



TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

#thenextstep



GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

THE GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK IS PUBLISHED
BY THE GRADUATE SCHOOL.

TEXAS A&M **INTERNATIONAL** UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL
SENATOR JUDITH ZAFFIRINI STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER, SUITE 223
5201 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD
LAREDO TX 78041

WWW.TAMU.EDU/GRADSCHOOL
956.326.3020
GRADUATESCHOOL@TAMU.EDU

   
@TAMIUGRADSCHOOL

FALL 2023

UNIVERSITY OFFICES

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Pablo Arenaz, President
Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library 270
Telephone: 956.326.2320
Email: president@tamiu.edu

PROVOST & VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Dr. Claudia San Miguel, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library 431
Telephone: 956.326.2240
Email: csanmiguel@tamiu.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Mr. Juan Gilberto Garcia, Jr., Vice President for Enrollment Management
Zaffirini Student Success Center 224
Telephone: 956.326.2468
Email: jgarcia@tamiu.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Juan J. Castillo, Vice President for Finance and Administration
Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library 269
Telephone: 956.326.2380
Email: jjcastillo@tamiu.edu

VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Ms. Rosanne Palacios, Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library 262
Telephone: 956.326.2178
Email: rosanne.palacios@tamiu.edu

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dr. Lola Norris, Dean
Zaffirini Student Success Center 223
Telephone: 956.326.3020
Email: lonorris@tamiu.edu

SUE & RADCLIFFE KILLAM LIBRARY

Dr. Colleen S. Harris, Dean
Killam Library 223
Telephone: 956.326.2393
Email: colleen.harris@tamiu.edu

A.R. SANCHEZ, JR. SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Dr. Luis Perez-Batres, Dean
Western Hemispheric Trade Center 203
Telephone: 956.326.2480
Email: l.perez@tamiu.edu

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Dr. Marcus A. Ynalvez, Interim Dean
Academic Innovation Center 373
Telephone: 956.326.2633
Email: mynalvez@tamiu.edu

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Dr. James G. O'Meara, Dean
Anthony J. and Georgia A. Pellegrino Hall 303
Telephone: 956.326.2680
Email: james.omeara@tamiu.edu

COLLEGE OF NURSING & HEALTH SCIENCES

Dr. Marivic B. Torregosa, Dean
Dr. F. M. Canseco Hall 301
Telephone: 956.326.2574
Email: mtorregosa@tamiu.edu

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

Ms. Laura Elizondo, Director
Zaffirini Student Success Center 214
Telephone: 956.326.2225
Email: laura@tamiu.edu

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

Ms. Triana Gonzalez Valdez, Registrar
Zaffirini Student Success Center 121
Telephone: 956.326.2247
Email: triana@tamiu.edu

STUDENT CONDUCT & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Ms. Mayra Hernandez, Director
Student Center 226
Telephone: 956.326.2288
Email: mghernandez@tamiu.edu

STUDENT ORIENTATION, LEADERSHIP, & ENGAGEMENT

Dr. Nicholas Hudson, Director
Student Center 224
Telephone: 956.326.2283
Email: nicholas.hudson@tamiu.edu

UNIVERSITY COMPLIANCE

Ms. Monica Palacios Robledo, Director
Sue and Radcliffe Killam Library 159
Telephone: 956.326.2856
Email: monicap.robledo@tamiu.edu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK	6
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL	7
INTRODUCTION	8
OBJECTIVE OF GRADUATE STUDY	8
GRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED	9
A.R. SANCHEZ, JR. SCHOOL OF BUSINESS	9
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES	9
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION	9
COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES	9
ADMISSION INFORMATION.	10
ADMISSION DECISIONS	11
PROVISIONAL ADMISSION	11
PROBATIONARY ADMISSION	11
FULL ADMISSION	11
DEFERRING ADMISSION.	11
NON-DEGREE APPLICANTS	11
GRADUATE STUDY FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS	11
COMBINED BA/MA, BA/MS, BS/MS DEGREES	12
UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL	13
MEMBERSHIP	13
FUNCTIONS OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL	13
PETITIONS.	13
MEETINGS	13
STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES.	14
CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE	15
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS	15
ELIGIBILITY TO TAKE THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	15
NOTIFICATION OF INTENT	15
PREPARATION FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	15
SCHEDULING THE EXAM	15
LAST DAY TO TAKE THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION.	15
FORMAT AND EVALUATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	16
THESIS AND NON-THESIS OPTIONS.	17
THESIS OPTION	17
THESIS PROPOSAL.	17
THESIS	17
NON-THESIS OPTION	17

