

TERMS

When you plan for college you need to understand certain terms that are commonly used by colleges to describe their programs, admissions procedures, and financial aid policies. The definitions given here are necessarily general, and it is suggested that students consult the college catalogs of specific institutions in order to get more accurate, detailed, and up-to-date descriptions of the procedures, programs, and practices discussed.

Accreditation: Recognized as maintaining standards that qualify the graduates for admission to higher or more specialized institutions.

Admission Tests: See SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Test, and ACT.

Advanced Placement: Admission or assignment of a college freshman to an advanced course in a certain subject on the basis of evidence that he/she has already completed the equivalent of the college's freshman course in that subject. In some cases the college may also grant academic credit for the college-level work that has been completed. Schools administer the examinations to qualified students, and several hundred participating colleges offer advanced placement, college credit, or both to students who obtain satisfactory grades on AP Exams.

American College Test (ACT) Assessment: Test battery of the American College Testing Program, given at test centers in the United States and other countries on specified dates throughout the year. It includes tests in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The composite score referred to in some colleges' descriptions and tables is the average of a student's scores on these four tests.

Associate's Degree: The degree given for completing certain college programs of at least two but less than four years of study, usually in a two-year institution such as a junior college or community college.

Bachelor's Degree: The degree given for completing certain undergraduate college programs that normally takes four years. Also called the baccalaureate degree.

Calendar: The system by which an institution divides its year into shorter periods for instruction and awarding credit. The most common calendars are those based on semesters, trimesters, and quarters.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA): A college subscribing to this agreement will not require any applicant offered admission as a freshman to notify it of his/her decision to attend (or to accept an offer of financial aid) before May 1. The purpose of the agreement is to give applicants time to hear from all of the colleges they have applied to before they have to make a commitment to any one of them.

College Scholarship Service (CSS): An activity of the College Board that provides colleges and scholarship agencies with an estimate of the amount of money an applicant's family might reasonably be expected to pay toward his/her college expenses. This estimate is based on information that the family has given about its income and assets and is sent to the colleges and agencies designated by the family. It is used by the colleges and scholarship agencies in determining how much financial aid, if any, an applicant will need in order to meet the full costs of attending particular colleges

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE: A financial aid service from the College Scholarship Service of The College Board required by some colleges. Registration forms will be available in the Guidance Office. After registration, students will receive a customized

profile application packet which they will complete and return to CSS for processing and distribution to appropriate colleges and scholarship programs. Remember, **not all** colleges will require this form. Students should contact Financial Aid offices at all schools to which they plan to apply to determine what forms are necessary.

Cooperative Education: A college program in which a student alternates between semesters (or other periods) of full-time study and full-time employment in related work. The student is paid for his/ her work at the prevailing rate. Typically, five years are required to complete a bachelor's degree program under the cooperative plan, but the graduate has the advantage of having completed about a year's practical experience in addition to his/her studies.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): Information is requested about income and assets of both parents and students to determine eligibility for federal student aid. **All** families applying for financial aid must complete this form. You are encouraged to apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov **as soon as possible** after January 1st.

Grade Point Average: A system used by many colleges for evaluating the overall scholastic performance of students. It is found by first determining the number of grade points a student has earned in each course he/she completed and then by dividing the sum of all his grade points by the number of points or hours of course work he/she carried. His/her grade points for a course are found by multiplying the number of points or hours given for the course by his/her grade in the course.

Honors Program: Any special program for strong academic students, usually offering the opportunity for educational enrichment, independent study, acceleration, or some combination of these. Consult with individual colleges to determine your eligibility.

Need Aware Admission: College includes the ability to pay as a factor in their decision to admit or not admit the applicant.

Need Blind Admission: College makes admission decision to admit or not admit an applicant without regard to the applicant's ability to pay.

New England Regional Student Program: Public colleges in New England offer tuition breaks to out of state students selecting majors in fields **NOT** offered at any public institution in the state where the student resides.

Pell Grants: A federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students.

Perkins Loan: A federally funded program, that provides loans for undergraduate education. Repayment need not begin until you complete your education and any military service or service with the Peace Corps or AmeriCorps. Repayment terms are favorable, and repayment may be partially or wholly waived if you go into certain kinds of employment.

Quarter: A period of about 11 weeks, four of which comprise an academic year. In colleges following the quarter calendar, a student makes normal progress by attending three quarters each year. In some colleges a student can accelerate his/her program by attending all four quarters in one or more years.

Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC): Reserve Officers' Training Corps program conducted by certain colleges in cooperation with the United States Air Force, Army, and Navy. Local recruiting offices of the services themselves can supply detailed information about these programs, as can the participating colleges. See section on military.

SAT Reasoning Tests: College Entrance Examination Board test given at test centers in the United States and other countries on specified dates throughout the year. This is a three-hour and thirty-five minute examination focusing on college success skills: writing, reading and mathematics

SAT Subject Tests: College Entrance Examination Board tests in specific secondary school subjects, given at test centers in the United States and other countries on specified dates throughout the year. Colleges that require these tests of applicants may specify the subjects and dates. Used by colleges not only in deciding about admissions but also in course placement of enrolled freshmen.

Semester: A period of about 17 or 18 weeks making up half of the usual academic year in colleges that follow this kind of calendar. Also see Calendar, Trimester, and Quarter.

Study Abroad: Any arrangement by which a student is enabled to complete part of his/her college program - typically the junior year but sometimes only a semester or a summer - study in another country. His/her own college may operate the campus abroad or it may have a cooperative agreement with some other American college or an institution of the other country.

3-2 Liberal Arts and Engineering Combination: Program in which a student completes three years of study in a liberal arts college followed by two years in an engineering college, at the end of which he/she is awarded the bachelor of arts and bachelor of science degrees, respectively, from the two institutions.

Trimester: A period of about 15 weeks, three of which, with breaks in between comprise the academic year. A student makes normal progress by attending all three trimesters each year.