

COLLEGE TERMINOLOGY

Academic Advisor/Counselor - Academic Advisors are employees who help students know and understand requirements to graduate in their degree program. They help them select courses, understand and plan for pre-requisite courses, meet degree requirements, prepare for their career, and connect with college resources when necessary.

ACT and SAT - These letters are acronyms for the American College Test and the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Both tests are designed to measure a student's level of knowledge in basic areas such as math, science, English, reading and social sciences. Colleges may require the results of either the ACT or SAT before granting admission.

Application/Acceptance/Admission - Application is the process by which a prospective student submits the required forms and credentials to his/her chosen institution. Application criteria may include one or more of the following: previous academic records, test scores, interviews, recommendations, and other information provided by the applicant. Check the college catalog for specific requirements of the schools you are considering.

Associate's Degree - The Associate Degree is granted upon completion of a program of at least two, but less than four years of college work. Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees are conferred upon students who successfully complete programs designed for transfer to a senior college.

Bachelor's Degree - This is the undergraduate degree offered by four-year colleges and universities. The Bachelor of Arts degree requires that a significant portion of the student's studies be dedicated to the arts - literature, language, music, etc. The Bachelor of Science degree requires that a significant portion of the studies be in the sciences - chemistry, biology, math, etc. The minimum credit hour requirement for a Bachelor's Degree is 120 hours.

College - A College is an institution of higher education that grants degrees and certificates. The term is also used to designate the organizational units of a university such as the College of Education or the College of Engineering.

Credit Hours - Courses taken in college are measured in terms of credit hours. To earn one credit hour, a student must attend a class for one classroom hour (usually 50 minutes) per week for the whole semester (usually 16 weeks). Classes are offered in 1 - 5 credit hour increments, and sometimes-larger amounts.

Degrees - Degrees are rewards for the successful completion of a prescribed program of study. There are three basic types of degrees: Associate - obtainable at a two-year community or junior college, Baccalaureate or Bachelor's - offered by four-year colleges and universities, and Graduate - Obtained after the bachelor's degree, i.e., Masters or Doctorate.

FAFSA -Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The almost universal application for financial aid, including loans, grants, college work-study and other federal and state programs. It is often required before a student can be considered for scholarships also.

Fees - Fees are additional charges not included in the tuition. Fees may be charged to cover the cost of materials and equipment needed in certain courses, and they may be assessed for student events, programs, and publications.

Financial Aid - Aid is made available from grants, scholarships, loans, and part-time employment from federal, state, institutional, and private sources. Awards from these programs may be combined in an "award package" to meet the cost of education.

Full-Time Enrollment/Part-Time Enrollment - A full-time student is enrolled in 12 or more credit hours in a semester (full-time status for a Summer term is usually 6 credit hours). A part-time student is enrolled in less than 12 credit hours in a semester (less than 6 in a Summer term).

Major/Minor - A major is a student's chosen field of study. It usually requires the successful completion of a specified number of credit hours. A minor is designated as a specific number of credit hours in a secondary field of study.

Prerequisite Courses - A prerequisite course is a course taken in preparation for another course. For example, Accounting 1 is a prerequisite for Accounting 2.

Private/Public Institutions - Private and public institutions differ primarily in terms of their source of financial support. Public institutions receive funding from the state or other governmental entities and are administered by public boards. Private institutions rely on income from private donations, or from religious or other organizations and student tuition.

Transfer of Credits - Some students attend more than one institution during their college career. When they move or transfer from one college to another, they also transfer accumulated credit hours from the former institution to the new one. The new institution determines which courses will apply toward graduation requirements.

Tuition - Tuition is the amount paid for each credit hour of enrollment. Tuition does not include the cost of books, fees, or room and board. Tuition charges vary from college to college and are dependent on such factors as resident or out-of-state status, level of classes enrolled in (lower, upper or graduate division), and whether the institution is publicly or privately financed.

Undergraduate - An undergraduate is a student who is pursuing either a one-, two-, or four-year degree.

University - A university is composed of undergraduate, graduate, and professional colleges and offers degrees in each.