

DEFINITIONS OF FINANCIAL AID TERMS

3/2 Program: An undergraduate program that terminates in the awarding of a post-baccalaureate degree or the simultaneous awarding of a baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate degree.

Academic Term/Standard Term: A period of time which conforms to a commonly accepted academic standard during which classes are in session at a postsecondary institution. The following term lengths are considered standard term types:

| | Minimum | Maximum |
|--------------------|----------|----------|
| Semester/Trimester | 15 weeks | 18 weeks |
| Quarter | 10 weeks | 12 weeks |
| Quinmester | 8 weeks | 9 weeks |

Academic Term/Nonstandard Term: A term type that does not conform to the standard definition of semester, trimester, quarter, or quinmester, as defined by the FDOE. Courses or programs offered in nonstandard terms must meet commonly accepted academic standards regarding hours of instruction and term length.

Academic Year: A period of time from the beginning of one fall term to the beginning of the next fall term in which students are funded two semesters or three quarters (fall – spring).

Annual Award: The maximum program award amount a student may receive during an academic year. Each state program will specify if an annual award is a flat award amount, is based on other criteria, or includes summer term funding. An annual award is distributed in equitable term award amounts.

Associate in Applied Science (AAS): A specialized degree which is awarded to signify attendance, progress, or satisfactory completion of the requirements of a technical or vocational program of study. An AAS program of study with an articulation agreement is considered a degree program. The postsecondary institution is responsible for determining the degree status of an AAS program of study.

Associate in Arts (AA): A degree which requires the completion of no fewer than 60 semester or 90 quarter hours, of which a minimum of 36 semester or 54 quarter hours must be in general education or liberal arts courses.

Associate in Science (AS): A degree which requires the completion of no fewer than 60 semester or 90 quarter hours, of which a minimum of 15 semester or 23 quarter hours must be in general education.

Awarded Student: An applicant who meets all criteria to receive funding from a particular financial aid program, but may not necessarily have a net receipt of greater than zero dollars during the academic year.

Award: A monetary commitment made to a student applicant for a specific student aid program, contingent upon the availability of funds and the student's eligibility.

Award Year: The first and second semesters, or the first, second, and third quarters, or the equivalent, of an academic year. See specific programs that may include a summer term award.

Baccalaureate/Bachelor's Degree: A degree which requires the completion of no fewer than 120 semester hours or the equivalent, a percentage of the total credits to be in general education, and which requires a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

Certificate: A recognized undergraduate educational credential issued by a postsecondary institution to an individual who completes a course or program of study which does not result in an AA, AS, or baccalaureate degree.

Clock Hour: A measure of credit based on an actual contact hour of attendance.

College-level program: A program of academic study which leads to the awarding of a graduate degree, a bachelor's degree, an associate in arts degree, an associate in science degree, an associate in applied arts degree, or an associate in applied science degree.

College preparatory course: A course as defined in [Board of Governors Regulations 6.002](#), and identified in the Counseling for Education Handbook as necessary for a student to acquire the skills or knowledge to perform successfully on college-level courses.

Contact Hours: For a program of study, the regularly scheduled hours of direct classroom activity.

Cost of Attendance (COA): The average cost for a student to attend a postsecondary institution for one academic year, which includes the cost of tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and personal expenses.

Degree Program: An academic program of study, which upon completion, results in the awarding of one of the following degrees:

- Associate in Arts
- Associate in Science
- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Doctorate

An AAS program of study with an articulation agreement is considered a degree program. The institution is responsible for determining the degree status of an AAS program of study.

Dependent Student: A student who meets the federal definition of a dependent student for Title IV purposes.

Diploma (Postsecondary): A recognized undergraduate educational credential issued by a postsecondary institution to an individual who completes a course or program of study which does not result in an AA, AS, or baccalaureate degree.

Disbursement: The transmission of funds from a postsecondary institution to an eligible student or to the student's institutional account.

