

College and Career Vocabulary

Academic Elective - Academic classes you can choose to add to your course schedule. Often these are core courses students take beyond what is required for high school graduation.

ACT Assessment® - The ACT Assessment® and SAT I® are both widely used admission tests. Many colleges accept either one, but some require one or the other. The ACT Assessment® is designed to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The ACT Assessment® is curriculum based, and tests what you know and are able to do based on what you have been studying in the classroom.

Admission/Application/Acceptance - You must apply to get into college. The process colleges use to decide who gets in is called admission. Colleges review each application and decide which students to accept. Students receive a letter of acceptance or rejection telling them whether they have been admitted.

Advanced Placement (AP®) - AP® courses offer college-level coursework in high schools. To earn college credit, students can take an end-of-the-year exam which covers all of the course material.

Apprenticeship - An apprenticeship program combines on-the-job training in a skilled craft or trade with classroom study. The student, also called an apprentice, is prepared for advanced training or employment in a higher-than-entry-level position.

Associate's Degree - To earn an associate's degree, you must complete a program that is at least two, but less than four, years of college usually at a community or technical college. These degrees are often designed to transfer to a four-year college.

Bachelor's Degree - The undergraduate degree offered by four-year colleges and universities.

Career Pathways - Groups of jobs that require similar skills and interests.

College - An institution of higher education that awards degrees and certificates.

Commission - An official government document that gives college graduates the rank of officer in the armed forces. See a military recruiter for more information on commissioning programs.

Community or Technical College - Two-year institutions of higher education. Courses and credits can generally transfer to a four-year college. These colleges also offer work-related and technical programs to prepare students for the world of work.

Core Course - Core courses include math, science, English, and social studies or history.

Cost of Attendance - The total cost for one year of college. It includes tuition, fees, books, food, housing, and transportation.

Curriculum - A curriculum is a group of classes needed to complete a program, degree, or certificate.

Degrees - Degrees are what you earn when you complete a program of study. The most commonly earned degrees are: associate's, bachelor's, and master's.

Doctoral Degree - The highest degree offered by colleges and universities. This degree can take five or more years after a bachelor's degree to complete.

Electives - Classes you can choose to add to your school schedule; they are not required.

Enlist - To join the military after graduating from high school.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) - The amount you and your family are expected to contribute toward college costs. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) determines your EFC.

Extra-Curricular Activities - Non-classroom or after-school activities, including sports, clubs, student government, community service, religious groups, and social organizations or events.

Fees - College costs not included in tuition. Fees may be charged to cover the cost of materials and equipment needed in certain courses. Fees may also be charged for student events, programs, and publications, like a yearbook.

Financial Aid - Financial aid includes grants, scholarships, loans, and part-time employment from federal, state, institutional and private sources. These types of aid are combined to create an "award package." The types and amounts of aid you receive are determined by financial need, available funds, student classification, academic performance, and sometimes the timeliness of your application.

Financial Need - The difference between what your family is expected to contribute and the total cost of attendance for one year of college. Financial Need equals Cost of Attendance minus Expected Family Contribution.

Four-year colleges and universities - These schools offer certificates, bachelor's (sometimes called four-year degrees), master's, professional, and doctoral degrees in broad subject areas like business administration, history, or biology.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - This free application must be filed every year to receive most forms of financial aid, including loans, grants, and work study.

Grade Point Averages (GPA)/Letter Grades - Most colleges consider letter grades and GPAs in admissions.

Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) - GET allows Washington students and families to buy tomorrow's tuition today. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends can purchase tuition for a student, and the money can be used at colleges and universities nationwide and some other countries. To learn more, call toll-free, (877) 438-8848 or visit the GET Web site, <http://www.get.wa.gov>.

Guidance Counselor/Academic Advisor - This person will help you choose high school courses, review the requirements for your chosen career, and help with any problems.

Higher Education - Any program of study or degree program for high school graduates or people with General Education Development (GED) certificates.

Interest Inventories - Short quizzes that help you learn which jobs or career pathways might be right for you.

International Baccalaureate (IB®) - IB® concentrates on multisubject study. Students enrolled in IB® can earn a special diploma and college credits by taking IB® courses and passing comprehensive examinations.

Journey-level Worker/Trade Professional - A master of a specific skilled trade, like carpentry, masonry, plumbing, etc.; one who has studied and worked in a skilled trade for many years.

Lifelong Learning - The idea that a person can and should learn throughout his/her whole life.

Master's Degrees - This is a graduate degree added onto a bachelor's degree. It usually takes two years to complete.

