

## **Section 11: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

### **Section 11.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities**

BRCTC is required to establish and monitor academic progress for students who receive federal financial aid funds. The student's total academic history is monitored regardless of whether he/she received financial aid. To continue to be eligible for Title IV aid, a student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). The components of SAP include a quantitative and qualitative component, as well as a measurement of 150% of the maximum timeframe for completion of a program of study. BRCTC measures SAP at the end of each payment period (semester). All students will have SAP evaluated regardless of full or part time status, major or any other academic qualities.

Students must meet SAP to continue to receive the following financial aid funds:

Federal Pell Grant, Federal SEOG, Federal Stafford Loan, Federal PLUS Loan, Federal Work Study, WV PROMISE Scholarship, WV Grant, Private loans (as directed by the lender).

### **Section 11.2 Same As or Stricter Than**

The FAO's SAP policy for Title IV students is the same as the school's standards for students enrolled in the same education programs who are not receiving Title IV aid. SAP, as assessed by the BRCTC FAO, is separate and distinct from the student's academic standing with the institution. The SAP policy is stricter than BRCTC Academic Policy that allows for up to three semesters of academic probation.

### **Section 11.3 Categories of Students**

All students receiving Title IV financial aid assistance are degree-seeking students or are enrolled in an eligible certificate program.

### **Section 11.4 Qualitative Measure**

The qualitative measure for SAP requires that student maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0. This policy is consistent with the institution's graduation requirements. The cumulative GPA that the FAO uses to evaluate SAP is based upon all courses that have been attempted. Remedial, repeated coursework and/or forgiven coursework are included in the SAP GPA calculation.

### **Section 11.5 Quantitative Measure**

The quantitative measure for SAP requires that a student must successfully complete 67% of attempted credit hours. This is measured on a cumulative basis. Example: If a student enrolls for 16 credit hour during one semester, the student must successfully complete 11 credit hours to maintain SAP standards.

Financial aid recipients must also complete their degree program in 150% of the published length of the program. Example: AAS degree that requires 60 credit hours for completion. Maximum enrolled credit

hours permitted to complete the program would be 90 credit hours. The FAO notifies students when a student is within 12 credit hours of being at 150% of the degree program. If it is determined that it will be mathematically impossible for the student to complete their degree program, the student will be required to submit a SAP Appeal and Academic Plan to the FAO. An Academic Plan can be a written out plan or a copy of the student's Degree Works plan available on the student's BRIDGE.

## **Section 11.6 Evaluation Periods**

The length of the Evaluation period is one payment period (semester). The evaluation periods are the same for all degree-seeking, or certificate students. The FAO evaluates SAP at the end of fall, spring and summer semesters.

### **Section 11.6.1 Financial Aid Warning Status**

A student who is not meeting the minimum SAP standards whether quantitative or qualitative will be placed on a Warning Status. The student is given one semester of Warning to correct SAP deficiencies. The student is eligible for financial aid during the Warning semester. However, if a student is not meeting the minimum SAP standards after the Warning semester, the student is considered to be Failing SAP and is ineligible to receive financial aid during subsequent semesters of enrollment.

### **Section 11.6.2 Financial Aid Failing Status**

A student who does not meet the minimum SAP standards after receiving a Warning status is placed on a Failing SAP status and is ineligible to receive financial during subsequent semesters of enrollment. This SAP Status is not the same as the school's academic policy.

### **Section 11.6.3 Financial Aid Probation Status**

A student who does not meet the minimum SAP standards after receiving a Warning status is placed on a Failing SAP status. A student may be eligible to appeal that status and be placed on Probation Status. The probation status is equal to one semester; however, it may take longer than one semester to re-establish aid eligibility under the SAP standards. The student must meet certain stipulations during their Probation Status. Stipulations monitored at the end of each payment period and if necessary prior to the payment period and during the payment period. If a student is found to be failing stipulations, the student is Failing Stipulations and is no longer eligible to receive financial aid funds.

