

Academic year: The academic year at most US colleges and universities starts in August or September and ends in May.

Academic advisor: School official, usually assigned by your college or university, who can help choose your classes and make sure you are taking the right courses to graduate.

Add/Drop: The period at the beginning of classes when you can change your class selection.

Associate's degree: A type of degree awarded to students at a U.S. college or university, usually after two years of classes.

Associate dean: Academic leader who reports to a Dean, and works closely with students in a UMaine college.

Audit: To attend a class without receiving a grade and not for academic credit.

Bachelor's degree: Also called "undergraduate degree." It is usually after four years of university studies.

Bursar's Office: The office where you pay your bill.

Career Center: An office which helps with choosing a major or a career, offers internship and job searching support.

College: At UMaine, an academic unit which includes multiple departments (See: "department")

Commencement: The graduation ceremony.

Co-requisite: A class you need to take together with another class.

Course = Class

Course Number: The number used to designate a course. You usually need this number in order to register for a class. Example: HTY 103.

Credit Hour: The number of hours assigned to a specific class. This is usually the number of instructional hours per week. The number of credit hours you enroll in determines whether you are a full-time student or a part-time student.

Dean: Academic leader of a UMaine college.

Department: Smallest academic unit hosting one academic program. Ex. History department.

Department Chair: The faculty member who is the lead administrator of a department.

Doctorate: Highest academic degree. Awarded after a master's degree.

Elective: A class you can take that is not specifically required by your major or minor.

Extracurricular activities: Groups you belong to outside of class, such as sporting teams, clubs and organizations.

Faculty: Generic term for the professors and instructors at a university.

Faculty member = Professor = Lecturer = Instructor

Financial aid: Money you receive for your university tuition or expenses that you may or may not have to pay back. (See: "Grant," "Loan," and "Scholarship")

Freshman: First-year college student.

Full-time student: A student who enrolls in the required minimum number of courses each term.

General education classes: Classes that give undergraduate students basic knowledge of a variety of topics. Students often must take general education classes in order to graduate.

Grade point average (GPA): The average of all of the course grades you have received, on a four-point scale.

Grant: A form of financial aid from a non-profit organization (or the US government) that you do not have to repay.

Greek Life: The generic name for fraternities and sororities, which are student organizations. They often have specific student housing options for their members.

Honors: UMaine College which provides an Honors degree, always combined with another major.

Internship: A temporary job, paid or unpaid, usually in the field of your major. You may be able to receive college credit for an internship.

Junior: Third-year college student.

Loan: A form of financial aid that you must repay.

Major: Your primary area of study. Your college major is the field you plan to get a job in after you graduate (for example: business, linguistics, anthropology, psychology).

Master's degree: The awarding of a master's degree requires at least one year of study (and often more, depending on the field) after a student earns a bachelor's degree. It is also called a "graduate degree".

Minor: Your secondary area of study, often optional. Fewer classes are required for a college minor than for a major. Many students' minors are a specialization of their major field. For example, students who want to become a science reporter might major in journalism and minor in biology.

Non-resident: A student who is not an official resident of the state where a public university is located. Tuition at public universities is less expensive for residents of the state.

Office hours: Time set aside by professors or teaching assistants for students to visit their office and ask questions or discuss the course they teach. Your professor or teaching assistant will tell you at the beginning of the term when and where office hours will be every week.

Online classes: Courses you take on a digital device from a distance instead of in a traditional classroom.

Part-time student: A student who does not enroll in enough credit hours to become a full-time student. Part-time students often take only one or two classes at one time.

Prerequisite: A class that is completed before another class. (For example, Astronomy 100 may be a prerequisite for Astronomy 200.)

Private university: A university that is privately funded. Tuition for a private college or university (before scholarships and grants) is the same for all students.

Professional advisor: Similar to "academic advisor", often a staff member.

Public university: A university that is funded by the government. Public colleges and universities are less expensive for residents of the state where they are located.

Quarter: Type of academic term. A school with this system generally will have a fall quarter, winter quarter and spring quarter (each about 10 weeks long), along with a summer term. (See also: "Semester")

Research Assistant: A graduate student working in a lab on research.

Scholarship: A form of financial aid that you do not have to repay.

Semester: Type of academic term. A school with this system generally will have a fall semester and a spring semester (each about 15 weeks long), along with a summer term. (See also: "Quarter")

Senior: Fourth-year college student. You are a senior when you graduate from college.

Sophomore: Second-year college student.

Syllabus: A description of a course which also lists the dates of major exams, assignments and projects, usually distributed in the first class meeting.

Teaching Assistant (TA): A graduate student who is teaching your lecture or recitation.

Term: The length of time that you take a college class. (See also: "Quarter" and "Semester")

Transcript: An official academic record from a specific school. It lists the courses you have completed, grades, and other information such as when you attended.