

# Minimum Standards of Academic Progress

Federal and state financial aid is intended to assist students as they make successful progress towards completing a degree. Therefore the student carries the responsibility to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress.

There are several factors that affect satisfactory academic progress. It is *your* responsibility to read this brochure and understand all the variables involved.

In turn, East Central College has the responsibility of monitoring student progress as follows:

The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended by Congress in 1998, mandates institutions of higher education to define, establish, and enforce **minimum standards of satisfactory academic progress** for students receiving financial assistance. Students receiving assistance from federal and state sources must meet the college's satisfactory academic progress policy in order to maintain their financial assistance eligibility.

The policy is based upon **cumulative attempted hours** and is applied consistently to all federal and state Student Financial Aid programs.

The policy is applied equally to new, continuing and transfer students. All students are required to meet the cumulative requirements to be eligible to participate in the federal and state financial aid programs administered by East Central College.

Students not receiving financial assistance are held to the same standards.

## ✂ Grades

**Successful completion is defined as receiving a grade of: A, B, C, D, or P.**

A grade of "F" (Failure), "W" (Withdrawal), "WX" (Administrative Withdrawal), "H" (Audit), or "I" (Incomplete) is considered unsatisfactory. All coursework must be completed within the regular semester time frame. Although the College allows a student to take an incomplete grade in a course and complete the course in the following semester, the course was not completed in the specified time frame, and the grade is therefore, unsatisfactory. Students may contact the financial aid office when this course is completed for a new review of their progress. Only the highest grade is counted for course repetitions when determining the students cumulative GPA. However, all repeated classes are counted as attempted hours.

**Note: If students meet the requirements for graduation, they are no longer eligible for federal, state, and institutional financial aid, including student loans and work study.**

## ✂ Grade Point Average

All students who have attempted at least 12 credit hours must have a 1.8 cumulative GPA. Students who have attempted at least 24 credit hours must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA.

### *Is it better to withdraw or take an F?*

**This is a frequently asked question. As you can tell by the policy above, a "W" or "WX" will not affect the grade point average, but will adversely affect the attempted vs. earned ratio. A grade of "F" will negatively affect both. Thus, it is advisable for a student failing a course to withdraw (A+ students who withdraw from a course will have to pay for that course out of pocket and if it reduces their completed coursework below 12 credits that semester, funding will be suspended the next semester).**

## ✂ Hours Attempted vs. Hours Earned

Students must complete a total of 67% of all coursework attempted, including degree and remedial coursework.

Coursework attempted during all semesters, including fall, spring and summer will be evaluated cumulatively.

Students participating in the East Central College Financial Aid Program are required to submit official college transcripts from all previous institutions. Transfer credit accepted from other colleges and universities will be included in the number of credit hours attempted and earned.

### *Example:*

In the fall, Jane Doe attempts 15 credit hours and completes 9. She withdrew from two, three-credit hour courses. Jane completed 60% of the coursework she attempted. This is below the minimum standard of 67%. Therefore, Jane is on warning going into the spring semester. While on warning she can continue to receive financial aid. However, she must carefully consider the number of credit hours she attempts in the spring.

In the spring Jane attempts 6 credit hours and completes all of them. Now, her cumulative record shows that she has attempted 21 hours and completed 15. She has improved her standing and now has completed 71% of all coursework she has attempted. Now Jane is back in good standing and removed from financial aid warning. (Note: If Jane accomplished the above, but only had a 1.79 cumulative GPA at the end of this semester she would have been placed on financial aid suspension.)

If Jane did not bring her cumulative completed hours back up to 67% of courses attempted by the end of the spring semester, she would have been placed on financial aid suspension and, therefore, would be ineligible to receive financial aid in future semesters.

## Maximum Time Limits

A financial aid recipient must complete his/her specified degree program within 150% of the published length of the program.

### Degree Program

Associate of Arts (AA)	
Hours Required	60
Maximum Hours Allowed	90
Associate of Science (AS)	
Hours Required	67
Maximum Hours Allowed	100
Associate of Applied Science (AAS)	
Hours Required	62-64
Maximum Hours Allowed	93-96

Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT)	
Hours Required	67
Maximum Hours Allowed	100
AAS-Nursing	
Hours Required	83
Maximum Hours Allowed	124

Students pursuing certificates of proficiency that require 30 or more credit hours for completion may attempt up to a maximum of 48 credit hours. (Please note: These hours could change. Check current program sheets to determine hours required).

### **Permanent Loss of Eligibility**

Once students reach the maximum hours attempted for their program of study they will not be eligible to receive financial aid at East Central College. Students may request a review of their cumulative, attempted, and completed hours if they switch degrees. ESL courses will not be counted as attempted or completed hours during this review.

### **Attendance Evaluation**

Attendance reports will be monitored continuously throughout the semester. If students who are getting loans are dropped for excessive absence, the second disbursement of the loans will be cancelled.

### **Repeating Coursework**

Courses taken three or more times cannot be paid by Federal student aid. Example: student is enrolled in 12 credits for the Fall semester, but 3 credits are from a course being attempted for the third time – all financial aid will be calculated from only 9 credits (Pell Grant recipients will receive grant based from ¾-time rather than full-time).

## ***What happens if I fail to meet minimum standards of satisfactory progress?***

### **Warning**

Failure to meet all parts of the satisfactory academic progress policy will result in **financial aid warning**. Students may continue to receive assistance for one semester, but must meet all parts of the satisfactory

### **Suspension**

Continued failure to meet the policy guidelines will result in **financial aid suspension**. Financial aid suspension means the termination of *all* federal, state, and institutional financial aid, including student loans and work study.

### **Can I get financial aid funds reinstated?**

Students can re-establish eligibility by bringing themselves back into compliance with the required cumulative GPA, and the required 67% completed hours out of all hours attempted within their degree program.

### **Student's right to appeal suspension**

In the event of extenuating circumstances, the student may request to be continued in the financial aid programs by submitting the Satisfactory Academic Progress Financial Aid Suspension Appeal form with all supporting documents to the Financial Aid appeals committee. A student may appeal for the following reasons: becoming very ill or severely injured, suffering from mental illness, is or has been through a divorce or suffered from family abuse, death in the family, having to drop due to an ECC error or work conflict. Documentation may be required. Students will be notified in writing of the results. Only one suspension may be approved through appeal. This one appeal rule starts with any appeals Fall 2005 and after. Appeals before this date are excluded.

### **Some state aid/scholarship programs have a higher grade point average requirement to remain eligible (ie: A+ requires 2.5).**

#### **Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy (Adopted December 2, 2013)**

Applicants for admission and employment, students, employees, and sources of referral of applicants for admission and employment and individuals with whom the Board of Trustees and college officials do business are hereby notified that East Central College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status.

Inquiries related to employment practices may be directed to the Human Resources Director, 005-D Donald Shook Student Center, telephone number 636-584-6710 or [hrnotice@eastcentral.edu](mailto:hrnotice@eastcentral.edu).

Inquiries/concerns regarding civil rights compliance as it relates to student programs and services may be directed to the Vice President of Student Development, 131 Buescher Hall, telephone number 636-584-6565 or [stnotice@eastcentral.edu](mailto:stnotice@eastcentral.edu).

Both offices are located at the ECC main campus located at 1964 Prairie Dell Road, Union, Missouri 63084.



# The Minimum Standards of Academic Progress

Maintaining financial aid eligibility for federal and state programs at East Central College



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