

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The following is a collection of explanations and interpretations of terms commonly used throughout this General Bulletin and at Montana State University Billings.

589 – Designated course number for professional development credit bearing courses offered by Extended Campus. These credits do not count toward any degree at MSU Billings.

Academic Record - The unabridged and complete historical record of a student's academic coursework.

Academic Senate - The highest ranking faculty governing committee on campus. The Senate makes recommendations on course offerings, program content, and other academic matters and governs a variety of faculty matters. Although members are elected by faculty members, students may also serve on Senate committees.

Academic Warning - Denotes that a student's academic performance is below standard as defined by the institution; the student is warned of possible suspension.

Academic Year - That period of time from the opening of Fall Semester to the closing of the next Spring Semester is the "academic year." Summer Session is specifically excluded.

Accredited Institution - A college or university accredited by, or a candidate for accreditation from, one of the recognized regional accrediting commissions. Montana State University Billings is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. As such, all college-level coursework from institutions accredited by the following list of agencies will be received and applied toward associate or baccalaureate degrees as applicable to general education, major, minor, and elective requirements.

- Higher Learning Commission
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- New England Commission of Higher Education
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
- WASC Senior College and University Commission

Activity Courses - Courses centered around participation rather than classroom and laboratory achievement. Examples include physical education activities, band and chorus activities, and drama activities. Credit earned in such courses may be limited when used for meeting graduation requirements in some programs.

Admission - The process of accepting a candidate for enrollment into college.

Advising - A service provided by a faculty member or designated person (advisor). An advisor guides students through academic questions, problems, and/or coursework to plan and complete a degree program.

Advisor - A faculty member or designated person who guides students through academic questions, problems, and/or coursework to plan and complete a degree program.

Associate Degree - A degree which generally requires two years to complete. MSU Billings offers Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees as well as the Associate of Applied Science degree.

Auditor - One who enrolls in a class for informational instruction only. No academic credit is granted for auditing a class.

Bachelor's Degree - A first-level degree granted upon completion of a course of study in a given field and based on at least four years of college work, or the equivalent thereof.

Business (College of) - This area includes subjects which apply to the business world including Accounting, Finance, Management, and Marketing.

Candidate for a Degree - A status students assume when they have completed all requirements for a degree and apply for graduation. To apply for graduation a student fills out an application for graduation at the Registrar's Office, pays a fee, and returns the application to the Registrar's Office.

Class Schedule - The list of courses and sections offered in a given semester, including days, hours, places of meeting and names of instructors.

College - One of five major divisions of academic areas at MSU Billings. They are the College of Business, the College of Education, College of Health Professions and Science, the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and City College. Each college is headed by a dean who reports to the Provost and Academic Vice Chancellor.

Common Body of Knowledge (CBK) - Courses required of students in all options and majors in the College of Business.

Core Courses - Courses required by the University, the college, or the department by all students in a degree program regardless of the option or concentration in which they may choose to major.

Corequisite - A course required to be taken at the same time as another course.

Course - A unit of academic work in a particular subject, normally one semester long, for which credit toward graduation is usually given.

Course Load - The number of semester credit hours associated with the academic work in which a student is enrolled in any given term.

Credit Hour - A credit is the unit used in recording an amount of work and engaged effort represented in learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement. Each credit hour represents a minimum of three class-oriented work hours (60 minutes of classroom instruction and an additional two hours of out-of-class engaged effort and work per student) each week during a 15-week (minimum) semester. One credit of achievement should approximate 45 hours of combined instruction and student work/engaged effort. At least an equivalent amount of work and engaged effort is required regardless of pedagogical format (lab, web-enhanced, on-line, condensed coursework, internships, studio, independent study, etc).

Degree - An academic title MSU Billings is authorized to confer as official recognition to those who complete an academic program. An example is a Bachelor of Science Degree.

Degree Program - A prescribed course of study which leads to a degree.

DegreeWorks - A program used to provide degree audit information for students, faculty, and graduation.

Double Counting - The process by which some courses may be used to meet both General Education requirements and requirements for a major or minor. However, the credits may not be counted twice. If, for instance, one course is used to meet requirements in General Education and the major, the credits may only be counted in one of those areas.

Education (College of) - This area involves coursework which will enable students to teach in elementary or secondary schools in most areas offered in arts and sciences and in health, physical education and related subjects, and in special education.

Electives - Courses which are not a required part of a degree program are electives. Some departments may insist that their majors choose between certain electives, referred to as Restricted Electives.

Extended Major - As a substitution for the standard major-minor requirement a student may, with permission of the department chairperson concerned, complete an extended major with a minimum of 40 semester credits.

Faculty Advisor - A faculty member who helps a student plan and complete a degree program.

Full-time Student - An undergraduate student registered for 12 or more semester credits, or any graduate student registered for nine or more semester credits is considered a full-time student.

General Education Requirements - A body of knowledge which, in the view of the University and its faculty, every graduate of MSU Billings must have in addition to the specializations of the major and minor. Each student is required to take 31 semester credits of General Education courses.

Good Academic Standing - Status which denotes that a student is eligible to continue at or return to an institution.

Grade Point Average (GPA) - The grade average a student earns for each semester.

It is calculated by multiplying the number of credits given for a course times the value of the grade received for the course (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0), adding the value calculated for each class and dividing by the total number of credits. Thus, if a student has an "A" in a 4 credit course; a "B" in a 3 credit course; a "C" in a 2 credit course, and a "D" in a 2 credit course the GPA calculation would be as follows:

Letter Grade	Description
A	4 times 4 credits = 16 grade points
B	3 times 3 credits = 9 grade points
C	2 times 2 credits = 4 grade points
D	1 times 2 credits = 2 grade points

Total = 31 grade points divided by 11 total credits = 2.82 GPA.

