



# **GCU TERMS TO KNOW**

**BY GCU ACE**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 01** ACADEMICS – UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE
- 03** ACADEMICS – STUDENT & PROGRAM INFORMATION
- 06** STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES & RESOURCES
- 08** PAYING FOR COLLEGE
- 09** GETTING INVOLVED ON CAMPUS
- 10** WORK, STUDENT EMPLOYMENT, AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT/PREPARATION
- 11** GRADUATION & COMMENCEMENT

# ACADEMICS – UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE

---

## **Dean**

Each of GCU's 9 colleges has a dean who oversees all of the operations, logistics, and planning for the college. Colleges may also have assistant or associate deans who work for the dean and support specific programs or projects within the college.

## **College versus University**

Grand Canyon University is designated as a university, as opposed to a college, with expansive undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Within GCU are 9 distinct colleges that offer specific degree programs (majors).

## **Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science**

Some degree programs fall under the category of a Bachelor of Arts (often designated as "BA") while some will be a Bachelor of Science (often designated as "BS"). The difference is primarily attributed to the type of degree program.

Designated degree programs will earn a Bachelor of Arts whereas others will earn a Bachelor of Science. A list of programs and their respective categories is available in the [University Policy Handbook](#).

## **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees assists with the overall management of and sets the direction for the university. The Board of Trustees consists of professionals from outside the organization who give their time to provide insight, guidance, suggestions, feedback, and more. The Board of Trustees is published on the GCU website and available in the [University Policy Handbook](#).

## **Provost – Chief Academic Officer**

The Provost, or the Chief Academic Office (CAO), is the highest-ranking academic leadership position within the university, and reports directly to the university president.

The Provost also oversees all the college deans and guides the direction of the academic staff and academic programming. The Provost is part of the Academic Leadership Team, which is also listed on the GCU website.

## **Undergraduate/Graduate/Doctorate/Masters**

There are many different levels of higher education. The undergraduate level consists of students pursuing a bachelor's degree, which is the typical degree students can pursue right out of high school. Once a student completes a bachelor's degree, they can choose to pursue a master's degree, which is the next level of higher education. A master's degree is typically shorter in length and time than a bachelor's degree, and is typically tailored to a specific industry, career, or content area. A doctoral degree is also referred to as a terminal degree, as it is the highest degree level possible. When a person earns a doctoral degree, they are then referred to as "Dr. (Name)", which is common among many faculty members. Masters and doctoral level programs are often referred to as graduate level work, while the bachelor's level is commonly referred to as undergraduate level work.

## **Adjunct vs Full-Time Faculty**

Full-time faculty are professors who teach a full load of courses, and teaching here at GCU is their full-time job. For some courses, GCU employs what are called adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are typically active full-time employees in their field of expertise and teach a course or two in addition to their primary career.

## **Faculty vs. Staff**

The university employs both faculty and staff. The faculty teach courses, while staff are full-time employees working at the university to assist with or oversee programs, initiatives, and departments.

# ACADEMICS – UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE

---

## **College Names: CHSS – COFAP – COT – CSET – CONHCP – CCOB – COE – CDS**

Grand Canyon University consists of nine distinct colleges. Each college offers a specific set of degree programs, typically centered around specific themes, industries, or skillsets. Below are the names of the colleges:

- College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS)
- College of Fine Arts and Production (COFAP)
- College of Theology (COT)
- College of Science, Engineering, and Technology (CSET)
- College of Nursing and Health Care Professions (CONHCP)
- Colangelo College of Business (CCOB)
- College of Education (COE)
- Honors College (Honors)
- College of Doctoral Studies (CDS)

## **Honors College**

The Honors College is one of the nine colleges at GCU. Students in the Honors College are also part of one of the other colleges depending on their major. For example, a student can be a Psychology major as part of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and also a member of the Honors College. The Honors College has selective admissions requirements and admitted students have specific Honors College requirements to meet in order to graduate with an Honors distinction. The Honors distinction earned by graduating from the Honors College is different from other academic recognitions including the Ray-Maben Scholars, Latin Honors, and University Honors. Any GCU student can earn Latin Honors, as they are associated with GPA upon graduation.

