

OSU Guide for First-Generation Students

NEW
to
OSU

Oklahoma State University

Index

2

Terms

9

Places

10

Websites &
Resources

Terms

Accreditation: This is the recognition that an institute maintains standards necessary for its graduates to gain admission in other reputable institutions, higher education, or later careers.

A

Adding and Dropping Classes: A student adds a class when they enroll each semester. A student may need to add a class during a semester because they have recently dropped a class and need to stay eligible. Dropping a class is when a student un-enrolls from a class. A student may drop a class due to not being able to make a passing grade, a student has recently changed their major and does not need the class anymore, or their current course load is too heavy.

Advising Meeting: During an advising meeting a student and their advisor discuss the classes the student is currently in and the classes they will take next semester. Every student is required to have at least one advising meeting per semester to take the advisor hold off of the student's account. Once the hold is removed, the student has access to enroll in classes on their date of enrollment.

Advisor: An advisor is a type of counselor who works with students to help them choose their major and minor and ensure they meet all the requirements to graduate with a major in that field. Each advisor specializes in specific majors and minors to be most helpful to their students. Each college has multiple advisors so they are experts in their field.

Assistant Residential Community Educator (ARCE): An ARCE is the CM's supervisor. This person is a graduate student.

Associate's Degree: A two-year college degree in a job related field, and often provides the training necessary for a beginning licensure.

Bachelor's Degree: A four-year degree in a subject (the student's major). Bachelor's degrees provide an opportunity for the student to take a variety of classes in different subjects to learn more about the world. Most students who get a Bachelor's degree don't get an Associate's degree, although some get both.

B

2

Terms

C

Career Fair: A career fair provides students, and sometimes alumni, with an opportunity to meet with a wide variety of prospective employers on campus. Students meet casually with employers at tables or booths set up at a venue. Students typically wear business professional to the Career Fair.

Community Mentor (CM): A CM, also known as RA's at other universities, is a trained peer leader who supervises those living in a residence or group housing facility.

Course Evaluation: At the end of each semester students are given a link to fill out a survey to evaluate their class. This is the best way to provide constructive feedback about their course structure, assignments, and professor.

Credit Hours: College courses are measured in terms of credit hours. One credit hour is equivalent to 50 minutes of one class per week. Classes are offered in one to five credit hours.

D

Dead Week: Dead week is the term students use to describe the week before finals week. During this week, students still attend classes, but they normally have less homework. This is the time students should begin studying for their final exams.

Dean: A Dean is a person with significant authority over a specific college.

Degree Requirements vs. Major Requirements: Degree requirements are classes a student must take and pass in order to get their degree. Major requirements are classes a student must take and pass in order to graduate with that major.

Discussion Boards: A discussion board is used in online classroom for students in the same class to interact with each other. It is common for teachers to have students post on a discussion board and reply to other students for a grade.

Terms

Doctorate or PhD: Getting a PhD takes between three and five years after getting a Bachelor's and/or Master's. A student getting their PhD is becoming a specialist in their topic, such as rural literature or infant mental health. A PhD qualifies a student to be a professor at a college, and write in their field as an expert. Getting a doctorate does not make a student a medical doctor.

Enrolling: Before the first semester of freshman year and toward the end of each semester, a student must enroll into their next semester's classes. To do this, the student must meet with their advisor to take a hold off of their account that restricts them from enrolling. When meeting with the advisor, they will help the student decide which classes to take next semester. Once the student knows the classes they want to take, they can enroll in their classes. When the student is able to enroll is dependent on their overall amount of earned hours.

Finals: Finals are the exams at the very end of the semester. These test are usually weighted heavily and can either help a student bring their grade up or lower their overall grade.

Finals Week: Finals week is the last week of school in which students are only taking their final tests. Students do not go to classes this week.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students and/or their parents/guardians must complete this to qualify for loans and grants. It helps determine eligibility for federal student aid. After filling out the FAFSA, the student will receive an EFC (Estimated Family Contribution). Institutions use this number to determine how much money a student needs, and therefore, how much money the student will receive.

