**COLLEGE DICTIONARY**

**COMMON STANDARD POST-SECONDARY TERMS**

* *Acceptance/Admission*.  This is when the school a student applied to lets them in.
* *Accredited*. Recognized associations of schools and colleges approve programs, procedures, and facilities of post-secondary schools, based on certain standardized criteria.
* *ACT*. College entrance exam that includes test areas in English, Math, Reading, Science and an optional writing section. Many Midwestern colleges require the ACT.  Scores for each section are averages which create a composite score.  A perfect score is a 36.
* *Application*.  Application is the process by which a student submits the required forms and credentials to the school he/she wants to go to.  Application requirements may include one or more of the following:  previous academic records, test scores, interviews, recommendations, and other information provided by the applicant.
* *Arts and Sciences*. A program of courses that does not primarily have a vocational aim; sometimes referred to as Liberal Arts.
* *Associate Degree*. A degree granted by a college or university after satisfactory completion of the equivalent of a two-year, full-time program of study.
* *Bachelor’s or baccalaureate degree*. A degree received after the satisfactory completion of a four- or five-year, full-time program of study at a college or university.  The bachelor of arts (B.A.) and a bachelor of science (B.S.) are the most common baccalaureates.
* *Class Rank*. A student’s comparative standing in his/her high school class, based upon Grade Point Average (GPA).  Class rank may be listed as a number or as a percentile.  For example, a student who ranks above 375 of his 400 classmates would have a class rank of 24th, or be listed in the 94% percentile.  Having a high class rank is important because both scholarship and college applications will want to know about it.
* *College*. A school of higher learning that grants a degree.  College refers to a two-year or four-year school, or a university division.
* *College Calendars*. Traditional semester – two approximately equal semesters; quarter – four equal terms of about 12 weeks each; trimester – calendar year divided into three equal semesters, the third semester replaces summer school.  Calendars are always listed in the school’s catalog.
* *College Fair*.  A free public event featuring regional and/or national college representatives and financial aid sessions.
* *Common Application Form*. A standardized form accepted by certain cooperating colleges and universities.  Common applications can be real timesavers when applying to several select schools.
* *Community Colleges (two year)*. Institutions that offer certificates, diplomas and associate degrees in a variety of programs.
* *Cost of Attendance (COA)*.  Cost of Attendance is the estimated cost of a full-time student completing one full year of his or her college education at a given school.  It includes tuition, room and board (food), student fees, books and supplies, and transportation costs.
* *Co-Ed*.  A school, facility, or program that includes both men and women.  This term is usually used when referring to a university of dorm.
* *Credit Hour*. A value generally given a particular course based on the number of class hours per week in a term.  Most college classes are three credit hours, meaning their total meeting time for a week is three hours.  Note that this does not include homework and other work done outside class.
* *Curriculum*. Courses of study.
* *Deferred admission*. The practice of permitting students to postpone enrollment, usually for one year, after acceptance to the college.
* *Degree*.  Degrees are what students get for completing a program of study at a college or university.  There are three basic types of degrees: Associate Degrees – obtainable at a two-year community or junior college, Bachelor’s Degrees – offered by four-year colleges and universities, and Graduate Degrees – obtained after the Bachelor’s Degree (for example – Masters Degree, Doctoral Degree, etc.)
* *Direct PLUS Loan*.   A federal loan that allows parents of a dependent student to borrow up to the cost of education minus other types of financial aid.
* *Direct Subsidized Loan*.  A need-based federal student loan in which the government pays interest while the borrower is attending college.
* *Direct Unsubsidized Loan*.  A federal student loan in which the borrower is responsible for all accrued interest, even while attending college.
* *Distance learning*. An option for earning college credit off-campus via cable television, Internet, satellite classes, videotapes, correspondence courses, or other means.
* *Dual enrollment*. Students may earn post-secondary school credit while still in high school from participating two-year and four-year schools.
* *Elective*. A course that is not a requirement.
* *Expected Family Contribution (EFC)*.  Determined by the FAFSA, this is the amount a family is expected to contribute toward their student’s college expenses.  The EFC is subtracted from a college’s COA (Cost of Attendance) before an institution decides how much financial aid a student will receive.  The general rule is the lower a student’s EFC, the higher the amount of financial aid offered.
* *FAFSA*.  The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the required application to apply for any type of federal financial aid including grants, work-study and student loans.
* *Full-Time student*. At least 12 credit hours per semester
* *General Educational Development (GED)*. A series of five tests that individuals who did not complete high school may take through their state education system to qualify for a high school equivalency certificate.  Many colleges accept satisfactory GED test results in lieu of high school graduation.
* *Graduate school*. Advanced study beyong college graduation, i.e., Master’s or Doctoral degree.
* *Grade-point average (GPA).*A system used by many schools for evaluating the overall scholastic performance of students.
* *Honors program*. A college program for academically talented students that offers the opportunity for educational enrichment, independent study, acceleration, or some combination of these.
* *Independent study*. Individualized  college coursework completed outside of the regular classroom structure under the direct supervision of the course instructor.
* A short-term, supervised work experience, usually related to a student’s major field, for which the student earns academic credit. The work can be full- or part-time, on- or off-campus, paid or unpaid.  Student teaching and apprenticeships are examples.
* *Major*. The student’s academic field of specialization. In general, most courses in the major are taken at the degree-granting institution during the junior and senior year.
* *Military academies*. Institutions that offer tuition-free education in exchange for military service.
* *Minor*. Similar to a major, a second area of concentrated study.
* *Nonresident*.  Any student who lives out of state or does not meet specific state residency requirements.  This is especially relevant for students applying to state universities.
* *Online courses*.  Classes held on the internet instead of in a traditional classroom.
* *Open admission*. The college admission policy of admitting high school graduates and other adults generally without regard to conventional academic qualifications, such as high school subjects, high school grades, and admission test scores. Virtually all applicants with high school diplomas or their equivalent are accepted.
* *Out-Of-State tuition*. An additional fee charged by a state college or university to students who are non-residents.
* *Personal Identification Number (PIN)*.  A unique identifier that allows you to access or update information on your FAFSA and federal student loans.  This number will serve as a legally binding electronic signature, so keep it secure and private.
* *Post-Secondary Education*.  The study beyond the level of secondary education. Institutions of higher education include not only colleges and universities but also professional schools in such fields as law, theology, medicine, business, music, and art. They also include teacher-training schools, community colleges, and institutes of technology. At the end of a prescribed course of study, a degree, diploma, or certificate is awarded
* *Private Career Schools*. Institutions that specialize in technology-related fields or trades such as business or cosmetology. These schools award diplomas, certificates, associate degrees, and in some cases, bachelor degrees.
* *Private Colleges*. Institutions that financially rely on endowments, tuition and fund-raising campaigns. They do not receive government subsidies.
* *Public Colleges*. Institutions that are financially supported by the state in which they’re located.
* *Religious-Affiliated Colleges*. Institutions that have a sponsoring denomination, but most welcome students who don’t subscribe to that faith.
* *Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC).*Programs conducted by certain colleges in cooperation with the United States Air Force, Army, and Navy.  Naval ROTC includes the Marine Corps. Local recruiting offices of the services themselves can supply detailed information about these programs, as can participating colleges.
* *Residency*. If a student lives within a state’s boundaries for a specified number of months for a purpose other than higher education, he/she may attend one of the state’s public colleges at a lower tuition cost than non-residents. Tuition at private colleges is not based on residency.
* *Resume*.  A document that highlights one’s contact information, education background, professional experience, honors, extracurricular activities, and coursework.  A resume is always required when applying for any sort of professional job or internship and is usually what determines whether an applicant will receive an interview and/or get hired.
* *SAT*. College entrance exam that measures verbal, writing and math reasoning skills. Scores on each section range from 200-800 points.
* *School Expenses*. The total annual cost of tuition, fees, room, board, books, travel, personal expenses, etc.
* *Student Aid Report (SAR)*.  The federal report generated from filing or updating your FAFSA.  The SAR summarizes your FAFSA information and provides the Expected Family Contribution amount.  The SAR is either mailed to your or provided online via a secure Web link.
* *Study Abroad*. Any arrangement by which a student completes a brief part of their college program studying in another country. A college may operate a campus abroad, or it may have a cooperative agreement with some other U.S. college or an institution of the other country.
* *Transcript*. A copy of a student’s official academic record listing all courses taken and grades received.
* *Transfer student*. A student who has attended another college for any period, which may be defined by various colleges as any time from a single term up to three years.  A transfer student may receive credit for all or some of the courses successfully completed before the transfer.
* *Tuition*. The amount paid for each credit hour of enrollment.  Tuition does not include the cost of books, fees, or housing.
* *Universities and Colleges (4-year).*Institutions that offer bachelor degrees and a variety of majors.  Many also offer advanced degrees such as masters and doctorates.
* *Work-Study*.  This program provides college students with a part-time to help pay for school.  There are two different kinds of work-study: Federal Work-Study (run by the government) and non-Federal Work-Study (usually run by the college a student attends).