

| Term | Definition | SCC | NSC | IPEDS | NWCCU | Dept. of Ed | ATD | NCES | AIHEC | OPI | AICF | EMPOWER |
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| Academic Year | One complete school year at the same school, or two complete, half years at different schools. For schools that have a year-round program of instruction, nine months is considered an academic year. | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Affiliation | Refers to the term in which a student enters the institution at the first-year freshman level. | x | x | | | | x | | x | | | x |
| AIMS AKIS | American Indian Measure of Success AIMS Key Indicator System Cohort is Summer Fall Spring | x | | | | | | | x | | x | |
| Applicant | A student who has completed the application with assumed intent who is not yet registered for classes. | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Attainment | Achieving an educational goal such as certificate or degree. | x | x | x | x | X | x | X | x | x | x | |
| Award Year | This is in reference to financial aid and begins with the fall term followed by the spring term and ending with the summer term. | x | | | | x | | | | | x | |
| Calendar Year | Standard year from January 1 through December 31. | x | | | | x | | | | | x | |
| Census Date | Also known as "freeze date." Reported enrollment as of the 15th day of each regular term. | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| Cohort | Refers to a specific group of students who were educated at the same time. | x | x | x | | x | x | x | | x | | x |
| Cohort Year | The year in which a cohort group began attending the institution (typically at the freshman level). | x | x | x | | | x | | x | x | | x |
| Completion Rate | The number of students who have received a degree or certificate divided by the total number of students in the cohort. | x | x | x | x | | x | | x | x | | |

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| Completion/Graduation | The outcome of how many students within a cohort complete and/or graduates from an institution. This is typically measured by 100-, 150-, 200-percent of time of the expected completion. (ie. one, one and one half, or two years for one-year certificate; two, three, or four years for associate degree; or four, six, or eight years for bachelor level). | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | |
| Continuing Student | Refers to a student who was previously enrolled in any semester within the last year. | x | | | | x | | | x | | | x | x |
| Credit | Credits are measured in terms of credit hours. One credit hour equals one hour in class per week. For each credit hour you will probably spend two to three hours outside of class studying. | x | x | X | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| Credits attempted vs. credits earned | The number and percentage of all credits completed with C - grade or higher divided by all credits attempted for all students. | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | |
| CTE | "Career and Technical Education", refers to educational programs that focus on specific skills and knowledge needed for particular careers or trades. | x | | | | | | | x | x | | | |
| CTE Concentrator | A student who is enrolled in a Career and Technical program and has chosen a specific concentration or specialization with that program. | x | | | | | | | x | x | | | |
| CTE Eligible Recipient | An individual who meets the eligibility criteria to receive services or benefits related to Career and Technical Education. | x | | | | | | | x | x | | | |
| CTE Participant | An individual who completes not less than one course in a career and technical education program or program of study of an eligible recipient. | x | | | | | | | x | x | | | |
| Drop | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who exit before the term begins or within the allotted 10-day drop period. Students who exit before the term begins or within the census date drop period. | x | x | | | x | | | | | | x | x |

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| Drop-out | Previously enrolled student who does not re-enroll or does not complete their intended degree program or set of courses and has no record of transfer. | X | | X | | | | | | | X | | |
| Dual Enrollment | Courses taught to high school students for which the students receive both high school credit and college credit. | X | | X | | X | | | | X | X | X | X |
| Dual Credit | A program through which high school students are enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) courses, taught at their high school, that fulfill high school graduation requirements and may earn the student college credits | X | | X | | | | | | X | X | | X |
| Final Accept | A student who has completed the application process and has been accepted to the institution but has not yet registered for classes. | X | | | | | | | | | | | |
| First-Generation Student | Neither of the student's parents have earned a bachelor's Degree. | X | | X | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X |
| First-time Ever in College (FTEIC) | Entering freshmen who has never attended any postsecondary institution. This includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term. Also includes students who are entering with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduating from high school). | X | | X | X | X | X | | | | | | X |
| First-time Freshman (FTF)/New to the Institution (NTI) | A student who is attending the institution for the first time. This includes transfers and students attending at the college level for the first-time who are coming in with advanced standing (ie. advanced placement or formally high school dual enrolled). | X | | X | | | X | | | X | | | X |
| Fiscal Year | Accounting term for year beginning July 1 through June 30. | X | | X | X | X | | | | | X | | |
| Full-time Equivalency (FTE) Calculation | This is equal to the total number of credit hours enrolled in a given term divided by the number or equivalent credit hours (12) to be considered full-time for institutions operating on a semester basis. | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | X | | |
| Full-time Student | A student who is enrolled in 12 or more credits in a given semester. | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | X | X | X |

