

GLOSSARY

AA-DTA: The Associate of Arts-Direct Transfer Agreement (AA-DTA) is the community college degree designed to transfer to most baccalaureate degrees at all public and many private Washington four-year institutions.

AAS: An Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree is built upon the technical courses required for job preparation.

AAS-T: An Associate of Applied Science–Transfer (AAS-T) degree is built upon the technical courses required for job preparation but also includes a college-level general education component, common in structure for all such degrees.

ABE: Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes prepare students for GED coursework in the areas of mathematics, writing, reading, social studies and science. The program also focuses on improving students’ potential for employment and developing computer knowledge and skills.

ABILITY TO BENEFIT: An assessment made by a college to determine if a potential student will be able to benefit, with or without remedial education/training, from the program(s) offered at the school.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS POLICY: The academic standards policy for Community Colleges of Spokane has two elements of measure: minimum grade point average and degree/certificate completion within the maximum credit limit.

ACADEMIC YEAR: Refers to the September through June school year.

ACCREDITATION: Certification that a school or a program meets standards set by an outside reviewing entity. Many forms of financial aid are available only to students enrolled at accredited institutions.

ADD: Students can officially add a class to their schedule after initially registering for a given quarter (subject to deadlines).

ADMISSION: Approval for a student to attend an educational institution or program. Admission usually follows a review of an application.

ADVISER: A member of the faculty or staff that assists students with scheduling and educational planning.

AMERICAN HONORS: American Honors (AH) is a public-private partnership between American Honors and leading community colleges, including Community Colleges of Spokane, to grow community college honors programs. It offers high-achieving students rigorous, interactive online courses that lead to transfer opportunities through its network of top-tier four-year university partners.

AS-T: The Associate of Science-Transfer (AS-T) degree is intended for students majoring in engineering and science who wish to transfer as juniors to four-year institutions in Washington.

ASSESSMENT: A method, such as an exam, of determining a student’s ability level to find his/her best placement level or starting point in a series of courses in math English, foreign languages or science.

ASSOCIATE DEGREE: An associate degree program conventionally entails approximately two academic years of study, i.e., 90 credits, or two years of 45 credits each. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) defines “associate degree” as a lower division undergraduate degree that requires no fewer than 60 semester hours or 90 quarter hours. Some highly technical programs may require more than this to ensure that students have the necessary preparation to succeed.

AUDIT: Registering for a course and attending classes with no obligation to complete homework or tests. Audit students are required to pay standard tuition and fees. No credit is earned.

BACCALAUREATE OR BACHELOR’S DEGREE: A college degree that can be earned after completion of a four-year instructional program. A baccalaureate institution, sometimes called a “four-year” college, is a college or university that is entitled to grant a baccalaureate or bachelor’s degree.

BAS: The Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree is an applied baccalaureate degree providing upper-division coursework in an applied field. These degrees build upon professional-technical associate degrees and may be offered at community or technical colleges.

CAMPUS: The buildings and land that a college uses for instruction, student services and related activities.

CERTIFICATE: A certificate is an award which may be made for completion of the competencies and requirements for an occupational program.

CLASS: (1) A specific group of students meeting for instructional purposes. (2) Often means the same as course. (3) A group of students who start at a school together and expect to complete their studies at the same time (e.g. “he’s in the class of 2017”).

CLASS ITEM #: the four-digit number associated with each class.

CLASS SCHEDULE: A class schedule is a publication listing detailed course and section information (days, times, room numbers) for a specific quarter. It can also mean the specific courses an individual student is taking or plans to take for a given quarter.

COLLEGE-LEVEL STUDY: Courses numbered 100 or above. It is assumed that students have already mastered certain skills and abilities and have the level of commitment needed for post-secondary schoolwork.

COMMENCEMENT: A ceremony at the end of an academic year when students formally receive their degrees or diplomas.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT: Classes that can be added after the tenth day of the quarter.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION: A structured method of combining academic education with practical work experience that provides academic credit for career work.

COUNSELOR: A faculty member who has professional training in counseling and who assists students in student success, activities, and personal matters.

COURSE: A planned sequence of instruction in a particular topic. Often means the same as “class.”

