

SAT

(pronounced by its letters, S-A-T) SAT is one of the two most common four-year college admissions tests. It can be taken more than once, as early as the junior year, and/or early in the senior year.

Semester

The length of an academic term at some schools—usually, 15 weeks of academic work. Students at schools on the semester system usually enroll for two semesters in one calendar year.

Technical college

Technical colleges offer the AAS (Associate of Applied Science) and AAS-T (Associate of Applied Science Transfer) degrees, but not the AA (Associate of Arts) degree. They also offer a variety of shorter-term certificates, depending on the training program. There are five technical colleges in Washington State.

Trade school

Trade schools offer vocational training in a wide variety of areas (construction, cooking, paralegal, electrical work, massage, etc.). Students usually earn a certificate, and may complete an apprenticeship. They do not earn degrees.

Two-year college

(see community college)

Undergraduate

Someone who is enrolled in a college, pursuing a two-year (associate's) degree, or a four-year (bachelor's) degree.



Gaining
Early Awareness
and Readiness for
Undergraduate
Programs

For more
information,
contact
Kathe Taylor, Ph.D.,
Director,
GEAR UP
The Evergreen
State College,
Olympia, WA. 98505
360-867-5136

What Did You Say?

The Real Meaning Behind All Those College Words.



Gaining
Early Awareness
and Readiness for
Undergraduate
Programs

A U.S. Department of Education Grant Program

For Students ♦ For Teachers ♦ For Parents

College jargon can sound like a foreign language.

In this brochure we've tried to define some common terms you are likely to hear when you start exploring college.

ACT

(pronounced by its letters, A-C-T) ACT is one of the two most common four-year college admissions tests. It can be taken more than once, as early as the junior year, and/or early in the senior year.

Admissions deposit

A nonrefundable fee that "holds your spot" once you are admitted. Admissions deposits are due by May 1.

Admissions fee

A nonrefundable fee that colleges charge to process your application. A \$50 fee per admissions application is typical. Under certain circumstances, colleges may waive this fee. Check with your high school counselor about requesting a fee waiver.

Application

A request for consideration. You must apply *separately* to be considered for admission to college, scholarship aid, financial aid, and housing—four *different* applications.

Associate's degree

A credential earned after completing a period of college study that usually takes two years or less, if a student attends full-time. There are many different kinds of associate's degrees. The Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree is most likely to transfer to a four-year college.

Baccalaureate

A bachelor's degree (see below), or an institution that offers bachelor's degrees. There are 28 baccalaureate colleges and universities in Washington State: 6 public and 22 independent.

Bachelor's degree

A credential earned after completing a period of college study that usually takes four or five years. There are many different kinds of bachelor's degrees. Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degrees are the most common.

College

A general term that refers to most forms of education beyond high school.

Core courses

High school courses needed to enter a college or university. Not all high school courses are considered "core." For instance, every math course does not satisfy "core." Check with your high school counselors!

Community college

A college that offers comprehensive educational, training and service programs that usually can be completed in two years or less. Students may earn degrees or certificates. There are 29 community colleges in Washington State.

Credit

Official certification that a student has completed a course. One credit roughly represents one hour of in-class work per week. Students accumulate credits to earn a degree.

Deadline

A firm date when documents are due. Deadline means deadline – the dates aren't negotiable. Don't get confused! Be clear on whether the deadline is the date when the document must be postmarked or received.

Four-year college:

(see baccalaureate)

Matriculation

A fancy way of saying that you are officially enrolled in a college.

Minimum requirements

Don't settle for minimum! Four-year colleges have minimum requirements for admission that specify the number and type of core courses needed. Because more students apply than can be selected, colleges are going to take students who have more than the minimum requirements.

Official transcripts

A record of your high school work that is mailed by the school in a sealed envelope, with the school's seal on it. Colleges will only accept official transcripts—not photocopies you may have made.

Placement test

A test given after a student has been accepted to a college to determine what level of math, reading, or English they are ready for.

Postsecondary education

Any form of education or training beyond high school.

PSAT

The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test gives you practice for the SAT Reasoning Test™, which many four-year colleges require for admission. It also enters you into the competition for scholarships sponsored by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Most students take the PSAT in their sophomore and/or junior year.

Quarter

The length of an academic term at some schools—usually, 10 weeks of academic work. Students at schools on the quarter system usually enroll for three quarters in one calendar year.