Tips for Academic Success

Common Academic Terms

(Adapted from *A Dictionary of American Idioms* and *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, Second Edition.*

**AP/Advanced Placement course:** A college level course that students can take in high school to earn college credit.

**audit:** to take a course not for credit.

**CoOp/Cooperative education:** classroom-based education with practical work experience that provides academic credit for a structured job experience.

**core requirement:** basic courses required of all students for a particular major or program.

**credit hours:** the number of points towards one's degree earned by completing a particular course.

**curriculum:** materials and topics covered in a course or major.

**curve:** grading based on how well students do in relation to each other, not how well they do on actual assignments or tests.

**drop/add:** time during which students can change courses without penalty or affecting their permanent record or transcript.

**elective:** a course not required by university or major program.

**final:** longer test that may cover several chapters at the end of the course or the second half of the semester. comprehensive final: a test that consists of everything that has been taught during the semester.

**first-year withdrawal policy:** first-year students may withdraw from a course at any time during the semester, up until the last day of class. Any course for which a grade of W is assigned will be deleted from the transcript at the end of the semester. This policy is not available for transfer students and does not apply to the summer session.

**Grade Point Average (GPA):** a numerical reference on a 4.0 scale (based on the averaged worth of letter grades for courses taken) that indicates a student's overall College performance.

**grader:** Teaching Assistant (TA) responsible for grading only, not classroom teaching.

**hands-on learning:** active participation in learning; learning by doing.

**lab:** a place for experimentation/hands-on learning.
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Terms Continued

**major**: primary, specialized area of study.

**midterm**: a longer test that may cover the first half of the course content or is scheduled mid-point in the semester.

**non-majors**: students not majoring or specializing in a subject.

**on reserve**: books held at the library for a particular course.

**overload**: when a student is registered for more than the usual 18 credit hour course load.

**pass/no pass**: a course not taken for a letter grade but simply credit or no credit.

**peer teaching**: students teaching each other.

**prerequisite**: a course that must be taken before another.

**reading days**: free days for study between last day of classes and first day of final exams.

**recitation leaders**: Teaching Assistants who teach smaller subsections of large, lecture courses to go over the material with students in more detail.

**office hours**: the set time a professor/instructor schedules each week to be to meet with students in his or her office.

**quiz**: an informal test. **pop quiz**: an unexpected/unscheduled, surprise test.

**registrar**: office where students register for courses.

**schedule**: courses being taken in a particular term by a student, including meeting times, days, and location.

**section**: smaller part of a larger lecture course.

**syllabus**: a description of what will be included and required for a course, including assignments, test dates, books required, and grading and other university policies.

**transcript**: student's official record (administered by the registrar) of courses taken and grades received.

**tutor**: someone who gives individual, extra help to students; but is not an advisor or recitation leader.

**under class student**: an undergraduate in first two years of study.

**upper class student**: an undergraduate in last two years of study.

**withdraw**: grade given when a course is dropped after the official drop/add period; a "W" appears on the transcript.