



# **A Guide to Determining Compliance with the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

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**Banner Financial Aid System  
June 2005**

## **Introduction**

In March 2005 the Connecticut Community Colleges approved a uniform [academic progress policy](#) for all students receiving student financial aid at all of the 12 community colleges. This standard is effective for periods of enrollment beginning with the fall 2005 semester. The common policy states that a student receiving Federal Title IV financial aid or other financial aid directly administered or certified by the college must maintain satisfactory academic progress towards the completion of a certificate or degree program of study. Satisfactory academic progress for financial aid recipients is measured by both quantitative and qualitative standards and is an assessment of a student's cumulative academic record at the college. Users should familiarize themselves with the new policy and can obtain the policy from the [financial aid services website](#).

The purpose of this Guide is to familiarize users of the Banner Financial Aid System with the procedures used by the system to determine the compliance of financial aid students with the new satisfactory academic progress standard. The Guide provides an overview of the processes used by the system to assist college staff in their compliance efforts. Users may also want to review a PowerPoint presentation, [NEW SAP Development](#), available on the financial aid services website.

## **The Inclusive GPA**

To ensure the effectiveness of the common academic progress policy for the 12 community colleges, we first had to develop a common GPA calculation. In the spring of 2005, we developed an "Inclusive GPA" for all students in the Banner system. This GPA calculation methodology effectively treats developmental courses, transfer credits, "fresh start" benefits, and other academic policies uniformly among the community colleges. The common academic progress policy for financial aid recipients uses this Inclusive GPA in all compliance determinations. We have modified all Banner financial aid forms and reports to use the Inclusive GPA calculation. In particular, you can use the Summary Academic History Inquiry Form (RSIHIST) to view a student's Inclusive GPA. Please note that at some colleges the Inclusive GPA used for financial aid compliance efforts will differ from the "Overall GPA" calculation used by the college for graduation and academic honors determinations. This is because college academic progress policies may differ whereas our determination of academic progress for financial aid recipients is uniform.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Codes

Essential to your understanding of the academic progress determination efforts of the Banner system is your knowledge of the various Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) codes assigned to each student's financial aid record. As you may know, academic progress compliance is determined for each term of a student's attendance at the college, authorizes or prevents packaging and/or disbursement of financial aid, and is recorded on the student's financial aid record. Users can view the academic progress code assigned to a student for a particular term on the Satisfactory Academic Progress window of the Applicant Status Form (ROASTAT).

The SAP Code structure in Banner is composed of 9 codes. There are 2 System Default Codes, 5 System Calculated Codes, and 2 Manual Codes.

The 2 System Default Codes are **NOTREV** (Not Reviewed) and **EXCPTN** (Exception Status). Both codes are maintained as system default codes on the Institution Options Form (ROAINST). **NOTREV** is the initial SAP status assigned to all financial aid records when created either by the dataload process or manually by a user. The **NOTREV** code prevents all packaging and disbursement of financial aid. The **NOTREV** status ensures that all applicants will undergo a SAP determination and that the resulting calculation of SAP compliance will be entered on the student's financial aid record **before** financial aid is provided to the applicant. The **EXCPTN** code is the default code assigned by Banner when the system is unable to calculate a SAP status for the student. **EXCPTN** prevents all financial aid from being packaged or disbursed to the student. Although rarely assigned, the **EXCPTN** code indicates follow-up by the financial aid staff is necessary.

Through a combination of rules and programs, Banner also determines a student's compliance with the academic progress standard and assigns one of 5 system calculated SAP codes to the student's record. These 5 system calculated SAP codes are: **NOHIST** (No Academic History at Your College), **MAXHRS** (Maximum Hours Reached), **SATPRG** (Satisfactory Progress), **PROB** (Probation), **NOTSAP** (Unsatisfactory Progress).

- **NOHIST** is assigned when Banner determines the student has not attempted any courses at your college. This code allows for the packaging and disbursement of financial aid.
- **MAXHRS** is assigned when Banner determines the student has attempted 150% of the program credits for the program in which s/he is currently enrolled. The code prevents the packaging and disbursement of financial aid.
- **SATPRG** is assigned when Banner determines the student is in compliance with the academic progress policy. The code allows for the packaging and disbursement of financial aid.