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| Graduation Rate 4 Year 6 Year | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 yr- The total number of FTIC or new students who earned a credential within four years of initial enrollment divided by all students from that cohort (either FTIC or new students) • 6 yr- The total number of FTIC or new students who earned a bachelor's (BA or BS) degree within six years of starting at your institution divided by all students from that cohort. | X | X | X | X | | X | | X | X | | X |
| IPEDS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System • Cohort is July 1st to June 30th • Graduation rate within IPEDS uses cohorts 7 years prior of date | X | | X | X | | | | | X | | |
| MPSEOC | Montana Postsecondary Educational Opportunities Council | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-credit Bearing Student | Anyone enrolled in a course or courses but will not receive credit upon completion of the course; enrolled not-for-credit. (Excluded from "official" count -ie. IPEDS) | X | | X | X | | | | X | | | |
| Non-traditional Student | Student age 25 or over. | X | | | | | X | X | | | | X |
| OCHE | Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education | X | | | | X | | | | | | |
| Part-time Student | A student who is enrolled in less than 12 credits in a given semester. | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | X |
| Persistence | The continued enrollment of students from one specified time to the next. Most typically considered from one semester to the next, but can also be marked by other progression milestones (by semester/quarter, through sequential degree requirements, etc.). Persistence is an institutionally-focused measure as it focuses on students' continued enrollment within a specific college or university. | X | | X | X | | X | | X | | X | X |
| Persistence Rate Calculation | Percentage of students who were enrolled from semester to semester, typically from fall to spring, or spring to fall. This calculation is (Returnees + Graduates)/(Enrollees - Exclusions (ie. students who joined the military or death) - Transfer)*100 | X | | X | | X | X | | X | | X | |

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| Progression | The rate at which a cohort participates in any activity an institution has determined to be correlated with persistence. Common measures are course completion rates, success rates of students on academic probation, and/or comparisons of academic credit hours attempted versus credit hours earned. Progression ensures that students demonstrate the skills and competencies needed to complete their academic program and continue successfully toward completion. | X | | | X | | X | | | | | | |
| PWI | Predominately White Institution | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Re-Admit | A student who does not return in the academic year. | X | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Registered | A student who has completed the application process, has been accepted to the institution, and is enrolled in courses for credit. | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | |
| Retention Rate | The continued enrollment of students from one specified time to the next. Most typically considered from one year to the next, but can also be marked by other progression milestones (by semester/quarter, through sequential degree requirements, etc.). Retention is an institutionally-focused measure as it focuses on students' continued enrollment within a specific college or university. | X | X | X | X | | X | | X | | X | X | |
| Retention Rate Calculation | Percentage of students who were enrolled from year to year, typically from fall to fall. This calculation is (Returnees + Graduates)/(Enrollees - Exclusions (ie. students who joined the military or death) - Transfer)*100 | X | | X | | | X | X | X | | X | | |
| Returning Student | Refers to a student who was previously enrolled in a given semester but has not been enrolled in any semester in the last year (stop-out). | X | | | | | X | | | | | | X |

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| Special Populations | This includes individuals with disabilities, individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children, individuals preparing for non-traditional fields, single parents, Veterans, students who went to head start, and students who are fluent in a tribal language. | X | | X | | | X | | X | X | | |
| Stop-out | Students who begin with a plan of study, however, for any reason, withdraw and leave for a period of time then re-enroll in order to complete their degrees. | X | | X | X | | | | | X | | |
| Student | Anyone enrolled during a semester for at least one (1) academic credit hour. | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X | X |
| SAI | Student Aid Index is a number used to determine a student's eligibility for federal aid. | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| Success/Progress Markers/Milestones | Recognized attainment and completion stages or steps that mark progression toward a completion goal or other educational intent. Traditionally marked by class/credit completion and completion of program requirements. | X | | X | X | | X | | | X | | |
| Successful Completion | Marked by completion in a course by achieving a "C" or better. | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | |
| Traditional Student | Student between the ages of 18-24. | X | | X | | | X | X | | | | X |
| Withdrawal | The process of leaving a course or complete removal from institutional enrollment (complete withdrawal) after the "10-day drop period." | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X | X |