

# COLLEGE TERMINOLOGY

**Academic Advisor/Counselor** - This person will help you set educational goals, select the correct courses, review the course requirements in the field you have selected to pursue, and help you with any academic problems you may encounter. At some institutions, academic advisement is conducted by faculty as part of their job duties. Other institutions may designate specific staff as academic counselors/advisor.

**Academic Courses**-Designated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for transfer among community colleges and state public four year colleges and universities as freshman and sophomore general education courses.

**Academic Dismissal (DISM)** - Students on Academic Dismissal with DCCCD are not eligible to enroll in credit courses for a period of 12 months.

**Academic Standing**-Academic Standing is also known as Acceptable Scholastic Performance or Good Standing. It is based upon grade point average (GPA). Semester GPA and GPA (1) determine academic standing and are computed at the end of each semester. Procedures have been developed to positively intervene with Academic Standings other than "Good" (see below).

**Add**- Adding an additional course(s) to a class schedule.

**Admission**- The process of being admitted to the college. A person wishing to enroll must complete an application, be accepted and receive acknowledgement of acceptance from the Admissions Office before registering for classes.

**Application**- Submitting a request to be accepted to enroll in the college.

**Advanced Standing Credit** - These are credit hours that an institution accepts toward a degree from courses that the student has earned elsewhere. Such credit may be given for work done at another higher education institution, by examination or "testing out," or by military service.

**Alumni** - people who have graduated from the institution.

**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 and social studies. 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. Depending on the application requirements of a particular school, the student can gain Acceptance to the institution if the decision to accept the application is positive. Admission is the status granted to an applicant who meets the prescribed entrance requirements of the institution. It must be noted that there is a wide variation nationwide in the Application/Acceptance/Admission policies of higher education institutions. Check the college catalog for specific requirements of the schools you are considering.

**Associate 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. The Associate Degree requires completion of a minimum of 60 credit hours, exclusive of physical education activity courses or military science courses, with a

**Bachelor's Degree** - This is the undergraduate degree offered by four-year colleges and universities. The Bachelor of Arts degree requires that a portion of the student's studies be dedicated to the arts - literature, language, music, etc. The Bachelor of Science degree requires that a 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.

**Career Pathway**- An educational process where the colleges and the public high school districts cooperatively develop and implement a planned sequence of courses to prepare students for technologically advanced careers. Career Pathway students earn college credit while in high school and advance to college programs after graduation.

**Career and Technical Courses**- Courses that are designed to aid the student in developing skills to be used in the job market and that lead to a certificate or Associate in Applied Sciences Degree in a technical or occupational program. These courses are designed to aid the student in developing entry-level skills to be used in the job market. Consult an advisor regarding transferability if you plan to attend a four-year institution.

**Catalog**- The official listing of courses and programs students can select from to earn certificates and associate degrees. Catalogs also include general information about the college and also specifies the policies and procedures enforced by the college. When a new college catalog is published each year, catalogs are classified as current, active or historical. A current catalog is one that is published for students' use in the current academic year. An active catalog includes the current catalog and the previous four years of catalogs. A historical catalog is one that is older than five years and has been archived. Current, active and historical catalogs are available to students online on DCCCD's website.

**Class Schedule**-A listing of all the courses being offered at any time and includes the section numbers, dates, times, room numbers, and instructor's names.

**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.

**College-Level Math**- Requires a student to have successfully completed two years of high school algebra and an appropriate assessment test score or a standard which is higher than the state's TSI standard.

**Commuter** - A commuter is a student who lives off-campus and drives to class, or commutes.

**Concurrent Enrollment** - A student can enroll and attend two educational institutions at the same time provided that certain criteria are met. For example: a high school senior can concurrently enroll in high school and in college provided he/she meets established criteria. A college student can concurrently enroll at two higher education institutions provided that certain criteria are met. Permission for concurrent enrollments are generally made in advance.

**Co-requisite/Concurrent**- A course requirement that must be met simultaneously with another course.

**Course Load**- The number of hours or courses in which a student is enrolled in any given semester.

**Credit Hours** - The number of credits awarded for successfully completing a course(s). This number is determined by the type of class and the number of hours it meets per week.

**Credit/noncredit**- The distinction between courses that accrue semester credit value and those offered through Continuing Education for C.E. Unit value.

**Curriculum** - A curriculum is composed of those classes prescribed or outlined by an institution for completion of a program of study leading to a degree or certificate.

**DCCCD**: Dallas County Community College District is a body of seven individually accredited colleges - Brookhaven, Cedar Valley, Eastfield, El Centro, Mountain View, North Lake, and Richland that are all subject to the policies established by the DCCCD Board of Trustees.

**Degree Requirements** - Those requirements prescribed by other institutions for completion of a program of study are generally termed degree requirements. Requirements may include a minimum number of hours, required GPA, prerequisite and elective courses within the specified major, and/or minor areas of study.

**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.

**Department** - A department is the basic organizational unit in a higher education institution, and is responsible for the academic functions in a field of study. It may also be used in the broader sense to indicate an administrative or service unit of an institution.

