



Office of Undergraduate Education

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University Terms

The terminology used in higher education can cause confusion for students and family members. Below is a list of terms along with their definitions and links to relevant Ohio State resources.

✓ Academic Advisor

These professional advisors are an excellent resource for students. In particular, they can help students select proper course sequences, describe alternatives for typical course offerings and serve as a general resource to connect students' future goals with current academic opportunities.

[Visit the advising website](#)

✓ Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action.

[Learn more about academic integrity](#)

✓ Academic Misconduct

Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the university or subvert the educational process. While many people associate academic misconduct with “cheating,” the term encompasses a wider scope of student behaviors which include (but not limited to) violation of course rules or program regulations, knowingly providing or receiving information during a course exam or assignment, and submitting plagiarized work for a course/program assignment.

[Learn more about academic misconduct](#)

✓ Audit/Auditing a Course

To attend a class without receiving academic credit. You may choose to audit a course in order to refresh your understanding of the material or to learn more about a subject without earning a letter grade. Fees are assessed for auditing a course, but no credit hours are awarded. Auditing a course requires the permission of the instructor and the permission of your college office, the latter obtained through your academic advisor. Your college office should have the form or you can download it online. If you are using financial aid, the hours for a course you are auditing **DO NOT** count toward financial aid course-load requirements.

✓ Bachelor of...

A bachelor's degree is an undergraduate academic degree awarded by colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study. The most common are a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), which traditionally requires fewer credits that directly link to a particular major while requiring students to earn credits in a variety of liberal arts subjects, and a Bachelor of Science (B.S.), which is (generally) more strictly focused on a subject matter so students concentrate their focus on mastering the technical and practical facets of their field. Other variants available at Ohio State include Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Bachelor of Music (BM), Bachelor of Music Education (BME), and Bachelor of Science in Design (BSD).

[Learn more about majors offered at Ohio State](#)

✓ Bachelors Degree in Three Years

A first-year student who has already earned substantial credit for college-level course work (30 semester hours or more) may be able to complete some degree programs in three years. Students in this group typically have applicable credit for Ohio State course work through one or more of sources, such as Advanced Placement credit, Examination Mark credit, conversion of military training and coursework, credit for college work completed in concurrent enrollment during high school, etc.

✓ Buckeye Link

This is a one-stop online destination for essential Ohio State resources and services. Students can visit Buckeye Link to take care of academic business online, which provides links to information, instructions, and deep links into their secure and personalized My Buckeye Link.

[Visit the Buckeye Link website](#)

✓ Bursar

The office that bills and collects tuition, fees, campus housing, and other university-related charges.

[Visit the Office of the Bursar website](#)

✓ Campus Change

Ohio State student who move their academic program from one of Ohio State's campuses to another. They are a distinct group from transfer students joining Ohio State from a non-Ohio State campus.

[Visit the campus change website](#)

✓ Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program

Ohio colleges, universities and their business partners that have developed innovative academic programs to recruit and retain more Ohio students into

STEMM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine) are awarding funding offer scholarships for those programs to current and potential students. Ohio State has Choose Ohio First Scholarships in numerous STEMM academic areas.

[Learn more about Choose Ohio First](#)

✓ **Code of Student Conduct**

The code of student conduct is established to foster and protect the core missions of the university; to foster the scholarly and civic development of the university's students in a safe and secure learning environment, and to protect the people, properties and processes that support the university and its missions. The code applies to the on-campus conduct of all students and registered student organizations, including conduct using university computing or network resources. The code also applies to the off-campus conduct of students and registered student organizations in situations which meet certain criteria. Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the code of student conduct.

[Learn more about the student code of conduct](#)

✓ **College**

Collection of departments and schools centered around a common discipline. For example, the College of Engineering is constituted from different departments within it such as chemical engineering, materials science engineering, etc.

[Learn more about Ohio State colleges and schools](#)

✓ **College Credit Plus (Ohio Academy)**

The Academy program is the Ohio State implementation of College Credit Plus (CCP) created by the state of Ohio and is a partnership between Ohio State, the high school, and the student and his or her parents or guardian. Ohio State College Credit Plus policies replace the former Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program (PSEOP).

[Learn more about CCP](#)

✓ **Commencement**

A graduation ceremony where students officially receive their degrees. Commencement is held each semester on the Columbus campus, with the spring commencement being the largest ceremony. Regional campuses also hold commencement, though not every semester.

[Learn more about commencement](#)

✓ **Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM)**

A review panel that investigates cases of misconduct range from deliberate acts of cheating to unintended missteps. They decide whether or not a violation has occurred, and if the panel finds there has been an offense, determine an appropriate penalty.

[Learn more about COAM](#)

✓ **Convocation**

Convocation is the official welcome to Ohio State for new students on the Monday of Welcome Week. Students hear from the president and top administrators, experience their first academic procession, and learn some of the history and traditions of Ohio State.

[Learn more about convocation](#)

✓ **Degree Audit**

One of the most important tools students and advisors use in degree planning is the degree audit, which also includes the Transfer Credit Report. A student can use Buckeye Link to run a degree audit, which provides an evaluation of how all the courses they have completed are used to meet both general and major area course requirements.

[Learn more about the degree audit](#)

✓ Distance Education/Distance Learning

A method of studying in which lectures are broadcast or classes are conducted by correspondence or over the Internet, without the student's needing to physically attend a school or college. This could be a single course taken during the course of regular study at Ohio State or a completely online degree program.

