

Satisfactory Academic Progress for Federal Student Financial Aid

This policy is separate from the ICO academic progress policy program requirements and affects only eligibility for financial aid, and not the ability to continue to be enrolled at the College.

Federal regulations require that all students receiving federal Title IV financial aid make satisfactory academic progress towards the completion of the degree program. The requirements set forth for financial aid eligibility must meet the federal requirements and be at least as strict, if not more, than the student's academic program.

As of May 22, 2017 (the start of Summer 2017), ICO's financial aid office is implementing the following policy to ensure that we are in compliance with the updated federal regulations and that all of our students who are receiving federal financial aid are making appropriate progress towards the completion of the degree.

Policy

Students receiving federal student financial aid must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.25 at the end of each professional year and complete the degree requirements within six academic years, not exceeding 414.75 credit hours attempted. In addition, students must satisfy all academic requirements to progress academically within the program.

Evaluation of Progress

The Financial Aid Office will monitor the satisfactory academic progress of all financial aid recipients at the end of each Spring quarter in order to authorize eligibility for the next year. At each review period, the Financial Aid Office will review the student's cumulative GPA and pace of progression to degree completion to ensure that the student is on track to complete the program within the maximum timeframe.

However, at any point in the year, should the SPC review of the student result in the dismissal of the student, eligibility for financial aid is immediately terminated. Should the student appeal the SPC's dismissal decision and be granted an additional term, the student will still have to complete a separate financial aid appeal. Being reinstated for enrollment at the College by the SPC does not reinstate eligibility for federal student financial aid.

Academic Progress: Cumulative GPA

The financial aid office will review financial aid applicants/recipients Cumulative GPA's to ensure that they are in keeping with the 2.25 standard of the College. Any student failing to maintain a minimum 2.25 Cumulative GPA will have their financial aid eligibility suspended. Students will be notified via their "eyedoc" email account.

A student may appeal the suspension of their financial aid by presenting an appeal letter and documentation of extenuating circumstances to the financial aid office. This decision and appeal is related to financial aid eligibility only and is independent of any decision made by

the SPC and academic program.

Academic Progress: Maximum Timeframe

As ICO students are enrolled full-time in a cohort based curriculum, students are expected to complete the program within four academic years. Given the manner in which courses are offered, a student must complete fall courses within a given fall quarter; otherwise those courses will generally not be offered until the following fall. In light of this, there are times when the academic program may allow the student to restart the program or repeat a portion of the program in the following year.

All students must complete the OD program within 150% of the number of credit hours attempted required to complete their degree (414.75 credit hours) and within a six year span. This means that each quarter enrolled, the student must successfully complete 67% of their attempted hours. At any point where the student is mathematically incapable of completing the program within the 150% timeframe, aid will be suspended. The student may submit a letter of appeal and an academic plan to the financial aid office for consideration.

The pace at which the student completes the program is defined as the number of hours earned divided by the number of hours attempted.

Electives (which are not required by the curriculum) are not included in the maximum timeframe calculation as they can only be taken in addition to the standard curriculum and with the approval of the Registrar.

Incompletes/Withdrawals/Repeated Courses/Transfer Credits

All courses receiving an incomplete or withdrawal grade will be counted as hours attempted toward the maximum program time frame. Transfer credits will be counted as attempted and earned hours towards the maximum time frame. Repeated courses will count in the hours attempted calculation. The financial aid office will continue to use the cumulative GPA as calculated by the Office of the Registrar.

Appeals for Extenuating Circumstances

Cumulative GPA

If a student has had their financial aid suspended due to a failure to meet the minimum GPA standards, a written and signed appeal must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office before further financial aid can be considered. The letter must explain the extenuating circumstances that have caused the decline in the cumulative GPA and give indication of what steps have been taken to ensure that those factors have been mitigated for future terms. In addition, the student must supply an academic plan, authorized by their academic program, outlining the steps required to remediate the grade point average and identify how progress can be measured at the end of each quarter, if it will take more than one quarter to reach the 2.25 cumulative GPA requirement.

In the event that the return to good standing will take longer than one quarter, the academic

plan must outline the requirements that the student must meet by the end of each quarter. The academic plan must be satisfied by the end of one academic year. If the student fails to meet the terms of the academic plan, they are ineligible for further financial aid.

These appeals must be reviewed and approved by the financial aid office before further federal financial aid can be received.

Maximum Timeframe

If a student has had their financial aid suspended due to exceeding the maximum timeframe standard, a written and signed appeal must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office before further financial aid can be considered. The letter must explain the extenuating circumstances that have caused the need to extend the program in either time or number of hours and also give indication of what steps have been taken to ensure that those factors have been mitigated for future terms.

In addition, the student must supply an academic plan, authorized by their academic program, outlining the remaining coursework required and the schedule in which it must be completed.

These appeals must be reviewed and approved by the financial aid office before further federal financial aid can be received.

SPC Actions Taken Before The End Of Spring Quarter

Since the SPC reviews continued eligibility to enroll in the program, should the SPC dismiss a student from the program at any time, financial aid eligibility automatically terminates at the time of the dismissal.

In cases where the student appeals the SPC decision, and the SPC appeal is granted, the student must still appeal to the financial aid office for continued eligibility. The student must document any extenuating circumstances and how they have been mitigated. The financial aid office will review the appeal and make a determination about the financial aid status, independent of the SPC decision. The financial aid office would use the SPC action plan as the requirements necessary to maintain financial aid should the financial aid office find cause to grant the appeal. Failure to meet the SPC terms at the end of the financial aid appeal quarter results in immediate suspension of eligibility for continued aid until the student returns to good academic standing in the program. The student is responsible for all tuition and fees incurred should they enroll while on financial aid suspension. These must be paid in full each quarter where financial aid is suspended.

If the SPC dismisses the student with the option to return in a future term, financial aid eligibility terminates with the dismissal. The student must still appeal to the financial aid office for continued eligibility. The student must document any extenuating circumstances and how they have been mitigated. The financial aid office will review the appeal and make a determination about the financial aid status, independent of the SPC decision. The financial aid office would use the SPC action plan as the requirements necessary to maintain financial aid should the financial aid office find cause to grant the appeal. Failure to meet the SPC terms at the end of the financial aid appeal quarter results in immediate suspension of eligibility for continued aid until the student returns to good academic standing in the program. The student is responsible for all tuition and fees incurred should they enroll while on financial aid suspension. These

must be paid in full each quarter where financial aid is suspended.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Statuses

Good Standing: The student is meeting both the 2.25 cumulative GPA requirement at the end of Spring quarter and is on track to complete the program within the allowable time frame.

Probation: The student has been granted an appeal of their satisfactory academic progress and is working on the agreed upon remediation plan. The student will be evaluated each quarter based upon the terms of the academic plan. If the student meets the requirements of the academic plan, they will continue to be eligible for financial aid. If the student fails to meet the requirements of the plan, further financial aid will be suspended. An appeal is required before further financial aid can be considered.

Suspension: The student has been dismissed by the SPC; has failed to meet the SPC action plan during a financial aid appeal quarter; or has failed SAP review by the financial aid office when either their cumulative GPA fall below 2.25 at the end of Spring or the student not able to mathematically complete the program within the required timeframe. An appeal is required before further financial aid can be considered.

In the event that aid has been suspended after a prior financial aid appeal, a return to good academic standing is required before further aid can be considered, regardless of the SPC decisions. The student is responsible for all tuition and fees during a suspension of financial aid eligibility and must satisfy their financial obligations with the College prior to the end of the enrolled quarter.