



Glossary of Higher Education and Austin College Common Terminology

- **Academic Skills Center (ASC)**- The Academic Skills Center provides students with resources for academic success. These include peer tutors and organization skills. This is also the office to contact if you have a diagnosed disability.
- **Academic Term/Semester** - An academic term refers to the period of time in which the academic year is broken up. Students will take courses that reside within either fall, spring, or summer term.
- **ACSC/ACSSC** - Austin College Student Conference/Austin College Student Scholarship Conference - A showcase of Austin College student's research, honors theses, creative endeavors, class projects and more. Students present independent and collaborative projects from every division within the college.
- **Applied Learning** - Hands-on learning in the real world where students are able to apply skills, theories and models through experiences such as internships, student research, study abroad, and community based learning.
<https://www.austincollege.edu/academics/applied-learning/>
- **ASB/Alternative Spring Break** - Opportunity for Austin College students to travel to volunteer their time over Spring Break every March.
- **ATP/Austin College Teacher Program**- A five-year Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program that allows AC students to receive their BA degree in any of the liberal arts majors or minors offered by Austin College and continue their studies with graduate education courses, resulting in both a Master's degree and a teaching certification. <https://www.austincollege.edu/academics/atp/>
- **Bulletin** - The bulletin is sometimes also referred to as the "catalog". It is the academic catalog that is the student's official guide for completing their academic program of study. It is published each year. [Austin College Bulletin](#)
- **Business Office** - This office is responsible for collecting all tuition and fees related to enrollment at the university. Deadlines are important and failing to meet them could have financial or enrollment consequences for students. Located in the Administration Building. (link: <https://www.austincollege.edu/campus-offices/business-affairs/business-office/>)
- **Commencement** - At Austin College, this is the ceremony of graduation.
- **Cost of Attendance**- Includes tuition and fees, room and board, other living expenses, cost of books, supplies, transportation, loan fees, and miscellaneous expenses. <https://www.austincollege.edu/campus-offices/business-affairs/business-office/>

- **CSOC (Sea-sock) Career-Study Off Campus** - an opportunity for students to gain work experience off campus and receive course credit (link to page <https://www.austincollege.edu/campus-life/career-services/internships/csoc>)
- **Direct PLUS Loan**- Also known as Parent PLUS Loan and grad PLUS Loan. This is a federal loan that graduate students and parents of dependent undergraduate students can use to help pay for college.
- **Directed Study** - Intensive work with a faculty member one-on-one or in a small group of students to explore a specific topic of interest. <https://www.austincollege.edu/campus-offices/academic-affairs/registrar/independent-learning-opportunities/>
- **Dismissal** - involuntary removal from the college due to academic or behavioral issues.
- **Dropping Classes** - students can drop courses through the end of the 7th week of the term, receive no grade for the course with no penalty, and the course is not listed on the students' transcripts. (Policy: <https://bulletin.austincollege.edu/academic-program/academic-regulations/>)
- **Faculty** - The professors and instructors of a university or college who teach and/or conduct research.
- **FAFSA**- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA opens October 1 and must be completed each year in order to receive need-based aid from the government, such as the Pell Grant or work-study awards. (link for FAFSA: <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>)
- **Federal Work Study** - Part-time work offered by the university as part of your financial aid package from the federal government. Must complete FAFSA in order to be eligible. (link: <https://www.austincollege.edu/admission/financial-aid/work-study/>)
- **Final Exams** - Most courses finish their academic term with a comprehensive exam or project. These take place the last days of the term and classes do not meet during this time.
- **Financial Aid Office** - the office on campus that is responsible for preparing and communicating information on financial aid, located in Wortham Center. (link for financial aid office: <https://www.austincollege.edu/admission/financial-aid/>)
- **Financial Aid Package** - the total amount of aid (federal and non-federal) a student receives from the college within an academic year. In order to obtain your financial aid package, a FAFSA must be completed each year (see FAFSA).
- **First Year Experience (FYE)** - an Austin College program designed for first year students that includes several initiatives such as For Your Information (FYI), First Year Seminar (FYS), connection with faculty mentor, and much more.
- **First Year Seminar (FYS)** - a course designed for first year students at Austin College during their first semester. It introduces students to the intellectual life of the College as well as guidance in navigating the college experience.

