

# COLLEGE TERMINOLOGY

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**Academic advisor:** An academic advisor is a faculty member or staff person who is trained to assist students with educational planning and to promote a successful college experience.

**Academic load:** An academic load is the number of credit hours taken in one semester.

**Academic probation:** All colleges require students to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) to remain in school. Students who do not meet the minimum GPA will be placed on academic probation. Refer to the Academic Probation, Suspension, and Disqualification Policy for specifics.

**Academic suspension:** Students who do not meet the GPA requirements when on probation will be placed on suspension. Suspension requires a student sit out one semester, excluding Summer Session, following suspension. In extraordinary cases, students may petition the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee to be granted reinstatement from suspension and not sit out the required semester. Refer to the Academic Probation, Suspension, and Disqualification Policy for specifics.

**Adding a course:** A course that meets the entire fall or spring Semester may be added online the first week of the semester. A late-start or summer course may be added through the first two days of the course.

**Address:** *Permanent* - The student's home address. Residency is determined by this address. *Mailing* - The address used by a student while he/she is attending NIC if different from permanent address. *Temporary* - The address used for a short time if the local and permanent addresses are not being used.

**Alumni:** People who have graduated from the institution. A male is called an alumnus, while a female is called an alumna.

**ACT and SAT:** These are acronyms for the American College Test and the Scholastic Aptitude Test. Both tests are designed to measure a student's level of knowledge in basic areas such as math, science, English, and reading. Colleges may require the results of either the ACT or SAT before granting admission. NIC does not require ACT or SAT scores, but these scores may be used to satisfy assessment requirements for initial course placement.

**Associate's degree:** The associate's degree is granted upon completion of a program. Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees are awarded to students who successfully complete programs designed for transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution. The associate's degree requires completion of a minimum of 60 semester credits of 100- and 200-level courses with a cumulative GPA of 2.0.

**Associate of Applied Science Degree:** This degree is awarded to students who successfully complete a program designed to lead directly into employment in a specific career. The Associate of Applied Science Degree requires completion of a minimum of 60 semester credit hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.0.

**Audit:** A student who does not want to receive credit or a grade in a course may audit the course. Audited courses will not fulfill graduation requirements and do not affect a student's grade

point average. The application process and fees for auditing a course are the same as if a student were enrolling for credit. Course enrollment may be changed from credit to audit during the drop/add period only. With the instructor's permission, course enrollment may be changed from audit to credit during the first four weeks of the semester or the first two weeks of Summer Session. Audited courses do not apply to credit/course load requirements for financial aid.

**Bachelor's degree (or Baccalaureate degree):** This is the undergraduate degree offered by four-year colleges and universities. The Bachelor of Arts degree requires that a portion of the student's studies be dedicated to the arts - literature, language, music, etc. The Bachelor of Science degree requires that a portion of the studies be in the sciences - chemistry, biology, math, etc. The minimum credit hour requirement for a bachelor's degree is 120 semester hours.

**Bookstore:** Bookstores generally stock the books and materials required in all the courses offered at the institution. Bookstores also provide basic items and clothing items.

**Cardinal Card:** The college's official student/employee photo ID. The card also provides access to campus housing access, meal program service, financial aid verification, bookstore purchases, library services, and more. Refer to page 8 for more details.

**Catalog:** College catalogs provide all types of information parents and students need to know about a school. It typically includes the institution's history and philosophy, policies and procedures, accreditation status, courses of study, degrees and certificates offered, physical facilities, admission and enrollment procedures, financial aid, student life activities, etc. They are considered the student's contract with the institution.

**Certificate programs:** Certificate programs are designed to provide specific job skills.

**The College Level Examination Program (CLEP):** This program can be administered to students who desire to obtain college credit by taking proficiency tests in selected courses. If the student scores high enough on the test, college credit may be awarded. There is a charge for each test taken. Information concerning an institution's CLEP test policies may be found in the institution's catalog or website.

**Concurrent enrollment student:** A student who is enrolled at NIC and the University of Idaho or Lewis-Clark State College in Coeur d'Alene. Students must submit a concurrent enrollment form to the NIC Registrar's Office for verification of course enrollment.

**Core courses:** These are general education courses within various disciplines that require a C- or better to satisfy the distribution requirements for an associate's degree.

**Corequisite course:** A corequisite is a course that must be taken concurrently with another course or courses unless the corequisite has been previously completed with a minimum grade of C- or better.

**Counselor:** A counselor is a professional who is trained to assist students in overcoming personal barriers to success.

**Curriculum:** A curriculum is composed of those classes outlined by an institution for completion of a program of study leading to a degree or certificate.

**Degree requirements:** An institution's requirements for completion of a program of study. Requirements may include a minimum number of hours, required GPA, and prerequisite and elective courses within the specified major and/or minor areas of study.

**Degrees:** Degrees are awarded for the successful completion of a program.

**Department:** A department is the basic organizational unit in a higher education institution and is responsible for the academic functions in a field of study. It may also be used in the broader sense to indicate an administrative or service unit of an institution.

