Welcome to the American Classroom!
HOW TO SEE AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR

- Come to the International Center (Misenheimer campus, library, top floor)
- Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 am–5 pm
- Call 704-463-3368 for an appointment.
- The International Advisor has office hours on the Charlotte campus twice a month. Watch for flyers announcing schedule.
What to Expect in U.S. College Classrooms

- Informal classroom atmosphere
- Required attendance
- Participation of students in class discussions
- Prerequisite courses may be required
- Frequent assignments and tests
- Objective tests and essays.
The American College Classroom

- The first time my professor told me:
  “I don’t know the answer—
  I will have to look it up.”
I was shocked. I asked myself, “Why is he teaching me?”
In my country, a professor would give a
correct answer rather than admit ignorance.”

-A visitor from Iran
The Course Syllabus: Your Key to Success

- Review the course syllabus. It contains course objectives, assignment deadlines, and instructor’s name with contact information.
- Contact your instructor if you are having difficulty. Visits with instructors during office hours are encouraged.
- Beware that acts of cheating and plagiarism will be subject to academic discipline.
Cheating & Plagiarism

- Cheating means using any method other than your **OWN** knowledge and skill to answer exam questions. Helping someone during an exam is also considered **cheating**.

- Plagiarism is including ideas and language in a paper you write that are not your own or submitting a paper someone else wrote.
School Time Hours Per Week

- CLASS = 12 hours per week
- STUDY = 24 hours per week
- TOTAL = 36 hours per week

FULL TIME STUDY = SAME NUMBER OF HOURS AS FULL TIME JOB
Calculating GPA

- Formula: total honor points divided by # of credit hours taken
- Honor Points
  - GPA scale:
    - $A = 4.0$, $B = 3.0$, $C = 2.0$, $D = 1.0$
- Grades can affect your immigration status.
Time Management and Stress

- Successful students are good managers of time.
- Develop a realistic plan for your day and follow it.
- Include time for class, study hours, and SLEEP!
- Socialize.
- Spend time with friends.
- Exercise!
Support and Academic Assistance Available to all Students.

- **FREE** tutorial assistance is offered in the Learning Center located on the Misenheimer campus.

- Online tutorial assistance is also available through SMARTTHINKING. Contact **Dr. Jim Gulledge** at 704-463-3366 for more information.

- Pamphlets on note-taking, test-taking, and time management are also available from the Learning Center. Many of these are available online on the university’s website.
► Academic Advisor: A member of the university’s faculty who helps and advises students solely on academic matters.

► Academic Year: The period of formal instruction, usually August – May.

► Accreditation: Approval of the university by nationally recognized professional associations or regional accrediting bodies.

► Add/Drop: A process at the beginning of a term whereby students can delete and add classes with an instructor’s permission.

► Audit: To take a class without receiving credit toward a degree.
Academic Terms (continued)

- Bachelor’s Degree: Degree awarded upon completion of approximately four years of full-time study in the liberal arts or sciences.

- College Catalog: An official publication giving information about a university’s academic programs, facilities, entrance requirements, and student life.

- Commuter Student: A student who lives off-campus.

- Core Requirements: Mandatory courses required for completion of the degree.

- Course: Regularly scheduled class sessions of one to five hours per week during a term. A degree program is made up of a specified number of required and elective courses.
Academic Terms (continued)

- **Credits**: Units that universities use to record the completion of courses (with passing grades) that are required for an academic degree. The catalog defines the number and kinds of credits that are required for the university’s degrees.

- **Electives**: Courses that students choose to take for credit toward their intended degree; these are different from courses that are required for the degree.

- **Fees**: An amount charged by universities, in addition to tuition, to cover costs of institutional services.

- **Final**: A cumulative exam on a particular course subject covering all material covered throughout the duration of the class.

- **Financial Aid**: A general term that includes all types of money, loans, and work/study programs offered to a student to help pay tuition, fees, and living expenses.
Academic Terms (continued)

- **Grade/Grading System:** The evaluation of a student’s academic work.

- **GPA:** Grade Point Average. A system of recording achievement based on a numerical average of the grades attained in each course.

- **Graduate:** A student who has completed a course of study; a graduate program at a university is a study course for students who already hold a bachelor’s degree.

- **High School:** The U.S. term for secondary school.

- **Honors Program:** A challenging program for students with high grades.
Academic Terms (continued)

► Liberal Arts: A term referring to academic studies of subjects in the humanities, the social sciences, and the sciences.

► Major: The subject in which a student wishes to concentrate.

► Minor: A subject in which the student takes the second greatest concentration of courses.

► Prerequisite: Programs or courses that a student is required to complete before being permitted to enroll in a more advanced program or course.

► Registration: Process through which students select courses to be taken during a semester.

► RA: Resident Assistant. A person who assists the residence hall director in campus residence halls and is usually the first point of contact for students with problems or questions. RA’s are students at the college who receive free or reduced accommodations in return for their service.
Scholarship: A study grant of financial aid, usually given at the undergraduate level, that may take the form of a tuition waiver or other fees.

SAT: Scholastic Assessment Test. A primarily multiple-choice test of mathematics and English abilities that is required by many U.S. colleges and universities for admission into an undergraduate program.

School: A general term for any place of education

Semester: Period of study lasting 16 weeks or ½ the academic year.

Syllabus: An outline of topics covered in an academic course

TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language. An English language proficiency examination required of applicants whose native language is not English.
Academic Terms (continued)

- **Transcripts:** A certified copy of a student’s educational record

- **Tuition:** The money an institution charges for instruction and training (does not include the cost of books).

- **University:** A large post-secondary institution that offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programs.