

BCTC Literacy—Words and Abbreviations to Know

The BCTC web site contains so much information for you! You can learn what you need to know about programs and focus areas; about degrees, diplomas, and certificates; about types of courses, and about resources you can use. This unit looks at terms some BCTC students showed they need to know.

Words to Know

AdvisorTrac

AdvisorTrac is a computer program helping students and advisors communicate with each other. Students use it to find the name, phone number, and office location of their advisor and to schedule appointments each semester so they can discuss their progress and determine which courses to take the following semester. Advisors track their appointments at a glance and make notes to remember for the next visit. The AdvisorTrac link is found at the “Current Students” part of the BCTC web site.

Block transfer

Block transfer is the process of getting your coursework transferred in “blocks” or groups. This is much easier than having to have each course evaluated individually for transfer. BCTC participates in a General Education Transfer Agreement with other colleges and universities in Kentucky, so BCTC’s A.A. or A.S. degree automatically fulfills the general education requirements for transfer (as a block) to any public four-year university in the state of Kentucky.

It is also possible to transfer smaller blocks of courses, not just the A.A. or A.S. degree coursework. Your advisor or BCTC’s Transfer Center can help you with this.

Certificate program

Certificate programs give students entry-level skills in the workplace and may qualify them to take licensure or other examinations in certain fields of work. A certificate can be earned in as little as one semester, depending on the program. They prepare students to work at the skill levels expected in an occupation in the local economy.

Certificate coursework includes at least one general education course. Certificate work may also be counted toward a diploma or associate degree in the same or a similar field.

Distance learning

“Distance learning” gives students choices about the ways they take courses—allowing them to learn even when they’re not in the same place with their instructors or classmates. Even though students may not be in the same place as the instructor, they will be able to contact him or her.

Some BCTC courses are offered *online*, meaning that instead of attending classes on campus, students can take them wherever they have access to a computer that can handle course requirements. These classes have deadlines and tests or papers to complete, just like other courses, and it’s important that they log on to the course and complete work regularly.

Another kind of distance course is the *telecourse*, in which students watch the course via television or a link on a computer. Students complete textbook assignments and submit work to their local instructor.

Students may also take course taught at another location but broadcast to their campus via closed-circuit TV. In these classes, they can talk with your instructor or classmates during the scheduled class time. To submit assignments they mail, FAX, or email their work.

Focus areas

Students have two options in earning an AA or AS degree. They may decide on a degree in general pre-baccalaureate studies, which allows a wide choice of courses and an opportunity to explore many subject areas, or they may decide on a Focus Area, which allows them to explore one field of study in more depth. A Focus Area is not a major or a minor but is a concentration of related courses.

Focus Area requirements are 12-21 hours with at least one 200-level course or one course with appropriate prerequisites. If students plan to transfer after earning their AA or AS degrees, they may fulfill a number of their pre-major requirements by choosing a Focus Area. Obtaining a Focus Area, however, does not mean that a student has fulfilled all pre-major requirements for a four-year degree at the University of Kentucky or elsewhere. It’s important to work with an advisor or with a representative from BCTC’s Transfer Center.

General Education Courses

General education courses lay groundwork for understanding life from a broad perspective. They include oral and written communication, the arts and humanities, the social and natural sciences, and quantitative reasoning. Typically, four-year colleges and universities want students to have explored a range of thinking in these areas before narrowing their focus to a major or career goal.

Hybrid course

Hybrid classes—also called “Blended Learning”—are a combination of traditional and online formats. These courses use systems such as Blackboard as well as face-to-face instruction. While many BCTC hybrid classes meet one time per week on campus, instructors may experiment with hybrid offering formats. Check the Schedule of Classes to see when a hybrid class meets.

Mandatory Placement

Mandatory placement is a policy requiring students to enroll in courses for which their ACT scores or the COMPASS (placement) test shows they are ready. The process is state-mandated and is used at all KCTCS institutions. Skills areas in which student test scores must demonstrate readiness are math, writing, and reading. The reasoning behind mandatory placement is that students are more likely to finish courses and graduate from college if they begin at the starting point that fits them best. A range of transitional, or developmental, courses can prepare students to succeed in college work.

Priority registration

Students enrolled in the current semester have priority in selecting and registering for classes for the next semester. They are notified by email sent from Wendy Bolt of the Advising and Assessment office and from their advisors. By meeting with their advisors and registering for classes months in advance they are more likely to get days, times, and instructors they want. They also avoid late registration lines and frustration. Advance registration helps BCTC schedule planners know whether enough sections are being offered in particular courses.

Priority registration

Proctor

A proctor is a person who supervises students as they take an exam. Many BCTC online courses require a proctor for tests which must be taken in person within a particular time frame. Students arrange for a proctor by contacting AppointmentPlus, an online scheduling service.

Program Plan

A program plan is an organized list of courses a student must take in order to earn a credential (certificate, diploma, degree) in a particular program. The program plan typically includes a description of the program and the types of jobs one might find after completing the credential. Also, the program plan will feature the BCTC coordinator’s contact information for any student needing more information. Program plans or programs of study are at the Academics link on the BCTC web site.

Repeat Option

A student may repeat a course to improve a grade. The highest grade earned will count as the official grade and will be the only one included in the cumulative GPA. To use the repeat option, a student should visit the Records Office to complete the necessary form. Students who plan to transfer should check about repeat option policies at their transfer institution. Some colleges and universities limit the repeat option work they will accept. Either BCTC's Transfer Center or the Registrar of the transfer institution can provide needed information.