GENERAL INFORMATION	18
CLASS ATTENDANCE . . . . .	.18
COURSE LOAD . . . . .	.18
MAXIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS . . . . .	.18
LEAVE OF ABSENCE. . . . .	.19
LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY . . . . .	.19
PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS . . . . .	.19
ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/TITLE IX NOTICE . . . . .	.20
TITLE IX INQUIRIES OR INCIDENT REPORTING . . . . .	.20
FINANCIAL AID . . . . .	.20
GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS . . . . .	.20
LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT . . . . .	.21
RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT . . . . .	.21
TRANSFER OF GRADUATE-LEVEL STUDY . . . . .	.21
GRADES REQUIRED. . . . .	.21
CORRESPONDENCE WORK . . . . .	.21
REPETITION OF A COURSE . . . . .	.21
CONTINUATION OF GRADUATE STUDIES . . . . .	.22
GOOD STANDING . . . . .	.22
MINIMUM GRADE REQUIREMENT. . . . .	.22
OTHER SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENTS . . . . .	.22
SCHOLASTIC PROBATION AND SUSPENSION . . . . .	.22
PLACEMENT ON SCHOLASTIC PROBATION. . . . .	.22
REMOVAL FROM SCHOLASTIC PROBATION . . . . .	.22
SUSPENSION BECAUSE OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE . . . . .	.22
READMISSION AFTER SUSPENSION. . . . .	.23
A.R. SANCHEZ, JR. SCHOOL OF BUSINESS PH.D. PROGRAM . . . . .	.23
EXPULSION BECAUSE OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT. . . . .	.23
GRADUATION UNDER A PARTICULAR CATALOG . . . . .	.24
ETHICS . . . . .	.24
GRADUATE STUDENT WORKING GREATER THAN 50% EFFORT. . . . .	.24
TAMUS PATHWAYS TO THE DOCTORATE PROGRAM . . . . .	.25

PURPOSE OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK



The Graduate Student Handbook is a resource for policies that pertain to graduate students at Texas A&M International University. Faculty and Staff in the Graduate School implement these policies uniformly, efficiently, and fairly. This handbook is supplementary to the Texas A&M International University [Student Handbook](#) published by the Division of Student Success and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement that applies to all university students regardless of student classification.

It is the responsibility of all administration, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of and abide by all approved policies, procedures, rules, and regulations set forth by The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents that are posted on the System website or that are disseminated through handbooks and manuals to all component campuses that make up The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS). The Texas A&M International University Student Handbook, which contains a description of the rights and responsibilities of all students enrolled at this institution, is posted on the University website for quick reference and easy access to students, faculty, and staff. The Student Handbook can be accessed directly at <http://www.tamtu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>

The statements set forth in the Student Handbook and the Graduate Student Handbook should not be construed as the basis of a contract between the student and the institution. While the provisions of the Student Handbook and the Graduate Student Handbook will ordinarily be applied as stated, Texas A&M International University reserves the right to change any provisions listed without notice to individual students. It should be noted that all students are responsible for keeping abreast of any changes in regulations and/or procedures that may have bearing on their enrollment at Texas &M International University.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL



My name is Dr. Lola Norris, and I am the Dean of the Graduate School at Texas A&M International University. I would like to welcome you to TAMIU as you embark upon earning your graduate degree. The faculty, staff, and I look forward to supporting you at this important moment in your academic and professional life.

The Texas A&M International University Graduate School is committed to providing services that maintain integrity and excellence in graduate education, and to advocating for the academic and professional development of graduate students. Our intensive student-centered learning environment provides research, scholarship, and leadership experiences that will prepare you to go beyond.

We look forward to serving your educational needs and we welcome you to the Texas A&M International University family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark red ink that reads "Lola O. Norris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Lola Norris
Dean, Graduate School

INTRODUCTION

The Graduate School and faculty of Texas A&M International University are pleased to welcome you to our graduate program. We hope that your experience at the University will be both enjoyable and rewarding.

This handbook has been prepared by the University Graduate Council at Texas A&M International University to assist graduate students and their advisory committee members. This material is provided as a convenient guide to basic information; however, students should be aware that the authoritative, official policies of the University are definitively set forth in the current Texas A&M International University catalog and in the policy manuals of the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS). When in doubt about any information in this handbook, students should consult the catalog, the Texas A&M University System manuals, or their college or program handbook.

Two other documents containing essential information are the Texas A&M International University Student Handbook and the Thesis and Dissertation Manual. The Student Handbook is available in the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement (Student Center 226), and the Thesis and Dissertation Manual is available in the Graduate School – Zaffirini Success Center (ZSC) 223. As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to be informed about policies and practices pertaining to your graduate studies.

OBJECTIVE OF GRADUATE STUDY

The aim of graduate academic work at Texas A&M International University is to provide an opportunity for further study in chosen fields. Such study should lead to greater breadth, but especially to greater depth of knowledge in the field selected. Emphasis is placed on (1) how to find knowledge, (2) how to evaluate it, (3) how to organize it, and (4) how to apply it.



GRADUATE DEGREES OFFERED

A.R. SANCHEZ, JR. SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Concentrations:

- Criminal Justice
- Health Care Administration
- International Business (taught in English and Spanish)
- International Banking and Finance
- International Trade and Logistics
- Management

Master of Professional Accountancy (MPACC)

Master of Science in Information Systems (MSIS)

Doctor of Philosophy in International Business Administration (Ph.D.-IBA)

Concentrations:

- Accounting
- Finance
- Management and Marketing
- Management Information Systems and Data Analytics
- International Business Administration

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Combined Bachelor of Arts/Master of Arts or Bachelor of Science/Master of Science

(Major in: Communication, Criminal Justice, English, History, Mathematics, Political Science, Psychology, or Sociology)

Master of Arts in Communication (MA)

Concentrations:

- Border and Latin American Media Studies
- Organizational Communication in Transnational Settings

Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology (MACP)

Master of Arts in English (MA)

Master of Arts in History and Political Thought (MA)

Concentrations:

- History
- Political Science
- History and Political Science

Master of Arts in Sociology (MA)

Master of Arts in Language, Literature, and Translation (MA)

Master of Science in Biology (MA)

Master of Science in Criminal Justice (MSCJ)

Master of Science in - Mathematics (MS)

Tracks:

- Mathematics Education
- Applied Statistics

Master of Science in Psychology (MS)

Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Doctor of Philosophy in Hispanic Studies (Ph.D.)

