



Financial Aid 2009-2010 Standards of Progress

Preface

The purpose of the financial aid program at College of the Canyons is to facilitate and foster successful academic participation of students who need help funding their education. In accordance with the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, the college has established the following Standards of Progress. While maintaining our responsibility as custodians of public funds, COC's objective is to establish an SAP standard that is consistent with institutional goals and philosophies and at the same time sensitive to the needs of students. These standards apply to all students receiving financial aid from the following programs:

- o Cal Grant B and Cal Grant C
- o Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)
- o Federal Pell Grant (PELL)
- o Federal Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students Program (PLUS)
- o Federal Stafford Loan Program (FFEL)
- o Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- o Federal Workstudy (FWS)

I. Student and Program Eligibility

To be eligible to receive financial aid, federal regulations require that a student be a "regular student enrolled in an eligible program". The student must maintain good standing and make satisfactory academic progress according to federal, state and institutional standards in his/her course of study. Students receiving financial aid must be enrolled in a course of study leading to an associate degree, a vocational certificate, or a transfer program to a four-year college or university.

II. Default or Overpayment on Title IV Funds

Students who are in default on a student loan or owe a Title IV program overpayment are not eligible for federal aid. If a student owes an overpayment, the debt must be cleared before any federal aid will be disbursed. In the case of a student loan default, financial aid may be reinstated once the student makes satisfactory repayment arrangements with the holder of the loan and proof of such arrangements are submitted to the Financial Aid Office.

III. Total Withdrawal

College of the Canyons applies the Return of Title IV Funds Policy outlined in Public Law 105-244 to students who withdraw from all classes before completing 60% of the semester. Affected students may be required to return the unearned portion of the federal aid they received.

IV. High School Diploma or the Equivalent

Federal regulations require financial aid students to either have graduated from high school or have completed a recognized equivalent (such as the California High School Equivalence Exam or the GED). Current regulations specify those students who fail to meet the above requirement must achieve a certain score on a federally approved ability to benefit test. The COC Assessment Center administers the CPT Accuplacer Test. Students must achieve scores at or above the mandated cut score in both verbal and computation subject matters to be eligible for financial aid.

V. Student Educational Plan

It is the student's responsibility to enroll in courses that count toward his or her educational objective. Students are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with a college counselor to create a personalized

Student Educational Plan (SEP). The Counseling Department recommends that students take the Placement Test and requires students to submit all transfer college transcripts for evaluation prior to making a counseling appointment.

VI. Satisfactory Academic Progress

Federal regulations require that all financial aid recipients make satisfactory academic progress and remain in good standing. Academic progress is reviewed prior to the student's first disbursement for each term. Additionally, prior to each financial aid payment, the student's enrollment status will be verified to determine eligibility for financial aid.

Enrollment Status	Units
Full-time	12 or more units
Three-quarter time	9 to 11.5 units
Half-time	6 to 8.5 units
Less Than Half-time	.5 to 5.5 units

The quantitative (unit progress) and qualitative (grade point average) standards are measures of academic progress, must be cumulative, and include all periods of the student's enrollment. Periods in which the student did not receive student financial aid funds must also be counted.

If transcripts are submitted for evaluation, all units must be included in this evaluation.

• Qualitative Standard -- Grade Point Average

To maintain eligibility, students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 ("C") or higher for all coursework attempted.

• Quantitative Standard -- Unit Progress

Students are required to complete 67% of the total number of cumulative units attempted. Unit progress is evaluated by comparing the number of cumulative units attempted with the cumulative units completed to determine whether the student is progressing at a rate that will allow him/her to complete the program within the maximum time frame.

• Maximum Time Frame

Students must complete their educational objective within the maximum time frame allowed. The maximum time frame may not exceed 150% of the published length of the COC program measured in total units completed.

College of the Canyons is a two-year, degree awarding institution that provides students with an associate degree, transfer certification or vocational certificate. The maximum time frame may only be extended under professional judgment if the college determines that mitigating circumstances exist. (See Section XIII. Petitions)

A. Associate Degree - Requires completion of a minimum of 60 units with a 2.0 grade point average. Students enrolled in the associate degree program must complete their goal by the time they have completed 90 units.

B. Vocational Certificate Program - COC offers many vocational certificate programs. Each requires a specific number of units for certification. Students enrolled in a vocational certificate program must complete their goal by the time they have completed 150% of the number of units required for that specific certificate.

C. Transfer Program - A student is allowed to transfer 70 units to a four-year college or university. Students enrolled in transfer studies programs must complete their goal by the time they have completed 105 units.

VII. ESL and Remedial Courses

All English as a Second Language classes, and up to 30 units of remedial course work, may be excluded from the student's units attempted when determining a student's maximum time frame.

