

# ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## Academic Expectations

### Expectations for Graduate and Professional Study

The major goals of graduate and professional education at Texas A&M are to instill in each student an understanding of and a capacity for scholarship, independent judgment, academic rigor, and intellectual honesty. Faculty along with graduate and professional students have a shared obligation to work together, fostering these goals through relationships that advance freedom of inquiry, demonstrating individual and professional integrity, and encouraging common respect.

Graduate student progress is guided and evaluated by an advisor and advisory committee. These individuals give direction and support for the appropriate developmental and learning goals of a graduate student. The advisor and the advisory committee also have the obligation of evaluating a graduate student's academic performance. The graduate student, the advisor, and the advisory committee constitute the basic core of graduate education. The quality, scope, and extent of interaction in this group determines the significance of the graduate experience.

High quality graduate education requires the professional and ethical conduct of the participants. Faculty and graduate students have mutual responsibilities in ensuring academic standards and quality graduate programs. Excellence in graduate education is achieved when faculty and students are inspired, have the academic and professional backgrounds essential to function at the highest level, and are genuine in their mutual desire to see one another succeed. Any action that negatively affects this interaction, from either faculty members or students, destroys the whole relationship. Mutual respect is critical to the successful process.

**The requirements set forth in this catalog are defined as minimum University requirements. Departments, interdisciplinary degree programs, and colleges/schools may opt to establish higher standards and/or additional requirements.**

### Student Responsibilities

Each student has a responsibility to:

1. Know specific degree requirements as established by the University and the student's department, interdisciplinary degree program, or college/school.
2. Be acquainted with the Texas A&M University Student Rules (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>).
3. Enroll in the necessary coursework to complete the approved degree plan.
4. Maintain appropriate standards to continue in graduate studies.
5. Know the steps and deadlines related to graduation.

Information about general degree requirements is available in this catalog. Specific degree requirements and procedural guidelines are available from the academic unit graduate advisor(s).

## General Graduate Degree Information

A *Research Doctoral Degree* is an academic degree that typically represents the highest level of formal student or research in a given field and that requires completion of original research.

A *Professional Practice Doctoral Degree* refers to certain degree programs that prepare students for a career as a practitioner in a particular profession, including certain credential types that are required for professional licensure.

### Research Doctoral

#### Doctor of Philosophy

Work leading to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree is designed to give the candidate a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the professional field and training in methods of research. Students who graduate with a doctoral degree will: master the degree-program's requirements; develop a coherent understanding of the subject matter; apply subject-matter knowledge to solve problems and make decisions; analyze and integrate information to make critical, reasoned arguments; communicate effectively; develop clear research plans; use appropriate technologies to communicate; teach and explain the subject matter in a discipline; and choose ethical courses of action in research and practice.

The degree is not granted solely for the completion of coursework, residence and program requirements, although these must be met.

Students who have completed a master's degree, a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS)/Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry (DMD), Doctor of veterinary Medicine (DVM), Doctor of Law (JD), or Doctor of Medicine (MD) at a United States institution, a minimum of 60 hours may be required on the degree plan for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Students who have completed a baccalaureate degree but not a master's degree or a United States DDS/DMD, DVM, JD, or MD, a minimum of 90 hours may be required on the degree plan for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. In all cases, program faculty determine the number of hours required upon admission.

### Professional Doctorate

Professional doctorates at Texas A&M include a Doctor of Education (EdD), Doctor of Engineering (Deng), and a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) are designed to prepare a candidate for a position of leadership in the full range of settings, including public and private schools, colleges, business, government, industry, and the military establishment. The programs are designed for the practitioner, with emphasis on solving problems to benefit society at large. Students who graduate with a Professional doctoral degree will: master degree-program requirements; develop a coherent understanding of the subject matter; apply subject matter knowledge to solve problems and make decisions; analyze and integrate information to make critical, reasoned arguments; communicate effectively; develop clear research plans; use appropriate technologies to communicate; teach and explain the subject matter in their discipline; and choose ethical courses of action in research and practice.

Because graduates of the program are expected to demonstrate a high level of professional skill and educational statesmanship, only those candidates who show a consistently high level of professional performance in their academic studies, in their role-related studies, in their internship experience, and in the completion of their records of study will be recommended for the degree.

Students who have completed a master's degree, a DDS/DMD, DVM, JD, or MD at a United States institution, a minimum of 60 hours may be required on the degree plan for a professional doctorate. Students who have completed a baccalaureate degree but not a master's degree or a United States DDS/DMD, DVM, JD, or MD, a minimum of 90 hours may be required on the degree plan. In all cases, program faculty determine the number of hours required upon admission.

## Professional Practice Doctorate

Professional Practice doctorates at Texas A&M include a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS), Juris Doctor (JD), Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD), and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM). The programs are designed to develop broadly competent practitioners. They typically combine intensive coursework with clinical/practical rotations in the field. Students who graduate with a professional practice doctoral degree will: master degree-program requirements; develop a coherent understanding of the subject matter; apply subject matter knowledge to solve problems and make decisions; analyze and integrate information to make critical, reasoned arguments; communicate effectively; develop clear research plans; use appropriate technologies to communicate; teach and explain the subject matter in their discipline; and choose ethical courses of action in research and practice.

## Master's

Work leading to the master's degree is designed to give the candidate a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the field beyond that of the undergraduate degree. Students who graduate with a master's degree will: demonstrate proficiency of degree-program requirements; apply subject matter knowledge in a range of contexts to solve problems and make decisions; use a variety of sources and evaluate multiple points of view to analyze and integrate information; communicate effectively; use appropriate technologies; develop clear research plans and conduct appropriate research; and choose ethical courses of action in research and practice.

A minimum of 30 hours may be required for completion of the master's degree.

## Scholastic Requirements

Unless otherwise stated, students in graduate degree programs and post-baccalaureate non-degree students (G6 Classification) must maintain a 3.000 cumulative GPA (computed as specified in Student Rule 10.4.3 (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule10/>)). Degree-seeking students also must maintain a GPA of at least 3.000 on all courses listed on a degree plan. Departments and Colleges may establish higher GPA requirements for their students in graduate degree programs and for post-baccalaureate non-degree students (G6 Classification).