First Generation Student: A student attending college from a family in which neither parent/ guardian attended college. Around 20-25% of the OSU student body is first generation.

Full time student: For undergrad, a student is considered "full time" when they are taking a minimum of 12 hours. In order to keep scholarships, be an active member in certain organizations, and more the student must be enrolled in at least 12 hours.



Terms

G

GPA: Grade Point Average is a calculated average of the letter grades a student earns in school.

GRE: The Graduate Record Exam is the most widely accepted graduate admissions test worldwide. Many graduate and business schools require students to take this test in order to be accepted. This multiple choice test measures four skills: quantitative reasoning, verbal reasoning, critical thinking and analytical writing.

Graduate vs. Undergraduate: A graduate student is a student who has already graduated with their Bachelor's degree and is now getting their Masters degree or PhD. An undergraduate student is currently getting their Associate's or Bachelors degree.

H

Holds: A hold is a restriction placed on a student's account when specific action is required from a student. Holds prevent students from enrolling in classes or having their official academic documents, such as transcripts and diplomas, released. A couple common holds are a past due account with the Office of the Bursar and an advisor hold.

I

Internship: An internship is a period of work experience offered to students by an employer to give students and graduates exposure to the working environment in a field related to their study. Some majors require students to have an internship and some students do an internship solely for the experience.

L

LLP: Living Learning Programs are residential communities for students in which all have something in common and live in the same hall.

M

Master's Degree: A Master's degree is a specialty degree that takes one to three years after getting a Bachelor's degree. A Master's degree focuses on one topic, such as mental health counseling or college student development. Master's Degrees are often more career specific.

S

MCAT: The Medical College Admission Test is a standardized, multiple-choice test part of medical school admissions. The test assesses problem solving, critical thinking, and knowledge of natural problem solving, critical thinking,

Terms

and knowledge of natural behaviors, and social science concepts and principles.

Midterms: Midterms are exams usually worth more points than other exams in a student's class. Midterms most often take place about six weeks into the semester.

Organization Fair: Similar to a career fair, but instead of prospective employers there are organizations from campus. Students meet with organizations to learn more about them and potentially join them.

Passing Grade: A 'D' is technically a passing grade, although it is unacceptable, since the minimum average at a standard undergraduate school is a 'C' grade point average. You must get a 'C' in prerequisite courses.

Plan of Study (Undergraduate): This is a template colleges and advisors use to show the student which classes they should take and when. These are specific to each student's degree, major, minor, and/or professional track. These are helpful to see which classes a student is required to take, when specific courses are offered, classes that have prerequisites, and amount of hours to take each semester.

Prerequisite: A prerequisite is a class a student must take before enrolling in a later class. For example, in the College of Human Sciences a student cannot enroll into Internship I until they have passed Pre-Internship.

Professional Tracks: A professional track is used to help a student tailor the classes they take before they graduate. Depending on the career or higher education the student desires to go into upon graduation, they may have classes they are required to take or should take before finishing. For example, two students can have the same major, but different professional tracks. Both students may major in psychology, but if one wants to go to medical school upon graduation and the other wants to be a counselor, they will have the same core classes but different electives. The student going into medical school may need to take a microbiology class while the other needs to take a

O

P

6

Terms

development class. The professional track helps the students see the classes they should take for their electives in order to excel in their later career or higher education.

Professor: Professors are teachers at colleges. They often hold a PhD, depending on the class and are experts in their field.

R

Retention: Retention is the rate of percentage of a school's first-time, first-year undergraduate students who continue at the school the next year.

S

Scholarships vs. Grants vs. Loans: A scholarship is free money used to pay for school that does not need to be paid back. Scholarships can come from schools, donors, outside organizations and more. Grants are also free money that do not have to be paid back and come from sources such as the government (ex. Pell Grant) and outside organizations (TEACH Grant). Loans have to be repaid post-graduation, and can be privatized or through the government.