Collaborative with TAMU

Professional Certificate

Non-Profit Leadership and Management

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction (MS)

Specializations:

- Academic Discipline
- Bilingual Education
- Educational Leadership
- Educational Technology
- Reading
- Master Teacher
- Special Education

Master of Science in Bilingual Education (MS)

Specializations:

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Educational Leadership
- Reading
- Special Education

Master of Science in Educational Administration (MS)

Master of Science in Special Education (MS)

Specializations:

- Bilingual Education
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Educational Leadership
- Education Diagnostics
- Reading

Master of Science in School Counseling (MS)

Professional Certificates (Master's Degree required)

- Educational Diagnostician
- Principalship
- Superintendent

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Master of Science in Nursing - Family Nurse Practitioner (MSN)

Master of Science in Nursing - Nursing Administration (MSN)

Master of Science in Nursing - Nursing Administration (MSN)
RN-MSN Option

Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate

ADMISSION INFORMATION

All applicants seeking admission to a graduate degree program at Texas A&M International University need to submit an application for admission online through <http://applytexas.org>. All supporting documentation and any additional program specific documentation indicated in the catalog and/or the Graduate Admissions Application must be submitted to receive admission consideration.

Each student application will be carefully reviewed (in compliance with HB 1641), and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. The Graduate School will notify students in writing about the status of their application and/or admission decision.

Below is a limited list required for graduate admissions (see the [university catalog](#) for full list):

1. Application for Graduate Admission
2. Graduate Application Fee
3. Official college/university transcript(s) from institutions other than Texas A&M International University. Degrees earned must be posted on transcript(s). The degree must be from a college or university of recognized standing, with degrees from institutions outside the U.S. evaluated for equivalence to U.S. degrees.
4. Official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) scores are required only if pursuing certain degrees. Official test scores must be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and dated within five years of enrollment. In programs requiring GRE, no admission decision will be made prior to the receipt of an official GRE or GMAT score.
 - Graduate programs in the **College of Arts and Sciences** do not require that applicants take the GRE, with the exception of the MA in Counseling Psychology.
 - The **A. R. Sanchez, Jr. School of Business*** does not require standardized test scores (GRE, GMAT, Examen de Admisión or EXANI III) for master's program applicants whose undergraduate upper level grade point average is a 3.25 or higher. Applicants who do not meet the undergraduate upper level grade point average requirement are required to submit GRE or GMAT scores. Students pursuing the MBA taught in Spanish may choose to take the Examen de Admisión. No admission decision will be made prior to the receipt of official GMAT, GRE, or Examen de Admisión scores. Applicants who have already obtained a masters or law degree from a regionally accredited institution are exempt from the GRE.
 - The **College of Education** does not require the GRE scores.
 - The **College of Nursing and Health Sciences** does not require the GRE scores.
5. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or Pearson PTE Academic is required of all students having academic studies from a country where English is not the native language. A minimum TOEFL score of 79 (ibt TOEFL), 550 (Paper-based), a 6.5 on the IELTS, or a 53 Pearson PTE Academic is required. These exam scores must be sent directly from the testing service and dated within two (2) years of enrollment. Institutional TOEFL exams taken at another institution will not be accepted. (If seeking exemption from this submission refer to TOEFL EXEMPTIONS section in the university catalog.)
 - For Ph.D. in International Business Administration applicants, a minimum TOEFL score of 100 (ibt TOEFL) or 600 (paper-based) or 7.0 on the IELTS is required for consideration for admission to the doctoral program; however, an applicant who has received a graduate degree from an Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited U.S. institution within two years of the date of application may be exempt from this requirement.

ADMISSION DECISIONS

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION

Provisional Admission may be granted to students who have not submitted all documents or test scores for admission. Such students will be allowed to attend for one semester (i.e., enroll in up to 6 graduate semester credit hours and earn a 3.0 or better overall graduate grade point average). Provisional admission is not available for all degree programs and is not available for international students. Students should check with the chair of the department/division delivering the program to determine provisional admission availability.

PROBATIONARY ADMISSION

Probationary Admission may be granted to students who have submitted all documents for admission but do not meet all requirements for full admission. Students who have a low overall grade point average or low GRE/GMAT scores, or who have not met departmental requirements or lack appropriate background for the chosen master's program may be granted probationary admission. Probationary status will be changed to full admission upon completion of 12 semester credit hours with a 3.0 or better overall graduate grade point average and upon completion of any additional requirements.

FULL ADMISSION

Full Admission may be granted to students who have submitted all documents for admission and have met all requirements for full admission depending on available space.

DEFERRING ADMISSION

Students wishing to defer their offer of admission can do so by submitting a [Change of Admission Information Form](#) available with the Graduate School. Deferrals will only be granted for a term of up to one year from the offer of admission. Students who defer their admission for more than one year will be required to reapply to the program.

