Helpful Definitions for the New College Student

A

**Academic Advisor:** a faculty or staff member assigned to each student to guide them in successful matriculation through Ursuline College. Advisors MUST approve to add/drop classes and/or majors. Duties include advising students on their choice of courses and majors, fulfillment of various academic requirements and other matters.

**Academic Calendar:** an annual publication listing all official dates and deadlines for the academic year.

**Accreditation:** the process by which a college or university is evaluated and approved by a broader organization of similar schools or relevant profession.

**Associate Degree:** a two-year degree in the arts or in science (A.A. or A.S.) Many associate degree programs are offered at community colleges and technical schools. Some large universities also offer such programs. Some states have agreements (called “articulation agreements”) that require state colleges and universities to accept all or most classes satisfactorily completed toward an associate degree and to count credits toward a bachelor’s degree.

B

**Baccalaureate:** Bachelor’s Degree, the formal name for a four-year college degree. Two major types are the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and the Bachelor of Science (B.S.). Ursuline also offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.)

**Board Plan:** a meal plan that you may have to purchase while enrolled as a student, often less expensive than buying meals individually.

C

**Career Counseling:** a variety of career-related services such as self-assessment and interest testing, job search workshops, and resume workshops, usually offered by counseling, student affairs or placement offices.

**Catalog:** the official publication of the institution, containing information about its regulations, requirements, and procedures, as well as opportunities for growth as a college student. It includes general information, admissions information, general academic regulations, general nonacademic information, financial aid and scholarship information, and academic programs. Catalogs usually include an academic calendar.

**Class Standing:** the standing of an individual student in relation to completion of a four-year undergraduate program, usually based on the number of courses or credits completed toward the degree. A freshman is working to complete the first one-fourth of college work. A sophomore is in the second fourth. A junior has passed the halfway point and a senior has three fourths of the requirement for graduation completed. This practice applies to student on the semester system programs.

**Co-curricular Activities:** campus student activities provided by organizations, clubs, athletics and student government.

**Commencement/Graduation:** A ceremony in which colleges award degrees to graduating students. Some schools hold two or three commencements annually, but the largest ones are held in May or early June.

**Commuter Students:** students who live off campus and have to commute, or travel, to campus each day.

**Comprehensive Examination:** some schools use this term to describe final exams, which are given during the last days of the term. The word comprehensive means that all material covered during the term may be included on the exam.

**Continuing Education:** programs that enable the nontraditional college student to take classes without having to be admitted as a degree candidate. While continuing education students may take college courses for credit, some colleges have established noncredit learning programs under this name.

**Cooperative (co-op) Education:** programs that provide an opportunity to work in academic major-relation settings off campus in public and private agencies, as well as in business and industry, either by parallel scheduling (going to school part-time and working part-time) or by alternative scheduling (staying out of school for an academic term and working full time).

**Core Curriculum:** a broad range of courses that a college may require.
Course Number: different colleges number their course in different ways. Undergraduate courses often numbered at the 100 level though at least the 400 level. The 100 level courses are usually survey course that introduce a subject and must be completed before you can take an upper-level course in that subject.

Credit Hour: one semester hour, generally representing one hour per week of lecture or two or more hours per week of laboratory work.

Curriculum: all courses required for a degree. Some colleges refer to all courses in the catalog as the curriculum. Ursuline provides curriculum outlines (audit sheets) in addition to the catalog, to show what course you must take and indicate what order in which you must take them.

Dean: an upper-level college administrator who heads an academic department, college, or other program. A dean can grant exceptions to academic policy. Some deans may have associate or assistant deans to help them.

Dean's List: a list of full time students who attain a semester GPA of 3.5 or above.

Degree Program: the curriculum to earn a degree in a specific field.

Department: a college is often organized into academic departments. For example, a group of history faculty will develop a curriculum for students studying history. The history department will offer all history courses for every student at the school.

Dismissal: (also known as suspension): the ineligibility to return to school for academic or disciplinary reasons. Dismissal or suspension is usually noted on your official record or transcript, and requirements to reenter college will vary.

Drop: the ability to drop (or quit) a course without penalty during specific periods of time. When dropping a course, you must follow the proper procedure, which include completing certain forms and obtaining official signatures from your academic advisor.

Electives: a course you may select from an academic area of interest to you. The course will not apply toward your core, major, or minor requirements. Each college determines the number of electives you may take, and you may take them at any time.

Extracurricular Activities: See Co-curricular Activities

Fabrication: a form of academic misconduct that involves intentionally inventing information or results in the course of academic work.

Faculty: the teachers at a college.

Fees: charges that a student may have to pay in addition to tuition. Fees may have to be charged for housing, labs, parking and so on. Fees are listed in the catalog.

FAFSA: (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) a form that must be completed annually in order to apply for federal financial aid. This form is time sensitive and impacts the financial aid the student will receive.

Final Exam: a test administered at the end of most courses, usually written and often covering the entire content of the course.

Financial Aid: student scholarships, grants, and loans. Some forms of financial aid are gifts, but others are loans that must be repaid with interest. Some aid is offered only to new students, while other sources of financial aid are available to all students. To determine your eligibility for any aid, see a financial aid counselor.

Full-time Student: students enrolled for a specific number of hours, such as 12 semester hours or more. Financial aid is dependent upon full time status.

General Requirements: a broad range of course that a college may require mainly in the freshman and sophomore years, which introduce the student to a wide variety of subjects.

Gift Assistance: any type of financial aid that does not have to be repaid.

Grade Point Average (GPA): sometimes called the cumulative average, grade point ratio.

