***Heads Up Category: Types of Postsecondary Institutions***

**Postsecondary Institution:** The broadest term to describe any and all establishments that offer education beyond high school, including, Community College, university, technical school, etc.

**Public Postsecondary Institution:** A postsecondary school that is primarily funded by taxpayers / public funds. The University of Arizona, NAU, ASU, Mohave Community College, Arizona Western College, Northland Pioneer College, Yavapai College, are examples of public institutions in Arizona.

**Private Postsecondary Institution:** A postsecondary school that does not directly receive funds from the government/taxpayers to operate. The money students pay, and donations, are used to operate the school. Private colleges may be “for profit” or “not-for-profit.” **For-Profit** institutions offer a service (education) in order to make money. Examples of these institutions in Arizona include: University of Phoenix, Grand Canyon University, Carrington College, and the Art Institute of Phoenix. **Not-For Profit** institutions also offer a service (education) but their goal is not to make money, but to achieve their stated mission. Examples of not-for profit schools include Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Prescott College, Harvard and Yale.

**Four-year University:** A postsecondary institution/school that offers undergraduate (bachelor’s) degrees. Many four-year universities also offer graduate (master’s) degrees.

**Community College:** A public postsecondary institution that offers courses to the residents in the surrounding area. Students may attend community colleges to obtain Associate’s degrees or technical certificates, or may take courses there towards a bachelor’s degree, before transferring to a four–year university (2+2 pathway). Students can also take courses to enhance their skills in an area, or just for fun.

**Technical School:** A general term used for a college that provides mostly employment-preparation skills for trained labor, such as welding, and culinary arts. These programs generally take no more than two years to complete. Examples include the Le Cordon Bleu Institute, UTI and DeVry. Many Technical Schools are for-profit. These are different than **Polytechnic Institutes** which offer bachelor’s, masters and doctoral degrees in the science and engineering fields, such as California Polytechnic and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

***Heads Up Category: College Vocabulary***

**Syllabus:** An outline and summary of topics to be covered in an education or training course.

**Credits:** The unit of measurement by which progress toward a degree is measured. Each course is assigned the number of credits it is worth (based on the number of hours the student attends that class per week). Each degree has an established number of credits needed for a student to be awarded that degree.

**Semester:** A half-year term in a school or college, typically lasting fifteen to eighteen weeks.

**Full-time student:** A student who is enrolled for the number of credits the school considers to be full-time attendance. Typically a minimum of 12 credits per semester is considered full time even though it is unlikely that a student can complete the credits required for a bachelor’s degree in four years if s/he takes only 12 credits per semester.

**Transfer:** To move from one postsecondary institution to another. Transferring can occur at an end-point of a degree such as after receiving an ‘Associate’s degree’ or whenever the student wants to move to a different institution.

**Associate’s Degree:** A degree granted after successful completion of a course of study requiring approximately 60 credits, typically by a community or junior college. Full time community college students taking 15 credits per semester can generally finish an associate’s degree in two years.

**Bachelor’s Degree:** A degree earned for a course of study that normally requires 120 to 130 credits, involving specific classes related to the student’s major. Full time students ideally complete a bachelor’s degree in four years, although changing majors, transferring institutions, taking fewer than 15 credit per semester and/or taking courses that don’t count toward one’s declared major can make it take longer.

**Undergraduate:** A student at a college or university who has not yet earned a bachelor's degree.

**Major:** A concentration of study focused on a discipline which requires completion of specific courses.

**Minor:** A college or university student’s declared secondary academic discipline during their undergraduate studies.

**Undeclared/Undecided:** Term to describe a student who is unable or not ready to select a major.

**Residence Hall/Dorm:** a building primarily providing living/sleeping quarters for large numbers of students.

**Commuter:** Usually defined as those students whose place of residence while attending college is not in a campus residence hall or in a fraternity or sorority house.

**Ivy League:** A group of long-established colleges and universities in the eastern US having high academic and social prestige. It includes Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Dartmouth, Cornell, Brown, and the University of Pennsylvania.