NON-DEGREE APPLICANTS

Individuals wishing to take courses for personal growth may register for up to twelve hours as non-degree seeking. These courses may not be applicable to a degree program.

GRADUATE STUDY FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

A senior student in the last semester or summer session of undergraduate work may complete a normal load with graduate work as provided below:

- Must be within 15 semester credit hours of graduation
- Must have a 3.0 cumulative grade point average in upper-division work
- Must not enroll for more than 15 semester credit hours total, and must not enroll for more than 6 semester credit hours of graduate work. Cannot count work in graduate courses towards the bachelor's degree. Graduate courses will be reserved for credit toward the graduate degree when the student is fully accepted into a graduate program (not applicable to students pursuing the BA/MA degree)
- Must have approval from the Department/Division Chair and the Dean of the College in which the work is offered

COMBINED BA/MA, BA/MS, BS/MS DEGREES

Undergraduate students with majors in Communication, English, Criminal Justice, History, Mathematics, Political Science, Psychology, or Sociology may pursue a combined BA/MA, BA/MS or BS/MS program. Students with an overall GPA of 3.2 or higher and a field GPA of 3.5 (3.25 for Mathematics) or higher (after completing at least six 3000-4000 level SCH; 9 SCH in Political Science with 3 SCH at the 3000-4000 level) may apply for admission to the Master of Arts/Master of Science program during their junior year. Students accepted into the program will begin taking graduate courses during the senior year. Students must attain a "B" in their coursework to remain in and continue the combined program. Students will need to complete all admission requirements to the program during their junior year in addition to two letters of recommendation, one from the student's faculty advisor and one from another faculty member.

Interruption of progress toward the degree may result in the requirement to reapply to the program and include meeting the GRE requirement (Note: only Counseling Psychology requires the GRE).

Students seeking the BA/MA degree in Communication, English, History and Political Thought concentrating in History, History and Political Science, or Political Science or Sociology take up to nine SCH of graduate coursework during the senior year. Students may count a portion or all of these graduate hours toward their undergraduate degree requirements or save a portion or all of them to count toward the graduate degree requirements. Graduate courses used toward the undergraduate degree requirements may not be counted towards the graduate degree requirements.

Undergraduate students with a major in Criminal Justice or Psychology may pursue a combined BS/MS or a BA/MS program. Students seeking the BS/MS degree in Criminal Justice or the BA/MS in Psychology may take up to nine SCH of graduate coursework during the senior year. Students may count a portion or all of these graduate hours toward their undergraduate degree requirements or save a portion or all of them to count toward the graduate degree requirements. Graduate courses used toward the undergraduate degree requirements may not be counted towards the graduate degree requirements. Students electing to complete the BS/MS in Criminal Justice are eligible for either the thesis or non-thesis option.

Undergraduate students enrolled in the BA or BS in Mathematics (not the BA in Mathematics with 7-12 Certification) may pursue a combined BA/BS/MS program. Students seeking the BA/BS/MS degree in mathematics may take up to nine SCH of graduate coursework during the senior year. Students may count a portion or all of these graduate hours toward their undergraduate degree requirements or save a portion or all of them to count toward the graduate degree requirements. Graduate courses used toward the undergraduate degree requirements may not be counted towards the graduate degree requirements. Students electing to complete the BA/BS/MS in Mathematics are eligible for either the thesis or non-thesis option.

UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COUNCIL

MEMBERSHIP

The Graduate Council shall be composed of the following:

- Dean of the Graduate School (Chair)
- One appointed member from each college
- One member elected by each college
- Four at large members, elected, with no more than two from any single college: Library representative (ex officio)
- University Registrar (ex officio)
- Graduate Student, appointed by Provost (ex officio)
- Faculty Senate President or his or her representative (ex officio).

With the exception of the graduate student representative, the University Registrar, and the Faculty Senate President, all members of the Graduate Council shall be full members of the Graduate Faculty. Elected or appointed members shall serve a term of two years from the beginning of the fall semester following their election or appointment, which shall occur in the spring.

Terms for elected or appointed members shall be two years and staggered.

FUNCTIONS OF THE GRADUATE COUNCIL

It is the responsibility of the Graduate Council to review all proposals for graduate degree programs and courses and, at its option, existing programs and to review the criteria for membership on the Graduate Faculty. Furthermore, the council is to establish admission standards, standards for continuation of graduate students, and residency requirements. Finally, the council is to consider any other matters relevant to the Graduate School.

PETITIONS

Although the faculty expects all graduate students to meet the requirements outlined in the catalog, exceptions will occasionally be made in cases in which a student can demonstrate a genuine emergency has interfered with the timely completion of these requirements. When such a situation arises, the student should petition the Graduate Council for an exemption from the ordinary requirements.

MEETINGS

The Graduate Council will meet monthly or as needed.

STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEES FOR STUDENTS IN THESIS PROGRAMS

Soon after enrolling for graduate course work, and no later than the end of the second semester of study, each student must request a faculty member to chair an advisory committee. The committee should include at least four (4) tenured or tenure-track faculty members who are members of the Graduate Faculty at Texas A&M International University. The committee chair and one of the four members must be from the student's major field, and one member must be from a different field.

Selection of the committee members should occur after discussion between the student and the committee chair. If the student wishes to include more than four faculty members on the committee, approval by the committee chair is required.