A graduate student will not receive graduate degree credit for undergraduate courses taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. A graduate student may not receive grades other than S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory) in graduate courses bearing the numbers 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 693, 695, 697, and 791 (except for ALEC 695 (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/search/?search=alec+695>), BUAD 693 (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/search/?search=BUAD+693>), AGEC 695 (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/search/?search=AGEC+695>), GEOG 695 (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/search/?search=GEOG+695>), and IBUS 692 (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/search/?search=IBUS+692>)). These officially designated S/U courses may be listed on a degree plan, along with other courses approved and noted as S/U in the graduate catalog.

Graduate courses not listed on a degree plan may be taken on an S/U basis. Only grades of A, B, C, and S are acceptable for graduate credit.

For graduate students, grades of D, F, or U for courses on the degree plan must be absolved by repeating the courses and achieving grades of C or above or S. If a course has been taken more than once, and a grade of D or F was earned and then repeated for a grade of C or higher, the original grades of D or F will be excluded from the GPA calculation for the degree plan (if applicable) and cumulative GPA, but remain on the student's permanent record.

A course in which the final grade is C may be repeated for a higher grade. If a subsequent grade is higher, the original grade(s) will be excluded from the GPA calculation for the degree plan (if applicable) and cumulative GPA, but remain on the student's permanent record.

Repeat grades and cumulative GPA requirements for financial aid programs may differ from those listed above, based on the type of aid.

Rules related to F\* grades and repeat courses may be found under Student Rule 20 (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule20/>) and on the Aggie Honor System Office website under Sanctions (<https://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/Rules-and-Procedures/Rules/Sanctions/>). If a minimum GPA is not attained in a reasonable length of time, a student may be dismissed from graduate studies. Degree-seeking graduate students may also be considered scholastically deficient if they fail to show acceptable proficiency in such other requisites for their degree as may be assigned by the student's advisory committee, department, interdisciplinary degree program, college/school, or the Graduate and Professional School (e.g., qualifying and preliminary examinations, research, writing, or a thesis, record of study, or dissertation, etc.).

A post-baccalaureate non-degree student (G6 Classification) who has completed 12 hours of coursework is considered to be scholastically deficient when the student's grade point ratio falls below 3.00 or below a higher standard set by the department or college of affiliation; or the student fails to show proficiency in such other areas as may be specified by the program's department or the Graduate and Professional School.

For a scholastically deficient post-baccalaureate non-degree student (G6 Classification), the student's home academic unit shall determine eligibility, and the academic unit is responsible for notifying the Graduate and Professional School if a registration block is to be placed on the student.

The details of scholastic deficiency and procedures for dismissal are explained in Texas A&M University Student Rule 12 (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule12/>). Departments, interdisciplinary degree programs, or colleges/schools may adopt additional or higher requirements pertaining to scholastic deficiency or dismissal.

## New Graduate Student Orientation

Coordinated by the Graduate and Professional School, the New Graduate Student Orientation (<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/dates-and-deadlines/new-graduate-student-orientation/>) provides an overview of graduate and professional education and services at Texas A&M University – including information on financial aid, procedures and processes, campus safety, writing services, and additional campus services. New graduate and professional students will have the opportunity to meet campus leaders, administrators, and fellow graduate and professional students. Experienced graduate students will be present to answer questions and provide insight about thriving in graduate school, balancing school, work, and personal life, and making the most

of living in the local communities. Designed to get new graduate and professional students off to a good start, students will also have the opportunity to explore resources and meet representatives of campus services and organizations who serve the graduate and professional community.

For additional information about New Graduate Student Orientation, please contact the Graduate and Professional School at Grad-Recruit@tamu.edu (grad@tamu.edu).

## Certificate Requirements

### Requirements for a Certificate

A current student must receive permission from the department offering the certificate and their primary academic advisor in order to pursue a certificate. All requirements outlined in the catalog and degree evaluation for the specific certificate program must be met in order for a certificate to be awarded.

#### Certificate types:

- **Major-dependent** - A student is admitted to the program through the offering department. Admission to the program requires the student to pursue a specific degree/major at Texas A&M University. This type of certificate program typically serves as a track within a degree program. The certificate and degree are awarded simultaneously.
- **Degree-dependent** - A student is admitted to the program through the offering department. Admission to the program simply requires that the student pursue a degree at Texas A&M University. The certificate may or may not be related to their specific degree/major. The certificate is awarded upon completion of the requirements independent of a degree.
- **Stand-alone** - A student is admitted to the program through the Office of Admissions. The student may pursue the certificate without being enrolled in a degree program. The certificate may be awarded upon completion of requirements. Students currently pursuing a degree or another stand-alone certificate through Texas A&M can be admitted to an additional stand-alone certificate program through the offering department without submitting an application through the Office of Admissions.

## Graduation Application, Certificate and Commencement

Formal application for certificates to be awarded must be submitted online in Howdy (<http://howdy.tamu.edu/>) by the deadline stated in the academic calendar.

Certificates are granted to students who make a formal application for the certificate to be awarded, have all grades on record in the Office of the Registrar, and have satisfied all certificate requirements. With the exception of major dependent certificates, which are awarded at the end of each term along with the student's associated degree, certificates are awarded on the last calendar day of the month in which they are completed. In months where a commencement ceremony is held, degree-dependent and stand-alone certificates will be awarded with the conferral date for that term's commencement.

Students that have made a formal application for a certificate in a given semester/term must have all requirements satisfied no later than 5 p.m., Friday, the first week of classes of the succeeding semester or summer term for the certificate to be formally awarded.

A Certificate Processing and Service Charge is assessed for each certificate graduation application submitted by a student. This charge is non-refundable and cannot be transferred to another certificate graduation application.

Students must have settled all financial obligations to the university prior to receiving a certificate.

University certificates will either be mailed directly to the student or issued to the college for formal presentation.

**For additional information regarding certificate tracking and awarding, please visit the Office of the Registrar website (<https://registrar.tamu.edu/administrative-services/degree-audit/certificate-tracking-awarding/>).**

## Degree Requirements

### Residence Requirement

A major purpose of the residence requirements for graduate degrees is to ensure that students have an opportunity to benefit from the advantages of a university environment. These advantages include accessibility to libraries, laboratories, and other physical facilities, as well as opportunities to participate in seminars and a variety of cultural activities. Equally important to graduate students are the advantages of becoming acquainted with the faculty and other students on personal and professional bases.

