CSTCM SAP Policy

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS
To be in good academic standing with CSTCM and to be eligible to receive Title IV financial aid, students must maintain satisfactory academic progress.

At the end of each trimester, each student is evaluated on three components to determine if he/she is maintaining satisfactory academic progress:
1. Cumulative Grade Point Average
2. Successful course completion rate
3. Credits attempted relative to the maximum credits attempted that are allowed (1.5 times the credits in the student’s program)

Students in violation with Satisfactory Academic Standing will be tracked through a database managed by the Academic Dean and the Financial Aid Administrator. The database will be revised, updated, and managed when final grades are in at the end of each academic trimester.

GRADE PROCEDURES
Students will receive a final grade for each course within 3 weeks of the end of the trimester. Grades are determined by written, oral, practical quiz/test/exam scores, class participation, clinic and extra credit projects. Students may apply for a retest for any score 69% and below. Re-tests may be the same test or may be a different test under the instructor’s discretion.

Clinical Acupuncture internship 4 interns are evaluated one time during the trimester by an outside practitioner with no relationship with CSTCM. Each intern is met with every trimester by the clinic director to discuss their clinical performance.

Grade Appeals Process
1. First Level- Appeal to the Faculty Member
   - After receiving a formal appeal, the faculty member shall assure that a written decision with express reason is available or delivered to the student within 5 business days.
   - Should the student fail to take further action within 5 business days after receiving the faculty members’ decision that decision will stand.
   - If the student is dissatisfied with the decision or does not receive a response from the faculty member within 5 business days, he/she may proceed with the second level of appeal.

2. Second Level- Administration
   - If the student elects to continue the appeal after the faculty member’s decision or recommendation that has been received, he/she may take the matter to the Academic Dean within 5 business days. The Academic Dean shall ascertain within 5 business days whether the procedures for appeal at the first level was duly followed; if they were not; he/she will require that they be followed before he/she takes any further action.
As soon as possible (but no later than 30 calendar days) after receiving a proper written, dated request for appeal at this level, the Academic Dean will make a decision.

3. Third Level - Appeals Committee

- If the student elects to continue the appeal after the Academic Dean’s decision or recommendation, he/she may ask the Academic Dean to convene an appeals committee. A written decision or recommendation with express reasons shall be furnished by the Academic Dean and transmitted through the Administrative Office to all affected parties within 5 business days after the conclusion of the Academic Dean’s deliberations.
- The faculty member may respond in writing to the Appeals Committee about the decision or recommendation of the Academic Dean with express reasons shall be furnished by the Academic Dean and transmitted through the Administrative office to all affected parties within 5 business days after the conclusion of the Academic Dean’s deliberations.
- The Appeals Committee shall be made up of 1 Board Member, 1 Faculty Member, 1 Administrative member (the Academic Dean may be appointed as a member), and 1 Student. The committee shall be appointed by the CSTCM President who shall serve as chairperson without vote. All deliberations of the committee will be closed and confidential. The presence of all eligible members and the CSTCM President shall constitute a quorum. All findings of the appeal committee shall be considered final.

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

- In order to graduate, student must:
- Successfully complete all courses (122 credits for M.S.Ac. or 152.5 credits for M.S.TCM) with a minimum grade of D (70%) in each course:
- Complete all observation and clinical work to the satisfaction of the Clinic Director and document the required student-performed treatments (at least 250 for M.S.Ac. or 350 for M.S.TCM)
- Passed all sections of the CSTCM Final Trimester Written Proficiency Exam with at least a score of 70%
- Have submitted a completed graduation checklist
- Clear all accounts with CSTCM (e.g. financial obligation, library books returned, etc.)

Students, who have not passed all sections of the CSTCM Final Trimester Written Proficiency Exam, have outstanding financial obligations, etc. may participate in the graduation ceremony but will not receive a diploma or transcripts until all graduation requirements have been met. Students should be aware that graduation requirements can change after a student is admitted. Any change in requirements will be distributed to the student body in memos.

