

Glossary

ACT (American College Testing Program)—A standardized college entrance examination consisting of four parts: English, math, reading and science reasoning. The ACT is offered on a number of dates throughout the year. (See a high school guidance counselor for the testing calendar.) Most colleges accept either the ACT or SAT I.

Academic Fresh Start—Senate Bill 1321 entitles residents of Texas to seek admission to public institutions of higher education without consideration of courses undertaken 10 or more years prior to enrollment. It gives students the option of electing to have course work taken 10 or more years prior to the starting date of the semester in which the applicant seeks to enroll either counted as usual or ignored for admission purposes. Applicants who elect to apply for admission under this law and who are admitted as students may not receive any course credit for courses undertaken 10 or more years prior to enrollment. Students cannot claim exemption from TASP on the basis of hours which they elect to ignore under Fresh Start. A student must make application for Fresh Start at the time of application for admission.

Academic Probation—A warning that a student's level of performance must improve if the student expects to continue in the University. A student whose WTAMU cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below the standard will be placed on academic probation for the next long semester for which he/she is enrolled.

Academic Suspension—When a student on academic probation fails to raise the cumulative grade point average and fails to earn a 2.0 semester average. A first academic suspension is for the first long semester following placement on academic suspension.

Academics—Basic, general areas of study such as English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, etc., as opposed to strictly technical or vocational courses.

Accuplacer—An assessment examination of entering undergraduate students at public colleges and universities.

Advanced Placement and Credit by Examination—Examinations that are offered in various subject areas from which students may be eligible to earn from one to five credit hours in a subject area, depending on the score earned on the test. Colleges and universities determine what credit will be given for specific scores.

Adviser/Advising—Advisers are specially trained faculty or staff members who advise students in selection and scheduling of courses, and in preparing degree plans.

Alumni—Former graduates or students of a college or university. Most colleges or universities have alumni organizations associated with the college or university that support the institution through various means such as scholarships and recruitment.

ASSET—An approved assessment examination of entering undergraduate students at public colleges and universities.

ATP Admissions Testing Program—The name given by CEEB to the group of tests used in the college admission process.

Audited Courses—Auditing provides a student the privilege of class attendance only and does not include taking examinations, submitting papers or participating in laboratories, clinicals or performance activities (e.g., fitness and recreational activity courses, studio art, applied music, dance). Those who audit a course do so solely for the purpose of hearing or observing. There is an audit fee. Auditors will not receive a grade in the course and no record of the audit will be kept.

Bachelor's Degree—An academic degree offered by a college or university in a specific discipline or major signifying completion of undergraduate curriculum and graduation. Also referred to as baccalaureate.

Board of Regents—The governing board of a university or university system.

Border State/Border County Tuition—A section of the Texas Education Code that allows residents of the states of Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico and Oklahoma who attend West Texas A&M University to pay a reduced tuition rate. Students residing in Oklahoma and New Mexico counties which border Texas are allowed to pay the same tuition rates as Texas residents.

Buff Advisor—West Texas A&M University's Internet registration system that is accessible through the WTAMU home page of the World Wide Web site: www.wtamu.edu.

Buffalo Branding—An annual orientation program for freshman and new students at West Texas A&M University that is offered a few days before the beginning of the fall semester.

CEEB Achievement Tests—An English composition test from which up to six hours of credit may be earned by successful completion of the test. CEEB is a nonprofit organization governed by college and secondary school members and is the overseeing agency for many tests and services of the college admission process.

Class Standing (see Student Standing)

CLEP (College Level Examination Program)—The College Level Examination Program sponsored by the College Board through which students can receive credit for classwork experiences and on-the-job training. WTAMU grants credit for specific subject examinations.

College (as different from a university)—An educational institution that offers instruction beyond the high school level in a two- or four-year program only; or an academic division of a university, such as College of Business.

College Board Advanced Placement Examinations—Tests offered to entering students in which credit may be earned in specific subject areas.

College Day or College Night Programs—A program sponsored by a high school or school district to provide information to students about the college selection process. Representatives from colleges and universities are present to answer questions about their institutions.

College Representative or Admission Officer—An employee of a university whose job is to recruit prospective students. Many colleges send admission officers to high schools to promote their schools and introduce their programs to prospective students.

College Scholarship Service (CSS)—The division of the College Board responsible for the PROFILE and needs analysis that determines the family's contribution toward payment of a student's education.

Combined Studies Program or Dual Degree Program—Terms that designate programs in which a student combines academic interests from more than one area. For example, a student who is pursuing two separate bachelor's degrees is in a combined (or dual) degree program. Students who pursue double majors and major/minor combinations are in combined studies programs.

Common Course Numbering—A system established to help facilitate the transfer of courses between participating institutions within the state of Texas.

