

Glosario Elemental de Términos Académicos usados en los EE. UU.

Academic adviser	A member of a college faculty who helps and advises students solely on academic matters.
Academic adviser	This is a senior faculty member in your area of concentration who is assigned to advise you on course selections and requirements. Before you declare your major, you will be assigned a temporary faculty adviser.
Academic year	The period of formal instruction, usually September to May; may be divided into terms of varying lengths; semesters, trimesters, or quarters.
Accelerated study	This program allows you to graduate in less time than is usually required. For instance, by taking summer terms and extra courses during the academic year, you could finish a bachelor's degree in three years instead of four.
Accreditation	Approval of colleges and universities by nationally recognized professional associations or regional accrediting bodies.
Add/Drop	A process at the beginning of the term whereby students can delete or add classes with an instructor's permission.
Admissions decisions	<p>Admit: You're in! You are being offered admissions to the college to which you applied. Your high school will receive notification, too.</p> <p>Admit/deny: You have been admitted but denied any financial aid. It is up to you to figure out how you are going to pay for school.</p> <p>Deny: You are not in. The decision is made by the college or university admissions committee and is forwarded to you and your high school.</p> <p>Wait list: You are not in yet but have been placed on a waiting list in case an opening becomes available. Schools rank their wait list in order of priority, and</p>

	<p>unfortunately, the more competitive schools have years when they never draw from their wait lists. After a certain time, a rejection notice is sent.</p>
Advance registration	<p>A process of choosing classes in advance of other students.</p>
Advanced Placement (AP) courses	<p>High-level, quality courses in any of twenty subjects. The program is administered through the College Board to offer high school course descriptions equated to college courses and correlated to AP examinations in those subjects. High schools provide the courses as part of their curriculum to eligible students. Based on the composite score on an AP test, which ranges from 0 to 5, a college may award college credit or advanced placement to a participating student. A score of a 4 or 5 on the AP test is usually required by colleges for credit or advanced placement in college courses. A 3 is sometimes acceptable in foreign languages and some other subject areas. Some colleges limit the number of AP credits that they will recognize. Check schools' policies on AP credits.</p>
Affidavit of support	<p>An official document proving a promise of funding from an individual or organization.</p>
Alternative assessment	<p>This method personalizes the admissions process and offers students an opportunity to be viewed more individually and holistically. Less emphasis is placed on standardized test scores and more on the interview, portfolio, recommendations, and essay.</p>
American College Testing (ACT) Program Assessment	<p>An alternative to the SAT, this test has gained wide acceptance by a broad range of institutions in recent years and is given during the school year at test centers. The ACT tests English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. These subject test scores can be used in lieu of SAT II subject tests, which are required for admission to some of the more competitive colleges. The score is the average of all four tests; the maximum score is 36.</p>

Assistantship	A study grant of financial assistance to a graduate student that is offered in return for certain services in teaching or laboratory supervision as a teaching assistant, or for services in research as a research assistant.
Associate degree	A degree granted by a college or university after the satisfactory completion of a two-year full-time program of study or its part-time equivalent. Types of degrees include the Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.), usually granted after the equivalent of the first two years of a four-year college curriculum, and the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.), awarded upon completion of a technical or vocational program of study.
Attestation	Official affirmation that a degree or transcript is genuine. Usually signed by a recognized expert or witness.
Audit	To take a class without receiving credit toward a degree.
Authentication	Process of determining whether something is, in fact, what it is declared to be. Incoming students are often required to provide a document of authentication for academic transcripts or previous degrees when applying to a program of study in the United States.
Award package	This is the way colleges and universities deliver their news about student eligibility for financial aid or grants. The most common packages include Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, and Work Study (see below).
Baccalaureate degree	The degree of "bachelor" conferred upon graduates of most U.S. colleges and universities.
Bachelor's or baccalaureate degree	The degree received after the satisfactory completion of a full-time program of study or its part-time equivalent at a college or university. The Bachelor of Arts (B.A) and the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) are the most common baccalaureates.
Bachelor's degree	Degree awarded upon completion of approximately four years of full-time study in the liberal arts and sciences or professional subjects. It is a prerequisite

