



## Glossary of Academic Terminology

The following glossary represents a list of the various academic terms and definitions that students, families, faculty, and staff encounter at Thiel College.

- The **Academic Calendar** represents important semester-specific dates and deadlines for students officially registered for courses, as well as for all Thiel degree-seeking students, academic and administrative departments, and instructors. The Academic Calendar for each semester is approved by the faculty and is posted on the College's website.
- Thiel's [Academic Catalog](#) is the complete and entire list of courses offered as part of the official Thiel College curriculum.
- **Academic Credential** is the notation on the transcript that represents the completion of a formally recognized academic program.
- The **Academic Transcript** represents the official College record of a student's academic history of coursework completed at Thiel and the grades and associated Grade Point Average (GPA) received. Also listed on the transcript are declared academic credentials, awarded academic credentials for students who have completed their degree, and College honors awarded by the institution upon the conferral of the degree. Only Thiel students who have been enrolled in Thiel courses (courses listed in Thiel's Course Catalog, see Course) will have a Thiel academic transcript.
- **Academic Program** is a sequence of credit courses that lead to an academic credential (e.g., degree and academic major and/or academic minor).
- **Academic Standing.** At the conclusion of each semester's grade processing, a term and cumulative GPA is calculated for each degree-seeking student. A student's academic standing may be impacted by the term GPA or the cumulative GPA, or both.
- The period of instruction composed of the fall and spring semesters is the **Academic Year**. The academic year begins at the start of the fall semester and ends after the last day of the spring semester.
- An **Admitted Student** is one who has been accepted by the College into a degree-seeking program and who has confirmed their acceptance. (The Office of Admissions coordinates this for admitted undergraduate and graduate students).
- An **alum** is an individual who has completed at least one full academic year at Thiel in a degree-granting program, excluding current students.
- An **articulation agreement** is a formal partnership between two or more institutions of higher education, with the goal of creating a seamless transfer process for students.
- While **asynchronous learning** allows students to access materials, ask questions, and practice their skills at any time that works for them, synchronous learning requires simultaneous attendance at scheduled meetings or lectures.
- Students may **audit** a course at Thiel either as degree-seeking students or visiting non-degree seeking students by securing permission of the instructor and registering with the Office of the Registrar. There are no credit hours associated with audited courses. Auditing a course does not affect a student's GPA.



- The **baccalaureate degree** is awarded after completing an undergraduate program of study; typically completed after four-five years. Thiel College offers Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS) degrees. Information regarding the requirements for each can be found in the [Academic Catalog](#).
- A **capstone project** is a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students.
- **Clinical Rotations** (Clinicals) are the time select students spend as members of a medical team so they can learn what is involved with a particular medical specialty.
- **Common Hour** occurs every Thursday from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. to give students the opportunity to experience varying academic topics, including invited speakers who are experts in their fields present to campus community members.
- **Community Hour** occurs every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. During the community hour a Chapel service is held that all are invited to attend. During this hour, no classes or meetings are held.
- A **course** is a particular class, such as ENG 120, MATH 142, etc. The greater the number, the greater difficulty of the course. All courses are listed in the [Thiel Course Catalog](#).
- The [Concise Course List](#) is the list of courses offered for a specific semester.
- Students can find **degree and specialization requirements** in the Academic Catalog.
- Listed on the course syllabus, the **course student learning outcomes** are represented by a statement formalizing the competencies, practical and professional skills, higher-level thinking, and analytical skills that the instructor expects by the conclusion of the course.
- A semester **credit hour** is the amount of credit awarded for a class at the end of a semester for successful completion of one hour of classroom instruction and two preparation hours per week.
- **Deficiency** refers to courses, coursework, test scores, documents, etc. that are outstanding and required before a student can be cleared to graduate, be granted full admission, and so on.
- **Degree Requirements** include the courses required for the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Master of Arts. Additionally, students must complete all other College requirements before they can receive their degree.
- **Department** is an administrative unit at the College.
- The **diploma** is a formal document issued by the College to symbolize that a Thiel degree has been conferred (awarded) by the institution upon the recipient.
- **Distance education** is a formal educational process in which most instruction in a course occurs when students and instructors are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. A distance education course may use the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferences; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMS is used as part of the distance learning course or program.
- An **enrolled student** is a student that is registered for at least one for-credit course.
- **The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of, and limit access to, student educational records. Please visit the following link to learn more: [www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco](http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco). See the FERPA page for additional information on FERPA at Thiel.



- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®)** determines how much financial aid a student qualifies for, including both need-based and non-need-based aid.
- **Freshman** (1<sup>st</sup> Year) is an undergraduate student who has completed and earned a total of 29 semester credit hours, or less.
- A **Full-time Student** is an undergraduate student registered for 12 or more credit hours in a semester. Graduate students on Thiel's three semester Academic Calendar are considered under full-time status when they are registered for 9 credit hours or more.
- A **Graduate Assistant** (GA) is a student that has matriculated into and is enrolled in a master's or doctoral degree program.
- **Instructor of Record** The individual designated by the academic unit as responsible for the course, including developing and overseeing its content and administration, assignments, and grades.
- **High-impact practices**, or HIPs, are active learning practices that promote deep learning by promoting student engagement as measured by the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE).
- The Thiel College Student Government established the **Honor Code** to promote the highest standards of academic integrity among students and to provide a forum for student initiative in minimizing plagiarism and cheating.
- **Hybrid** is the method of delivery for a particular course section that includes online and in-class participation.
- **Junior** (Third Year) is an undergraduate student who has completed and earned a total of 60 to 89 semester credit hours.
- **Class locations** are listed in Thiel's Course Schedule under "Meeting."
- **Lower-Level Undergraduate** courses numbered 100 through 299, sometimes referred to as lower division courses, or as freshman and sophomore courses.
- **Major** Also known as academic major. The academic major represents a cohesive and extensive program of study in a designated subject area in which a student commits to gaining in-depth knowledge, competence, and understanding. Students may pursue more than one major while pursuing a degree, but the completion of at least one major is required to award a degree.
- Also known as academic **major concentration**. The academic major concentration is a second-order component of a degree program and is represented by a coordinated group of courses that reflect a sub-specialization or emphasis within a major field for currently enrolled students in the major. Courses and credit hours earned toward the major concentration also apply towards the completion of the major.
- The **Master's Degree**, at a minimum, must represent 30 credit hours of study with coursework completed at the 500-level or above.
- A **matriculated** student is a new student that has either registered for a course or the first day of classes (whichever is first).
- Sometimes referred to as **Method** or **Mode of Delivery** and represents the instructional method that is being used to communicate course content with students.
- **Moodle** is Thiel's learning management system.



- Also known as academic **minor**. The academic minor comprises a designated group of classes in a discipline that is outside the major field(s). Minors typically consist of a minimum of 18 credit hours and are not required to obtain a degree.
- The National Center for Education Statistics defines a **nontraditional student** as meeting one of seven characteristics: delayed enrollment into postsecondary education; attends college part-time; works full time; is financially independent for financial aid purposes; has dependents other than a spouse; is a single parent; or does not have a high school diploma. These are students enrolled in for credit courses.
- A **part-time** undergraduate student is a Thiel student enrolled in less than 12 credit hours in the fall or spring semesters. Graduate students on Thiel's three semester Academic Calendar are considered under part-time status when they are registered for less than 9 credit hours.
- **Pedagogy** is the method behind teaching.
- The **preparation hour** is represented by 50 minutes of outside of class or nonscheduled preparation work the typical student is expected to complete. The preparation hour, and Contact Hour, is used to calculate the appropriate Semester Credit Hours that each course carries. See Credit Hour and/or Carnegie Unit.
- **Residency** is defined by institutional coursework completed, and residency requirements (i.e., a certain number of credit hours completed at Thiel College) are included in the Degree Requirements for both undergraduate degree-seeking and graduate degree-seeking students.
- Students should meet regularly with their academic advisor and obtain authorization from that individual to register for courses each semester. Students with double majors should obtain **scheduling** approval from both departments.
- **Self-service** is the system that manages all student-related information.
- A **semester** is made up of 14 weeks of instruction plus a final exam week during the fall and the spring of each Academic Year.
- **Senior** (4<sup>th</sup> Year) is an undergraduate student who has completed and earned a total of 90 semester credit hours, or more.
- **Sophomore** (2<sup>nd</sup> Year) is an undergraduate student who has completed and earned a total of 30 to 59 semester credit hours.
- **Standard Time Blocks** are day/time period combinations used for scheduling to optimize the use of Thiel's resources. More information can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website.
- A **student** is any individual who is or has attended the College and for whom the College maintains education records. See Matriculated Student.
- **Synchronous Learning**. See Asynchronous Learning.
- Thiel follows an academic calendar of 14 weeks of instruction for the fall and spring semesters. Thiel also follows an academic calendar for parts of **term** which is a term that has dates that take place within a larger semester.
- **Undergraduate Student** (UG) is a student that has matriculated into and is enrolled into a bachelor's degree program.
- Undergraduate courses numbered 300 through 499, sometimes referred to as **upper-level** courses, or as junior and senior courses.
- The **year of study** represents the undergraduate student's class seniority based on credit hours completed. See Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior.