

Common Academic Terms

Adapted from A Dictionary of American Idioms and Webster's New World
Dictionary of the American Language, Second Edition.

AP/Advanced Placement course: A college level course that students can take in high school to earn college credit.

audit: to take a course not for credit.

CoOp/Cooperative education: classroom-based education with practical work experience that provides academic credit for a structured job experience.

core requirement: basic courses required of all students for a particular major or program.

credit hours: the number of points towards one's degree earned by completing a particular course.

curriculum: materials and topics covered in a course or major.

curve: grading based on how well students do in relation to each other, not how well they do on actual assignments or tests.

drop/add: time during which students can change courses without penalty or affecting their permanent record or transcript.

elective: a course not required by university or major program.

final: longer test that may cover several chapters at the end of the course or the second half of the semester. comprehensive final: a test that consists of everything that has been taught during the semester.

first-year withdrawal policy: first-year students may withdraw from a course at any time during the semester, up until the last day of class Any course for which a grade of W is assigned will be deleted from the transcript at the end of the semester. This policy is not available for transfer students and does not apply to the summer session.

Grade Point Average (GPA): a numerical reference on a 4.0 scale (based on the averaged worth of letter grades for courses taken) that indicates a student's overall College performance.

grader: Teaching Assistant (TA) responsible for grading only, not classroom teaching.

hands-on learning: active participation in learning; learning by doing.

Terms Continued

major: primary, specialized area of study.

midterm: a longer test that may cover the first half of the course content or is scheduled mid-point in the semester

non-majors: students not majoring or specializing in a subject.

on reserve: books held at the library for a particular course.

overload: when a student is registered for more than the usual 18 credit hour course load.

pass/no pass: a course not taken for a letter grade but simply credit or no credit .

peer teaching: students teaching each other.

prerequisite: a course that must be taken before another.

reading days: free days for study between last day of classes and first day of final exams.

recitation leaders: Teaching Assistants who teach smaller subsections of large, lecture courses to go over the material with students in more detail.

office hours: the set time a professor/instructor schedules each week to be to meet with students

quiz: an informal test. pop quiz: an unexpected/unscheduled, surprise test.

registrar: office where students register for courses.

schedule: courses being taken in a particular term by a student, including meeting times, days, and location.

section: smaller part of a larger lecture course.

syllabus: a description of what will be included and required for a course, including assignments, test dates, books required, and grading and other university policies.

transcript: student's official record (administered by the registrar) of courses taken and grades received.

tutor: someone who gives individual, extra help to students; but is not an advisor or recitation leader.

withdraw: grade given when a course is dropped after the official drop/add period; a "W" appears on the transcript.