

# **What Are They Talking About?**

**Terminology Common Only in Higher  
Education**

Students,

There are LOTS of new concepts and terms used in higher education that may be confusing. When someone uses a word or term you don't understand, ASK for clarification. ("I'm not familiar with that . . . can you explain what you mean?") Ask a teacher, your advisor, or stop in the Advising Center. Your questions will help us learn more about what we need to teach new students.

Please share this document with anyone in your life who may also find it helpful. If you'd like an electronic copy of this, just let us know.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cynthia Gissy  
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**ACADEMIC HONORS:** Any student whose overall GPA is a 3.5 or higher will graduate “with honors,” and this distinction will be stated on the academic transcript. You should include this distinction on future resumes.

- **President’s Scholars:**

Full-time students (earning 12 or more credit hours in a semester) who maintain a 4.0 grade-point average.

- **Dean’s List:**

All students who are registered for at least six credit hours in a semester and who maintain a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher.

- **Honor Graduates:**

All persons who complete graduation requirements and who maintain high cumulative grade-point averages are identified with the following designations:

<b><u>Cumulative GPA</u></b>	<b><u>Honor Designation</u></b>
3.50-3.74	Cum Laude
3.75-3.99	Magna Cum Laude
4.00	Summa Cum Laude

**ACADEMIC MAPS:** The Academic Map is a handout that lays out your degree program, semester by semester. The closer you can follow your Academic Map, the more likely you are to graduate in a timely fashion. The Academic Map will let you know what classes you have to take each semester. The direct link to the Academic Maps is <https://www.wvup.edu/current-students/course-catalogs/academic-maps/>

**ACADEMIC OR FINANCIAL AID HOLDS:** If you owe a balance on your account, have admissions requirements that you haven’t submitted, or are participating in a payment plan, you will have a hold placed on your account. This means you will not be able to register for classes for the next semester or even access your own academic records. You must check your OLSIS account or visit the office that placed the hold on your account to determine why you have that hold and resolve the issue before the hold can be lifted.

## ACADEMIC STANDING:

### Good Academic Standing

To be in good academic standing, a student must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade-point average for all work undertaken.

**Early College Students.** Early College students must maintain a grade-point average greater than 2.0 to continue in the program with no grade of D or F.

### Academic Watch

Any student who, at the end of a grading period, has not maintained a 2.0 cumulative grade-point average shall be placed on Academic Watch. This serves as a written notice to students that timely completion of their intended degree path may be in jeopardy and continued lack of improvement may lead to Academic Probation.

### Academic Probation

Any student who has not maintained a 2.0 cumulative grade-point average after being placed on Academic Watch, shall be placed on Academic Probation.

- **Course Load.** Any student on Academic Probation may register for no more than 13 credit hours during a full Fall or Spring semester. Probationary students may register for no more than 7 credit hours during the summer session.
- **Restriction from WVU Parkersburg Clubs and Organizations.** Any student on Academic Probation may not participate in the activities and events of any WVU Parkersburg Club or Organization.
- **Removal from Academic Probation.** A student on academic probation shall be returned to Good Academic Standing at any time the cumulative grade-point average reaches 2.0 or higher.
- **Early College Students.** Early College students who have a GPA below 2.0 will not be allowed to continue, or return, to the program.

### Academic Suspension

Any probationary student who, upon completing one additional semester after being placed on Academic Probation and fails to maintain a minimum 2.0 grade-point average during that semester shall be placed on Academic Suspension.

- **First Suspension.** A student's First Academic Suspension shall be in effect for one full semester (not including Summer Sessions). At the end of one semester's

suspension, the student may be reinstated on Academic Probation. All circumstances and conditions relating to Academic Probation shall apply.

- **Second Suspensions.** After return to Academic Probation, a student who completes an additional semester and fails to achieve a minimum grade-point average of 2.0 during that semester shall be placed on Second Academic Suspension. A student's Second Academic Suspension shall be in effect for two full semesters (not including Summer Sessions). At the end of two semesters' suspension, the student may be reinstated on Academic Probation. All circumstances and conditions relating to Academic Probation shall apply.
- **Third Suspension.** After return to Academic Probation, a student who completes an additional semester and fails to achieve a minimum grade-point average of 2.0 during that semester shall be placed on Third Academic Suspension. Third Academic Suspension shall be for a minimum of eight consecutive full semesters (not including Summer Sessions).

#### **Appeal of Academic Suspension**

- A student placed on First, Second or Third Academic Suspension who has already registered for the next semester will be withdrawn from these classes.
- Any student who is placed on First or Second Academic Suspension may request to appeal this decision.
- Requests for appeals must be made to the Provost for Academic and Student Affairs for re-instatement.

The appeal may be denied or approved with multiple requirements: (a) uphold the Suspension, (b) reinstate the student on Academic Probation, or (c) reinstate the student on Academic Probation with specific stipulations such as (but not limited to) establishing maximum course load, mandating that specific courses be repeated, requiring specified counseling, and/or career counseling, requiring specified testing, or other academic procedures deemed necessary.

