Below is a list of terms and phrases for students who are new to higher education at DU

- **Academic Year**: The period of formal educational instruction, which is usually September to June.
- **Add/drop**: A process at the beginning of a term whereby students can delete and add classes with an instructor's permission. The following are the drop deadlines for tuition refunds.
  - Sept 15 – last day to drop at 100%
  - Sept 22 – last day to drop at 85%
  - Sept 29 – last day to drop at 50%
  - Sept 30 – no tuition refund for dropping
  - [Updated calendars for future terms](#).
- **Concurrent enrollment**: Taking a pre-requisite at the same time as the course.
- **Core Course**: Courses that provide the foundation of the degree program and are required of all students seeking that degree.
- **Course Number**: The number your college or university uses to classify a course. You usually need this number in order to register for a class. For example 1951 is the course number for MATH 1951.
- **Credits or Credit Hours**: Units that most colleges and universities use to record the completion of courses (with passing grades) that are required for an academic degree. The University of Denver unit of credit is the quarter hour. In general, each quarter hour of credit requires one class period of 50 minutes each week. Depending on the instruction method, the quarter-hour credit may not equal the hours spend in class. Most undergraduate programs at DU require 183 credit hours. In order to be a full-time student, you will need to register for at least 12 credits, which is generally three classes, worth 4 credits each. We recommend registering for 16 credits (4 classes).
- **Degree Plan**: The course of study necessary to fulfill the requirement for graduation. A degree plan is "major specific" and is established through collaboration between the student and the academic advisor for the student's major.
- **Distance Learning/Online courses**: A class taught to students via Internet or in an online learning environment. There are special regulations for international students to follow regarding online courses. Be sure to ask ISSS for information before enrolling in an online course.
- **Electives**: Courses that may be chosen from any field of study (often outside your major). Electives give students an opportunity to explore other topics or subjects of interest. For example, a student studying Biology could take a course in History as an elective.
• **Faculty** (academics): In North America this refers to academic staff at a university including professors of various ranks, lecturers, and/or researchers. Not to be confused with how British and Australian/NZ systems use ‘faculty’ to refer to a university’s department or college.

• **Hybrid Courses**: "Blended" are names commonly used to describe courses in which some traditional face-to-face in classroom time with an online component.

• **Lecture**: Common method of instruction in college and university courses; a professor lectures in classes of 20 to several hundred students. Lectures may be supplemented with regular small group discussions led by teaching assistants.

• **Major**: The student’s field of concentration. Major courses represent 25-50% of the total number of courses required to complete a degree. Most students pursue one major, but some pursue double majors.

• **Minor**: The student's secondary field of concentration. Students who decide to pursue a minor will usually complete about five courses in this second field of study.

• **Placement test**: An examination used to test a student’s academic ability in a certain field so that he or she may be placed in the appropriate courses in that field. In some cases, a student may be given academic credit based on the results of a placement test.

• **Pre-requisites**: Program or course that a student is required to complete before being permitted to enroll in a more advanced program or course. For example engineering students must take MATH 1951 before taking MATH 1952 (unless credit was granted for MATH 1951 for AP, IB or dual enrollment – transfer credit).

• **Seminar**: A form of small group instruction, combining independent research and class discussions under the guidance of a professor.

• **Subject**: Course in an academic discipline offered as part of a curriculum of an institution of higher learning.

• **Quarter**: Type of academic term. A school with this system generally will have a fall quarter, winter quarter and spring quarter (each about 10 weeks long), along with a summer term.

• **W/Withdraw**: “W” is the abbreviation for a withdraw from a class, if a student drops a class after the first week of classes a “W” is added to their record to note that they started the class but did not complete it.