INTRODUCTION

Section 484 (Subpart c, Section 668.16(e)) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) as amended requires that a student be maintaining satisfactory progress in the course of study s/he is pursuing according to the practices and standards of the institution in which s/he is enrolled in order to receive financial aid under the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of the HEA. These programs include the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Work-Study, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, and the Federal Family Education Loan Program (Federal Stafford Loans (subsidized and unsubsidized), and Federal PLUS loans for parents). The establishment, publication, and application of reasonable standards for measuring students' progress is currently a regulatory requirement for all institutions participating in these programs.

Asnuntuck Community College, in an attempt to meet the self-regulation initiatives proposed by the Higher Education Act and the United States Department of Education, has formulated the following standard of satisfactory academic progress to maintain student financial aid eligibility. This standard is designed for all students receiving any type of student financial assistance either provided or administered by the College. This standard has been developed in conjunction with recommendations of the American Council on Education and self-regulatory guidelines proposed by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

INSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES

A student participating in the student financial aid program at the College must be a regularly enrolled student involved in a recognized program of study leading either to an Associates of Arts Degree, Associates of Sciences Degree, or a Certificate. The program
of study chosen by the student shall be designated as the educational objective of the student and satisfactory progress towards this educational objective shall determine compliance with the standard.

**Associates Degree Candidates/Certificate Candidates**

Students whose educational objective is an associates degree or certificate in one of the aid eligible programs of study shall be subject to the following conditions:

1. At the time of entry into the College, each student must designate a specific program of study. This associates degree or certificate program will remain the student's educational objective throughout his/her tenure at the College.

2. During the student's first regularly enrolled semester at the College, s/he must arrange with the Director of Student Services and his staff to have evaluated all previous academic work completed at other postsecondary institutions and have such credit as may be applicable applied to the student's chosen course of study.

3. To accommodate educational exploration, career transitions, differing priorities and plans, each student will be allowed to change his/her degree or certificate status provided this change will not extend the time period provided for in these standards. Any programmatic change that will exceed the allowed period will be at the student's expense unless a well-documented exception is requested by the student and granted by the Director. If a student does transfer to a revised degree or certificate program, all credits earned at the College or resulting from transfer evaluation must be applied if possible toward the revised program.

4. Each student will be provided the opportunity to complete the designated program of study and be certified for graduation within the time periods described later in this statement. Dual degrees in appropriate subject areas will be permitted provided such a program of study has been previously designated by the student and such a program is completed within the allowed time period.

5. During the student's tenure at the College, s/he will be allowed to pursue those credit-bearing courses and subject areas which are in line with the proposed educational objective. Extraneous courses which cannot be credited to the degree
or certificate program are not sufficient to meet this requirement. Specifically, credit-bearing courses applying to the degree or certificate program and of the following types are permitted: repeat courses previously not completed successfully, classroom instruction, independent study, directed study, special topics, internships, externships, and other field work experiences. Those not permitted unless at the student's expense and not applicable for student assistance benefits are the following: challenge exams, life experience credit, testing/evaluation of the College Entrance Examination Board, testing/evaluation of the College Level Examination Program, any non-credit or special programs designed for remediation purposes, audited courses, and repeat of courses previously completed successfully.

6. Satisfactory academic progress guidelines will apply equally to all candidates enrolled in either an associates degree or certificate program of study at the College. Due to the non-traditional nature of the student body, differences will be recognized for certain categories of students as follows: (A) Students enrolled in a program of study on a full-time basis (12 or more credits per semester); (B) Students enrolled on a three-quarter time basis (9-11 credits per semester); and (C) Students enrolled on a half-time basis (6-8 credits per semester).

Quantitative Measurement of Student Progress/
Allowed Time Period for Completion of the Associates Degree

It is expected that a student enrolled in an associates degree program shall be able to complete his/her educational objectives in accordance with the time frame established.

1. A full-time student (minimum 12 credits per semester) is expected to complete his/her program of study in a four-year academic period (eight semesters).
2. A student enrolled on a three-quarter time basis (9-11 credits per semester) will be required to complete his/her program of study in five years (ten semesters).
3. A student enrolled on at least a half-time basis (6-8 credits per semester) will be required to complete his/her program of study in a seven and one-half year academic period (fifteen semesters of study).
4. A part-time student (less than 6 credits) is not required to adhere to an established time frame as outlined earlier. S/he will be required to complete two-thirds (2/3) of all attempted credits.
These time frames correspond to semesters of enrollment and need not be consecutive semesters. These time frames are also maximum standards. Students may, of course, be certified for graduation at an earlier period.

