

# 2018–2019 Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Information



Dear Student:

If you are a Veteran Benefit Recipient (VBR) you are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) in order to continue to receive those funds. In brief, you are required to meet **all** of the following standards.

## SAP Standards:

You must maintain the cumulative grade point average (GPA) required by your program or at least a 2.0; and

You are required to satisfactorily complete a cumulative minimum of 67% of the credits in which you enroll

Students who experience extenuating circumstances, that were reasonably unforeseeable at the beginning of the semester and that are beyond the student's control, may appeal. The circumstances that are cited in the appeal must be timely to the semester of enrollment during which the academic difficulty occurred. These extenuating circumstances must have been sufficiently disruptive that the student was prevented from continued enrollment and/or successful completion of the semester and meeting of the SAP standards. Circumstances such as difficulty adjusting to college, time management issues, failure to balance social life against academic workload requirements, prioritization of other activities above coursework and inability to afford enrollment expenses in the absence of Veteran Educational Benefits are not alone sufficient to qualify as extenuating.

## Academic Improvement Plan Requirements:

In order for Veterans Educational Benefits to be reinstated after suspension, the student must provide to their veteran advisor:

- A statement describing actions taken to ensure Satisfactory Academic Progress
- A comprehensive degree plan that is strictly adhered to to ensure success
- Student may not change their program of study without the consent and counsel of their assigned veteran advisor.
- Veteran Educational Benefits will be suspended if the student does not adhere to the Academic Improvement Plan and does not meet SAP Standards. Suspension will be lifted once SAP Standards have been met.

**The decision of the VA SAP Appeals Committee is final and can neither be appealed elsewhere in the College, nor can it be appealed to the U.S. Department of Veterans.** If your SAP appeal is denied you can only re-appeal if you have extenuating circumstances and/or documentation that you did not include with your initial appeal submission. Re-appealing because you do not agree with the VA SAP Appeal Committee's decision is not a valid basis upon which to submit another appeal. Your re-appeal letter and documentation must be submitted to the Military & Veteran Services Office within two weeks of the date your denial was posted in your MyPima. If your re-appeal is denied by the VA SAP Appeals Committee, you are not permitted to appeal again and all subsequent appeals that are based upon the same circumstances will be rejected.

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### Documented extenuating circumstances might include, but are not limited to:

Student's major illness or injury	Death in the student's immediate family
Major illness or injury in the student's immediate family	Death of student's spouse
Student's spouse's major illness or injury	Student's deployment to active duty
Student's loss of employment	Student's spouse's deployment to active duty
Student's parent's loss of employment	Student's parent's deployment to active duty
Student's spouse's loss of employment	Natural disaster affecting the student
Student's separation or divorce	Natural disaster affecting the student's parent(s)
Student's parent's separation or divorce	Natural disaster affecting the student's spouse

All SAP appeals will be evaluated by the Military & Veteran Services SAP appeals committee. The student must document all extenuating circumstances, explain changes that will allow for academic success during future enrollment and must submit an advisor-approved academic plan.

Documentation of extenuating circumstances typically consists of provider confirmation of injury or illness, an employer's separation letter, a court order, police incident or accident report, attorney's letter, divorce decree, deployment orders, obituary or death certificate as applicable; however, the VA SAP appeals committee or its designee solely determines the sufficiency of documentation in accordance with the circumstance(s) presented.

Please note, having extenuating circumstances does not in any way guarantee that your SAP appeal will be approved. If your circumstances were reasonably foreseeable or are deemed to have been within your control, or were present and you decided to enroll anyway, your SAP appeal is likely to be denied. Your SAP appeal is also likely to be denied if you enrolled for more than two semesters without seeking intervention and treatment for an existing issue (or issues).

### **VBR Probation**

Students are required to follow their academic plans. PCC reviews progress at the end of the semester for those students on probation to determine if the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan. If you wish to change your academic plan you must appeal to do so. Types of changes that require you to appeal include changes to your program of study, changes that you initiate and deviations from the college's course catalog. Modifications that are not considered changes and therefore do not require you to appeal include approved alterations in the sequence of courses, approved course substitutions, veteran advisor approved adjustments or corrections and schedule updates that are initiated by the college such as to program of study requirements, course numbering, course descriptions and course cancellations.