**ACCOMODATIONS:** If you have a disability that can impact how you learn in the classroom, you may be entitled to receive some special services, such as extended test time. Visit the Center

for Student Support Services with questions about what services you may be entitled to. The Center is located in Room 1019.

**ADMISSIONS:** The Center for Student Services handles all intake of incoming records (high school transcripts; GED scores, applications, transfer classes, etc.). You will receive a Yes! Packet after you apply and then receive your acceptance letter once your admissions file is complete.

**ADVISORS/ADVISEES:** WVU Parkersburg has a Professional Advising Center (PAC) where students with no transfer hours and are within their first 30 semester hours are advised. Each advisor works with a specific division. Once you complete 30 semester hours, you will be assigned an advisor in your major.

**ALUMNI:** Once you graduate from WVU Parkersburg, you will be considered an “alumnus”, alumnae or alum for short. Alumni is the plural of “alumnus.” We often look to our alumni to serve on advisory committees for our various programs. Your opinions of your experience here are valuable to the institution, and we hope that once you’re an alum, that you will stay in touch.

**APPLY/APPLICATION:** You have to let us know you are coming. You can apply online at [www.wvup.edu](http://www.wvup.edu). There is NO application fee.

**ATTENDANCE:** It is a myth that college professors do not care whether you attend class or not. Even professors who don’t actively take roll each day will know when you are there and when you are not. Some faculty make attendance a part of your grade; others do not . . . but this does not mean they don’t notice. Coming to college is like having a job: you show up every day, even on days you think are going to be “slow.” WVU Parkersburg is training you to become a working professional, and developing strong attendance habits is a professional skill.

**ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION:** Due to updates in federal and institutional policy, WVU Parkersburg takes attendance in all courses. The amount of financial aid you receive will depend on your attendance record for that semester. Failure to attend college courses will result in a loss

of financial aid connected to those courses. **NOTE: It is your professors who determine if you are attending. You must contact your professors if you are reported as not attending.**

For example, if for the fall semester you have registered for 12 credit hours and your professors report you as only attending six of those 12, then you will be dropped/deregistered from those credit hours you are not attending, and will only receive financial aid for those six credit hours you are attending. You will not receive a “W” on your transcript, and you will not be charged tuition or fees for those classes from which you are not attending and are dropped/deregistered. Fees are not refundable. Before you are dropped/deregistered from classes for which you are reported as not attending, you will receive a warning through your WVU Parkersburg email address and a chance to confirm your status with your professor before you would be dropped/deregistered.

Because we cannot disburse financial aid until we have confirmed your attendance, the first refunds for financial aid will be ready during the fifth week of the semester. Not all students will receive a refund. If for some reason your refund is not ready at that point, we do continue to process throughout the entire semester. This delay in refund disbursement means that you will have an extended period of time to charge books and supplies against your financial aid at the Barnes and Noble bookstore on campus. Eligible students may charge from the Monday before classes begin until the Wednesday of the fourth week of class.

**BLACKBOARD:** This is the name of the course management system. You can access it by using the same log in information you use to access your WVU Parkersburg email.

**COLLEGE CATALOG:** This publication details all WVU Parkersburg policies and procedures related to admissions, grading, and graduation requirements. It also provides an alphabetized listing of full-time faculty and staff and their highest academic degrees. This catalog is updated on an annual basis. Students follow the guidelines of the college catalog from the year they begin their programs. Students who leave college before they finish their academic program will be subject to the provisions of the new catalog upon their return to college. Students who remain in college until they have completed their degree may follow the degree plan of their original catalog year OR the updated catalog, whichever they prefer. A student must request a formal change to

update their catalog year. This can be done by completing/submitting a Major Change/Advisor form.

**COMMENCEMENT:** This is the graduation ceremony. WVU Parkersburg holds a commencement ceremony at the end of the fall semester in December and at the end of the spring semester in May. Some graduates choose not to participate in commencement, but students are encouraged to do so to celebrate this accomplishment in front of family and friends. Sometimes, people refer to this as “walking.” (*“Hey, I hear you’re graduating, are you walking?”*) Participating in commencement is NOT necessary in order to graduate.

**COURSE AND COURSE NUMBER:** Every WVU Parkersburg course has a subject, course title and a course number. You should learn yours once you are enrolled. You aren’t just in an English class, for example. There are several English courses, and they each have a different number and title. The course number identifies the level and content of the course.

**CREDIT HOURS:** A credit hour reflects the academic credit awarded for a class. Most classes are worth 3 credit hours because they meet for three hours each week, either twice a week for 75 minutes each session; or once a week for two hours and fifty minutes.