Once the committee has been chosen and the designated faculty members have agreed to serve, the student must obtain their signatures on the form "Request for Service on a Graduate Advisory Committee." This form is submitted to the Graduate School, where it is kept as part of the student's academic records. A copy of this form should also be submitted to the department chair. Students must update their committee membership if any faculty members on the committee have left the university.

The student's advisory committee, in consultation with the student, will design a coherent and viable degree plan and a reasonable timetable for executing it. Upon advisement, each student will receive a copy of a checklist for graduate students and faculty advisors which will clarify the various stages of the student's expected progress toward the degree.

Undergraduate stemwork or prerequisites will not be included in the degree plan. Students must complete all courses with a satisfactory grade (C or above) and must maintain at least a 3.00 (B) cumulative average to remain in good standing. No more than one grade of "C" will be accepted as credit for any graduate program (except for the MACP Program, which allows no grades of Cs).

The advisory committee, under the direction of the committee chair, will have the responsibility for the following:

- Counseling the student on academic matters
- Evaluating the student's progress toward completion of the degree program
- Preparing the comprehensive examination
- Assisting with the thesis research proposal (if student is pursuing the thesis track)
- Administering and attending the defense of the thesis proposal
- Assisting with the thesis research
- Administering and attending the defense of the thesis

All graduate students should schedule regular appointments with their committee chair each semester. At the end of each semester, the committee chair must record that the student is making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree. Any student who temporarily or permanently drops out of a graduate program must provide a written explanation to the chair of the advisory committee, who will file a report with the department chair and the Graduate School (See Leave of Absence section of this Handbook).

Students wishing to change either the chair or any member of the advisory committee must petition the Department Chair for permission to make such a change, citing specific and substantial reasons. Such changes should only be made after serious reflection.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

To be eligible to receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M International University, candidates must demonstrate the ability to comprehensively synthesize information, concepts, or skills vital to their discipline. This requirement may be met through passing a written comprehensive examination, through writing and successfully defending a thesis or dissertation, through completing a major project appropriate to the field of study, through completing satisfactorily an internship or other capstone experience, or through a combination of the preceding. The faculty of each program will decide which of these experiences is most appropriate as a requirement for the degree. Candidates must initiate completion of this requirement no later than the long semester after they have completed required coursework.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

Comprehensive examinations are required in certain Non-Thesis programs. Consult with your academic advisor for full program requirements. If required, a written comprehensive examination shall be passed by the candidate covering the major and minor fields, and each will be VALID FOR ONE YEAR. Exams will be given each long semester. The comprehensive examination may be taken during the student's last semester of course work. A student who fails to pass one or more questions of the exam will be allowed one opportunity to repeat and pass the exam. Oral examinations must be completed by mid-November or mid-April.

ELIGIBILITY TO TAKE THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

In order to be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, a student must have at least a 3.00 GPA and be in good standing.

NOTIFICATION OF INTENT

Master's degree candidates must register intent to take the comprehensive examination with the Department Chair and the Testing Center no later than the third Friday of the semester in which the examination will be taken.

PREPARATION FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

At, or near the beginning of the semester during which the examination will be taken, master's or doctoral students are encouraged to make appointments with professors who will submit questions for the examination. These appointments will give students guidance about the materials most important to review. In order to study for the comprehensive examination, graduate students should keep notes, exams, and books from their courses.

SCHEDULING THE EXAM

Comprehensive examinations are administered by the Testing Center during the student's last semester of course work. Before the examination takes place, the Department Chair and/or Advisory Committee Chair will ask faculty in the student's major and minor fields to submit questions.

LAST DAY TO TAKE THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The last Friday of October (Fall Semester) or March (Spring Semester) is the last day to take the comprehensive examination for graduation in that semester. Examinations may be scheduled in the summer at the discretion of the Department Chair.

FORMAT AND EVALUATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The comprehensive examination will vary in format according to departmental requirements, but it should include written responses that cover the class work taken in the student's major and minor fields, as well as questions covering basic general knowledge in these disciplines. An oral defense of the student's written answers may be required at the discretion of the advisory committee.

At the examination, each master's student will be given a number of questions selected by the student's committee chair that cover the courses taken by the student in the major and minor fields. Topics for questions will not be announced prior to the examination. Each student will ordinarily have one hour per question for a maximum of 4 hours. The department will supply writing materials or computer, which will be used for each question. Students should be prepared to show a picture identification when going for the examination.

Each faculty member who has submitted a question will judge whether the student has responded sufficiently to that question to deserve a passing grade. This judgment will be reported first to the chair of the Advisory Committee and then to the Department Chair. It is also the prerogative of each faculty member involved to request that the student undergo further written or oral examination on a particular question. The student's Advisory Committee makes a final recommendation to the Department Chair concerning the student's performance on the exam (i.e., pass or fail) utilizing the Comprehensive Examination Form. All recommendations for comprehensive examinations will be sent to the office of the Department Chair no later than the second Friday of November (Fall Semester) or the second Friday of April (Spring Semester). The Department Chair will forward the Comprehensive Examination Form to the College Dean and the College Dean will forward the form to the Dean of the Graduate School.

A student who does not complete all degree requirements within one year of passing the comprehensive examination will have to take and pass it again. A student who fails to pass one or more questions of the examination will be allowed one opportunity to repeat and pass the examination.

