

## GLOSSARY OF ACADEMIC AND CAMPUS TERMS

**academic adviser** - a staff or faculty member appointed to assist a student in planning the student's academic career

**add a course** - to enter a course in which you were not enrolled at the beginning of the semester

**adjunct instructor** – a part-time teacher or professor, usually a person who works full time in some field and teaches one or two classes about that field

**assignment** - out-of-class work required by a professor, due by a specified date

**assistant professor** - the lowest of the three ranks of faculty members

**associate professor** - the second of the three ranks of faculty members

**bomb a test** - to do poorly on an exam

**caf** – short for cafeteria, the place in a residence hall where meals are provided

**carrel** - a small, enclosed desk, usually in a library, for people wanting some solitude while they study

**comps** - comprehensive examination, an examination (written, oral, or both) Master's and Ph.D. students take following completion of all the course work required for the degree

**cram** - to study for a test, usually the night before, in a short period of time - implies that one has not studied the material earlier and must try to condense it into a short period of time

**cum** - pronounced "kyoom," it refers to a person's cumulative grade point average

**cut** - to fail to attend a class

**dissertation** - a scholarly independent research study required to obtain a doctoral degree

**drop a course** - to withdraw from a course

**drop and add** - that period during the early part of an academic term when students may change their programs of studies by "dropping" and "adding" courses. Also refers to the procedure by which this is done.

**ESL** – English as a second language

**dorm** – short for dormitory

**dormitory** - school-owned housing, with a number rooms for one (not usually), two, or sometimes three or more students. More formally called “residence hall”

**emeritus** – retired, but with an honorary title such as “professor emeritus”

**faculty** - the people who teach in a school (at any level). Can refer to an individual teacher or to a group of teachers collectively. Does *not* refer to a department or a college.

**final** - last exam of a semester

**flunk** - to fail to achieve a passing grade

**FSA** - Foreign Student Adviser (also ISA)

**fraternity** - a social organization of men, sometimes living together in a large house, each with different rules, regulations, and objectives. Some fraternities are purely social; others are professional organizations or academic honorary organizations

**freshman** - a student in the first year of study at a college or university (or a four-year secondary school)

**G.P.A.** - grade point average

**graduate or grad student** - a student who has earned a baccalaureate and is pursuing a higher degree (In many other countries, the equivalent term is “post-graduate student.”)

**Greek** - member of a fraternity or a sorority

**gut course** - a course in which it is generally considered to be easy to receive a good grade with a minimum of effort

**honor system** - the practice of relying on students not to cheat in any academic matter

**incomplete** - a temporary mark given to a student who is doing passing work in a course but who cannot complete all the requirements for the course during the term. The student must have an acceptable reason for not being able to complete the requirements on time, and must complete the requirements within a specified period of time following the term’s end.

**ISA** - International Student Adviser (also FSA)

**jock course** - a course in which it is generally considered to be easy to receive a good grade with a minimum of effort

**junior** - a student in the third year of study at a college or university

**major** - a student's primary field of study

**matriculate** - to formally enroll in a college or university; to register for classes

**McPaper** - a paper that is done in a hurry without much research

**minor** - a student's secondary field of study

**mid-term** - test in the middle of a semester

**orals** - the oral examinations which a student working toward a doctor's degree must pass in order to become a "candidate" for a Ph.D. degree. It is a preliminary test of the student's knowledge in the field

**paper** – written assignment more than a few pages in length, usually requiring some research. More formally called a “term paper”

**portfolio** -a collection of samples of the work of a student (or other person) in a field requiring production of some creative work, such as a student in art, architecture, or photography

**prof** - a professor

**professor** - the third of three ranks of faculty members; also, “full professor”

**quarter** – an academic term at institutions on the “quarter system,” where the academic year is divided into three “quarters” plus a summer session

**quiz** - a short test, usually given without warning

**R.A.** - research assistant (see the definition) or resident assistant (see the definition)

**reading list** (syllabus) - a list of books and articles prepared by each professor for a specific course. Tells what readings are required and which are “suggested.” The list is designed to give the student an overview of the course

**registrar** - official recorder of students' academic information, such as courses taken and grades received

**registration** - procedure of enrolling officially in classes at the beginning of each semester or other academic term

**res. hall** – short for “residence hall”

**research assistant** – graduate student employed to assist a faculty member with research

**residence hall** – school-owned housing, with a number rooms for one (not usually), two, or sometimes three students. Informally called “dorms,” short for dormitory

**resident assistant** – student (usually undergraduate) employed by a residence hall (or “dorm”) to monitor and assist students who live in the hall

**semester** - one academic term, which is half of the academic year

**senior** - a student in the fourth year of study at a college or university

**skim** - to quickly read something to get a general idea of its contents

**skipped, skip out** - to fail to attend a class, meeting, etc.

**sophomore** - a student in the second year of study at a college or university

**sorority** - comparable to a fraternity, except that it is for females instead of males

**T.A.** - teaching assistant

**“take a W”** - withdraw from a class after the drop-date, resulting in a “W” on the transcript

**teacher** – generic term for a person who teaches in a college or university, used for people of any rank (graduate assistant, full professor, etc.) who teach

**teaching assistant** - graduate student hired to perform teaching duties

**tenure** – the status of holding one’s position permanently, as in a “tenured professor,” who cannot be removed from his or her post except in extreme circumstances

**tenure track** – a faculty position whose occupant has the potential to be granted tenure

**term paper** - written assignment more than a few pages in length, usually requiring some research. Informally called merely “paper”

**thesis** - a scholarly research paper which may be required to obtain a master's degree

**town and gown** – the community surrounding a higher-education institution and the educational institution itself, as in “We have good town-and-gown relations.”

**transcript** - official record of a student's grades and courses

**trimester** – an academic term representing one-third of an academic year

**undergraduate** - a student in the first four years of university study