Grading System: most schools use the A-F system. A is the highest grade, and F means failure. A-D are passing grades for which you will earn points and credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-89</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failing below 70</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
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Failing below 70 ............0 quality points
Graduate Student: a person who has earned at least a bachelor’s degree and is enrolled in a program granting a master’s degree (M.A. or M.S.), a Ph.D., or other graduate degree, for example, in law or medicine.

Grants: a type of financial assistance that does not have to be repaid.

Higher Education: any college courses you take or any degree you earn after completing high school (secondary education). Also called postsecondary education.

Honors: most colleges recognize good grades in the form of academic honors. Dean’s List and President’s List are two awards given every semester. Honors are also awarded at graduation to superior students and the following Latin words are used: cum laude (with praise), magna cum laude (with great praise), and summa cum laude (with highest praise).

Humanities: the range of academic fields or disciplines including mainly the study of literature, foreign languages, history, philosophy, and religion.

Independent Study: a course in which you complete the requirements on your own time, under the direction of a professor, and outside a classroom setting.

Internship: an arrangement that permits students to work and receive college credit usually in their major. Internships are required for graduation in some fields, such as psychology, nursing, and medicine.

Liberal Arts: a curriculum of studies based on the Western concept of education as a balance of fine arts, humanities, and the natural and social sciences.

Major: an undergraduate student’s field of specialization in college.

Master Plan: a listing of all classes that will be offered during the coming term, including days and times of class meetings, name of instructor, building and room, and other registration information.

Master’s Degree Students: students who have chosen to continue their education in either a Masters of Arts (M.A.) or Master of Sciences (M.S.) program. Master’s students may have entered a program different from the one in which they earned their bachelor’s degree.

Matriculate: to apply for and be accepted and enrolled in classes for a degree program.

Midterm Exam: a test administered at around halfway through a course, usually covering all course information presented up to that point in the term.

Minor: in contrast to a major, a second, smaller number of course completed in another field. Not all completed in another field. Not all colleges require students to complete a minor. Some schools require a minor to be closely related to the student’s major, for example, as history is related to government.

Non-traditional Student: a student for whom several or many years have elapsed between his or her previous education and the start or continuation of a college program.

Oral Examination: a test in which the teacher asks questions to which the student must answer by speaking rather than by writing.

Orientation: a period of time set aside by a school for providing new students and parents with various campus information and resources.

Part Time Student: a student taking less than 12 credit hours a semester.

Pass/Fail or Pass/no fail: many colleges allow you to take certain course on a pass/fail basis. By passing the course, you will earn credit toward graduation, but the grade will not affect you GPA. Pass/fail grades will not affect your GPA. Pass/fail grades do not have grade points assigned to them.

Placement Test: a test that shows the level of a student’s preparedness in entering the sequence of related course at some specific level.

Plagiarism: a form of academic misconduct that involves presenting another’s ideas, words, or opinions as one’s own.

Practicum: like an internship, part of an academic course or program that gives a student practical experience related to some form of training. It is usually
shorter in duration and narrower in scope than an internship.

**Prerequisite**: a course or courses that must be completed as a condition for taking another course. Catalogs state prerequisites. A GPA or class standing may constitute a prerequisite for certain courses.

**President's List**: a list of full time students who attain a semester GPA of 4.0 or above.

**Probation**: a warning that you are not making satisfactory academic progress toward your degree or have violated certain standards of acceptable personal behavior. Probation is followed by suspension/dismissal unless the situation is corrected.

**Professor**: college teachers are ranked as teaching assistant, lecturer, instructor, or professor. Professor is the highest rank and includes three levels: assistant professor, associate professor, and (full) professor.

**Registrar**: the college administrator who maintains student transcripts and directs the registration process. When faculty submits final grades, the registrar posts them to your transcript.

**Registration**: the process by which a student officially selects and enrolls in university course work. Registration is not complete until appropriate fees are paid.

**Reinstatement or Readmission**: a return to college following suspension or a leave a absence; you must apply for reinstatement or readmission.

**Residence Hall**: on campus student housing provided by the school. Different rates apply for double, single or suite occupancy.

**Resident Assistant**: an undergraduate or graduate student who lives in the residence hall and works with students to provide personal help and assistance; manage and facilitate small groups; facilitate social, recreational, and educational programs; provide information or act as a referral source to appropriate university or community offices and agencies; and interpret and enforce university rules and regulations.

**S**

**Self-help Assistance**: any type of financial aid for which you must do something in return—usually work or repayment. Also known as Work-Study

**Semester Hours**: the unit of credit you earn for course work that takes a semester to complete.

**Semester System**: a semester system consists of a fall semester, spring semester, and an optional summer semester. Ursuline semesters last for 16 weeks with a weeklong midterm break.

**Study Abroad**: a program that lets you attend a college or university in another country for a specific time, earning credit that will apply toward graduation requirements at your institution.

**Syllabus**: one or more pages of class requirement that an instructor gives our on the first day of a course. The syllabus acts as a course outline, telling when you must complete assignments, readings, and so on.

**T**

**Transcript**: the official record of your college work and grades, which is maintained and updated each term by the registrar.

**Transfer Credit**: if you transfer from one college or university to another, the course the new college accepts and counts toward your degree are your transfer credits.

**Transient Student**: a student who receives permission from his or her college to take courses (usually in the summer) at a different college.

**Tuition**: the money you pay for your college courses. Ursuline tuition is based per credit hour for undergraduate students. This amount does not include room, board, or fees.

**W**

**Withdrawal**: a formal process of removing oneself officially from one or more courses within a certain time period while the course is still in progress. Failing to complete course for which you have not submitted the required withdrawal forms may result in failing grades and academic suspension. Withdrawing usually permits a student to avoid a failing grade and request readmission to the same course later on.

**Work-Study**: a federal student aid program based on need, which provides the opportunity for students to earn some of the aid for which they are eligible through employment, generally on campus.