

Common Data Set 2016-2017

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.
Admitted student: Applicant who is offered admission to a degree-granting program at your institution.
* Adult student services: Admission assistance, support, orientation, and other services expressly for adults who have started college for the first time, or who are re-entering after a lapse of a few years.
American Indian or Alaska Native: 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has been notified of one of the following actions: admission, nonadmission, placement on waiting list, or application withdrawn (by applicant or institution).
Application fee: That amount of money that an institution charges for processing a student's application for acceptance. This amount is <i>not</i> creditable toward tuition and required fees, nor is it refundable if the student is not admitted to the institution.
Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
Associate degree: An award that normally requires at least two but less than four years of full-time equivalent college work.
Bachelor's degree: An award (baccalaureate or equivalent degree, as determined by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education) that normally requires at least four years but <i>not</i> more than five years of full-time equivalent college-level work. This includes ALL bachelor's degrees conferred in a five-year cooperative (work-study plan) program. (A cooperative plan provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government; thus, it allows students to combine actual work experience with their college studies.) Also, it includes bachelor's degrees in which the normal four years of work are completed in three years.
Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
Board (charges): Assume average cost for 19 meals per week or the maximum meal plan.
Books and supplies (costs): Average cost of books and supplies. Do not include unusual costs for special groups of students (e.g., engineering or art majors), unless they constitute the majority of students at your institution.
Calendar system: The method by which an institution structures most of its courses for the academic year.
Campus Ministry: Religious student organizations (denominational or nondenominational) devoted to fostering religious life on college campuses. May also refer to Campus Crusade for Christ, an interdenominational Christian organization.

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<p>* Career and placement services: A range of services, including (often) the following: coordination of visits of employers to campus; aptitude and vocational testing; interest inventories, personal counseling; help in resume writing, interviewing, launching the job search; listings for those students desiring employment and those seeking permanent positions; establishment of a permanent reference folder; career resource materials.</p>
<p>Carnegie units: One year of study or the equivalent in a secondary school subject.</p>
<p>Certificate: See Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma.</p>
<p>Class rank: The relative numerical position of a student in his or her graduating class, calculated by the high school on the basis of grade-point average, whether weighted or unweighted.</p>
<p>College-preparatory program: Courses in academic subjects (English, history and social studies, foreign languages, mathematics, science, and the arts) that stress preparation for college or university study.</p>
<p>Common Application: The standard application form distributed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals for a large number of private colleges who are members of the Common Application Group.</p>
<p>* Community service program: Referral center for students wishing to perform volunteer work in the community or participate in volunteer activities coordinated by academic departments.</p>
<p>Commuter: A student who lives off campus in housing that is not owned by, operated by, or affiliated with the college. This category includes students who commute from home and students who have moved to the area to attend college.</p>
<p>Contact hour: A unit of measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students. Also referred to as clock hour.</p>
<p>Continuous basis (for program enrollment): A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that enroll students at any time during the academic year. For example, a cosmetology school or a word processing school might allow students to enroll and begin studies at various times, with no requirement that classes begin on a certain date.</p>
<p>Cooperative education program: A program that provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government.</p>
<p>Cooperative housing: College-owned, -operated, or -affiliated housing in which students share room and board expenses and participate in household chores to reduce living expenses.</p>
<p>* Counseling service: Activities designed to assist students in making plans and decisions related to their education, career, or personal development.</p>
<p>Credit: Recognition of attendance or performance in an instructional activity (course or program) that can be applied by a recipient toward the requirements for a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.</p>
<p>Credit course: A course that, if successfully completed, can be applied toward the number of courses required for achieving a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.</p>
<p>Credit hour: A unit of measure representing an hour (50 minutes) of instruction over a 15-week period in a semester or trimester system or a 10-week period in a quarter system. It is applied toward the total number of hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.</p>
<p>Cross-registration: A system whereby students enrolled at one institution may take courses at another institution without having to apply to the second institution.</p>
<p>Deferred admission: The practice of permitting admitted students to postpone enrollment, usually for a period of one academic term or one year.</p>
<p>Degree: An award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition for the successful completion of a program of studies.</p>
<p>Degree-seeking students: Students enrolled in courses for credit who are recognized by the institution as seeking a degree or formal award. At the undergraduate level, this is intended to include students enrolled in vocational or occupational programs.</p>

