Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Federal regulations require institutions of higher education to establish Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards for recipients of financial aid. The purpose of satisfactory academic progress standards is to measure a student’s progress toward the completion of their educational program. The Financial Aid Office is responsible for ensuring that all students receiving federal, state, and institutional financial aid are meeting these standards by conducting an evaluation at the end of each semester.

The satisfactory academic progress standards established in this Policy apply to all financial aid programs including, but are not limited to, Federal aid programs—Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), TEACH Grant, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Direct Loan, Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), Federal Work Study, State aid programs—HOPE Scholarship, Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant (GTEG), and LaGrange College Institutional aid—LaGrange College grants, academic scholarships, and LaGrange College Work Aid.

A satisfactory academic progress policy is comprised of a qualitative (grade-based) and quantitative (pace and time frame) standard. The qualitative standard assesses the quality of the academic work as measured by an overall grade point average. The quantitative standard establishes the pace at which the student must progress to ensure completion of the degree program within the allowable maximum timeframe. Financial aid recipients must meet all of these standards to be making satisfactory academic progress and to receive financial aid.

Qualitative Standard

- Grade Point Average

A student is expected to adhere to the “Academic Standing and Probation” grade point average (GPA) requirements outlined in the Undergraduate Bulletin to be considered in “good academic standing” and to qualify for financial aid. The cumulative grade point average is based on all courses taken at LaGrange College. LaGrange College defines “good academic standing” as follows: a student with less than 30 earned hours must maintain a minimum of a 1.75 cumulative GPA; a student with 30-59 earned hours must maintain a 1.90 cumulative GPA; a student with 60 or more earned hours must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0. The Provost monitors the grade point average component of the SAP policy each semester. Any student whose cumulative GPA is below the established minimum standard may be placed on academic probation or academic suspension.

Quantitative Standard

- Rate of Progress (Pace)

A student receiving financial aid is expected to progress through the degree program of study at a pace that ensures the completion within the maximum timeframe defined below. The rate of progress (pace) is computed by dividing the cumulative number of hours the student has successfully completed (earned credits) by the cumulative number of hours the student has attempted. A student is considered to be making measurable progress toward the completion of their degree program by maintaining an overall rate of progress of 67%. This standard applies to all financial aid recipients, regardless of full-time or part-time enrollment status.

Attempted hours are those credit hours for which the student is registered on or after the conclusion of late registration (drop/add). Earned hours are successfully completed courses in which grades of A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, or P are awarded, as long as credit is earned. Grades of F, Incomplete (I), withdrawal (W), Withdrawn failing (WF), No credit (NC), Not Reported (NR), Audit (AU), or Audit withdrawn (AW) do not count as successful completion of a course. In evaluating the rate of progress, please note the following:

- Withdrawals, incompletes, and failed courses are considered attempted hours but not earned hours. If an incomplete course impacts a student’s satisfactory academic progress standing, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office when a final grade is reported.
- Audited courses are not considered attempted or earned credit hours.
- Transfer credits, including courses taken as a transient student, do not count in the calculation of LaGrange College GPA, but are included in the attempted hours, earned hours, and maximum time frame standards.
- Repeated courses, for which a passing grade was previously awarded, are included in attempted hours and grade point average calculation but not earned hours.

Example of Rate of Progress Calculation:

At the end of the Fall semester, Jonathan had attempted 30 semester hours and passed (earned) 21 credit hours. Jonathan’s rate of progress (pace) would be determined by dividing the 21 credit hours he has earned by the total hours attempted, which is 30. His rate of progress is 70% (21/30). Jonathan would be considered to be meeting the quantitative standard.
### Maximum Time Frame

By Federal regulation, a student is expected to complete the degree program within 150% of the credit hours required to complete the degree program. For example, an undergraduate student pursuing a Chemistry degree, which has a total of 120 semester hours, as published in the Undergraduate Bulletin, could receive financial aid for no more than 180 semester hours. Frequent withdrawals from courses or school, changes of major, failed or repeated courses, or taking courses that are not related to the degree program could jeopardize financial aid eligibility. All attempted hours at LaGrange College and transfer credits accepted into the degree program will count toward the maximum time frame. A student’s eligibility for financial aid will terminate at the time the student has completed the required course work in the degree program or when it is determined that the student has exceeded the 150% maximum time frame, or it is determined that it is mathematically impossible for the student to complete the degree program within the maximum timeframe.

The following are considered when evaluating the time frame standard:

- A student pursuing two bachelor’s degree programs at the same time must adhere to the 150% time frame. The maximum attempted hours allowable for financial aid will be based on the degree that requires the most hours.
- Students returning to school to pursue another undergraduate degree are allowed an additional 60 semester hours to complete the degree. All other standards established in the satisfactory academic progress policy apply to subsequent undergraduate degrees. If the second degree will require more than 60 hours to complete, the student must submit documentation from their advisor outlining the courses needed to complete the degree.
- A transfer student’s compliance with the time frame component of the satisfactory academic progress policy will be based on the sum of the attempted hours at LaGrange College plus the credit hours accepted on transfer from previous institutions toward the student’s degree program. For example, if a transfer student has 70 credit hours acceptable towards their degree program, the student may receive financial assistance for up to 110 additional credit hours.