***Heads Up Category: Things to Remember When Applying for College***

**Send transcripts:** Many colleges require official high school transcripts by mail at the time a student applies for admission. Some college applications have students enter their high school course and grade information on line and need only submit an official transcript if requested.

**Take placement test**: Colleges and universities may require students to take tests to determine the appropriate level college math and/or English class.

**Send ACT/SAT scores:** When registering for the ACT and/or SAT, students can provide the names (and ACT/SAT Codes) of the colleges they are interested in attending. If you do so, your scores will automatically be sent to those colleges (at no additional cost). If you do not provide the names of colleges upon registering for the ACT/SAT, you will be required to contact ACT/SAT to request the scores be sent to the colleges you apply to and an additional fee will be charged.

**Accept admission:**  Upon receiving notification from the college to which you applied that you have been accepted, the student must respond to the college to inform the college if he she will accept the offer. There are deadlines for this. Students who apply, and are accepted, to multiple schools will want to compare their financial aid packages to help them decide.

**Attend orientation**: Most colleges offer a meeting/event (hours or days-long) where incoming students and a parent/guardian receive information about registering for classes, meet their advisor, and learn about school resources and policies.

***Heads Up Category: Paying for College***

**Tuition:** The amount of money charged for instruction/classes at postsecondary institutions.

**FAFSA:** The **F**ree **A**pplication for **F**ederal **S**tudent **A**id is an online form that can be prepared annually by current and prospective college students (undergraduate and graduate) in the United States to determine eligibility for student financial aid. Students who are eligible to file the FAFSA should complete it every year.

**Financial aid package**: The amount and types of federal, state, and college aid that a college/university that has accepted a student is offering to offset the cost of attendance at their school. Depending on the package, sometimes it can be cheaper for a student to attend an expensive school because more aid is offered to offset the cost. This is why it is important to apply to the schools you want to attend, even if you don’t think you can afford it. There are different types of aid defined, below.

**Scholarship:** Money to support a student’s education that does not have to be paid back. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic, athletic, or other types of achievements.

**Pell grant:** Money from the US Government to support a student’s education that does not have to be paid back. Pell grants are awarded to US citizens and legal residents on the basis of financial need and timeliness of completing the FAFSA.

**Work study: T**he opportunity for college students to work part-time jobs (often on the campus of the school they attend) to earn money to pay educational expenses. Students receive compensation in form of a paycheck, much like traditional job.

**Student loan:** Money a student borrows to help pay for college, which must be paid back. **Subsidized Loans** are offered to students who qualify through the FAFSA. The Federal Government pays the interest while the student is in college.  There are also **Unsubsidized Loans** where interest begins accruing as soon as the loan is accepted.

***Heads Up Category: Things that Successful College Students Do***

**Professor:** A teacher in a college or university.

**Faculty:** The teaching staff of a university or college.

**Student Organizations:** Groups/clubs on a college campus.

**Advisor:** A college staff or professor who helps a student plan and complete a course of study at a college or university.

***Heads Up Category: Having the Time of your Life in College***

**Study Abroad:** Completing some of the coursework toward a degree at an educational institution in another country.

***Heads Up Category: Preparing for Life after College***

***Graduate School:*** A division of a university offering advanced programs beyond the bachelor's degree.

**GRE:** A standardized exam used to measure one's aptitude for abstract thinking in the areas of analytical writing, mathematics and vocabulary. The GRE is commonly used by graduate schools to determine an applicant's eligibility for the program.

**LSAT:** Law School Admission Test is a standardized test that students may be required to take to apply to an ABA-accredited law school in the United States or Canada.

**MCAT:** The Medical College Admissions Test, a test that is required of all applicants to medical school in the U.S. and Canada. The MCAT is a standardized test used to assess applicants' science knowledge, reasoning, and communication and writing skills.

**Apprenticeship:** A form of on-the-job training in which a person works for another in order to learn a trade.

**Master’s Degree:** An academic degree granted to individuals who have undergone study demonstrating mastery of a specific field of study or area of professional practice.

**Doctorate Degree/PhD:** An advanced university degree. Another name for a doctorate is a PhD. The highest level of academic degree.