Distance Learning: An educational process that is characterized by the separation, in time or place, of instructor and student.

Doctorate: A degree which requires the completion of a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter hours beyond a baccalaureate degree.

Drop/Add Period: The limited period immediately following the regular registration period which the postsecondary institution allows students to discontinue a specific course(s) and/or to enroll in an additional course(s).

Dual Enrollment: The enrollment of a secondary student in a postsecondary course creditable toward a postsecondary certificate, diploma, associate or baccalaureate degree, and simultaneously, toward a high school diploma.

Early Admission: A form of dual enrollment in which eligible secondary students apply for college admissions prior to the receipt of a high school diploma and enroll full-time in a postsecondary institution in courses that are creditable toward the high school diploma and the associate or baccalaureate degree.

Earned Credit Hours: The number of semester, quarter or clock hours awarded to a student upon successful completion of an academic term of study and accepted by a postsecondary institution as the satisfactory completion of hours attempted.

Eligible Institution: A public or private postsecondary institution that meets statutory requirements for participation in the specified state student financial assistance programs.

Eligible Student: A student who meets all academic criteria to receive funding from a particular financial aid program, but may not necessarily be disbursed.

Eligible Program of Study: A degree or postsecondary vocational or technical program of study authorized by a state student financial aid program statute.

Enroll or Enrollment: Registered for credit instruction.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC): The amount of funds derived from the federal need analysis form (FAFSA) that a family is expected to contribute to the student's cost of attendance at a postsecondary institution.

Fiscal Year: Academic year funding period of July 1 through June 30.

Financial Need: The amount of funds derived after deducting an individual's Expected Family Contribution from the institutional cost of education.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): A form used by an applicant to apply for federally funded student aid programs and some state student financial aid programs. The FAFSA requests demographic, financial, and other information about an applicant and the applicant's spouse or parent(s).

Full-time enrollment:

- For undergraduate degree-seeking applicants, full-time enrollment means being registered by the end of the postsecondary institution's drop/add period for at least 12 credit hours for the semester or quarter.
- For applicants seeking a postsecondary certificate or diploma, full-time enrollment means being registered for all weeks in the term for a minimum of 24 contact hours per week by the end of regular registration, including the postsecondary institution's drop/add period.
- For graduate degree-seeking applicants, full-time enrollment means being registered by the end of the institution's drop/add period for at least 9 credit hours for the semester or quarter.

General Education Credits: Courses in the areas of language, humanities, mathematics, natural science, and social science.

Gift Aid: Type of financial assistance that does not have to be paid back.

Grade Point Average (GPA): The number of attempted hours divided into the number of earned quality points earned for postsecondary credit work. (See Institutional Cumulative GPA for more information.)

Graduate Funding: Florida Bright Futures Scholarship recipients who graduate in the 2010-11 academic year and thereafter with a baccalaureate degree in 7 semesters, or the equivalent or fewer hours, and pursue graduate study may apply the unused portion of their Florida Academic Scholars award or Florida Medallion Scholars award toward 1 semester of graduate study, not to exceed 15 semester hours paid at the undergraduate rate.

Graduate Student: A student enrolled in a degree program leading to a master's degree, doctorate degree, or any post-baccalaureate certificate.

Grant: A type of student financial assistance, usually based on financial need, designed to assist with educational costs and which has no repayment conditions.

Half-time Enrollment: For undergraduate students, enrollment in six (6) to eight (8) credit hours, or one hundred eighty (180) to two hundred sixty-nine (269) clock hours, during an academic term.

Hours Earned: All hours in which a student was enrolled and completed (not failed) during the academic year. This may include repeated or remedial course work even if those hours were not funded.

Independent Student: A student who meets the federal definition of an independent student for Title IV purposes.

Initial Applicant: An eligible applicant who has not previously qualified for an award or received an award from a program.