- **Grants** - a need-based form of financial aid given to college students to help pay for college expenses. Can be funded through the federal government (e.g., Pell Grant), the state, or institution. Unlike loans, grants do not need to be repaid.
- **Handshake** - A career portal that is managed by Career Services. Connects students and alumni to local, national and international employers.
- **Independent Study**
 - **NSOC Independent Study Off-Campus:** students to complete independent research or academic projects related to a student's major or minor completed off-campus.
 - **On-Campus Independent Study** - Similar opportunity as a NSOC, only completed on-campus.
- **January Term (Jan Term)** - an abbreviated academic term that allows students to experience unique opportunities, including travel abroad. (link to Jan Term: <https://www.austincollege.edu/academics/janterm/>)
- **Liberal Arts Education** - A contemporary liberal arts education may refer to 1) the type of institution (e.g., a small liberal arts college), 2) the graduation requirements (i.e., the requirements include breadth of study and depth of study), and/or 3) the institution's objectives for educating students (i.e., to prepare students with practical skills, ethical reasoning, critical thinking, and knowledge about the cultural and physical worlds so they become productive citizens in civil societies) (Brighthouse, 2019, How Can We Understand "Liberal Arts Education"? Mellon Foundation blog). The word "liberal" in "liberal arts" does not mean liberal politics, but rather refers to liberty or freedom, because the liberal arts education should allow people to think freely and independently as members of society. Ironically, this education promoting freedom and civic participation has its roots in ancient Greece where only elite people had access to this education of the mind, non-elites had access only to vocational education, and elite people often suppressed freedoms by enslaving others.
- **Medical Withdraw** - voluntary removal from the college when a student's physical or psychological condition significantly impairs their ability to function successfully or safely as a student, and the condition prevents them from completing the semester.
- **Mentor** - faculty member mentors meet each semester and guide students in selecting courses, choosing your major and minor, and completing overall degree plans. Mentoring also includes discussing your career interests, aspirations, and goal management. These steps will include coursework, internships, study abroad, research projects, and summer experiences. (link: <https://www.austincollege.edu/campus-offices/academic-affairs/faculty/faculty-mentor/>)
- **Merit Based Scholarships** - scholarships that are awarded to students demonstrating academic, athletic, or artistic achievement. Unlike loans, scholarships do not need to be repaid.

- **Moodle** - the course management system (CMS) used at Austin College. All students need to be able to access their moodle account in order to have access to pertinent course materials each semester.
- **Office Hours**- Specific times that faculty are available in their office to meet with students. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities, usually no appointment is needed.
- **Peer Mentor** - In First Year Seminar (FYS) courses, upper division Austin College students are chosen to help lead the class. These students provide an “insider’s view” to life at the college.
- **Peer Tutor** -Upper division students who support and tutor students in subject-based courses. These students work in the Academic Skills Center (ASC) and also help students with academic skills such as note taking, time management, organization or learning styles.
- **Peer Writing Assistant** - Peer Writing Assistants work in the Scarbrough Writing Center and help students with writing prompts assistants and teachers alike to hone writing strategies, to refine their language for talking about writing, and to think differently about their own writing processes.
- **PLUS Loan** - Direct PLUS Loans are federal loans that parents of dependent undergraduate students can use to help pay for college or career school. PLUS loans can help pay for education expenses not covered by other financial aid.
- **Registrar** - The Registrar is the office responsible for maintaining all academic records at the university. (link: <https://www.austincollege.edu/campus-offices/academic-affairs/registrar/>)
- **Registration** - the process of signing up for classes. AC students register in Spring for the Fall term and in Fall for the Spring term.
- **Satisfactory / Deficient / Unsatisfactory (S/D/U) Grading System** - Students may elect no more than a total of four courses during their academic career to be graded on an S/D/U basis. Transfer students may elect a proportionate number of courses to be graded on the S/D/U basis during their academic career as determined by the number of terms attended.
- **Scarborough Center for Writing** - Offers free writing assistance for assignments, peer review, workshops, and professional endeavors.
- **Service Station**: The Service Station is a student-run office that promotes the involvement of all Austin College students in volunteer and community service efforts.
- **Staff** - college employees who perform the regular functions of the college. This group includes administration, operations, support, maintenance, student life and others.
- **Student Success Office** - This office collaborates with faculty, staff, and other college offices to provide programs and services to support student’s academic growth and personal development.

- **Study abroad** -When students study at colleges internationally and engage in cultural and language immersion. During study abroad, students are able to work in their majors, take electives, and engage in internships.
- **Subsidized Loan** - loans available for undergraduate students with financial need. These loans do not accrue interest while the student is attending at least half-time or during deferment periods.
- **Title IX Coordinator-** The individual responsible for handling complaints, reports, allegations, and information about sex- and gender-based discrimination (link for Title IX: <https://www.austincollege.edu/campus-life/sexual-misconduct/>)
- **Unsubsidized Loan** - loan available for both undergraduate and graduate students and is not based on financial need. These loans accrue interest during in-school, deferment, and grace periods.
- **Webhopper** - The electronic system used by students to access academic and financial information, campus information/forms, register for classes, view class schedules and unofficial transcripts, search course offerings and check academic progress.
- **Withdrawal from College** - Student voluntarily withdraws from the College and is removed from all academic courses. Students will be required to apply for readmission in the future.
- **Withdrawing from Class-** From the 8th week of class until the 10th week students may withdraw from the class. This will be indicated by a “W” on the students transcript, but there will be no GPA penalty. Financial Aid should be consulted before dropping a class during this time.