

## 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. 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



**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.

**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.

**Double major:** Program in which students may complete two undergraduate programs of study simultaneously.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**Early decision plan:** A plan that permits students to apply and be notified of an admission decision (and financial aid offer if applicable) well in advance of the regular notification date. Applicants agree to accept an offer of admission and, if admitted, to withdraw their applications from other colleges. There are three possible decisions for early decision applicants: admitted, denied, or not admitted but forwarded for consideration with the regular applicant pool, without prejudice.

**English as a Second Language (ESL):** A course of study designed specifically for students whose native language is not English.

**Exchange student program-domestic:** Any arrangement between a student and a college that permits study for a semester or more at another college **in the United States** without extending the amount of time required for a degree. **See also Study abroad.**

**External degree program:** A program of study in which students earn credits toward a degree through independent study, college courses, proficiency examinations, and personal experience. External degree programs require minimal or no classroom attendance.

**Extracurricular activities (as admission factor):** Special consideration in the admissions process given for participation in both school and nonschool-related activities of interest to the college, such as clubs, hobbies, student government, athletics, performing arts, etc.

**First-time student:** A student attending any institution for the first time at the level enrolled. Includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended a postsecondary institution for the first time at the same level in the prior summer term. Also includes students who entered with advanced standing (college credit earned before graduation from high school).

**First-time, first-year (freshman) student:** A student attending any institution for the first time at the undergraduate level. Includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term. Also includes students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school).

**First-year student:** A student who has completed less than the equivalent of 1 full year of undergraduate work; that is, less than 30 semester hours (in a 120-hour degree program) or less than 900 clock hours.

**Freshman:** A first-year undergraduate student.

**\*Freshman/new student orientation:** Orientation addressing the academic, social, emotional, and intellectual issues involved in beginning college. May be a few hours or a few days in length; at some colleges, there is a fee.

**Full-time student (undergraduate):** A student enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more clock hours a week each term.



**Part-time student (undergraduate):** A student enrolled for fewer than 12 credits per semester or quarter, or fewer than 24 clock hours a week each term.

\* **Personal counseling:** One-on-one or group counseling with trained professionals for students who want to explore personal, educational, or vocational issues.

**Post-baccalaureate certificate:** An award that requires completion of an organized program of study requiring 18 credit hours beyond the bachelor's; designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree but do not meet the requirements of academic degrees carrying the title of master.

**Post-master's certificate:** An award that requires completion of an organized program of study of 24 credit hours beyond the master's degree but does not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctoral level.

**Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma:** Includes the following three IPEDS definitions for postsecondary awards, certificates, and diplomas of varying durations and credit/cowt of 7.8 (7.8 (8 (ons)-2 ( 0)3.8 (t)-g-2 ( of)-7)-2 ( degr)-6.9

**Required fees:** Fixed sum charged to students for items not covered by tuition and required of such a large proportion of all students that the student who does NOT pay is the exception. Do not include application fees or optional fees such as lab fees or parking fees.

**Resident alien or other eligible non-citizen:** A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who has been admitted as a legal immigrant for the purpose of obtaining permanent resident alien status (and who holds either an alien registration card [Form I-551 or I-151], a Temporary Resident Card [Form I-688], or an Arrival-Departure Record [Form I-94] with a notation that conveys legal immigrant status, such as Section 207 Refugee, Section 208 Asylee, Conditional Entrant Parolee or Cuban-Haitian).

**Room and board (charges)—on campus:** Assume double occupancy in institutional housing and 19 meals per week (or maximum meal plan).

**Secondary school record (as admission factor):** Information maintained by the secondary school that may include such things as the student's high school transcript, class rank, GPA, and teacher and counselor recommendations.

**Semester calendar system:** A calendar system that consists of two semesters during the academic year

**Weekend college:** A program that allows students to take a complete course of study and attend classes only on weekends.

**White:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

\* **Women's center:** Center with programs, academic activities, and/or services intended to promote an understanding of the evolving roles of women.

**Work experience (as admission factor):** Special consideration given to students who have been employed prior to application, whether for relevance to major, demonstration of employment-related skills, or as explanation of student's academic and extracurricular record.

### Financial Aid Definitions

**Awarded aid:** The dollar amounts offered to financial aid applicants.

**External scholarships and grants:** Scholarships and grants received from outside (private) sources that students bring with them (e.g., Kiwanis, National Merit scholarships). The institution may process paperwork to receive the dollars, but it has no role in determining the recipient or the dollar amount awarded.

**Financial aid applicant:** Any applicant who submits **any one of** the institutionally required financial aid applications/forms, such as the FAFSA.

**Indebtedness:** Aggregate dollar amount borrowed through any loan program (federal, state, subsidized, unsubsidized, private, etc.; excluding parent loans) while the student was enrolled at an institution. Student loans co-signed by a parent are assumed to be the responsibility of the student and **should** be included.

**Institutional scholarships and grants:** Endowed scholarships, annual gifts and tuition funded grants for which the institution determines the recipient.

**Financial need:** As determined by your institution using the federal methodology and/or your institution's own standards.

**Need-based aid:** College-funded pTC-fu..l schoIN the 7.8 (he)-6.8 (ds)-2 (.8 (ps)-28mb3 6.9 (ol)3.8 (l)3sed