

SAP Appeal Personal Statement and Supporting Documentation Tip Sheet

All students at Columbus State Community College who receive federal financial aid must make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) toward completion of their degrees within a reasonable time period in accordance with regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education. If you've been placed on a financial aid suspension due to not meeting SAP, you have the option to appeal the suspension if you had extenuating circumstances which impacted your ability to be successful. This tip sheet is provided to assist you in writing the **Personal Statement** you will include with the SAP Appeal form as well as to provide examples of documents that meet the requirements for **Supporting Documentation** verifying the extenuating circumstances you describe in your statement.

If you choose to submit an appeal for **Failure to Meet Grade Point Average (GPA) and/or Completion Rate** or for **Coursework Exceeding Maximum Credit Hours (150%)** you must submit the appropriate form ([GPA and/or Completion Rate](#) OR [Exceeding Maximum Credit Hours \(150%\)](#)) and ALL items listed on the form. ***Please note that incomplete appeal forms will be DENIED.***

If there are questions about these instructions or the appeal process, email us at finaid@csc.edu, call 614-287-5353, use the live Chat option on our [webpage](#), or visit [Student Central](#) in Madison Hall.

Extenuating Circumstances

Extenuating or mitigating circumstances are defined as unanticipated and unavoidable events or situations beyond a student's control that prevented them from successfully completing courses or meeting the terms of a prior approved appeal. Examples of extenuating circumstances include (but are not limited to):

- Serious personal illness, accident, injury, or mental health struggles;
- Death, accident, or serious illness of immediate family member;
- Involuntary call to active military duty;
- Domestic violence or other legal issues; or
- Exceeded time frame for completing credits required for program (150%).

Circumstances NOT Considered Extenuating

Examples of NON-extenuating circumstances for the purpose of appealing financial aid suspension include (but are not limited to):

- Typical adjustment to college life and academics, lack of awareness of withdrawal policies or requirements for satisfactory academic progress, or withdrawal to avoid a failing grade;
- Difficulty with or unreliable transportation;
- Competing demands such as known responsibilities associated with employment and/or family care; or
- Inability to self-pay for classes.

Writing the Personal Statement

The student's Personal Statement must include a detailed explanation of **what happened** during the semester (or semesters) they had poor performance and **what has changed** to allow the student to achieve and maintain academic progress moving forward. The Personal Statement should also include an **explanation of the Supporting Documentation** they will attach to the Appeal form. The statement needs to be specific, including dates of events that occurred during the period of enrollment.

What Happened? Explain why you were unable to maintain satisfactory progress.

- Explain what the problem was and when it occurred, including the semester(s)
- and courses in which the student was enrolled.
- Describe how long the problem lasted.
- Explain how the problem affected your ability to complete your coursework.

What Has Changed?

- How has the problem been resolved?
- What corrective measures have you taken to prevent the problem from reoccurring?
- What is your plan for regaining and maintaining satisfactory academic progress?

Explain Your Supporting Documentation Explain the documents you are attaching to your appeal form to verify the extenuating circumstances you described. This can be a list of the items.

Examples of Supporting Documents

- Medical or hospital record containing student's name and date of service; signed and dated letter from physician or counselor on official letterhead indicating the dates you were under their care, including a release to return to college
- Accident report; police record; court documents
- Copy of a death certificate, obituary, or funeral notice of immediate family member
- Signed and dated letter from a neutral third-party that has detailed knowledge of your extenuating circumstances. **Note: neutral third-party does not include family and close friends.**

Example Personal Statement

Below is an example of a Personal Statement from a student involved in an accident. Your statement must be specific to **your own situation** and the Supporting Documentation you submit will be based on and verify the circumstances you describe.

Student Name

Date

I wish to appeal my financial aid suspension due to not meeting SAP requirements during the Spring 2021 semester. I failed my BIO 2301 and PSY 2340 classes. I was involved in a car accident on March 9, 2021 and was seriously injured. I was in the hospital and on bedrest for two weeks for a broken leg. After I was released from the hospital, I needed to have physical therapy every day for six weeks. Because of these factors, I was unable to complete my work for the rest of the semester. Before the accident I was performing well in my classes.

My leg has now healed, and I am confident that I can return to college without any issues. I intend to register and repeat the coursework in the classes that I failed. I met with my academic advisor and have a solid plan to finish my degree. I also set up times to meet with a tutor.

I am attaching the following documents to the appeal form to verify the car accident, my hospital stay, my physical therapy, and my ability to return to school:

- *An accident report from the police*
- *Hospital record showing the dates I was admitted and released*
- *A statement from my physical therapist showing my dates of physical therapy*
- *A statement from my doctor stating I am able to return to school*

Thank you for considering my request,

Student Signature