CREDIT: A unit of instruction in one subject lasting one academic term.

CREDIT LOAD: The total credit value of the courses for which a student is currently enrolled.

CURRICULUM: An established sequence of information to be learned and/or skills to be acquired in a specific course or in a complete instructional program. Or, the courses offered by a department, division, or college.

DEAD DAY: Slang for the non-instructional day preceding final exams.

DEGREE: A rank conferred by a college or university and earned by a student who has successfully completed specified courses and requirements (compare to certificate).

DEPARTMENT: An organizational unit within the college or university, offering courses about closely related topics; for instance, the math department.

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION: Instruction that helps students to improve their English and math abilities and prepares them for college-level study. Developmental level courses are numbered below 100.

DIPLOMA: An official document issued by a college or university indicating that a student has earned a certain degree or certificate.

DIRECT TRANSFER AGREEMENT (DTA): A transfer agreement that ensures that a student who completes an Associate of Arts degree (or designated direct transfer degree) at a public Washington state community college will have satisfied the lower-division general education (100 and 200 level coursework) requirements of most Washington state participating universities.

DISTANCE LEARNING: See eLearning.

DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS: Course requirements included in an instructional program to make sure that the student is well-rounded and gains some perspective outside his or her specific focus or major.

DIVISION: An organizational unit within the college or university consisting of two or more related departments.

DROP: To cancel the registration in a course after enrolling in it. **It is the student's responsibility to drop or withdraw from a class.** Students can add and drop courses during a particular quarter, subject to deadlines. See also withdrawal.

eLEARNING: eLearning instruction may involve the use of computers, televised lessons, text materials and/or on-campus sessions. Some courses require on-campus visits for discussion sessions, laboratories or testing. These courses are usually hybrid or online.

ELECTIVE: A course that is not required for a particular instructional program. Many programs require a certain number of elective credits.

ENROLLMENT: The process of signing up and paying for courses. See also registration.

ESL: English as a Second Language. Usually refers to a developmental level instruction in English language skills for nonnative English speakers.

FACULTY: The instructors or teaching staff at a school.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The application required for students to be considered for federal student financial aid.

FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Student rights to privacy are protected with certain restrictions on the disclosure of student educational records and information (Public Law 93-380).

FINANCIAL AID: Money available from various sources to help students pay for college expenses. This comes in the form of loans, grants, scholarships from state or federal government, or other organizations.

FULL-TIME CREDIT LOAD: For enrollment verification, a minimum of 12 credits in a term is considered full-time.

GATEWAY TO COLLEGE: Gateway to College serves youth, 16 to 21 years old, who have dropped out of school or are significantly behind in credits and unlikely to graduate. The dual credit program allows students to earn a high school diploma while progressing toward a college degree or certificate.

GED: A General Educational Development (GED) test is a high school equivalency test that certifies a person has the skills and knowledge equal to those of a high school graduate.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: Courses typically taken as part of the Associate of Arts degree to fulfill the first 90 credits of a baccalaureate degree.

GPA: A student's grade point average (GPA) is calculated by dividing grade points earned by the credit hours attempted.

GRADE: A formal indicator of a student's performance in a course, recorded on an official transcript.

GRADUATION: The formal completion of an instructional program or course of study.

GRANT: A type of financial aid that does not have to be paid back after the student leaves school.

HYBRID: A class that is instructed through a combination of in-class and online methods.

I-BEST: Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training, a program that helps students improve their basic skills while at the same time gaining professional-technical skills.

INTERNSHIP: A supervised short-term apprenticeship or temporary job in a real-world setting closely related to a student's field of study. The student may or may not be paid but earns college credit for the work experience.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: What students are expected to know and be able to do as a result of their experience at the college and as a result of completing their general education requirements.

LOANS: A type of financial aid that must be repaid to the government agency or lending institution when the student leaves school.

MAJOR: Specialization in one academic discipline or field of study.

MAJOR RELATED PROGRAMS (MRP): Transfer associate degrees outlining the appropriate courses to prepare students to enter the major upon transfer to participating four-year institutions.

