standards apply to each student's entire academic history, regardless of whether Title IV aid was received or not.

Requirements to Maintain Eligibility

- **Pace:** Is the number of successfully completed hours divided by the number of attempted hours. Students must pass at least 67% of all attempted hours (not earned) in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. Attempted hours include: "W, AU, I, IP, N, N/C, W, WD, WF, X, FA". Students placed on Warning, Probation or Removal will be notified via MyWS.
- **Cumulative progress:** In addition to the above standards, students must achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.0.

Maximum Hours

Associate Degree & Certificate Programs: Recipients majoring in Associate Degree Programs and eligible Certificate Programs are **limited to 150% of the required hours** of their program of study, excluding learning support hours (previously remedial and/or developmental hours). This maximum (which is based on cumulative attempted hours and not earned hours) will be reviewed after each term. Students will be placed on warning when they reach 100% of their scheduled program hours. Students will be placed on removal when it is determined that it is mathematically impossible for them to complete their scheduled program within 150% of the required hours.

- **Learning Support Hours:** Students are allowed to receive financial aid for a maximum of 30 cumulative attempted hours of learning support coursework.
- **Transfer Students:** Credits/grades officially accepted by WSCC are included in the cumulative attempted hour limitation as stated above.
- **Second Degree Students:** Students who enroll to obtain a second degree or certificate are subject to the above limitations as well. Credits from a prior enrollment at WSCC (or other institution) will be included in the maximum hour limitation.
- **Repeated/Audited Courses:** All credits from repeated sources will be counted toward the maximum hour limitation. A student may receive financial aid to repeat a previously passed course one time only but they may receive financial aid to repeat a failed course until it is passed or until the college limit is met or maximum hour limitations are reached.
- **Change of Majors:** Changes in majors do not extend the maximum hours allowed.
- **Academic Fresh Start:** All courses taken count towards maximum hours. Courses excused under an Academic Fresh Start will count towards maximum time frame.

Maximum Duration of Pell Eligibility

The amount of Federal Pell Grant Funds a student may receive over his or her lifetime is now limited to 600%. This is equivalent to 6 years or 12 semesters. Students enrolled less than full time will be assessed at the fractional enrollment status. **This cannot be appealed.**

Financial Aid Warning

If a student does not meet the academic requirements as stated above, he/she will be placed in a financial aid "warning" status. The student will be allowed to receive financial aid for the next term that he/she attends; however, the student's status will be evaluated after the "warning" term, and the student must meet the required academic standards including pace and GPA to continue to be eligible to receive financial aid. If the student reaches or exceeds the maximum hour limitation, he/she will not be eligible for financial aid.

Financial Aid Removal

Students placed on financial aid removal may continue to enroll at Walters State **without financial aid** if they are eligible to re-enroll according to institutional policies and have the resources to pay their fees.

If a student registers for a future term prior to grades being evaluated for the current term, the aid posted for future terms will be canceled as a result of being placed on financial aid removal.

Students will be placed on financial aid removal if any of these conditions occur:

- Students in "warning" status fail to meet SAP in their next semester of enrollment
- Students are placed on academic suspension
- Students fail to meet the conditions of an IAP (Individual Academic Plan)
- Students meet the maximum hour limitations
- Students are unable to mathematically meet the maximum hour limitations

Zero Earned Hours

Students who receive all unsatisfactory grades, any combination of: F, FA, AU, I, IP, N/C, W, WD, WF, X for a term will automatically be placed on financial aid warning. This applies to grades transferred from other higher education institutions. This may be appealed by following the appropriate procedure stated below. Students will return to "Good Standing" by satisfactorily achieving the required academic progress standards at the next evaluation period. Students will be placed on financial aid removal if academic progress standards are not met at the next evaluation period.

Appeal Process

If **extenuating circumstances** precluded a student from meeting the standards, the student may file an appeal. Documentation must be provided to substantiate the reason of appeal. **Only complete and legible appeals will be considered. Submitting an appeal does not constitute approval.** Students are limited to 3 appeals during the course of their enrollment at WSCC.

Appeals will be considered for the following reasons:

- Serious injury or illness of the student
- Death, serious injury/illness of immediate family member (mother, father, sibling, spouse, child)
- Family trauma which occurred during the semester in question
- Other extenuating circumstances (must be documented)

Process for filing an appeal:

- Complete Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal. Include a written statement (prepared by the student) indicating what occurred that resulted in unsatisfactory progress and what has changed that will now allow for student success. (Forms are available in Financial Aid Office and off-campus sites).
- The student must meet with his/her academic advisor or counselor for advising. The advisor must complete and sign the form or the appeal will be considered incomplete.
- Attach appropriate documentation to support reason stated in appeal.
- Submit all information to Financial Aid Office for review.

Walters State offers counseling, career guidance, testing, tutoring and academic advising free of charge in order to assist students in achieving their educational goals.

ws.edu/student-services/

The Financial Aid Office encourages all students to use these services as needed.

The following criteria will be considered when reviewing appeals:

- Academic progress (including grades from other schools)
- Remaining hours in program of study
- Amount of aid already received (including aid from other schools)
- Pace (cumulative number of hours successfully completed/cumulative attempted hours)
- Demonstrated ability to complete the program

Federal regulations allow for the approval of appeals only under the following conditions:

- It has been determined that the student will be able to meet SAP standards after the subsequent term.
- An Individual Academic Plan (IAP) is developed for the student that, if followed, will ensure that the student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific point in time. This option must be approved and monitored by the Financial Aid Appeals committee. The student will be required to sign the IAP agreeing to the conditions stated within the agreement.

Once a determination has been made regarding the results of the appeal, it will be posted to the student's MyWS account. If the appeal is approved and the student is placed on probation, the student must meet the satisfactory progress standards by the next evaluation period. Failure to meet these requirements will result in the student being placed on Financial Aid removal for subsequent terms. Students that are placed on an Individual Academic Plan (IAP) must meet the requirements of the plan, which will also be evaluated at the end of each term. If the student does not meet the conditions of the IAP, he/she will be placed on Financial Aid Removal and will not be eligible for financial aid until he/she meets the SAP standards. **All decisions made by the Appeals Committee are final and cannot be re-appealed.**

Academic criteria for other programs: Scholarships and other third party sources of financial aid may have additional requirements regarding satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the guidelines of the specific scholarship or third party source for additional requirements (ie. TN Lottery). Standards are available on the WSCC Financial Aid website.