



## Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Pursuant to federal regulation, the USCA Office of Financial Aid is required to monitor the academic progress of all students who apply for federal financial aid. Financial aid funds can be awarded only to students who are making measurable progress toward the completion of degree requirements within a reasonable period of time.

Students are considered to be making satisfactory progress only if they are meeting all of the standards set forth in this policy. If a student fails to meet any particular standard or combination of standards, he or she will become ineligible for federal financial aid. Students are considered to be making satisfactory progress only if they:

- A. Are admitted and enrolled as degree-seeking students.
- B. Meet the University standards for continued enrollment as specified in the Academic Regulations section of the University of South Carolina Aiken Undergraduate and Graduate Programs Bulletin available on the USCA website ([www.usca.edu](http://www.usca.edu)).
- C. Meet the maximum total enrollment and minimum earned hours stipulations specified below:
  1. **Maximum Total Enrollment** – This assessment applies to all work attempted at any post-secondary institution as it directly relates to USCA’s academic policies. It is not limited to enrollment at USCA or to semesters in which financial aid is received. To be eligible for financial aid, a student’s total enrollment must be within the applicable time limitations as follows:

The total number of semesters of full-time enrollment (12 or more semester hours attempted) at any post-secondary institution does not exceed ten semesters.

The total number of semesters of part-time enrollment (fewer than 12 semester hours attempted) at any post-secondary institution does not exceed the equivalent of ten full-time semesters.

The total number of full-time and part-time semesters combined does not exceed the equivalent of ten full-time semesters.

2. **Minimum Earned Hours** – To be making satisfactory progress, a student must earn a minimum number of semester hours each year, based upon his or her enrollment status. Each period of enrollment included in the student’s record is assessed. This assessment is not limited to semesters in which financial aid is received. To be eligible for financial aid, a student must:
  - a. Earn no fewer than 24 semester hours of undergraduate credit per academic year if enrolled as a full-time student (12 or more hours attempted per semester).

- b. Earn no fewer than 18 semester hours of undergraduate credit per academic year if enrolled as a three-quarter-time student (9-11 hours attempted per semester).
- c. Earn no fewer than 12 semester hours of undergraduate credit per academic year if enrolled as a half-time student (6-8 hours attempted per semester).

Summer session enrollment is not assessed in the determination of a student's total semesters of enrollment. However, semester hours earned during the summer session are assessed with regard to the student meeting the minimum earned hours requirement. Therefore, a student who is not meeting the minimum earned hours requirement may restore his or her record to compliance with this standard through summer session enrollment **ONLY at USCA or approved transient work at another USC system school**. If a student who has been deemed ineligible successfully changes his or her standing relative to this policy, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the Office of Financial Aid of this change. Otherwise, the student's financial aid file will remain in an inactive status.

A student whose total number of credit hours earned is not greater than three hours below the minimum number of credit hours required for that student shall be allowed to receive student financial aid for two consecutive major semesters following this determination. At the conclusion of this probationary period, the student must meet the University's non-probationary Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards in order to receive future student financial aid. This probationary standard will never be applied more than once for any student.

Students who are determined to be ineligible for federal financial aid under this policy may appeal this determination under specifically prescribed conditions. Such appeals are subject to all applicable deadlines. Detailed information regarding the appeal process can be obtained from the Office of Financial Aid.

The standards set forth in this policy apply to all federal financial aid programs including grants, loans and work funds. These standards will be applied to any determination or certification of satisfactory progress standing.

USCA has an established Academic Forgiveness Policy. When reviewing satisfactory academic progress for a student who has been granted Academic Forgiveness in consultation with the Scholastic Standing and Petitions (SS&P) Committee, the Office of Financial Aid insures that the monitoring compliments the SS&P policy and is in compliance with Title IV satisfactory academic progress regulations.