

Helpful Information about the College Process

What does it mean to Matriculate?

To matriculate means that you apply to be accepted into a college's degree-granting program, and are working toward a college degree. You are not matriculated if you are taking one course, but haven't applied to be accepted to a degree program at the college.

What is a Certificate Program?

Some colleges offer certificate programs in early childhood education. A certificate is less than a degree but acknowledges that you have taken a number of courses in early childhood education. Most early childhood certificate programs include the courses that you would need to qualify for lead teacher certification. The courses in a certificate program will often focus just on one area (early childhood for example) and may not include general courses such as history or math. Certificate programs will usually integrate easily into the college's Associate Degree program.

What is an A.A. (Associate of Arts) or an A.S. (Associate of Sciences) degree?

A.A. or A.S. degrees are sometimes called 2-year degrees (the amount of time it would take to complete the degree if you were going to college full-time). AA or AS degrees are offered at all community colleges, and at some local private colleges. Colleges award the A.A. or A.S. degree in a particular field (liberal arts, early childhood education, etc.), and will require that specific courses are taken to achieve the degree.

What is a B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) or a B.S. (Bachelor of Science) degree?

B.A. and B.S. degrees are also sometimes called 4-year degrees. Students who have an A.A. or A.S. degree may continue on to a college offering the bachelor degree, and use some or all of their A.A./A.S. credits toward their bachelor degree. However, students should carefully check the requirements of the 4-year colleges, because not all bachelor's degree programs accept all associate degree credits.

What is an Articulation Agreement?

An articulation agreement is between colleges. It is an understanding that one college will accept the courses of another college for credit toward their degree program. Articulation agreements differ from school to school, based on how many credits will be accepted and what specific courses will be credited.

What is a Credit?

Colleges measure the time spent in class as credits. A college will grant credits based on the number of hours you attend the course. Usually, a course is 3 or 4 credits. The tuition (cost) for a course is often based on the cost per credit. For example, if a college charges \$150 per credit, a 3-credit course will cost \$450. A college will also specify how many credits you need to get a degree. For example, if you need 60 credits to graduate, and the college offers 3-credit courses, you will need to take 20 courses in order to graduate.