

## Glossary

### Academic advising effectiveness

The [Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) includes several items for measuring student satisfaction with academic advising effectiveness, for which schools receive a composite score. The [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) asks students to rate advising on a scale of 1-7, with scores of 5, 6, or 7 being considered above average. The school may also directly assess the quality of academic advising using its own surveys or other methodologies.

### Admission pathways

Refers to the various pathways for admission to the same terminal degree within a health professions school (e.g., BA/MD joint degree, post-baccalaureate/MD, traditional MD).

### Areas of high poverty

Poverty areas are census tracts or block numbering areas (BNA's) where at least 20 percent of residents are classified as poor by the United States Census Bureau.

### Campus climate

Campus climate is the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical environments in which students learn. Climate is determined by a constellation of interacting factors that include faculty-student interaction, the tone set by instructors, instances of stereotyping or tokenism, student body demographics, student-to-student interactions, and the range of perspectives represented in course content and materials.

### Community Health Worker (CHWs)

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are frontline public health workers who have a close understanding of the community they serve. They often help link patients to needed health care information and services.

## **Cultural competence**

Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, knowledge, attitudes, and policies that enable effective work in cross-cultural situations. Both organizations and individuals can display cultural competence.

## **DFW rates**

A DFW rate is the rate at which college students receive grades of D, F, or W (withdrawn) from courses.

## **Engagement with faculty outside of class**

The [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) includes the following items to measure student-faculty interaction outside of class: “During the current school year, how often have you: a) Talked about career plans with a faculty member, b) Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.), c) Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class, or d) Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member.”

## **First-generation student**

According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#): “First-generation students are defined as those from families where neither parent attained any education beyond high school.” Some institutions and organizations use a broader definition: a student for whom both parents’ highest education level was some college but no degree, or less.

## **First-year retention**

The percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall term who either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall term.

## **First-year student**

A first-year student is a student who has completed less than the equivalent of one full year of undergraduate work; that is, less than 30 semester hours (in a 120-hour degree program) or less than 900 contact hours.

## **Foreign born**

Foreign-born students are students who were born in another country outside of the United States but currently reside primarily in the United States, regardless of their current citizenship status (may include U.S. Citizens, Permanent Residents, and students with DACA status (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), but not international students on J-1 visas).

## **Full-time student (undergraduate)**

A student enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more contact hours a week each term.

## **Full-time student (graduate)**

A student enrolled for 9 or more semester credits, 9 or more quarter credits, or a student involved in thesis or dissertation preparation that is considered full-time by the institution.

## **Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)**

A Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) is a geographic area, population group, or facility designated by the Health Resources and Services and Administration (HRSA) as having shortages of primary medical care, dental or mental health providers. A HPSA may be a geographic area such as a county or service area; represent a specific demographic group (e.g., low-income); or represent a designated institution such as a Federally Qualified Health Center.

## **High-Impact Practices (HIPs)**

The term “High-Impact Practices” refers to those published by the [Association of American Colleges & Universities](#) and reported in the [National Survey on Student Engagement](#). These include: learning communities, service learning, undergraduate research, capstone experiences, internships, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments, and study abroad experiences. Schools may use a broader definition of “high-impact” to include any effective teaching and learning strategy.

## High-need specialties

Medical specialties for which there are current or projected shortages, either regionally or nationally. Examples include general surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, and psychiatry.

## Holistic review

Holistic review is a flexible, individualized way of assessing an applicant's capabilities by which balanced consideration is given to experience, attributes, and academic metrics and, when considered in combination, to how the individual might contribute value as a student and health professional.

## Holistic review practices

Holistic review practices include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The school has a mission statement for admissions that includes diversity;
- The school considers non-academic criteria as well as academic metrics, such as GPA and test scores, in the initial screening process;
- The school evaluates applicant criteria related to a specific mission or goals of the school (e.g., primary care, research mission, global health mission, urban or rural focus);
- The school evaluates non-academic criteria related to student background or experience in the initial screening (e.g., first-generation status, socioeconomic status, gender, race, foreign language ability, community of origin);
- The institution selects students from the waitlist by characteristics related to the school's mission or goals; and
- The school provides regular training for the admissions committee related to the school mission and/or diversity.

## LGBTQ

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning.

## Local areas

A geographic area served by the university or academic medical center, according to its mission. A local area may include local neighborhoods, school districts, the county, or the state. Specific types of institutions such as “feeder

high schools” or “feeder colleges” can be included in the definition of local area.

### **Low-income student**

A low-income student is a student who has qualified for free or reduced price lunch programs, has received a Pell grant, or whose household had a reported annual income of \$50,000 or less.