## **Section 11.7 Appeals**

If a student is placed on a Failing SAP status, the student may submit an appeal to the FAO stating why they are not meeting minimum SAP standards after a period of Warning. The SAP Appeal Committee comprised of members of the FAO, Admissions and Student Success Teams meets regularly to review Appeals. A student must be able to document extenuating circumstances. These circumstances can

include but are not limited to: death of a family member, prolonged illness of the student or a family member, job loss or schedule change or other unusual circumstances. *The SAP Appeal form also requires the student to explain what steps the student has taken or will take to meet the SAP standards in the future.*

The SAP Appeal Committee will approve or deny SAP appeals. Students whose SAP Appeal has been denied will be placed on Appeal-Denied Status and are no longer eligible for financial aid. Students whose SAP Appeal has been approved are placed on a SAP Probation Status and must meet the stipulations as outlined by the SAP Appeal Committee.

#### **Section 11.7.1 Documentation**

The FAO will accept the following as acceptable documentation:

Newspaper obituaries and death certificates to substantiate death

Physician's written statements

Hospital discharge paperwork that outlines dates of services, etc.

Written statements from a third party such as a clergy member, advisor, counselor

All documents will be reviewed as this is not intended to be a complete list of acceptable documentation

#### **Section 11.7.2 Academic Plans**

Students who are failing the Max Time Frame component of SAP must submit an academic plan that should be signed by their Academic Advisor. An Academic Plan can be a written out plan or a copy of the student's Degree Works plan available on the student's BRIDGE. The DegreeWorks plan includes only courses that are required for their degree program. Students should not register for courses that do not fit their degree plan.

The Academic Plan must include a course-by-course plan for degree completion and an expected graduation date. It is assumed that the Academic Plan is complete.

It is also up to the discretion of the SAP Appeal Committee to ask a student who is appealing their SAP Status of Pace or GPA to submit an Academic Plan.

#### **Section 11.8 Regaining Eligibility**

If a student chooses not to appeal a SAP Failing status or their SAP Appeal has been denied, the student may regain eligibility by completing enough courses to raise cumulative GPA and completion rate to minimum SAP standards, at their own expense.

#### **Section 11.9 Treatment of Non-Punitive Grades, Repeated Courses, Audited Courses, Pass/Fail Courses, Withdrawals & Incompletes**

The definition of non-punitive grades, repeated courses, audited courses, pass/fail courses, withdrawals and incompletes are in the BRCTC Student Handbook and College Catalog. The FAO currently counts all repeated courses, withdrawals, and incompletes as hours attempted but not credits earned. If the student drops below the SAP standard of 67%, these hours are taken into account.

An incomplete grade must be completed by the end of the next semester of enrollment. This grade will be reevaluated at the end of that payment period. For the current semester, that a student has an Incomplete grade, this grade is counted against Pace of the quantitative component. If this places the student into a Failing SAP status, the student is encouraged to appeal with documentation from the instructor stating when the final grade will be calculated.

### **Section 11.10 Treatment of Remedial, Enrichment & English as a second Language Courses**

BRCTC offers remedial coursework. These classes are counted in both the qualitative and quantitative SAP measures. No more than one year's worth of noncredit or reduced credit remedial coursework may be included in a student's enrollment status. ESL courses are not calculated into a student's SAP status.

### **Section 11.11 Treatment of Consortium, Change of Major, Second-Degree, and Second Major Courses**

Students taking courses through a consortium agreement must provide transcripts from the host institution that are transcribed as part of the student's official record. Those courses count in the SAP determinations.

Students who change majors or are seeking a Second-Degree are eligible to receive financial aid as long as they are meeting minimum SAP Standards. Students in this group are typically found to be failing SAP when they hit the maximum time frame of their degree program. Students are notified to be near failing SAP when their enrollment is within 12 credit hours of the 150% time frame of their degree program. These students are required to appeal to receive financial aid and must submit an Academic Plan and an expected graduation date. The SAP Appeal Committee will approve or deny these appeals. The Academic Plan is monitored.