Students "in residence" are expected to devote sufficient time and energy to graduate studies under the direction of an advisory committee chair and members (if applicable). Another major purpose of the residence requirements for graduate degrees is to ensure that faculty have opportunities to properly evaluate students' development, guide and direct their studies, and determine competency.

For specific minimum residence requirements, students should check the Additional Requirements section in the Graduate and Professional Catalog for the degree they are pursuing.

## Student's Advisory Committee

After receiving admission to graduate studies, students will consult with the graduate program concerning selection of a chair and members (if applicable) for an advisory committee representative of the student's field(s) of study and research.

Only members of the Graduate Committee Faculty located on Texas A&M University campuses may serve as chair of a student's advisory committee. Other members of the Graduate Committee Faculty – including those located outside the university or off-campus (if permitted by program, department, and college/school policy) – may serve as a co-chair or member.

The advisory committee as a group – and as individual members – are responsible for advising the student on academic matters. The duties include responsibility for approving the student's proposed degree plan; research proposal (if applicable); thesis, dissertation, or record of study (if applicable); and conducting examinations (if required). The advisory committee members' approval of a degree plan indicates their willingness to accept the responsibility for guiding and directing the entire academic program of the student and for initiating all academic actions concerning the student. Additionally, in the case of academic deficiency, the advisory

committee is responsible for initiating recommendations to the Graduate and Professional School.

The chair of the advisory committee, who usually has immediate supervision of the student's degree program, has the responsibility for calling meetings at any time considered desirable.

If the chair of the student's advisory committee is unavailable for an extended period of time in any academic period during which the student is involved in activities relating to an internship, thesis or professional paper – and is registered for courses such as 684, 691, 692, or 693 – the Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair may appoint an alternate advisory committee chair during the interim period.

If the chair of a student's advisory committee voluntarily separates from the university, and wants the chair to continue to serve in this role – a written request must be submitted to the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School, by the Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair, that the faculty member who is on an approved leave of absence be allowed to continue to serve as chair of the advisory committee – without a co-chair – for up to one year. The request must confirm that the faculty member is able to engage in the required duties as chair during the leave of absence. Extensions beyond the one-year period (if necessary) may be granted with additional approval of the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School.

If the chair of a student's advisory committee voluntarily separates from the university, and the student is nearing completion of the degree, the chair may continue to serve in this role – at the student's request – for up to one year. Two options are available:

1. The chair may continue, with a co-chair, without additional approval by the Graduate and Professional School. The student must select a current member of the Graduate Committee Faculty – from the student's academic program and located near the Texas A&M University campus site – to serve as co-chair of the advisory committee.
2. The chair may continue, without a co-chair, with approval by the Graduate and Professional School. A written request must be submitted to the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School by the Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair to allow the faculty member to continue as chair, without a co-chair, of the advisory committee.

For both options, extensions beyond the one-year period (if necessary) may be granted with approval of the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School.

Although individual advisory committee members may be replaced by petition for valid reasons, all members of a student committee cannot resign *en masse*.

For specific advisory committee requirements, students should check the Program Requirements section in the Graduate and Professional Catalog for the degree they are pursuing.

## Degree Plan

Graduate students must file a degree plan which includes those courses to be applied toward a particular degree and formally establishes an advisory committee.

Students, in consultation with the advisory committee, will develop a proposed degree plan. The degree plan must be created, submitted, and

approved through the online Document Processing Submission System (<https://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>) (DPSS). The degree plan must be submitted prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college or school and approved by the Graduate and Professional School no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination or thesis/dissertation defense. Students must select the appropriate program option when submitting a proposed degree plan.

Changes to an approved degree plan may be made by petition to the Graduate and Professional School. No changes can be made to the degree plan once the student's Final Examination Request or Final Examination Exemption Request is approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

Coursework included on the degree plan is subject to the requirements and restrictions detailed in the Credit Requirements and Limitations on Credits and Coursework sections in each degree program page, or the student's academic unit. Coursework may not satisfy requirements for more than one degree except for approved combined degree programs.

Degree program time limits apply to courses listed on a degree plan. Details are available on the Time Limits section in each degree program page.

## Petitions

Graduate students may use a Change of Major, Department, or Degree Program (MDD) petition to request a change of major, academic unit, or degree program.

Graduate students may use a Long Form Petition to request

- changes to the coursework on an approved degree plan, if deemed necessary by the advisory committee;
- membership on the student's advisory committee as established by a degree plan;
- a leave of absence;
- extensions to time limits; or
- waivers or exceptions to published rules.

The Graduate and Professional School considers each petition on its own merit. A student should make such requests online by submitting either an MDD or a Long Form Petition through the Document Processing Submission System (<https://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>) (DPSS).

Petitions will be routed for the required approval by members of a student's advisory committee (if established), and the Department Head, interdisciplinary degree program Chair, college/school Dean, or designee.

## Limitations on Credits and Coursework

Master's degree program credit-hour requirements are subject to the following limitations:

1. To receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M University, students must earn one-third or more of the credits through the institution's own direct instruction. These limitations also apply to joint degree programs.
2. Transfer credits may be used toward meeting the credit hour requirements under the following limitations:
  - The maximum number of credit hours which may be considered for transfer credit is the greater of 12 credit hours or one-third (1/3) of the total hours of a degree plan.

- Graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate courses taken in residence at an accredited United States or international institution (recognized by the Office of Admissions), with a final grade of B or greater, may be considered for transfer credit if – at the time the courses were completed – the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution.
  - An official transcript from the institution at which the transfer coursework was taken must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions. Coursework credit submitted for transfer from any institution must be shown in semester credit hours or equated to semester credit hours.
  - Up to 1 hour of credit may be obtained for each five-day week of coursework for graduate courses of three weeks' duration or less taken at other institutions. Each week of coursework must include at least 15 contact hours.
  - Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPA.
  - Coursework in which no formal grades were given, or in which grades other than A or B were earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.), is not accepted for transfer credit.
  - Courses completed at Texas A&M University and appearing on the degree plan with grades of D, F, or U may not be absolved by transfer work.
  - Except for officially approved cooperative doctoral programs, credit for thesis or dissertation research – or the equivalent – is not transferrable.
  - Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied for transferred graduate credit.
    - Courses used toward a certificate, but not applied to an awarded degree, may be considered for transfer.
    - If the course to be transferred was taken for a certificate or prior to the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.
  - A student who has earned 12 credit hours of graduate credit in residence at Texas A&M University may be authorized to transfer courses in excess of the limits upon the advice of the advisory committee and with the approval of the Graduate and Professional School.
3. The maximum number of credit hours taken in post-baccalaureate non-degree (G6) classification at Texas A&M University which may be considered for application to the degree plan is 12.
  4. Only grades of A, B, C, and S are acceptable for graduate credit.
  5. Graduate courses on a degree plan may not be taken on an S/ U basis except for 681 (Seminar), 684 (Professional Internship), 690 (Theory of Research), 691 (Research), 692 (Professional Study), 693 (Professional Study), 695 (Frontiers in Research), 697 (Methods), 791 (Doctoral Capstone), or SOPH 680 (Public Health Capstone).
  6. A student pursuing a non-thesis option Master's degree may not enroll in 691 (Research) courses for any reason. Under special circumstances, however, students in a non-thesis Master of Arts or Master of Science degree program may request use of 691 hours on the degree plan under the following conditions:
    - The Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair (if applicable) for the program may approve an exception for a student who changes to a non-thesis option MA or MS degree program from a PhD (after at least one year of studies) or a thesis option MA or MS degree.
    - If approved, a maximum of 8 credit hours in combination of 685 (Directed Studies) and 691 may be used.
    - Colleges/schools, departments, and interdisciplinary degree programs may establish additional requirements.
7. A maximum of 12 credit hours may be used, in any combination, of the following:
    - No more than 8 credit hours in a combination of 684, 691 (if permitted), or SOPH 680.
      - No more than 8 credit hours of 684 for thesis option Master's degrees.
      - No more than 4 credit hours of 684 for non-thesis option Master's degrees.
    - No more than 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies).
    - No more than 3 credit hours of 690 (Theory of Research).
    - No more than 3 credit hours of 695 (Frontiers in Research).
  8. A maximum of 3 credit hours may be used toward the non-thesis option Master's degree, in any combination, of the following:
    - Not more than 2 credit hours of 681 (Seminar).
    - Not more than 3 credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship).
    - Not more than 3 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies).
  9. Certain zero-credit courses may be allowed for Master's degree programs:
    - A zero-credit 684 (Professional Internship) or 685 (Directed Studies) course is only allowed for non-thesis option Master's programs.
    - A zero-credit 681 (Seminar) course may be used for either thesis or non-thesis option Master's programs.
    - Other courses, including 691 (Research) hours, are not eligible for zero credit.
  10. No more than 25 percent of the total credit-hours required on the student's degree plan may be in any combination of 684, 685, 690, 691 (if permitted), and 695.
  11. A maximum of 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300- or 400-level) may be considered for application to the degree plan.
  12. No more than 50 percent of the non-research coursework required for an in-person degree program may be completed through distance education courses.
  13. Continuing education or extension courses may not be used for graduate credit.
- Doctoral degree program credit-hour requirements are subject to the following limitations:
1. To receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M University, students must earn one-third or more of the credits through the institution's own direct instruction. This limitation also applies to joint degree programs.
  2. Transfer credits may be used toward meeting the credit hour requirements under the following limitations:
    - Courses taken in residence at an accredited United States or international institution (recognized by the Office of

Admissions), with a final grade of B or greater, may be considered for transfer credit if – at the time the courses were completed – the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution.

- An official transcript from the institution at which transfer coursework was taken must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions. Credit for coursework submitted for transfer from any college or university must be shown in semester credit hours or equated to semester credit hours.
  - Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPA.
  - Coursework in which no formal grades are given, or in which grades other than A or B were earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.), is not accepted for transfer credit.
  - Except for officially approved cooperative doctoral programs, credit for thesis or dissertation research – or the equivalent – is not transferable.
  - Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied for transferred graduate credit.
    - Courses used toward a certificate, but not applied to an awarded degree, may be considered for transfer.
    - If the course to be transferred was taken for a certificate or prior to the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.
  - Credit for “internship” coursework in any form, or taken by extension, is not transferable.
  - Courses for which transfer credits are sought must be approved by the student’s advisory committee and the Graduate and Professional School.
3. Approval to enroll in any professional course should be obtained from the Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair (if applicable) in which the course will be offered before including such a course on a degree plan.
  4. A maximum of 9 credit hours of advanced undergraduate courses (400-level) may be considered for application to the degree plan.
  5. No more than 50 percent of the non-research credit hours required for an in-person degree program may be completed through distance education courses.
  6. No credit may be obtained by correspondence study, by extension, or for any course of fewer than three weeks duration.

Some departments may have additional or more restrictive requirements. Exceptions will be permitted only in unusual cases and when petitioned by the student’s advisory committee and approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

## Preliminary Examination for Doctoral Students

A student’s graduate degree program faculty (if applicable) and/or the student’s advisory committee may require qualifying, cumulative, or other types of examinations at any time deemed desirable. These examinations are entirely at the discretion of the academic unit and/or the student’s advisory committee.

## Preliminary Examination Requirement

A preliminary examination for doctoral students shall be given no earlier than a date at which a student is within 6 credit hours of completing formal coursework on a degree plan (i.e., all coursework on a degree plan except 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 693, 695, 697, 791, or other graduate courses specifically designated as S/U in the Graduate and Professional Catalog). A student should complete a preliminary exam no later than the end of the semester following the completion of formal coursework on a degree plan.

## Preliminary Examination Format

The objective of preliminary examinations is to evaluate whether a student has demonstrated the following qualifications:

1. mastery of the subject matter of all fields in the program;
2. adequate knowledge of the literature in these fields and an ability to carry out bibliographical research; and
3. an understanding of the research problem and appropriate methodological approaches.

The format of a preliminary examination shall be determined by a student’s academic unit and/or advisory committee, and communicated to the student in advance of the examination. The exam may consist of a written component, oral component, or combination of written and oral components.

A preliminary exam may be administered by an advisory committee or a departmental committee (herein referred to as an “examination committee”).

Regardless of exam format, a student will receive an overall preliminary exam result of pass or fail. If the exam is administered by the examination committee, the academic unit will determine how the overall pass or fail result is determined based on the examination structure and internal academic unit procedures. If the exam is administered by a student’s advisory committee, each member will provide a pass or fail evaluation decision.

Only one advisory committee substitution is allowed to provide an evaluation decision for a student’s preliminary exam. The committee chair may not be replaced by a substitute.

