

Common Data Set Definitions

All definitions related to the financial aid section appear at the end of the Definitions document.

Items preceded by an asterisk (*) represent definitions agreed to among publishers which do not appear on the CDS document but may be present on individual publishers' surveys.

***Academic advisement:** Plan under which each student is assigned to a faculty member or a trained adviser, who, through regular meetings, helps the student plan and implement immediate and long-term academic and vocational goals.

Accelerated program: Completion of a college program of study in fewer than the usual number of years, most often by attending includrse payment or waivrse of 1oaapplicattra fee, if our who has beea notified of one of 1oa followrse acctras: admixtra, nonadmission, placement on waiting list, or application withdrawn (by applicant or institution).

Application fee: That amount of money that an institution charges for processing a student's application for acceptance. This amount is *not* creditable toward tuition and required fees, nor is it refundable if the student is not admitted to the institution.

Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Associate degree: An award that normally requires at least two but less than four years of full-time equivalent college work.

Bachelor's degree:

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Credit course: A course that, if successfully completed, can be applied toward the number of courses required for achieving a degree, diploma, certificate, or other recognized postsecondary credential.

Credit hour: A unit of measure representing an hour (50 minutes) of instruction over a 15-week period in a semester or trimester system

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Grade-point average (academic high school GPA): The sum of grade points a student has earned in secondary school divided by the number of courses taken. The most common system of assigning numbers to grades counts four points for an A, three points for a B, two points for a C, one point for a D, and no points for an E or F. Unweighted GPA's assign the same weight to each course. Weighting gives students additional points for their grades in advanced or honors courses.

Graduate student: A student who holds a bachelor's or equivalent, and is taking courses at the post-baccalaureate level.

***Health services:** Free or low cost on-campus primary and preventive health care available to students.

High school diploma or recognized equivalent: A document certifying the successful completion of a prescribed secondary school program of studies, or the attainment of satisfactory scores on the Tests of General Educational Development (GED), or another state-specified examination.

Hispanic or Latino: A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Honors program: Any special program for very able students offering the opportunity for educational enrichment, independent study, acceleration, or some combination of these.

Independent study: Academic work chosen or designed by the student with the approval of the department concerned, under an instructor's supervision, and usually undertaken outside of the regular classroom structure.

In-state tuition: The tuition charged by institutions to those students who meet the state's or institution's residency requirements.

International student: See **Nonresident alien**.

International student group: Student groups that facilitate cultural dialogue, support a diverse campus, assist international students in acclimation and creating a social network.

Internship: Any short-term, supervised work experience usually related to a student's major field, for which the student earns academic credit. The work can be full- or part-time, on- or off-campus, paid or unpaid.

***Learning center:** Center offering assistance through tutors, workshops, computer programs, or audiovisual equipment in reading, writing, math, and skills such as taking notes, managing time, taking tests.

***Legal services:**

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At Least 2 But Less Than 4 Academic Years: Requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 2 but less than 4 full-time equivalent academic years, or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 credit hours, or in at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 clock hours.

Private institution: An educational institution controlled by a private individual(s) or by a nongovernmental agency, usually supported primarily by other than public funds, and operated by other than publicly elected or appointed officials.

Private for-profit institution: A private institution in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives compensation, other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk.

Private nonprofit institution: A private institution in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives no compensation, other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk. These include both independent nonprofit schools and those affiliated with a religious organization.

Proprietary institution: See **Private for-profit institution**.

Public institution: An educational institution whose programs and activities are operated by publicly elected or appointed school officials, and which is supported primarily by public funds.

Quarter calendar system: A calendar system in which the academic year consists of three sessions called quarters of about 12 weeks each. The range may be from 10 to 15 weeks. There may be an additional quarter in the summer.

Race/ethnicity: Category used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. The categories do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. A person may be counted in only one group.

Race/ethnicity unknown: Category used to classify students or employees whose race/ethnicity is not known and whom institutions are unable to place in one of the specified racial/ethnic categories.

Recognized Postsecondary Credential: Includes both Title IV eligible degrees, certificates, and other recognized postsecondary credentials. Any credential that is received after completion of a program that is eligible for Title IV federal student aid. Credentials that are awarded to recognize an individual's attainment of measurable technical or industry/occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an industry occupation. (Generally based on standards developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations).

