

# College 101 – Terminology

## **COLLEGE BASICS**

**Accreditation** – An endorsement given to educational institutions or academic degree programs by an organization that reviews qualifications.

**Associate's Degree** – a two-year degree from a community or junior college

**Bachelor's Degree** – A four-year degree from a college, university or professional school; usually requires at least 124 credit hours.

**Credit Hour/Semester Hour** - Credit given for attending one lecture hour of class each week for 15 weeks or equivalent. Most college classes are three credit hours, meaning their total meeting time for a week is three hours.

**Degree** – A certificate of completion of a course of study.

**Degree Plan** – A specific list of required courses and elective to be completed for a degree.

**Doctoral Degree** - The most advanced degree that can be earned.

**Freshman** – A student who has completed less than 30 hours of college credit.

**Full Time Student** – Twelve or more credit hours per semester for undergraduate students.

**Half Time/Part Time Student** – Six credit hours per semester for undergraduate students.

**Internship** – A job in a student's field of study; may be required in some academic programs and may include salary and college credit.

**Junior** - A student who completed 60-89 college credit hours.

**Long Session** – regular fall or spring semester.

**Major** – A student's concentrated field of study.

**Master's Degree** - A graduate degree that usually required two or more years of study beyond the bachelor's degree.

**Minor** – A student's secondary field of study.

**Nonresident** – Any student who live out of state or does not meet specific state residency requirements.

**Online Courses/Web-based classes** – Classes held on the Internet instead of in a traditional classroom.

**Prerequisite** – A course that must be taken prior to enrollment in another course.

**Private University** – A non-state assisted college or university that relies on private funding, tuition and fees.

**Public University** – A state-assisted college/university.

## College 101 – Terminology

**Resident** – A student that meets state residency requirements.

**Senior** - A student who has completed 90 or more hours of college credit but has not received a bachelor's degree.

**Sophomore** – A student who has completed 30 to 59 college credit hours.

**Summer Session** – A term of approximately six weeks.

**Teleregistration** – Registration by telephone for classes.

**Tuition** – Cost for courses, not including certain fees.

### **COLLEGE APPLICATIONS**

**ApplyTexas** [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org) – a universal application website for all state colleges/universities in Texas as well as participating community and private colleges

**The Common Application** [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) – a common, centralized application for over 600 selected private and public universities nationwide

**Universal College Application** [www.universalcollegeapp.com](http://www.universalcollegeapp.com) – currently serves as an application option for 44 colleges/universities

**Regular Admission** – standard admission whereby students submit applications by the college's regular deadline; generally notified of the decision in March or April

**Rolling Admission** – applications are considered as they are received and the student is notified of the decision as soon as it is made; no commitment to accept; if accepted you can relax knowing that you are in but can still wait to see additional options

**Open Admission** – admits all interested students with a high school diploma

**Early Decision (Binding)** – If the college accepts you, you MUST attend; be very cautious about using this option

**Early Action (Not Binding)** – an opportunity to apply early and to be notified of admission decision early - in mid-December or January; If accepted under Early Action, you are NOT obligated to attend and you still have until May 1 to make a decision

**Early Action – Single Selection** – cannot file any other Early Action or Early Decision applications; however, you can apply to as many colleges as you wish for regular admission

**Deferred** – college is undecided about accepting you; will decide and notify you later

**Waiting List** – Students placed on a “waiting list for admission”, their admission will depend upon the number of students that accept admission from “regular admission” offers. Mid-year senior grades are often used to determine acceptance

**“Apply Early”** – start college application process senior year as soon as possible after the application becomes available; don't wait until right before the deadline to apply. However, MOST universities define “early” as MID-OCTOBER

## College 101 – Terminology

**TSI (Texas Success Initiative)** – A law requiring that all students entering a Texas public institution of higher education must be assessed for college readiness in Reading, Mathematics, and Writing unless they qualify for an exemption. If students are not able to show academic college readiness, then the student must be placed in (and pay for) developmental courses to help them achieve academic college readiness. Students may qualify as college ready and be exempt from the test in several ways. For CFISD students, the most common exemptions are SAT or ACT scores. Students not meeting any exemption will need to take the TSI Assessment.

**SAT Subject Tests** – measure knowledge or skills in a particular subject; not all colleges require the SAT Subject Tests; find out what your prospective colleges require or recommend; take the test whenever you peak in that particular subject; each test is one hour; may not take on the same day as SAT Reasoning Test. Students should satisfy SAT Reasoning Test scores first.

**Impacted Major** – some colleges apply a different set of admission standards to high demand/limited majors; if the major is the most important thing to you, then you should try for admission in that major at several schools; if the school itself is more important than the major, then it might be wise to choose a Major that will provide admission flexibility – including “Undecided”/“General Studies” as a second choice.

**“Gateway” programs** – alternate admission programs offered by four-year universities (i.e., summer admits; UT – CAP program; Blinn TEAM program offered by A&M; other programs and co-enrollment opportunities.)

### **FINANCIAL AID**

**FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) – form required by all institutions for financial aid and some scholarships; complete the application in October of senior year; must have all tax info to complete form

**FSA ID** (Federal Student Aid ID) –an FSA ID is needed to access the Federal Student Aid’s online system and can serve as your legal signature; it is needed to complete the FAFSA online. Must create your own FSA ID.

**EFC** (Expected Family Contribution) – is a measure of your family’s financial strength and is calculated according to a formula established by law. Universities subtract the EFC from the Cost of Attendance to establish Financial Need for Financial Aid packaging.

**Grants** – Financial assistance that does not require repayment.

**Scholarships** – Free money that students apply for based on qualification requirements. (need-based and/or merit-based)

**Need-based** - College grants and scholarships that are issued based on your financial need

**Merit-based** - College grants and scholarships that are issued based on your academic, athletic, artistic, or some other talent or skill

**Loans** – Financial assistance that must be repaid likely with interest.

**Work Study** – A federal aid program that allow students to work on campus.