**Division:** A division represents a number of different units of a college or university:

1. an administrative division of an institution usually consisting of more than one department;
2. an academic division of an institution based on the year level of students; and
3. a service division of an institution that is composed of a number of service departments, such as the Student Services Division.

**Dropping a course:** A course may be dropped online without a grade of W (withdrawal) being recorded during the drop period. A course dropped online after the drop period will be reflected with a grade of W on the official transcript.

**Dual credit:** Dual credit allows eligible high school juniors and seniors to enroll in NIC courses on campus or at their high schools. Credit for both high school and college may be awarded. Students enrolled in NIC courses will receive an NIC transcript. These credits transfer to many regionally accredited colleges and universities across the nation.

**Elective:** An elective is a course that is not specifically required and may be selected by the student based on personal preference and educational objectives.

**Extra-curricular activities:** These are non-classroom activities that can contribute to a well-rounded education. They can include such activities as athletics, clubs, student government, recreational and social organizations, and events.

**Faculty:** The faculty are the individuals who teach classes.

**Fees:** Fees are additional charges not included in the tuition. Fees may be charged to cover the cost of materials and equipment needed in certain courses and they may be assessed for student events, programs, and publications.

**Final exams (Finals):** These end-of-the-semester exams are either given during the last week of courses each semester or during a specific week called Finals Week. The type of final administered in a course is left to the discretion of the instructor. Final exams given during Finals Week are given on specified dates that may be different than the regular course time and are

usually two hours in length. Finals schedules are published online each semester.

**Financial aid:** Aid for paying college expenses is made available through grants, scholarships, loans, and part-time employment from federal, state, institutional, and private sources. Financial aid from these programs may be combined in an "award package" to meet or defray the cost of college. The types and amounts of aid awarded are based on financial need, available funds, student classification, academic performance, and sometimes the timeliness of application.

**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** This is a qualifying form used for all federal and government guaranteed commercial lenders' programs – as well as many state, regional, and private student aid programs. By filling out the online or paper FAFSA, applicants start the process of qualifying for financial aid.

**Full-time enrollment/Part-time enrollment:** A full-time student is enrolled in 12 or more credit hours per semester. A part-time student is enrolled in less than 12 credit hours per semester.

**Gateway Courses:** Courses identified in program maps as good early indicators of student readiness for further study. These courses typically include key topics, concepts and learning expectations that are foundational to the program. The college builds supports for student success into these courses given their importance for student progress in a given field. Students who have difficulty in these courses benefit from consideration of possible redirection to another area of study better suited to their aptitudes and interests.

**Honor roll:** Students are placed on honor rolls for GPAs above certain specified levels. Criteria for President's, Dean's, or other honor rolls vary at different institutions. In most cases, students must be enrolled full time to be eligible.

**Hybrid course:** These courses provide multiple learning environments for interactions among students and instructors. They include required hybrid and face-to-face components. The face-to-face components are reduced, but not eliminated. Note: The hybrid component is technology-based and often consists of web-based instruction requiring the students to have some computer skills.

**Interactive video conference course (IVC):** These courses are delivered to off-campus sites by technology that allows interaction between students and faculty through two-way audio and video.

**Interest Areas:** Groupings of college programs with similar education and career goals. Interest areas help students choose a direction that is suited to their interests, especially when they are unsure about the specific certificate or degree to pursue when they begin college. By starting in an interest area, students can develop confidence and clarity to select a program that is meaningful to them. Interest areas at NIC may include transfer and career programs under one heading. NIC has established six interest areas: Arts, Communication and Humanities, Business Administration and Management, Healthcare, Manufacturing and

Trades, Social Services and Human Resources, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

**Internet course:** Internet courses are delivered through a website.

**Junior/community college:** A junior/community college is often called a two-year institution of higher education. Course offerings generally include a transfer curriculum with credits transferable toward a bachelor's degree at a four-year college, and an occupational or technical curriculum with courses of study designed to prepare students for employment in two years or less.

**Late-start course:** A course that begins after the start of a term or semester.

**Lecture/laboratory/discussion courses:** In lecture courses, students attend class on a regular basis and the instructor lectures on course material. Laboratory courses require students to perform certain functions in controlled situations that help them test and understand what is being taught in the lecture. Discussion courses, sometimes called seminar courses, offer students the opportunity to talk about material being taught, ask questions, and discuss material with their classmates.

**Letter grades/Grade Point Averages (GPA):** Most colleges use both letter grades and GPAs in determining students' grades. Most colleges figure GPAs using the following method: As are worth 4 points; Bs are worth 3 points; Cs are worth 2 points; Ds are worth 1 point; and Fs are worth 0 points. To figure a GPA, multiply the number of credit hours a course is worth by the number of points for the letter grade, then add up the totals for each course and divide by the number of attempted credit hours.

**Major/Minor:** A major is a student's chosen field of study that usually requires the successful completion of a specified number of credit hours. A minor is designated as a specific number of credit hours in a secondary field of study.

