

Academic Terms Used In College

ACADEMIC ADVISOR: A faculty or staff who assists students individually with planning their course of study and understanding academic policies and procedures.

ACADEMIC PROBATION: This is a warning to the student that his or her academic progress is unsatisfactory. In some colleges, there are several degrees of academic probation.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE: A two-year degree in the arts or sciences.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE: A student receives this degree upon completing his or her undergraduate studies. There is a Bachelor's of Arts (B.A.) and a Bachelor's of Science (B.S.).

CATALOG: A campus publication, used by students and faculty. This book provides information ranging from specific college academic and non-academic programs; rules and regulations; and admission policies. Also included are the institution's academic and non-academic calendars.

CLEP: College Level Examination Program. Tests given to college students that allows them to prove their knowledge in certain areas of studies. By passing these test, students can earn credit and advance to higher course levels.

CREDIT/HOURS: What a student receives upon completing a college course. Credits are based on the number of hours spent in a class.

DEADLINE: The due date for a course assignment; paper, project, ect.

DEAN: Senior academic officer of a college. A college or university may have several schools headed by deans.

DEGREE: What a college student receives once he or she fulfills a course curriculum.

DOCTORATE: An academic program with a research focus that is pursued after a Master's degree. A Doctoral degree signifies original scholarship in an academic field or discipline.

DROP/ADD: During the first weeks of a semester, the student is allowed to drop a course and add another course for that semester or quarter.

ELECTIVES: Courses of interest that can be taken for credit but cannot apply toward a major or minor. These courses are outside of a student's required curriculum.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA): The grading system used in college. Numbers instead of letters are used to calculate academic progress and success.

INDEPENDENT STUDY: A program where students are allowed to take a course under a professor's direction, without classroom participation, and still gain academic credit.

MAJOR: A specialized field of study that a student chooses to pursue through his or her college career.

MASTERS: A degree awarded to a graduate student once he or she has completed the first level of graduate school.

MIDTERMS: Test administered midway through the semester or quarter to assess the student's progress.

MINOR: Along with a major, students can take additional courses to compliment their academic concentration and curriculum.

PASS/FAIL: A system where a student does not receive a letter grade for taking a course. Depending upon the student's achievement in the class, the word PASS or FAIL appears on the transcript.

QUARTER: One of four terms in a college year. Fall, winter, spring, summer.

REGISTRAR: Processes and maintains student transcripts and other official records affiliated with student attendance and accomplishments.

SEMESTER: The school year is composed of semesters. Depending on the institution, there can be two or three semesters per year. Semesters usually last three to four months.

SYLLABUS: A professor's plan of action for the class. It is a schedule of requirements usually explain the intent of the course and what the student's responsibilities are, such as assigned readings or papers and when the tests are due during the semester or quarter.

TRANSCRIPT: The compilation of the student's grades, credits, honors, ect., received through his or her college career.