Grade Report - A report of the student's grades earned at the end of each semester.

Graduate Student - Student who has earned a baccalaureate degree and is pursuing post baccalaureate studies including a master's degree.

Graduate Courses - Courses generally reserved for graduate students and numbered at the 500 level and above.

Graduation Check - The determination of whether a student has met the specified minimum educational requirements necessary for the granting of a degree.

Headcount - The number of students enrolled in an educational institution, program, course, etc., without regard to the number of credit hours being taken by individual students.

Health Professions and Science (College of) - This area involves coursework which will prepares students to work in health, human services, rehabilitation, science (biology, chemistry, earth sciences and physics), and related areas.

Hours - Sometimes referred to as semester credit hours unless specifically stated otherwise.

Human Services - A broad field of human endeavor in which individuals act as agents to assist individuals, families, and communities to better cope with crisis, change, and stress; to prevent or alleviate stress; and to function effectively in all areas of life and living.

Laboratory - A course involving supervised experimentation or practice related to an academic area. It generally requires hands-on use of equipment and materials.

Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (College of) - Subjects used traditionally to teach students to think, to evaluate ideas, and to communicate with precision. Subjects in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences include: Art; Communication and Theatre; English, Philosophy and Modern Languages; History; Mathematics; Music; Psychology; and Social Sciences and Cultural Studies (sociology, political science, Native American studies, environmental studies, and women's studies).

Lower Division Courses - Classes usually numbered 100 to 299. Ordinarily freshman and sophomores take courses numbered from 100 to 299.

Major - The area in which a student concentrates. An academic major is required for graduation. Majors require a minimum of 30 semester credits.

Minor - A program of courses in addition to the major in which students must complete. A minor requires at least 20 semester credits of instruction in specified courses.

Moratorium - The academic program remains in the catalog, but the University has suspended admission to the program.

Multicultural Study - A general term for courses which involve students in the study of a culture other than the typical American culture.

Option - A program by which students narrow their area of specialty within the overall umbrella of a particular major program.

Part-time Student - A student enrolled with 11 or fewer credits.

Pass/No Pass Grading - Pass/No Pass is a way of taking classes without fear of failure. Students who do "A," "B," or "C" work in the class are given a "P;" students who do "D" or "F" work receive a "X (no pass)." It is intended to encourage students to explore courses outside of their major and minor programs. There is no effect on Grade Point Average; however, credit is earned toward graduation. Students must indicate the P/NP Option at the time they register for classes.

Pre-registration - The process by which students select courses for a succeeding term in advance of the official opening date of the semester.

Prerequisite - A course to be completed successfully or a condition to be met before a student may enroll in a specific course.

Probation - Academic probation is the result of unsatisfactory scholarship. It is not a penalty but a warning and an opportunity to improve.

Quantitative Methods - A group of basic mathematics and statistics courses required for business majors. It provides a foundation for the more complicated mathematical manipulations required in the Common Body of Knowledge and other business courses.

Quarter - An enrollment period of about ten weeks.

Quarter Credit Hours - Units of credit awarded for successful completion of academic work. Students' progress toward fulfilling curricular and degree requirements is measured in terms of quarter credit hours at some other institutions. A quarter credit is equal to .66 of a semester credit. Example: A three-credit quarter course is equal to a two-semester credit course.

Registration - The process by which students officially enroll in classes and pay fees. Students must be formally admitted to MSU Billings before they may register.

Restricted Electives - Courses where students choose between several particular classes to meet requirements of the University, college or department.

Section - A division of a course, as between one or more instructors, but having the same course title and the same subject matter.

Semester - An enrollment period of about fifteen to eighteen weeks.

Semester Credit - A semester credit is 1 and 1/2 times more than a quarter credit (example: a two credit semester course is equal to a three credit quarter course).

Semester Hour - Normally one semester credit hour represents 60 minutes of classroom instruction each week for one semester. Credit in a laboratory, independent study, or internship may require a longer period. A three-credit class will meet for three 60-minute or two 90-minute sessions each week for the entire semester. A semester hour is the basis of college credit at Montana State University Billings. A semester hour is the credit received for passing a subject taken one hour a week for one semester. Laboratory courses require two or three hours a week for each semester hour of credit.

Summer Session - An enrollment period that begins after the Spring Semester ends.

Suspension - Academic suspension is an involuntary separation of the student from the University for unsatisfactory scholarship. Financial Aid also has suspension policies. (See Minimal Academic Progress (<https://catalog.msubillings.edu/undergraduate/admissions-registration/academic-policies-procedures-scholastic-requirements/>) or the Financial Aid section (<https://catalog.msubillings.edu/undergraduate/financial-aid-scholarships/>) for details.)

Teacher Licensure - A document issued by Montana's Office of Public Instruction authorizing the person holding it to teach at certain levels or in certain subjects, or serve in a professional teaching service position in the public schools of the state. (For additional information contact the Licensure Officer in the College of Education).

Teacher Endorsement - An official notation appended to the Teacher Licensure which defines the areas in which the holder of the licensure is qualified to teach or to serve in a professional teaching service position in the public schools of Montana.

Transcript - An Official Transcript is an unabridged and certified copy of a student's permanent academic record. A small fee is charged for each copy. (An uncertified working copy of the student's academic record is available at no charge).

Undergraduate Student - A student who has not yet earned a bachelor's degree or who has earned a bachelor's degree, but is a candidate for an additional bachelor's degree, or is pursuing additional undergraduate coursework.

Upper Division Courses - Courses numbered from 300 to 499. Ordinarily juniors and seniors take courses numbered from 300 to 499. Students must earn 36 semester credits of upper division courses to complete graduation requirements.