

Common College Definitions

ACT (American College Testing): The ACT is an admission exam. It'll tell you where you are in your education. It can show how ready you are for college-level work in English, math, reading, and science. Some colleges are using it to place students in their English and math classes for their first year. The ACT Assessment is designed to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

Advanced Placement Courses: AP courses offer college-level coursework in high schools. To earn college credit, students must take an end-of-the-year exam which covers all of the course material.

Advanced Placement Test: This is a standardized test to measure how well you understand a specific subject. The tests are given by the College Board in May. If you score high enough on the test, you might be able to earn college credit. Talk with your counselor about your options.

Appeal: This is a process you can go through if you didn't get into a college. It means you want a college to take a look at your application again to see if you can be admitted.

Cal Grant: This is money for college that you won't have to pay back. There are different types of Cal Grants. Each is its own amount depending on the college you're going to go to. To get a Cal Grant, you have to fill out the FAFSA or CADAA by March 2nd.

CADAA (California Dream Act Applications): This is the application that undocumented and nonresident students fill out for financial aid. They can get state and campus financial aid from applying for the CADAA.

CCC (California Community Colleges): Public colleges that offer associate degrees, transferable credits, and certificate programs. To apply to any CCC, you must create an account through CCCApply.

Financial Aid: This is a term for the help you can get to pay for college. It includes grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study. You can get financial aid from the federal government, state government, your college, and private organizations.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): This is a free application you can fill out for federal financial aid. You can get grants, work-study opportunities, and loans. If you are an undocumented student, you'll fill out the CADAA.

FSA ID (Federal Student Aid Identification): The FSA ID is a username and password combination you use to log in to U.S. Department of Education (ED) online systems. The FSA ID is your legal signature and shouldn't be created or used by anyone other than you. Visit StudentAid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch to create an FSA ID. You'll need your Social Security number, full name, and date of birth.

Loans: This is money you borrow for college. It's a part of your financial aid that you'll have to pay back after college. All loans gain interest as time goes by. You're responsible for paying for the loan and the interest it gains.

Priority Registration: This is a time frame when some students can sign up for their classes earlier than others. It makes sure that you get into the classes you need before they become full. Check with your counselor to find out if you can sign up for priority registration.

PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test): This is a practice test for the SAT. It's usually given to 10th and 11th graders.

SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test): This is a college entrance exam, like the ACT, meant to show schools how prepared you are for college by measuring key skills in reading, writing, and math.

Transcripts: This is a list of the classes you've taken in high school or college. It includes the grades you've gotten in each class and your overall GPA. Colleges look at your transcripts when you apply. They usually ask for a final transcript once you've graduated.