

Helpful College Terms

- **Adjunct Professor**- a teacher hired specifically to teach classes, usually as a part-time employee
- **Advisor**- An advisor is a staff member that is assigned to assist a student in selecting their classes each semester and persisting towards graduation.
- **Baccalaureate/Bachelor's degree**- a degree that is given to a student by a college or university usually after four years of study.
- **Bursar**- This is the person/office in-charge of all financial aspects of the university, including tuition payments.
- **Course Catalog**- This is a listing of all courses available in each major and minor program. The year that a student begins classes will be their catalog year, meaning the requirements in the course catalog at that time are what they must complete to graduate.
- **Credit Hours**- These numbers are assigned to each class you take and are cumulated on your road towards graduation. The typical class is worth 3 credit hours, and a standard semester consists of 12-15 credit hours (i.e. 4-5 classes a semester).
- **Cumulative Exam**- If a professor assigns a cumulative exam, the exam will include all materials that have been covered in the class up to that point.
- **Dean**- A dean is the head of a college within the university. The college is what houses each major and minor program. Examples at ETSU include the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Nursing, and the College of Business and Technology.
- **Department Chair**- A chair is the head of an individual academic department
- **Doctorate degree**- the most advanced degree you can earn, symbolizing that you have mastered a specific area of study, or field of profession (ex: Ph.D, Ed.D)
- **FAFSA**- This is the acronym for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students and their families complete and renew this form each year to determine eligibility for federal financial aid.
- **FERPA**- This is the acronym for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. This legislation protects student data and ensures privacy. FERPA prohibits faculty and staff from speaking to parents about their child's academic performance. If you wish to have access to certain academic records, you may do so with your child's permission using the First Mate platform at ETSU.
- **First-generation College Student**- the federal government defines this as a student whose birth mother and father have not earned a **4-year** college degree
- **Grant**- This is a form of financial aid that a student does not have to pay back (Pell, TSSAC, and SEOG are common grants awarded to students).
- **Lecturer** - a teacher ranking between an adjunct professor and professor and usually involves an extended, multi-year teaching contract.
- **Learning Support**- Classes at ETSU labeled "Learning Support" are specialized classes in math, reading, and writing. Students are placed in these courses to ensure they learn fundamental skills that will help them throughout their college education.
- **Loan**- This is a form of financial aid that a student must repay. Loans can be subsidized or unsubsidized. Repayment typically begins 6 months after graduation, or 6 months after a student fails to remain enrolled in courses.
- **Major**- This is a student's primary area of study. The majority of their classes will be focused on their major.

- **Master's degree**- a degree that is given to a student by a college or university usually after one or two years of additional study following a bachelor's degree
- **Master Promissory Note (MPN)**- This is a legal agreement that a student makes to repay their loans, as well as any accrued interest and fees.
- **Minor**- This is a student's secondary area of study. Students will take classes focused on their minor subject, but not as many as needed for their major. Minors are sometimes chosen to accompany a major.
- **Office Hours**- Sometimes called "Student Hours," these are dedicated times each week when faculty members are available to meet with students. These are great times for students to ask questions about the class material and upcoming assignments.
- **Parent Plus Loan**- a loan that a student's parents can receive to help pay for their student's tuition, or educational expenses. This loan is very similar to a conventional loan that the parent(s) may receive through their own bank, or other lending institution. It does not come with a deferment period like a Subsidized, or Unsubsidized Student loan.
- **Probation**- This is an academic warning that ETSU places on you when you do not meet academic standards. Based on the number of credit hours that you attempt, you are required to maintain a minimum GPA. If you don't, you are placed on probation and can only register for a maximum of 13 credit hours the following semester.
- **Promissory Note**- This is a legal contract a borrower agrees to when they take out a loan, verifying that they will repay it in accordance with its terms and conditions.
- **Provost**- This person/office is in-charge of academic performance on campus. They work alongside colleges, deans, and faculty to ensure quality academic departments.
- **Registrar**- This is the person/office on campus in-charge of all academic records, such as transcripts, course offerings, and graduation records.
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress (PACE/SAP)**- This is a term used in reference to Federal financial aid eligibility, as determined by the Office of Financial Aid. Staying on "PACE" means that you have earned 67% of the credit hours that you have attempted to complete. Students are assessed for PACE/SAP at the end of each semester. You must maintain the 67% ratio at all times in order to stay eligible for Federal financial aid (SEOG Grant, Pell Grant, Stafford Loans, TN state level grants, and HOPE Scholarship).
- **Subsidized Student Loan**- A student loan in which the Federal Government agrees to pay the interest that accrues over the life of loan. Student must remain enrolled in courses and is actively working toward degree completion the receive this deferment.
- **Syllabus**- Every class has a syllabus, which is a document that outlines the objectives, goals, assignments, and rules of each class. Students should read the syllabus for each of their classes, as it contains valuable information that can help them succeed.
- **Unsubsidized Student Loan**- A student loan in which interest begins to accrues immediately upon receiving the loan. The value of the loan and the total amount a student repays will be more following their graduation, or failure to remain enrolled in classes.