## **Buildings on Campus:**

- Student Union (Building #29) – 4-story building
  - 1st floor: different food choices including (these may change from year to year): Einstein Bros Bagels, Lopacellis Pasta, Harvest Kitchen, Canyon Pizza Company, Fresh Fusion, Jamba Juice, and Qdoba
  - 2nd floor: GCBC, GCU's very own coffee shop, and the Nerd Herd, GCU's student technical support team
  - 3rd & 4th floors: GCU Library
- Student Advising Center (Building #18)
  - Building where you can find your Student Services Counselor (SSC) who can help you with your schedule, major and minor, payment, FAFSA, financial aid, and more
- Student Life Building (Building #26)
  - Houses Residence Life, Housing Operations, Spiritual Life, Student Engagement including ASGCU (Associated Students of Grand Canyon University), and Counseling services.
- Commuter Lounge (Building #25)
  - Designated space where commuter students (students who do not live on campus) can store food and belongings, study, spend time with friends and peers and attend commuter-specific events.
- GCU Library (3rd & 4th floors of Building #29)
  - The GCU Library provides helpful library services along with access to computers, printers, anatomical models, and study rooms.

# ACADEMICS – STUDENT AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

---

## **Drop, Withdrawal & Withdrawal Period**

Course Drop: According to the University Policy Handbook, students who seek to remain active in school but wish to reduce the number of credits they're taking may choose to drop a course.

However, there are different deadlines, specifications, and ramifications around dropping/withdrawing from a course. For more information, review the University Policy Handbook. For questions, contact your Student Services Counselor (SSC).

## **Credit Hour**

Each class bears a certain number of credit hours. For example, a course could be 1, 2, or 4 credit hours (commonly referred to as "credits"). Some courses may even be 0 credits but are required. Students are required to take a certain number of credit hours to be considered "full-time" versus "part-time" students. Additionally, degree programs have minimum credit hours that must be earned in order to complete all degree requirements and graduate. Review the [University Policy Handbook](#) for more information.

## **Prerequisite**

A prerequisite is a course that is required to be completed before taking another course. For example, if there are two levels of a biology class, the first level might be a prerequisite for the second level; in other words, to take the second level, you must successfully complete the first level.

## **Midterms**

Halfway through the semester, professors may facilitate "midterms". These are checks for understanding and often tied to a big portion of the grade for the term. Some midterms may involve an exam of the content covered so far, while others may involve essays or other projects. Some professors do not facilitate midterms, however it is the common phrase used to describe the middle of the semester.

## **Syllabus**

Each class has a syllabus that structures the content for the course, the order in which it is delivered, and when certain assignments, projects, and exams are due or will take place.

## **Office Hours**

Faculty teaching courses will offer "Office Hours" which are dedicated times they will be in their offices on campus and available for students to walk-in and ask questions or get assistance. These hours are designated time for the faculty to be available for students needing support, clarification, and guidance.

## **Transcript**

A transcript documents a student's record of courses and grades. There are two types of transcripts: official and unofficial. Official transcripts must be requested through GCU and will often be sent on behalf of the student in a way that verifies the student's performance. Unofficial transcripts can be downloaded from the Student Portal and saved in a file format that the student can share on their own.

## **Learning Management System (LMS)**

The university uses an online learning management system (LMS) which serves as the foundation, or base, for all courses at the university whether they are in-person or online. The LMS is where students access the platform for their specific courses, view their syllabi, submit assignments, interact with their professor and peers, access course materials, and more. The best way to access the LMS is through the Student Portal.

# ACADEMICS – STUDENT AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

---

## **SAP – Satisfactory Academic Progress**

According to GCU's University Policy Handbook (2021-2022), Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is defined as a student's progress toward successful completion of his or her degree requirements. There are two components that drive SAP, including GPA and course completions. For more information, review the SAP policy in the University Policy Handbook. For questions, contact your Student Services Counselor (SSC).

## **Major – Minor – Program of Study**

Major: According to the University Policy Handbook, GCU students are required to select at least one subject area to study, called a major. In order to earn a major, students must earn at least 36 upper-division credits. Upper-division credits are 300-level and 400-level courses. These can be identified by the course code. For instance, BUS-352 is considered a 300-level course and would therefore be considered upper-division. Each major might have a different number of required courses or credit hours.

Minor: Students can elect to add an additional study area called a minor to their major. A minor requires fewer credits than a major (a minimum of 16). Students can choose to add a minor to bolster their educational training in an additional topic to their major.

## **Electives/Elective Credits**

Some majors will have room for what are called elective credits. If a major has room for elective credits, the student can work with their Student Services Counselor (SSC) to determine what courses would be available to fulfill their elective credits.