If an academic unit requires students to take a written component as part of their preliminary examination, the faculty must:

1. offer the examination at least once every six months, and the departmental or interdisciplinary degree program examination should be announced at least 30 days prior to the scheduled examination date;
2. assume responsibility for marking the examination as satisfactory or unsatisfactory – or otherwise graded – and in the case of unsatisfactory, stating specifically the reasons for such a mark; and
3. forward the marked examination to the student’s advisory committee chair within one week after the examination.

## Preliminary Examination Scheduling

Students are eligible to schedule the preliminary examination in the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS) if they meet the following list of eligibility requirements:

- A cumulative GPA of at least 3.000.
- A degree plan GPA of at least 3.000.
- Student is registered at Texas A&M University for a minimum of one semester credit hour in the long semester or summer term during which any component of a preliminary examination is held. If the entire examination is held between semesters, then the student must have been registered for the term immediately preceding the examination.
- An approved degree plan is on file with the Graduate and Professional School prior to commencing the first component of the examination.
- At the end of the semester in which at least the first component of the exam is given, there are no more than 6 hours of coursework remaining on the degree plan (except 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 693, 695, 697, 791, or other graduate courses specifically designated as S/U in the course catalog). The head of the student's academic unit has the authority to approve a waiver of this requirement.
- No open requests in the Document Processing Submission System (DPSS).

## Preliminary Examination Grading

Credit for the preliminary examination is not transferable in cases where a student changes degree programs after passing a preliminary exam.

If a written component precedes an oral component of the preliminary exam, the chair of the student's examination committee is responsible for making all written examinations available to all members of the committee. A positive evaluation of the preliminary exam by all members of a student's examination committee, with at most one dissension, is required to pass a student on their preliminary exam. Only one committee member substitution is allowed with prior approval of the Graduate and Professional School.

The student's department will promptly report the results of the Preliminary Examination to the Graduate and Professional School *via* the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS) within 10 working days of completion of the preliminary examination. If an approved examination committee member substitution (one only) has been made, their approval must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS.

After passing the required preliminary examination for the doctoral degree, a student must complete the final examination for the degree within four calendar years; otherwise, the student will be required to repeat the preliminary examination or, with academic unit and committee approval, a student may petition to extend the preliminary examination results.

## Failure of the Preliminary Examination

### First Failure

Upon approval of a student's examination committee (with no more than one member dissenting), and approval of the Department and Graduate and Professional School, a student who has failed a preliminary examination may be given one re-examination. In accordance with Student Rule 12 (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule12/>).5, the student's department head or designee, intercollegiate faculty, or graduate advisory committee should make a recommendation to the student regarding their scholastic deficiency.

### Second Failure

Upon failing the preliminary exam twice in a doctoral program, a student is no longer eligible to continue to pursue the PhD in that program/major. In accordance with Student Rule 12.5.3 and/or 12.5.4, the student will be notified of the action being taken by the department as a result of the second failure of the preliminary examination.

## Retake of Failed Preliminary Examination

Adequate time must be given to permit a student to address inadequacies emerging from the first preliminary examination. The examination committee must agree upon and communicate to the student, in writing, an adequate time-frame from the first examination (normally six months) to retake, as well as a detailed explanation of the inadequacies emerging from the examination. The student and committee should jointly negotiate a mutually acceptable date for this retake. When providing feedback on inadequacies, the committee should clearly document expected improvements that the student must be able to exhibit in order to retake the exam. The examination committee will document and communicate the time-frame and feedback within 10 working days of the exam that was not passed.

## Research Proposal

For thesis option master's degree and all doctoral degree students, a Research Proposal must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS). The proposal must be approved by an advisory committee and the department, interdisciplinary degree program, or the college/school approver.

Compliance issues must be addressed if a graduate student is performing research involving human subjects, animals, infectious biohazards, or recombinant DNA. A student engaged in these types of research should check with the Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety to address questions about all research compliance responsibilities before the proposal is submitted to the Graduate and Professional School. Additional information may be obtained at the Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety website (<https://vpr.tamu.edu/research-compliance-and-biosafety/>).

## Master's (Thesis Option) Students

For thesis option master's students, a Research Proposal must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS at least 20 working days prior to the submission of a Final Examination Request, or by the date established in the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines calendar (<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/dates-and-deadlines/dates-and-deadlines/>) – whichever comes first.

## Doctoral Students

For doctoral students, a Research Proposal should be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS according to guidelines and deadlines set by a individual academic unit or program as soon as possible following the completion of formal coursework on a degree plan but no later than 20 working days prior to the submission of the Final Examination Request.

Students must have an approved Research Proposal to be admitted to candidacy.

## Admission to Candidacy

To be admitted to candidacy for a doctoral degree, a student must:

1. complete all formal coursework on the degree plan (with the exception of any remaining 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 791, or other graduate courses specifically designated as S/U in the course catalog);
2. achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA, and a Degree Plan GPA of at least 3.0, with no grade lower than C in any course on the degree plan;
3. pass the preliminary examination;
4. submit an approved dissertation Research Proposal; and
5. meet the residence requirements.

A final examination will not be authorized for any doctoral student who has not been admitted to candidacy.

## Final Examination for Doctoral Students

Candidates for doctoral degrees must pass a final examination by deadlines announced through the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines Calendar (<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/dates-and-deadlines/dates-and-deadlines/>) each semester. A doctoral student is allowed only one opportunity to take the final exam.

No unabsolved grades of D, F, or U for any course may be listed on a degree plan. A student must register for any remaining hours of 681, 684, 690, 691, 692, 791, or other graduate courses specifically designated as S/U in the Graduate and Professional catalog during the semester of the final exam. No student may undergo a final examination until they have been admitted to candidacy and their current cumulative and degree plan GPAs are 3.00 or better.

Refer to the Admission to Candidacy (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext>) section of the Graduate and Professional Catalog for candidacy requirements.

The final examination request must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS a minimum of 10 working days in advance of the requested examination date, or the deadline listed on the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines Calendar (<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/dates-and-deadlines/dates-and-deadlines/>) a – whichever comes first. Any changes to the degree plan must be approved by the Graduate and Professional School prior to submission of the request.

### Final Examination Format

A student's advisory committee will conduct the examination. Only one committee member substitution is allowed with the approval of the Graduate and Professional School. The committee chair may not be replaced by a substitute. If the substitution is for the sole external member of the advisory committee – with an appointment to a department other than the student's major department – then the substitute must also be external to the student's major department. In extenuating circumstances, with approval of the Graduate and Professional School, an exception to this requirement may be granted.

