

SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS COLLEGE

FINANCIAL AID, VETERAN SERVICES AND
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT OFFICE

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY
FOR
MILITARY EDUCATION BENEFITS

SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS COLLEGE
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID, VETERAN SERVICE AND
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

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Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy For Military Education Benefits

In accordance with U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and State of Illinois student aid regulations, Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) is required to establish minimum standards of a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy for all students applying for and receiving military benefits. This policy is required to ensure that students are making progress toward the completion of their program of study. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements of this policy will become ineligible for military benefits. Standards are subject to change each academic year in accordance with U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs and State of Illinois reforms.

Mandatory SAP Requirement

- Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA): You must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA.

What You Need to Know About SAP Calculations

- It is ultimately students' responsibility to know and understand their SAP status and how it affects military education benefits.
- SAP is evaluated for veterans/dependents at the end of each semester (after all grades are posted). Students with a SAP status other than "MEET" will be notified via their SWIC student email account.
- All prior semesters of attendance are included in the evaluation of SAP, whether or not military benefits were used to pay for those previous semesters.
- Dual credit courses are included in CGPA.
 - A high school/SWIC partnership program where qualified students can earn college and high school credit at the same time. These classes are taught at the high school by qualified high school instructors who meet the minimum instructor requirements and utilize appropriate college curriculum.
- Course completion is determined by the following grades:
 - Courses graded with an (A), (B), (C), (D), or (P) are considered complete.
 - Courses graded with an (I), (PR), (W), (WF), (FLW), or (F) are considered incomplete.

SAP Definitions

MEET Status

Students are considered to be in a MEET status (i.e. good standing) if they meet the mandatory SAP (CGPA 2.0) requirement.

WARNING Status

Students are placed on warning after the 1st semester they fail the CGPA (2.0) requirement. By the end of the warning semester, the student must meet the CGPA requirement to regain good standing. If the student fails after the 2nd semester in a row, s/he will be placed on suspension for the next semester. Students may still receive military education benefits while on warning.

SUSPENSION Status

Students are placed on suspension after the 2nd consecutive semester they fail the CGPA (2.0) requirement. If by the end of the suspension semester the student meets the CGPA requirement, s/he will regain good standing and receive military education benefits again. Students remain on suspension until they have completed enough credit hours to meet the CGPA requirement. Students on suspension are not eligible for military education benefits.

PLAN Status

Students are placed on plan after having a suspension appeal granted due to failing the mandatory SAP requirement. This status is reviewed at the end of each semester to ensure the academic plan requirement is being met according to the official letter of approval. Students who lose their plan status will return to a suspension status for their military education benefits.

Military Benefit Suspension Appeal Process

Students who have failed to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy requirement due to documented extenuating circumstances may qualify to submit a suspension appeal for military education benefits. An appeal represents a formal request to have one's loss of military education benefits eligibility re-evaluated based on unusual circumstances that resulted in poor academic performance. The SAP Appeal Committee will evaluate each appeal on a case-by-case basis.

Examples of Extenuating Circumstances

- Death of an immediate family member
- Military reassignment
- Other mitigating circumstances
- Severe illness/injury to self or immediate family member
- Separation/divorce for self or parents

What You Need to Know About the Appeal Process

SUBMISSION: 1st day of enrollment for the semester

- All appeal decisions will be communicated via your SWIC student email account.
- The processing of your military education benefits will be delayed until a committee decision has been made.
- You are responsible for tuition, fees, and books throughout the appeal process.
- You must have a documented extenuating circumstance that addresses each semester that has contributed to your current suspension status (dates of documentation must coincide with semesters in question).
- Incomplete appeal packets will not be evaluated by the committee.
- Your appeal will be reviewed by the SAP Appeal Committee. The committee's decision is final.
- The review process at a minimum is a 1 to 2-week process.

If Granted an Appeal

- You will be placed on a PLAN status which signifies your agreement to follow your academic plan according to your appeal.
- The PLAN status expires upon completion of your primary program of study.
- Your academic plan only follows your primary program of study according to your appeal submission.
- You must wait until the appeal process is complete prior to using military education benefits.
- You must meet all requirements in the letter of approval to maintain appeal status and military education benefits eligibility.
- You will be evaluated at the end of every semester to ensure appeal status requirements are being met.
- Loss of your appeal status will return you to a suspension status for military education benefits.
- You cannot reason the loss of an appeal status using the original extenuating circumstances.

If you qualify for a military education benefits suspension appeal, please contact the Office of Financial Aid, Veteran Service and Student Employment for a military education benefits suspension appeal coversheet to begin the process.