## **GPA – Grade Point Average and Cumulative GPA**

According to the University Policy Handbook (UPH), GCU assigns letter grades based on a percentage of points earned in each course. The average of each grade earned in a semester is the semester GPA, whereas the average of all grades earned is called a cumulative GPA. Letter grades differ depending on the college and program. Please refer to the UPH for more information.

## **University Success**

This is a required course for all new GCU students to introduce them to the learning management system (LMS) and orient them to university-level learning. Topics include time management, study skills, learning about your college and major, and more. There are multiple versions of the University Success course, which is abbreviated to "UNV", and students take different versions depending on their major or special circumstances. The majority of students take UNV-103 which is entirely online for the first 7 weeks of the semester.

## **Week 3 College Kickoff**

As part of your University Success course, you are required to attend 2 in-person events including your Week 3 (or 2) College Kick-Off and your Week 6 College Career Launch. These events provide you the opportunity to hear about your specific college, meet your college leadership and faculty, and learn more about your major. Attending the event is also tied to an assignment in your University Success course. If you can't make it for some reason, be sure to let your professor know right away.

# ACADEMICS – STUDENT AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

---

## **Week 6 College Career Launch**

As part of your University Success course, you are required to attend 2 in-person events including your Week 3 (or 2) College Kick-Off and your Week 6 College Career Launch. The Week 6 College Career Launch is similar to the College Kick-Off in Week 3, but is on a smaller scale and is major-specific. This event will give you the opportunity to meet more faculty in your major and learn about what you can do with your major. Attendance at this event is tied to an assignment in your University Success course, so if you can't make it for some reason, be sure to let your professor know right away.

## **STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics**

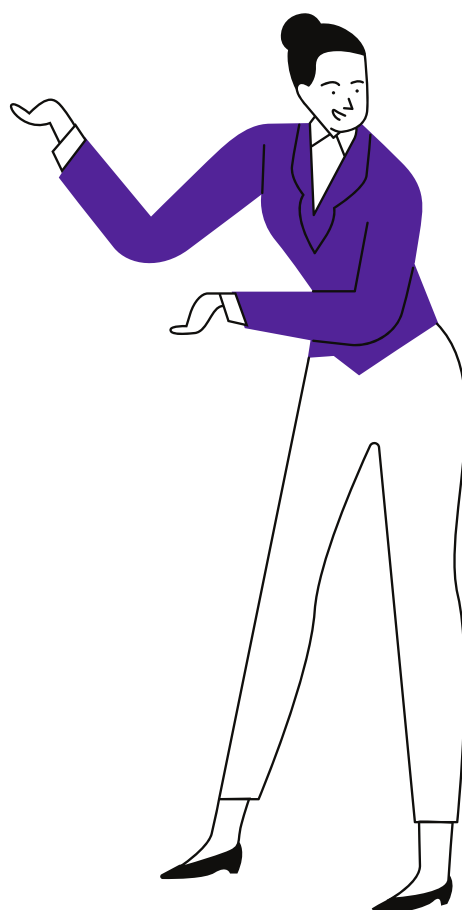
Degree programs that fall under science, technology, engineering, or mathematics are typically referred to under the umbrella name of “STEM” as an acronym representing each subject area.

## **FERPA – Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy ACT of 1974, or FERPA, is a federal law protecting the privacy of student educational records and personally identifiable information. To protect our students' educational records, students may be asked to identify themselves using FERPA identification information. For questions, contact your Student Services Counselor (SSC).

## **Canyon Connect**

Canyon Connect is the system to review what textbooks are required for each course and how you will access them. Many of the required textbooks at GCU are electronic, which are included in the Canyon Connect fee for each of your courses. If your courses require physical textbooks, you can determine which textbooks you need to order by looking up your courses in the Canyon Connect system.



# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES & RESOURCES

---

## **Academic & Career Excellence (ACE)**

Academic and Career Excellence (ACE) is a student-facing department focused on supporting students' success in both their academic and career journeys. ACE provides support and programming targeted toward first-year students through the First-Year Experience (FYE) program, peer-to-peer academic support through academic LEADs (Learning Advocates), success coaching through a Student Success Specialist and Success LEADs, and career development support and programming through ACE Advisors and Career LEADs. For students who are part of the CCSC (Canyon Christian Schools Consortium) scholarship program, students can also access the CCSC administrative team for support in fulfilling their CCSC scholar expectations.

## **Instructional Assistants/IA Centers**

Instructional Assistants (IAs) are employed by the university to support both faculty and students. IAs are often assigned to certain courses and assist the faculty with grading or facilitating information. Many IAs also support students by answering questions or offering open office hours for students to come in, ask questions, and get support for content related to that course. There are also IAs who work in the Math Center, Science Center, Writing Center, and ELL Center where students can stop by or schedule appointments for support in their classes.

## **GCU Library**

The GCU Library provides helpful library services along with access to computers, printers, anatomical models, and study rooms.

## **Career Connections**

Career Connections is an online platform accessible to GCU students through the Career Connections widget in their Student Portal. The online platform is a dynamic and engaging system connecting students with academic and career resources. Students can schedule appointments with Academic and First-Year Experience (FYE) LEADs (Learning Advocates), Success Coaching, and Career Advising. Students can also build their professional profile, access career readiness resources, apply for internships, full-time, and part-time jobs, and RSVP for career fairs, information sessions, workshops, and more.

## **Student Affairs**

Student Affairs is a combination of departments aiming to provide students with resources across campus to help enrich the student experience and campus life. Departments include Residence Life, Spiritual Life, and Student Engagement, Student Care, Club Sports, Outdoor Rec, Intramural Sports, and more.

## **Student Disability Services (SDS)**

The Student Disability Services (SDS) department provides equal access to all GCU programs, systems, and facilities for students with disabilities. Work with the department specifically for any personal inquiries: [disabilityoffice@gcu.edu](mailto:disabilityoffice@gcu.edu).

## **Student Success Center**

The [Student Success Center](#) is a website designated for GCU students and houses numerous academic and college-specific resources.



# STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES & RESOURCES

---

## **Student Services Counselors (SSCs)**

SSC's are responsible for all aspects of your scheduling and financial advising needs. They counsel on university policies and procedures, as well as ensure your academic journey is successful and timely. Inquiries related to schedules and finances should first go through your assigned counselor.

## **Student Care/Campus Therapists**

The Office of Student Care provides campus therapists who deliver counseling to full-time, on-campus students.

## **Student Portal**

The Student Portal is the “home base” for GCU students to manage their student account, records, finances, and more. Students also access the learning management system associated with each of their current classes through the Student Portal.

## **Student Portal Widgets**

Within the Student Portal are a number of widgets, or buttons, students can click on to navigate through the various resources. Available widgets include the Finance Hub for making payments, Career Connections, transcripts, and more.

## **Walk to Class**

The First-Year Experience (FYE) team as a part of the Academic & Career Excellence (ACE) team offers a Walk to Class for all new, incoming students. The Walk to Class is an online webinar offered throughout the summer to introduce new students to the online learning management system (LMS), called Halo.

## **Canyon Health & Wellness Clinic**

The Canyon Health & Wellness Clinic provides quality medical services to all students, faculty, and staff.

## **Success Patrol**

Success Patrol occurs during the first week of class each semester and assists students in looking for their new classrooms. Success Patrol tables are spread out across campus and designated by purple tablecloths and signs - stop by any of the tables for help finding your classroom buildings and rooms!



# COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND CONDUCT

---

## **Community Standards**

All GCU students are held to established Community Standards as outlined in the [University Policy Handbook \(UPH\)](#).

## **Student Conduct (Student Affairs)**

Students who violate the standards outlined in the Community Standards will go through the Student Conduct process. For more information, review the [University Policy Handbook \(UPH\)](#).

## **Student Code of Conduct and Academic Standards (Academic Affairs)**

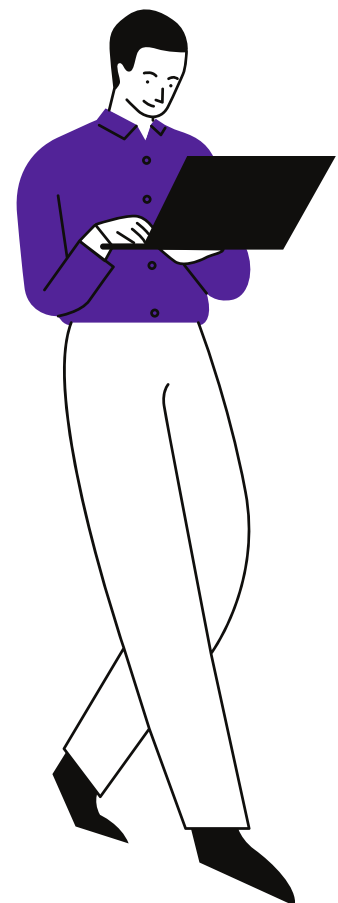
Students who violate the academic integrity policies of the university will go through the code of conduct process. Learn more about academic integrity and the Student Code of Conduct and Academic Standards [here](#).