The final exam is not to be administered until the dissertation or record of study is available in substantially final form to a student's advisory committee, and all concerned have had adequate time to review the document. Whereas the final exam may cover the broad field of the candidate's training, it is presumed that the major portion of the time will be devoted to the dissertation and closely-related topics. Persons other than members of the graduate faculty may – with mutual consent of the candidate and the chair of the advisory committee – attend final

examinations for advanced degrees. Upon completion of a candidate's questioning, all visitors must excuse themselves from the proceedings.

### Final Examination Grading

The student's department will promptly report the results of the Final Examination to the Graduate and Professional School *via* the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS) within 10 working days of completion of the final examination. The Graduate and Professional School will be automatically notified *via* ARCS of any cancellations.

A positive evaluation of the final exam by all members of a student's advisory committee, with at most one dissension, is required to pass a student on their final exam. If an approved committee member substitution (one only) has been made, their approval must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS.

## Final Examination for Master's Students

### Thesis Option

For thesis option students, a final examination may cover the thesis and all work taken on a degree plan and – at the discretion of the student's advisory committee – the examination may be written, or oral, or both. The final exam may not be administered before the thesis is available to all members of a student's advisory committee in substantially final form, and all members have had adequate time to review the document.

### Final Examination Format

The examination is conducted by the student's advisory committee as finally constituted. The final examination covers the thesis and all work taken on the degree plan and – at the discretion of the student's advisory committee – may be written, or oral, or both. The final examination may not be administered before the thesis is available to all members of the student's advisory committee in substantially final form, and all members have had adequate time to review the document.

A thesis option student must be registered at the University in the semester or Summer term in which the final examination is taken.

### Final Examination Grading

The student's department will promptly report the results of the Final Examination to the Graduate and Professional School *via* the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS) within 10 working days of completion of the final examination. If an approved committee member substitution (one only) has been made, their approval must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS.

A thesis option candidate may petition to be exempt from a final exam provided the degree plan GPA is 3.500 or greater and have the approval of the advisory committee; the student's department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair; and the Graduate and Professional School. It is recommended that the petition for exemption be submitted the same semester the student intends to submit the thesis.

### Non-Thesis Option

For non-thesis option students, a final comprehensive examination may be required. A final exam cannot be held prior to the mid-point of the semester if questions on the exam are based on courses in which the student is currently enrolled. If a student has completed all required degree plan coursework, the student is not required to be registered for classes in the semester a final exam is administered (unless the student holds an assistantship). For specific final exam requirements,



students should check the Program Requirements for the degree they are pursuing.

### Final Examination Scheduling

A request to schedule the final examination must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS with a minimum of 10 working days in advance of the scheduled date for the examination. The Graduate and Professional School will be notified *via* ARCS of any cancellations.

Persons other than members of the graduate faculty may, with mutual consent of the candidate and the advisory committee chair, attend final examinations for advanced degrees. Upon completion of questioning the candidate, all visitors must excuse themselves from the proceedings.

A student shall be given only one opportunity to repeat a final examination for the master's degree, and that must be within a time period that does not extend beyond the end of the next regular semester (Summer terms excluded). An academic unit may have stricter requirements provided there is consistency among all degree programs within the college/school or department.

### Final Examination Grading

A positive vote by all members of the graduate committee with at most one dissension is required to pass a student on the final examination. If the chair is the sole member of the student's advisory committee, a positive vote – with no dissension – is required to pass a student on the final examination.

The student's department will promptly report the results of the Final Examination to the Graduate and Professional School *via* the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS) within 10 working days of completion of the final examination. If an approved committee member substitution (one only) has been made, their approval must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS.

If the program requires the advisory committee to include at least one external member – with an appointment to a department other than the student's major department – and the substitution is for the sole external member of the advisory committee, then the substitute must also be external to the student's major department. In extenuating circumstances, with approval of the Graduate and Professional School, an exception to this requirement may be granted.

This is what we have for Final Examination Grading for doctoral students. We should keep both as consistent as possible—I know for master's there is the sentence about sole chair that doesn't apply to doctoral students. Please see my comment below about that sentence. "The student's department will promptly report the results of the Final Examination to the Graduate and Professional School *via* the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS) within 10 working days of completion of the final examination. The Graduate and Professional School will be automatically notified *via* ARCS of any cancellations.

A positive evaluation of the final exam by all members of a student's advisory committee with at most one dissension is required to pass a student on their final exam. If an approved committee member substitution (one only) has been made, their approval must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School *via* ARCS".

## Thesis, Dissertation and Record of Study

An acceptable thesis, dissertation, or record of study is required for all thesis option master's or doctoral degrees.

A master's thesis must reflect a comprehensive understanding of the pertinent literature and express in clear language the problem(s) for study, method, significance, and results of the student's original research.

A doctoral dissertation, which must be a candidate's original work, demonstrates the ability to perform independent research. Whereas acceptance of the dissertation is based primarily on its scholarly merit, it must also exhibit creditable literary workmanship.

A record of study explains and supports the activities undertaken in a major research project and supports its conclusions with adequate investigations, empirical data, and a comprehensive bibliography. Procedures used in the student's research will be described in sufficient detail for educators in other locations to apply or extend the procedures. All records of study should be characterized by accuracy of observation and measurements, thoroughness of analysis and synthesis, and accuracy and completeness of presentation.

Formatting must be acceptable to the Graduate and Professional School as outlined in the *Guidelines for Theses, Dissertations, and Records of Study*. After successful defense (or exemption, if applicable) and approval of the student's advisory committee and the head of the student's major department (or chair of intercollegiate faculty, if appropriate), the student must submit the manuscript in electronic format as a single PDF file to <https://etd.tamu.edu/>.

Deadline dates for submitting the manuscript are announced each semester or Summer term in the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines Calendar (<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/dates-and-deadlines/dates-and-deadlines/>) (see Time Limit statement). These dates also can be accessed via the Graduate and Professional School website (<http://grad.tamu.edu/>).

Each student who submits a manuscript for review is assessed a one-time thesis/dissertation processing fee through Student Business Services for the thesis/dissertation services provided. After commencement, theses and dissertations are digitally stored and made available through the Texas A&M Libraries.

