

Glossary of College Search Terms

ACT or SAT - The most widely used and recognized college entrance exams. Many colleges also require one or more SAT Subject Area Tests as well.

Admissions Decisions

- **Admit** — You are offered admissions to the college for which you have applied.
- **Admit/deny** — You have been admitted, but denied any financial aid.
- **Deferred Admission** – Postponing enrollment, usually for one year, after acceptance to college.
- **Deny** — You were not granted admission to the college or university for which you have applied.
- **Wait list** — You have been placed on a waiting list in case an opening becomes available.

Associate Degree - A degree granted by a college or university after the satisfactory completion of a two year full time program of study or its part-time equivalent. In general, the associate of arts (A.A.) or associate of science (A.S.) degree is granted after students complete a program of study similar to the first two years of a four-year college curriculum. The associate in applied science (A.A.S.) is awarded by many colleges on completion of technological or vocational programs of study.

Award Letter - Financial aid offered by the college or university. The award letter provides information on the types and amounts of aid offered, as well as specific program information, as well as the student's responsibilities and the conditions that govern the award.

Bachelor's Degree - A degree received after the satisfactory completion of a four- or five- year full-time program of study (or its part-time equivalent) at a college or university. The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) are the most common bachelor's degrees.

CEEB Code - a six digit code that is assigned specific to your high school. This number is used to identify your school for the purpose of registering for tests and other applications.

Class Rank - The relative numeric position of a student in his or her graduating class, as determined by the secondary school. Rank is calculated according to grade point average and/or other measures of scholastic achievement.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP): A program of exams in undergraduate college courses. Students may earn postsecondary credit based on the receipt of a specified minimum score on a nationally standardized general or subject area examinations.

Common Application - The Common Application is a non-for profit organization that serves students and member institutions by providing admission application-online and in print- that students may submit to any of the organization's nearly 300 members.

Credit Hours - The number of hours per week that courses meet are counted as equivalent credits for financial aid and used to determine your status as a full- or part-time student.

Double Major - Any program in which a student completes the requirements of two majors concurrently.

Early Action - A program in which the student receives a decision earlier than the standard response date but is not required to accept the admissions offer or to make a deposit before May 1.

Early Decision - A program that commits participating students to enroll at the college if admitted and offered a satisfactory financial aid package. Application deadlines are usually in November or December, with a mid- to late-December notification date. Some colleges have two rounds of Early Decision.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) - The amount of financial support a family is expected to contribute toward a child's college education. This amount is part of the formula used by the federal government to determine financial aid eligibility using the FAFSA form.

First Time in College (FTIC) – Students who have earned their high school diploma and are attending college for the first time. Previous dual enrollment students are classified as first time in college students when applying for post high-school course work.

Federal Pell Grant Program - This is a federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students. Congress annually sets the appropriation; award amounts vary based on need, and the maximum award for 2010-11 is \$5,550. This is "free" money because it does not need to be repaid.

Federal Perkins Loan Program - This is a federally run program based on need and administered by a college's financial aid office. This program offers low-interest loans for undergraduate study. Repayment does not begin until 9 months after the borrower drops to less than halftime enrollment status. The maximum loan amount is \$5,500 per year.

Federal Stafford Loan - This federal program provides low-interest loans for undergraduate and graduate students. The maximum annual loan amount depends on the student's grade level. Fixed interest rates will not exceed 6.8%. Repayment does not begin until 6 months after the borrower drops to less than halftime enrollment status. Several repayment options are available.

Federal Work-Study Program (FSW) - A federally financed program that arranges for students to combine employment and college study; the employment may be an integral part of the academic program (as in cooperative education or internships) or simply a means of paying for college.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - This is the federal government's instrument for calculating need-based aid. It is available from high school guidance departments, college financial aid offices, and the Internet (www.fafsa.gov). The form should be completed and mailed as soon after January 1 as possible.

Grants/Scholarships - These are financial awards that are usually dispensed by the financial aid offices of colleges and universities. The awards may be need- or merit-based. Most are need-based. Merit-based awards may be awarded on the basis of excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, or special talent.

Minor - An area of concentration with fewer credits than a major. The minor can be related to the major area of concentration or not; for example, an English major may have a minor in theater.

Open Admissions - A policy of admission that does not subject applicants to a review of their academic qualifications. Many public junior/community colleges admit students under this guideline, that is, any student with a high school diploma or its equivalent is admitted.

Rolling Admissions - An admissions procedure by which the college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials, such as school record and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies an applicant of its decision without delay. At many colleges, rolling admissions allows for early notification and works much like nonbinding Early Action programs.

Student Aid Report (SAR) - A report produced by the U.S. Department of Education and sent to students in response to their having filed FAFSA. The SAR contains information the student provided on the FAFSA as well as the federally calculated result, which the financial aid office will use in determining the student's eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant and other federal student aid programs.

Transfer Student - A student who transfers from one college or university to another. Credits applied toward the transfer will be evaluated by the receiving school to determine the number it will accept. Each school sets different policies for transfers, so anyone considering this option should seek guidance.

Upper division - This term refers to the junior and senior years of study. Some colleges offer only upper-division study. The lower divisions must be completed at another institution before entering these programs to earn a bachelor's degree.