Glossary

Education, like any field, has its own special terminology. We have selected a few of the terms you are likely to come across as a college student and defined them below.

**Academic Advisor** - Individual (usually a member of the college’s faculty) who helps students decide what courses to take and helps students chose a major of study. Academic advisors also make certain students fulfill graduation requirements, and they give guidance when the student has academic difficulties.

**Academic Calendar** - A list of important dates for the academic year, including vacation breaks, registration periods, and other pertinent information.

**Academic Probation** - A student whose GPA falls below a designated number (2.0) can be placed on academic probation. If the GPA does not improve, then the student may be prohibited from registering for classes for a designated number of semesters.

**Accreditation** - Approval given to a college which meets accepted standards concerning its academic program, library facilities, faculty, policies, physical plant, financial assets and similar criteria is known as accreditation.

Westmoreland County Community College is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It is also approved by the Council of Higher Education and the Department of Education, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**Articulation** - Articulation deals with the transfer of credits among colleges and universities. Articulation agreements guaranteeing acceptance of certain courses and programs are in place between Westmoreland County Community College and a number of area colleges, including California University of PA, Seton Hill University, Saint Vincent College, and University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg.

**Articulation Agreement** - A signed document stating that one college will accept the courses from another college.

**Associate Degree** - A diploma granted by community and junior colleges after successful completion of the credits equivalent to two years of college work. A student of Westmoreland County Community College can receive an Associate in Arts, or an Associate in Applied Science, depending on the curriculum pursued.

**Auditing** - When you audit a course; your credits do not apply towards your degree program, nor will you receive a letter grade for the course audited. At WCCC, you may enroll in a class with your status recorded as AUDITOR only with the written permission of the instructor.
Otherwise, at the end of the second week of a semester, you may request that your status be changed to AUDITOR. The instructor must approve the request in writing. At the end of the semester your record will show Audit (AU) in place of a grade. Financial aid does not pay for audited courses. Full tuition and fees are required to audit a course.

**Baccalaureate Degree**- A degree awarded upon completion of a four-year program of study by a college or university.

**Bachelor’s Degree**- See Baccalaureate Degree.

**Certificate**- A certificate is granted by community and junior colleges after successful completion of a number of specific courses in a curriculum. This number is less than the equivalent of two years of college.

**College Catalog & Student Handbook**- The college catalog provides students with information about the college’s academic calendar, tuition and fees, and degree/diploma/certificate programs. The Student Handbook section provides students with information about student services, resources, rights, responsibilities, and student life.

**Commencement**- The ceremonies held upon completion of a student’s studies and the beginning (commencement) of the rest of his or her life; this is also known as graduation.

**Community College**- A community college is a two-year, public college funded by local or state governmental units. It offers transfer and career programs leading to associate degrees or certificates.

**Comprehensive Examination**- A thorough examination often given to students at the end of their studies to determine their knowledge of their majors. At many institutions, students must pass “comps” to graduate.

**Core Curriculum**- A core curriculum is the heart of a program of study. Many schools require students to take a sampler of courses (knows as distribution requirements) before they graduate to ensure they receive a well-rounded education.

**Co-requisite**- A course that can be taken at the same time as another course. For example, if intermediate algebra is a co-requisite for physical science, then both courses can be taken during the same semester.

**Dean**- The Dean is an administrator who is in charge of the faculty, and/or a division in the college.

**Developmental Classes**- Sometimes referred to as remedial classes, developmental classes focus on basic college-level skills such as reading, writing, and math. Students who earn a
certain score on standardized testing may be required to take developmental classes before enrolling in a course.

**Drop/Add**- Drop/add refers to changing from a specific course or adding a new course during a specific time period early in a semester. At WCCC, questions concerning drop/add should be directed to the Counseling Department or the Office of Student Records and Registration in Room 130, Founders Hall.

**Early High School Enrollment**- Early high school enrollment introduces students to the advantages of postsecondary education and helps students make a successful transition to the culture and expectations of college life. Students enrolled in the WCCC Early Enrollment Program will have the opportunity to experience college life while simultaneously completing their high school requirements. The program’s intent is not to speed up the high school curriculum, but to provide an early start on a collegiate career.

**Educational Centers**- There are eight educational centers that conduct day and evening classes. Westmoreland County Community College in Youngwood (Main Campus), WCCC-Bushy Run, WCCC Fayette, Greene County Education Center, Indiana County Community College Center, WCCC- Laurel, WCCC- Mon Valley, and WCCC- New Kensington.

**Elective**- A course that students may choose to take that is not part of the required curriculum.

**Final Exam**- An examination taken by students at the end of each term in each of their classes to test their knowledge of the material covered in the class during the term. Grades on finals generally carry more weight than other grades received during the term.

**Grade Point Average (GPA)** - WCCC uses a letter system with associate quality points which are used to compute cumulative grade point averages.

- **A** = 4 Superior
- **B** = 3 Considerable
- **C** = 2 Satisfactory
- **D** = 1 Marginal
- **F** = Unsatisfactory
- **I** = Incomplete- Grade to be determined upon completion of hours.
- **W** = Withdrew
- **AU**= Audit No Credit
Z = No report from your instructor.