The more credit hours a class is worth, the more your grade in that class affects your GPA. A science class, for example, is worth 4 credit hours (a 3-hour class and an additional lab); some Physical Education classes are only 1 credit. An “A” in a Physical Education class does not have nearly as much “weight” or influence on a GPA as an “A” in Biology. Sometimes a lab may count as “0” credit hours but is still required as a necessary component to the course itself. A student who carries at least 12 credits is considered full-time. Even though this means you’re only in classes 12 hours per week, the credit hours assume that the student will be spending a significant amount of time outside class reading, studying, preparing, etc., that is why a “full-time” job requires 40 hours a week, but a “full-time” class schedule maxes out at 18 credits. Because of all the work expected outside of class to be successful in the class, a student cannot take more than 18 credit hours in a semester without special permission from the Provost.



**CRN** – Course Reference Number. For every course offered each semester, there are usually several days and times to choose from. Each class has its own CRN, which is an identification number. It is the CRN you will use to schedule, not the course name or course number. Each of the five or so sections of English 101, for example, has its own CRN. Each CRN represents the day/time/room/location/teacher of the course. CRN's with four digits will be Fall and Spring, three digits will be Summer.

**D/F REPEAT POLICY:** Any class in which you earn a D or F in the first sixty credits can be repeated at any time before you graduate. Your second grade will replace the original grade in the GPA calculation. This policy is another good reason to avoid asking for an “Incomplete.” This D/F repeat policy provides you with a “do-over” if you need to do something over from your first sixty hours. SAP is still impacted as the attempt/registration of the class is not removed.

#### **DEGREES OFFERED:**

**CERTIFICATES:** A certificate is a “smaller” credential than an Associate degree. It can be completed in about 30 credits. A certificate program is also known as a year-long program and is awarded by the college.

**ASSOCIATE DEGREES:** WVU Parkersburg offers Associate of Arts, Associate of Science and Associate of Applied Science degrees. These are majors that can be completed in about 60 credits. Many people refer to Associate degrees as “two-year” degrees because they are designed to be earned in two years. However, students often take longer than two years if they attend only part-time and/or need to repeat any courses or take courses that are not a part of their Academic Map.

**BACHELOR DEGREES:** WVU Parkersburg, although a Community College, does offer select Bachelor Degrees. Some of these programs have specific admissions requirements, such as GPA.

**DEAN'S LIST:** All students who are registered for at least six credit hours in a semester and who maintain a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher will be awarded a Dean's List certificate which will need to be picked up at the Office of the Provost for Academic Affairs.

**DIVISIONS:** WVU Parkersburg has five Academic Divisions. Those divisions are:

- Business, Accountings and Public Services
- Education
- Humanities, Fine Arts, and Social Sciences
- Nursing and Health Sciences
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)

**DIVISION CHAIR:** Every academic division has a chair who is the academic administrator of that division. Every faculty member reports to a division chair.

**ELECTIVES:** Electives are courses that are totally your choice. You may have “program electives,” which are specific to your degree/program, or you may have “open” electives, which means any course at all that you want. Beware, though: most certificates and Associate degree programs do not have room for electives. Everything on most Academic Maps is a requirement of the particular program. If you plan on starting college with a semester of “electives,” plan on taking more than two years to complete your degree.

**EMAIL:** You will be assigned a student email account, and it is a Google account. Check your student email account every day! All college notifications will be sent electronically.

**ENROLLING/REGISTERING:** Enrolling for classes is the next step after being admitted to college. When you enroll in classes, you register for them officially and create your class schedule.

**ENTRANCE LOAN COUNSELING:** Entrance Counseling is a federal requirement for all Federal Direct Loan recipients. The funds for your loan will not be disbursed until you have completed the counseling. Entrance Counseling provides you with information about your rights and responsibilities as a borrower, interest rates, expenses, repayment plans, and other important details about borrowing and who to contact with questions. Entrance counseling can be found at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) and you utilize your FSA ID and password to log in.

**EXIT LOAN COUNSELING:** Exit Counseling is a requirement that is established after you go below half-time status (6 credits). As soon as you go below half-time status, you enter a six-month grace period, as applicable. If you have not re-enrolled in classes for at least half time at the end of your grace period, you will become responsible to begin repayment on your Direct Stafford Loans. Exit Counseling provides you with information about your rights and responsibilities as a borrower of student loans, budgeting tips and repayment plan options. Exit counseling can be found at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) and you utilize your FSA ID and password to log in.

**FACULTY:** WVU Parkersburg has full-time faculty, and we also have adjunct faculty. Adjunct Faculty teach part-time and are not usually housed on campus. All faculty should be addressed by Mr., Ms. or Mrs. or Professor until they tell you otherwise. Faculty rank goes from an instructor to an assistant professor to an associate professor to a full professor. Technically, only full faculty are professors, but it is still a nice generic term to use for any faculty. All will be flattered, and none will complain. **Some faculty prefer to be called by their first names, but they will let you know that; don't assume.**

**FAFSA:** Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Visit [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). This application is the first step in receiving federal aid or loan eligibility. Submit your FAFSA beginning October 1 before the semester you plan to attend but no later than March 1 for every year you will be in college. (i.e., Fall 2020 semester, Spring 2021 and Summer 2021 you would complete the 2020/2021 FAFSA; Fall 2021, Spring 2022 and Summer 2022 you would complete the 2021/2022 FAFSA). Once you complete it the first year, you may use an App – MyStudentAid. You must complete a new FAFSA every year. For convenience, a lot of the information will be saved.

