**Academic Year/Term Guidelines by U.S. Department of ED**

* Minimum academic year must = 30 weeks + 24 credit hours. (Barton’s definition = 30 weeks + 30 credit hours)

* A semester must be at least 15 – 17 and no longer than 21 weeks. (Exception: Summer may be less.)
* Fall/Spring semesters must total 30 weeks for Barton’s defined academic year.
* Certificate programs must be at least 15 weeks in length.
* Semester start and end dates cannot overlap with another semester.
* Exception: Clinical Courses

Periods of clinical work such as medical which is conducted outside the classroom may not be included in a standard term, unless all of the following apply:

* All students in the program must participate in practicum or clinical experience and its completion is required for graduates to apply for licensure or authorization or practice occupation those students intend to pursue;
* The school has little or no control over the length or start/end dates of practicum or clinical experience. This may be due to constraints imposed by outside licensing bodies, or the need to accommodate schedules of entities with which students are being placed; and
* Credit hours associated with practicum or clinical experience must be associated with the term in which most of the training occurs, even if starting and ending dates do not exactly align with term dates and/or overlap with another term.

If the clinical work meets all of the above criteria, terms which include such clinical work are not required to be considered nonstandard, nor are such programs required to be considered nonterm, even if the clinical work overlaps another term. This flexibility is limited to required clinical periods associated with standard term programs in medicine.\*

* Academic programs may have different academic years.

(e.g. Natural Gas, MLT, Liberal Studies, etc.)

* Different versions of the same academic program may have different academic years.

(e.g. BOL, EduKan, LSC, F2F, etc.)

* May have modules or parts of term within the term.
* Ineligible programs/ineligible students – not restricted. These courses must be scheduled with a grade mode indicating the course is not eligible for federal aid.

(e.g. Military certificates)

* May pay federal aid for standalone intersession.

(i.e. Standalone Winter Intersession may attach to either fall or spring)

* May use Pell Formula 1 under these rules.
* **Basic rule – respect the integrity of the start/end dates!**

\*2018-19 Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 3, Chapter 1, p. 3-7