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COKER UNIVERSITY

FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

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In accordance with federal regulations (HEA Sec. 484(c), 34 CFR §§ 668.16(e), 668.32(f), and 668.34), students must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to remain eligible for Federal Title IV financial aid. Coker University is required to deny financial aid to any student who does not meet SAP standards. The following are Coker University's SAP guidelines for financial aid. SAP is evaluated at the end of each academic term based on official academic records maintained by the Registrar and reflected in the student information system. SAP status is reviewed prior to the disbursement of financial aid for the subsequent term and, when applicable, during periods of Probation or Academic Plan monitoring following an approved appeal.

*Financial aid SAP is a separate process from the academic records academic probation and academic suspension processes.*

### **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS SAP REQUIREMENTS**

In order to receive Federal Title IV aid, the student must comply with the following eligibility requirements.

1. Students must be admitted and enrolled as a degree-seeking student, and take courses required for the chosen degree completion. Only courses required for degree completion for your selected degree program will be eligible for Federal Title IV funds (Pell, SEOG, Work-Study, Direct Loans, Parent PLUS Loans, SC Tuition Grant, and Hope, LIFE, or Palmetto Fellows Scholarships). Per 34 CFR 600.2, courses that do not count toward the completion of the student's degree program requirements are not eligible for federal funding.
  2. Maintain a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.0 or higher (as outlined in the college catalog under "Continuation Requirements and Classification Probation").
  3. Complete at least 67% of the cumulative credit hours attempted during the academic year toward chosen program of enrollment (grades of W, I, and F will be counted as hours attempted).
  4. Students must complete their chosen degree requirements for a single degree within the 150% published length of the program. Coker University requires that students complete 120-degree hours within the student's chosen program—students will have up to 150% of the 120
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hours to complete their program for up to 180 attempted credits. All transfer credit hours received by Coker University are included in the total attempted credit hours.

## **WARNING PERIOD**

The SAP warning period allows a student one semester (one term for graduate program students) to make up for any GPA or pace of progression deficiencies. During the SAP warning period the student may continue to receive financial aid without an appeal and/or academic plan. Students are encouraged to work with their advisors, student success coach, and tutors regarding academic challenges and offerings that may help increase the student's success with increasing their GPA and/or pace of progression.

If the student does **not** meet the requirements for cumulative GPA and/or pace of progression by the end of the Warning period, the student will no longer be considered to be making SAP and will become ineligible for federal and state funding without an approved appeal.

The one semester (one term for graduate program students) SAP warning period is only available one time throughout the degree program.

## **FINANCIAL AID PROBATION AND SUSPENSION**

A student who fails to meet one or more Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards is considered not making SAP and will be subject to the SAP status progression described in institutional policy (Good Standing, Warning, Suspension, and Probation).

A student who fails to meet SAP standards at the end of a term and has already used the one-time Warning status will be placed on SAP Suspension and becomes ineligible for Federal Title IV, state, and applicable institutional financial aid unless the student submits a SAP appeal that is approved.

### **Probation and Academic Plans**

If a student on SAP Suspension submits a SAP appeal and the appeal is approved, the student may be placed on Financial Aid Probation, with or without an Academic Plan, in accordance with institutional policy.

- If it is possible for the student to meet SAP standards within one term, the student may be placed on Probation for one term without an Academic Plan.

- If it is not possible for the student to meet SAP standards within one term, the student will be placed on Probation with an individualized Academic Plan.

An Academic Plan outlines specific, measurable requirements the student must meet each term and is developed based on the student's academic circumstances and deficiencies. Academic Plan requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis and may include, but are not limited to, conditions such as earning a minimum term GPA, completing a specified percentage of attempted credits, successfully completing all enrolled courses, limiting withdrawals, or meeting other academic benchmarks designed to ensure the student can regain SAP within the approved timeframe.

An Academic Plan may be approved only once per student and will not exceed three (3) semesters/terms in length. Failure to meet the requirements of Probation or the Academic Plan results in loss of financial aid eligibility.

### **Suspension and Loss of Eligibility**

A student will be placed on SAP Suspension and is ineligible for Federal Title IV aid if any of the following occur:

- The student fails to meet SAP standards after the Warning term;
- The student fails to meet the conditions of an approved Probation term or Academic Plan;
- The student fails to maintain the required pace of completion (67%);
- The student exceeds the maximum timeframe (150% of the published program length, measured in attempted credits); or
- The student completes the academic requirements for a program but has not yet been awarded the degree and therefore is no longer eligible for Title IV aid for that program.

All attempted coursework, including accepted transfer credits, repeated courses, withdrawals, and failed courses, is included in SAP evaluations for pace and maximum timeframe purposes in accordance with institutional policy and federal regulations.

### **Program Changes and Repeated Coursework**

All attempted and completed coursework, including coursework from program changes and accepted transfer credits, is included in SAP evaluations. Students are permitted a limited

number of program changes in accordance with institutional academic policy; however, once a student has completed the academic requirements for a program, the student must graduate or will no longer be eligible for Federal Title IV aid for that program.

Students may repeat courses in accordance with federal regulations and institutional academic policy. Repeated coursework counts as attempted credits for SAP purposes and may affect pace and maximum timeframe.

### **Reinstatement of Eligibility**

Suspension of Federal Title IV aid continues until the student either:

- Regains compliance with SAP standards through successful academic performance; or
- Has an appeal approved and is placed on Financial Aid Probation, with or without an Academic Plan.

Reinstatement of financial aid eligibility is not retroactive. Students must request that the Office of Financial Aid review their record once SAP standards are met or once an appeal is approved and the student is placed on Probation.