You will be asked to create a Federal Student Aid (FSA) account for the site, including a User ID and a Password. Remember these! The FSA you set up for your first FAFSA will be the one you use to access your information each year. On the FAFSA, you will be asked to identify the colleges you wish to receive this information. West Virginia University of Parkersburg's identification number is 003828.

Just completing the FAFSA does not automatically guarantee you will be eligible for financial aid. Your FAFSA report is sent to the college to let them know what you are eligible for, and then WVU Parkersburg “packages” the aid. The college will notify you of what steps you need to take to complete the financial aid process; completing the FAFSA is the first, most important step, but not the last.

You complete the FAFSA using a Data Retrieval tool to pull information from your income tax return directly from the IRS website. The earlier you submit your FAFSA the more sources of aid you’re eligible for, including the WV Higher Education Grant. Even if you haven’t filed taxes by March 1, file your FAFSA and go back in and make corrections when you get updated information. If you don’t complete a FAFSA, WVU Parkersburg has no idea how much financial aid you may be eligible for. If you don’t have your FAFSA submitted by April 15 at the latest, you will NOT be eligible for the WV Higher Education grant – regardless of your financial need.

**FERPA:** Family Educational Rights and ~~to~~ Privacy Act. Just as your doctor can’t discuss you and your records as a patient with anyone else, the college cannot talk to others about you unless you give us permission. If you want the college to be able to discuss your student records with anyone other than you, you must sign this release form and indicate with whom we are allowed to discuss your case. You may rescind (revoke; take back) this release at any time. You, as the student, are ultimately in control of your own academic path-regardless of who is paying your tuition. You are encouraged to develop a system of honest communications with those who are helping you pay for college, especially if you are asking them to take out a loan to help you. If you share your grades before you are asked to, that can go a long way to develop trust, and the matter of a signed FERPA becomes less of an issue.

**FINAL GRADES:** Remember: Your final grades are housed in OLSIS. They will NEVER be mailed to your home address. Your final grades are what are averaged each semester to determine your overall and cumulative GPA.

**FINALS WEEK/FINAL GRADES:** The final week of the semester is known as “finals” week. During that week, you do NOT follow your usual class schedule. Instead there is a Final Exam

schedule to allow for a traditional two-hour final to be administered in every class. Many faculty though, do not give those traditional finals and your last test in the class may serve as your “final.” Be sure to check your syllabus for exact days and times of each of your final exams. When in doubt, follow the official Final Exams schedule located on the WVU Parkersburg website. If you have two or more exams that conflict, speak to each of your faculty as soon as possible. They must make arrangements for you if they are not following the Final Exam schedule. Final grades are NOT mailed to your home address. They are recorded in OLSIS and on your transcript.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

**ACADEMIC PLAN:** Students who file a successful financial aid appeal will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and will be required to complete an academic plan if they wish to continue to receive financial aid. While the student is on financial aid probation with an Academic Plan, the student must develop an Academic Plan that ensures they will comply with SAP within a period of 1 but not more than 3 semesters. The required Academic Plan worksheet must be developed and agreed to by the student and their academic advisor. All courses listed in the Academic Plan must be required for completion of the degree for which the student is enrolled. A current MyDegree evaluation is required as part of the appeal process. The student will meet with their academic advisor, who will detail the remaining requirements to the degree, or the remaining requirements to return to good academic or financial aid standing. The bulk of the academic plan, though, is written by the student and includes detailed reasoning as to why the student has failed to make satisfactory academic progress and what steps they will take to ensure they can be successful. Students with a documented reason for being unsuccessful (extensive medical problems that can be backed up by doctors’ notes, for example) should include such information in their plan.

### **WARNING:**

1. Students who fail to meet the SAP standards are placed on financial aid warning during the following semester. In the first semester that a student does not meet SAP, they will be notified via their WVUP email account of their failure to meet SAP, and placed on Financial Aid Warning status for the next semester.

2. Students on Financial Aid Warning status are eligible to receive any aid that they meet the eligibility requirements to receive without limitations due to the warning status. Financial Aid Warning status does not initiate any differences in disbursement from the rest of the student population.
3. Students on Financial Aid Warning status are expected to attend and complete all courses in which they are enrolled with an overall GPA for the financial aid warning term of 2.50 or higher. Academic performance and completion percentage while on financial aid warning status will be considered during the evaluation of a student appeal.

