



GLOSSARY OF COMMON COLLEGE TERMS

Ability to Benefit

In order to apply for federal financial aid, a student who has not graduated from high school or does not have a GED or the equivalent must take an “ability to benefit” assessment. The government believes that students who score at a certain level are probably more serious about college and, therefore, better choices for receiving financial aid.

Advisory

A strongly suggested recommendation for you to consider before registering for a particular class. The chances of success in a desired class are significantly better when you have mastered the skills in a preparatory class. See the course listings in this catalog for additional information.

Articulation

To help make the transfer process smoother, Gavilan College has an articulation agreement with many four-year colleges and universities which benefits students who are going to transfer. The four-year/receiving colleges have agreed in writing that a variety of Gavilan courses will fulfill many or all of the lower division requirements at the four-year school. The articulation officer, counselors and the Career Center staff have lists of participating institutions.

Assessment Evaluation

An evaluation of skill levels in math and English. (See Placement Assessment)

Associate's Degree

The Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree or Associate of Science (A.S.) degree is a college degree awarded to a student when 60 units have been completed within a specific major program. These degrees can be in a career and technical area or in a transfer area. This is commonly referred to as a "two-year college degree" although it is common for a student to take more than two years to complete the program. The catalog lists about 60 A.A. and A.S. degrees available to Gavilan College students.

Associated Student Body (ASB)

The ASB is the official student organization on campus. It represents the student body and student issues to the board of trustees, administration, faculty and staff. This representative group of students provides leadership opportunities to students through the weekly student senate, a leadership course (Poli Sci/Psychology 27), and through participation on campus committees. Through the fees collected on student body card sales, student representatives plan educational, cultural, political, and social events for the student body. For additional information, see the Student Activities section in this catalog.

Bachelor's Degree

The Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree and the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree are awarded by four-year colleges and universities upon successful completion of an organized program of study. This is commonly referred to as a "four-year college degree" although it is common for students to take more than four years to earn it. Many students begin their college education at a community college and transfer to a four-year college for their junior and senior years.

Certificate

A certificate is awarded to a student who completes a planned course of study in a technical or occupational area. The certificate requires fewer units than an A.A. degree and verifies competence in a specialized area of study without the general education requirements. A student can complete a certificate program and then continue on for an A.A. or A.S. in some areas. There are approximately 50 certificates available at Gavilan College.

Challenge

A student can petition to enroll in a class where there are prerequisites and corequisites. A challenge is a college process where a student provides evidence that he/she has satisfactorily met the necessary prerequisite. The Admissions and Records Office has the required forms.

Community College

A community college provides a variety of educational opportunities to community members. Admission is open to all people 18 years or older. Students can select technical and vocational programs that provide or upgrade job skills (certificate programs); transfer programs that provide the general education or the first two years of a four-year education; and the Associate of Arts (A.A.) two-year degree programs. Others return to a community college for personal enrichment. Community colleges informally referred to as "junior colleges" when their scope was narrower.

Corequisite

A course which must be taken at the same time as another because the skills and the content in one are needed for success in the other.

Counselors

Faculty members who provide a variety of counseling services, including academic, personal and career counseling for new and continuing students. Students can schedule appointments at the kiosks outside the Counseling Office, Student Center 113, or call 408-848-4723.

Course

A prescribed series of classes; a number of classes in a particular field of study. Sometimes "course" is used interchangeably with "class."

Disruptive Behavior

Willful disobedience, habitual profanity or vulgarity or the open and persistent defiance of the authority of, or persistent abuse of, college personnel.

Educational Goal

An educational outcome identified by the student. Examples: A.A. degree, certificate, general education for transfer, etc.

Educational Plan

A multi-semester academic plan, designed by a student with a counselor, which moves a student towards his/her educational goal in an efficient yet flexible manner.

Exemption

The right of a student to seek self-initiated exclusion from orientation or assessment testing services. This, however, does not allow a student to be exempt from prerequisites.

