Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

I.   Authority

In accordance with the U.S. Department of Education and State of Illinois student aid regulations, ECC is required to establish minimum standards of academic progress to qualify for federal and state financial aid. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that students are making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward the completion of their educational program of study. Minimal standards are subject to change in accordance with the U. S. Department of Education and State of Illinois regulations.

II.   Financial Aid Programs Covered

The Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy applies to students who are requesting or receiving funds from the following federal, state, and ECC financial aid programs:

- Federal PELL Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
- Federal Work Study
- Federal Direct Student Loan
- Federal TRIO Grant
- Federal Veterans Educational Benefits

- ISAC, Monetary Award (MAP)
- ISAC, Illinois Veterans Grant (IVG)
- ISAC, Illinois National Guard (ING)

Note: IVG and ING only require students to meet the Cumulative Grade Point Average standard of this policy.

- All College and Foundation Scholarships
- Most Sponsorships and private donor scholarships

III.   Minimum Academic Standards Requirements

The SAP policy measures a student's academic progress in three ways. Students must meet all three standards to be in good status.

A.   Cumulative Grade Point Average

You must achieve and maintain at least a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 in all credit hours completed at the College, including transferred, repeated, and remedial credits.

B.   Cumulative Completion Rate

You must complete, with a passing grade, at least 66.67% of all credit hours attempted at the College, including transferred credits.

Passing grades are: A, B, C, D, CR, and S. These grades count as credit hours attempted and completed.

Grades of E, F, W, U, I, Z, AU, WF, NR, AW and NC count as credit hours attempted, but not completed.

Note: Transferred, repeated, and remedial courses are included to determine if you meet the cumulative completion rate standard.

C.   Maximum Time Frame

You must complete your program of study within 150% of attempted credit hours relative to credit hours required to complete the program.

Example: A degree-seeking student may attempt no more than 90 credit hours in order to complete a 60 credit hour program; a certificate-seeking student may attempt no more than 45 credit hours to complete a 30 credit hour program.

If during the SAP review it becomes clear that you cannot mathematically complete your program within the maximum time frame, you may become ineligible for financial aid.

Note: Transferred, repeated, and remedial courses are included to determine if you meet the maximum time frame standard.

IV. Frequency of Evaluation

The SAP of degree-seeking and certificate seeking students will be evaluated at the end of each semester: (summer, fall and spring). After each semester, students will be placed in the appropriate status as outlined in Section V.

V. Initial, Good, Warning, Suspension, Maximum Time Frame, and Probation Status

A. Initial Status: Students who have no academic record at the College and are applying for financial aid for the first time are placed in initial status. Students in initial status may receive financial aid if otherwise eligible.

B. Good Status: Financial aid applicants who meet the standards in Section III are in good status. Students in good status may receive financial aid if otherwise eligible.

C. Warning Status: When financial aid applicants are in good status and do not meet the standards in Section III, they are placed in warning status. Students in warning status may receive financial aid if otherwise eligible.

D. Suspension Status and Maximum Time Frame Status: When financial aid applicants who are in warning status do not meet the standards in Section III, they are placed in suspension or maximum time frame status and are not eligible to receive financial aid.

E. Probation Status: When financial aid applicants who are in suspension or maximum time frame status submit an appeal and the appeal is granted, they are placed in probation status for one semester. If after that semester the student does not meet the standards in Section III, they become ineligible to receive financial aid. Students in probation status may receive financial aid if otherwise eligible.

Note: Students who have an academic record at the College, including transferred classes, and are applying for financial aid for the first time at the College will be evaluated according to the SAP policy in Section III and placed in the appropriate status.

VI. Appeal of Suspension and Maximum Time Frame Status

Students who are in suspension or maximum time frame status may appeal their eligibility for financial aid to the SAP Appeals Committee based on extenuating or special circumstances, such as death of a relative, injury or illness.

Steps to appeal include:

- Print, complete and submit the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal form that is available on the College website and/or in the Financial Aid office.

- Attach a written statement explaining what caused your failure to comply with this policy and what steps you will be taking to improve your academic performance and achieve satisfactory academic progress requirements for financial aid which are outlined in this policy.

- Students may be required to submit an Academic Plan and/or a Program Evaluation. Students will be notified if this step is required.

Students whose appeal is approved will be placed in probation status for one term after which their status will be once again evaluated. Students may receive financial aid while in probation status.

Students whose appeal is denied, may only reestablish aid eligibility by taking action that brings them fully into compliance with the Minimum Academic Standards Requirements outlined in Section III of this policy.

VII. Notification of Status

The Financial Aid office will notify you when you are in warning, suspension, maximum time frame or probation status. The Financial Aid office will also notify you if your appeal has been granted or denied within 30 calendar days of submission. The decision of the SAP Appeals Committee is final.

VIII. Notice

The College's SAP policy is subject to change without notice to comply with federal or state regulations, or ECC Board of Trustee policy or action.

For the most current SAP Policy visit elgin.edu/financial aid.

For information regarding grades, please refer to the "Grading Chart" at elgin.edu.