

GLOSSARY of TERMS for POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

ACCREDITED: to recognize at a post-secondary institution as maintaining standards required for its graduates to gain admission to other post-secondary institutions or qualify for credentials from a professional organization.

ACADEMIC ADVISOR: a person who is available through post-secondary student services to answer questions about registration, course selection, graduate requirements and program related questions.

ACADEMIC YEAR: the period of time usually from early September to late April, includes two consecutive semesters or terms (i.e., four months each).

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS: a set of rules that each post-secondary institution outlines for students to follow in order to gain acceptance into the institution. These can include specific courses, portfolio work, first aid certification etc.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE): allows students to upgrade their education to an equivalent of Grade 12 academic completion.

ADVISING: personal assistance to students trying to make academic decisions.

ALUMNI: people who have graduated from a university, school or college.

APPEAL: an appeal is made by students when an exceptional situation exists that requires special consideration. Each institution has a policy that outlines the appeal process.

APPRENTICESHIP: a systematic program of on-the-job training supplemented by in-school instruction. Students must be employed in a trade area and become registered through their employer.

ASSESSED FINANCIAL NEED: this is the amount calculated using a standardized method, and helps predict how much money you will need once your resources have been subtracted from your educational costs and living expenses.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE: a bachelor's degree is awarded upon completion of a program of study. Traditionally a bachelor's degree is four years in length.

BCCAT: the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer - responsible for the management of the BC Transfer Guide and Education Planner.

BURSARY: is a non-repayable award given primarily on the basis of assessed financial need.

CALENDAR: an annual publication, issued each year by post-secondary institutions to provide information regarding academic regulations, programs, courses, grading, and related topics.

CERTIFICATE: a formal credential awarded upon successful completion of a program of study. Certificate programs usually require up to one year of study.

COMMENCEMENT: an award ceremony honoring students who have fulfilled requirements for graduation.

COMPULSORY COURSE: a course that is required to move onto the next course level.

CONCURRENT STUDIES: a BC secondary school student who is taking post-secondary credit courses while in secondary school is enrolled in concurrent studies.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: non-credit courses, lectures, workshops, and seminars, usually offered in the evening or on weekends in a variety of areas, such as: general interest, employment, language skills, vocational, and business.

CONVOCATION: a formal ceremony held by universities to award degrees to graduating students.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION (COOP): a program that integrates classroom learning with semesters of paid practical work experience.

COREQUISITE: a course required to be taken at the same time as another course.

COURSE INFORMATION: the published information about each course that includes: subject area information, description, credit value, prerequisites, and hours of study assigned.

COURSE LOAD: the number of units or credits a student is taking each term.

COURSE SCHEDULE: a listing of credit and non-credit courses and the days, times and locations they are offered.

CREDENTIALS: evidence of an individual's qualifications (i.e. certificate, diploma, degree).

CREDIT: a value assigned by an institution to a course, to represent the quantity of work accomplished during a particular period of study.

CURRICULUM VITAE: a summary of one's academic qualifications, employment history, and experience. Sometimes referred to as a resume.

DEAN: The head of a Faculty, Department or School of Study

DEAN'S LIST: a listing of students who achieve an outstanding grade point average.

DEFAULT: failure to repay an outstanding student loan.

DEGREE: an academic credential awarded by a university to students who have successfully completed a program of study. A Bachelor's degree is awarded for completion of undergraduate studies; a Master's degree or PhD is awarded for completing advanced studies beyond the undergraduate level.

DIPLOMA: a formal credential issued to a student who has successfully completed a program that is usually not less than two academic years of full-time study.

DIPLOMA PROGRAM: a program that is one or two years long and leads to a diploma rather than a degree. They are usually geared toward employment in a particular field.

DISCIPLINE: a field of study within a department of a post-secondary institution.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM: the highest university degree. Generally a student must complete a bachelor's degree and a master's degree before embarking on doctoral studies. Most commonly designated as PhD.

DOMESTIC STUDENTS: students who are either Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

DROP (COURSE): before specific deadlines outlined by the individual institutions, students may apply to drop a course from their schedule and not have it appear on their transcript.

ECE: Early Childhood Education

ELECTIVE: a course that is used to fulfill credits beyond those specifically required for a program.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: a student's ability to read, write, listen, speak and comprehend the English Language.

EXCHANGE PROGRAM: a program of study that includes an opportunity to study abroad for a specific length of time (i.e. one year)

FACULTY: the members of the teaching staff at post-secondary institutions.