## **Canyon Health & Wellness Clinic**

The [Canyon Health & Wellness Clinic](#) provides quality medical services to all students, faculty, and staff.

## **Success Patrol**

Success Patrol occurs during the first week of class each semester and assists students in looking for their new classrooms. Success Patrol tables are spread out across campus and designated by purple tablecloths and signs - stop by any of the tables for help finding your classroom buildings and rooms!



# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

---

## **FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid**

Many GCU students utilize the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine eligibility for federal financial aid. Eligibility for funds through FAFSA is highly individualized, and there are many different types of financial aid including loans, grants, work-study, scholarships, and more. Work with your Admissions Counselor or Student Services Counselor (SSC) for assistance with FAFSA and for more information.

## **Account Balance/Invoice**

Depending on your payment selection, status, and more, you may have an account balance which you can view by looking at your invoice. For questions related to your account balance or an invoice, work with your Student Services Counselor (SSC).

## **Student Worker/Student Employment**

According to the GCU Student Worker Handbook (2020), student workers are registered students who attend classes at GCU's traditional campus or GCU's nontraditional online program (local residents only) and are hired on a short-term temporary basis, usually by semester, and who work 20 hours or fewer per week when classes are in session and up to 40 hours per week when classes are not in session.

## **Federal Work-Study & Non-Federal Work-Study**

Students may qualify for either Federal Work-Study (FWS) or Non-Federal Work-Study (NFWS). This status is best determined by your Student Services Counselor (SSC) and/or the Human Resources department.

## **Student Employment Documents**

An I-9 form is a form that must be completed to begin a student worker position. Students wishing to accept and begin a student worker position must provide two forms of ID from a pre-determined list of acceptable documents.

## **Scholarships**

Scholarships are a great way to help pay for college. Scholarship funds are available both within GCU and outside of GCU through external scholarship sites and organizations. When applying for scholarships, be sure to check if the opportunity is reputable to avoid experiences of fraud. For questions about GCU-specific scholarships, speak with your University Admissions Counselor (UAC) or your Student Services Counselor (SSC).



# GETTING INVOLVED ON CAMPUS

---

## Living & Learning Community

Living and Learning Communities (LLCs) are for first-year students living on campus. When selecting housing, first-year students can elect to live in an LLC based on their major or interest area. LLCs are in Juniper Hall, where students in the LLCs live in the same area to create communities with their major or interest-specific peers. The First-Year Experience (FYE) team oversees the programming for LLCs, which aim to promote connection to their colleges and the transition to university-level learning.

## Clubs & Organizations

Activities you can participate in to have fun and meet new people; there are different types such as:

- o Academic and Honor Societies
- o Career and Pre-Professional
- o Community and Volunteer
- o Cultural
- o Ministry
- o Outreach and Governmental
- o Performance, Visual and Fine Arts
- o Social
- o For a list of clubs: [gcuclubs.org](http://gcuclubs.org)

## Clubs vs. Club Sports

Club sports are not to be confused with clubs or with NCAA Division I athletics. GCU has Division I athletics teams that compete with other Division I teams across the country. Club sports are a different level of athletics where students take part in the club sport and compete with other club sports teams across the country. These club sports athletes do not compete at the Division I level.

## Student Engagement

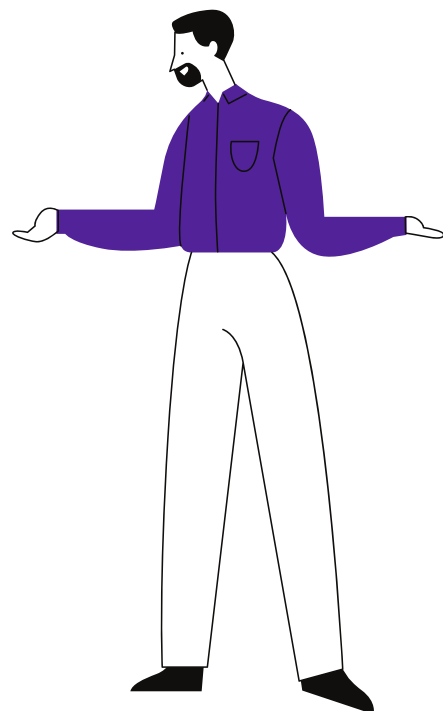
The Office of Student Engagement houses multiple departments including Clubs and Organizations, Commuter Life, the Associated Students of Grand Canyon University (ASGCU), Army ROTC, Thunderground, the Canyon Activities Board (CAB), and the GCU Engage team. Student Engagement aims to help GCU students engage in their community, build authentic relationships, and develop as student leaders.