**Matriculated/Non-Matriculated (Degree Seeking/Non-Degree Seeking):** Students who are matriculated are working toward a degree or certificate and have completed the admissions process, which includes application, payment of application fee, and provision of high school and/or college transcripts. Matriculated students are eligible to apply for financial aid. Non-matriculated students are not working toward a degree from North Idaho College and are not eligible for financial aid or participation in varsity athletics.

**Mid-term exams:** During the middle of each semester, instructors may give mid-term exams that test students on the material covered during the first half of the semester. Some courses have only two tests, a mid-term and a final.

**Milestone Courses:** Courses identified in program maps to mark key achievement along the path to a certificate or degree. These courses serve as intermediate goals to focus effort and further direct the student toward completion. Milestone courses may draw together foundational knowledge, integrate learning, and foster key co-curricular experience. They highlight the way forward and may have specific college supports or resources built into them.

**Non-credit courses:** Courses that have zero credit hours and do not meet the requirements for a certificate or a degree at a given institution. Non-credit courses may serve one of several purposes: to explore new fields of study, increase proficiency in a particular skill area or profession, develop potential, or enrich life experiences.

**Open-door institution:** Open-door institutions are usually public junior/community colleges. The term "open-door" refers to an admission policy that states that anyone who meets certain age requirements can be admitted. Open-door admissions policies do not mean that students can take any courses that they choose. Students must meet course prerequisites in order to enroll in specific courses.

**Pathways at NIC:** A comprehensive, research-based approach to strengthening how the college supports student achievement of educational and career goals. Pathways at NIC integrate thoughtfully designed program plans, improved student intake processes, and best practices for instruction and developmental education. Maps of program course sequences with related co-curricular activities and experiences that promote student completion of the certificates and degrees are a centerpiece of pathways at NIC.

**Prerequisite:** A prerequisite is a condition that must be met before a student can enroll in a course. This may include, but is not limited to, completion of other courses with a C- or better, acceptance in other programs, sophomore standing, instructor permission, and prescribed test scores. For example, Accounting I is a prerequisite for Accounting II.

**Private/Public institutions:** Private and public institutions differ primarily in terms of their source of financial support. Public institutions receive funding from the state or other governmental entities and are administered by public boards. Private institutions rely on income from private donations, or from religious or other organizations and student tuition.

**Resident/Non-resident status:** The amount of tuition a student pays to a public (state supported) college is determined by the student's state residence status. If a student is a resident of the state, then the student pays a lower tuition rate. A non-resident will pay a higher tuition rate. Residency requirements vary from state to state, but are determined by the student's place of residence or his/her parents' place of residence if the student is younger than a certain age. Tuition rates for private colleges are not based on residency.

**Schedule of classes:** With the help of academic advisors or faculty advisors, students make up their own individual class schedules for each semester they are enrolled. Courses are designated in the online Class Schedule by course department, course number, time and days the course meets, the room number, building name, and the instructor's name.

**Service Learning:** Service Learning combines academic studies with community service by linking the theory and content of a course with the practical application of the course's concepts in a community setting. The Service Learning assignment, which is optional, requires 15-20 hours outside the classroom during the semester (in lieu of other course assignments comparable to

15-20 hours). Career exploration may be an added benefit to this type of class.

**Short-term course:** A course that begins at the start of a term or semester and ends early.

**Syllabus:** A course syllabus is a summary of the course. It usually contains specific information about the course; information on how to contact the instructor, including the instructor's office location and office hours; an outline of what will be covered in the course, with a schedule of test dates and due dates for assignments; the grading policy for the course; and specific classroom rules. It is usually given to each student during the first class session.

**Transcript:** The transcript is a student's permanent academic record. It may show courses attempted, grades received, academic status, and honors received. Colleges do not release transcripts if a student owes money to the college. Transcripts are maintained and sent from the Registrar's Office.

**Transfer of credits:** Some students attend more than one institution during their college careers and will wish for accumulated credit hours from the former institution to transfer to the new one. To transfer credits, a student must have an official transcript sent to the new institution, which will determine which courses will apply toward graduation requirements.

**Tuition:** Tuition is the amount paid for each credit hour of enrollment. Tuition does not include the cost of books, fees, or room and board. Tuition charges vary from college to college and are dependent on such factors as resident or out-of-state status, level of classes enrolled in (lower, upper, or graduate division), and whether the institution is publicly or privately financed.

**Tutors:** A tutor is a person, generally another student, who has completed and/or demonstrated proficiency in a course or subject, and is able to provide instruction to another student. Tutoring is free for all NIC students. See the *Cardinal Learning Commons* website for more details.

**Undergraduate:** An undergraduate is a student who is pursuing either a certificate, an associate's or a baccalaureate degree.

**University:** A university is composed of undergraduate, graduate, and professional colleges and offers degrees in each.

**Waitlist:** If a class is full, a student may choose to add themselves to a waitlist for that course section. If a seat becomes available, the student will be added to that course and notified via their Cardinal Mail student email account. Waitlists are active from the time registration for a term begins until the add/drop period ends for that course. Waitlists are not available for all courses.