

The words and phrases associated with attending college are often unfamiliar to new students. This glossary of terms, grouped in thematic areas, provides general definitions, as well as some Rutgers-specific definitions, to familiarize students with the words and terms used in regular communications.

ACADEMIC

- **Associate's Degree:** An undergraduate degree awarded by a college or university upon successful completion of a program of study, usually requiring two years of full-time study and typically awarded by community colleges.
- **Bachelor's Degree:** An undergraduate degree awarded by a college or university upon successful completion of a program of study, typically requiring at least four years (or the equivalent) of full-time study.
- **Co-Op:** Cooperative education programs allow students to work, often full time, to gain skills and experience in their chosen field.
- **Core Courses:** Required areas of study that all students must complete regardless of their major.
- **Curriculum:** The learning goals of a particular school or academic department.
- **Declared:** When a student has officially been accepted into a major.
- **Doctorate (e.g., Ph.D./Ed.D.):** The highest academic degree awarded by a university upon successful completion of an advanced program of study, typically requiring at least three years of graduate study beyond the master's degree.
- **Externship:** An experiential learning opportunity for students. This is similar to an internship, but can be for a shorter period of time
- **Fellowship:** An amount of money awarded by a college or university to support a student, usually during their graduate study, and are generally based on academic achievement.
- **Grade Point Average (GPA):** A student's overall academic performance, which is calculated as a numerical average of grades earned in all courses.
- **Internship:** A short-term work experience offered by companies or other organizations to provide entry level exposure to an industry or field; in some cases, students may earn pay or academic credit for the experience.
- **Liberal Arts:** Academic studies of subjects in the humanities, social sciences, and the sciences, with a focus on general knowledge, in contrast to a professional or technical emphasis.
- **Major:** The primary academic focus of a student's degree.
- **Master's Degree:** A graduate degree awarded by a college or university upon successful completion of an advanced program of study, typically requiring one or two years of full-time study beyond the bachelor's degree.
- **Minor:** A secondary subject of study in which students specialize in addition to their major.
- **Still Deciding/Undecided/Exploratory:** When a student is exploring possible major options and has not yet declared a major.
- **Transcript:** A document that lists all the classes and grades that a student has officially attempted or completed.
- **Undeclared:** When a student does not yet have a major; schools have different timelines for when a student must declare their major.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- **Award Letter (now called “Offer Letter”)**: A document that displays the estimated costs of attending school and the estimated financial aid a student may be eligible for, based on the completion of all required documents.
- **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)**: An application that students complete each year to determine their financial aid eligibility.
- **Federal Pell Grant**: Awarded only to undergraduate students who display exceptional financial need and have not earned a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree.
- **Financial Aid**: Assistance to help pay for college, including grants, loans, and scholarships.
- **Food Pantry**: Provides students experiencing food insecurity with access to food.
- **Grant**: A type of financial aid that is provided to a student and does not need to be paid back. Often given by the federal or a state government, a company, a school, or a charity. Grants are typically based on financial need.
- **Health Insurance Waiver**: A waiver students must complete and submit if they already have health insurance.
- **Loan**: A type of financial aid that consists of an amount of money that is given to someone for a period of time, with an agreement that it will be repaid later with interest.
- **Meal Plan**: A pre-paid account for a student's on-campus meals, specifically for use in dining halls.
- **Meal Swipes**: How students pay for their meals at dining halls; one swipe provides access for the full meal and students are not charged for individual items.
- **Merit-Based Grant**: A type of financial aid awarded by a college or university to students who have demonstrated special academic ability or talents, regardless of their financial need.
- **Need-Based Grant**: Financial aid that is awarded to students due to their financial inability to pay the full cost of attending a specific college or university.
- **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**: The successful completion of coursework toward a student's degree. To maintain eligibility for financial aid, students must maintain a certain GPA and completion rate.
- **Scholarship**: A type of financial aid that is provided to a student and does not need to be paid back. Typically, they are not financial need-based but awarded based on other criteria such as academic performance, leadership skills, etc.
- **Work-Study**: A federally funded employment program where students are placed in part-time jobs on campus to earn funds and gain work experience.

OFFICE RESOURCES

- **Advising**: Guidance provided by various university advisors to help students reach their educational and career goals; advisors may be faculty or staff and often have specialty advising knowledge about academic options, career and postgraduate planning, financial issues, and organization and student success.
- **Coaching**: A service, offered through the Learning Centers and other programs, that provides support for students looking to improve their academic skills, such as time management, organizational, and study skills.
- **Disability Services**: An office that provides reasonable accommodations and services for students with disabilities.
- **Learning Centers**: Service offices that provide academic support, such as tutoring, academic coaching, writing assistance, and student groups for students on campus and online.

- **Learning Community:** A community where students can interact with faculty, students, and staff focused on a particular interest area; learning communities can be organized in residence halls, online and through student organizations.
- **NJ Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF):** An office which provides financial assistance and support services (e.g. counseling, tutoring, and developmental course work) to students from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds who attend participating institutions of higher education in the State of New Jersey.
- **Student Affairs:** A division within the university that provides students with academic and personal development support.
- **Study Groups:** Small group study sessions that meet weekly to review and practice course materials.
- **Tutoring:** A service, often through the Learning Centers, that provides assistance with content-based information in a specific class or subject.