- **PROB** is assigned when Banner determines the student fails to comply with the academic progress policy **but** has yet to receive and use a probation term. This code allows for the packaging and disbursement of financial aid.
- **NOTSAP** is assigned by Banner when a student does not comply with the academic progress standard **and** the student has already used a probation term. This code prevents all packaging and disbursement of financial aid.

Only the Banner system can insert one of the system calculated codes in a student record. Users can assign 2 SAP codes manually when appropriate and dependent upon a professional judgment decision by the aid administrator. The 2 manually assigned codes available to users are: **WAIVER** (Waiver/Professional Judgement) and **INTAID** (Institutional Aid Only). Financial aid staff can use the WAIVER code on an individual basis when overriding the Banner SAP calculation. This code will allow for the packaging and disbursement of financial aid. The INTAID code is also assigned on an individual basis and allows for the packaging and disbursement of only financial aid identified as from an institutional aid fund source. Users must be sure to lock the SAP code on the ROASTAT form as subsequent SAP assignment activity for that term will override the manual code. Also be aware that your professional judgement determination and manual code assignment is only effective for the one term. For subsequent terms, the SAP assignment process will assign a system calculated code to the student's record. Users will want to develop a manual system for the tracking of student academic progress when they have determined an individual student is not subject to the system's academic progress policy.

## **SAP Code Assignment Process**

Integral to the determination of academic progress is Banner's assignment of one of the 5 system calculated codes to a student's financial aid record. We have developed a customized SAP Assignment Process, **RWPSAPR**, that automatically batch calculates the appropriate SAP status code based upon the student's compliance with the academic progress standard. RWPSAPR calculates the SAP code for each student with a financial aid record in the Award Year. Users can invoke the RWPSAPR process through the job submission process, GJAPCTL. RWPSAPR has only 1 parameter – "Calculate SAP For This Term" – users merely indicate the term for which they want to determine the student's SAP code.

If users prefer to invoke the SAP Code Assignment Process individually for a student, s/he can use the ROAIMMP form (Immediate Process form) which has also been redesigned to accommodate the new SAP calculation.

## Reports

Users may review the results of the SAP Code assignment process in numerous ways.

- You can view the student's SAP status for the current term as well as former terms on the Satisfactory Academic Progress window of the Applicant Status form (ROASTAT).
- You can also view the SAP group assignments and the number of students assigned to the various groups for a term by using the Group Inquiry form (ROIGRPI).
- We have modified the Satisfactory Academic Progress Report (RWRXS01) to reflect the use of the Inclusive GPA data. We have also added a more descriptive header and a "Previous SAP" column to the report.
- The SAP Assignment Process (RWPSAPR) also produces a version of the SAP Report as an output document for your immediate viewing.
- Both the RWPSAPR and the RWRXS01 reports are produced in the customary PDF versions as well as a standard CSV format for your use with Excel and other applications.

## Banner Self-Service

As always, students can view their current SAP status on the web by logging into the secure self-service area of **Online**. As users make changes in Banner to a student's SAP status for a term – via batch processing (RWPSAPR), immediate processing (ROAIMMP), or manually – students can view the changes immediately in the self-service product.

In addition, hyperlinks on various self-service web pages direct students to the common academic progress policy. A link there brings students to the appeal policy in effect for their specific college. If the college has provided us with an appeal form, we also direct the students to the appeal form and present it to the students in PDF format. The students accordingly can fill in the form online and print it out for submission to the financial aid office. Users can update the college appeal process by modifying the x\_sapinfo letter form on the custom RWAPARA form in Banner. We maintain the PDF version of the appeal document (if any) on the financial aid services website. If you want any modifications to this document, merely provide a new form in Word format to User Support.

# Communication with Students

Integral to your communications with students is the objective to refer students to the secure area of the Banner self-service product so they can always view their current academic progress standing as well as the relevant academic progress policy and appeal procedures. Your communication efforts should address this gateway for student access whether your correspondence is in electronic or paper format.

In order to effectively communicate electronically with students, you must set-up SAP email codes and notifications within Banner on RWV PARA and RWAPARA. If you have not already done so, on RWV PARA you must establish a code (X\_EMAILSAP) for SAP e-mail. This code must have a type indicator - EMAILSAP. On RWAPARA, you must establish text for the X\_EMAILSAP notification that you will e-mail to students directing them to the self-service product, **ONLINE**. Please remember that this notification should not contain any personal student information.