A manuscript that is deemed unacceptable by the Graduate and Professional School because of excessive corrections will be returned to the student's department head (or chair of the intercollegiate faculty, if applicable). The manuscript must be resubmitted as a new document, and the entire review process must begin again. All original submittal deadlines must be met during the resubmittal process to graduate.

## Graduation

A graduate degree is conferred at the close of each regular semester and 10-week summer semester. A candidate for an advanced degree who expects to complete their work at the end of a given semester must apply for graduation by submitting the electronic application for degree to the Office of the Registrar and by paying the required graduation fee to Student Business Services no later than the Friday of the fifth week of the fall or spring semester or the Friday of the first week of the second summer term. The electronic application can be accessed in Howdy (<https://howdy.tamu.edu>). **A cancellation made after the application deadline will not result in a refund of the graduation fee. Graduate degree candidates who have completed all degree requirements will not be allowed to cancel their graduation application without approval from the Graduate and Professional School.** Graduation ceremony dates and times are listed online at <http://graduation.tamu.edu>.

## Qatar Students

Formal application for a degree at Texas A&M University at Qatar is made by submitting an Application for Graduation via the Howdy Portal. Students must also pay the required diploma/graduation fee and the optional regalia fee (if planning to attend the commencement ceremony) using the online payment portal (<https://tamu.estore.flywire.com/products/?storeCatalog=1202>). Applications for graduation should be submitted by the deadline stated in the Texas A&M University at Qatar academic calendar. Under certain circumstances, an application for a degree may be accepted after the stated deadline.

Students must have settled all financial obligations to the university and Qatar Foundation prior to receiving a diploma.

Texas A&M University at Qatar graduate and undergraduate students completing their degree in July or December will have the opportunity to participate in the commencement ceremony in May, following the completion of their degree. Students must participate in the commencement ceremony at their home campus.

## Letter of Completion

The Graduate and Professional School may issue, if necessary, a Letter of Completion upon written request from the student. The letter certifies that the student has completed all academic requirements for a degree and states the date a degree will be awarded.

A Letter of Completion may be requested anytime from the point a student has completed all requirements for the awarding of a degree and until five days prior to commencement. A student in a master's thesis option or a doctoral program must have completed all non-course degree requirements, including final clearance of a thesis or dissertation by the Graduate and Professional School, and have received final grades for all degree plan coursework for eligibility to request a letter. For students in a master's non-thesis option program, requests for a Letter of Completion will be accepted only if the student has completed all non-course requirements and received final grades for all degree plan coursework, and the Graduate and Professional School has received the final examination results (if applicable).

A Letter of Completion will not be issued after a degree has been conferred.

Students must use the Letter of Completion Form (<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/forms/request-for-letter-of-completion/>) available through the Graduate and Professional School website. International students should contact International Student and Scholar Services prior to requesting a Letter of Completion to determine how receipt could affect the student's visa status.

## Letter of Intent

Students completing a graduate degree who wish to enroll in pursuit of another graduate degree at Texas A&M University should file a Letter of Intent with the admitting academic unit for the subsequent graduate degree. Letters of Intent are common when students apply to pursue a subsequent degree within the same department and college/school, but may not be acceptable for students applying for a subsequent degree in a different discipline from their current degree. A Letter of Intent, when approved by a department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair (if applicable) in which the student intends to study, will be viewed by the Graduate and Professional School as an admission to the program specified in the letter. A student must use the Letter of

Intent Form (<https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/forms/letter-of-intent/>) available through the Graduate and Professional School website.

If a student wishes to enroll in a department, interdisciplinary degree program, or college/school where a Letter of Intent is not the accepted practice, the admitting academic unit should consult with the Office of Admissions and the Graduate and Professional School to pursue an alternate process for admission.

If a break in enrollment occurs for one academic year or longer following graduation, the student must reapply for admission to a graduate degree program through the Office of Admissions and is not eligible to submit a Letter of Intent.

## Professional Internship

For programs which include a professional internship (see individual Program Requirements), a student will spend an appropriate period of time under the supervision of a practicing professional in business, an educational institution, government agency, or industry. The objectives of the internship are two-fold:

1. demonstration of a student's ability to apply training and knowledge by making an identifiable contribution in an area of practical concern to the industry or organization in which the internship is served; and
2. experience in a non-academic environment, and in a position in which they will become aware of organizational approaches to problems in addition to those traditional approaches with which students are familiar.

Internship agreements should be negotiated between an appropriate organization or industry and the appropriate academic department. The organization of an internship, an internship supervisor, and the nature of an internship will be determined by mutual consent of the student, the head of the student's academic unit, the student's advisory committee, and the supervising organization prior to commencement of an internship period. An internship experience should be at a level commensurate with the particular degree objectives.

An internship report should be prepared by a student in accordance with guidelines established by a student's academic unit, advisory committee, or other appropriate body. The report should be submitted to the advisory committee and to any other organization which may be specified for specific programs. The internship report must be the original work of a student.

An internship, if utilized as part of a student's degree requirements, should be undertaken near the end of the student's educational program, after the student has had the opportunity to establish a solid theoretical base for an internship experience.

## 99-Hour and 7-Year Cap on Doctoral Degrees

In Texas, public colleges and universities are funded by the state according to the number of students enrolled. In accordance with legislation passed by the Texas Legislature, the number of hours for which state universities may receive subvention funding at the doctoral rate for any individual is limited to 99 hours. Texas A&M and other universities will not receive subvention for hours in excess of the limit.

Institutions of higher education are allowed to charge the equivalent of non-resident tuition to a resident doctoral student who has enrolled in 100 or more semester credit hours of doctoral coursework.

Doctoral students at Texas A&M have seven years to complete their degree before being charged out-of-state tuition. A doctoral (G8) student who, after seven years of study, has accumulated 100 or more doctoral hours will be charged tuition at a rate equivalent to out-of-state tuition. Please note that the tuition increases will apply to Texas residents as well as students from other states and countries who are currently charged tuition at the resident rate. This includes those doctoral students who hold GAT, GANT, and GAR appointments or recipients of competitive fellowships who receive more than \$1,000 per semester. Doctoral students who have not accumulated 100 hours after seven years of study are eligible to pay in-state tuition if otherwise eligible. For counting purposes, a year is counted as three semesters – normally fall, spring, and summer. Using this system, a student is allowed 21 semesters as a G8 student to complete the doctoral degree before being penalized with the higher tuition rate. Any semester in which a G8 student is enrolled for a doctoral-level course is counted.