### **Section 11.12 Transfer Students**

Students who transfer to BRCTC must submit all transcripts for evaluation. Transfer students are considered financial aid eligible. All students are evaluated at the end of each payment period for their SAP progress. Transfer students who already have a bachelor's degree are considered to be at maximum time frame and must appeal to receive financial aid. Their appeal must include an Academic Plan or a copy of their DegreeWorks plan. *Blue Ridge Community and Technical College articulates credits from an institution if it is accredited by a regional, national, programmatic, or other accredited body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. There is no time limit on college transcripts; however, there are time limits on certain classes. Successful classes from previous institutions transfer and credits are used in calculation of both attempted and completed hours. Courses that received a failing or incomplete grade are not articulated. Coursework meeting 70% or more of the learning*

*objectives of the Blue Ridge CTC comparable course will be accepted. Transfer GPAs are calculated into the overall GPA at Blue Ridge Community and Technical College. Transfer credits are included in determining Satisfactory Academic Progress as attempted and completed hours and may place a student on Financial Aid and/or Academic Probation upon enrollment. During the application process, the student is required to have all transcripts from previous institutions sent to Blue Ridge Community and Technical College. Only official copies of transcripts will be accepted. Courses on the West Virginia Core Coursework Transfer Agreement are honored. Credits taken at any West Virginia public institution shall count towards a student's credit residency requirement.*

### **Section 11.13 Notices**

The SAP Policy is published on the BRCTC website, available in pamphlet form in the FAO Office and is printed in the Student Handbook and Catalog. The SAP Policy is reviewed as needed when further guidance is issued from the US Department of Education. The FA Director and FA SAP Manager review the SAP Policy and provide suggestions to the VP of Enrollment Management if a change is required. *At the end of each review period, students are notified via their BRCTC email regarding their SAP status including Warning, Failing and Probation statuses*

## SECTION 12: RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS

### Section 12.1 Process Overview & Applicability

*Federal regulations require BRCTC to recalculate a student's financial aid eligibility when the student has officially withdrawn, if a student fails to earn credit in all attempted courses; or when a student stops attending. A Return of Title IV (R2T4) calculation is a complex process and involves input from the Registrar's Office, Financial Aid Office and the Finance Office.*

*If a student is considered withdrawn (either officially or unofficially), a student's last day of attendance determines the amount of financial aid funds that a student has earned. A student who withdraws (officially or unofficially) after the 60% point of a semester is entitled to retain all Title IV aid for that semester. However, if the student withdraws prior to that 60% point in the term, unearned Title IV funds, as determined by the R2T4 federal policies, must be returned to the various programs. The student could owe the institution and/or the U.S. Department of Education.*

**Student withdrawals:** The Registrar's Office is the point of contact for students who wish to officially withdraw. The student can fully withdraw from their courses via their BRIDGE self-service. Instructors are required to provide Last Dates of Attendance for any student that has withdrawn or has an F or IF grade.

The Registrar processes all withdrawals and notifies the FAO, Finance Office, and the VP of EM. The Registrar also submits official withdrawals to the national Student Clearinghouse via its established/required reporting criteria.

**Calculating R2T4s:** It is the responsibility of the FAO to complete the R2T4 calculation within the timeframe required by the federal regulations. It is also the responsibility of the FAO to notify students of their obligation to repay funds. BRCTC returns the calculated amount to the Department of Education which creates a bill owed to BRCTC. The FAO also notifies the Finance Office of the amount and type of aid returned for each student. *R2T4 calculations are to be performed within 30 days of the determination that a student has withdrawn. Unearned funds are required to be returned within 45 days of the date of determination that a student has withdrawn.*

