

## **Common Data Set Definitions**

**All definitions related to the financial aid section appear at the end of the Definitions document.**

Items preceded by an asterisk (\*) represent definitions agreed to among publishers which do not appear on



**Differs by program (calendar system):** A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that have occupational/vocational programs of varying length. These schools may enroll students at specific times depending on the program desired. For example, a school might offer a two-month program in January, March, May, September, and November; and a three-month program in January, April, and October.

**Diploma:** See **Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma.**

**Distance learning:** An option for earning course credit at off-campus locations via cable television, internet, satellite classes, videotapes, correspondence courses, or other means.

**Doctor's degree-research/scholarship:** A Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial

**First-time student:** A student attending any institution for the first time at the level enrolled. Includes students

**Liberal arts/career combination:** Program in which a student earns undergraduate degrees in two separate

*At Least 2 But Less Than 4 Academic Years:* Requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 2 but less than 4 full-time equivalent academic years, or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 credit hours, or in at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact hours.

**Private institution:** An educational institution controlled by a private individual(s) or by a nongovernmental agency, usually supported primarily by other than public funds, and operated by other than publicly elected or appointed officials.

**Private for-profit institution:** A private institution in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives compensation, other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk.

**Private nonprofit institution:** A private institution in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives no compensation, other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk. These include both independent nonprofit schools and those affiliated with a religious organization.

**Proprietary institution:** See **Private for-profit institution**.

**Public institution:** An educational institution whose programs and activities are operated by publicly elected or appointed school officials, and which is supported primarily by public funds.

**Quarter calendar system:** A calendar system in which the academic year consists of three sessions called quarters of about 12 weeks each. The range may be from 10 to 15 weeks. There may be an additional quarter in the summer.

**Race/ethnicity:** Category used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. The categories do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. A person may be counted in only one group.

**Race/ethnicity unknown:** Category used to classify students or employees whose race/ethnicity is not known and whom institutions are unable to place in one of the specified racial/ethnic categories.

**Religious affiliation/commitment (as admission factor):** Special consideration given in the admission process for affiliation with a certain church or faith/religion, commitment to a religious vocation, or observance of certain religious tenets/lifestyle.

\* **Religious counseling:** One-on-one or group counseling with trained professionals for students who want to explore religious problems or issues.

\* **Remedial services:** Instructional courses designed for students deficient in the general competencies necessary for a regular postsecondary curriculum and educational setting.

**Required fees:** Fixed sum charged to students for items not covered by tuition and required of such a large proportion of all students that the student who does NOT pay is the exception. Do not include application fees or optional fees such as lab fees or parking fees.

\* **Summer session:** A summer session is shorter than a regular semester and not considered part of the academic year. It is not the third term of an institu1.1(i)3.1(ons)]ldmic yeg ycpmm-8(t)-1..96 ..4()1..96 -1.1(h21( i)3.1(st)-1.1i)3u

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