POLICIES

- **Academic Integrity:** Students' commitment to displaying honest and moral behavior in the academic setting.
- **Academic Sabotage:** Deliberately impeding the academic progress of others.
- **Cheating:** The use or possession of inappropriate or prohibited materials, information, sources, or aids in any academic exercise. Cheating also includes submitting papers, research results or reports, analyses, and other textual or visual material and media as one's own work when others prepared them.
- **Fabrication:** The invention or falsification of sources, citations, data, or results, and recording or reporting them in any academic exercise.
- **Facilitation of Dishonesty:** Deliberately or carelessly allowing one's work to be used by other students without prior approval of the instructor or otherwise aiding others in committing violations of academic integrity.
- **FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act):** Legislation that protects the privacy of student education records.
- **Honor Pledge:** A pledge Rutgers students make to abide by the code of student conduct "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment)."
- **Plagiarism:** The use of another person's words, ideas, images, or results, no matter the form or media, without giving that person appropriate credit.
- **Title IX:** Federal legislation that protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance.
- **Violation of Research or Professional Ethics:** Violations in this category include both violations of the code of ethics specific to a particular profession and violations of more generally applicable ethical requirements for the acquisition, analysis, and reporting of research data and the preparation and submission of scholarly work for publication.
- **Violations Involving Potentially Criminal Activity:** Violations in this category include theft, fraud, forgery, or distribution of illicitly obtained materials committed as part of an act of academic dishonesty.

REGISTRATION

- **Add/Drop:** A period of time during the first two weeks of classes when students can freely change the classes on their schedule based on course availability.
- **Co-Prerequisite:** A class that must be taken in the same semester as another related class.
- **Credit Load:** The total amount of credits a student is registered for in a semester.
- **Degree Credits:** Recognition for having taken a course that can be applied to completing a degree.
- **Double-Dipping/Overlaps:** A class that counts toward more than one requirement.
- **Enroll:** To register for courses.
- **Index #:** A 5-digit number assigned to a specific section of a course that is used when registering for classes.
- **Net ID:** The username students are assigned and use to log into Rutgers websites and is part of students' official Rutgers email address: [netID]@scarletmail.rutgers.edu.
- **Placement tests:** Tests students take prior to their first semester to determine their appropriate initial English and math classes.
- **Prerequisite:** A class you must take before taking another related course.
- **RUID:** The 9-digit Rutgers ID number assigned to each student (XXX-00-XXXX), with 00 always being the fourth and fifth digit.
- **Special Permission Number (SPN):** A 6-digit number provided by a professor or department that will grant a student access to add a class.
- **Term Bill:** Rutgers' official billing statement that includes all tuition, fees, financial aid, and other credits for a specific term.
- **Withdrawal "W":** A grade/notation that appears on a student's transcript when they withdraw from a class after the add/drop period; the W is not calculated into the GPA.

SCHEDULE/COURSES

- **Academic Calendar:** An official, full-year calendar with important dates and deadlines.
- **Accommodations:** Resources provided to students with disabilities.
- **Asynchronous:** An online class format where a class does not meet at a specific day/time each week. Instead of having a specific day or time listed, these courses will be labeled as "By Arrangement."
- **By Arrangement:** Courses that are "By Arrangement" will have a regular schedule of work and assignments due throughout each week, but they will not require you to be online at a particular time. Rather, your instructor will provide materials: for example, readings, video content, presentations, lectures, assignments, and exams: and you can access these materials and satisfy the course requirements within time frames specified by the instructor.
- **Campus:** The physical grounds that make up Rutgers–New Brunswick, of which there are five: Busch, College Avenue, Cook, Douglass, and Livingston.
- **Cross-listed:** Cross-listed courses are the same course taught under more than one course name, course number, and/or index number. It's all one course, but some students may be registered under one course number and others under a different index number.
- **Elective:** A class you can take that is not specifically required by your major or minor and does not meet any Core Curriculum learning goals. All students must take elective courses to reach the 120 degree credits needed to graduate.
- **Exempt:** Not required to do something other students may have to do. Examples can include being exempt from an exam based on current grades.
- **Final:** An exam or assignment that is the culminating assignment of a class.

