

NUMBER: 703

SUBJECT: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

EFFECTIVE: 2019-2020 FSA AWARDS

APPROVAL DATE OF LAST REVISION: JUNE 17, 2019

REGULATORY CITATIONS: CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34, PARTS 668.16(e), 668.32(f), 668.34  
FSA HANDBOOK VOLUME 1, CHAPTER 1; FSA ASSESSMENTS; HEA SECTION 484(c)  
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**703.0 – INTRODUCTION TO POLICY**

Every school participating in the Federal Student Aid (FSA) Programs (Pell Grant) must monitor its FSA recipients to ensure that students are meeting satisfactory academic progress standards. Federal regulations require that Bridgerland Technical College develop reasonable standards for measuring academic progress and that these standards be at least as strict as the institution's policy for students not receiving FSA. These standards must be applied to all students within each program and be consistent with requirements for completion of or graduation from the program. Students enrolled in programs whose standard exceeds policy must adhere to the higher standard required for that program.

Each year the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP) for financial aid recipients is reviewed and may be updated, changed or clarified at any time. In an ongoing effort to maintain the rules set forth by federal regulation, there may be changes within this policy pending the approval of the Bridgerland Board of Directors. Any changes may be in effect by practice by the Financial Aid Office and students may be required to comply to the changes. Contact the Financial Aid Office (FAO) for the most current policies for which students may be held to standard, that may differ from what is posted here.

**703.1 – POLICY**

Standards are published and reasonably applied for measuring whether an otherwise eligible student is making Satisfactory Academic Progress in his/her education program. Programs at the College are designed to provide for individualized training to meet the diverse learning needs and abilities of our students and to provide entry level skill training to any student who states a technical goal. Financial aid recipients must attend classes and complete competencies at a satisfactory rate in their chosen program of study and within a maximum timeframe in order to continue to receive FSA. Students must also maintain student conduct standards as outlined by the College.

All hours of enrollment in approved programs will be considered when evaluating SAP. Should a student change programs or pursue a second program of enrollment, experience a break between programs, or leave and return to the same program, a student's SAP status will continue unless the break exceeds two calendar years.

As defined by the Department of Education (ED) students must make satisfactory academic progress to be eligible for FSA. Although a school may establish its own SAP policy, the requirements must meet the minimum standards required by law and regulation. Standards include qualitative (*grade*) and quantitative (*pace*) measures. Students must maintain these standards throughout all periods of enrollment, even periods in which a student did not receive FSA.

**703.2 – MEASURING STANDARDS**

Bridgerland has set a maximum time - measured in clock hours completed - in which a student is expected to finish a program. Students must attend classes and demonstrate that they are working to progress through the program at a rate which allows completion of the program (both attended hours and progress hours) to occur within 1.5 times (not to exceed 150% of) the published length of the program in enrolled hours. Transfer hours are subtracted from program hours before the 1.5 times hours is calculated.

FSA is awarded in Payment Periods. Students must complete all attended hours and progress hours of a Payment Period before 150% of the scheduled hours for that period, and at or following the hours and weeks of instructional time associated with that period, to qualify for subsequent Payment Periods. For example, a student awarded a 450-hour Payment Period must be scheduled 450 hours, attend 450 hours, and complete 450 hours of progress by the student's 675<sup>th</sup> scheduled hour of enrollment.

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**703.3 – ATTENDANCE**

Just as showing up for work every day is important to an employer, Bridgerland expects regular attendance and punctuality as part of the students “hands on” training process. Attendance is monitored by the instructor and reported to the Financial Aid Office (FAO). The FAO pulls attendance reports immediately following the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month after each month of report. Students must work with their instructor to resolve any errors (including clock-in, clock-out errors) prior to the 5<sup>th</sup>. Hours attended are divided by the hours the student is scheduled each month. If the result meets the minimum required for the students program, the student is considered to have satisfactory attendance. For programs with no minimum required attendance, or a standard below 67%, students must attend – at the very least – 67% of their scheduled hours each month to be on track to complete the hours of their Payment Period within the 1.5 standard. A student’s enrollment will be terminated on the tenth day of consecutive absence.