Institutional Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA): The grade point average for all graded postsecondary work attempted by the student which is included in a student's transcript at the institution where the student is seeking a degree or certificate.

Loan: A type of student financial assistance that must be repaid.

Loan Forgiveness: Payments toward education loan balances for an eligible applicant who has completed employment service in specified areas and within a specified time frame.

Master's Degree: A degree which requires the completion of no fewer than 24 semester or 36 quarter hours above the baccalaureate degree.

Minority: Any individual belonging to one of the following race/ethnic categories: Black or African-American; Hispanic/Latino; Asian; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; American Indian or Alaska native.

Need: The amount of funds derived after deducting an individual's expected family contribution (EFC) from the institutional cost of attendance.

Non-qualifying EFC: An expected family contribution which is above the maximum amount established by OSFA for eligibility to receive a need-based award.

Nonstandard Term: See Academic Term.

Otherwise Eligible (OE): Otherwise Eligible students are applicants who meet all criteria to receive FSAG or FGMG awards, but were not awarded due to lack of funds.

Postsecondary Institution: An institution providing educational training opportunities beyond the high school level and awarding degrees, diplomas, or certificates.

Preparatory Course: A course defined by a postsecondary institution as necessary for a student to acquire the skills or knowledge required to perform successfully in college entry-level courses. Such a course is considered the same as a remedial course.

Prorated Award: An award amount less than the maximum allowed which is based on the funds available and the number of eligible applicants, or based on the number of hours a student is enrolled.

Qualifying EFC: An expected family contribution equal to or less than the maximum amount established by OSFA for student eligibility to receive a need-based award.

Regular Registration: The limited period of time prior to or at the beginning of each term during which the postsecondary institution allows students to enroll in courses.

Reinstated Student: An applicant who was determined eligible for a specific program award, but who did not receive funds during the immediately preceding award year.

Remedial Course: A course defined by a postsecondary institution as necessary for a student to acquire the skills or knowledge required to perform successfully in college level courses. Such a course is considered the same as a preparatory course.

Renewal GPA: A grade point average that is calculated to two decimal points. Only the second decimal point may be a rounded number from the third decimal point.

Renewed Student: An eligible student who received an award during one or more terms of the immediately preceding academic year.

Repayment: Money received from state aid which a student is required to return to the educational institution; or an amount of money received from a state scholarship loan which a student is required to return to the state.

Residency: The legal status which a person acquires as the result of establishment of a domicile with the intent to permanently remain in that domicile other than for temporary absences. However, any domicile established solely or primarily for the purpose of obtaining an education or of obtaining financial aid from the state shall not constitute residency.

Restored Student: A student who lost eligibility for a specific program award due to an academic standard(s) deficiency, and, after the subsequent summer or at least one academic year without specific program funding, re-established eligibility for a specific program award.

Scholarship: A type of student financial assistance based on academic criteria which does not have to be repaid.

Standard Term: See Academic Term.

State Program: Any financial aid program administered by the Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).

Term Award: The maximum amount of funds an individual student is eligible to receive for a specified program during an academic term. A term award is based upon the type of annual award and/or the institution's term type.

Three-quarter-time undergraduate enrollment: Undergraduate enrollment in nine (9) to eleven (11) credit hours, or in two hundred seventy (270) to three hundred fifty-nine (359) clock hours during an academic term.

Undergraduate Student: A student who is taking coursework in a specific program to pursue a certificate, diploma, an associate's, or bachelor's degree.

Unmet Need: The cost of attendance less the student's EFC and other financial aid resources, excluding student loans.

Unrounded Initial GPA: A grade point average which is calculated to a minimum of three unrounded places beyond the decimal point.

Unweighted GPA: A grade point average based on all quality points for earned credits awarded on a 4.0 scale.

Weighted GPA: A grade point average including additional quality points per earned credit awarded in addition to the standard 4.0 scale. Weighted GPA is usually awarded at the secondary educational level for coursework that has enhanced curriculum requirements.