All degree requirements must be completed within five years of beginning the master's degree.

THESIS AND NON-THESIS OPTIONS

Both thesis and non-thesis degree plans are available in most of the graduate programs at Texas A&M International University.

THESIS OPTION

The thesis option requires an original paper which demonstrates the ability of the candidate to organize and conduct a research study and to write a professionally competent report which makes a substantial contribution to ongoing work in the student's chosen discipline. Each student is guided in the thesis project by the advisory committee, under the direction of the committee chair. The format of the master's thesis should follow the guidelines set forth in the Texas A&M International University Thesis Manual, which provides clear information about relevant specifications. This manual is available in the Graduate School website: <https://www.tamui.edu/gradschool/ThesisHomepage.shtml>

While degree plans differ in the number of total semester credit hours (SCH) required, hours in a minor area of study are an obligatory part of most thesis plans, as are the six hours of thesis research. Students should maintain continuous registration during the Fall and Spring semesters until all degree requirements are fulfilled.

THESIS PROPOSAL

Students preparing to write a master's thesis should carefully consult with their advisors and should familiarize themselves with the Texas A&M International Thesis Manual and any other available college and/or program specific Thesis Manual. Since the thesis should demonstrate a student's capacity for independent research and formal writing, all work submitted to the advisor or to the committee should be presented in an acceptable format and should be free from fundamental technical or logical errors. Each student embarking upon a thesis project should read at least one M.A. or M.S. (whichever is appropriate) thesis recommended by the advisor. Each thesis topic should be thoroughly researched so that no duplication of work occurs. When the advisor is satisfied that the thesis proposal is formally acceptable, an oral defense of the thesis proposal will be scheduled.

THESIS

When the advisor is satisfied that the thesis is formally acceptable, an oral defense of the thesis will be scheduled.

NON-THESIS OPTION

In some instances, the requirements for the non-thesis option for a master's degree are satisfied by completing additional semester hours of course work in lieu of the thesis. Thirty-six credit hours are required for most non-thesis master's degrees with required courses in a field of study.

The level of courses and the examination requirements are typically the same as the thesis option. The comprehensive final examination or other capstone experience must be completed satisfactorily.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Although individual faculty members will set their own attendance policies, graduate students should be aware that, because their classes ordinarily meet once a week, missing one class is equivalent to missing one week of instruction. Consequently, absences must be kept to a minimum, and students should make certain that their professors understand the reasons for any absences from class. Although graduate work teaches students to develop skills in independent thinking, the classroom (or on-line) experience remains at the heart of this learning process; therefore, responsible and regular contribution and preparation are vital.

COURSE LOAD

Normal Load: the normal load for a graduate student for a long semester is nine (9) semester credit hours. The normal load for summer school is six (6) semester credit hours per session. For a graduate student employed in a full-time public school teaching position, the University recommends a load of six (6) hours each long semester. Please Note: a graduate student carrying a load of three (3) hours in a long semester will be considered part-time, as per the definition below.

Full-Time: a full-time graduate student is defined as one carrying a minimum load of six (6) semester credit hours during a long semester. A graduate student registered for fewer than six (6) semester credit hours is considered a part-time student.

Half-Time: a half-time graduate student is defined as one carrying a minimum load of three (3) semester credit hours during a long semester.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS

The maximum load for a full-time graduate student is twelve (12) semester credit hours per semester (including sub-terms), six (6) semester credit hours each summer term, and six (6) semester credit hours each sub-term. **Any semester credit hour load in excess of the maximum load must be approved by the Dean of the appropriate College.**

A graduate student may enroll for up to nine (9) semester credit hours in one summer session only if he/she meets both of the following criteria:

- Needs the nine semester credit hours to complete graduation and/or certification requirements in August; and
- Has at least a 3.5/4.0 grade point average based on all valid graduate course work taken up to the present time. Total semester credit hours earned in the summer may not exceed fifteen (15) semester credit hours.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students should be aware that they are required to maintain continuous registration during the Fall and Spring semesters, including registration for thesis, until all requirements for graduation have been met. Interruptions or delays in the course of study which have not been approved in advance by the student's advisory committee chair will interfere with the degree time limits and may result in students having to re-take courses and/or apply for re-admission to the program.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

- You must be in good standing (i.e., financial obligations met, no disciplinary action, good academic standing)
- Requests for Leave of Absence must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate School before the second week of the first semester of absence
- The maximum Leave of Absence is two semesters. Any Leave of Absence beyond two semesters must be adequately justified and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School
- The maximum number of Leave of Absence requests is two
- You must inform the Dean of the Graduate School when you return from your Leave of Absence period. Unapproved Leaves of Absence may result in the student being required to re-apply to his or her program

PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. If a student would like to file a complaint for discrimination due to his or her pregnant/parenting status, please contact the TAMIU Director of Title IX and Civil Rights Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site: www.tamiu.edu/reportit.

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Compliance can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodations. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students at the University, contact the TAMIU Director of Title IX and Civil Rights Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu). In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU University urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU Student Handbook. As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (<http://www.tamiu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>).

