

COLLEGE TERMINOLOGY

GENERAL

Academic advisor: Academic advisors are staff members or faculty who are assigned to students. They help students choose majors and minors, design a course of study, and help ensure students fulfill graduation requirements.

Bachelor's degree (BA/BS): Undergraduate degree that generally requires four years of full-time study. Students must declare a major in a particular field of study and choose a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science (BS) degree path. Truman also has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA).

Campus: The physical buildings and grounds owned by a college or university.

Credit hours: A measure of a class's time based on how many hours students spend in the classroom/receiving instruction.

Department: Academic division specializing in an area of study like Nursing, English, or Biology.

Department chair: Professor assigned to manage an academic department. They unite the department and act as a liaison between the department and college administration.

Faculty: Academic staff including professors. Faculty should be referred to as "Dr. ____" or "Professor ____."

First-generation college student: A college student who is the first in their immediate family to go to college.

Full-Time Student: To qualify as a full-time student, learners must take a minimum number of credits per semester. At Truman, you must be at 12 credit hours to be full-time. This is important for your financial aid and staying on track with your degree program.

Greek life / Fraternities and sororities: Social and academic organizations for college students formed to pursue a common goal or ideals. Most are identified by letters of the Greek alphabet (Alpha, Beta, Gamma, etc.) and as a whole comprise a school's Greek life.

Office Hours: Professors schedule dedicated time outside of class to meet with students. Office hours are times when you can meet with your professors to discuss the material being presented in class or other related interests you have.

Part-Time Student: Unlike full-time students, part-time students take a smaller number of classes per semester to help them balance personal and/or professional obligations. Students below 12 credit hours are considered part-time.

Registrar: The registrar's office is responsible for many administrative academic duties like organizing the dates/rules on registering students for classes, preparing student transcripts, and preparing class schedules for faculty.

Study Abroad: Learners who want to study outside the U.S. commonly study abroad. These educational trips to other countries can last anywhere from two weeks to a full academic year.

Title IX: This federal law was enacted in 1972 and prohibits any school or education-related program from discriminating on the basis of sex.

Transcript: Official record of courses taken and grades earned at a given institution.

HOUSING-RELATED

Resident Advisor (RA): A resident advisor is usually an upperclassman who lives in the residence halls and serves as a mentor for newer students

Residence Halls: Campus housing where students live within a close distance of academic buildings.

Room and board: Term for charges stemming from on-campus food services and housing.

FINANCIAL-RELATED

FASFA: Stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid. A document prospective students complete to determine eligibility for federal loans and grants.

Federal grants vs. state grants: Grants are need-based forms of financial aid that do not need to be repaid. Federal grants are awarded through the FASFA. State grants are awarded through the student's home state and usually have different eligibility requirements than that of the FASFA.

Scholarship: An award given by a college, university or outside institution to help a student pay for tuition or day-to-day expenses. Criteria varies depending on individual scholarships.

Subsidized vs. Unsubsidized Loan: If a student receives a subsidized loan, the U.S Department of Education pays all interest accrued during school, the 6-month grace period and deferment. Students with unsubsidized loans must pay interest either while in school or have the accrued interest added to the principal loan balance.

Tuition: The core price for college classes. At Truman, we have a flat rate for 12-17 credit hours.

Work-study: Work-study programs help college students with financial need get part-time jobs to help pay for day-to-day expenses and tuition payments. Work-study jobs are federally- or state-funded. Most students know if they are eligible for work-study through the FAFSA.

ACADEMICS-RELATED

Academic Standing: Institutions measure academic standing by GPA and courses passed. The various academic standings at Truman are “Good Standing,” “Probation,” and “Suspension.” For Truman’s policies on academic standing, visit the University Catalog at catalog.truman.edu.

Add/drop period: Time frame when students can drop or add courses to their course schedule without financial consequences. At Truman, this happens in the first week of every semester and mid-semester when 2nd-block courses begin.

Asynchronous learning: Online classroom format where students have access to the professor but are learning at their own pacing, which is dictated by the professor.

Audit: When taking an “audit” course, students attend a class they are interested in without being required to complete assignments or take tests—giving them a chance to learn the material but not for credit. Students should only audit courses that are not required for graduation.

Course catalog: A college publication that describes academic programs, their majors and minors, and required courses and their contents. Truman’s catalog can be found at catalog.truman.edu.

Course load: This refers to the total amount of credit hours a student is taking per semester.

Electives: Classes students choose to fulfill a general education requirement or just because they’re interested in a topic outside of their major’s core courses.

Final exam: Test taken at the end of a course that usually includes subject matter from the entire course.

Lecture: Oral presentation given by a professor to educate students. Sometimes this can refer to a class format that doesn’t require lab-work hours.

Midterm: An exam, project, assignment, etc. given approximately halfway through a course term that generally covers all lecture, reading and discussion material presented so far.

Minor: A secondary focus meant to add value to a student’s major. A minor consists of the lower-level courses required for a major in the same discipline. For example a Business major with a minor in Spanish will be required to complete a certain number of lower-level Spanish courses (typically 15 credit hours)—which are typically the same lower-level Spanish courses as those pursuing it as a major.

Pass-fail course: Instead of receiving a letter grade, students receive either a “P” (Pass) or “F” (Fail) on their transcript. Requirements for passing will vary depending on the course.