**703.3.1 – LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is a temporary interruption of a student’s enrollment. If excessive absences are expected, a student may request an LOA. Students should visit with the FAO to understand how taking any leave may affect their financial aid. An LOA may be requested using the student portal (documents and forms) or at the Registration desk in Student Services. For more information, see the College’s full Leave of Absence policy found in Section 600.

**703.4 – ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

The College has established clock hours in which a student is expected to finish a program. Students must complete progress hours by monthly progression at a rate that will allow the student to complete the program within 1.5 times (time and a half) the scheduled hours of the program minus any transfer hours. Test scores, projects, demonstrations etc., are used to evaluate a student’s competency in each course. Partial registered course hour completion will be evaluated using competency benchmarks of 25%, 50%, and 75% competent completion of the course. At the completion of every course students will receive a final grade or rating using an A-F grade or 4-0 rating scale. Each program defines competency levels that must be met for certificate eligibility, which at a minimum must not be equal to an F or zero. Repeating courses, incompletes or withdrawing from courses, or taking longer than the hours determined for the course to complete it may affect student ability to maintain satisfactory academic progress as well as run the risk of lost payments, depleting financial aid funds and being responsible for educational expenses and charges not covered by financial aid in order to complete the program.

Academic progress is monitored by the instructor throughout each month of a student’s enrollment. Progress hours associated with competency completion benchmarks and completion of courses will be assigned and accurately recorded in the student information system in a timely manner, no later than the last school day of each month. The FAO pulls progress reports immediately following the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month after the month of the report from either the student information system or as reported by the program department head. Students must work with their instructor to resolve any reporting errors prior to the 5<sup>th</sup>. The total hours the student is scheduled to that point is divided by the total progress hours the student has completed to that point. If the result is 1.5 or less, or meets the minimum required for the students’ program if the program standard is stricter, the student is considered to have satisfactory academic progress.

**703.5 – STUDENT CONDUCT**

Students enrolled at the College accept the obligation to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner acceptable at an institution of higher learning. The College has established procedures that provide standards and fair treatment for its students. Students must comply with appropriate conduct conditions throughout their enrollment as outlined in College policy. Conditions may include maintaining ethics, honesty and timely payment of fees, and avoiding infractions such as cheating, excessive

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tardies, destruction of property, lack of cooperation, rude or discourteous behavior. Students not complying with such conditions may be dismissed at any time.

**703.6 – EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

Informal evaluations and official reviews of a student's attendance and academic progress will be conducted throughout the student's enrollment.

**703.6.1 – INFORMAL EVALUATION**

An informal evaluation of student attendance and academic progress will occur following the end of each month. At any time, a student is not meeting attendance or progress standards as defined, the student may be notified.

**703.6.2 – OFFICIAL REVIEW**

An official review of student attendance and academic progress will occur following the end of the student's FSA Payment Period. A student continues to be eligible for FSA payments so long as by the end of each Payment Period it is mathematically possible to complete the program within 150% of its length (or by the program's requirement if stricter). Failure to demonstrate this by the end of the Payment Period will result in the loss of payment for any subsequent Payment Period(s) and the student may be notified.

**703.7 – EXCEPTIONS, APPEALS, AND REESTABLISHING ELIGIBILITY**

**703.7.1** Students with disabilities are required to maintain SAP standards the same as all other students in the program. The American Disabilities Act (ADA) does not override these requirements. The college may offer resources to assist students in meeting standards, however, the requirements to maintain these standards to be eligible for FSA may not be removed.

**703.7.2** Students must complete all scheduled, attended, and progress hours of a Payment Period and within the maximum timeframe for that Payment Period before payments may be made and in order to qualify for payments of a subsequent Payment Period. If a student fails to successfully complete a Payment Period as described, payments of subsequent Payment Periods are forfeited. There are no exceptions or appeals.