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/TITLE IX NOTICE

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity in admissions, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Title IX and Civil Rights Compliance, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, Report It, at www.tamiu.edu/reportit, and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

TITLE IX INQUIRIES OR INCIDENT REPORTING

COMPLAINTS AGAINST A NON-FACULTY EMPLOYEE, STUDENT, STUDENT ATHLETE, OR THIRD PARTY:

Lorissa M. Cortez, TAMIU Director of Title IX and Civil Rights Compliance
5201 University Boulevard, Laredo, TX 78041
Killam Library Building, Room 159B
Phone: (956) 326-2857
TitleIX@tamiu.edu

COMPLAINTS AGAINST A FACULTY MEMBER:

Dr. Kevin Lindberg, Associate Provost | Title IX Deputy Coordinator
5201 University Boulevard, Laredo, TX 78041
Killam Library Building, Room 332B
Phone: (956) 326-2601
klindberg@tamiu.edu

ALL TITLE IX COMPLAINTS CAN ALSO BE FILED WITH:

Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office)
U.S. Department of Education
1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620
Dallas, TX 75201-6810
Phone: (214) 661-9600

FINANCIAL AID

Graduate students interested in financial assistance should visit the Financial Aid website: <https://www.tamiu.edu/fa.shtml>

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The Graduate School and individual departments may provide a limited number of teaching and research assistantships for graduate students who demonstrate outstanding ability. Such assistantships will be awarded on a competitive basis, and students receiving such appointments will be subject to regular evaluation by their respective departments. These assistantships will constitute no more than 1/2 time employment, and graduate assistants will be expected to register for no less than nine credit hours per semester and to maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 or 3.5, depending on the program. Students interested in applying for such assistantships should contact the Dean of Graduate School and/or the appropriate Department Chair.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

All graduate students should demonstrate fundamental skills in the reading, speaking, and writing of English. Any student who proves unable to function competently in English will be required to take remedial work in order to develop the proficiency necessary for successful graduate study. Decisions about individual students will be made by the Dean of each College.

Most graduate schools encourage or even require students to demonstrate reasonable proficiency in the reading of at least one language other than English. All Texas A&M International University graduate students are encouraged to improve their skills in Spanish and to study other languages as our course offerings expand. To ascertain whether a particular degree program requires demonstrable proficiency in a language other than English, students should consult the Department Chair in their major area.

Students who hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a university outside the United States may be required to pass a departmentally administered reading proficiency test of English.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

All coursework must be taken at this University. See Transfer of Graduate-Level Study below.

TRANSFER OF GRADUATE-LEVEL STUDY

A maximum of twelve (12) semester credit hours with a minimum grade of 3.0 ("B") on a 4.0 scale can be transferred into a master's program with the consent of the Program Director and Department Chair. Transferred courses must also comply with the expired coursework policy. In the A.R. Sanchez, Jr. School of Business, transfer credit applies solely to elective/concentration courses; required courses that are part of the business graduate curriculum must be completed in residence.

GRADES REQUIRED

A minimum grade point average of 3.0 ("B") on a 4.0 point scale computed on all graduate work attempted must be maintained as well as in the major and in the minor. No more than three (3) semester credit hours with a letter grade of "C" earned at this university will be accepted as credit for a master's degree. Exception: No grade below 3.0 ("B") will be accepted for the MA in Counseling Psychology and in the major curriculum courses in Sociology.

CORRESPONDENCE WORK

In no case will courses taken by correspondence be accepted for graduate credit.

REPETITION OF A COURSE

Courses applicable to a graduate degree may not be repeated for course credit, unless prescribed during the admissions process or the Scholastic Deficiency process.

CONTINUATION OF GRADUATE STUDIES

GOOD STANDING

Graduate students, including degree-seeking, certificate-seeking, and non-degree-seeking students, are considered in “good academic standing,” if they maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale on all graduate course work, have no more than one grade of “C,” and do not have a grade of “D” or “F”.

MINIMUM GRADE REQUIREMENT

Only grades of A, B, S, and CR are acceptable for graduate credit. No more than one grade of “C” will be accepted as credit for any graduate program. IP is considered acceptable with respect to the minimum grade requirement. Grades of “D” or “F” or a second grade of “C” will lead to immediate suspension from a program. Students may repeat courses in which they earned a “C” or higher, in which case the last grade of record is the official grade, will be used in calculating the GPA, and will be used in determining whether or not a student is in “good standing.” However, only one course in which the student earned a “C” may be repeated. No grades below “B” will be accepted for the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology degree and in the major curriculum courses in Sociology.

OTHER SCHOLASTIC REQUIREMENTS

Satisfactory academic performance may also include specific program requirements which can include, and are not limited to, satisfactory research performance, a satisfactory GPA in the major, satisfactory performance in examinations, such as the comprehensive examination, satisfactory performance in the program capstone course, or other specific program requirements.

SCHOLASTIC PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

PLACEMENT ON SCHOLASTIC PROBATION

A graduate student will be placed on scholastic probation if, at the end of any semester or term, the student’s cumulative graduate grade point average falls below 3.0. Students may not appeal being placed on probation, but they may appeal a course grade through the grade appeal process.

REMOVAL FROM SCHOLASTIC PROBATION

A student must achieve a cumulative 3.0 GPA within completion of the next long semester (Fall or Spring) to be removed from scholastic probation if scholastic probation was due to unsatisfactory GPA. The courses included in the long semester must be within the degree plan the student is pursuing when placed on scholastic probation.