**SUSPENSION:**

1. A student loses federal and state student eligibility by failing to adhere to one or more of the SAP components for two consecutive semesters or by exceeding the enrolled program's maximum timeframe limit. A student who does not appeal, submits an unsuccessful appeal, fails to meet the SAP standards after a successful appeal, or fails to fulfill the terms of an approved academic plan are placed on the financial aid status of Suspension. Students in the Suspension status cannot receive federal or state financial aid unless they re-establish eligibility.
2. Federal and state student aid for students on Suspension status may be reinstated for GPA/Completion pace issues by following the Re-establishing Eligibility process described in Answer Book Standard VI-10A *Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standards for Financial Aid Applicants*
3. Students will be sent an email via the WVUP email system notifying them that they have been placed on Suspension status because of their failure to meet SAP standards and of their right to appeal in accordance with the process described in WVUP Answer Book #VI-10B, *Financial Aid Appeal for Students not in Compliance with Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standards*.

**GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE:** A general education course is one that many students may take and is not just limited to certain majors.

**GPA:** Grade Point Average – Your GPA is determined by assigning “points” to letter grades and then dividing those points over the number of credits completed. A GPA in college can go as high as a 4.0 – straight A’s. All students need at least a 2.0 to graduate. (That means you have at least twice as many “points as “credit hours”).

Quality points are earned with each final course grade. Using the following formula, these are then averaged against the total number of credit hours that the student has completed. This is done on the following formula:

Final Course Grade	Quality Points
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1
F, FIW	0
W	N/A

To compute a grade-point average, the number of quality points for a single grade is multiplied by the number of credit hours given for completion of the course. The total number of quality points is then divided by the total number of credit hours on record.

**Example of Calculating GPA:**

Course Completed	Final Grade	Quality Points	Semester Hours	Quality Points
ENGL 101	A	4	3	12
BIOL 101	D	1	3	3
BIOL 103	D	1	1	1
HIST 101	B	3	3	9
SOC 101	C	2	3	6
MATH 126	W	0	0	0
			13	31

31 Quality Points divided by 13 Credit Hours = 2.38 GPA

**GRADE FORGIVENESS:** Students may request the forgiveness of D and F grades previously earned. Forgiveness is not automatic, and can only be initiated by the student and their academic advisor.

- The student requesting grade forgiveness must not have been enrolled in any college on a **full-time basis** during any semester or summer session during the four years immediately prior to the request for grade forgiveness.
- The student's request for grade forgiveness should be requested their first semester after returning to college.
- Grade forgiveness may be requested no more than two times and will still be included in SAP.
- Grade forgiveness requests will be reviewed following the end of the withdrawal period for the current semester.
- Grades which were used in meeting graduation requirements for a degree or certificate that has already been awarded may not subsequently be forgiven.
- In all instances of grade forgiveness, students are notified that other colleges or universities may have policies that do not allow the forgiveness of grades.
- Grade forgiveness should not be granted if the student can exercise the D/F Repeat Rule.
- Any grade to be forgiven must have been earned at least four years prior to the date of requesting forgiveness.
- Once a Grade Forgiveness form is completed, the request should be submitted to the Records Office, located in the Center for Student Services.
- Grades that are forgiven are not removed from the student's transcript but are marked to indicate that they are not being counted in tabulating either the student's total credit hours completed or grade-point average but are still utilized for SAP.

**GRADE OF INCOMPLETE OR "I":** Incomplete is a temporary grade, given only when students have completed most of the course but are unable to conclude it because of illness or some other circumstances beyond their control. Incompletes are not granted routinely but are based on significant work having been completed, valid reasons, and the discretion of the instructor. If all work is not completed within six weeks of the end of the semester, the "I" will become a grade of



“F.” Incomplete grades are not assigned quality points, and the semester hours for incomplete courses are not counted as hours attempted. Students receiving a grade of “I” will not be eligible for the President’s or Dean’s list that semester. SAP may be impacted as well.

**GRADUATION:** Once you have met all course requirements of your degree program with an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher, you must apply to graduate by the published deadline ~~are eligible to graduate~~. WVU Parkersburg graduates students three times a year: The fall semester in December; the Spring semester in May; and in August. August graduates may walk in the December program. Diplomas are mailed to your home address.

There are two options when applying to graduate (accessible within the student’s OLSIS account:

- **“Transcript Only”** – degree completion will be listed on your academic transcript. you will **not** receive a paper diploma or be eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony. This application is **free**.
- **“Diploma with option to Participate”** – you will receive a printed diploma and will have the opportunity to participate in the graduation ceremony (you **must** select “Y” to participate if you wish to walk in the graduation ceremony). **This option includes a \$25.00 processing fee. This fee is applied whether you wish to participate in the ceremony or not.**

**GRANTS:** Grants are like financial aid “gifts.” You do not pay them back if you complete your coursework successfully. However, if you receive grants and then fail or drop your courses, you MAY have what is called “negated” aid and will owe that money back.

**HYBRID:** Some classes are offered as a hybrid course: part online and part in the classroom. These courses are labeled as hybrid in the master schedule. You may be required to meet in person and submit assignments though Blackboard.