**703.7.3** If by the end of a subsequent Payment Period, a student has successfully completed all scheduled, attended, and progress hours and within the maximum timeframe for program completion - for the subsequent Payment Period(s) and the prior Payment Period(s) – the student has reestablished FSA eligibility. The student will never receive payment for the forfeited subsequent Payment Period(s) including the Payment Period wherein eligibility is reestablished, but may qualify for payment of Payment Period(s) following the Payment Period wherein eligibility is reestablished.

**703.8 – AVAILABILITY OF MORE INFORMATION**

Information about the Colleges academic progress and attendance requirements and additional college policies mentioned here may be found in Section 600.

Additional information may be found in the Student Guide posted on the College's website or available in Student Services.

Visit the FAO at the College for further clarification.

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### **703.9 – DEFINITIONS**

**703.9.1 – Academic Year:** The academic year for all programs at the College is 900 clock hours and 30 weeks of instructional time which meets the minimum federal requirement. The academic year determines the period of time (Payment Period) for which FSA aid may be awarded and disbursed.

**703.9.2 – Attended hour:** A clock hour in which a student is physically present in college instructor-supervised activity associated with the completion of coursework within a program.

**703.9.3 – Award year:** Period of time from July 1 of one year through June 30 of the following year.

**703.9.4 – Clock hour:** Period of time consisting of a 50- to 60-minute class, lecture, or recitation in a 60-minute period; a 50- to 60-minute faculty-supervised laboratory, shop training, or internship in a 60-minute period.

**703.9.5 – Contracted hour:** Number of clock hours (by day) a student declares intent to attend and spend participating in program instructional activities. Contracted hour may also be referred to as an enrolled or scheduled hour.

**703.9.6 – Course hours:** Number of clock hours assigned to a specific course within a program. Once a student registers for a course, the student becomes an active participant in the course and tuition and fees are generated.

**703.9.7 – Enrolled hour:** Number of clock hours (by month) a student declares intent to attend and spend participating in program instructional activities. Enrolled hour may also be referred to as a contracted or scheduled hour.

**703.9.8 – Payment Period:** Period of time during which a student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, and is awarded and may receive FSA disbursements. Payment Periods are student specific and are defined by clock hours and weeks of instructional time as defined by regulation. A student must successfully complete one Payment Period to progress to the next Payment Period.

**703.9.9 – Program hours:** Total clock hours a program is designed for a student to spend participating in class or other instructional activities in order to complete a program of study preparing a student for employment.

**703.9.10 – Progress hour:** A clock hour for which a student has demonstrated successful completion of coursework associated with a course for which he or she is registered within his or her program. These hours are recorded in the student information system or as reported by program department head.

**703.9.11 – Satisfactory Academic Progress:** Achieved by attending classes and completing program competencies within a maximum time frame as required by law and regulation and defined by the College.

The students **rate of progress** (whether satisfactory or unsatisfactory) is determined using this calculation:  
$$\text{Scheduled hours} \div \text{Attended hours or Progress hours} = \% \text{ Rate}$$

**703.9.12 Scheduled hour:** Number of clock hours a student declares intent to attend and spend participating in program instructional activities and is expected to complete within a period of time. Typically scheduled hours are cumulative and assigned to a Payment Period. Scheduled hour may also be referred to as a contracted or enrolled hour.

**703.9.13 Successfully complete:** Passing coursework defined by clock hours, in which a student is scheduled, attends, and demonstrates progress hours as described. See definition of Satisfactory Academic Progress for more information.

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**703.9.14 – Weeks of instructional time:** As defined by regulation, programs must provide at least 600 clock hours of instruction offered during a minimum of 15 weeks. *In order to meet this definition maximum enrollment per week may not exceed 40 hours. Students enrolled full-time at the College (or 30 hours per week) complete program hours of instruction offered during the required number of weeks of instruction.*