**Offering Post-Withdrawal Disbursements:** It is the responsibility of the FAO to offer post-withdrawal disbursements to eligible students as defined by federal regulations. Responses are processed by the FAO and notification given to the Finance Office. *If a student is eligible for a post-withdrawal disbursement, the school will provide written notification via the student's email that they may be eligible for a post-withdrawal disbursement within 30 days of the date of determination of a student's withdrawal. Post-withdrawal grant disbursements will be disbursed within 45 days of the date of determination of a student's withdrawal. A student has 14 days to accept or decline the funds allowed through a post-withdrawal disbursement. Post withdrawal disbursements will be first applied to the student's account. Any remaining funds will be disbursed directly to the student via direct deposit or a check provided to the student.*

**R2T4 calculation procedures:** The FAO uses the R2T4 calculation that is provided by COD online services. The R2T4 calculation worksheets are sent to the student, Finance Office and a copy is maintained in the student's file.

## **Section 12.2 Withdrawal Date**

### **Section 12.2.1 Official Withdrawals**

The last date of attendance provided on the A&C Petition is used as the withdrawal date.

### **Section 12.2.2 Unofficial Withdrawals**

While not required to take attendance, BRCTC chooses to take attendance. For students who unofficially withdraw, the FAO is able to access last dates of attendance and make the determination whether an R2T4 is required based upon the 60% point of the semester.

## **Section 12.3 Formula Calculation**

The FAO uses the R2T4 calculation that is provided by COD online services. The R2T4 calculation worksheets are sent to the student and to the Finance Office and a copy is maintained in the student's file. Tuition and Fees are considered to be institutional charges.

## **Section 12.4 Returning Unearned Funds**

Students are notified in writing if they owe a payment due to an R2T4 calculation. The portion of the unearned funds is returned by the school immediately. The student is then billed for any funds that the school was required to return that create a debt with BRCTC. A student may not enroll in subsequent terms, or have academic records released, until such time that all debts have been repaid to the institution. Funds are returned in the following order:

1. Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
2. Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan
3. Federal Direct PLUS Loans
4. Federal Pell Grant
5. Federal SEOG

*If the R2T4 calculation results in a credit balance on the student's account, the funds will be disbursed within 14 days of the date of the R2T4 calculation. Funds will be distributed by direct deposit or paper check to the student.*

*If the R2T4 calculation results in an amount that exceed the school's portion, the student must repay those funds.*

## **Section 12.5 Leave of Absence**

Students who have ceased attendance are considered to have withdrawn from the school and BRCTC must perform an R2T4 calculation. Students may appeal any balance due from the result of the return calculation to the Vice President of Enrollment Management or the Finance Office.



## SECTION 13: INSTITUTIONAL REFUNDS

### Section 13.1 Process Overview & Applicability

Students who completely withdraw in accordance with institution procedures may receive a refund of tuition and fees in accordance with the schedules outlined below. The refund calculation is based on the amount paid toward tuition and fees. There are no refunds on partial withdrawals. Refunds are determined from the first day of the school term. The official withdrawal date is certified by the Registrar. Refund checks are issued through the State Treasury and receipt of a refund may take up to six weeks. To get a 100% refund you must drop all classes by the end of the add/drop period. The add/drop date is the first Friday during the first week of the term.

#### Fall/Spring Semester

During first and second weeks	90%
During third and fourth weeks	75%
During fifth through eighth weeks	50%
Beginning with ninth week	No Refund

#### Summer Session

During first 10% of the term	90%
From 11% to 25% of the term	75%
From 26% to 50% of the term	50%
After 50% of the term is completed	No Refund

### Section 13.2 Finance Appeal Committee

The Finance Appeal Committee may approve an exception to the refund policy in situations that are beyond the student's control. Situations may include but are not limited to: errors due to incorrect application of fees, miscalculation of refund or student charges or other extenuating circumstances. Students wishing to appeal must submit the request in writing and provide supporting documentation. The decision of the Finance Appeal Committee is final and cannot be appealed further to the U.S. Department of Education.