

LAKE TAHOE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FINANCIAL AID OFFICE
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) POLICY
EFFECTIVE 9/1/2016 (Fall 2016)

As a financial aid recipient, the student owns the responsibility to understand the terms and conditions of the *Lake Tahoe Community College Financial Aid Office Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy* in order to maintain eligibility to receive aid. The Financial Aid Office monitors academic progress toward the student's educational goal, in accordance with federal regulations for satisfactory academic progress (which should not be confused with academic and progress probation/dismissal policies of the College, nor the State standards for the Board of Governors Fee Waiver [BOGFW]).

The Financial Aid policy for satisfactory academic progress (SAP), uses three standards for aid:

- (1) G.P.A. (qualitative)
- (2) Pace (quantitative)
- (3) Maximum timeframe

Students must meet the minimum academic requirements for all three criteria to be eligible to receive financial aid.

Summary of Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards for Financial Aid Eligibility

In order to be eligible to receive financial aid, students must meet the following criteria:

- Be enrolled at Lake Tahoe Community College
- Have an educational goal leading to an Associate's Degree; an A.A. or A.S. transfer degree; or Certificate of Achievement. This educational goal must be on file with Lake Tahoe Community College Enrollment Services.
- Maintain a cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.) of 2.0 (qualitative standard)
- Maintain minimum pace, successfully earning a minimum 67% of all units attempted (quantitative standard)
- Not exceed 135 units for an A.A./A.S. degree or transfer objective (maximum timeframe standard)
- Not exceed 45 units for a Certificate of Achievement objective (maximum timeframe standard)

NOTE: for the Board of Governors Fee Waiver (BOGFW) program only, the student must successfully earn greater than 50% of all units attempted (quantitative standard). The qualitative standard for the BOGFW program is a cumulative 2.0 G.P.A. There is no maximum timeframe component of SAP for the BOGFW program.

Review of Satisfactory Academic Progress

Lake Tahoe Community College Financial Aid Office assesses SAP at the end of each primary quarter. The process will be completed once all faculty have posted grades for the quarter. Students must maintain SAP standards to maintain financial aid eligibility.

Consequences of Failing to Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress

Student may lose eligibility to receive financial aid and have future aid denied.

Student may be required to return some or all financial aid received.

Student who is denied aid may file an *Appeal* for reinstatement of aid eligibility.

NOTE: These SAP conditions apply to all types of financial aid, with the exception of some scholarships.

Notification

Students who fail to meet SAP are notified individually by email to their Lake Tahoe Community College Passport email accounts. Notification will occur after satisfactory academic progress is evaluated at the end of each primary quarter, following completion of grade reporting to Enrollment Services.

Unit Load for Financial Aid Award Determination

Note: Credit by exam/challenge exam units ARE NOT INCLUDED in calculations of a financial aid student's enrollment status. Students will be paid according to the number of units in which they are enrolled at the time of the fund request *OR* the number of units in which they indicate they will enroll on the *Financial Aid Supplemental Information* form. Change in unit load may result in a delayed payment. **It is always the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office in writing of any changes in unit load. This applies to cancelled classes, as well as units the student adds and/or drops.**

At the end of each primary quarter, all financial aid recipients' transcripts will be reviewed for satisfactory academic progress. Students will be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress when they maintain G.P.A., pace, and timeframe standards as described herein.

Note: The amount of a student's financial aid award is also dependent on financial aid programs' criteria and the student's individual eligibility for each program.

Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) – SAP Qualitative Standard

Lake Tahoe Community College requires that financial aid recipients maintain a cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0. This qualitative standard is applied to aided and non-aided terms at LTCC. When a continuing or returning student at LTCC applies for aid, their academic progress during all previous terms will be subject to this standard.

Pace – SAP Quantitative Standard

Pace is the rate at which a student completes their educational goal requirements at Lake Tahoe Community College. All coursework on a student's transcript is included in a quantitative evaluation of *Units Attempted* versus *Units Earned*. Cumulative units earned must always be at least 67% of cumulative units attempted, for federal aid. All units on a student's transcript count as attempted units, whether they were completed with a "W," were retaken for a better grade, or eliminated from the G.P.A. calculation through the Academic Renewal process. NOTE: Student who receive financial aid for a specific term, then drop below 6 units during the first two weeks of that term, may be placed on financial aid Warning or Termination status; may be liable for repayment of financial aid received; and/or may be ineligible to receive additional financial aid.

Acceptable grades for units earned

- letter grades "A" through "D"* (*if you receive a "D," please note you must still maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA)
- "P" - passing

Unacceptable grades - not considered as units earned

- "F" - failing
- "NP" – not passing
- "W" - withdrawal
- "I" - incomplete

Students receiving "I" grades must notify the Financial Aid Office when the class has been completed with an acceptable grade.

Maximum Timeframe SAP Standard

Maximum timeframe is the SAP standard of eligibility used to determine the maximum number of units for which a student may receive financial aid for their educational goal. Your educational goal must be on file with Enrollment Services. At Lake Tahoe Community College, the following maximum timeframe standards apply:

- Associate Degree – maximum of 135 units attempted * NOTE: units from other institutions which are counted on an LTCC Credit Evaluation or CSU/IGETC Certification will also be counted towards the 135 unit calculation.
- Transfer objective – maximum of 135 units attempted * NOTE: units from other institutions which are counted on an LTCC Credit Evaluation or CSU/IGETC Certification will also be counted towards the 135 unit calculation.
- Certificate of Achievement – maximum of 45 units attempted

The maximum timeframe requirement applies to all financial aid recipients, and will include all non-aided terms of attendance at LTCC. **NOTE: Changing majors can impact a student's ability to complete their education with financial aid funding.** If a student cannot finish their program of study within the allotted timeframe, (s)he will become ineligible for financial aid.