Selective admission

Selection admission involves admitting students with the best qualifications to a program. BCTC has over 40 technical programs, some of which have limited numbers of openings. A number of programs require that students take tests to acquire certification in their professional field. Students interested in a particular program can look at the program's requirements at ? and talk with an advisor for that program about the admission process.

One of the most important things students can do, if they want to be admitted to a program with selective admission, is to work hard from their first day in every course until the end of the semester. Grades will probably be one criterion for which students can be admitted.

Abbreviations to Know

AA degree—the Associate in Arts degree. Students earning this degree complete a range of general education requirements and frequently transfer to a four-year college or university. A full-time student typically takes about two years to earn this degree. Slightly more heritage, humanities, or social science coursework is required for the AA degree than for the AS.

AS degree—the Associate in Science degree . Students earning this degree complete a range of general education requirements, and frequently transfer to a four-year college or university. It typically takes about two years for a full-time student to complete the coursework for this degree. Slightly more math or science coursework is required for the AA degree than for the AS.

AAS degree—the Associate in Applied Science degree. This degree prepares students to enter the professional world in some professional field directly after graduation. Typically students working toward an AAS degree do not plan to transfer to a four-year college or university. Their coursework is designed for more immediate career application.

FERPA—The Federal Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy of any information students use in the application process, through their enrollment and after they graduate. Financial information or grade information, for example, may not be released to anyone without the student's permission.

SAP—Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students receiving Federal or state financial aid must make “satisfactory academic progress” toward graduation. This involves percentage of courses completed each semester (at least 67%) as well as grades (a minimum 2.0 GPA). Failure to meet SAP requirements can result in cancellation of student aid. Students can file an appeal by completing a form, attaching documentation, and submitting an Academic Plan of Action approved by their advisors.

SGA—Student Government Association

Bluegrass Community and Technical College Student Government is open to all BCTC students interested in activities and programs to unify the campuses and serve the student body and community.

SNAP

SNAP is the *Safety Notification Alert Process* for the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). SNAP alerts users to on-campus emergencies.

Processes to Know

How and why should you “double-delete” KCTCS email? It’s very important to check KCTCS email regularly-- and to “double-delete” what you don’t need. One “delete” puts the message into your delete box, but it has to be deleted again to free up your email space.

Some instructors use email to get in touch with students about important changes in class or assignment. The Student Affairs office emails students when and how to advance register and get the best possible schedule. Students who do not check email regularly and “double-delete” old messages miss important new ones.

How do you figure a semester GPA? Knowing how to figure your GPA can help you make decisions about what grade you need to get in a course to be eligible for a scholarship or for a technical program. Sometimes, too, figuring your semester GPA can help you decide whether you should drop (withdraw from) a course to protect your overall GPA.

See next page for example.

The following chart shows how to figure your semester GPA:

On each line **multiply** credit hours **times** grade **equals** quality points.

(Hours x grade = quality points)

Course	Credit Hours	Grade	Quality Points
ENG 101	3	B (3 pts.)	9 quality points
SPA 101	4	A (4 pts.)	16 quality points
AST 191	3	C (2 pts.)	6 quality points
MAT 150	3	D (1 pt.)	3 quality points
GEO 160	3	E (0 pts.)	0
	16 total credit hours		34 total quality points

Do NOT average in any courses with course numbers below 100. For example, do not average ENC **91** (91 is less than 100) or MAT **65** with other courses. Also, do not average courses that give P/F grades.

Once you have the total for credit hours and the total for quality points, divide credit hours into quality points: **Quality points** divided by **credit hours** = your **semester GPA**. For the student whose grades are in the chart above, 34 quality points divided by 16 credit hours equals a GPA of 2.15.

How can you find out if a course transfers?

You may be able to find what course is equivalent to yours at the Transfer Center link (under the Current Students link on the BCTC web site). A number of universities list course equivalencies there. But you can also get help at BCTC's Transfer Center, AT lobby, Cooper campus—help available by phone or email. Or you can contact the registrar at the college to which you are transferring the course. For colleges and universities in Kentucky students can take advantage of block transfer agreements. See block transfer.

What happens if a tuition bill is not paid on time?

Students who do not pay tuition by the published deadline may have their registration cancelled. This means that they will lose the schedule they originally had—and have to start over. The classes previously chosen may no longer be available if other students register for them before the tuition issue is resolved.

Whom should students contact if they have a problem with an instructor?

If the problem is about the syllabus, for example, that the course syllabus is not being followed, the student can contact the coordinator whose name is on the syllabus. If some other problem exists, and the student feels a mediator would help, the Academic ombud is the mediator. The ombud will listen

to the student, talk with the instructor, and attempt to help both resolve the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved, the ombud can determine whether the issue merits review by BCTC's Appeals Board and explain appeals procedures to the student.

How do you declare or change a major?

Students who want to be accepted into a technical program need to declare their major so that they can receive important information and so that, if there is a wait list for acceptance into that program, they can be placed on that. To declare or change a major, students should request and complete a "Change of Program" form at the Records Office (Cooper campus), at the One Stop (Leestown campus), or at the front desk at other campuses. In order to be assigned an advisor from the appropriate area, students must submit their "Change of Program" form by December 1 for the spring semester and August 1 for the fall semester.