Religious affiliation/commitment (as admission factor): Special consideration given in the admission process for affiliation with a certain church or faith/religion, commitment to a religious vocation, or observance of certain religious tenets/lifestyle.

***Religious counseling:** One-on-one or group counseling with trained professionals for students who want to explore religious problems or issues.

***Remedial services:** Instructional courses designed for students deficient in the general competencies necessary for a regular postsecondary curriculum and educational setting.

Required fees: Fixed sum charged to students for items not covered by tuition and required of such a large proportion of all students that the student who does NOT pay is the exception. Do not include application fees or optional fees such as lab fees or parking fees.

Resident alien or other eligible non-citizen: A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who has been admitted as a legal immigrant for the purpose of obtaining permanent resident alien status (and who holds either an alien registration card [Form I-551 or I-151], a Temporary Resident Card [Form I-688], or an Arrival-Departure Record [Form I-94] with a notation that conveys legal

***Tutoring:** May range from one-on-one tutoring in specific subjects to tutoring in an area such as math, reading, or writing. Most tutors are college students; at some colleges, they are specially trained and certified.

Unit: a standard of measurement representing hours of academic instruction (e.g., semester credit, quarter credit, clock hour).

Undergraduate: A student enrolled in a four- or five-year bachelor's degree program, an associate degree program, or a vocational or technical program below the baccalaureate.

***Veteran's counseling:** Helps veterans and their dependents obtain benefits for their selected program and provides certifications to the Veteran's Administration. May also provide personal counseling on the transition from the military to a civilian life.

***Visually impaired:** Any person whose sight loss is not correctable and is sufficiently severe as to adversely affect educational performance.

Volunteer work (as admission factor): Special consideration given to students for activity done on a volunteer basis (e.g., tutoring, hospital care, working with the elderly or disabled) as a service to the community or the public in general.

Wait list: List of students who meet the admission requirements but will only be offered a place in the class if space becomes available.

Weekend college: A program that allows students to take a complete course of study and attend classes only on weekends.

White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

***Women's center:** Center with programs, academic activities, and/or services intended to promote an understanding of the evolving roles of women.

Work experience (as admission factor): Special consideration given to students who have been employed prior to application, whether for relevance to major, demonstration of employment-related skills, or as explanation of student's academic and extracurricular record.

Financial Aid Definitions

External scholarships and grants: Scholarships and grants received from outside (private) sources that students bring with them (e.g., Kiwanis, National Merit scholarships). The institution may process paperwork to receive the dollars, but it has no role in determining the recipient or the dollar amount awarded.

Financial aid applicant: Any applicant who submits **any one of** the institutionally required financial aid applications/forms, such as the FAFSA.

Indebtedness: Aggregate dollar amount borrowed through any loan program (federal, state, subsidized, unsubsidized, private, etc.; excluding parent loans) while the student was enrolled at an institution. Student loans co-signed by a parent are assumed to be the responsibility of the student and **should** be included.

Institutional scholarships and grants: Endowed scholarships, annual gifts and tuition funded grants for which the institution determines the recipient.

Financial need: As determined by your institution using the federal methodology and/or your institution's own standards.

Need-based aid: College-funded or college-administered award from institutional, state, federal, or other sources for which a student must have financial need to qualify. This includes both institutional and non-institutional student aid (grants, jobs, and loans).

Need-based scholarship or grant aid: Scholarships and grants from institutional, state, federal, or other sources for which a student must have financial need to qualify.

Need-based self-help aid: Loans and jobs from institutional, state, federal, or other sources for which a student must demonstrate financial need to qualify.

Non-need-based scholarship or grant aid: Scholarships and grants, gifts, or merit-based aid from institutional, state, federal, or other sources (including unrestricted funds or gifts and endowment income) awarded solely on the basis of academic achievement, merit, or any other non-need-based reason. When reporting questions H1 and H2, non-need-based aid that is used to meet need should be counted as need-based aid.

Note: Suggested order of precedence for counting non-need money as need-based:

1. Non-need institutional grants
2. Non-need tuition waivers
3. Non-need athletic awards
4. Non-need federal grants
5. Non-need state grants
6. Non-need outside grants
7. Non-need student loans
8. Non-need parent loans
9. Non-need work

Non-need-based self-help aid: Loans and jobs from institutional, state, or other sources for which a student need not demonstrate financial need to qualify.