COMPASS—An assessment examination of entering undergraduate students at public colleges and universities.

Concurrent Enrollment—Enrollment of a student in two state colleges or universities during the same semester. These students may be eligible for reduced tuition charges at the second institution.

Continuing Education—Credit and non-credit educational experiences and services that provide a variety of opportunities beyond campus programs. On-campus and off-campus non-credit courses, conferences, institutes, workshops, seminars, short courses and special training programs are offered at West Texas A&M University. For non-credit activities, Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are awarded, one unit for every 10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience.

Cooperative Education Program—A program established between a college or university and a corporation, studio or lab, in which the student attends classes and works off-campus, for pay, at the business site in the student's career field to gain experience.

Core Curriculum—A specific group of a variety of courses required of all undergraduate students. The core curriculum exposes students to a wide range of academic disciplines in order to produce a well-rounded student and graduate.

Correspondence Work—Semester credit offered to students through correspondence. Requirements and restrictions apply; see academic adviser for specific information.

Credit by Examination—Examinations offered to allow credit to satisfy parts of core curriculum requirements.

Credits—Units used for measuring educational accomplishments based on a given number of classroom periods per class, per week, throughout a term. Most undergraduate programs require an accumulation of approximately 120 credit hours to graduate.

Cum Laude—A designation of high academic success of students with grade point averages of 3.50 to 3.74 for a minimum of 60 credit hours, based on all course work attempted at West Texas

A&M University for which grade points are assigned. This distinction is noted on the student's diploma and transcript.

Dean's List—Students who have earned a grade point average of between 3.50 and 3.99 for an undergraduate load of 12 hours or more during a semester.

Deferred Admission—A process by which high school seniors apply for and are accepted for admission to colleges or universities during their senior year of high school but choose to enter their chosen college or university as freshmen after a one-year absence from school. A deferred admission is a commitment on the part of the college or university to take the student; a deferred acceptance is a commitment on the part of the student to attend the college or university after one year. Check with the college or university for specific information about deferring enrollment.

Degree Plan—Plan of study prepared for a student with assistance of an adviser within the student's major field of study.

Deposit—An amount of money that a student must send to the college or university once he or she has been accepted. The deposit indicates that the student accepts the college's offer and will enroll. The enrollment deposit is often nonrefundable. A college or university housing deposit may also be required and is often applied toward the first semester of housing.

Distribution Requirements—Most colleges or universities do not allow students to take only history courses or only math courses; instead, students are required to take some humanities courses, math courses, language courses, etc., in order to be liberally educated (i.e., not specialized). Some colleges or universities have a core curriculum that is very specific about required courses. For example, most colleges or universities require freshman composition (i.e., English).

Diversity—Often refers to the percentage of minority or international students within the student body of a college or university. May refer to a variety of things from geographic distribution, to socioeconomic backgrounds, to political leanings or to religious affiliations of the student body.

Doctorate—An academic degree offered by a university in a specific discipline or major signifying completion of study beyond the master's degree. The highest degree conferred by a college or university in a specific discipline or major.

Dual Degree Program or Combined Studies Program—Terms that designate programs in which a student combines academic interests from more than one area. For example, a student who is pursuing two separate bachelor's degrees is in a combined (or dual) degree program. Students who pursue double majors and major/minor combinations are in combined studies programs.

Early Admission—Many colleges have a program under which a student may apply for admission during the junior year of high school. Early Admission at most colleges is reserved for truly exceptional individuals whose academic preparation, achievement level and maturity level are sufficient for early entrance to college.

Electives—Courses that are taken beyond those specifically required for a particular major or degree. Students often use

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electives to explore different areas of interest prior to selecting a major.

ETS (Educational Testing Service)—A nonprofit agency employed by the CEEB to produce its test.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)—A form that must be submitted for a student to receive federal financial aid. The form is available from high school counselors.

Financial Aid—Monetary assistance offered to students to help pay for college or university expenses. Most forms of financial aid must be paid back to the lender; however, some forms of financial aid such as scholarships and grants are not required to be repaid.

Freshman—A student who has successfully completed 29 or fewer credit hours.

Full-time Student—Students who are enrolled in 12 or more hours per semester.

GMAT (Graduate Management Assessment Test)—A standardized examination required to be taken before or during the first semester of graduate work in order to be admitted to a graduate program of study in accounting, finance and economics, and business administration.

GPA (Grade Point Average)—An average of all or most grades.

Grade Point Deficiency—When a student's grade point average fall below the graduation requirement ("C" for undergraduate students, "B" for graduate students).

Graduate Assistantships—Teaching assistantships available to students pursuing graduate degrees. Most assistantships are half-time teaching; however, some non-teaching assistantships may also be available.