General Education Requirements

An educated person has been exposed to wide range of subjects and ideas in a lifetime. Within the educational system, general education classes provide a foundation for this exposure. Approximately 40 units of coursework in the areas of written and oral communication, math, physical and natural sciences, social science, arts, humanities, and personal development comprise general education requirements. All associate degrees require general education, in addition to the student's major course of study. Certificate programs do not require general education, only the specific area of study.

Lecture/Lab

In the schedule of classes, the abbreviation L/L appears as part of the description of many classes. This means that there are required hours in a lecture or classroom setting and additional hours in a lab setting (computer, language, science, etc.)

Lower Division

The classes taken during the first and second years of college are referred to as "lower division" classes. Community colleges only offer lower division classes. When a student transfers to a four-year college, the third and fourth-year courses are referred to as "upper division." In the Gavilan College catalog, lower division classes that transfer to a four-year college are numbered 1-99. (Always check with the transferring school for confirmation on the acceptance of particular classes at their four-year institution.)

Major

A group or series of courses in a specific area that is designed to provide an intensive education or study in that area. A major in a technical or career area prepares a student for employment after community college. A transfer major at the community college begins the specialized area of study that will continue at the four-year level. Transfer students are expected to declare a major in order to transfer, as they apply to both the four-year college and a particular department at that college as upper division students.

Noncredit Course

A noncredit course is designed to meet the special needs and capabilities of those student populations who do not desire or need to obtain unit credit. These courses provide remedial, developmental, occupational and other general education opportunities.

Orientation

An important part of the matriculation process which increases a students' comfort and familiarity with the academic environment and programs. Orientation may be done in a group, one-to-one or through specific programs or delivery models (ie., online, video).

Placement Assessment

A standardized assessment (test) is given by the college to assist a student in selecting the most appropriate math and English courses. It is administered in group settings throughout the school year. It is one measure for placement.

Prerequisite

A course that must be completed in order for a student to advance to another course. The material and skill achieved in the previous course (with a "C" grade or equivalency) are the signs that a student is ready for the following course. The prerequisite must be validated through research to be used.

President's Council

Community colleges are required by Assembly Bill 1725 to practice shared governance. Gavilan College has a college council made up of representatives from the students, faculty, staff and administration. This group recommends actions on policies and practices that affect students, faculty and staff to the president/superintendent.

Semester

Colleges divide the academic year into either semesters, quarters or sessions. Gavilan has two semesters: fall and spring, winter intersession and summer session. If a student has attended colleges which use different systems, the units are recalculated for consistency. To learn about semester to quarter conversions, refer to page 40.

Senator (student)

A student who has chosen to become a voting member of the student body government. The student represents student opinion in the senate, allocates money for campus events and services and participates on campus-wide committees as the student voice.

Syllabus

A course syllabus is an outline of expectations, major projects, test and assignment due dates, attendance policies, and other pertinent information established for an individual course by the instructor. Students should read and review their course syllabus for each course and keep it handy throughout the semester for quick reference. Course syllabi are available online at self-service Banner at <http://www.gavilan.edu>.

Transcript

The official record of a student's academic coursework. If a student has attended any other colleges, a transcript must be requested from each college previously attended so that Gavilan College has the student's complete academic history. Transcripts showing academic work at Gavilan are sent to four-year colleges at a student's request. The first two transcripts are free of charge.

Unit

The measurement of college credit given for each course. In general, one unit of credit, or one unit, requires one hour of lecture per week for each week of the semester. For example, an English class that meets one hour, three times per week is awarded three units of credit. Courses with lab sections are calculated differently. The unit value for each course is listed in the college catalog and Schedule of Classes as part of the course description.

Upper Division

These are the courses that are part of the junior and senior years of college and are provided by the four-year institutions.

Waiver

A student may formally decide not to participate in Matriculation services by filing a "waiver." Obtain the form from the Admissions and Records Office.