**LOANS:** This is financial aid that you pay back. It is like taking out a personal loan from the government to pay for school. To receive loans, you must be taking 6 or more credit hours. Like all other loans, you have to pay this money back, but not until you are out of school six months. If you don’t follow a payment plan to pay back the loan, the IRS will take your income tax refunds

and possibly contact your employer to have payments taken directly from your paycheck. There is no escaping paying back a student loan. The government will wait and take it from your Social Security payments if you avoid paying back the money you have borrowed, and you may end up paying back more in interest than you did for the original loan. You are required to pay back your loans even if you don't graduate! If you do not pay back your students loans you will be placed in default. Being in default of your student loans will be reflected on your credit report and may keep you from returning to college. A good rule to follow is to not borrow more in student loans than you will earn in your annual salary from your first full-time job in the profession. This is another compelling reason to figure out what you want to major in sooner rather than later.

There are three types of loans available to students. They are **Subsidized** and **Unsubsidized**. **Subsidized** loans are available to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need and are enrolled at least half-time (6 hours). The interest rate on the loan is variable and established each June but will not exceed 8.25%. A processing fee may be deducted from the borrowed amount so the disbursed amount may be slightly less than the borrowed amount shown in the student's financial aid award package. Loan repayment begins six months after you exit school whether you graduate or you withdraw. If you drop below six credit hours you may be required to pay back your loans after six months as well. No interest is charged on a subsidized loan while you are in school. Maximum federal annual amounts are \$3,500 for freshmen, \$4,500 for sophomores, and \$5,500 for juniors and seniors. However, institutional cost of attendance may reduce those amounts.

**Unsubsidized** loans are the second type of loans available to students. We usually don't do these due to our tuition rate. These loans are available to undergraduate students who are enrolled at least half-time (6 hours) and have not had their cost of attendance met through other aid awards. The interest rate will not exceed 8.25%. A processing fee may be deducted from the borrowed amount so the disbursed amount may be slightly less than the borrowed amount shown in the student's financial aid award package. Loan repayment begins six months after graduation, if you withdraw from school, or drop below six credit hours. However, interest payments on the loan must be paid while the student is in school or deferred and capitalized (added to the principal of the loan). Maximum federal annual amounts depend on other aid that was awarded to the student.

The third loan available is the PLUS loan. This loan is available to parents of dependent students who are enrolled at least half-time (6 hours). The parent must have a good credit history and may borrow up to the cost of attendance minus any financial awards. The interest rate on the loan is variable and established each June, but will not exceed 9%. A processing fee may be deducted from the borrowed amount so the disbursed amount may be slightly less than the borrowed amount shown in the student's financial aid award package.

**MAJOR:** A major is your academic degree program. WVU Parkersburg offers several majors in many academic areas.

**MASTER SCHEDULE OF COURSES:** On the WVU Parkersburg homepage, there is a link that says “Current Students”. Once you choose this link, you will then choose the link titled “Resources” and then “Course Schedule”. You can then choose the semester schedule you want to view and they will be listed alphabetically by course prefix. The direct link to this page is <https://www.wvup.edu/current-students/student-resources/course-schedules/>

**MIDTERMS AND MIDTERM GRADES:** Midterm is the halfway point of the semester. Some faculty give an official midterm test. Your midterm grades are an indication of how you are doing in a class up to that point based on what grades you’ve earned. If the class has four tests, though, and you’ve only taken one, your midterm grade might be misleading. Your midterm grades will be posted in OLSIS. Midterm grades will NEVER be mailed to your home address. They will only be posted online in your OLSIS account. You will get a midterm grade for each of your courses regardless of the grade you are earning. Midterm grades will not appear on your transcript.

**MPN:** The Loan Agreement, also called a Master Promissory Note (MPN) is a legal document in which you promise to repay your loan(s) and any accrued interest and fees to the U.S. Dept. of Education. It also explains the terms and conditions of your loan(s); for instance, it will include information on how interest is calculated and what deferment and cancellation provisions are available to you. Your MPN can be found at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) and you utilize your FSA ID and password to log in.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Full time faculty are expected to keep at least five office hours a week, either in a physical location or to be available online. Many faculty keep more extensive office hours. These are the hours you can expect a faculty member to be available to meet with you about any questions or concerns you have. Some advisors are better than others. That’s life. You’re welcome to drop by a faculty member’s office during their office hours, but if they are not there, don’t complain too loudly until you check to make sure that you actually went during a published office hour. If you show up on a Wednesday at 2 pm, but their Wednesday office hours are from

10-11 am, that is not their fault. To be safe, it's a good idea to email the faculty member beforehand to set an appointment if possible.

