



Serving Richmond and Scotland Counties

Financial Aid
1042 West Hamlet Avenue
PO Box 1189, Hamlet, NC 28345
(910) 410-1726
financialaid@richmondcc.edu

Policy updated spring, 2022

Purpose

The purpose of financial aid at Richmond Community College is to supplement the resources of the student and their family. Richmond Community College (RichmondCC) makes every effort to ensure that every student will have an opportunity to attend, regardless of financial ability. However, students have a responsibility for their own education and must pursue and complete course work, which permits them to meet degree requirements within a reasonable time frame. Successful completion of a diploma or degree requires that a student earn a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.00 on all hours completed. In compliance with appropriate Federal Regulations, RichmondCC will adhere to the policies stated in this section for determination of satisfactory academic progress for students receiving assistance through RichmondCC's Financial Aid Office. This includes federal, state, institutional aid, and veteran benefits. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress before financial aid can be awarded. The Financial Aid Office will evaluate the student's entire academic record in determining the student's compliance, regardless of the age of the record or whether aid was received. Certain special awards, i.e., academic scholarships, may require higher academic achievement than the standard policy.

Policy Statement

To be eligible for financial aid, students must meet the following minimum guidelines at the end of each semester:

1. **Qualitative Standard** - The minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) requirement a student must maintain to receive and/or continue receiving financial aid assistance is 2.00.
2. **Quantitative Standard** - Students must make progress toward their degree or diploma by successfully completing a minimum percentage of coursework attempted. Successful completion is defined as completion of at least 67 percent of the total hours attempted. The pace of progression toward a degree is measured by dividing the cumulative hours the student has completed by the cumulative hours the student has attempted. Courses resulting in final grades of F, I, IE (Incomplete Emergency), U, X, W, WP, WE (Withdrawal Emergency) and WF are not considered as successfully completed. All courses taken for credit in which a student is enrolled after the official tuition refund period has ended are counted as attempted hours and are shown on the academic transcript. Courses resulting in final grades of AU, AP, AR, SR, and NA are not considered as attempted or earned hours.

3. **Quantitative Standard Maximum Time frame** - Students must complete their educational program of study in a time frame not to exceed 150 percent of the published length of program. This will be measured in credit hours attempted (e.g., if the academic program length requires 65 credit hours to graduate, the maximum time frame or pace of progression cannot exceed 97 credit hours attempted). All hours attempted at Richmond Community College and hours transferred from other post-secondary institutions, regardless of when they were attempted, are counted toward the maximum time frame for program completion. An additional 30 credit hours may be allowed for required remedial coursework.

Eligibility Status

Satisfactory: Satisfactory status is achieved when the student's cumulative GPA is a 2.00 or higher, the cumulative completion rate of courses is 67% of his or her attempted credit hours at the end of each semester, and the credit hours attempted by the student do not exceed 150 percent of the published length of the program.

Warning: A student whose cumulative grade point average is below 2.00 and/or has not completed 67% of their cumulative attempted credit hours, will be placed on financial aid warning the following semester of enrollment. A warning period allows a student to receive financial aid for one semester even though the student does not meet all of the requirements. At the end of the warning period, if the student meets all of the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements, the student remains eligible for financial aid.

Termination: At the conclusion of the warning period, if a student's cumulative grade point average is below a 2.00 GPA and/or the student's cumulative completion rate is below the required 67% completion of attempted credit hours, the student's financial aid will be terminated. Also, students who cannot complete their program of study by the 150% maximum time frame have their financial aid terminated.

Probation: Students who have had their financial aid terminated because they did not make satisfactory academic progress have the right to an appeal. Students whose appeals have been approved will be placed on financial aid probation for the next semester of enrollment. While on probation, student must earn a minimum 2.00 GPA and earn passing credits in 100% of the attempted classes. Their academic progress will be reevaluated at the end of that semester. Students who meet the satisfactory academic progress guidelines will be re-instated. Those who do not meet the standards will have their aid terminated.

Special Notes

1. **Withdrawal from College and/or Course Withdrawals** - Students who withdraw from classes at RichmondCC should understand their withdrawal may affect their eligibility for financial aid as determined by this Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP). Withdrawal from the College and/or course(s) before the end of the official Tuition Refund Period (census date for the semester or course, whichever comes first) are not calculated in the SAP.