✓ Double Majors/Dual Degree

A program of study that allows a student to complete the course requirements for two majors or two degrees at the same time. Contact your advisor to discuss these options, as different colleges have different requirements and rules.

✓ Elective

A class you can take that is not specifically required by your major or minor.

✓ Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The almost universal application for financial aid, including loans, grants, college work-study and other federal and state programs. It is often required before a student can be considered for scholarships.

[Learn more about FAFSA](#)

✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

This act sets forth requirements designed to protect the privacy of student educational records. The law governs access to records maintained by educational institutions and the release of information from those records. This is a federal law that Ohio State employees are required to abide by. Students can specify individuals allowed to access their information by updating their FERPA release in BuckeyeLink.

[Learn more about FERPA](#)

✓ Financial Aid

Money you receive for you college tuition or expenses that you may or may not have to pay back.

[Visit the student financial aid website to learn more](#)

✓ Fresh Start Rule

Allows an undergraduate student who has been absent from the university for five or more consecutive years to petition to have their GPA reset. All grades of C- or better are counted for credit hours only. All courses taken for credit remain on the record, but the student starts with a clean slate as far as his/her point-hour ratio is concerned. The Graduate School and professional programs sometimes have other rules. The fresh start petition is approved by a student's college office.

[Learn how to file for reinstatement](#)

✓ Grade Forgiveness

Permits students to petition to repeat up to three courses for which the grade in the repeated course will replace the grade for the original course in the calculation of the student's cumulative point-hour ratio.

[Learn more about grade forgiveness](#)

✓ Grade Grievance

It is not uncommon for students to disagree with their instructors about grading; whether it be an individual assignment, an exam, or an overall course grade. Ohio State has a specific process for grade grievances outlined in the University Rules.

[Learn more about the complaint and grievance system](#)

✓ Honors Program and Classes

The Honors Program offers greater academic challenges in limited enrollment sections and special courses. These courses are designated H and must be entered by permission.

[Visit the Honors and Scholars Center website](#)

✓ **Independent Study**

An academic course that allows students to earn credit for work done outside of the normal classroom setting.

✓ **Loans**

A student loan is a type of loan designed to help students pay for post-secondary education and the associated fees, such as tuition, books and supplies, and living expenses. This must be paid back over time.

[Learn more about student loans](#)

✓ **Majors**

Your primary area of study. Your college major is the field you plan to get a job in after you graduate (for example: business, linguistics, anthropology, psychology).

[Learn more about the majors offered at Ohio State](#)

✓ **Merit-based Scholarships**

A type of financial aid awarded to students who have demonstrated special academic ability or talents, regardless of their financial need.

[Learn more about merit-based scholarships](#)

✓ **Minor**

Your secondary area of study. Fewer classes are required for a college minor than for a major. Colleges and universities usually don't require students to

have a minor. Many students' minors are a specialization of their major field. For example, students who want to become a science reporter might major in journalism and minor in biology.

✓ **Need-based Financial Aid**

Financial aid that is awarded to students based on their financial need.

[Visit the student financial aid website to learn more](#)

✓ **Nontraditional Students**

College students are traditionally 18-22 years old, but many students do not fall into that age range. Having deferred starting college, dropped out or stopped along the way, students enroll at all ages. This diversity of ages and experiences adds interest and experience to students' classes.

✓ **Petition**

A petition is both the process and the form a student fills out to request consideration of special circumstances. Examples of petitions include grade forgiveness, drop/withdrawals, late course add, reinstatement, and registration.

[Learn more about filing a petition](#)

✓ **Prerequisite**

A required course that must be completed before a student is allowed to enroll in a more advanced one.

✓ **Regional Campuses**

Regional campuses offer residents of Ohio a convenient, affordable path to an Ohio State education. These campuses are located throughout Ohio in Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark and Wooster.

[Learn more about Ohio State regional campuses](#)

✓ Registrar

The Ohio State University Registrar is responsible for processes related to students' academic records, including transcripts, academic progress, enrollment data, classroom support, academic certification, fee assessment, and national and institutional testing.

[Visit the registrar website](#)

✓ Scholarship

A grant or payment made to support a student's education, awarded on the basis of academic or other achievement.

[Learn more about scholarships and scholarship opportunities](#)

✓ Student Advocacy Center

The center is committed to helping students navigate Ohio State's structure and to resolving issues that they encounter at the university. The center offers help for students in crisis and those in need of direction in their academic, financial, emotional, and physical well-being.

[Visit the Student Advocacy Center website](#)

✓ Student Financial Aid (SFA)

The Office of Student Financial Aid makes every effort within its means to help all students with limited financial resources secure needed funds. Financial aid is intended to help students finance their education when family and personal resources are not adequate to meet total educational costs. Financial aid consists of scholarships and grants, loans (which must be repaid), and part-time employment.

[Visit the SFA website](#)

✓ Transcript

An official academic record from a specific school. It lists the courses you have completed, grades, and information such as when you attended. To request a copy of your transcript, visit the Office of the Registrar.

[Learn more about transcripts](#)

✓ Work-study

A financial aid program funded by the U.S. federal government that allows students to work part time on campus or with approved off-campus employers.

[Learn more about the work-study program](#)

University Life

The Undergraduate Journey

Student Resources



Complaint, Grievance and Appeal Procedures

Getting Started

Scholarship and Supplemental Academic Services

University Terms

Hale Hall Room Reservation System



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