Graduate Council—A group of graduate faculty members representing departments that offer the master's degree. Council members are chosen to serve terms in accordance with bylaws of the Graduate School. Chairman of Graduate Council is the dean of the Graduate School.

Graduate School—A community of scholars, made up of graduate students and graduate faculty, devoted to the extension of knowledge and to professional achievement through advanced study and specialization in a variety of disciplines. The purpose of graduate study is to encourage academic inquiry, stimulate intellectual creativity, and foster the spirit of independent scholarship and research. Most students enrolled in the Graduate School are pursuing a master's degree.

Graduate Student—A student enrolled in graduate school who is pursuing a master's degree and who has completed requirements for and received a bachelor's degree.

Grant—An amount of money given (rather than loaned or earned) to a student for a specified time of study or research. Certain grants are based on need, as are the federal Pell Grant.

GRE (Graduate Record Exam)—A standardized examination required to be taken before or during the first semester of graduate work in order to be admitted to a graduate program of study.

Greek Life—Sponsored activities of fraternities and sororities associated with a college or university.

Hours—Units used for measuring the amount of time a class meets per week throughout a semester or session. Most undergraduate programs require an accumulation of approximately 120 credit hours to graduate.

International Student—A student who is not a citizen or permanent resident of the United States who applies for admission to a college or university. Any foreign student residing in or planning to study in the United States on any type of visa other than a resident alien card is considered an international student.

Intersession—The period or break between semesters and/or sessions, usually when courses are offered for a brief, concentrated period of time. (e.g., Mid-December through mid-January and mid-May through the end of May.)

Junior—A student who has successfully completed 60–89 credit hours.

Liberal Arts—A broad undergraduate program of education stressing the core courses; preprofessional training is often also available.

Loans—The most commonly used loans are:

Federal Stafford Loan—obtained from a local bank with the interest paid by the federal government while the student attends college. Repayment begins six months after completing (or leaving) college.

Federal Perkins Loan—carries the lowest interest rates and is offered through the college as part of a financial aid package.

Parent Loan Program (PLUS)—parents borrow from participating banks; repayment begins 60 days after inception of the loan.

Magna Cum Laude—A designation of high academic success of students with grade point averages of 3.75 to 3.89 for a minimum of 60 credit hours, based on all course work attempted at West Texas A&M University for which grade points are assigned. This distinction is noted on the student's diploma and transcript.

Major—A subject of academic study that is chosen as a field of specialization.

Master's Degree—An academic degree offered by a college or university in a specific discipline or major signifying completion of study beyond the bachelor's degree.

Merit Scholarships or No-Need Scholarships—Money given to students to cover college expenses without regard for financial need; e.g., athletic scholarships, academic scholarships, music scholarships, etc.

National Merit Scholarship Program—A program that offers qualified students scholarships financed by more than 400 corporations, company foundations, professional associations, unions and company trusts. Winners are chosen on the basis of

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PSAT scores, course work, grades, leadership, interests, goals and school recommendations.

New-Student Orientation—A program offered to new students prior to registration.

New-Student Registration—A program allowing entering freshmen and transfer students who have been admitted for the fall semester to preregister for fall classes the summer preceding entry into the University.

NMSQT—The National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is the PSAT (Preliminary Student Aptitude Test). Scores on the PSAT are used by the National Merit Scholarship Program, in combination with other student attributes, to determine scholarship winners.

Payment Option Plan—A plan for paying a student's tuition and fees that includes (1) payment in full at time of registration or preregistration or (2) payment due in three stages throughout the semester which may include additional fees.

Prerequisite—A course or courses required before taking another course (e.g., French I would normally be required before taking French II).

President's List—Students who have earned a grade point average of 4.00 or higher for an undergraduate load of 12 hours or more during a semester.

Privacy Act—The right a student has under provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, to withhold disclosure of directory information as listed. A request form to withhold directory information must be filed in the Office of the Registrar no later than the 12th class day of the fall or spring semester or the fourth class day of summer sessions. The student must file a form each semester that the student requests disclosure of directory information withheld.

PROFILE (formerly known as FAF—Financial Aid Form)—The form used by the College Scholarship Service (CSS) to assess a family's ability to pay for a college education. After information is analyzed, a complete report is sent to institutions and agencies designated by the student. Need-based financial aid is awarded according to the results. The student must register with CSS to receive the PROFILE Packet. Students should see their high school guidance counselor for registration forms.

PSAT—The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test is offered to students in October of the junior year of high school. Some students take it during the sophomore year.

Registration—The selection of classes and arrangement of payment of tuition and fees.

Residency—The residence status of a student for tuition purposes. Texas residence is determined by law for state-supported colleges or universities and is subject to change by the Texas Legislature. Non-residents of the state of a college or university generally pay higher tuition rates than residents. Reduced tuition rates are available for states and counties of states that border Texas.