Plagiarism: Taking credit for someone else’s work as your own including copying words, sentence structure or ideas. Plagiarism has very grave consequences in higher education and are outlined in the Student Conduct Code.

Prerequisites: Courses required to take more advanced courses or apply to a program. For example, the *prerequisite* for SPAN 102 is SPAN 101.

Registration: Process of reserving a spot in specific classes for enrolled students. At Truman, this occurs approximately halfway through each semester.

Semester / Blocks: The academic year is often divided into terms—most commonly in the form of semesters or blocks. Semesters typically last 16 weeks and occur in the fall, spring, and summer. 1st-block courses refer to courses in the first 8 weeks of the semester; and 2nd-block courses begin in the last 8 weeks of the semester.

Syllabus: At the start of each semester, professors hand out a syllabus for each class that provides an overview of required readings, assignments, tests, and other necessary information.

Synchronous learning: Online classroom format where students learn together at the same time and can engage with classmates and instructors via chat rooms and video conferencing.

Transfer credits: Course credits carried over from one institution to another. It is common for students to also have transfer credits from Advancement Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), CLEP, etc.

Undecided or undeclared: A student enrolled in courses but has not yet declared a major. This is very typical of new freshmen students and even students into their sophomore year. Your academic advisor and the Career Center can help you find a major that fits your interests.

Waitlist: A term commonly seen during registration periods. Students hoping to enroll in a full class can opt to be placed on a waitlist. This essentially saves a place in line in case spots open up from registered students dropping or changing plans.

Withdraw: To drop a class after the add/drop grace period. Withdrawing means receiving a 'W' on your transcript, which does not calculate into your overall GPA.

Truman-Specific Terms & Abbreviations

Baldwin Hall (BH): Academic building that primarily holds classes for history, English, foreign language, Classics, and other arts and humanities fields. Baldwin Hall also holds the Center for Diversity & Inclusion, Center for International Students, Center for International Education Abroad, and LGBTQ+ Resource Center.

Barnett Hall (BT): Academic building that is home to the University's Publications Office and several academic programs: Communication, Justice Systems, Psychology, Military Science/ROTC, and Sociology-Anthropology.

Center for Academic Excellence (CAE): The CAE houses our first-year academic advisors. The Bulldog Scholars Program is also run by the CAE, so you'll become very familiar with our space!

Center for Diversity & Inclusion (CDI): The CDI is built on the principles of inclusive excellence, encouraging everyone to actively participate in both academic and social realms, fostering growth in identity development, exploring the intersections of diverse experiences, nurturing inter-group relations, and championing justice. The CDI holds many events on campus related to celebrating diversity and bringing students together. Website: diversity.truman.edu

Center for International Education Abroad (Study Abroad Office): Many students are interested in study abroad and a large portion of Truman students participate in some type of study abroad experience. Even if you are only thinking about studying abroad, you can stop in and speak to a staff member about the opportunities available to you.

Dialogues Curriculum: This curriculum is the foundation of an undergraduate degree at Truman. It generally includes lower-level courses in 5 different "perspectives." These include Communication Skills, Social Perspective, Arts & Humanities Perspective, STEM Perspective, Statistics Perspective, and Interconnecting Perspectives. Your academic advisor will walk you through these requirements and help you develop a long-term academic plan.

Health Sciences Building (Health Sciences): Our Health Sciences Building is connected to the Pershing Building and gives Athletic Training, Nursing, Communication Disorders, Health Science and Exercise Science. This is also where our Speech and Hearing Clinic and Nursing Simulation Center.

Magruder Hall (MG): Academic building that is home to the School of Science and Mathematics. This modern science facility has classrooms, research labs and prep rooms, a greenhouse, a solar garden, and a planetarium. You can also drop by the Herpetology Lab. Magruder Hall is home to programs including Agricultural Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

McClain Hall (MC): Academic building that primarily holds classes for Classical and Modern Languages, History, Economics, Creative Writing, English, Linguistics, Philosophy and Religion, and Political Science and International Relations. This is also the administrative building on campus that holds the president's office, Registrar, Financial Aid, Business Office, Cashier's window, and others.

Pershing Building (Pershing): This facility houses Truman's Pershing Arena, the Small Gym, the Dance Studio, Athletics Offices, and six classrooms.

Pickler Memorial Library (PML): Our beautiful campus library where you can also grab a coffee at Starbucks. The CAE is located in the library, as well as the Writing Center, Tutoring Center, and Research Librarians. Website: library.truman.edu

The Quad: The grassy area in the center of campus. This is where a lot of events take place and where students casually hang out.

Student Recreation Center (The Rec): This modern facility features a fantastic weight room, three basketball courts, a track, a multipurpose gym, an aerobics room, and more than 50 pieces of cardio equipment. All kinds of free classes are available to students each semester.

Student Union Building (SUB): The hub of campus and where many larger campus events occur. This is where Mainstreet Market is, the Bookstore, Career Center, Women's Resource Center, and other offices related to student engagement and involvement. There is a space on the main floor of the SUB called the "SUB Hub," where many students hang out.

Violette Hall (VH): Academic building that is home to the School of Business and the School of Health and Exercise Sciences and Education. Violette Hall houses departments that offer programs in Accounting, Business Administration, Education, Mathematics and Computer Science. This is also where the University's testing center is located.