Financial Aid: Operations and Auditing in the Future

Pat Barton
Clayton State University
New for 2013-2014

Satisfactory Academic Progress

*Indicates Related Handout

- Verification chart from FSA presentation
- Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose
- DCL GEN-13-09 Unusual Enrollment History Flag
- SAP example from FSA Handbook
New Verification Process

* Verification Tracking Groups VI – V5
  - Household Size & # in College not required if logical
  - SNAP & Child Support Paid only required if present on FAFSA/ISIR
  - No general provision for copy of tax return instead of tax transcript except as specified (not optional as in 1213)
  - Two new verifiable items
New Verification Items

- *Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose
  - Original government-issued ID AND
  - Signed statement of educational purpose OR
  - copy of that ID and the statement notarized (no copies – must store with original seal)

- High School Completion Status
  - High school diploma or transcript OR
  - GED certificate or transcript OR
  - transcript showing 2-year program completion (fully acceptable toward a bachelor’s degree) OR
  - or home school credential or transcript
New Flag

*Unusual Enrollment Flag

- ‘2’ requires review by institution
  - Review enrollment for prior three-year period to see if student received a Pell Grant at institution performing review
  - Yes – no further action required
  - No – treat as ‘3’
New Flag for 1314

- Unusual Enrollment Flag
  - ‘3’ requires review by institution
    - Review NSLDS and academic records to determine if credit received at each institution attended during three-year period where Pell was received
    - Yes – no further action required
    - No – must obtain statement and documentation from student explaining why s/he failed to earn credit and determine 1) if documentation supports reason(s), and 2) student did not enroll only to receive credit balance
New Flag for 1314

- Unusual Enrollment Flag
  - Documentation is sufficient – student may receive aid
  - Documentation not sufficient – student is no longer eligible for any title IV aid (not just Pell)
    - Must allow opportunity to question and appeal decision similar to SAP and professional judgment
    - Must provide information as to how to regain eligibility
Ability-To-Benefit

- Eliminated “ability-to-benefit” test or completion of hours to satisfy eligibility
- High school diploma, equivalent, or homeschool completion required
- Students enrolled before July 1, 2012 remain eligible
Satisfactory Academic Progress

- New 2013-2014: Must establish procedure to review and address additional information that may impact SAP.
- Example: Grade change after SAP has been reviewed
Minimum Requirements

- Quantitative (time-based) standard (completion ratio)
- Qualitative (grade-based) standard
  - May be escalating GPA for first 2 years
  - "C" required at end of 2\(^{nd}\) academic year
- Maximum timeframe (150\% of program/degree)
- Remedial coursework must be assessed for academic progress in some way
Satisfactory Academic Progress

- Minimum Requirements
  - Must count transfer credits that apply toward current major (minimum)
  - May not exclude courses remaining past add/drop, withdrawals, or certain hours attempted such as summer session
  - Must count all periods of enrollment even if no aid was received
Satisfactory Academic Progress

- **Timing of Evaluations**
  - **Each Payment Period** *(semester/quarter)*
    - Required for programs of one year or less
    - Allows use of Warning status
    - Must review at end of summer if attended
    - May allow appeal/probation
  - **Annual** *(once per academic year)*
    - Must correspond with end of a payment period
    - No Warning allowed
    - May allow appeal/probation
Warning

- Optional only if SAP reviewed each pay period
- Not meeting SAP standards
- May receive aid for one payment period only
- Must regain eligibility or become ineligible at end of payment period
- May be placed on Warning again after meeting SAP standards for at least one term
Satisfactory Academic Progress

- *Appeals
  - Optional for institution
  - Must be based on special circumstances
  - Must explain why s/he failed to meet standards
  - Must explain what has changed that will allow h/him to meet standards now
  - Must include **sufficient documentation** to support circumstances
Satisfactory Academic Progress

*Probation
- Approved appeal
- May be for one term with no academic plan
- May be for multiple terms with academic plan
- Academic plan must ensure student is able to meet SAP standards by a specific time or through successful program completion (no specific model)
- Student must appeal to change academic plan
Satisfactory Academic Progress

- **Policy**
  - Must be at least as strict as for those not receiving FSA funds and be applied consistently
  - Must specify both minimum quantitative and qualitative standards and when they are reviewed
  - Must explain how GPA/pace are affected by incompletes, withdrawals, repeated courses, and transfer credit
Satisfactory Academic Progress

Policy

- Must specify appeal process if appeals are allowed
- Must specify number of appeals allowed if limited
- Must explain how a student can regain eligibility (if appeals not allowed)
- NOTE: “Neither paying for one’s own classes nor sitting out for a term affects a student’s academic progress standing, so neither is sufficient to reestablish aid eligibility.” (FSA Handbook)
Questions