A student who is removed from scholastic probation is not eligible for placement on scholastic probation a second time.

SUSPENSION BECAUSE OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

A student who has been on scholastic probation will be suspended from a program if the student’s grade point average for any subsequent term or semester falls below 3.0, or the student does not achieve the required cumulative GPA within one long semester. Students may also be suspended from a program if they earn a second grade of “C” or a grade of “D” or “F.” Students may not appeal being suspended from a program based on their grades, but they may appeal individual grades that triggered the suspension.

READMISSION AFTER SUSPENSION

A student who is suspended may not enroll in any graduate program for a minimum of 12 consecutive months. A student must reapply, meet current requirements for degree-seeking students, and be accepted by the University and the program to enroll for graduate studies following the period of suspension. The application may be submitted prior to the requested enrollment date.

A.R. SANCHEZ, JR. SCHOOL OF BUSINESS PH.D. PROGRAM

Doctoral students in the A. R. Sanchez, Jr. School of Business who receive a grade of “C” in any of the Ph.D. classes must seek immediate guidance from the director of the program.

Doctoral students in the A. R. Sanchez, Jr. School of Business who earn a second grade of “C”, a “D”, or an “F” will be dismissed from the program.

EXPULSION BECAUSE OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The default sanction imposed by the provost for a graduate student found responsible for violation of the TAMU Honor Code is expulsion from the university. On the recommendation of the Honor Council and with the approval of the university provost, this sanction may be reduced to suspension from the university for a set period of time if -- in the opinion of the provost -- the nature of the violations or the circumstances warrant a sanction less severe than expulsion. Students who are suspended rather than expelled may apply for reinstatement after meeting the terms established by the provost at the time of their suspension. Students who are expelled from the university cannot reenter any university degree program.

Students found guilty of violating the Honor Code may appeal the findings of the Honor Council that has triggered the expulsion or suspension. They may not appeal, however, an expulsion or suspension itself that is based on a violation of the Honor Code and on the recommendation of the provost.

GRADUATION UNDER A PARTICULAR CATALOG

A degree seeking student may receive his/her master's degree upon satisfying the requirements of the catalog under which he/she first earned resident credit for graduate work, or upon satisfying the requirements of the catalog of any subsequent year in which he/she earned credit as a resident student in the University. All requirements for a master's degree must be completed within a period of five years or within the time specified for the particular program. No credit more than five/six years old, counting from the catalog year in effect at registration, will be recognized as graduate credit applicable toward a graduate degree. Students whose coursework has expired may repeat the expired course(s) or request an appropriate substitution. Students may also submit an Extension Form for Graduate Coursework requesting credit for expired coursework.

ETHICS

Texas A&M International University graduate students should recognize that they represent their intellectual community in a special way. Our institution's reputation depends upon what our graduates achieve and upon how they conduct themselves. The University expects graduate students to conduct themselves in accord with principles appropriate to mature and rational individuals. A detailed description of the Student Code of Conduct is available in the Texas A&M International University Student Handbook.

GRADUATE STUDENT WORKING GREATER THAN 50% EFFORT

The following is a reminder of the Graduate School-Graduate Council Guidelines for employing Graduate Students at greater than 50% effort.

1. Students that hold positions of Graduate Assistant Teaching (GAT), Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching (GANT) and Graduate Assistant Research (GAR) are normally required to work 19 hours per week (50%)
2. GAT, GANT, and GAR positions are not allowed to work beyond 50% efforts without the approval of the Graduate School
3. International students are not allowed to work beyond whatever percent of effort their assistantship is for the fall and spring semesters, in accordance with immigration rules.
4. Domestic students are allowed to work no more than 10 hours per week beyond the assistantship anytime during the semester provided they are correctly registered and the department giving the assistantship approves the extra hours.
5. A written request must be submitted to the Graduate School from the hiring entity through the department giving the assistantship (if the hiring entity is not the department giving the assistantship).

TAMUS PATHWAYS TO THE DOCTORATE PROGRAM

Pathways to the Doctorate is a program dedicated to increasing the number, quality, and diversity of master's and doctoral graduates across all disciplines within the nine universities and the Health Science Center of Texas A&M University System. This allows the program to recruit top students from diverse geographic, socio-economic, racial, ethnic and cultural environments to pursue careers in higher education and thus produce the next generation of faculty. Pathways to the Doctorate is one approach to Closing the Gaps in Texas.

Through a variety of activities such as seminars and workshops, inter-institutional exchange programs, a mentoring program and an annual research symposium with System wide participation, the Pathways Program:

- creates a pathway for talented students to pursue graduate education;
- fosters opportunities for faculty, graduate and undergraduate students to collaborate and to pursue innovative research and enhance interpersonal communication skills;
- enlightens and encourages students and teachers (P-16) to see that science and technology are essential to lead a life of discovery and enjoyment;
- helps meet faculty needs as post-secondary enrollment grows and current faculty retire.

Information can be found at <http://ogs.tamu.edu/OGS/pathways>. Contact the Dean of the Graduate School if you are interested in the Pathways to the Doctorate Program.

#THENEXTSTEP

TEXAS A&M **INTERNATIONAL** UNIVERSITY
5201 UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD, LAREDO, TX 78041-1900
956.326.3020 | WWW.TAMU.EDU | GRADUATESCHOOL@TAMU.EDU