2. **Student Initiated Withdrawal Between 10% and 75% of Semester (W)** - After the end of the official Tuition Refund Period (census date for the semester or course, whichever comes first) a student who voluntarily withdraws from a course(s) will receive a "W" grade. This grade will count as an attempted course and will affect the student's ability to meet the quantitative requirements and complete his program within the maximum time frame.
3. **Student Initiated Withdrawal After 75% Point (WF)** - A student who officially withdraws from a course(s) after the 75% point of the term will receive a "WF" grade. A course for which a "WF" grade is given will count as an attempted course and will be counted as an "F" in computing grade point averages.
4. **Instructor Initiated Withdrawal Before 75% Point (W)** - A student withdrawn from a course(s) in this manner will receive a "W" grade. This grade will count as an attempted course and will affect the student's ability to meet the quantitative requirements and complete his program within the maximum time frame.
5. **Instructor Initiated Withdrawal After the 75% Point of the Term (WP or WF)** - If a student violates the attendance policy, the instructor will assign a "WP" or a "WF" grade according to the quality of a student's performance at the time a student is withdrawn. A course for which a "WP" grade is given will count as an attempted course and will affect the student's ability to meet the quantitative requirements to complete his program within the maximum time frame. A course for which a "WF" is given will count as an attempted course and will be counted as an "F" in computing grade point averages.
6. **Failures (F)** - Grades of "F" are used when computing the GPA and cumulative attempted hours, but do not qualify as successful completion of credit hours attempted. These grades will negatively impact the student's ability to maintain compliance with the SAP standards.
7. **Grades of "Incomplete" (I)** – An incomplete will count as attempted hours, not completed hours, and will have a negative impact on GPA. No earned hours will be posted until a grade has been assigned for the coursework. Students with an "incomplete" may have difficulty meeting the satisfactory academic progress requirements at the time of evaluation but may be reevaluated upon completion. The student must make a written request to the Financial Aid Office when the coursework has been completed. The request form is available on the RichmondCC website.
8. **Never Attended Classes (NA) or Non-Payment (NP)** Credit hours for which a student registers but never attends will not be counted as attempted or earned hours. The student is responsible for paying the tuition and fees for these courses and charges for unreturned books and supplies.

9. **Course Repeats** - Students may be allowed to repeat a course in accordance with the policy outlined in the Student Handbook. For financial aid purposes, all hours attempted and/or completed will be included in the calculation of SAP.

10. **Remedial Coursework** - Remedial coursework will count in the number of attempted and earned hours, and grades given for these courses will affect GPA. In addition, there is a limit of 30 semester hours of remedial coursework that can be included in a student's enrollment status.

11. **Audited Courses** — An audited class is not included in the enrollment hours for purposes of awarding financial aid funds. The audited hours will not count as attempted or earned hours.

12. **Transfer Credit** - Transfer credit hours are included in the calculation of SAP.

13. **Proficiency (Credit by Exam)** - While a credit by exam ("X") is not included in the enrollment hours for purposes of awarding financial aid, the attempted and completed credits are counted in each component of the quantitative standard and the maximum time frame.

14. **Program of Study** - If a student is enrolled in courses that do not count toward their degree, they cannot be used to determine enrollment status unless they are courses that a student is required to take based on placement testing. This means that courses taken that do not fulfil a requirement on the program evaluation will not be covered by Title IV funds. They will, however, be counted in qualitative and quantitative standards.

15. **Change of Majors**—Students who change their major are still responsible for maintaining satisfactory academic progress in accordance with the procedures as outlined. A review of satisfactory academic progress will be based on the student's current active and primary program of study. A student changing from an associate program into a diploma or certificate program may lose federal and state eligibility immediately upon making the change. Academic progress is calculated on the student's active program.

It is always in the best interest of the student to contact the financial aid office before changing programs and/or withdrawing from any courses.

16. **Summer Session** —Credit hours attempted and earned during the summer session are included in the calculation of SAP, just as for any other term of study.

Monitoring and Notification Process

It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of their satisfactory academic progress status for financial aid eligibility.

To determine a student's academic progress status and eligibility for financial aid, a student's academic record will be evaluated at the end of each semester or period of

enrollment. Once the student is determined to be ineligible for financial aid, the student will be notified that they are being placed on financial aid warning for one semester due to failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress standards. If the student does not meet all the requirements at the end of the warning semester, the student will be determined to be ineligible at that time for aid and the student will be terminated from the financial aid programs. The student will be notified that their financial aid eligibility has been terminated. This notification will also appear on the students Self Service Account.

Regaining Satisfactory Academic Progress

To regain financial aid eligibility, the following steps may be taken:

Financial Aid Appeals Process Qualitative and Quantitative Standard

A student who has become ineligible for financial aid due to lack of satisfactory grade point average or percentage of credit hours completed, may appeal their status to the Financial Aid Office. Federal regulations allow the Financial Aid Office to extend eligibility to students who fail to meet minimum standards if they can document that there were mitigating circumstances beyond their control that caused them to perform below standards. Mitigating circumstances may include, but are not limited to:

1. Serious illness or injury that prevented the student from completing his/her classes.
2. Death in the student's immediate family.
3. An unusual situation in which the student had no control prevented them from successfully completing his/her classes.

Appeals must be made on a Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form. This form may be found on the RichmondCC website or in the Financial Aid Office. Included in the appeal should be a description of the circumstances which caused the student not to make satisfactory academic progress. In addition, the student should describe how those circumstances have changed for them to successfully meet the conditions for progress. All appeals, along with any supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office and students will be notified of the decision rendered. The decision will also be seen in Self-Service. The decision of the Financial Aid Office is final.

Maximum Timeframe (150%)

Students who exceed the maximum allowable time frame to complete a program of study must provide a Graduation Plan. The student will submit the Graduation Plan along with the Maximum Time frame Appeal Form to the Financial Aid Office. This form may be found on the RichmondCC website or in the Financial Aid Office. Included in the appeal should be a description of the circumstances which caused the student not to meet the maximum time frame standard. In addition, the student should describe how those circumstances have changed for them to successfully meet the conditions for progress. All appeals, along with any supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office and students will be notified of the decision rendered. The

decision will also be seen in Self-Service. The decision of the Financial Aid Office is final.

References:

United States Code of Federal Regulations 34 § 668.16(e), 668.32(f), 668.34 and Higher Education Act Sec. 484(c)