**OL SIS – Online Student Information System:** This is a web-based system which allows students access to the following on-line services:

- **Registration** – Students register themselves for the classes they are going to take each semester. They must first schedule an appointment with their academic advisor so a ‘PIN’ can be released. After this happens, they can log into their OLSIS and register for their classes.
- **Withdrawing from a Class** – Within the first week of classes, student can log in and withdraw themselves from a class through their OLSIS. After the first week of classes, they must meet with their academic advisor and complete a withdraw form.
- **Billing Information** – Students can view and print their bill for a semester. In addition, accounts from prior semesters can be viewed and printed.
- **Financial Aid** – Students view and accept their financial aid awards in OLSIS under the Financial Aid section. Students receive specific instructions for uses of OLSIS for financial aid purposes in emails sent by the financial aid office.
- **Holds** – Holds on a student record will prevent access to registration, grades, and transcripts. The reason for the hold can be viewed in OLSIS.
- **Mid-Term and Final Grades** – Student grades are available through OLSIS as well as Blackboard. Students who need a grade report card must request it through the Records Office, located in the Center for Student Services, by the last day of finals for the semester.
- **Student Information** – Name, address, and email address information are available for the student to view and request to update as needed.
- **Transcripts** – Unofficial transcripts are available for students to view or print. Official transcripts for yourself, an employer, or another school may be submitted via a student's OLSIS account through the National Clearinghouse.

**ONLINE:** Unlike a traditional class, an on-line class meets online only through the course management system Blackboard. These classes are labeled as online in the master schedule. All online classes have a syllabi and deadlines for assignments, just as traditional classes do. Just

because a class meets only online doesn't mean it is "self-paced." Even courses that are self-paced have due dates for assignments. Most students who fail online classes do so because they let work pile up and do not access the course on a regular basis. You can't wait to open up and work on an online class weeks into the semester. You should schedule time to work on that class and treat it like a traditional class.

**“OPEN DOOR OR OPEN ADMISSION” PHILOSOPHY:** This is the national policy of all community colleges. Students are eligible for admissions regardless of their high school grades or their ACT or SAT scores. In general, if you apply, you are accepted. Remaining in college depends on your performance once you have been accepted.

**PLAGIARISM:** Every syllabus should include an “academic integrity” statement that warns students against plagiarizing. Plagiarizing can be considered but not limited to, copying someone else's paper; having someone else write your papers; cutting and pasting information from another source and presenting it as your own; not citing a reference when you have used someone else's words, etc. An assignment proven to be plagiarized (there are software programs to detect it) may be assigned a grade of “F”, and/or the student may receive an F in the course. There may also be other academic consequences. When in doubt, ask your professor or visit the Tutoring Center.

**PREREQUISITES:** These are courses or criteria that you must meet before being allowed to enroll in a particular course. For example, ENGL 102 requires ENGL 101 first, so ENGL 101 is a “prerequisite” for ENGL 102. These are often called “pre-reqs” (pronounced “pre-wrecks”). If you somehow avoid taking the “prereq,” you will likely “wreck” in the next course.

**PRESIDENT'S SCHOLARS:** Full-time students (earning 12 or more credit hours in a semester) who maintain a 4.0 grade-point average will be awarded a President's Scholars certificate which can be picked up in the President's Office.

**RESUME:** This is an individualized profile of your educational and employment history that you can share with prospective employers as you search for a job. Our Office of Career Services is

available to help all students develop their resume while they are in college, as well as after they graduate. CareerCoach is also a tool that will assist with resume writing.

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP):** Title IV of Federal Financial Aid policies require that students maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) in order to continue to qualify to receive federal financial aid, which includes grants and loans. Satisfactory Academic Progress has three basic requirements:

1. Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.) of 2.0.
2. Student must complete at least 67% of their cumulative attempted credits. For example, if a student is registered for 12 credit hours and drops 3, that student has completed 75% of their credit hours and will still be eligible for aid.
3. Complete their program of study within 150% of the required number of credit hours. We measure cumulative hours (all college credits ever attempted, including dropped classes).
  1. Certificate programs are 30 credit hours in length, so students need to complete these programs before they have attempted 45 credit hours.
  2. Associate degree programs are 60 credit hours in length, so students need to complete before they have attempted 90 credit hours.
  3. Bachelor's degree programs are 120 credit hours in length, so students need to complete before they have attempted 180 credit hours.

A Student's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be reviewed at the end of each semester. Students that do not meet any of the three requirements listed above will be subject to the guidance outlined in Answer Book Standard VI-10A *Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standards for Financial Aid Applicants* as follows:

1. A review will be done at the end of each semester/payment period. The evaluation period will be based on attendance in all prior semester(s) and will include all classes attempted (and transfer work) whether federal aid was received or not.
2. After the first time, the student does not meet the minimum SAP standards for GPA and completion percentage, the student is placed on Financial Aid Warning Status. Financial Aid Warning means that the student CAN receive federal financial aid for the next semester of enrollment.

3. If, after the Warning period, the student is still unable to meet the minimum SAP standards the student is then placed on Financial Aid Suspension status, and is eligible to appeal to go on either Probation or Probation with Academic Plan. When the student is on Probation status, they are NOT eligible for federal financial aid for the next semester unless they appeal and the appeal is approved or they can meet SAP by entering into an approved Academic Plan. Students may appeal only if they have extenuating circumstances.
4. A student who does not appeal, submits an unsuccessful appeal, fails to meet the SAP standards after a successful appeal, or fails to fulfill the terms of an approved academic plan will remain on or return to the financial aid status of Suspension. Students on Suspension status cannot receive federal or state financial aid unless they re-establish eligibility.
5. A student not meeting the 150% maximum timeframe is automatically required to submit an appeal and an Academic Plan. The Academic Plan may be applicable for up to 3 semesters.