**Division** - A division could be several different things: an administrative unit of an institution, usually consisting of more than one department... a unit of an institution based on the year-level of students - i.e., lower and upper division... or a branch of the institution, instructional or not - i.e., the Division of Student Affairs.

**Drop and Add** - Students are generally permitted to drop courses from their class schedules and/or add other courses. Colleges allow varying lengths of time for students to add and drop classes. The college catalog or class schedule should note the correct procedures. Students usually need written approval from designated college officials to initiate dropping or adding a class. A small fee is often required.

**Dual credit**- Credit earned for both high school and college via concurrently enrolled high school students.

**eCampus**- Courses offered online are sometimes referred to as "eCampus" courses. eCampus also refers to the Web site students use to access their online courses. To access eCampus, visit <http://ecampus.dcccd.edu/>.

**eConnect**- eConnect is a Web application that allows you to plan your schedule, search, register/drop and pay for your credit classes, buy books, order transcripts, view your grades and access your personal/financial information online. You must meet certain eligibility criteria to register online. All students are eligible to search or pay for credit classes and access their personal/financial information using eConnect. To access eConnect, visit <https://eConnect.dcccd.edu> .

**Enrollment** - This is the procedure by which students choose classes each semester. It also includes the assessment and collection of fees. Pre-enrollment is the method by which students select courses well in advance of the official enrollment date of the next term.

**Extra-Curricular Activities** - These are non-classroom activities that can contribute to a well-rounded education. They can include such activities as athletics, clubs, student government, recreational and social organizations and events.

**Faculty** - The faculty is composed of all persons who teach classes for colleges.

**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.

**Final Exams (Finals)** - These exams are usually given during the last week of classes each semester. The type of final administered in a course is left to the discretion of the instructor. Final exams are given on specified dates that may be different than the regular class time, and are usually listed in each semester's class schedule.

**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. The types and amounts of aid awarded are determined by financial need, available funds, student classification, academic performance, and sometimes the timeliness of application.

**Fraternities/Sororities (also called the Greek System)** - Fraternities (for men) and sororities (for women) are social organizations that are active in various activities. Through a process of mutual selection, called Rush (which takes place during a specified period of time), students may be offered the opportunity to "pledge" a certain fraternity or sorority. Not all colleges have these organizations.

**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).

**Good Standing**- Good Standing is awarded to students maintaining a cumulative/overall GPA (1) of 2.0 or higher. Students who do not earn an overall GPA (1) of 2.0 or higher are placed on Probation One.

**GPA**- Grade Point Average (GPA). Two different ways of computing a GPA are utilized by DCCCD.

**Honor Roll** - Students are placed on honor rolls for GPAs above certain specified levels. Criteria for President's, Dean's, or other honor rolls vary at different institutions. In most cases, students must be enrolled full-time to be eligible.

**Humanities Courses** - Humanities courses are classes covering subjects such as literature, philosophy, and the fine arts. Most undergraduate degrees require a certain number of humanities credit hours.

**Junior/Community College** - A Junior/Community College is a two-year institution of higher education. Course offerings generally include a transfer curriculum with credits transferable toward a bachelor's degree at a four-year college, and an occupational or technical curriculum with courses of study designed to prepare students for employment in two years.

**Lecture/Laboratory/Discussion Classes** - In lecture classes, students attend class on a regular basis and the instructor lectures on class material. Laboratory classes require students to perform certain functions in controlled situations that help them test and understand what is being taught in the lecture. Discussion classes offer students the opportunity to talk about material being taught, ask questions, and discuss material with their classmates. Discussion classes are often taught by Masters or Doctoral students, and are becoming more common on college campuses.

**Letter Grades/Grade Point Averages (GPA)** - Most colleges use both letter grades and GPAs in determining students' grades. Grades at most colleges are figured using the following method: As are worth 4 points Bs are worth 3 points Cs are worth 2 points Ds are worth 1 point Fs are worth 0 points To figure a GPA, simply multiply the number of hours a course is worth by the number of points for the letter grade, then add up the totals for each course and divide by the number of credit hours. The result is the grade point average.

**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.

**Mid-Term Exams (Midterms)** - During the middle of each semester, instructors may give mid-term exams that test students on the material covered during the first half of the semester. Some classes have only two tests, a midterm and a final.

**Non-Credit Courses** - These are classes or courses that do not meet the requirements for a certificate of a degree at a given institution. Non-credit courses may serve one of several purposes: to explore new fields of study, increase proficiency in a particular profession, develop potential or enrich life experiences through cultural and/or recreational studies.

**Open-Door Institution** - Open-door institutions are usually public two-year junior/community colleges. The term open-door refers to an admission policy that states that anyone who is 18 years of age or older, whether or not a high school graduate, can be admitted to that college.

**Pass/Fail Courses** - Pass/fail courses do not earn letter grades or grade points for students. If a student passes a pass/fail course, he/she receives a "P" (pass) or "S" (satisfactory) on the transcript and the credit hours. If the student does not pass the course, they will receive an "F" (fail) or a "U" (unsatisfactory) on the transcript and no credit hours. The evaluation for the pass/fail course is not figured into the student's GPA.

