

# Glossary of Academic Terminology

The following glossary represents a list of the various terms and definitions that students, faculty, and staff encounter at MDC.

**Academic Calendar**-The Academic Calendar represents important semester-specific dates and deadlines for students officially registered for courses.

**Academic Program**-A sequence of credit courses that lead to an academic credential (e.g., degree and academic major tied to the degree, academic minor, university certificate).

**Academic Standing**-At the conclusion of each semester's grade processing, a term and cumulative GPA is calculated for each degree-seeking student. A student's academic standing may be impacted by the term GPA or the cumulative GPA, or both.

**Academic Year**-The period of instruction composed of the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The academic year begins at the start of the fall semester and ends after the last day of the summer semester.

**Admitted Student**-An admitted student is one that has been accepted by the school into a degree-seeking program and who has confirmed their acceptance. The Office of Admissions coordinates this for admitted undergraduate students.

**Alum (or Alumni)**-"an alum is an individual who has completed at least one full academic year at MDC in a degree-granting program, excluding current students."

**Articulation Agreement**-between institutions benefiting transfer students.

**Auditing Courses**-Students may audit a course by securing permission of the instructor and registering as an auditor with the Office of the Registrar. There are no credit hours associated with audited courses, and auditing a course does not affect a student's GPA.

**Baccalaureate Degree**-The baccalaureate degree is awarded after completing an undergraduate program of study; typically completed after four-five years.

**Certificate**-Certificates are formally recognized programs of study attesting to a level of competence or to the development of skills in a particular area of field.

**Course**-A particular class, such as CGS1060C.

**Course Catalog**-the complete and entire list of courses offered as part of the official curriculum at MDC.

**Course Schedule**-the list of courses available and offered for a specific semester.

**Student Learning Outcomes**-Listed on the course syllabus, the course student learning outcomes are represented by a statement formalizing the competencies, practical and professional skills, higher-level thinking and analytical skills that the instructor expects students to obtain by the conclusion of the course.

**Course Type**-Course types are used by departments to create, modify and schedule courses.

**Contact Hour**-A contact hour is defined as 50 minutes of scheduled instruction presented to students.

**Continuing Studies Noncredit Student**-A Continuing Studies Noncredit Student is a student enrolled in a non-degree seeking program or course at the School of Continuing Education & Professional Development.

**Class #**-Course Reference Number. This is a unique multiple digit number assigned to a specific section of a course for a given semester.

**Credit Hour**-Also known as semester credit hour which is the amount of credit awarded for successful completion of one contact hour of classroom instruction and two preparation hours per week for a semester of not less than 14 weeks (varies with mini-terms).

**Degree**-See baccalaureate degree, associate's degree.

**Diploma**-The diploma is a formal document issued by the institution to symbolize that a degree has been conferred (awarded) by the institution upon the recipient.

**Enrolled Student**-An enrolled student is any student at MDC that is registered for at least one course for-credit.

**Emancipated Minor**-An emancipated minor is someone who has been legally deemed an adult by a court in his or her state of residence. If you are an emancipated minor, you are considered an independent student and will not provide information about your parents on the FAFSA® form.

Dependent vs independent

**FERPA**-The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of, and limit access to, student educational records.

**Freshman**-An undergraduate student's first year

**Full-time Student**-An undergraduate student is considered as registered under full-time status when they are registered for 12 or more credit hours in a semester.

**In-Progress (IP)**-A grade indicating that a course is still in progress and will be completed at a later date.

**Instructor of Record**-The individual designated by the academic unit as responsible for the course, including developing and overseeing its content and administration, assignments, and grades.

**Hybrid**-The method of delivery for a particular course section that includes online and in-class participation.

**Junior**-An undergraduate student's third year.

**Major**-Also known as academic major. The academic major represents a cohesive and extensive program of study in a designated subject area in which a student commits to gaining in-depth knowledge, competence, and understanding. Students may pursue more than one major while pursuing a degree, but the completion of at least one major is required in order to award a degree.

**Major Concentration**-Also known as academic major concentration. The academic major concentration is a second-order component of a degree program and is represented by a coordinated group of courses that reflect a sub-specialization or emphasis within a major field for currently enrolled students in the major.

**Part-time Student**-A part-time undergraduate student enrolled in less than 12 credit hours in the fall or spring semesters.

**Semester**-A semester is made up of 16 weeks during fall and spring.

**Senior**-An undergraduate student's last year.

**Sophomore**-An undergraduate student's second year.

**Transcript**-Also known as academic transcript. The academic transcript represents the official university record of a student's academic history of coursework completed at MDC and the grades and associated Grade Point Average received.

**Transient student**-A student from another institution taking certain courses at MDC.

**Undergraduate Student (UG)**-A student that has matriculated into and is enrolled into an associate or a bachelor's degree program.