	to study in a graduate program.
Branch campus	A campus connected to, or part of, a large institution. Generally, a student spends the first two years at a branch campus and then transfers to the main campus to complete the baccalaureate degree. A branch campus provides a smaller and more personal environment that may help a student mature personally and academically before moving to a larger and more impersonal environment. A branch campus experience may be a good idea for a student who wants to remain close to home or for an adult learner who wishes to work and attend college classes on a part-time basis.
Bulletin	A publication created each year by a university or college that contains the details of academic majors offered and the requirements for completing them. Usually includes a listing and description of every class the institution offers.
Campus	The land on which the buildings of a college or university are located.
Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA)	If admitted to a college, a student does not have to reply until May 1. This allows time to hear from all the colleges to which the student applied before having to make a commitment to any of them. This is especially important because financial aid packages vary from one school to another, and the CRDA allows time to compare packages before deciding.
Class rank	A number or ratio indicating a student's academic standing in his or her graduating class. A student who ranks first in a class of 100 students would report his or her class rank as 1/100, while a student ranking last would report 100/100. Class rank may also be expressed in percentiles (for example, the top 25 percent, the lower 50 percent).
Coed	A college or university that admits both men and women; also refers to a dormitory that houses both men and women.
College	A postsecondary institution that

	<p>provides undergraduate education and, in some cases, master's level degrees. College, in a separate sense, is a division of a university; for example, College of Business.</p>
College catalog	<p>An official publication giving information about a university's academic programs, facilities, entrance requirements, and student life.</p>
College Scholarship Service (CSS)	<p>When the federal government changed the FAFSA form several years ago, the College Board created this program to assist postsecondary institutions, state scholarship programs, and other organizations in measuring a family's financial strength and analyzing its ability to contribute to college costs. CSS processes the PROFILE financial form that students may use to apply for nonfederal aid. This form is submitted to some 300 private colleges and universities along with the FAFSA when seeking financial aid from these institutions. Participating colleges and universities indicate whether they require this form.</p>
College-preparatory subjects	<p>Courses taken in high school that are viewed by colleges and universities as a strong preparation for college work. The specific courses are usually in the five majors area of English, history, world languages, mathematics, and science. The courses may be regular, honors-level, or AP offerings, and the latter two categories are often weighted when calculated in the GPA.</p>
Common and Universal Applications	<p>These college application forms can save students hours of work. The Common Application is presently accepted by about 190 independent colleges, while the Universal is used by about 1,000 schools. The colleges and universities that accept these standardized forms give them equal weight with their own application forms. Students complete the information on the standardized form and then submit it to any of the schools listed as accepting it. Some schools will return a supplementary form to be completed by</p>

	the applicant, but most schools base their decisions on these documents alone. The Common Application is available on disk or as a hard copy and can be obtained from your guidance department. The Universal Application is available on the Web.
Conditional admission	An acceptance to a college or university that is dependent upon the individual completing coursework or meeting specified criteria prior to enrollment.
Control	A college or university can be under public or private control. Publicly controlled universities are dependent on state legislatures for their funding, and their policies are set by the agencies that govern them. Private colleges and universities are responsible to a board of directors or trustees. They usually have higher tuition and fees to protect the institutions' endowment.
Cooperative education	A college program that alternates between periods of full-time study and full-time employment in a related field. Students are paid for their work and gain practical experience in their major, which helps them apply for positions after graduation. It can take five years to obtain a baccalaureate degree through a co-op program.
Core requirements	Mandatory courses required for completion of a degree.
Cost of education	This includes tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses. A student's financial aid eligibility is the difference between the cost of education and the Expected Family Contribution as computed by the federal government using the FAFSA.
Course	Regularly scheduled class sessions of one to five hours (or more) per week during a term. A degree program is made up of a specified number of required and elective courses and varies from institution to institution.
Course load	The number of course credit hours a student takes in each semester. Twelve credit hours is the minimum to be considered a full-time student. The