VIII. Prior College Transcripts

Transcripts are required if you are eligible for an Academic Competitiveness Grant and/or you wish to receive a 2nd year student loan. If transcripts are submitted for evaluation, all units completed will be counted toward the quantitative standard (unit progress) and qualitative standard (GPA) when calculating the maximum time frame and determining satisfactory academic progress. Please see the Admissions and Records office or the Counseling Office at the Valencia or Canyon Country Campuses to request a Transcript Evaluation form.

IX. Additional Elements

A. Grades

Completed units means that credit was given for the units enrolled. Grades of "F", "NP" (no pass), "I" (incomplete), "IP" (in progress) and "W" (withdrawal) will not count as completed classes for satisfactory academic progress, but will count as units attempted.

B. Course Repetition

Students may be allowed to repeat any course in which a grade below a "C" was recorded. See the COC College Catalog for additional information about repetition of courses.

C. Credit By Exam or Audited Course Work

Units earned from credit by exam courses, or courses taken by audit, are not counted for financial aid purposes.

D. Concurrent Enrollment

In the determination of enrollment status, it is not permissible for a student to count units being taken concurrently at another college.

X. Evaluation

The student's program is divided into equal evaluation periods called increments. The number of units attempted is compared with the number of units the student successfully completed. This calculation enables the school to determine whether the student is progressing at a rate that will allow completion of an academic program within the maximum time frame. To ensure a student is making sufficient progress throughout the course of study, satisfactory academic progress for each student will be evaluated at the end of each term.

XI. Academic Renewal

Academic renewal is a procedure through which a student can petition to the college to have credits attempted and grades earned in previous semesters excluded from their grade point average. The financial aid program regulations do not provide for such amnesty. In evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes, all courses that apply must be included toward his/her program of study.

XII. Dismissal Status

Students who fail to meet the requirements of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) will be dismissed from financial aid. *Eligibility for the Board of Governors Fee Waiver is not subject to the SAP standards.* A student may reestablish their eligibility by submitting a petition to the Financial Aid Office (Section XVI).

XIII. Petitions

If a student believes that he/she has a documented special circumstances which may affect his or her financial aid eligibility, the student can request to have his/her situation evaluated by submitting a Financial Aid Petition.

Each petition will be reviewed and approved or denied based on the student's individual extenuating circumstances and supporting documentation. Some petitions require a Student Educational Plan approved by a COC academic counselor. A request for financial aid eligibility extension when the student has completed all required coursework but has not yet received degree, vocational certificate or transfer certification will not be approved. College of the Canyons

permits the student's maximum time frame to be adjusted to allow for one academic major or one educational objective change only.

Petition forms are available online at College of the Canyons Financial Aid website located at www.canyons.edu/money4college. Each of the following petition forms identify the process and provide directions for submission:

- A. **Satisfactory Academic Progress** – Under extenuating circumstances, a student may petition his/her dismissal from financial due to a failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress.
- B. **Extenuating Financial Circumstances** – An adjustment may be made to student or parent income information due to extraordinary circumstances which were not addressed on the FAFSA.
- C. **Dependency Override** – An otherwise "dependent" student who cannot obtain parental income information, may be eligible to have a dependency status change to "independent" based on documented circumstances.
- D. **Cost of Attendance Additional Expenses** – A student may require the addition of expenses that fall outside the standard student budget. Allowances are limited to: Disability/Medical related, dependent care, studying abroad or a cooperative education program.

A student whose petition is **approved** will be reinstated to good standing for financial aid eligibility and the student's Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) will be recalculated, if appropriate. The student will be notified of any changes to his or her eligibility by a newly generated FAFSA Student Aid Report.

A student whose appeal is **denied** will receive written notification advising the student of the reason their petition was denied. Written notification will be sent from the Financial Aid Director by U.S. Postal Service mail or email, if the student has provided their email address on their petition form.

A student has the right to submit a written request for a student hearing to be conducted before the Financial Aid Advisory Committee if he/she does not agree with the outcome of the petition. The student will represent him or herself at the hearing. All decisions rendered by the Financial Aid Advisory Committee are final and binding.

XIV. Reinstatement

In order to be reinstated to good standing, a student must: (1) meet all financial aid satisfactory progress standards (qualitative, quantitative, and maximum time frame) or (2) successfully petition, under the petition process in Section XIII.

XV. Fraud

A student who attempts to obtain financial aid fraudulently may be suspended from college, and from all financial aid program eligibility, as a result of formal student disciplinary action taken by the College. The College may be required to report such instances to local law enforcement agencies, the California Student Aid Commission, the U. S. Department of Education and the Office of Inspector General. Restitution will be required of any financial aid received under fraud.