Six-Week Grades: These are grades posted around the sixth week of school. These help students see what their current grade is in the class and help forecast their approximate grade at the end of the semester. Although, this grade can be changed depending on how well a student does on their assignments and classes the rest of the semester.

Student Code of Conduct: Rules and regulations in place to provide a safe living, learning, and working environment. It informs students of the standards of behavior expected. The Student Code of Conduct expects students to follow policies, rules, and regulations of the university, and to be honest in academic work and other activities.

Syllabus: A syllabus is a document created by professors and/or TAs to outline the course and what will be expected. Usually it will include policies, rules, required texts, and a schedule of the assignments.

Terms

T/TR: When students receive their schedules, the days of the week will be labeled as follows: M, T, W, TR, F. The TR is for Thursday.



Teaching Assistant (TA): A student who is studying for their Master's degree or PhD who assists in teaching, or teaches, a course or lab. In return for teaching a TA receives free tuition and a stipend. At OSU, some TAs are only involved in grading and sitting in on the class and others teach the class and grade.

Tenure: This is a professor's permanent job contract, granted after a probationary period of six years. When a professor is tenured they have the freedom to pursue any academic research without fear of repercussion of losing their job.

Tenure Track: A professor on a tenure track is on their way to receiving tenure. They are in a contract that states they are prepared to receive tenure after six years.

Transfer Credit: This refers to the credit a student receives prior to college or at another university that adds to the student's degree, major, or minor requirements.

University vs. College vs. Department: A university is an institution that offers undergraduate and graduate degrees. Universities contain many colleges. A college is a smaller institution within the university. Colleges contain specific departments and majors within similar fields. For example, the College of Arts and Sciences has a wide variety of majors in the field of arts and sciences. A department is a section within a college with majors more closely related to each other. As an example, the department of Human Development and Family Science is located in the College of Human Sciences at Oklahoma State University.



Unsubsidized vs. Subsidized vs. Parent Plus Loans: Unsubsidized loans are guaranteed to students who pursue education. These loans accrue interest as soon as the loan is disbursed to the school. Subsidized loans are based on financial need. These do not accrue interest while the student is in college. A Parent Plus Loan is a loan taken out by the

Terms

students' parents to help pay for their school. There are very little to no limits when borrowing with these loans. Interest accrues as soon as the loan is disbursed to the school. Students and/or parents are required to make payments on these loans six months after graduation.

V

Volunteer Fair: Similar to a career fair, but instead of prospective employers, they usually offer volunteer opportunities and/or internships. Many times these volunteer positions can lead to a later job or career.

W

Work Study: A type of financial aid where a student works for the university or in a partnering agency for up to 20 hours a week. When completing the FAFSA, the student has to check a box that says they want to be considered for work study. If a student receives work study there are allotted a certain amount of money they earn throughout the year. Once they have earned that amount, the student cannot work anymore.

Places

Bursar: The Bursar Office is responsible for billing of student tuition accounts. If a student needs to make a payment, they can pay at the office or online. The Bursar Office is not necessarily involved in the financial aid process, but actually sending bills and creating payment plans.

Office of the Registrar: This office provides services to students related to the creation and maintenance of student academic records. They assist with enrollment, official transcript requests, degree and enrollment verification, and more.

9

Websites / Resources

HireOSUGrads.com: This is a website created by Career Services to help students at OSU and alumni find a career. They post part-time, full-time, and work study positions. Students and alumni can look through the position to find out more about the employer, qualifications, and how to apply.

SLATE Student Portal: This is the system used to make appointments with a student's advisor or receive tutoring.

O-Key: Website used to change your password. Hint: Every OSU student has to change their password every 90 days.

Canvas: Website used to access courses. Professors upload the syllabus and other course documents here. This is also used to upload assignments, post and reply on discussion boards, and take online tests and quizzes. Visit canvas.okstate.edu