**Grapevine** - This is a newsletter published once a week during the fall and spring semesters by the Student Activities Office. It announces current issues, programs, and activities that affect the college.

**Hold** - A hold is a notation placed on a student’s records that indicates that he or she has outstanding financial obligations to the college, such as unpaid fees, unreturned equipment, or overdue library books. A hold could also be placed on a student’s record for disciplinary or academic reasons. If a student has a hold on their account, it means that the student is ineligible to receive academic documentation from the college; such as a transcript, or to use college services, such as the placement service.

**Humanities** - At WCCC, humanities include the study of English, foreign languages, history, philosophy, art, music, and photography. The study of these disciplines is concerned with the excellence of human thought and the grandeur of human emotion. These studies encourage a spirit of inquiry and reflection which lead to better understanding of cultures throughout history, and our world today.

**Intercollegiate Athletics** - WCCC competes with other two-year college in baseball, golf, women’s volleyball, co-ed tennis, and women’s softball in the WPCC (Western Pennsylvania Collegiate Conference) which is made up of 2-year colleges. The college is affiliated with the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). Students must satisfy the eligibility provisions of the NJCAA.

**Intramurals** - This program incorporates a variety of activities (within the college) with team or individual tournaments regardless of their ability level. The main motive is interest, not skill level.

**Loan Programs** - Provide financial assistance to students who qualify and must be repaid with interest.

- **PLUS Loans** - Parents Loan for Undergraduate Students. These are for parents of dependent students.

- **SLS Loans** - Supplemental Loan for Students. These are for independent students.

- **Stafford Loans** - Loans available to assist students based on financial need. For subsidized loans, repayment begins 6 months after the student stops attending college. With unsubsidized loans, the student must pay the interest on this loan while in school.
**Learning Resources Center** - Provides library services, media services, and a learning assistance center where the student may obtain individual and small-group tutoring, attend workshops, or access a variety of other help sources.

**Major** - A concentration in a specific field of study in a department is referred to as a major.

**Phi Theta Kappa (PTK)** - Westmoreland County Community College’s honor society.

**Pell Grant** - This is a FEDERAL grant. Students must complete the free application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

**PHEAA Grant** - Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency Grant, Available to full-time students who are residents of PA.

**Placement Office** - An office that provides students with career information and helps them find jobs during the summer and when they graduate.

**Prerequisites** - These are courses that are required before a student can register or enroll for a particular curriculum or take as particular class. Prerequisites are listed in the program description in the College catalog.

**Quality Points** - WCCC uses a letter system with associated quality points to computer cumulative grade point averages. See definition “Grade Point Average” for more information.

**Semester** - Semesters are periods of academic instruction into which an academic year is decided.

**SGA (Student Government Association)** - The governing body of the entire student body. They conduct activities each semester and support and finance various ongoing services.

**Syllabus** - A course syllabus is a specific course plan which provides information about the course which is specific to that semester and instructor. In addition to the general course information, the syllabus also includes the number of exams and specific dates, instructor office hours, textbook information, supplemental material to be used, the grading system to be followed, plus course outline. The course syllabus for a given course will be slightly different for each instructor teaching the course. The student should use this to plan their academic responsibilities for each term.

**Transcript** - A transcript is the official record of a student’s grades and the credits earned at WCCC.

**Transfer Student** - A student may transfer into WCCC from another college or they may transfer out to another college after taking courses at WCCC.
**Undergraduate**- An undergraduate is a student at a college or university who has not yet received a bachelor’s degree.

**Wolfpack**- Westmoreland County Community College mascot.

**Work-Study- Federal Work-Study** provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses.

**Deciphering the Acronyms**

**AtD- Achieving the Dream**- WCCC is proud to be one of the 84 colleges selected to participate in the national initiative, Achieving the Dream: Community College Count, which aims to help student achieve success- be it earning a degree, diploma or certificate, or transferring to a senior institution to pursue a bachelor’s degree.

**CLC- College Learning Center**- The College Learning Center offers WCCC credit students comprehensive services which are essential to academic success. Tutoring services, placement testing, and make-up testing is administered in the CLC.

**CRC- Computer Resource Center**- The Computer Resource Center currently has over 50 computers. Students can do research, complete college assignments, and print (free of charge) their assignments. A scanner is also available for student use. A Help Desk is located in the center of the CRC. Lab assistants are available to provide assistance throughout the day and evening hours.

**FERPA- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**- A Federal law that ensures that a student’s educational records, including test grades and transcripts, are not accessed or viewed by anyone who is not authorized by the student to do so.

**GPA- Grade Point Average**- The number that is used to determine a student’s progress in college. It refers to the number of quality points divided by the number of credit hours a student has taken.

**VID- Interactive Videoconference Classes**- VID courses are offered at Youngwood and at other WCCC locations at the same time. This allows the students at a WCCC location other than the Youngwood campus to participate in classes that are not traditionally offered at the center. Students have face-to-face interaction with the instructor of their course at times and also watch and participate in lectures through a live video feed.

**LRC- Learning Resources Center**- The Learning Resources Center supports the instructional process by providing library, audiovisual and digital database services.
WON- Online Classes- Online classes are designated as WON in the class schedule. Online classes allow students to complete coursework using a home computer or a computer at another location. These classes do not have specific meeting days or times and all coursework is completed online.