Treatment of Remedial Courses

Remedial coursework refers to pre-collegiate basic skills courses which are offered as non-degree applicable courses. According to the LTCC College Catalog, a student may receive up to 45 quarter units of credit for LTCC remedial coursework. Up to this limit, LTCC remedial units will not be counted when determining timeframe requirements for satisfactory academic progress.

Repeatability

Students are not eligible to receive grant aid for any course that has been previously passed twice or more.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Statuses:

Warning Status

In the event the student fails to meet the criteria stated above, the student will be placed on financial aid warning status for the following quarter of attendance. The student will be eligible to receive financial aid during this quarter on warning status; however, the student must successfully make SAP during this term, or they will be subject to termination from financial aid. There is no appeal of the warning status. Students who are initially approved as a financial aid recipient with an LTCC cumulative GPA of below 2.0, or with less than 67% completion rate of all attempted units--even though they may not have received financial aid for prior quarter(s)--will be placed on warning status for their first quarter as a financial aid recipient. For the BOGFW program, a completion rate of 50% or less will result in warning status.

Termination

In the event the student fails to meet the criteria stated under “Warning Status” during the following quarter of attendance, the student will be terminated from further financial aid.

Appeal

A student who has been terminated from financial aid may have his/her eligibility reinstated once (s)he has completed a minimum of six counselor-approved units in one term, with a minimum 2.0 GPA in all courses. The student’s cumulative GPA must also be at least 2.0, and their completion rate of attempted units at least 67%. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the counselor that they are trying to have their financial aid reinstated, so that the counselor can record in their notes the approval of specific courses for the purpose of financial aid reinstatement.

Once the student has met the requirements as listed in the preceding paragraph, he/she must complete and submit to the Financial Aid Office an *Appeal to Receive Financial Aid/Satisfactory Academic Progress*, which will be reviewed by the Financial Aid Director. If the student has successfully completed the requirements for reinstatement, (s)he will be reinstated to financial aid eligibility. The student may not be paid retroactively for the unaided term under any circumstances.

Appeal Process without unaided term

If a student has been terminated from financial aid due to lack of satisfactory academic progress, the student may appeal to the Financial Aid Director if they feel there were extenuating circumstances that led to their termination.

Please note: extenuating circumstances that are typically deemed sufficient to grant an exception to policy include a death in the immediate family or emergency medical conditions of the student. Difficulties encountered with course content or instructors typically do not qualify as sufficient extenuating circumstances to grant an *Appeal* prior to the student’s completing an unaided term.

1. The student must complete and submit to the Financial Aid Office an *Appeal to Receive Financial Aid/Satisfactory Academic Progress*, explaining the extenuating circumstances that led to their failure to make satisfactory progress; and what has now changed regarding those circumstances that will allow them to successfully complete their classes during subsequent terms. All supporting documentation of the extenuating circumstances must be attached to the *Appeal* that is submitted.
2. The Financial Aid Director will review the *Appeal* and determine whether the termination will stand, or whether there were sufficient extenuating circumstances to grant an exception to policy. The Director may extend warning for another quarter, may ask the student to provide monthly progress reports, etc. The Director may uphold the termination and require the student to complete an unaided quarter, as explained above. The student will be notified of the Director’s decision by mail.
3. The decision of the Financial Aid Director may be appealed to the Executive Dean of Student Success if additional information is available that the Director was not aware of when making a decision. The student must complete and submit to Student Services an *Appeal to the Dean*, available from the Financial Aid Office.

Excess Units (Quantitative Progress)

Once a student reaches 135 quarter units, (s)he/he must petition to receive continued financial aid. For the calculation of 135 units, and per federal guidelines, attempted units from LTCC will be used. In addition, units from other institutions which are counted on an LTCC Credit Evaluation or CSU/IGETC Certification will also be counted towards the 135 unit calculation. A maximum of 45 LTCC units of remedial courses may be attempted in addition to the 135 quarter unit limit. A student who has reached excess unit status must complete a *Petition to Receive Financial Aid* with a Financial Aid Petition counselor. The *Petition* must indicate the student’s specific educational goal, and the courses necessary to reach that goal. If the student is planning to receive an Associate’s Degree, a Credit Evaluation must be on file before the *Petition* can be completed. For students whose goal is to transfer, the *Petition* must list the courses required by the transfer institution; in some cases, verification of acceptable courses may be required from the transfer institution. Once the *Petition* is completed, the Financial Aid Petition Committee will meet and vote on whether to approve or deny the *Petition*. In most circumstances, only one Associate’s Degree will be considered per student. If the degrees are closely related and require only a few additional courses, a second Associate’s degree may be considered in exceptional cases. One transfer goal per student will also be considered by the Committee. The student’s overall transcript and progress towards his/her goal will be considered when evaluating the *Petition*, as well as other factors pertinent to the student’s situation. At the time of the *Petition*, the student must have earned at least 50% of required coursework towards their educational goal. All applicable units will be considered, regardless of whether financial aid was received for those units. The student will be notified of the Committee’s decision by mail. Note: Regular standards for SAP do not apply to students who are receiving financial aid for excess units. There is no warning status granted to such students; students whose *Petition* is approved must complete all units they attempt, and receive a minimum of “C” or “P” for all units, to remain eligible for financial aid.

Students who have already been awarded a Bachelor’s Degree are not eligible for any financial aid at LTCC other than a fee waiver.

Please contact the LTCC Financial Aid Office at (530) 541-4660 ext. 236 if you have any questions concerning these policies.