## Department of Campus Recreation

If you're looking for a way to get active, stay fit, compete in intramural sports, and go explore beautiful parts of the Southwest United States, Campus Recreation has programs and resources to help!

## Spiritual Life

The Office of Spiritual Life provides opportunities for spiritual leadership and discipleship, holding weekly worship services, offering global and local outreach ministry opportunities, and facilitating weekly small group Bible studies.



# RESIDENCE LIFE & COMMUTER LIFE

---

## **Residence Halls**

Students living on campus typically live in a building called a residence hall. Students will be assigned a room and typically have a few roommates.

## **Apartments**

Some residential buildings on campus are called apartments, because they are structured very similarly to regular apartments.

## **Roommate Agreement**

At the beginning of a new living situation, roommates will work together to establish a roommate agreement. This agreement will include items like quiet time, bedtimes, who will take out the trash, etc. This agreement will be used as a reference for any roommate disagreements.

## **Resident Assistants (RAs)**

Each floor of a residence hall will have one-two student leaders living on the floor who are identified as an RA. The RAs are responsible for community building, programming for the floor, working through roommate issues, and helping students navigate their experience.

## **Resident Directors (RDs)**

Each residence hall will also have one-two full-time staff who are the Resident Directors. The RDs are responsible for the overall safety and well-being of their residents, oversee the RAs, assist with programming, handle escalations, provide educational information, ensure policies are followed, and more. The RDs live in one of the rooms within the building.

## **Visitation Hours**

The residence halls enforce a visitation policy, which runs from 10:00am to midnight daily. For more information, review the Community Standards section of the [University Policy Handbook \(UPH\)](#).

## **Community Standards**

All GCU students are held to established Community Standards as outlined in the [University Policy Handbook \(UPH\)](#).

## **Student Conduct (Student Affairs)**

Student who violate the standards outlined in the Community Standards will go through the Student Conduct process. For more information, review the [University Policy Handbook \(UPH\)](#).

## **Life Leaders**

Life Leaders are also students leaders on campus who facilitate bible studies and other spiritual engagement opportunities for students on campus.

## **Student Code of Conduct and Academic Standards (Academic Affairs)**

Students who violate the academic integrity policies of the university will go through the code of conduct process. Learn more about academic integrity and the Student Code of Conduct and Academic Standards [here](#).

## **Commuter Life**

Students who do not live on campus are considered commuter students, or commuters. Commuters have access to a Commuter Lounge and specific programming designed to support them and help them get connected on campus. Contact Commuter Life at [commuters@gcu.edu](mailto:commuters@gcu.edu).

# WORK, STUDENT EMPLOYMENT, AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT/PREPARATION

---

## **Internship**

Internships can come in many forms, but in general, it is an opportunity to gain hands-on, real-world experience related to a desired career.

Some internships are very formal, with a designated learning curriculum, set of projects, and pre-determined start and end dates. Some internships are very informal. Informal internships may have less structure, may task interns with a wide range of projects, and may not have specific start and end dates. Some internships are paid, and some are unpaid. Either way, gaining experience in a given field is critical for developing skills, building your resume, and making connections in your industry. Some students may be able to complete internships for credit. Ask your Student Services Counselor (SSC) for more information.

## **Student Worker/Student Employment**

According to the GCU Student Worker Handbook (2020), student workers are registered students who attend classes at GCU's traditional campus or GCU's nontraditional online program (local residents only) and are hired on a short-term temporary basis, usually by semester, and who work 20 hours or fewer per week when classes are in session and up to 40 hours per week when classes are not in session.

## **Federal Work-Study & Non-Federal Work-Study**

Students may qualify for either Federal Work-Study (FWS) or Non-Federal Work-Study (NFWS). This status is best determined by your Student Services Counselor (SSC) and/or the Human Resources department.

