**Common College Terminology**

**TYPES OF DEGREES:**

**Undergraduate** – A student attending college who has not yet earned a 2-year or 4-year degree.

**Short-term Certificate (STC)** – a certification that can be earned at a 2-year or vocational school; the certificate is proof of a specific skill level and is required in many technical fields such as Welding, HVAC, etc.

**Associate’s degree** – degree earned for 2 years of college work; Associates of Arts, Associates of Science, and often Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.)

**Bachelor’s degree** – Undergraduate studies lead to a Bachelor’s degree – usually earned after 4 years of college; Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or a Bachelor of Science (B.S.)

**Graduate degree** – degree earned beyond first four years; Master’s Degree (M.A. or M.S), Doctoral degree (Ph.D.), etc.



**MONEY:**

**Cost of attendance** – The total estimated cost to attend a college for one year. This amount usually includes tuition, room, meal plan, estimates for books and supplies, transportation, and personal/miscellaneous.

**Tuition** – The cost of classes

**Room & Board** – Cost to live in a residence hall (dorm room) and a meal plan



**FINANCIAL AID:**

**Merit-based Aid (Scholarships)** – Money a student earns to pay for college based on “merit” such as academic, GPA, test scores, athletics, music, dance, art, etc.

**Need-based Aid** – Money a student receives for college that is based on the income level of the family. This could include grants, work-study, etc.

**FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid** – This application opens October 1 for seniors. It is an application to the US Government to determine how much need-based aid a student will get to help with college expenses.

**Pell Grant** – A grant from the government that is provided to students who qualify based on their family’s income. This is “free money” that does not need to be paid back. You must submit the FAFSA to find out if you qualify. The current amount for the full Pell Grant is $6,195. Some students receive “full” and some receive “partial” Pell.

**Work-Study** – A program through the government where students have a job while in school (usually an on-campus job) to help with college expenses. Students can use their paycheck money to pay for tuition or they can use it for living expenses.

**Loans** – Money that students or parents borrow to pay for college expenses.



**GENERAL COLLEGE TERMS:**

**Application for Admission** – Students submit an application for admission to request admission to the college. A complete application usually consists of the online application, test scores, transcript, and application fee or fee waiver. Each college develops their own admission standards. After the application, students will find out if they are admitted or declined by the college.

**Credit Hours** – College courses are measured in terms of credit hours. Most classes are 3 hours, which means the student spends approx. three hours in the class each week. For example, a math or English class is usually 3 hours. Science courses are often 4 hours because they require 3 hours of class time and 1 hour of lab.

**Full time student** – A student is considered “full time” if he/she takes at least 12 hours of credit.

**Part-time student** – A student is considered “part time” if he/she takes less than 12 hours of credit.

**GPA** – Grade point average. This number is calculated using the grades earned in a course – A = 4.0, B = 3.0, C= 2.0, D = 1.0, F = 0. The high school GPA for grades beginning in 9th grade is often considered when applying to college. When students start college, their GPA gets a fresh start – the college GPA includes all the courses taken in college.

**General Education classes** – “Gen Ed” classes are the courses that all students must take regardless of their major. This usually includes English Composition, Speech, Fine Arts, etc.

**Major** – A major is the student’s chosen field of study. The student will take a specific number of classes in this area to earn a degree in that area.

**Minor** – A minor is the student’s secondary field of study. The student will take a specific number of classes in this area, but they will be fewer than the major.

**Prerequisite Courses** – A prerequisite course is taken in preparation for another course. For example, students must complete English 101 before taking English 102.