

**SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE****SUBJECT: Retention and Progression Standards****EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2000; Revised September 4, 2013; Revised February 18, 2016; Revised August 19, 2021; Revised October 11, 2021; September 6, 2024**

Consistent with the standards of good academic practice and in compliance with Tennessee Board of Regents (“TBR”) Policy 2.03.01.01, Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”) reviews the academic standing and progress of students at the close of each semester. The minimum requirements for good standing, progression, and graduation are described herein.

**I. Grade Point Average (“GPA”)**

A. The following quality point system will be used to determine a student’s GPA:

For each credit hour of A:	4 quality points
For each credit hour of B:	3 quality points
For each credit hour of C:	2 quality points
For each credit hour of D:	1 quality point
For each credit hour of F:	0 quality point
For each credit hour of FA:	0 quality point

B. GPA is determined by dividing the total number of quality points earned by the total number of credit hours that a student attempted, with the exception of credit hours in courses from which the student withdraws in good standing or for courses in which the student receives grades such as pass/fail and which are not considered when determining GPA. The following grades are not used in calculating GPA: W, I, N, S, P, U, and AU. These grades are described in Southwest Policy 2:00:00:00/23, Grading System.

C. Classifications of GPA

1. Institution GPA includes only college-level credits from Southwest.
2. Institution combined GPA includes college-level and developmental/learning support credits from Southwest.
3. Transfer GPA includes only college-level transfer credits.
4. Transfer combined GPA includes college-level and developmental/learning support transfer credits.
5. Overall GPA includes only college-level credits from Southwest and transfer credits.
6. Overall Combined GPA includes college-level and developmental credits from

Southwest and transfer credits.

The following uses are based on each calculation:

- The institution GPA will be used in calculating the required GPA for graduation.
- The institution GPA will be used in determining graduation honors.
- The institution GPA will be used in determining term honors.
- The institution combined GPA will be used in determining suspension and probation.
- The overall combined GPA will be used in determining all financial aid eligibility.
- The institution combined GPA will be used in determining athletic eligibility.

## **II. Repeated Courses**

- A. A student may repeat a course regardless of the grade received, however, permission from the Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee is required to repeat a course in which the student earned an “A” or “B” grade. No permission is needed when repeating a course required for entry into a Southwest program.
- B. In computing a student’s GPA, only the last grade earned in a repeated course will be used (*even if the last grade is lower than a previously received grade*). However, with courses repeated more than twice (three (3) attempts), the grades in the third and subsequent attempts will be used in calculating the quality point average.

## **III. Retention Standards**

### **A. Good Standing**

In order to be eligible for continued enrollment in good standing and to progress toward degree completion, a student must earn a minimum institution combined GPA of 2.0.

**B. Academic Probation**

A student whose institution combined GPA falls below 2.0 will be placed on academic probation at the end of the term of enrollment.

**C. Academic Suspension**

A student who has been placed on academic probation and who, by the end of the probationary term, has failed to attain either a minimum 2.0 institution combined GPA or a minimum GPA of 2.0 for that term will be suspended for one (1) full term. Summer terms will not be counted as a full term of suspension. For example, a student suspended spring term may not enroll summer or fall. After the period of suspension, the student may re-enroll.

**IV. Appeal of Academic Suspension**

A student who has extenuating circumstances may appeal the academic suspension and be readmitted upon the recommendation of the Academic Appeal Committee.

**V. Academic Fresh Start**

"Academic Fresh Start" is a plan of academic forgiveness that allows undergraduate students who have experienced academic difficulty to make a clean start upon returning to the College after an extended absence. The Academic Fresh Start allows an eligible student to resume study without being penalized for past unsatisfactory scholarship. It signals the initiation of a new GPA to be used for determining academic standing.

- A. Readmitted students who were formally enrolled in Southwest, as well as transfer students who meet Southwest requirements for admission and who have been separated from all institutions of higher education for a minimum of four (4) years are eligible for Academic Fresh Start.
- B. Southwest policies governing the readmission of former students and admission of transfer students will comply with TBR Policy 2.03.00.00, Admissions. This policy requires that a transfer applicant's GPA for transferable courses must be at least equal to that which Southwest requires for the readmission of its students.
- C. Pursuant to TBR Policy 2.03.00.00, applicants who do not meet Southwest's standards may be admitted on academic probation or suspension.
- D. Student Requirements
  - 1. Separation from all collegiate institutions for at least four (4) years.

2. A student may at any time after readmission or admission as a degree-seeking student, file a formal application with the Admissions and Records office requesting an Academic Fresh Start and describing an academic plan.

E. Terms of an Academic Fresh Start

1. Once a student satisfies the requirements stated above, Southwest may grant an Academic Fresh Start. A student will be granted an Academic Fresh Start only once.
2. A student's permanent record will remain a record of all work, however:
  - a. Courses taken and previously failed will be excluded from the calculation of GPA.
  - b. Courses with a D grade will also be excluded from the calculation when a grade of C or better is required in a student's current major.
  - c. GPA and credit hours will reflect courses for which passing grades were earned and retained.
  - d. Retained grades will be calculated in the Fresh Start GPA.
  - e. Courses with D or F grades must be repeated at Southwest when a higher grade is required in a student's current major. All remaining courses for the current degree objectives must be completed at Southwest.
  - f. The application of retained credit toward degree requirements will be determined by the requirements currently in effect at the time the academic renewal status is conferred on a student. Specific program regulations must also be met.
  - g. Previously satisfied Assessment and Placement Program (COMPASS) requirements will not be forfeited.
3. Upon degree admission, Fresh Start applicants who did not satisfy COMPASS requirements at the time of previous enrollment and whose academic plan includes completion of a college-level English or Mathematics course must meet current Academic Assessment and Placement Program (COMPASS) requirements regarding enrollment in college English and Mathematics courses.
4. A student's transcript will note that the Fresh Start was made and the date of the Fresh Start.
5. A student will apply for a Fresh Start with the understanding that all TBR institutions honor Fresh Start provisions granted at another TBR institution. A

student should also signify understanding that non-TBR institutions may not accept the GPA as it is calculated with the Fresh Start.

6. This policy is independent of financial aid regulations. Financial aid requirements at the time of application will apply. Therefore, Fresh Start applicants should check with their financial aid counselor for guidance.

## VI. Drop and Withdrawal Standards

- A. During the registration period, students may make adjustments in their schedules through the process of adding and/or dropping courses. The last date to add a course each term is published on the College's academic calendar. Each term, the last date to withdraw from a course with the grade of "W" is listed on the College's academic calendar. After that date, students may be assigned the grade of "F" or "FA".
- B. Should extenuating circumstances occur after the last date to withdraw and receive a "W," a student may appeal to the Registrar or designee. Extenuating circumstances include documentable conditions such as hospitalization, incarceration, and death in the immediate family (parent, spouse, sibling, or child).
- C. Any student who stops attending class without officially dropping or withdrawing will be assigned the grade of "FA."

## VII. Graduation Standards

A minimum institution GPA of 2.0 is required to achieve a certificate or associate degree. The institution GPA is used to determine graduation honors and term honors.

### Responsible

Source of Policy: Academic Affairs

Administrator: VP of Academic Affairs

TBR Policy Reference: 2.03.01.01; 2.03.00.00

Related Policy: 2:00:00:00/23

TBR Guideline Reference: n/a

Approved:   
President

Date: September 6, 2024