If the student is meeting the requirements of the academic plan, and did not receive any grades of "F", "I", "IP" or "W" the student is eligible to use Veteran Educational Benefits so long as the student continues to meet those requirements.

### **Reestablishing Eligibility for VA Educational Benefits:**

Students who choose not to appeal, or whose appeals are not approved, may be able to reestablish eligibility for VA Benefit use. Such students may (if they are otherwise eligible) continue to enroll for courses at the college at their own expense until they have met all of the SAP standards that are required for VA benefit use. Neither paying for one's classes nor sitting out for a term affects a student's academic progress standing, so neither (alone nor together) is sufficient to reestablish benefit eligibility, if the student has not met all SAP standards.

If you submit a VA SAP appeal and it is approved, you will be eligible to use your VA Educational Benefits so long as you meet all other program eligibility requirements.

If you submit a VA SAP appeal and it is denied you will not be eligible to use your VA Educational Benefits at Pima Community College until you meet all of the SAP standards.

If you experienced extenuating circumstances and wish to appeal the loss of your eligibility to use your VA Educational Benefits, please submit the SAP appeal form along with appropriate documentation to the Military and Veteran Services Office as far in advance of your planned enrollment as possible. The VA SAP appeal committee will review your application and will determine if your eligibility is reinstated. The Veteran Services Office will respond with the committee's decision to your Pima College email address and/or MyPima messages usually within 2 weeks of receiving your complete appeal application. See appeal application for deadlines.

Sincerely,  
The Military and Veteran Services Office

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# 2018-2019 Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Application



## 1. STUDENT INFORMATION

Student's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ PCC Student ID Number \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number (include area code) \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate or Cell Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Steps to Appeal:

Complete this SAP appeal form.

Type a detailed statement describing the extenuating circumstances that prevented you from meeting the terms of the college's satisfactory academic progress policy for VBR's and attach it to this appeal form. Your appeal may be rejected if your statement is not typed.

Attach complete documentation of your extenuating circumstances to this appeal form.

Meet with your Veteran Advisor to complete step 3 of this form.

Submit the complete appeal packet by the deadline:

Semester I am Appealing	Semester Deadline	FAO Decision Posted on MyPima
Fall      Spring      Summer	Drop/Refund/Audit deadline of LAST 5-week session in semester ( <a href="https://pima.edu/calendars/key-dates-and-deadlines/index.html">https://pima.edu/calendars/key-dates-and-deadlines/index.html</a> )	Typically within 2 weeks of submission of complete appeal packet
Non-Traditional Program	Variable (see Veteran Advisor for Program)	Typically within 2 weeks of submission of complete appeal packet

## 3. Schedule an appointment with your Veteran Advisor to complete this step:

Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that only coursework that is applicable to my program of study is eligible and that taking a course that does not fulfill a program requirement may violate the terms of an appeal approval and my probationary status.

### Academic Plan as recommended by Veteran Advisor (select one):

Follow program's coursework requirements as listed in the college catalogue that will lead to completion of program listed below. Courses do not need to be taken in any order unless specified by catalogue.

Follow a term-by-term course plan that specifies individual courses and course load (attach MyDegreePlan Planner). Courses may or may not be taken in a specific order unless specified by the catalog or instructed by my Veteran Advisor.