	average course load per semester is 16 credit hours.
Course load	The number of courses or credits taken in a specific term.
Credit hours	The number of hours per week that courses meet are counted as equivalent credits for financial aid and used to determine your status as a full- or part-time student.
Credits	Units institutions use to record the completion of courses (with passing grades) that are required for an academic degree. The catalog of a college or university defines the number and kinds of credits that are required for the university's degrees and states the value of each course offered in terms of "credit hours" or "units."
Cross-registration	The practice, through agreements between colleges, of permitting students enrolled at one college or university to enroll in courses at another institution without formally applying for admission to the second institution. This can be an advantage for students in a smaller college who might like to expand options or experience another learning environment.
Culture shock	The mental shock of adjusting to a new country and a new culture, which may be dramatically different from your own.
Dean	Director or highest authority within a certain professional school or college of a university.
Deferred acceptance	the admissions decision is being moved to a later date.
Degree	Diploma or title conferred by a college, university, or professional school upon completion of a prescribed program of studies.
Department	Administrative subdivision of a school, college, or university through which instruction in a certain field of study is given (such as English department or history department).
Dissertation	Thesis written on an original topic of research, usually presented as one of the final requirements for a doctoral degree(Ph.D.).
Doctorate (Ph.D.)	The highest academic degree conferred

	by a university to students who have completed at least three years of graduate study beyond the bachelor's and/or master's degree and who have demonstrated their academic ability in oral and written examinations and through original research presented in the form of a dissertation.
Dormitories	Housing facilities on the campus of a college or university reserved for students. A typical dormitory would include student rooms, bathrooms, common rooms, and possibly a cafeteria.
Double major	Available at most schools, the double major allows a student to complete all the requirements to simultaneously earn a major in two fields.
Drop	See "Withdrawal."
Dual enrollment	This policy allows a student to earn college credit while still in high school. Many of these course credits can be transferred to a degree-granting institution, especially if the student maintains a minimum B average. A college, however, may disallow courses taken in the major field of concentration at another institution because its policy dictates that all courses in the major must be taken at the college. When considering dual enrollment, students should talk with admissions offices at the colleges they are considering enrolling in to make sure that they will accept credit transfers.
Early Action (EA)	A student applies to a school early in the senior year, between October 30 and January 15, and requests an early application review and notification of admission. The answer usually takes three to four weeks after application. If accepted, the student is not obligated to attend that institution but can bank this admission and still apply to other colleges during the regular admission cycle.
Early admission	Some colleges will admit certain students who have not completed high school, usually exceptional juniors. The students are enrolled full-time and do not

	complete their senior year of high school. Colleges usually award high school diplomas to these students after they have completed a certain number of college-level courses.
Early Decision (ED)	Sometimes confused with Early Action, the Early Decision plan allows students to apply to an institution early in the senior year, also between October 30 and January 15, and request an early notification of admission. The student and guidance counselor sign a contract with the school at the time of application that indicates that if accepted, the student is obligated to attend that institution. Some colleges and universities offer both ED and EA options.
Electives	Courses that students may choose to take for credit toward their intended degree, as distinguished from courses that they are required to take.
Emphasis	An area of concentration within a major or minor; for example, an English major may have an emphasis in creative writing.
English as a Second Language (ESL)	A course used to teach English to students whose first language is not English.
Expected Family Contribution (EFC)	The amount of financial support a family is expected to contribute toward a child's college education. This amount is part of the formula used by the federal government to determine financial aid eligibility using the FAFSA form.
External degree program	A program of study whereby a student can earn credit through independent study, college courses, proficiency examinations, distance learning, or personal experience. External degree colleges generally have no campus or classroom facilities. They are sometimes referred to as "colleges without walls."
Extracurricular activities	Nonacademic activities undertaken outside university courses.
Faculty	The members of the teaching staff, and occasionally the administrative staff, of an educational institution. The faculty is responsible for designing the plans of study offered by the institution.

