FRANK PHILLIPS COLLEGE

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

This Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy and Procedure was reviewed for 2022-23. The effective date, November 1, 2022, supersedes all other Frank Phillips College Student Financial Services Satisfactory Academic Progress Policies and Procedures published on the web and/or in prior catalogs.

PURPOSE

Student financial aid programs were created and funded to help students achieve access to higher education and accomplish academic goals. To receive funds administered by Student Financial Services, students must complete a degree plan and be making measurable progress toward completion of an eligible degree or certification. Federal regulations require evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative progress.

POLICY

- Frank Phillips College is required by the U.S. Department of Education to apply reasonable standards for measuring whether a student is making progress toward a degree as a standard for participating in any federal student aid program.

- The State of Texas also requires students to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) in order to receive any state-funded student assistance.

- ***Consistent application of standards is provided to all students within all categories of the student population.***

- Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is administered for all students.
  - For students without a SAP history, the student's total history is analyzed. Federal and State requirements are met and apply to Frank Phillips College institutional financial aid eligibility by measuring SAP (at the end of each payment period of an academic year) against qualitative and quantitative standards whether or not financial aid was applied for or received during any academic period in which the student was previously enrolled. Both standards, qualitative and quantitative, must be met for a student to be eligible for Title IV aid. The academic year includes the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

- This policy will be reviewed during the fall semester of every year.

- The maximum number of appeals a student may submit is two.

- This policy is as strict or stricter as the policy Frank Phillips College applies to students not receiving Title IV aid.

- Any exceptions to this policy will require approval from the Director of Student Financial Services.

Note that the Student Financial Services SAP policy differs from [Frank Phillips College's Academic Status Policy](#) for students. The Student Financial Services SAP policy reviews both pace and maximum time frame, in addition to GPA, and all attempted credit hours are included in reviewing student eligibility. These two policies also have separate appeal procedures.

Required Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA or Qualitative Standard)

- 2.0 cumulative grade point average
- Financial aid GPA includes all attempted course work
- Rounding is not used when calculating GPA
- The college GPA may be different than the financial aid GPA as some grades may be excluded from the college GPA

Completion Percentage (Pace or Quantitative Standard)

(Note that both pace and maximum time frame are measured in credit hours only, regardless of full time or part time attendance.) In reference to SAP flexibilities established in new regulations (34 CFR668.34), Frank Phillips College will continue to calculate or measure maximum time frame in credit hours.

- *Maximum Time Frame*
    - Attempted credit hours may not exceed 150% of the educational program.
    - For students who exceeded the maximum time frame of their educational program, submitted an appeal and were approved at 150%, and still have not graduated will be ineligible for Title IV aid at 175% of the published educational program.
    - For students who have been approved for being over hours for their published educational program will not be allowed to change programs prior to graduating.
- *Pace*
    - All students must complete coursework with successfully passing grades by the end of each period of enrollment or put both current and future financial aid eligibility at risk. Successfully passing grades are D- and higher; all others (F, I, W) count as unsuccessful credit hours attempted.
    - Pace is calculated by dividing all passed hours (including repeat and transfer) by all attempted hours (including repeat and transfer). Rounding is not used when calculating pace rate.
    - Note for pace calculation: Pace is calculated as (passed hours)/(attempted hours). This is slightly different than how the academic side treats this as a course can count as attempted but not earned, or other combinations.

Elements Affecting GPA and Pace

- *Change of Program*
  Change of program can result in a possible overage of attempted credit hours which would impact the maximum time frame component.

- *Conflicting Information*
  All conflicting information is reviewed for SAP monitoring. For example, late posted grades or grade changes will not automatically change a student's current status. Students may request their SAP status be recalculated after confirming with the Registrar that the grade change has been posted to the academic record. The student must submit a SAP appeal and that SAP appeal must be approved. The SAP appeal approval must make the student SAP-eligible retroactively to the start of a payment period within the current award year/academic year. A student may have to re-pay unearned financial aid.

- *Consortium*
  For consortium agreements, students will be reviewed, and SAP calculated at the next normally scheduled SAP review.

- *Course Repetition*
  Students are allowed to repeat a course and have it count toward enrollment for financial aid eligibility only once. However, all attempts will count toward a student's pace, GPA and maximum time frame. A passing grade will be treated as such. A student who scores a C, but retakes it to get an A, both count as passing.

- *English as a Second Language (ESL) Courses*
  ESL courses are reviewed and included as part of the SAP calculation at the next normally scheduled SAP review.

- *Incompletes*
  At the time of evaluation, Incompletes (grade of "I") do not affect a student's cumulative GPA for SAP but count as credit hours attempted toward both pace and maximum time frame.

- *Pass/Fail Courses*
  For pass/fail courses which count towards graduation requirements, a "pass" does not count in the GPA but does count towards attempted hours and impacts progression. A grade of "fail" impacts both the GPA and progression.

- *Remedial Courses*
  Remedial coursework will be counted in determining financial aid eligibility, enrollment status, and satisfactory academic progress. These courses will initially be included in maximum timeframe calculations. Exclusions may be considered in some cases. Remedial courses do not count towards the total number of credits needed for graduation. Students will be limited to no more than thirty (30) remedial credits for financial aid eligibility.

- *Students Who Receive All Failing Grades (Unofficial Withdrawals)*
  If a student receives all failing grades (a combination of 'F', 'I' and 'W') attendance in all classes will be reviewed. If attendance cannot be confirmed via official Registrar records, Student Financial Services personnel will apply the federally mandated calculation for the return of federal financial aid funds. Unearned federal financial aid (Title IV) will be returned to the programs from which the money was paid the student (or parent) and it is possible repayment could be owed to the college.

- *Transfer Credits*
  Transfer credits, including dual credit attempted at either Frank Phillips College or another institution which are accepted by Frank Phillips College towards the student's program will count toward a student's cumulative GPA, pace and maximum time frame for SAP. Transfer credit hours will be calculated for the term the Registrar's office has entered them.

- *Withdrawals, Dropped Courses, or Backdated Withdrawals*
  Withdrawals or dropped courses do not affect a student's cumulative GPA for SAP, but count as credit hours attempted, but not passed, toward both pace and maximum time frame. Classes dropped prior to the 12th class day (first census) do not count as attempted hours.

- *Waivers and Exemptions*
  Legislative requirements state a student receiving certain waivers/exemptions must meet the GPA requirement portion of this SAP policy. Students may or may not have a FAFSA on file.

- *Fresh Start/Academic Amnesty*
  For students who have been granted academic amnesty under the state legislative "Academic Fresh Start" program, all attempted coursework, even those granted amnesty, will still be included in the SAP calculation, per federal Department of Education guidelines.

For students who do not wish to appeal and who successfully meet the minimum standards without state or federal aid must notify Student Financial Services to be considered for financial aid for their next semester of enrollment.

Financial aid is not provided for a term in which a SAP appeal was not processed and approved; after that term has ended.

Evaluation

All students enrolled at Frank Phillips College are evaluated for SAP at the end of each payment period, after the Registrar's office has released official grades. Students can find their SAP status within the Plainsmen Portal.

Status Definitions

- **SAP Met** – Student is eligible for financial aid. This category may include students with no SAP issue at all or students who have appealed successfully.

- **SAP - Suspension** - Failure to make SAP; however, student is eligible to appeal. If the appeal is approved, the student can continue financial aid eligibility for another period of enrollment under a SAP – Warning status. Students may also choose not to appeal and attempt to regain financial aid eligibility by meeting SAP while paying out of pocket (without any financial aid). Students on suspension may not receive financial aid unless an appeal is approved.

- **SAP Warning**- Failure to make SAP. Alert to inform students if SAP standards are still not met. At the end of the warning period, the student is placed on SAP suspension. Also applies to student whose appeal is approved in which the student is financial aid eligible for one more period of enrollment before going on SAP Suspension.

- **SAP Not Met** - Failure to meet SAP. A student is not eligible for financial aid until the SAP Appeal is approved.

Appeal Procedure

- All students who have their financial aid eligibility suspended may appeal to Student Financial Services by completing the [Satisfactory Academic Progress Request to Appeal Form](#).
- The appeal must be submitted by the 12th class day of the current term.
  - For students receiving military benefits, exemptions, or waivers (Hazelwood, GI Bill, etc.), appeals will continue to be accepted past the published deadline for the purpose of receiving applicable military benefits, exemptions, and waivers only. The student will not be eligible for federal, state, or institutional financial aid eligibility if an appeal is

           submitted after the deadline. These students must submit the appeal and
           have completed the necessary exemption/waiver applications by the last
           class day of the term.

- Students who submit their FAFSA on or after the first class day will have two weeks to submit an appeal but no later than the last class day of the term.

- GPA, pace, and maximum time frame are all appealable.
- If a student appeals on the basis of one circumstance and wants to appeal again based on the same circumstance, updated documentation must be provided about what has changed to permit the student to make SAP at the next evaluation. Appeals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The student is responsible for submitting the complete SAP Appeal.
- Basis on which student may file an appeal:
  - **Medical:** Illness, accident, or injury experienced by you or an immediate family member. (Documentation required: proof of office visit, police report, hospital bill statement, etc.)
  - **Death:** Death of an immediate family member. (Documentation required: obituary, death certificate or funeral program.)
  - **Divorce:** You or your parents. (Documentation required: divorce decree (last page only – decree legality, lawyers' statement, etc.)
  - **Military Service:** If you withdrew due to military service, provide documentation.
  - **Exceeding timeframe:** If you are in a dual-degree program or have changed your program.
  - **Other Circumstances:** Please clearly state your reason and provide documentation.
- **COVID-19**: Circumstances related to an outbreak of COVID-19, including, but not limited to, the illness of a student of family member, compliance with a quarantine period, or the general disruption resulting from such an outbreak.
- Include information describing why SAP minimum standards have not been met and how the situation has changed so that SAP will be met at the next evaluation.
- Detail any mitigating circumstances, including supporting documentation from a 3rd party (e.g., police reports, hospital bill or proof of office visit, death certificate, etc.).
- Demonstrate understanding why student failed to make SAP and explain what has changed that will allow the student to make SAP at the next evaluation.
- Include enrollment plans for the next period of enrollment (e.g., number of credit hours, change in major, any other academic-related documentation, etc.)

Consistent application of standards is provided to all students within all categories of students for purposes of appeal review and basis upon which students may file an appeal. Students are notified of their SAP appeal decision via their Frank Phillips College email account. All appeals are reviewed outside of Student Financial Services, and decisions are considered final. Students whose appeals are not approved may reestablish financial aid eligibility only by meeting the SAP standards.

How a student can get reinstated should appeal be denied:

To regain financial aid eligibility, you must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards as outlined in the Frank Phillips College Student Financial Services SAP policy. Students denied for exceeding the maximum number of appeals will be evaluated at the end of each Spring. If a student believes they have regained eligibility after a Fall or Summer semester, they will need to self-identify and request to have progress evaluated.

Simply sitting out or paying cash for a period of time does not alter the student's SAP status. A student's SAP status is changed by improving their individual measurements over time so they can meet the general SAP standards outlined in the SAP policy.