**SEMESTER:** The academic year is divided into semesters. The Fall semester begins in August and ends in December. The Spring semester begins in January and ends in May. The Summer semester begins once the Spring semester ends and runs through the end of July or August. Your classes in the Fall semester are complete when the semester breaks for the Christmas holiday. Your classes in the Spring semester are done before the year breaks for summer. Your classes in the Summer semester are done before the Fall semester begins. Make sure to check your grades at the end of each semester.

**SKILL SETS/ADVANCED SKILL SETS:** These credentials are “smaller” than Certificates. They may be completed in fewer than 12 credit hours and are awarded by the division, not the college.

**STAFF:** People who work at a college are classified as either “faculty” or “staff.” Many faculty are also academic administrators. Sometimes, the word “staff” is used in another context. Many faculty in the master schedule may be identified only by “staff.” It does not mean that the same



person is teaching all those classes; it just means that the specific faculty member hasn't been assigned to the class yet.

**SYLLABUS/SYLLABI:** A syllabus is the written document that exists for each college course, indicating the course description, the incoming requirements of the course (pre-requisites), attendance policy, student learning outcomes, faculty office hours, etc. Many syllabi (plural of syllabus) include a day-by-day outline of the course and all important dates, such as due dates for assignments and test dates. All syllabi should be in Blackboard. Faculty who don't use Blackboard will distribute a hard copy in class, if not on the first day then sometime in the first week. Be sure to check the syllabus frequently if you have any questions about make-up work, grading policies, etc.

**TUTORING CENTER:** The college hosts a Tutoring and Testing Center free of charge to all WVU Parkersburg students. It is staffed by peer mentors and professional tutors. The Center is located in Room 1123. Phone: [304-424-8295](tel:304-424-8295) Email: [tutoring@wvup.edu](mailto:tutoring@wvup.edu)

### **Office Hours**

Monday – Thursday: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**TRANSCRIPT:** This is the official document that lists all final grades for all courses. Most employers will ask for an official transcript once you're hired. In order for a transcript to be considered "official," it must be in a sealed envelope or delivered electronically from the college in a secured delivery system. The transcript you can print out from you OLSIS is an "unofficial" transcript.

**TRADITIONAL CLASS:** A traditional class meets face-to-face in a traditional classroom.

**WITHDRAWING FROM COURSES:** Before the semester begins, students can drop, or remove themselves, from an individual course in their OLSIS account. During the first week of

the semester, when classes start, students can still drop their courses via OLSIS. After the first week, students must contact and complete a withdraw form with their academic advisor, their financial aid counselor and, if necessary, the Business Office, before they may withdraw from any class. The forms for this withdraw process will be available in the Center for Student Services, the Professional Advising Center, the Jackson County Center administrative office, and online.

**WORK STUDY:** The Federal Work Study (FWS) Program is federally funded and designed to assist those students who demonstrate a financial need. It provides the opportunity of employment to qualified students. Students must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year in order to be considered for FWS. Students must also maintain a 2.0 GPA or greater to qualify. Federal Work Study is a campus-based program with limited funding. This type of assistance usually goes to the earliest applicants with the highest financial need. Funds may become available throughout the academic year as students choose not to participate in FWS. If you have been awarded Federal Work Study, contact the Financial Aid Office for work-study options on campus.

**IF YOU REMEMBER NOTHING ELSE, REMEMBER THIS:**

Graduating in a timely fashion depends entirely on your being able to follow a prescribed degree plan. The longer you take to decide on a major, the longer it will likely take you to graduate. You don't get an Associate degree after being here a few years; you get a degree after you complete all the requirements of that degree program.

Think ahead as much as possible. If you go "off-track" from your model schedule you should be prepared to take a class at another campus OR be prepared to wait a semester for it to be offered at your preferred campus. It is impossible for the college to offer all classes at all locations every semester.

Because there is some financial aid available even if you do not enroll full-time, always complete your FASFA. Sign up for what you know you can be successful in. Do not load up with the intention of dropping something; by the time you decide what to drop you are likely doing poorly in everything and having a "W" on your transcript can impact your SAP.

Ask for help when you need it. If the person you ask cannot help you, they can point you in the right direction. If they can't do that, you will know to go to someone else. Just keep at it.

Think of college as a trip you are taking: when you take the wrong exit or run out of gas, you don't just abandon the car. You go walk for gas or drive a while to get back on the right road. Why? Because you are going somewhere!

***NOTE:*** *If you decide NOT to attend college after all, be sure to officially withdraw from any classes you register for, and do so before the start of classes. "Not attending" isn't the same as "withdrawing." Even being on the class list for one day will generate a bill. You do not want to get in trouble with your financial aid before you even get started!*

*With permission from Nancy Parks, adapted from Pierpont website.*