Merit-based Financial Aid - Financial aid based on high academic, athletic, artistic, or community service achievement.

Need-based Financial Aid - Financial aid given to students with a demonstrated financial need.

Occupational Education - These are work-related classes or programs of study. Examples include bookkeeping, keyboarding, and business technology.

Officer - Someone who joins the military after college or receives a commission to become a military leader/supervisor.

Officer Candidate Schools (OCS) or Officer Training Schools (OTS) - These 10-week to 17-week schools train college graduates to become entry-level supervisors in the military.

Open Admissions Policy - Open admissions institutions are usually public two-year community and technical colleges. The term "open admission" refers to an admission policy that says almost anyone with a high school diploma or General Education Development certificate (GED) can be admitted to that college.

Personal Profile - A mental picture or written description of your interests, abilities, values, priorities, and other information.

PLAN® - As a "pre-ACT" test, PLAN® is a predictor of success on the ACT Assessment®. Students take PLAN® in the tenth grade. Like the ACT Assessment®, PLAN® is curriculum based, and tests what you know and are able to do based on what you have been studying in the classroom. The tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning.

Private vocational colleges - These are sometimes called trade schools or voc-tech programs. They offer apprentice and journeyman programs for skilled tradesmen like plumbers, machinists, electricians, or carpenters. The length of each program varies, but many can take three or more years to complete.

Proprietary or for-profit schools - These schools can offer bachelor's and master's degrees, but most offer associate's degrees or certificates in office management, medical assistance, cosmetology, dental hygiene, computer systems engineering, and more.

PSAT® - The Preliminary SAT®/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test® is designed for juniors and is co-sponsored by the College Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The PSAT®/NMSQT® measures the critical reading, math problem-solving, and writing skills that you've been developing throughout your life. It does not measure things like creativity and motivation, and it doesn't recognize those special talents that may be important to colleges.

Public/Private Colleges - Public colleges are run by the state or other government agency and are managed by public boards. Governments do not run private colleges.

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) - This program can help college students pay for their education. In return for scholarship money, students agree to serve in the military. Junior ROTC students are not required to serve.

SAT I® and SAT II® - The SAT I® and the ACT Assessment® are both widely used admissions tests. Many colleges accept either one, but some require one or the other. The SAT I® measures your verbal reasoning, critical reading, and math problem solving skills. It tells you how well you use the skills and knowledge you've learned so far, both in and out of school. SAT II Subject Tests® show colleges your mastery of specific subjects, like English, history and social studies, math, science, and language.

State Need Grant (SNG) - This grant is available to eligible students who demonstrate financial need. Students must be Washington residents and admitted and enrolled at least half-time at a participating institution.

State Work Study (SWS) - The State Work Study program allows students to earn money and work experience while in college. Jobs are usually part-time, allowing you to attend classes and to study. Jobs are related to your career interests, whenever possible.

Tech Prep - A four-year program that usually begins in 11th grade. Students take classes in selected career fields and receive college credits in return. While in the program, students work in business and industry, testing their skills in the real world.

Transcript - A permanent record of all the classes you take and grades you earn while in high school or college. It may also show any honors or awards you receive.

Transfer of Credits - Some students attend more than one college during their college careers. When they move or transfer from one college to another, they can transfer certain credit hours or classes from the old college to the new one. The new college determines which courses will count toward its graduation requirements.

Tuition - The amount colleges charge for each hour of class time. Tuition does not include the cost of books, fees, room, or board (food). Tuition charges also vary from college to college.

Tutor - A person who helps a student with homework or study skills.

Undergraduate - A student pursuing his/her first, two-, or four-year degree.

University - A university offers undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees.

Washington Award for Vocational Excellence (WAVE) - WAVE recognizes three students from each of the 49 state legislative districts for outstanding achievement in voc-tech or Tech Prep programs. This grant is equal to about two years of tuition at a Washington college.

Washington Scholars - Students who graduate in the top 1 percent of their classes can be considered for the Legislature's Washington Scholars program. Two students in each legislative district are chosen for this award. Students then receive a four-year college scholarship. These can be used for undergraduate study at selected Washington colleges and universities.



1-877-GET-TUIT (1-877-438-8848)
www.get.wa.gov

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs

GEAR UP is a national effort to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in higher education. The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, in cooperation with the Office of the Governor, administers the state GEAR UP grant.

The College and Career Planning Handbook was originally developed with money from a federal grant to help GEAR UP students plan and prepare for college and careers. The Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Washington Guaranteed Education Tuition Program are partnering with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to make it available for all Washington students.



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