Students who are in academic suspension status under institutional academic policy are not eligible for financial aid.

### **APPEALS**

1. Students may appeal the denial of Federal Title IV financial aid due to failure to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards. To initiate an appeal, the student must request the appeal materials from the Assistant Director of Financial Aid and submit the completed appeal form and all required supporting documentation by the published deadline.

The appeal must include:

- A written explanation of the extenuating circumstances (such as illness, injury, death of a family member, or other documented special circumstances) that prevented the student from meeting SAP standards;
- Supporting documentation substantiating those circumstances; and
- A statement explaining what has changed and how the student will be able to meet SAP standards at the next evaluation.

2. If an appeal is approved, the student may be placed on Financial Aid Probation, with or without an Academic Plan, in accordance with institutional policy. If it is not reasonably possible for the student to meet SAP standards within one term, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation with an individualized Academic Plan.

An Academic Plan outlines specific, measurable requirements the student must meet each term based on the student's academic circumstances and deficiencies. Requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis and may include, but are not limited to, conditions such as earning a minimum term GPA, completing a specified percentage of attempted credits, successfully completing all enrolled courses, limiting withdrawals, or meeting other academic benchmarks designed to ensure the student can regain SAP within the approved timeframe. Student progress under Probation or an Academic Plan is reviewed at the end of each payment period or enrollment period, as applicable.

3. Transfer students are evaluated for Satisfactory Academic Progress based on Coker University's SAP standards. All accepted transfer credits are included in the student's attempted and earned credit totals for purposes of pace and maximum timeframe calculations; however, transfer GPA is not used unless otherwise defined by institutional academic policy.

4. Students may submit **one (1) SAP appeal** during their academic career at Coker University. If an appeal is approved and an Academic Plan is required, **only one Academic Plan** may be approved per student. Additional appeals will not be considered.

## **ACADEMIC PLANS**

1. Academic Plans are individualized and are developed based on the student's academic circumstances and deficiencies. An Academic Plan outlines the specific, measurable requirements a student must meet, as well as the timeframe in which the student is expected to regain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

2. Academic Plan requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis and may include, but are not limited to, conditions such as earning a minimum term GPA, completing a specified percentage of attempted credits, successfully completing all enrolled courses, limiting withdrawals, or meeting other academic benchmarks designed to ensure the student can regain SAP within the approved timeframe.

For graduate students, Academic Plan requirements may include higher GPA thresholds consistent with institutional academic policy.

3. An Academic Plan may be approved only once per student, will not exceed three (3) semesters/terms in length, and will never extend beyond the maximum timeframe for the student's academic program.
4. Students may be required to update or revise an Academic Plan if there is a change in course offerings, degree requirements, or program structure that affects the student's ability to meet the original plan requirements.

### **UNDERGRADUATE and GRADUATE PROGRAM APPEAL & ACADEMIC PLAN DUE DATES**

Appeal deadlines are firm and are communicated to students in official SAP notifications. Appeals submitted after the stated deadline are **not guaranteed** to be reviewed. However, the Office of Financial Aid **may, at its discretion**, consider a late appeal when the student documents extraordinary circumstances beyond their control that prevented timely submission. Approval of a late appeal is rare and is not automatic.

### **GRADUATE PROGRAM STUDENTS**

1. To be eligible for Federal Title IV, state, and applicable institutional financial aid, graduate students must be admitted and enrolled as degree-seeking students in an eligible graduate program.
2. Graduate students must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards established by Coker University and outlined in institutional policy, including:
  - Maintaining a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of **3.0**;
  - Successfully completing at least **67% of attempted credit hours** (pace of completion); and
  - Completing the academic program within the **maximum timeframe of 150% of the published program length**, measured in attempted credit hours.
3. For purposes of maximum timeframe, all attempted coursework, including accepted transfer credits, repeated courses, withdrawals, and failed courses, is included in the SAP evaluation in accordance with institutional policy and federal regulations. Examples of maximum timeframe limits based on program length may include, but are not limited to:
  - 30-credit program: up to 45 attempted credits
  - 33-credit program: up to 49 attempted credits
  - 42-credit program: up to 63 attempted credits

- 80-credit program: up to 120 attempted credits
4. Graduate students are evaluated for SAP at the end of each academic term. A student who fails to meet one or more SAP standards will be placed in the appropriate SAP status (Warning, Suspension, or Probation), in accordance with institutional policy.
  5. A graduate student who fails to meet SAP standards after the Warning term will be placed on SAP Suspension and becomes ineligible for financial aid unless the student submits a SAP appeal that is approved.
  6. If a SAP appeal is approved:
    - If it is possible for the student to meet SAP standards within one term, the student may be placed on Financial Aid Probation for one term without an Academic Plan.
    - If it is not possible for the student to meet SAP standards within one term, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation with an individualized Academic Plan.
  7. An Academic Plan outlines specific, measurable requirements the student must meet each term and is developed based on the student's academic circumstances and deficiencies. An Academic Plan:
    - May be approved **only once per student**;
    - Will **not exceed three (3) semesters/terms** in length; and
    - Will **not extend beyond the maximum timeframe** for the program.
  8. Failure to meet the conditions of Financial Aid Probation or an approved Academic Plan results in loss of financial aid eligibility.
  9. A student who completes the academic requirements for a graduate program but has not yet been awarded the degree is **not eligible for additional Title IV aid for that program**, in accordance with federal regulations.
  10. Students who are in academic suspension status under institutional academic policy are not eligible for financial aid.
  11. A student may submit **one (1) SAP appeal** during their academic career at Coker University. If the appeal is approved, the student may be placed on Probation, with or without an Academic Plan, as described above. Additional appeals will not be considered.