Federal Pell Grant Program	This is a federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students. Congress annually sets the appropriation; amounts range from \$400 to \$3,000 annually. This is “free” money because it does not need to be repaid.
Federal Perkins Loan Program	This is a federally run program based on need and administered by a college’s financial aid office. This program offers low-interest loans for undergraduate study. Repayment does not begin until a student graduates. The maximum loan amount is \$3,000 per year.
Federal Stafford Loan	Another federal program based on need that allows a student to borrow money for educational expenses directly from banks and other lending institutions (sometimes from the colleges themselves). These loans may be either subsidized or unsubsidized. Repayment begins six months after a student’s course load drops to less than halftime. Currently the interest rate is 0 percent while in school and then is variable up to 8.25 percent. The loan must be repaid within ten years.
Federal Work-Study Program (FSW)	A federally financed program that arranges for students to combine employment and college study; the employment may be an integral part of the academic program (as in cooperative education or internships) or simply a means of paying for college.
Fees	An amount charged by universities, in addition to tuition, to cover costs of institutional services.
Fellowship	A form of financial assistance, usually awarded to a graduate student. Generally, no service is required of the student in return.
Financial aid	A general term that includes all types of money, loans, and work-study programs offered to a student to help pay tuition, fees, and living expenses.
Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)	This is the federal government’s instrument for calculating need-based aid. It is available from high school guidance departments, college financial aid offices, and the Internet

	(www.fafsa.ed.gov). The form should be completed and mailed as soon after January 2 as possible.
Freshman	A first-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.
Full-time student	A student who is enrolled at a university and is taking at least the minimum number of credits (often 12) to meet the university's requirement for a full course load.
Gap	The difference between the amount of a financial aid package and the cost of attending a college or university. The student and his/her family are expected to fill the gap.
Grade Point Average (GPA)	A system of recording achievement based on a numerical average of the grades attained in each course.
Graduate	A student who has completed a course of study, either at the secondary or university level. A graduate program at a university is a study course for students who already hold a bachelor's degree.
Grant	A form of financial aid.
Grants/scholarships	These are financial awards that are usually dispensed by the financial aid offices of colleges and universities. The awards may be need- or merit-based. Most are need-based. Merit-based awards may be awarded on the basis of excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, or special talent.
Greek life	This phrase refers to sororities and fraternities. These organizations often have great impact on the campus social life of a college or university.
Honors program	Honors programs offer an enriched, top-quality educational experience that often includes small class size, custom-designed courses, mentoring, enriched individualized learning, hands-on research, and publishing opportunities. A handpicked faculty guides students through the program. Honors programs are a great way to attend a large school that offers enhanced social and recreational opportunities while receiving an Ivy League-like education at a reduced cost.

Incomplete	A designation given in lieu of a grade for a course that has not been completed (with permission). The student will be given a specified period for completion of the coursework, after which an "F" (a failing grade) will result.
Independent study	Official coursework undertaken outside a classroom setting. It will usually be monitored by an instructor.
Independent study	This option allows students to complete some of their credit requirements by studying on their own. A student and his or her faculty adviser agree in advance on the topic and approach of the study program and meet periodically to discuss the student's progress. A final report is handed in for a grade at the end of the term.
Interdisciplinary	Faculty members from several disciplines contribute to the development of the course of study and may co-teach the course.
Internal Revenue Service (IRS)	The U.S. government body that oversees the collection of income taxes.
International student adviser (ISA)	The person at a university who is in charge of providing information and guidance to international students in such areas as government regulations, visas, academic regulations, social customs, language, financial or housing problems, travel plans, insurance, and legal matters.
Internship	Placement of a student in a work environment in order to acquire professional experience.
Internship	This is an experience-based opportunity, most often scheduled during breaks in the academic calendar, whereby a student receives credit for a supervised work experience related to his or her major.
Junior	A third-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.
Language requirement	A requirement of some graduate programs that students must show basic reading and writing proficiency in one other language besides their own to receive their degree.
Lease	A legal document to show an agreement between the owner (landlord)

