

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Federal regulations require that all students who receive any financial aid meet federal academic progress standards while taking courses toward a degree or certificate program. This policy applies to all terms of enrollment, even if not receiving federal aid. Academic progress is measured both by cumulative grade point average and by course grades. The financial aid office checks student academic progress after both the fall and spring semesters.

Academic Progress Standards

A. Completion Rate (67% Rule): Students must receive a satisfactory grade in courses attempted by completing at least 67% of the credits for which they are enrolled. This percentage is calculated by dividing the number of credits earned by the number of credits attempted for the semester. All withdrawals, failures and incompletes are counted as attempted, but not earned credits.

1. **Exception to the 67% Rule:** It is important to note that the 67% completion rule applies to Title IV financial aid. However, specific grant and scholarship aid programs may mandate a higher completion rate.

B. Cumulative GPA Minimum Requirements (GPA Rule): The college has established the following cumulative grade point average (GPA) standards:

<u>At the end of</u>	<u>Cum. GPA</u>	<u>At the end of</u>	<u>Cum. GPA</u>
1 st semester	1.5	4 th semester	2.0
2 nd semester	1.7	5 th semester	2.0
3 rd semester	1.9	6 th semester	2.0

If a student's cumulative GPA falls below the standard, he must meet or exceed the cumulative GPA standard for all ensuing semesters at the college or he will fail to meet the college's academic progress standards, resulting in ineligibility for future financial aid and enrollment termination. If a student fails to meet the college's Cumulative GPA Minimum Requirement in the last semester of his senior year, he cannot graduate from the college.

C. Course Grade Requirements: Students are required to pass all courses designated for their assigned curriculum. If a student fails a course, he must follow the college's Course Substitution Policy, as described in a subsequent section. Failure of three courses or failure of either a trade theory or trade skills course (for which a suitable substitute course cannot be found) will result in a student disenrollment.

D. Maximum Hours (150% Rule): Students may only receive financial aid up to the point at which they can no longer complete their program of study within 150% of the program length (including all semesters, even if no federal aid was received). For example, if a program requires 100 hours, a student may only attempt up to 150 hours in that program. All hours attempted are counted.

E. Developmental Courses: Grades for developmental courses (those numbered below the “100” level) are included in cumulative GPA calculations and are subject to the Course Grade Requirements listed above.

F. Withdrawals, Audits, Repeat Courses, and Incompletes: Each student enrolls in a program with a set curriculum of courses to be taken each semester; students may not withdraw from, audit, or repeat courses. If a student receives a grade of Incomplete for a class, he has one semester following the conclusion of that class to satisfy class requirements and receive a final grade; if a student does not satisfy class requirements in the time allotted, he will receive a failure for his final grade. Once an Incomplete grade has been changed to a final grade, the student’s record will be reviewed by the Office of the Dean of Education for compliance with academic progress standards.

1. **Withdrawals – Exceptions:** Students who are granted a Leave of Absence or a Readmission Program Transfer after a semester has started but before a semester has been completed, will receive Withdrawal grades for all classes, which do not count as a passing grade; these grades are counted in attempted credits.
2. **Repeat Courses – Exception:** Students who are granted a Readmission Program Transfer after a semester has been completed may be required to repeat certain classes, as determined by the Dean of Education. Repeated coursework is counted as attempted credits, with all grades related to this repeated coursework included in GPA calculations, in order to comply with Title IV SAP qualitative requirements.

G. Course Substitution Policy: If a student fails a course, he may not re-take the course at Williamson, but must find a substitute course at another institution. The student must then submit a Course Substitution proposal for approval to the Dean of Education. If approved, the student must successfully complete the proposed course, with a grade of “C” or higher, within three semesters following the semester in which the failure occurred (summer session is counted as a semester). Failure to successfully complete the substitute course within the specified time limit will result in the student being disenrolled from Williamson. The student’s original grade will remain on his transcript and the compensating course will be noted on the transcript. The initial grade will be used in calculating his cumulative grade point average.

H. Change of Major and Double Majors: Apart from a Readmission Program Transfer (see below), students may not change majors nor complete a double major. Once all the requirements for a program are completed, a student may no longer receive financial aid. Students may not apply for financial aid for the completion of a double major.

Ineligibility for Financial Aid

- A. Any student who fails to meet the Academic Progress Standards listed above will be placed on Academic Warning by the Dean of Education. If a student on Academic Warning achieves a cumulative 2.0 grade point average or higher at the conclusion of any subsequent semester, the Dean of Education may remove the student from Academic Warning status. If a student on Academic Warning fails to meet Academic Progress Standards at the conclusion of any subsequent semester, he will be disenrolled from the college.
- B. Students on Academic Warning remain eligible to receive financial aid if they meet Satisfactory Academic progress requirements.

Appeal of Satisfactory Academic Progress Decisions

Students who faced mitigating circumstances that may have affected their academic progress may appeal a satisfactory academic progress decision. Mitigating circumstances include: experiencing a serious illness or accident; the death, accident or serious illness of an immediate family member; or other mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control. Poor time management, feeling "unprepared for school," or other circumstances that are in a student's control will not be accepted as mitigating circumstances. To appeal, a student must complete the Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Form, provide acceptable supporting documentation, and complete all required steps outlined on the form. The Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Committee – composed of the Dean of Education, the Registrar, and the Director of the student's trade program – approves or denies the student's appeal and, in the case of approval, places the student on financial aid probationary status until all Academic Progress Standards are met. Students may submit a letter of appeal regarding the decision of the committee to the College President, whose decision will be considered final.

If a student's appeal is approved, in order to continue receiving student aid the student must develop (with the Dean of Education) and follow an academic plan and successfully meet the college's Cumulative GPA Minimum Requirements and Course Grade Requirements. Failure to follow the plan and successfully meet the college's stated requirements will result in enrollment termination.

Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility

If a student does not meet satisfactory academic progress requirements but continues to meet the college's Cumulative GPA Minimum Requirements and Course Grade Requirements, he may continue his enrollment at the college without federal or state financial aid assistance. At the end of the semester and/or the year, the college will review the student's academic progress and, if all progress requirements are met, the student's financial aid eligibility will be reinstated for subsequent semesters.

Normally, students should complete all school programs in six semesters of full-time enrollment. Mitigating circumstances may necessitate an additional year or two. Students should understand that: (1) eligibility for federal aid is limited up to 150% of the expected

program length (six semesters) for the associate degree, and (2) eligibility for state financial aid is limited to a maximum of four semesters for the associate's degree.