**Petition** - A petition is both the process and the form a student fills out to request consideration of special circumstances. For example, if a student is denied admission, they may petition for admission based on extenuating circumstances.

**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. Private institutions are governed by a board of trustees.

**Probation One (PROB1)**: Students on Probation One may have the total number of credit hours limited and may be required to register for specific courses. Students on Probation One must earn a semester GPA of at least 2.0 or withdraw from any coursework attempted. Students that meet the semester requirement will remain on Probation One until their cumulative GPA (1) is 2.0 or higher. Students with a standing of PROB1 who do not meet the semester requirement will be placed on Suspension.

**Probation Two (PROB2)** - Students readmitted after Suspension will be placed on Probation Two. Students on Probation Two may have the total number of credit hours limited and may be required to register for specific courses. Students on Probation Two must earn a semester GPA of at least 2.0 or withdraw from any coursework attempted. Students that meet the semester requirement remain on Probation Two until their cumulative GPA (1) is 2.0 or higher. Students with a standing of PROB2 who do not meet the semester requirement will be placed on Academic Dismissal.

**Probation Three (PROB3)** - Students readmitted after Dismissal will be placed on Probation Three. Students on Probation Three may have the total number of credit hours limited and may be required to register for specific courses. Students on Probation Three must earn a semester GPA of at least 2.0 or withdraw from any coursework attempted. Students that meet the semester requirement remain on Probation Three until their cumulative GPA (1) is 2.0 or higher. Students with a standing of PROB3 who do not meet the semester requirement will be placed on Indefinite Dismissal.

**Registrar** - The registrar of an institution is responsible for the maintenance of all academic records and may include such duties as: maintenance of class enrollments, providing statistical information on student enrollment, certification of athletic eligibility and student eligibility for honor rolls, certification of the eligibility of veterans, administering probation and retention policies and verification of the completion of degree requirements for graduation.

**Review of Academic Standings**-Students placed on Probation One, Two, or Three will be required to see an advisor to register. Students may request a review of any academic standing, including Probation One, Probation Two, Probation Three, Suspension, Academic Dismissal and Indefinite Academic Dismissal. The chief student affairs officer at each college is responsible for establishing a review process. It is the student's responsibility to understand and comply with the college's academic standings and procedures of the institution.

**Schedule of Classes**- Colleges publish and distribute a Class Schedule book for each semester, during the previous semester. With the help of academic advisors and/or faculty members, students make up their own individual class schedules for each semester they are enrolled. Courses are designated in the Class Schedule by course department, course number, time and days the course meets, the room number and building name, and the instructor's name. A class schedule is also simply a list of classes a student is taking, which includes course name and number, time and location of the class, and possibly the instructor.

**Student Identification Card (I.D.)** - A student ID is usually required in college. It is similar to a driver's license and generally includes a photograph of the student, a student number (often the social security number), the student's name, the name of the college and the semester enrolled. The IDs require validation each semester. The card is often required for admittance to functions sponsored by the college or for identification when cashing checks or for other purposes.

**Suspension (SUSP)** - Students on Suspension are ineligible to enroll in credit courses in the next subsequent semester or session of enrollment (Fall Semester, Spring Semester or Summer Session).

**Syllabus**-An outline of the important information about a course. Written by the professor or instructor, it usually includes important dates, assignments, expectations and policies specific to that course. Some are quite lengthy.

**Transcript** - The transcript is a permanent academic record of a student at college. It may show courses taken, grades received, academic status and honors received. Transcripts are not released by the college if the student owes any money to the college.

**Transfer courses**- Courses that are designed to transfer to other colleges and universities. Students need to consult with a registration advisor or check on the Transfer Services/Articulation and University Relations Web site about the transferability of specific courses. Because a course will transfer does not mean it will apply toward a specific major or degree.

**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.

**TSI**- The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Program is required by state law to ensure students enrolled in Texas public colleges possess the academic skills needed to perform effectively in college-level coursework. Visit <https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/GeneralInfo/AdmissAssessAdvEnroll/tsi.cfm> for more information.

**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.

**Tutors** - A tutor is a person, generally another student, who has completed and/or demonstrated proficiency in a course or subject, and is able to provide instruction to another student. Tutors usually help students better understand course material and make better grades.

**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.

**WECM Courses**- Designated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as workforce education (technical) courses offered for credit and CEUs (Continuing Education Units). While these courses are designed to transfer among state community colleges, they are not designed to automatically transfer to public four-year colleges and universities.

**Withdrawal** - Students may withdraw from courses during a semester, but there are established procedures for doing so. The college catalog and/or Class Schedule generally specifies the procedures. Written approval from a university official must be secured, and some fees must be paid.

**Source:**

<http://www.collegeprep101.com/articles/terminology.htm>

<https://www1.dcccd.edu/catalog/GeneralInfo/Glossary/terms.cfm>