- **Graduate Student:** A student who already holds an undergraduate degree and is pursuing advanced studies at a graduate school, for a master's degree, doctorate, or graduate certificate.
- **Independent Study:** A course that awards credit for work done outside of the normal classroom setting, often through a research assignment created with a faculty member.
- **Matriculate:** A matriculated student is admitted, registered for classes, and in good academic standing at the university.
- **Midterm:** An exam or assignment that is administered about halfway through the semester. Some courses have two midterms, which are held roughly one third and two thirds through the semester.
- **Office Hours:** Designated times for students to meet with professors to discuss material presented in class, ask questions, present concerns, and to connect with the professor.
- **Online Class:** A class format that does not meet in person.
- **Pass/No-Credit:** A grading system in which students receive either a "pass" or "no-credit" grade, rather than a specific letter grade.
- **Recitation:** A smaller class that meets to supplement the work in a large lecture course; attendance at recitations is required.
- **Requirements:** The classes that students must complete as part of their academic program.
- **Schedule:** A list of classes a student takes during a semester.
- **Semester:** The time span that courses traditionally are offered. Fall semester is September to December; spring semester is January to May. Rutgers also offers a Winter Session and a Summer Session.
- **Syllabus:** A document that communicates information about a specific course and outlines faculty expectations, important dates, and assignments.
- **Synchronous:** Class format where the class meets at the same designated time weekly, just as an in-person class would. If a course has a day and a time associated with it in the schedule of courses and doesn't say "By Arrangement," this means you are expected to participate at those specific times via whatever platform the instructor designates.
- **Teaching Assistant (TA):** A student (usually a graduate student) who works directly with professors to teach a class and serve as supplemental support for students.
- **Turnitin:** A system that reviews assignments for plagiarism, usually attached to assignments in Canvas or other learning management systems (LMS).

STAFFING

- **Academic Dean:** A university employee who provides advising and oversight for all academic policies and procedures at a specific Rutgers school.
- **Chancellor:** The executive head of the university responsible for fulfilling the university's mission; Rutgers has four, campus-specific chancellors who oversee the Camden, Newark, New Brunswick, and the Biomedical and Health Sciences. The chancellors each report to the University president and are part of the president's executive team.
- **Dean of Students:** New-Brunswick-wide office that provides solutions, services, and support to help students navigate Rutgers when personal issues are affecting their academic performance and progress; DOS staff focus on educational, social, and personal development.
- **Hall Director:** A university employee who is responsible for the management of a particular residence hall on campus.
- **Office of the Registrar:** The custodian of student academic records, providing registration, transcripts, changes in residency and graduation information.

- **President:** The chief executive officer for the entire institution with responsibilities for all strategic operations and policies set forth by the governing boards.
- **Professor:** A general term for the person in charge of a class; a professor may be a faculty member, a graduate or undergraduate student, or a part-time lecturer, hired for their teaching expertise.
- **Provost:** The senior academic officer of a college or university who typically oversees all academic policies and curriculum-related matters.
- **Resident/Apartment Assistant (RA/AA):** A student responsible for supervising and supporting other students in a specific residence hall or apartments.

SYSTEMS/TECHNOLOGY

- **Canvas:** A learning management system students use for their classes where they can view course information and submit assignments; access Canvas at canvas.rutgers.edu.
- **Course Schedule Planner:** A system that students use to create schedules in preparation for registration.
- **Email (Rutgers Official):** The Rutgers Official Email Service for students is ScarletMail. This can be accessed on myRutgers. School of Nursing students' email can be accessed through Rutgers Connect. Information for managing email accounts can also be found on the NetID website
- **Degree Navigator:** The degree audit system that students use to view their degree requirements and progress to graduation.
- **Handshake:** A platform for all things related to career success. Access thousands of job and internship listings, schedule appointments with career advisors, access exclusive online resources, and more
- **Learning Management System (LMS):** Websites where students can view their course requirements; some examples of common Rutgers LMS are Canvas and Sakai.
- **Modules:** Group of lessons and materials that pertain to a certain subject, usually organized in an LMS.
- **myRutgers:** A dashboard where students can view most of their important personal information including academics, financial, email, and technology help.
- **myGuest access:** An online platform for students to authorize a guest (parent, guardian, etc.) access view and make payments on their behalf, as well as view other academic and financial information (available on the myRutgers dashboard).
- **RUHere:** A website where students confirm their attendance for the fall, spring, and winter semesters.
- **Sakai:** A learning management system where students can submit assignments for their classes; access Sakai at sakai.rutgers.edu
- **Schedule of Classes:** Online listing of all of the courses offered in a particular semester. You can look at the current semester, as well as upcoming and previous semesters.
- **Webreg:** Online system that students use to register for and drop classes (webreg.rutgers.edu)

Rutgers Lingo: Commonly Used Acronyms

- **AACC:** Asian American Cultural Center
- **CAC:** College Avenue Campus
- **CAPS:** Counseling, ADAP, and Psychiatric Services
- **CES:** Career Exploration and Success
- **CLAC:** Center for Latino Arts and Culture
- **DICE:** Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement
- **DM:** Dance Marathon
- **DRC:** Douglass Residential College
- **EJBPP:** Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
- **EMSOP:** Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy
- **MGSA:** Mason Gross School of the Arts
- **OFA:** Office of Financial Aid
- **OFSA:** Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs
- **PRCC:** Paul Robeson Cultural Center
- **RHA:** Residence Hall Association
- **RUPA:** Rutgers University Programming Association
- **RUSA:** Rutgers University Student Assembly
- **SAS:** School of Arts and Sciences
- **SJE and LGBT:** Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities
- **SCI:** School of Communication and Information
- **SEBS:** School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
- **SOE:** School of Engineering
- **SMLR:** School of Management and Labor Relations
- **VCSA:** Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
- **VPVA:** Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance