



Glossary of Basic College Terms

Admissions: Completing and submitting the application to the college. Upon completion, accepted students receive a student identification number and can take the next step of meeting with an advisor and enrolling in classes.

Adult Basic Education (ABE): Pre-college courses that help students build basic skills in reading, writing and math. The courses are non-credit. ABE programs are part of Basic Skills departments.

Advising: A relationship between a student and a college advisor that helps students reach their educational goals. Advisors help students with selecting programs and the correct courses to ensure they meet the graduation requirements. The advisor also reviews course requirements and can help students address any academic problems.

Assessment: A test that measures your knowledge and/or skill level in certain subjects/areas such as math, reading, writing, English. The results help the college advisor or career pathways navigator place students in the appropriate classes.

Associate's Degrees: A degree received after completing at least two years of college coursework. Degrees are awarded in a variety of occupational areas. There is an Associate of Arts Degree (AA, academic transfer), an Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS, professional/technical), and an Associate of Applied Science Transfer Degree (AAST, professional/technical transfer).

Basic Skills / Basic and Transitional Studies: This department includes Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED), and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. ABE, GED, and ESL courses are non-credit.

Certificate: A certificate is awarded after completing a short-term training program (1 - 2 quarters) and/ or a one-year program. Some programs also offer two-year certificate programs that require a few less courses than a two-year degree. The certificate is generally recognized by the industry for which the certificate is offered.

Continuing Education: Short-term courses, programs, or organized learning experiences for adults, sometimes taken after a degree is obtained, to enhance personal or professional goals. Courses are offered in a variety of topics from business planning to photography and creative writing. Continuing education can also include courses that bring participants up to date in a particular area of knowledge or skills, which are required for a job. Continuing Education courses are not for credit and are not eligible for financial aid.

Counseling: Guidance and support provided to students to help manage stress or other difficulties that they may encounter while in school. Counselors meet with students individually to discuss any problems or issues and help students cope with the challenges they may experience.

Credits: Credits are earned based on the type of class and number of hours spent in the class per week. Generally, for lecture classes, 1 hour of class per week equals 1 credit. For lab (hands-on) classes, 2 hours of class per week generally equals 1 credit. Full-time and part-time student status depends on the number of credits you are taking as a student.

Developmental Education (Dev Ed): Pre-college courses that prepare students for college-level coursework in math, reading and math. Developmental Education includes multiple levels with students progressing as skills are developed. Developmental classes are usually a higher level than ABE classes, but there can be some overlap in levels.

Distance Learning: Education that occurs outside of the traditional classroom and on an individual basis. The students and instructors interact through web-based communication. Lectures can be viewed online and homework assignments and questions are submitted via email. Also called online learning.

Enrollment: The process of choosing and signing up for the classes you would like to take during the semester. Enrollment is often done with the assistance of a college advisor. Also referred to as registration.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. A form that must be completed to qualify for federal and state financial aid.

Fees: Additional charges by the college that are not included as part of tuition. Fees can be used to cover the costs of materials, equipment, and student activities, etc.

Financial Aid: Money that is available to students to help pay for college tuition or other expenses. Types of aid include grants, loans, and scholarships. Grants and scholarships do not need to be paid back; loans, however, are considered borrowed money and must be paid back. There are also other funding sources available from the state for students who meet certain criteria.

Grade Point Average (GPA): The average of all the course grades you have received, on a four-point scale.

Pre-requisite (Pre-req): A course that must be completed prior to taking another course. For example, completion of the Certified Nursing Assistant certificate can be a pre-requisite for continuing with the Licensed Practical Nurse training. Pre-Requisites are also sometimes called Requirements.

Professional/Technical Education (Prof/Tech): Combines technical and career skills with academic content such as reading, writing, and math, to prepare students for the workplace. In some colleges, Prof/Tech is referred to as Workforce Development or Workforce Education. (see Workforce Education and Workforce Development)

Quarter (Qtr): The academic year is often broken up into quarters (Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer). Courses are offered each quarter. Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters last 11 weeks; Summer quarter is usually less than 11 weeks.

Registration: See Enrollment.

Syllabus: An outline of the course that you will be taking that provided important information such as test dates, due dates for homework, assignments, policies and expectations.

Transcript: A student's permanent academic record that shows the courses taken, grades received, academic status, and honors received.

Tuition: The amount of money paid for each credit one is enrolled in. It does not include books, fees, or equipment costs.

Workforce Development: Generally, a department within the community college that is focused on short-term training to prepare students for jobs. This department also helps students access funding sources to pay for the training as well as provide assistance in accessing additional services to help with student success such as support services and tutoring. Depending on the college, the Workforce Development department can part of the Professional/Technical department or it can be a separate department. Workforce Development can also be referred to as Workforce Education in some colleges. (See Workforce Education and Professional/Technical Education)

Workforce Education: Programs focused on developing work-related skills in a given occupation. In the college, Workforce Education may be another name for Workforce Development, or it may be another name for the Professional/Technical Division. (See Workforce Development and Professional/Technical Education)