MY BIGFOOT CARD: Community Colleges of Spokane has partnered with Higher One, a financial services company, to bring an efficient method of refund disbursement to students via the My Bigfoot Debit Card.

MY BIGFOOT STUDENT PORTAL: An online gateway where students can log into the Community Colleges of Spokane website to access important program information.

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY: A day when classes do not meet but college staff work.

NON-RESIDENT: For purposes of calculating a student's tuition and fees, someone who has NOT lived in the state for a specified length of time as demonstrated by specified types of evidence.

OFFICE HOURS: Time instructors and departments set aside to meet with students.

ONLINE (CLASS): A class that meets and requires class work via the Internet.

OPEN ADMISSION: The policy of some colleges to admit nearly all applicants, regardless of high school grades and admission test scores.

ORIENTATION: Information sessions designed to help students learn their way around the college.

PACE OF PROGRESSION: The rate at which a student is progressing toward the completion of a degree, certificate or certification.

PLACEMENT: The appropriate level to enter a series of courses based on the student's skills.

PLACEMENT TEST: An assessment tool used to determine student skills.

POSTSECONDARY: Educational programs for students past high school age; these include community and technical colleges, job training programs, and baccalaureate colleges and universities.

PRACTICUM: A course that includes job-related activities and emphasizes the practical application of theory in a field of study.

PREREQUISITE: A course that must be completed or skills that must be demonstrated before a student may enroll in a more advanced course.

PROFESSIONAL-TECHNICAL: A course or instructional program that emphasizes job training for a particular field of work, sometimes called occupational or vocational education.

PROGRAM: A very general term used in many ways in a college or university: (1) The courses that a student plans to take. (2) The courses required to complete a particular degree or certificate. (3) The courses that make up a department or the departments that make up a division. (4) Organized activities with a specific function.

QUARTER: Community Colleges of Spokane organizes its academic year into three main periods: fall, winter, and spring quarters, plus a shorter summer quarter.

RECORDS: Information the college keeps regarding a student; it includes registration activity (enrollment, withdrawal, etc.), grades, payments, awards received, financial aid applications and awards, notes on disciplinary actions, as well as address, phone numbers, and student identification number.

REFUND: Tuition and fees that are paid back to a student who has withdrawn from a course, subject to deadlines.

REGISTER/REGISTRATION: To sign up or enroll in a course or courses. Registration activity includes enrolling, adding, dropping/ withdrawing, choosing pass/fail in place of decimal grades, and making payments.

REQUIREMENT: Minimum standards defined by the college; e.g., admission, graduation, prerequisite, distribution, and general education.

RESIDENT: For purposes of calculating a student's tuition and fees, someone who has lived in the state for a specified length of time as demonstrated by specified types of evidence.

RUNNING START: Running Start is a dual credit program that allows high school juniors and seniors to earn college credit simultaneously for high school graduation and toward a college degree.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP): The SAP policy for students receiving financial aid has three elements of measurement: credits, grade point average, and pace of progression.

SCHOLARSHIP: A type of financial aid grant. Organizations may give scholarships for academic achievement, financial need, or any other basis.

SECTION: A specific class with its own unique days, hours, location, and instructor.

SYLLABUS: An outline plan for a particular section of a class, including textbook requirements, class meeting dates, reading assignments, examination dates, and grading standards.

TECH PREP: Tech Prep is a dual credit program that allows high school students to earn college credit toward career and professional certificates and degrees without ever leaving high school.

TRANSCRIPT: The official copy of a student's academic record showing courses completed, grades and credits earned, and degrees earned.

TRANSFER: To move from one college to another and have the second institution recognize and accept some or all of the course work earned at the first.

TUITION AND FEES: Tuition is a student's basic payment toward the cost of instruction at a college or university. Most institutions also charge fees for laboratory equipment and materials, computer use, parking, and other miscellaneous costs.

UNDERGRADUATE: A student who has not yet earned a baccalaureate degree.

WEB ENHANCED: Web-enhanced courses meet in regular class sessions but use online resources for additional interaction, posting of assignments and course materials.

WITHDRAWAL: The process of formally dropping a class or classes after the term has started. **It is the student's responsibility to drop or withdraw from a class.**