**Quantitative Measurement of Student Progress/**
**Allowed Time Period for Completion of a Certificate Program of Study**

For a student enrolled in a certificate program of study, it is expected that s/he shall be able to complete his/her educational objective within the time frame established below:

1. A full-time student is expected to complete the certificate program in a two-year academic period (four semesters).
2. A student enrolled on a three-quarter time basis is expected to complete his/her certificate program in a two and one-half year academic period (five semesters).
3. A student enrolled on at least a half-time basis (minimum 6 credits per semester) is expected to complete his/her program of study in a four-year academic period (eight semesters).
4. A student enrolled on a part-time basis in a certificate program is to meet the same requirements as a part-time student enrolled in an associates degree program.
5. A student completing a certificate program and intending to continue with a related degree program is required to comply with all conditions (including the time period requirement) governing the associate degree candidate.

**Review of and Changes in Enrollment Status/Quantitative Measurement**

For all students, student status (in terms of full-time, three-quarter time, half-time, part-time) will be determined for each semester of student enrollment. This determination will be made at the conclusion of the traditional two-week add/drop period utilized for the student refund policy. In this manner, enrollment status for the term will be determined based upon the same rule the College uses to determine enrollment status for payment purposes for Title IV aid. Any changes in student status must be reported to the Office of the Registrar.

Satisfactory progress determinations in accordance with the imposed time limitations for successful completion of the educational objectives will be monitored and reviewed by the
aid office. Appropriate calculation and measurements of progress will reference varying student status in relation to the time period limitations.

Because a student may change his/her enrollment status from time to time, the College may avoid using an average of the several maximum time frames by simply using 2/3 of all attempted credits in order to determine whether such a student has completed the required amount of work. For example the College has a maximum time frame of four academic years for full-time students and seven and one-half academic years for half-time students. A student at the College may enroll full-time in the first semester and half-time in the second semester. At the end of the College’s increment (one academic year), it must add the number of credits for full-time semester (12) to the number for the half-time semester (6) and multiply by 67% (2/3). And, therefore, at the end of one academic year, the student must have completed 12 + 6 = 18 * .67 = 12 credits toward the objective. In addition, the student’s progress must be measured qualitatively, and the student’s cumulative grade point average at the end of one increment must be greater than or equal to that specified in the guidelines as a minimum level for the academic year derived from the greater enrollment status for that increment (1.5 in this example).

For the second academic year, the College simply adds the total number of all credits attempted up to this point and multiplies by .67 to determine the number of credits. The result is the number of credits to be completed by the end of that second academic year. The required number of credits to be completed by the end of each successive academic year is calculated similarly.

**Academic Standard Requirements/Qualitative Measurement**

In addition to the time period limitations explained earlier in this statement, there exist academic standard requirements that must also be met to maintain eligibility for Title IV student assistance.

1. All enrolled students will be required to meet the minimum grade point averages as stated according to his/her enrollment status and program of study.

The minimum grade point average to be attained, as indicated on the accompanying chart, is determined through the successful completion of credit-bearing courses.
Grades of A, B, C, D, or P (Pass) are considered. Grades of N (No basis for grade), W (Withdrawal from course), and F (Failure) indicate non-completion of the course. A grade of I (Incomplete in the course as assigned by the instructor) will be evaluated upon the student's final grade in the respective course. A student failing to comply with the quantitative measurements of student progress and having incomplete (I) grades will be provided an opportunity to complete such work that will assist him/her in complying with the academic progress requirements.

The 2.0 grade point average is required for graduation from all degree and certificate programs. The grades of N, W, P, and I will not be utilized in the calculation of the grade point average. PLEASE REFER TO THE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS CHART (attached).

Probationary Period

According to federal regulations, a student enrolled at the College must be making satisfactory progress before Title IV aid will be awarded, whether or not the student was receiving financial aid during the period of prior enrollment.

In light of this regulation and the part-time nature of many students at Asnuntuck, a probationary period of one semester is in effect with this policy. Any student who does not meet the institution's criteria may still be considered to be making satisfactory academic progress and may be entitled to receive Title IV aid if the aid office determines that mitigating circumstances exist.

Some of the individual mitigating circumstances we will look at in determining the probationary period include:

1) Personal circumstances—illness, employment, marital change, etc;
2) Changes in academic or personal objectives; and,
3) Student's enrollment — evaluation of previous course work, the lapse of time in an academic setting, or duration of previous enrollment.

The determination of probationary status will be made in writing to a student. A copy of such correspondence will also be kept in the student's permanent aid file. A student
denied probationary status may appeal this finding in accordance with the Appeals Process explained later in this statement.

**Reinstatement or Dismissal from Probation**

At the conclusion of the semester's probationary period, the student's academic record will be reviewed to determine compliance with this statement of satisfactory academic progress. If the student has complied with this statement, his/her continuance on Title IV aid will be accorded with written notification. If such compliance is not made, the student will be so informed. S/he may then choose to utilize the Appeal Process.