## **Student Employment Documents**

An I-9 form is a form that must be completed to begin a student worker position. Students wishing to accept and begin a student worker position must provide two forms of ID from a pre-determined list of acceptable documents.

Work with our Human Resources and Student Employment teams for more information: HR@gcu.edu or HR@gce.com.

## **Academic & Career Excellence (ACE)**

Academic and Career Excellence (ACE) is a student-facing department focused on supporting students succeed in both their academic and career journeys. ACE provides support and programming targeted toward first-year students through the First-Year Experience (FYE) program, peer-to-peer academic support through academic LEADs (Learning Advocates), success coaching through a Student Success Specialist and Success LEADs, and career development support and programming through ACE Advisors and Career LEADs. For students who are part of the CCSC (Canyon Christian Schools Consortium) scholarship program, students can also access the CCSC administrative team for support in fulfilling their CCSC scholar expectations.

## **Career Connections**

Career Connections is an online platform accessible to GCU students through the Career Connections widget in their Student Portal. The online platform is a dynamic and engaging system connecting students with academic and career resources. Students can schedule appointments with Academic and First-Year Experience (FYE) LEADs (Learning Advocates), Success Coaching, and Career Advising. Students can also build their professional profile, access career readiness resources, apply for internships, full-time, and part-time jobs, and RSVP for career fairs, information sessions, workshops, and more.

## **Purpose Plan**

The Purpose Plan is a four-year checklist housed within Career Connections. The checklist outlines what steps you should be taking toward your academic, career, and spiritual goals each year. Stop by an ACE Center, work with an FYE LEAD, Career LEAD, or ACE Advisor for more information. Email [ACE@gcu.edu](mailto:ACE@gcu.edu) with any questions.

# GRADUATION & COMMENCEMENT

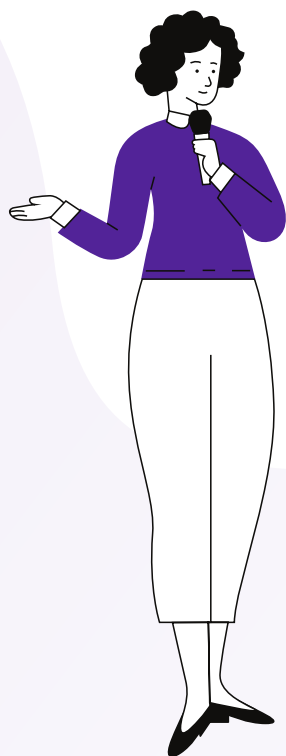
---

## Graduation and Commencement

Graduation and commencement are different. Graduation occurs when a student meets all of the eligibility requirements to complete the degree program in which they enrolled. Once students complete their degree requirements, they change to “graduated” status, their degree is complete, and they will receive their official diploma in the mail. Students cannot claim to have graduated or completed a degree until they have been changed to graduated status. Commencement, on the other hand, is the ceremony to celebrate graduation. Students can qualify to participate in commencement based on the number of credits they have remaining.

## Alumni

Students who graduate from a university then become “alumni” of that university. Additionally, the university houses an Office of Alumni Relations to build relationships with alumni of the university.



## Academic Recognition (Honors)

According to the [University Policy Handbook \(UPH\)](#), there are a few different ways students can earn academic recognition when graduating:

- Ray-Maben Scholars
  - Highest scholarship honor awarded by GCU and established by the faculty.
- Latin Honors
  - Latin Honors are a recognition of graduating with a certain GPA, earning at least 60 credits at GCU, and are awarded as follows:
    - Summa Cum Laude (highest) – 3.8 - 4.0
    - Magna Cum Laude – 3.60 - 3.79
    - Cum Laude – 3.40 - 3.59
  - Upon final degree completion and GPA calculation, if the final GPA meets these requirements, the Latin Honors will be included on the student’s diploma.
- University Honors
  - University Honors are a recognition of graduating with a certain GPA and are for students who earned fewer than 60 credits at GCU, and are awarded as follows:
    - University Honors – 3.5 GPA or higher
  - Upon final degree completion and GPA calculation, if the final GPA meets these requirements, the Latin Honors will be included on the student’s diploma.
- Honors College
  - Students who graduate from the Honors College and complete all degree requirements will earn special Honors recognition.



## CONNECT WITH US

602-639-8901 | [ace@gcu.edu](mailto:ace@gcu.edu)

Instagram @gcuace | LinkedIn GCU Academic & Career Excellence