### Satisfactory Academic Progress Evaluation

After final grades are reported for the semester, the academic history from all periods of enrollment, regardless of full-time or part-time enrollment status, will be reviewed to determine if the student is maintaining the standards established in the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy. This includes all courses attempted regardless of whether financial aid was received. Transfer grade point averages are not considered in either of the standards; however, accepted transfer credit hours will be included in attempted hours, earned hours, and the maximum time frame. Once evaluated, the student will be placed into one of the following Satisfactory Academic Progress statuses and notified, if applicable:

- **Good Standing**—status assigned to a student who is in full compliance with the satisfactory academic progress standards. The student will not be notified.
- **Financial Aid Warning**—status assigned to a student that is deficient in the grade point average and/or rate of progress standards of the satisfactory academic progress policy. A student on “financial aid warning” is eligible for financial aid for one additional semester. The financial aid office will notify the student of his status and the area(s) of deficiency that must be resolved by the end of the next semester.
- **Financial Aid Suspension**—status assigned to a student that remains deficient in grade point average and/or rate of progress standards after being placed on “financial aid warning” or has exceeded the 150% time frame for complete his/her degree program. A student placed on “academic suspension” by the Provost is also placed on financial aid suspension regardless of actual satisfactory academic progress status. A student on “financial aid suspension” will be notified of his/her ineligibility for future financial aid and the appeal process—(See Appeal Procedures below.)
- **Financial Aid Probation**—status assigned to a student who has failed to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and had eligibility for financial aid reinstated. A student placed on financial aid probation is eligible for financial aid and has one semester to comply with the satisfactory academic progress standards or meet the requirements of an academic plan developed by the student and Provost.

### Appeal Procedures

A financial aid recipient who is placed on financial suspension loses eligibility for financial aid. The student can appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility provided there is a mitigating circumstance that affected the student’s academic performance. Mitigating circumstances are those events that are beyond the student’s control such as serious injury, illness or mental health condition involving the student or an immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, and other extenuating circumstances. An Appeals Form must be submitted to the Director of Financial Aid with a written statement detailing the mitigating circumstance, documentation of circumstance (i.e., letter from physician or health care provider detailing the onset and the duration of the illness, statement form a law enforcement agency or social services agency, etc.) and the manner by which the deficiency was/will be resolved and not interfere with future terms of enrollment. **Appeals without supporting documentation will not be considered.** Appeals must be submitted within 2 weeks of notification of ineligibility for financial aid.

The Director of Financial Aid will convene the Financial Aid Appeals Committee to review the request for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility. The Director of Financial Aid will notify the student in writing at the student’s home address or campus e-mail account of the decision of the Committee and any conditions associated with reinstatement within two weeks of receiving the appeal. The **decision of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee is final.** A student whose appeal is approved will receive financial aid on “financial aid probation” status for one additional semester and their academic performance will be reviewed at the end of that next semester for continued financial aid eligibility.
Reestablishing Financial Aid Eligibility

A student who is unsuccessful in appealing for reinstatement of his/her financial aid or a student who does not have a mitigating circumstance that warrants an appeal can only regain eligibility by complying with the satisfactory academic progress policy. The student is encouraged to take advantage of counseling, tutoring, and study skills resources available through the College’s Counseling Center and the Source Center.

It should be noted that taking courses at the student’s expense, sitting out a semester, or taking courses at another institution does not automatically restore a student’s eligibility for financial aid. If the student has resolved the satisfactory academic progress deficiencies that resulted in the termination of financial aid eligibility, the student should contact the financial aid office and request a satisfactory academic progress review.

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A financial aid recipient who is placed on financial aid suspension loses eligibility for financial aid. The student can appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility provided there is a documented mitigating circumstance that affected the student’s academic performance. Mitigating circumstances are those events that are beyond the student’s control such as serious injury, illness or mental health condition involving the student or an immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, and other extenuating circumstances. Acceptable documentation must be presented with the appeal. Information contained in an appeal and supporting documentation is confidential and will only be shared with the Financial Aid Appeal Committee. **Any appeal received without documentation will be denied.** Please complete the information below and return to the Financial Aid Office within two weeks.

Name: ___________________________________________ SSN/LCID: ________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________________________

Phone #: __________________________________________ Email Address: ________________________________

Major: __________________________________________ Date: ________________________________

Last term of Enrollment: ___________________________ Have you submitted an appealed before? ___ Yes ____ No

Reason for appeal: □ GPA □ Rate of Progress □ Time frame □ Other: Specify ______________________________

**Appeal Instructions:**

An appeal must include the following:

1. A detailed, typed, statement of the mitigating circumstance that affected your academic performance. Please include the date of the circumstance in the case of an injury or illness.
2. Supporting documentation of the circumstance. Below are examples of acceptable forms of documentation for specific events.
   - Illness of student or family member (child, spouse, parent or legal guardian)
     - Statement from physician confirming the onset and duration of the illness
   - Death of an immediate family member
     - Copy of death certificate
   - Severe emotional difficulties
     - Statement from a psychologist or physician confirming the onset and duration of the condition
     - Statement from a third-party such as physician, social worker, police, etc.
   - Change/loss of employment
     - Letter from employer verifying the date of the loss/change of employment or separation notice from the Department of Labor
   - Time frame exceeded
     - Letter from academic advisor explaining why the program cannot or was not completed within time-frame
     - Degree audit indicating courses needed to complete program.
3. A detailed, typed, statement of the steps you have taken or plan to take to resolve or remove the circumstances that previously impacted your academic performance.
4. Submit this form and all supporting documentation to the Financial Aid Office at the address below within **two weeks** of notification of ineligibility for financial aid.

Return to:
Financial Aid Office
LaGrange College
601 Broad Street
LaGrange, GA 30240-2999