Upon graduation, each student receives a diploma and an official copy of their transcripts free of charge along with their graduation sets mailed to the NCCAOM and the state. Each additional diploma is $25 and a set of official transcripts are $10 each. Upon request, CSTCM will send official transcripts to the NCCAOM for the exams and to the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies if needed for licensing. For the latest information concerning eligibility requirements for practice in other states, students should contact the individual state. The book *Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Laws* is in the library and gives the laws and contact offices for each state. This book is updated yearly. Contact the NCCAOM for exam eligibility.
EVALUATION POINTS

- Satisfactory academic progress evaluation points are tied to the student’s academic credits.
- Again, the number of credits is tied to the maximum credits allowed, i.e. 1.5 times the credits in a student’s program.
- Students enrolled in a graduate-level program must complete a minimum of 65% of the cumulative credits attempted and maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 throughout their time in the program.
- Example: In a 12 credit trimester, the student must pass at least 8 of those 12 credits to have completed 65% of the credits.
- If a student passes at least 8 of their trimester credits each trimester, they will maintain a 65% completion rate.
- For a part-time student enrolled in 6 credits for the trimester, they must pass at least 4 of those trimester credits to achieve a 65% completion rate for the term.

OVERVIEW OF ACADEMIC STANDING SEQUENCE

- The first Trimester the student does not meet these minimum standards they will be placed on Academic Warning for the following trimester. They will be required to meet with the Academic Dean and develop an Academic Success Plan. The student is eligible for Financial Aid during their Warning trimester. If the student increases their cumulative GPA or course completion rate to the minimum standard levels then by the end of the next trimester, they will return to good standing.

- The second trimester the student does not meet these minimum standards; they will be placed on Academic Probation for the following trimester. The student will once again be required to meet with the Academic Dean to revise their Academic Success Plan. The student is eligible for financial aid in their Probation 1 trimester.

- The third trimester the student does not meet these minimum standards; the student will be placed on Academic Probation 2. Their case will be forwarded to the Academic Dean for review and possible dismissal; they will have the opportunity to appeal dismissal. At this point in the third trimester, the student is no longer eligible for Federal Student Aid and will have to self-pay if their appeal is granted.

- If the student’s appeal is granted they will not be able to use Title IV financial aid until they return to satisfactory academic standards.

- If their appeal is not granted the student will be formally dismissed prior to the add/drop date of the trimester or at the point the appeal decision is made. Any funds that the student paid toward his/her bill will be refunded to the student. The student is responsible for returning all books and supplies to the book store, and CSTCM is not responsible for any amount they may owe in books or supplies if those items are not returnable.

Each student’s Satisfactory Academic Progress will be evaluated after each trimester. The Registrar in collaboration with the Academic Dean collects grade information for every student each trimester. That information is then relayed to the Financial Aid Administrator to be reviewed for any financial implications.
Upon review, the Financial Aid Administrator will develop a list of students who are now on Warning, 1st trimester probation, and 2nd trimester probation and that list will be managed through an excel database with all pertinent information.

SAP students will receive a written letter and an e-mail informing them of their warning or probation status, what they need to do to return to good academic standing and the status of their Federal Student Aid for the warning trimester, and a description of what their Federal Student Aid eligibility will look like if they go on to 1st Trimester Probation, and 2nd Trimester probation.

**DISTINCTION BETWEEN ACADEMIC WARNING AND PROBATION**

At the end of each trimester, after grades have been posted, students’ Cumulative GPA’s and completion rates are reviewed to determine whether the students are meeting the above requirements:

If students are not meeting the above requirements, they will be placed on Warning the first term in which their cumulative GPAs or completion rate fall below the values specified above. Students placed on Warning will be required to meet with the Academic Dean to develop an Academic Success Plan that details a specific plan for academic recovery. This plan may include actions such as mandatory tutoring, periodic advising as well as taking a reduced number of courses until the Cumulative GPA and/or completion rate reaches the minimums to be removed from Warning. **At the end of the next term, students will be placed on Probation** if they continue to fall below the specified values.

Students will be notified by standard postal mail and e-mail with a letter from the Financial Aid Administrator notifying them of their Academic status and the steps required of them, if any.

Students on **Probation 1** will continue on an Academic Success Plan and will be evaluated at the end of their second trimester of monitoring by Registrar and Financial Aid Administrator to determine their FSA eligibility. Students who raise their Cumulative GPA’s and completion rates at or above the minimums will be removed from Probation and returned to Good Standing. If students do not meet the minimum Cumulative GPA or completion rate requirements at the time of evaluation, they will be placed on **Academic Probation 2**. Their case will be submitted to the Academic Dean for further review and possible dismissal. The student will have the opportunity to appeal their dismissal. The appeal process is outlined below.