### **Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/MUP)**

A Medically Underserved Area/Population is an area or population designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) as having too few primary care providers, high infant mortality, high poverty, and/or a high elderly population. MUAs may be a whole county or a group of contiguous counties, a group of county or civil divisions, or a group of urban census tracts in which residents have a shortage of personal health care services.

### **National Health Service Corps**

The [National Health Service Corps](#) is a scholarship program, administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), for students committed to providing primary health care in communities identified as having a shortage of health professionals.

### **Patient Navigator**

Patient navigators are individuals who guide patients through and around barriers in the complex healthcare system to ensure timely diagnosis and treatment.

### **Peer Wellness Specialist**

A peer wellness specialist is a person who uses his or her lived experience of recovery from mental illness and/or addiction, plus skills learned in formal training, to deliver services in behavioral health settings to promote mind-body recovery and resiliency.

## **Pell Grant recipient**

Under the Higher Education Act of 1965, Title IV, the Pell Grant program provides grant assistance to eligible undergraduate postsecondary students with demonstrated financial need to help meet education expenses.

## **Population health**

Population health is the health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group ([Kindig & Stoddart, 2003](#)).

## **Post-baccalaureate programs**

A post-baccalaureate program is a formal curricular program that begins after an undergraduate degree and is designed specifically to support the transition from undergraduate study to a professional school, such as a medical school or dental school, as well as enhance an applicant's competitiveness for admission.

## **Primary care**

Primary care is the provision of integrated, accessible health care services by clinicians who are accountable for addressing a large majority of personal health care needs, developing a sustained partnership with patients, and practicing in the context of family and community ([Institute of Medicine, 1996](#)).

## **Service learning**

According to the [National Service Learning Clearinghouse](#), service learning is “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.”

## **STEM**

STEM refers to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields of study, as indicated by the [Classification of Instructional Program \(CIP\) codes](#). STEM may also be used to refer to a wider range of disciplines. For example, the [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#) defines STEM fields broadly, including

not only the common categories of mathematics, natural sciences, engineering, and computer and information sciences, but also such social/behavioral sciences such as psychology, economics, sociology, and political science. Many recent federal and state legislative efforts, however, are aimed at improving STEM education mainly in mathematics, natural sciences, engineering, and technology fields ([Kuenzi, Matthews, and Mangan 2006](#); [National Governors Association, 2007](#)).

### **Target communities**

Target communities may include, but are not limited to, the following: school districts with low college-going rates, communities with low representation in enrollment, rural or urban areas, local areas with significant health disparities, or communities designated as having health workforce shortages (e.g., HPSAs or MUAs). Universities may target these communities, particularly in recruitment efforts, in order to improve education opportunity or respond to community needs.

### **Tool for Assessing Cultural Competence Training (TACCT)**

The [Tool for Assessing Cultural Competence Training \(TACCT\)](#) is a 67-item, self-administered assessment tool developed by the AAMC. The TACCT can be used by medical schools to examine all components of the medical school curriculum for cultural competence content and identify gaps or redundancies. The [Tool for Assessing Cultural Competence Training in Dental Schools \(D-TACCT\)](#) is based on AAMC's TACCT.

### **Unmet financial need**

Unmet need for undergraduate students is the cost of attendance at an institution, less the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC) – calculated when the student submits a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) – less any grants or other aid that does not need to be repaid.

### **Undergraduate research**

Undergraduate research experiences with faculty members is a [High-Impact Practice as defined by the AAC&U](#). Undergraduate participation in research



activities can be measured through the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) using students' self-reported answers ("Have you worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of course or program requirements?"). It can also be evaluated directly by measuring student participation in research courses or symposia, or by counting students presenting at professional conferences.

### **Under-represented racial/ethnic minorities (URM)**

URM individuals are individuals from racial/ethnic groups who are historically under-represented at a national level in STEM and health fields. According to the [United States Department of Education](#) these include: Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; American Indian or Alaska Native; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Institutions should examine their own data to determine if other groups are under-represented specific to the institution or the community.

### **Validated cultural competency assessment**

A validated cultural competency assessment is a method of assessing students' cultural competence that has been repeatedly tested for validity and reliability. Gozu et al (2007) evaluated 45 existing evaluation tools and found 6 that demonstrated both validity and reliability (see [Self-administered instruments to measure cultural competence of health professionals: a systematic review](#) for descriptions of these 6 tools). In addition, an emerging method for medicine is to integrate questions about cultural competence into the [Objective Structured Clinical Examination \(OSCE\)](#).

### **Women underrepresented in STEM fields**

Women's participation in STEM varies significantly by discipline. The proportion of women is lowest in engineering, computer sciences, and physics, and women earn only about one-fourth of all doctorates in mathematics and statistics.