	and the renter of an apartment or other property.
Lecture	Common method of instruction in college and university courses; a professor lectures in classes of 20 to several hundred students. Lectures may be supplemented with regular small group discussions led by teaching assistants.
Liberal arts	A term referring to academic studies of subjects in the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences. Also called "liberal arts and sciences" or "arts and sciences."
Loan	A sum of money lent to an individual (or organization) with an agreement to repay the money, possibly with interest.
Maintenance	Refers to the expenses of attending a university, including room (living quarters) and board (meals), books, clothing, laundry, local transportation, and incidentals.
Major	The concentration of a number of credit hours in a specific subject. Colleges and universities often specify the number of credits needed to receive a major, the sequence of courses, and the level of course necessary to complete the requirements.
Major	The subject in which a student wishes to concentrate.
Major professor/thesis adviser	For research degrees, the professor who works closely with a student in planning and choosing a research plan, in conducting the research, and in presenting the results. The major professor serves as the head of a committee of faculty members who review progress and results.
Master's degree	Degree awarded upon completion of academic requirements that usually include a minimum of one year's study beyond the bachelor's degree.
Merit awards, merit-based scholarships	More "free" money, these awards are based on excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, and other areas determined by the granting organization, which can be a college or university, an organization, or an individual. They are not based on

	financial need.
Midterm exam	An exam administered after half the academic term has passed that covers all class material studied until that point.
Minor	A subject in which the student takes the second greatest concentration of courses.
Minor	An area of concentration with fewer credits than a major. The minor can be related to the major area of concentration or not; for example, an English major may have a minor in theater.
Need blind	Admissions decisions made without reference to a student's financial aid request, that is, an applicant's financial need is not known to the committee at the time of decision.
Nonmatriculated	A student who has either not been admitted yet but is taking classes or has been academically dismissed. Under this category, a student may neither receive financial aid nor participate in an athletic program at that school.
Nonresident	A student who does not meet the residence requirements of the state. Tuition fees and admission policies may differ for residents and nonresidents. International students are usually classified as nonresidents, and there is little possibility of changing to resident status at a later date for tuition purposes.
Notarization	The certification of a document (or a statement or signature) as authentic and true by a public official (known in the United States as a "notary public") or a lawyer who is also a commissioner of oaths.
Open admissions	A policy of admission that does not subject applicants to a review of their academic qualifications. Many public junior/community colleges admit students under this guideline, that is, any student with a high school diploma or its equivalent is admitted.
Part-time student	A student who is enrolled at a university but is not taking the minimum number of credits (often 12) to meet the university's requirement for a full course load.
Placement test	An examination used to test a student's

	academic ability in a certain field so that he or she may be placed in the appropriate courses in that field. In some cases, a student may be given academic credit based on the results of a placement test.
Plagiarism	The use of another person's words or ideas as your own.
Postdoctorate	Studies designed for those who have completed a doctoral degree (Ph.D.).
Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test	This test, given in October, duplicates the kinds of questions asked on the SAT but is shorter and takes less time. Usually taken in the junior year, the test also acts as a qualifying instrument for the National Merit Scholarship Awards Program and is helpful for early college guidance.
Prerequisite	Program or course that a student is required to complete before being permitted to enroll in a more advanced program or course.
Registration	Process through which students select courses to be taken during a quarter, semester, or trimester.
Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)	Each branch of the military sponsors an ROTC program. In exchange for a certain number of years on active duty, students can have their college education paid for up to a certain amount by the armed forces.
Residency requirement	The term has more than one meaning. It can refer to the fact that a college may require a specific number of course to be taken on campus to receive a degree from the school, or the phrase can mean the time, by law, that is required for a person to reside in the state to be considered eligible for in-state tuition at one of its public colleges or universities.
Resident assistant (RA)	A person who assists the residence hall director in campus dormitories and is usually the first point of contact for students with problems or queries regarding dorm life. RAs are usually students at the college who receive free accommodation and other benefits in return for their services.
Retention rate	The number and percentage of students returning for the sophomore year.

Reverse culture shock	The culture shock an individual experiences upon returning to their home country after living abroad.
Rolling admissions	There is no deadline for filing a college application. This concept is used most often by state universities. Responses are received within three to four weeks. If admitted, a student is not required to confirm, in most cases, until May 1. Out-of-state residents applying to state universities should apply as early as possible.
SAT II Subject Tests	These subject-specific exams are given on the same test dates and in the same centers as the SAT I. More emphasis has been placed on these tests in recent years, not only because they are used for admission purposes, but also for placement and exemption decisions.
Scholarship	A study grant of financial aid, usually given at the undergraduate level, that may take the form of a waiver of tuition and/or fees.
Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) I: Reasoning Test	Also known as "board scores" because the test was developed by the College Board. This test concentrates on verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities and is given throughout the academic year at test centers. The maximum combined score for both sections is 1600.
Semester	Period of study lasting approximately 15 to 16 weeks or one-half the academic year.
Seminar	A class that has a group discussion format rather than a lecture format.
Senior	A fourth-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.
Silent scores	The term is applied to PSAT scores because only the student and his or her guidance counselor see the scores. They are not reported to colleges. It is the "practice without penalty" feature of the test.
Social Security Number	A number issued to people by the U.S. government for payroll deductions for old age, survivors, and disability insurance. Anyone who works regularly must obtain a Social Security Number. Many institutions use this number as the student identification number.

Sophomore	A second-year student at a secondary school, college, or university.
Special student	A student at a college or university who is not enrolled as a candidate for a degree. Also may be referred to as a nondegree, nonmatriculating, or visiting student.
Standby	If a student registers for an SAT or ACT testing date and there are no seats available, the student may accept a standby position; that is, if a seat becomes available the day of the test, the student will take the test. The student must go to the testing center and wait to see if there is an open seat. A fee is attached to standby.
Student Aid Report (SAR)	Report of the government's review of a student's FAFSA. The SAR is sent to the student and released electronically to the schools that the student listed. The SAR does not supply a real money figure for aid but indicates whether the student is eligible.
Student-designed major	Students design their own majors under this policy. It offers students the opportunity to develop nontraditional options not available in the existing catalog of majors.
Teaching Assistant (TA)	A graduate student who acts as instructor for an undergraduate course in his or her field, in return for some form of financial aid from the university.
Thesis	A written work containing the results of research on a specific topic prepared by a candidate for a bachelor's or master's degree.
Transcript	A certified copy (see "Notarization") of a student's educational record.
Transfer program	This program is usually found in a two-year college or in a four-year college that offers associate degrees. It allows a student to continue his or her studies in a four-year college by maintaining designated criteria set down at acceptance to the two-year program. It is not necessary to earn an associate degree to transfer.
Transfer student	A student who transfers from one college or university to another. Credits applied toward the transfer will be

	evaluated by the receiving school to determine the number it will accept. Each school sets different policies for transfers, so anyone considering this option should seek guidance.
Trimester	Period of study consisting of approximately three equal terms of 16 weeks during the academic year.
Tuition	The money an institution charges for instruction and training (does not include the cost of books).
Undergraduate studies	Two-year or four-year programs at a college or university, undertaken after secondary school graduation and leading to the associate or bachelor's degree.
University	A large postsecondary institution that offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programs.
Upper division	This term refers to the junior and senior years of study. Some colleges offer only upper-division study. The lower divisions must be completed at another institution before entering these programs to earn a bachelor's degree.
Virtual visit	This is the use of the Internet to investigate various colleges by looking at their home pages. A student can "tour" the college, ask questions via e-mail, read school newspapers, and explore course offerings and major requirements on line. It is not a substitute for a live visit.
Waiver to view recommendations	The form many high schools ask their students to sign by which they agree not to review their teachers' recommendation letters before they are sent to the colleges or universities to which they are applying.
Withdrawal	The administrative procedure of dropping a course or leaving a university.
Yield	The percentage of accepted students who will enter a college or university in the freshman class; these students have received formal acceptance notices and must respond by May 1 with their intention to enroll. The more competitive the school, the higher the yield percentage.

Zip code	A series of numbers in mailing addresses that designate postal delivery districts in the United States.
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