Other specific instructions by Veteran Advisor/Counselor (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I need: \_\_\_\_\_ Credit/Clock hours to complete my PCC program of study in: \_\_\_\_\_

My anticipated graduation date is:      May      August      December      of the year: \_\_\_\_\_

Veteran Advisor Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Veteran Advisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Campus \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Check the applicable extenuating circumstance(s) that prevented you from making satisfactory academic progress:

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Student's major illness or injury                         | Student's loss of employment          |
| Major illness or injury in the student's immediate family | Student's parent's loss of employment |
| Student's spouse's major illness or injury                | Student's spouse's loss of employment |

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Student's separation or divorce  | Student's spouse's deployment to active duty     |
| Student's parent's separation or divorce   | Student's parent's deployment to active duty     |
| Death in the student's immediate family  | Natural disaster affecting the student           |
| Death of student's spouse  | Natural disaster affecting the student's parents |
| Student's deployment to active duty  | Natural disaster affecting the student's spouse  |
| Other (please provide a brief description here and fully explain in your written statement): |  |

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Student's Full Name

PCC Student ID Number

**5. Attach documentation of your extenuating circumstances:**

Documentation of extenuating circumstances typically consists of provider confirmation of injury or illness, an employer's separation letter, police report, court order, attorney's letter, divorce decree, deployment orders, obituary or death certificate as applicable; however, the financial aid appeals committee or its designee solely determines the sufficiency of documentation in accordance with the circumstance(s) presented.

**6. Please initial each of the following statements:**

- Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I am not currently eligible to use VA education benefits and if I enroll I do so at my own risk. I understand that I will not receive any VA Education benefits if my appeal is not approved and that I am responsible for any charges that I incur at Pima Community College.
- Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if my appeal is approved that I will be placed on probation and I must achieve all of the SAP standards based upon my semester GPA and semester completion rate during any probationary semester of my enrollment. I also understand that any grade of "F", "I", "IP" or "W" is a violation of my probation and will make me ineligible to use my VA benefits unless I am eligible based upon my cumulative GPA and completion rate.
- Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I must follow my academic plan and that if I wish to change my academic plan I must appeal to do so. Types of changes that require me to appeal include changes to my program of study, changes that I initiate and deviations from the college's course catalog. Modifications that are not considered changes and therefore do not require me to appeal include approved alterations in the sequence of courses, approved course substitutions, advisor approved adjustments or corrections and schedule updates that are initiated by the college such as to program of study requirements, course numbering, course descriptions and course cancellations.
- Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if my VA SAP appeal is denied I can only re-appeal if I have extenuating circumstances and/or documentation that I did not include with my initial appeal submission. I understand that re-appealing because I do not agree with the VA SAP Appeal Committee's decision is not a valid basis upon which to submit another appeal.
- Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if I re-appeal my re-appeal letter and documentation must be submitted to the Military and Veteran Services Office within two weeks of the date my denial was posted in MyPima.
- Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if my re-appeal is denied by the VA SAP Appeals Committee I am not permitted to appeal again based upon the same circumstances and all my subsequent appeals (that are based upon the same circumstances) will be rejected.
- Initial \_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the decision of the VA SAP Appeals Committee is final and can neither be appealed elsewhere in the College, nor can it be appealed to the U.S. Department of Veterans.

**7. Certification and Signature:**

**WARNING - If you purposely give false or misleading information on this document, or any other VA form, you may be punished under the College's Student Code of Conduct Policy.**

**Any information you provide will be kept confidential (to the extent provided by law). Please be candid in your explanation so that the committee can accurately assess your circumstances. You will not have the opportunity to explain your circumstances in person due to the high volume of appeals the Veteran Services Office appeals committee receives. My signature below confirms that all of the information I am providing on this appeal application and in supporting documentation is true, accurate, and complete.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date

**Scan and email this document with supporting evidence to [veterans@pima.edu](mailto:veterans@pima.edu). Enter VA Appeal Documentation with your name and student ID in the subject line or submit to your Veteran Advisor.**

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**VETERAN SERVICES SAP APPEAL COMMITTEE USE ONLY**

Approved

Dates of Circumstances are not consistent with enrollment

Appealed previously, did not meet SAP standards during probation

Denied

Insufficient documentation of extenuating circumstances

Circumstances were reasonably foreseeable and/or were within the student's control

Denied Pending Documentation

Was not making progress prior to extenuating circumstances

Circumstances are not extenuating

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Appeal Committee Representative Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Campus \_\_\_\_\_ Date