**The Review Process**

As called for in the guidelines, the aid office will regularly review the satisfactory academic progress of each student aid recipient. A record of the review and a summary of the student's academic record will be maintained in the financial aid office.

A formal evaluation of each student's academic record to assure that he/she is making satisfactory academic progress will be conducted at the conclusion of each semester. At this time, an appraisal will be given the qualitative (grade point average) and the quantitative (number of credits earned) minimum measures as outlined in this policy. A record of the review and a summary of the student's academic record will be maintained in the financial aid office.

In addition, in order to comply with particular program requirements the aid office will ascertain before each disbursement that a student is eligible for payment according to the College's satisfactory progress standards.

If, in its review, the aid office finds a student in non-compliance with the standards, we will inform the affected student in writing of our decision. Similar correspondence will be directed to the appropriate agencies/institutions providing student assistance to the affected student. At this time the student is to be informed that s/he will be denied the benefit of any additional student assistance for any terms of enrollment following the conclusion of the semester period resulting in the findings of non-compliance with the standards.
The Appeal Process

A student found not in compliance with the satisfactory academic progress requirements and thus denied the availability of student assistance for subsequent periods of enrollment is allowed ten (10) days from the receipt of his/her notification to submit a written statement of appeal to the Director of Student Financial Aid Services.

The student's statement must of necessity be specific and expressly concern itself to the reasons surrounding the non-compliance with the satisfactory progress requirements. In addition, the appeal must be based specifically on one or more of the conditions cited below:

A) Prolonged illness or disability of the student's spouse, parent, dependent child, or other immediate family member necessitating the student's care;
B) Prolonged anxiety and/or mental anguish concerning marital difficulties, separation, or divorce of either student or student's parents or other such traumatic life crises;
C) Prolonged difficulties caused by the student's outside employment, including but not limited to excessive demands, hours, stress, travel, relocation, and so forth; or
D) Prolonged personal difficulties such as lack of transportation, loss of social service benefits, employment, and so forth.

In each instance the affected student will be asked to demonstrate how such circumstances specifically denied him/her the opportunity to meet the satisfactory progress requirements for the period in question.

Within thirty days of the receipt of the student's appeal statement, the Director of Student Financial Aid Services will provide a decision as to the resolution of the appeal. In his/her deliberations the director shall be guided by the student's past academic record, the documentation provided by the student in reference to the appeal, and conversations with faculty and staff concerning the student.

If the student's appeal is denied, the student has ten (10) days from the receipt of such notification to address his appeal to the Dean of Student Services. Within thirty days, the Dean of Student Services will notify the student as to the decision relative to the appeal.
If the decision of the Dean of Student Services is not satisfactory to the student, s/he may appeal the decision within ten days of receipt of the decision.

Acting as the designee of the President, the Dean of Student Services will convene the Committee on Student Financial Aid (if unavailable, the Dean will convene an ad-hoc committee representative of faculty, staff, and students at the College) to hear the student's appeal. At the discretion of the Committee, a verbal or written appeal may be heard. Such action shall occur on a timely basis. The decision of the Committee is final.

**Reinstatement**

Once dismissed from the student financial aid program at the College, a student may be reinstated in the following manner:

1. If a student is successful in the appeal process, s/he will be reinstated to the program conditional upon any compromises reached as a result of the appeal process.
2. If a student does not engage in the appeal process or is unsuccessful in the appeal process, s/he may be reinstated to the program only after s/he meets the minimum quantitative and qualitative standards for the number of semesters in attendance (or completed credits) as explained in the accompanying chart. A student seeking reinstatement to the program, at his/her discretion, may utilize credits earned at other institutions and accepted in transfer at ACC to meet the academic progress standards. A student whose record contains Incomplete (I) grades also has the option of completing his/her work in the course(s). The completion of the course(s) may assist the student in meeting the satisfactory progress standard. In any event, the College will determine the student's compliance with the standard at the end of the two-week add/drop period. A student with Incomplete (I) grades found not to be in compliance with the satisfactory progress requirements has this grace period (2 weeks into the next regularly scheduled semester) to meet the minimum requirements and be certified as eligible to receive aid for the current semester. The student must also specifically request in writing consideration for his/her reinstatement to the Director of Student Financial Aid Services. Such requests for reinstatement shall not be unreasonably denied.
GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

### Associate Degree Candidates 60, (63) credit programs

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<tr>
<th>Student Status</th>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Semesters in Attendance</th>
<th>Credits Attempted</th>
<th>Credits Earned</th>
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<td>10</td>
<td>90 (94.5)</td>
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<th>Credits Attempted</th>
<th>Credits Earned</th>
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<td>Three-quarter time (9-11 credits each semester)</td>
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Students attending less than half-time will be required to complete two-thirds (67%) of all attempted credits and to have a reasonable G.P.A. to be in compliance with these standards.

Revised 5/15/01/DJS/app