If the student is not satisfied with the Academic Dean’s decision they can appeal to have an Administrative Review by the Registrar, Financial Aid Administrator, the Administrative Director and the Dean. The student should create a revised personal statement and submit their Appeal Packet to the Administrative Director. Following a review by all of these parties, a final decision will be delivered to the student by the Academic Dean.

If at any point it is determined by the Registrar and Financial Aid Administrator that it is mathematically impossible for the student to meet the minimum requirements within the trimesters allowed under warning and probation, the student will be notified to meet with the Academic Dean for review.

The Colorado School for Traditional Chinese Medicine reserves the right to place students on, or remove them from, academic monitoring based on their academic performance, not limited to these published standards. Please reference the CSTCM Student handbook and School Catalogue for written rules on Student Conduct and Guidelines.
ATTENDANCE POLICY

GENERAL ATTENDANCE POLICY
In learning TCM, participation in all classes is crucial. Missing classes may very well limit a student’s competence as a practitioner. CSTCM expects 100% participation in all courses and student clinics. Participation below 100% in the courses will result in the student being asked to make up the hours under the prior approval of the instructor. For didactic courses, students should call to notify the instructor of any classes that will be missed. Note; if a student is going to miss a didactic class we advise the student to talk to a classmate and see if their classmate would be willing to give them a copy of their notes for that day. The student could also ask the teacher in advance if the teacher would allow a classmate to audio record the class for them. Requests for leave of absence are reviewed on a case by case basis. Please reference the LOA policy in the student handbook.

Each class counts for a participation grade, missing classes can result in receiving a zero for that participation grade.

Poor participation may result in a student having to retake the course, each instructor may manage and outline their own participation policy as they deem necessary. Poor participation that leads to poor grades can result in warning, probation or dismissal from the program or can lead to failure or an incomplete for the course. Failure or incomplete grades requires the course to be retaken for the required hours and/or credit for graduation. Missing 3 participation grades can cause the course to be retaken. If there are 3 missed participation grades then the student must make an agreement with the instructor on how to make up the participation.

Warnings or Probation can be removed by meeting Academic requirements and receiving approval of the Academic Dean.

Interns: In the student intern portion of the program, students are expected to arrive early and to remain in the forum/clinic/or supply store area for the duration of the clinic and remain in all classes until the class is over, unless they have the instructor’s permission to leave early. Disregarding this policy may result in having to retake the course and can lead to an Academic Warning.

Tardiness: Students are expected to arrive on time for all classes. Any student arriving to class more than 15 minutes late may not be allowed to enter the class and this will constitute as missed participation. Tardiness is disrespectful to the instructor and to classmates. Tardiness or leaving class early may be counted as missing participation; each instructor has the right to address tardiness at their discretion.

Accommodations for making up any missed participation will be made for the following events: childbirth, military deployment, serious illness or injury, or a death in the immediate family. Student must make an agreement with the instructor on how to make up the participation. Due to the comprehensive nature and length of the program, classes may be held on various holidays and on secular and religious holidays. While recognizing the importance of religious observation, CSTCM cannot promise students that the scheduled classes will not conflict with religious obligations.
OBSERVATION HOURS CLINIC FORUM 1 ATTENDANCE POLICY
All students are expected to be in their seats ready to begin at 9am. Clinic observation hours end with each student logging the number of hours they observed that day. Late arrival to clinic observation hours is not acceptable and instructors reserve the right to refuse a student participation points for the day based upon late arrival. Students must have a total of 45 hours in order to meet the graduation requirement. Students must make up any missed hours as part of the credit requirements for graduation by observing a private practitioner under the prior approval of the Clinic Director. Students may not leave observation classes in the middle of class without the permission of the instructor. Any student who leaves without permission or signs the hour log book for another student could face serious disciplinary action from the Academic Dean. Clinic hours are also verified at the end of clinic with each student submitting their class paperwork to the instructor for the instructor to sign.

