

Understanding Postsecondary School Types



Merriam-Webster's Dictionary offers the following definition of college:

Main Entry: col-lege

Function: *noun*

1: College is an independent institution of higher learning offering instruction, usually in a professional, vocational or technical field.

There are many different types of colleges and schools in general, which means that you have a wide variety of choices. The best type of education for you may be available right here in Oklahoma. Check out www.OKcollegestart.org and click on "College Planning/Explore Postsecondary Schools" to learn about Oklahoma's colleges and universities. Here are some examples to help with your decision:

Four-Year Universities

- Offer undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees
- Include Oklahoma's research and regional universities and public liberal arts university
- Examples: Northwestern Oklahoma State University and Cameron University

Community Colleges

- Take about two years to complete a degree program
- Are usually less expensive than some other types of colleges
- Examples: Carl Albert State College and Northern Oklahoma College

Technical Branches

- Emphasize education and training in technical fields
- Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology and Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City are Oklahoma's technical branches

Technology Centers

- Prepare you for a specialized career or trade
- Offer several certifications, some online
- Examples: High Plains Technology Center and Northeast Technology Center

Proprietary Schools

- Privately-owned or out-of-state colleges and universities that aren't supported by state funds
- Prepare students for direct entry into an occupation or profession
- Examples: Brown Mackie College and Platt College

Private Schools

- Privately-owned accredited colleges and universities that aren't supported by state funds
- Offer associate, bachelor's and/or graduate degrees
- Examples: Oklahoma Christian University and Bacone College

Note that several terms can be used to describe the same school. For example, the University of Central Oklahoma is a four-year, public, regional university.