FIELD OF STUDY: a term used to describe a specific program's main area of study (i.e. Health is the Field of Study for Nursing etc)

FINANCIAL NEED: a process for determining when a student's legitimate expenses are more than their financial resources. Financial need is calculated for student loan applications and for some scholarship and bursary applications.

GED: General Education Development Test (i.e., grants Grade 12 equivalency)

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA): a figure derived by using grade points--a numerical value given to an alphabetical letter grade--to compute an average measure of performance. Most GPAs are based on a four-point scale.

GRADUATE SCHOOL: post-secondary programs students may wish to take after completion of a bachelor's degree.

GRADUATE STUDENT: a student who is completing a master's or doctoral degree.

HONOURS: the specialization in one discipline, usually during the third and fourth years of study. It is designed for students of above average ability.

IELTS: International English Language Testing System.

INSTITUTE: a post-secondary school that provides specialized training in technologies, trades, art and design, law enforcement or indigenous studies.

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES: a group of courses combining studies and research from different subject areas.

INTERNSHIP: a period of apprenticeship when students work off campus, under supervision, in a school, factory, hospital, business, laboratory, or government agency.

INTERSESSION: a break between regular terms which may offer courses in a condensed time frame.

LADDERING: a process that allows students to build upon previously earned post-secondary credits or credentials.

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INDEX (LPI): a method of rating the standard of English language usage that must be met by all incoming undergraduate students before they are allowed to register for first-year English courses.

LETTER OF INTENT: a short essay (about 500 words) that details your work and volunteer history, career goals and reasons for choosing your program. Individual programs may request additional information.

LIBERAL ARTS: academic disciplines taught within the behavioural and social sciences, and the humanities.

LECTURE: a presentation on a particular subject given in order to provide information about history, background, and theories.

LSAT: Law School Admission Test

MAJOR: in universities, the specialization in one discipline, usually during the third and fourth years of study.

MASTER'S DEGREE: the degree after a bachelor's degree. Students studying for a master's degree are referred to as graduate students.

MINOR: a secondary field of academic study with a concentration or specialization different than a major.

NON-CREDIT: courses that do not comprise part of a program of study leading to a credential awarded by a post-secondary institution.

PART-TIME STUDENT: an undergraduate student who is enrolled in fewer than 12 credit hours a term.

PhD. abbreviation for Doctor of Philosophy. This is the designation for doctoral degrees in most fields of study.

PRACTICUM: the portion of a course which is made up of practical work experience in the relevant field of study.

PREREQUISITE: requirement(s) that must be met before students may register in a particular course.

PROGRAM: a combination of course work leading to a specific credential.

REGISTRAR: the official at a post-secondary institution who is responsible for maintaining student records, and the application, admission and graduation policies.

REGISTRATION: the process of selecting specific courses in a particular term. After students are admitted into an institution, they must complete the registration process to get the courses they desire.

SEMINAR: the segment of a course devoted to discussion, presentations, and group projects.

SOFA: Safety Oriented First Aid Certificate (St. John Ambulance)

STUDENT FEES: a fee or combination of fees that is paid to the student associations or the institutions for services such as student activities, parking, recreation, etc.

STUDENT LOAN: A major source of need-based financial assistance provided by the federal and provincial governments. The government loans the borrower money interest free while the borrower is enrolled in full time study.

TERM: A segment of time in the academic year (i.e., four months) also referred to as a semester.

TIMETABLE: A schedule listing the days and times that courses (or examinations) are held.

TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language

TRANSCRIPT: an official record of all courses taken with credits and grades documented. A transcript for each student is maintained by the Admissions Office or Registrar's Office at all post-secondary institutions.

TRANSFER CREDIT: credit given at an institution for work successfully completed at another institution.

TUITION: the fee charged for post-secondary educational instruction.

TUTORIAL: a session of study given by a tutor to an individual or a small group of students.

UNDERGRADUATE: a university or college student who has not yet received a first degree or diploma

UNIVERSITY TRANSFER (UT): credit programs of study, usually in arts, social sciences, and science courses, which are transferable toward degree programs at universities.

VIEWBOOK: An annual publication, issued each year by post-secondary institutions to provide information regarding academic programs, admission requirements, and related topics.

VOCATIONAL AND TRADES TRAINING: a variety of vocational, trades, and health education training and upgrading designed to meet employment needs.

WITHDRAWAL: cancellation of registration in a course or program prior to the specific deadline set by the institution to avoid academic penalty.

WORK STUDY: A need-based form of financial aid which supplements government student loans and grants by allowing qualified individuals to work at a fair wage for up to 10 hours per week on campus, often in positions which relate to their area of study.