CLINIC FORUM 2-4 ATTENDANCE POLICY
All students are expected to arrive for Clinic Forum 2-4 on time. Once each student has logged in for Clinic forum, they must participate in all 3 hours of Clinic unless they receive prior permission from the moderating practitioner to leave early. Failure to participate for the full 3 hours will result in the student receiving zero hours for that Clinic Forum meeting date. Clinic hours are verified mid-way through the class by the instructor who will verify each student’s login. Late arrival to clinic observation hours is not acceptable and instructors reserve the right to refuse a student participation for the day based upon late arrival. Students must make up any missed hours as part of the credit requirements by making prior arrangements with the Clinic Director. Students may not leave observation classes in the middle of class without the permission of the instructor. Any student who leaves without permission or signs the hour log book for another student could face serious disciplinary action from the Academic Dean. Students in Clinic Forums 2 thru 4 are permitted a maximum of 3 missed participation classes from Clinic Forum without making up the time. Anyone missing more than 3 forums on all levels must repeat the course. Holidays that occur during a Clinic Forum weekend will count as a missed participation. Two regular participation classes plus a holiday weekend that falls over one of the regularly scheduled forums would equal 3 missed participation classes in total.

CLINIC ATTENDANCE
Students should arrive 15 minutes early to set up the rooms for patient care. If a student is not participating and will not have logged hours for the day, they should notify their clinic partner and their instructor as soon as possible. It is each student’s responsibility to be in the clinic to care for their patients. Inadequate participation in clinic could result in dismissal from clinic and the student having to retake the clinic the following trimester. Missing clinical hours could affect the student’s required 350 patient visits for M.S.TCM or 250 patient’s visits for M.S.Ac. as well as required clinic hours needed for graduation. If you are short of the required hours needed, or patient visits needed for graduation, the hours and or visits must be made up before graduation. If a student does not receive 90 hours during the trimester, they will receive an incomplete until they make up the hours. During each clinic each student is responsible for filling out the “Student Performed Treatment Sheet” and having it signed by the Clinic Supervisor.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE
A student may apply for an approved leave of absence (LOA) at any time. The student requesting the LOA must deliver the completed LOA request form to the CSTCM Academic Dean. The LOA request form must be dated and signed, include the reason for the LOA and report the student’s anticipated return date. LOA requests are usually granted for medical,
maternity, financial, personal, family and emergency situations or for military duty requirements. Students who are on a payment plan will need to see the Financial Aid Administrator.

The time frame allotted for a LOA in one trimester.

A student who is granted a LOA must meet all requirements for graduation that are in effect at the time of re-admission regardless of what the requirements were when the student was originally enrolled.

A student will need to reapply to the program if they do not return within the time granted for leave of absence and will be subject to readmission policy. If a student does not return the student will be withdrawn from the program.

LOA forms are located in the forms bin in the hallway.

When a student does not return from LOA their grace period starts on the day they started their LOA. If a student decides to withdraw during an LOA, the date of withdrawal and the start of the grace period is the day that the LOA began.

No add/drop fees will be assessed to a student who is going on LOA. Students on Financial Aid who do not return from a LOA are likely to have a change in the status of their loan repayment terms, including the exhaustion of some or all of the student’s grace period. Please see the Financial Aid Advisor if you have any questions.

**MAXIMUM PROGRAM LENGTH (MPL)**

Students must complete the M.S.Ac. program in a maximum of six years, or the MSTCM program in a maximum of eight years.

Therefore, the maximum time frame for any program is calculated by multiplying the number of total credits by 1.5. For example, students enrolled in a 90-credit-hour program can attempt no more than 135 credit hours.

**Should any students exceed the 150% maximum time requirement, they will be required to meet with the Academic Dean.**

CSTCM as directed by the federal government does not allow students who do not raise their Cumulative GPA’s or completion rates of progress to the necessary minimums to continue to receive federal financial assistance regardless of the students’ circumstances.

**SITUATION BASED FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY STATUSES**

First term Cumulative GPA and/or completion rate Warning Students are still eligible for federal financial aid for the following 15 week trimester.

Second consecutive trimester Probation Students are still eligible for federal financial aid for the following 15 week trimester.

Third consecutive term students who are still not meeting minimum cumulative GPA standards are no longer eligible for federal financial aid.