Residential Campus—A college that provides or requires on-campus housing for most or all students. Many colleges require all first-year students (freshmen) to live in college housing.

Rolling Admission—When applications arrive at a college, the admission office starts reading them and making decisions, often within three or four weeks. Usually, if accepted under this plan, the student will not have to commit until May 1, but be sure to read the fine print. Most, but not all, state universities operate with Rolling Admission—the earlier you apply, the better the chance for acceptance at most colleges using this plan.

SAT I (Scholastic Aptitude Test)—A standardized college entrance test offered by the College Board. The SAT is offered on a number of dates and consists of two parts: verbal and math. Tests are scored on a scale of 200–800.

SAT II(s) or ACT Achievement Tests—A series of 16 subject-area exams sponsored by the Educational Testing Service. Students may take one, two or three exams on any test date. The scores provide a national standard to measure a student's performance in classroom achievement. Test subjects include areas such as English composition (all multiple choice or with essay), literature, American history, European history, math, Latin, Spanish, biology, chemistry and physics. Tests are scored on a scale of 200–800. Information about these tests can be obtained from the high school guidance counselor's office.

Schedule of Classes—A publication listing courses, tuition and fees and other information pertaining to registration for each semester, summer session and intersession offered by a university or college.

Scholarship—Money given to students demonstrating high academic achievement, outstanding leadership, or special interests or talents. This money may be used for payment of all or part of college expenses and is not required to be paid back.

Selective Admission—The ability of a college or university to choose a freshman class from an applicant pool that has more qualified candidates than the college can accommodate. Only about 100 U.S. colleges are truly selective and only a few are highly selective, i.e., in the position to deny 50 percent of students who apply.

Senior—A student who has successfully completed 90 or more credit hours.

Sophomore—A student who has successfully completed 30–59 credit hours.

Student Load—The number of credit hours attempted per semester or session by a student. For undergraduate students, full-time enrollment is 12 or more semester hours. For summer sessions, the normal load is six to seven hours; full-time enrollment during a summer session is six semester hours. Full-time enrollment for graduate students is six or more semester hours.

Student Standing—Class standing of a student measured by the number of credit hours completed. Freshmen are students with 29

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or fewer hours, sophomores are students with 30–59 hours, juniors are students with 60–89 hours and seniors are students with 90 or more hours. Graduate students have completed all requirements for a bachelor's degree.

Summa Cum Laude—A designation of high academic success of students with grade point averages of 3.90 to 4.0 for a minimum of 60 credit hours, based on all course work attempted at West Texas A&M University for which grade points are assigned. This distinction is noted on the student's diploma and transcript.

STARR (Student Advising, Retention and Registration) Center—Freshmen advising by specially trained faculty and admissions personnel. Students who are TSI affected (have not met TSI requirements) are also advised by STARR Center staff.

Texas Common Course Numbering—A system established to help facilitate transferability of courses between participating colleges and universities in Texas.

Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA)—An assessment examination of entering undergraduate students at public colleges and universities.

Texas Success Initiative (TSI)—TSI uses a statewide standard for assessing college readiness skills of entering undergraduate students at public colleges and universities. Students are assessed on reading, math and writing skills.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)—A test offered to assess knowledge of English for students whose native language is not English.

Transcripts—The official record from a school showing the student's grade records, list of courses taken and cumulative grade point average. An official transcript, sent directly from the student's high school to the college or university admissions office, is required for a student to be admitted to a college or university.

Transfer Students—Students who have attended a college or university and wish to attend another college or university. Most credit hours from former colleges or universities are transferable to other colleges or universities but may be subject to acceptance.

Transferred Credits—The semester credit hours that may be transferred to a college or university. No more than 66 hours earned at community colleges can be counted toward a degree at West Texas A&M University. Transfer students should contact their academic dean with questions concerning applying transfer credits toward general education requirements.

Tuition—The price of courses charged to students of a college or university. The tuition rate is usually determined per semester credit hour, increasing or decreasing by the number of credit hours the student attempts per semester. Most colleges or universities also charge for miscellaneous service fees in addition to tuition.

Undergraduate Student—A student enrolled in a college or university who is pursuing a bachelor's degree.

University—Latin for “the whole (uni) truth (veritas).” The term refers to an academic organization that grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of academic fields and supports at

least two degree-granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine, journalism or agriculture) and is composed of a number of schools or colleges, each of which encompasses a general field of study.

Viewbook—A publication that contains information about a particular college or university, such as courses of study available at the college or university, size of the student body, size and quality of the faculty, and life on campus.

Work-Study—A special federally sponsored college program combining class hours and work hours on the college or university campus. Pay is usually minimum wage or slightly above for approximately 10–15 hours per week. Earnings from the job are used as part of a financial aid plan to help pay for tuition and other college expenses.