**Be sure to review all communications that you have defined on RWAPARA for all SAP codes and make revisions as needed**

## **RWRXL01 – Financial Aid Batch Letter Process**

Depending upon the parameters you use when you run **RWRXL01**, you can communicate SAP evaluations to your students in either a “**broadcast**” communication or a “**specific**” communication. These methods are explained below.

- a. “**Broadcast**” **Communication** - Using these parameters, all students for whom you have run the SAP Assignment Process, **RWPSAPR**, and have not yet been notified will receive either a paper letter or an e-mail notification that their academic progress has been evaluated. The Banner system will automatically determine whether to produce a paper letter or e-mail notification for the student.

Parameter	01 - Aid Year	enter aid year
	02 - Letter Type	S (Sap)
	03 blank for all	blank for all
	04 - left margin	.5
	05 - n/a for SAP	blank
	06 - SAP Term	enter SAP term code
	07 - SAP Code	blank to include all
	08 - Paper Letter	N (no)

b. **“Specific” Communication** - This enhanced method of SAP communication is designed to be used after running the “broadcast” method and requires the use of precise parameters as described below. This method allows you to send **one** SAP paper letter to each student who was sent an e-mail notification via the “broadcast” method even if s/he has already received a SAP e-mail notification. This process will over-ride an e-mail SAP notification in RUAMAIL and produce a paper SAP letter. To run the RWRXL01 “specific” communication, use the following parameters:

Parameter	01 - Aid Year	enter aid year
	02 - Letter Type	S (Sap)
	03 - blank for all	blank for all
	04 - left margin	.5
	05 - n/a for SAP	blank
	06 - SAP Term	enter SAP term code
	* 07 - SAP Code	<b>you must enter a valid SAP code</b>
	* 08 - Paper Letter	<b>Y (yes) this parameter must be set to (Y)</b>

\* **Parameter 07** – Use SAP codes PROB, MAXHRS, NOTSAP. Be sure you have letters for each code defined in Banner on RWAPARA.

\* **Parameter 08** - In order to produce papers letters, this parameter must be entered as “Y”.

**Recommendation:** Each time you run the SAP Assignment Process, **RWPSAPR**, and want to communicate with your students, we recommend you first run RWRXL01 using the **“Broadcast”** communication method with the parameters defined above. This will send either an e-mail notification or paper letter to each student for whom you have made a SAP evaluation. RUAMAIL will be updated to show that the communication was sent to the student.

As a follow-up, you then may want to run RWRXL01 again, this time using the **“Specific”** communication method with the parameters defined above. This enhancement will produce a paper letter for those students who previously received a SAP e-mail notification. RUAMAIL will be updated to show that a paper letter was generated for the student.

## **Business Practices**

As you know, we now assign a **NOTREV** (Not Reviewed) SAP status code to all student financial aid records upon dataload or manual creation. The NOTREV code prevents the packaging and disbursement of financial aid to the student. Since in the community college environment, users import financial aid records throughout the aid year, users must continually evaluate student progress to ensure compliance with the system's academic progress policy. Accordingly, users will need to review their office business practices relevant to the operation of the SAP Code Assignment Process (RWPSAPR). Some suggestions for your review:

- Associate RWPSAPR with the dataload process. After dataload activity runs in the evening, run RWPSAPR the next morning to assign each student a SAP status code;
- Associate RWPSAPR with the packaging process. Before running the packaging program, run RWPSAPR to assign a SAP status code to each student;
- Run a SAP Report (RWRXS01) weekly to determine the number of NOTREV SAP code students for your college. Run either RWPSAPR or ROAIMMP to assign SAP status codes to student records.

Depending upon the application processing cycle and your office business practices, users will want to exert controls over the SAP Code Assignment Process (RWPSAPR) to ensure that they are effectively evaluating student academic progress. Users must be cognizant of the academic calendar and procedures at their college to ensure student academic records are complete before invoking the RWPSAPR process for a particular term.

## **User Support**

For assistance with this Guide or any aspect of the academic progress compliance process, please contact User Support at [SYS-BannerFinAidHelp@commnet.edu](mailto:SYS-BannerFinAidHelp@commnet.edu) or at 860.244.7802.