Under no circumstances, will a student on FSA be permitted to continue past the maximum time frame as stipulated above or graduate with a cumulative grade point average of below a 2.0.
Students who fail to show significant improvement during the probationary term(s) will be required to meet with the Dean and may be dismissed. They will be notified by the Financial Aid Administrator after every term as to their Academic status until they return to good standing as stipulated above.

**ACADEMIC PROBATION OR DISMISSAL APPEAL**

A student who is placed on Academic Probation 2 will be referred for dismissal for failing to maintain satisfactory academic progress; they may appeal dismissal by submitting to the Academic Dean a written statement explaining the mitigating circumstances that affected his/her performance. Such circumstances may include illness or injury, death in the family, family crisis, or other occurrences outside the control of the student. The student must provide documentation of the circumstances that had an adverse impact on his/her performance.

**APPEAL PROCESS**

To appeal the application of the satisfactory academic progress standards, the student must follow the appeal process:

1. Obtain a Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Packet from the Dean’s office.
2. Submit the Appeal in writing to the Academic Dean at least 7 days prior to the trimester starting.
3. Should the appeal be granted, the student must meet with the Academic dean to develop an academic success plan.
4. Continue to attend regularly scheduled classes during the review period.

The Academic Dean will review the student’s request and reach a decision no later than the add/drop date of the trimester. Financial Aid Administrator and Registrar will ensure this decision is made on time.

If the appeal is granted, a student will be allowed to continue in classes, but will be required to pay for all educational costs on their own accord. Should an appeal be denied, the student’s dismissal stands and he/she can no longer attend classes; any tuition charges that have been posted for the current term will be reversed. Charges cannot exist on the student’s account if they were dropped prior to drop/add therefore it is required that the charges be reversed. If the student disagrees with the Deans decision they can submit an appeal to the Administrative Director so that their case is administratively reviewed.

A student may appeal academic dismissal only one time unless the Academic dean agrees to an additional appeal, the appeal will proceed in the exact process an original appeal would proceed in as stipulated above; this additional appeal is up to the Dean’s discretion.

**REESTABLISHMENT AS A REGULAR (TITLE IV ELIGIBLE) STUDENT AND SECOND TRIMESTER PROBATIONARY STATUS**

Students who have been dismissed due to the failure to maintain the minimums outlined above may apply to continue their studies at the institution in a second trimester probationary status. During this time, the student is not eligible to receive financial aid or loans and must attempt to improve the deficient areas that led to the dismissal by retaking courses from which the student withdrew or which he/she failed. The student will be responsible for all costs incurred while on the second trimester probationary status and must make acceptable arrangements with the Financial Aid Administrator in order to continue.
Payment plans will be organized with the Financial Aid Administrator on a case by case basis depending on the student’s situation. Students on second trimester probationary status remain in probationary status and will have their progress evaluated at the completion of each term by the Academic Dean. Students in second trimester probation who do not make improvements as determined by the Academic Dean or Registrar may be dismissed from the School. A student on second trimester probation who reestablishes satisfactory progress may return to a Good Standing student. The registrar will monitor these students in collaboration with the Financial Aid administrator to ensure the student maintains eligibility status. If the Academic Dean or Registrar determines that the student has the academic ability and desire to successfully continue in the program, the student will meet with the Financial Aid Administrator to determine eligibility for Title IV aid. Reinstated students will be placed on Academic Watch for one term after reestablishing satisfactory progress. Academic Watch students will be monitored by the Financial Aid Administrator on the SAP Spreadsheet for the first term that they are back in good standing.

**CONVERSION BETWEEN PROGRAMS**
Students transferring between the M.S.Ac. and M.S.TCM programs will not relinquish academic standing by virtue of transferring. All Academic progress and grades will remain with the student upon transferring; therefore they cannot return to Good Standing by transferring programs, any Warning or Probationary statuses will follow them between programs. The Registrar will ensure that when students make transfers to other schools that their Academic Status is transferred as well.

**GRADING SCALE**

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<tr>
<th>Course Grading</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
<th>Course Grading</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>71-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-97</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-94</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-91</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-88</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Challenge Pass</td>
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Grades A+ through F are used in determining the grade point average for satisfactory academic progress. All other grades carry no points and are not used in determining grade point averages.

**DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY**

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<tr>
<th>Academic Standing</th>
<th>Eligible for Title IV financial Aid?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warning</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Trimester 1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Trimester 2</td>
<td>No</td>
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