

# **COVID-19 Financial Aid Policies**

## **Standards of Academic Progress (SAP)**

Based on the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), Pub. L. No. 116-136, and guidance provided by the US Department of Education (USDOE) on May 15, 2020 (updated on June 16, 2020), Berkeley College has adopted an Interim Satisfactory Academic Progress (34 CFR 668.34) policy of waiving “WF” and “WP” grades (occurring on or after March 12, 2020). Based on updated guidance, the College has adopted a somewhat different policy for students who withdraw from classes during the Spring 2020 semester and forward.

According to USDOE guidance dated May 15, 2020: “Section 3509 of the CARES Act allows institutions to exclude from the quantitative component (pace measurement) of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) attempted credits a student was unable to complete as a result of the COVID-19 national emergency. It is not necessary for a student to have filed an SAP appeal for an institution to exercise this flexibility. However, to exclude attempted credits from SAP, an institution must have reasonably determined that the student’s failure to complete those credits was the result of a COVID-19 related circumstance. Allowable circumstances include, but are not limited to, illness of the student or family member, need to become a caregiver or first responder, economic hardship, added work hours, loss of childcare, inability to continue with classes via distance education, inability to access Wi-Fi due to closed facilities...For example, the pace of a student who has completed 78 of 120 attempted hours is 65 percent (78/120), below what is necessary to be making SAP. However, if the 12 credits the student attempted but was unable to complete in (Winter) of 2020 are excluded due to a COVID-19 related circumstance, the pace becomes 72 percent (79/108) and the student is making SAP.”

Berkeley College collects student waiver requests via the Attestation eform. The eform must be submitted with documentation regarding COVID-19 impact for the semester in question. Based on June 16th guidance, the College has extended this policy through the end of the semester when the national emergency is canceled.

## **Attestation Eform Process**

The College sends all appropriate students an email that includes a link to an eform attestation. The attestation should be completed by the deadline indicated. Those past the deadline may or may not be considered for waivers. The eform must be accompanied by documentation that reflects how COVID-19 impacted the student’s ability to attend for that semester.

If the College denies a student’s eligibility for waiver, based on the guidelines from the US Department of Education referenced above, the student will be given the ability to appeal via the appeal committee’s email address. The committee’s determination is final.

Updated: Fall 2022