

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 summer sessions and carrying extra courses during the regular academic term.

Admitted student: Applicant who is offered admission to a degree-granting program at your institution.

* **Adult student services:** Admission assistance, support, orientation, and other services expressly for adults who have started college for the first time, or who are re-entering after a lapse of a few years.

American Indian or Alaska Native: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and maintaining tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Applicant (first-time, first year): An individual who has fulfilled the institution's requirements to be considered for admission (including payment or waiving of the application fee, if any) and who has been

<p>Commuter: A student who lives off campus in housing that is not owned by, operated by, or affiliated with the college. This category includes students who commute from home and students who have moved to the area to attend college.</p>
<p>Clock hour: A unit of measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students. Also referred to as credit hour.</p>
<p>Continuous basis (for program enrollment): A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that enroll students at any time during the academic year. For example, a cosmetology school or a word processing school might allow students to enroll and begin studies at various times, with no requirement that classes begin on a certain date.</p>
<p>Cooperative education program: A program that provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government.</p>
<p>Cooperative housing: College-owned, -operated, or -affiliated housing in which students share room and board expenses and participate in household chores to reduce living expenses.</p>
<p>* Counseling service: Activities designed to assist students in making plans and decisions related to their education, career, or personal development.</p>
<p>Credit: Recognition of attendance or performance in an instructional activity (course or program) that can be applied by a recipient toward the requirements for a degree, diploma, certificate, or other recognized postsecondary credential.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>Credit hour: A unit of measure representing an hour (50 minutes) of instruction over a 15-week period in a semester or trimester system or a 10-week period in a quarter system. It is applied toward the total number of hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other recognized postsecondary credential.</p>
<p>Cross-registration: A system whereby students enrolled at one institution may take courses at another institution without having to apply to the second institution.</p>
<p>Deferred admission: The practice of permitting admitted students to postpone enrollment, usually for a period of one academic term or one year.</p>
<p>Degree: An award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition for the successful completion of a program of studies.</p>
<p>Degree-seeking students: Students enrolled in courses for credit who are recognized by the institution as seeking a degree or recognized postsecondary credential. At the undergraduate level, this is intended to include students enrolled in vocational or occupational programs.</p>
<p>Differs by program (calendar system): A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that have occupational/vocational programs of varying length. These schools may enroll students at specific times depending on the program desired. For example, a school might offer a two-month program in January, March, May, September, and November; and a three-month program in January, April, and October.</p>
<p>Diploma: See Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma.</p>
<p>Distance learning: An option for earning course credit at off-campus locations via cable television, internet, satellite classes, videotapes, correspondence courses, or other means.</p>
<p>Doctor's degree-research/scholarship: A Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. Some examples of this type of degree may include Ed.D., D.M.A., D.B.A., D.Sc., D.A., or D.M, and others, as designated by the awarding institution.</p>
<p>Doctor's degree-professional practice: A doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. The degree is awarded after a period of study such that the total time to the degree, including both pre-professional and professional preparation, equals at least six full-time equivalent academic years. Some of these degrees were formerly classified as "first-professional" and may include: Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.); Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.); Law (L.L.B. or J.D.); Medicine (M.D.); Optometry (O.D.); Osteopathic Medicine (D.O); Pharmacy (Pharm.D.); Podiatry (D.P.M., Pod.D., D.P.); or, Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), and others, as designated by the awarding institution.</p>
<p>Doctor's degree-other: A doctor's degree that does not meet the definition of a doctor's degree - research/scholarship or a doctor's degree - professional practice.</p>
<p>Double major: Program in which students may complete two undergraduate programs of study simultaneously.</p>
<p>Dual enrollment: A program through which high school students may enroll in college courses while still enrolled in high school. Students are not required to apply for admission to the college in order to participate.</p>
<p>Early action plan: An admission plan that allows students to apply and be notified of an admission decision well in advance of the regular notification dates. If admitted, the candidate is not committed to enroll; the student may reply to the offer under the college's regular reply policy.</p>
<p>Early admission: A policy under which students who have not completed high school are admitted and enroll full time in college, usually after completion of their junior year.</p>

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Liberal arts/career combination: Program in which a student earns undergraduate degrees in two separate fields, one in a liberal arts major and the other in a professional or specialized major, whether on campus or through cross registration.

Master's degree: An award that requires the successful completion of a program of study of generally one or two full-time equivalent academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree. Some of these degrees, such as those in Theology (M.Div., M.H.L./Rav) that were formerly classified as "first-professional", may require more than two full-time equivalent academic years of work.

Minority affiliation (as admission factor): Special consideration in the admission process for members of designated racial/ethnic minority groups.

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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.

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* **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