Doctoral students who exceed the credit limit will receive notification from the Graduate and Professional School during the semester in which they are enrolled and exceeding the limit in their current degree program. The notification will explain that the State of Texas does not provide funding for any additional hours in which a student is enrolled in excess of 99 hours. Texas A&M University will recover the lost funds by requiring students in excess of 99 hours to pay tuition at the non-funded, non-resident rate. This non-funded, non-resident tuition rate status will be updated for the following semester and in all subsequent semesters until receipt of a doctoral degree. Please see the Tuition Calculator (<https://tuition.tamu.edu/>) at the non-resident rate for an example of potential charges.

The following majors are exempt from the 99-Hour Cap on Doctoral Degrees and have a limit of 130 doctoral hours:

- Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics
- Biomedical Sciences
- Clinical Psychology
- Counseling Psychology
- Genetics and Genomics
- Health Services Research
- Medical Sciences
- Microbiology
- Neurosciences (College of Medicine)
- Nutrition
- Oral and Craniofacial Biomedical Sciences
- Pharmaceutical Sciences
- Public Health Sciences
- School Psychology
- Toxicology

## Registration and Academic Status

### General Information

Registration requirements for a graduate student holding an assistantship and/or fellowship are discussed in the section on Financial

Assistance (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/tuition-fees-financial-information/financial-assistance/>).

### Full-Time Status

Graduate students (domestic or international) are considered full-time if they are registered for a minimum of

- 9 semester credit hours during a fall or spring semester; or
- 6 semester credit hours during a summer semester.

Grades of Q or W do not count toward the certification of enrollment status.

Colleges/schools and departments may impose additional semester credit hour requirements for a student holding an assistantship or fellowship which exceeds the minimum stated above.

Special considerations relate to “full-time status” for an international student. Please refer to the information on this subject in the Course Load Requirements for International (Non-Immigrant) Students with F1 or J1 Status section (below).

A student who has financial assistance should consult the Scholarships & Financial Aid (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/tuition-fees-financial-information/>) section of the catalog, visit the Aggie One Stop webpage (<https://aggie.tamu.edu/>), or contact [AggieOneStop@tamu.edu](mailto:AggieOneStop@tamu.edu).

### Maximum Schedule

Fall/Spring semesters: A graduate student may register for a maximum of 15 hours. The college/school dean's office can approve/register a student for up to 18 hours. A request to register for more than 18 hours should be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School via the Petition for Waivers or Exceptions to University Requirements through the Document Processing Submission System (<https://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>) (DPSS) and must include the course/section number and the semester of registration. If approved, maximum allowable hours will be updated accordingly by the Graduate and Professional School, and the academic department will register the student for the additional hours.

5-week Summer sessions: A graduate student may register for a maximum of 6 hours. The college/school dean's office can approve/register a student for up to 9 hours. A request to register for more than 9 hours should be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School via the Petition for Waivers or Exceptions to University Requirements through DPSS and must include the course/section number and the semester of registration. If approved, maximum allowable hours will be updated accordingly by the Graduate and Professional School, and the academic department will register the student for the additional hours.

10-week Summer sessions: A graduate student may register for a maximum of 10 hours. The college/school dean's office can approve/register a student for up to 15 hours. A request to register for more than 15 hours should be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School via the Petition for Waivers or Exceptions to University Requirements through DPSS and must include the course/section number and the semester of registration. If approved, maximum allowable hours will be updated accordingly by the Graduate and Professional School, and the academic department will register the student for the additional hours.

## Continuous Registration Requirements

Students in graduate degree programs requiring a thesis, dissertation, internship, or record of study and who have completed all coursework on a degree plan, other than 684 (Internship), 691/791 (Research), or 692 (Professional Study), are required to maintain continuous registration until the completion of all requirements for a degree. Registration for zero-credit courses does not satisfy the continuous registration requirement. The continuous registration requirement may be satisfied by registering either *In Absentia* or *In Residence*.

Unless a student plans to take examinations or use university resources, which includes any interaction with the graduate advisory committee, registration during the summer semester is not required to fulfill the continuous registration requirement; however, colleges/schools, departments, or interdisciplinary degree programs may have additional or stricter requirements.

Students who do not comply with the continuous registration requirement will be blocked from registration. A student may register again after receiving favorable recommendation from a departmental review committee (not the student's advisory committee), endorsement of the department head, interdisciplinary degree program chair, or college/school dean, and approval of the Graduate and Professional School. If a break in enrollment occurs for one academic year or longer, the student must apply for readmission to the university through the Office of Admissions.

### In Absentia Registration

To qualify for *In Absentia* registration, a student must not have access to or use of facilities or properties belonging to or under the jurisdiction of the Texas A&M University System at any time during the semester or summer term for which the student is enrolled. A student who qualifies for *In Absentia* registration must register in each subsequent fall and spring semester for a minimum of one and maximum of four credit hours of 684, 685, 691, or 692. Academic units may have additional or stricter requirements.

### In Residence Registration

A student subject to *In Residence* (i.e., on campus) registration must register in each subsequent fall and spring semester, and each 10-week summer semester, for at least one credit hour. Academic units may have additional or stricter requirements.

### International Graduate Student Registration

An international graduate student may have additional registration requirements depending on visa status. Students should consult with International Student and Scholar Services (<https://global.tamu.edu/iss/>) to obtain current information on these requirements.

## In Absentia

Graduate students may register *In Absentia* if enrolled in a course which is offered on an individual basis and conducted away from the College Station campus, System campuses, or facilities such as Agricultural Research and Extension Centers, Research Stations, or other properties under the jurisdiction of the Texas A&M University System (TAMUS). Such courses may include, but are not limited to, 683 (Practicum), 684 (Professional Internship), 685 (Directed Studies), 691 (Research), 692 (Professional Study), and other courses.

To qualify for *In Absentia* registration, a student must not have access to or use of facilities of the TAMUS at any time during the semester or summer term for which they are enrolled. The definition of "facilities" includes human resources and services such as those provided by graduate advisory committee members responding to drafts of theses, dissertations, or records of study material, etc. A student holding a fellowship or assistantship may not register *In Absentia*.

International students who want to work in another student title when registered *In Absentia* should contact both the Division of Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness (<https://employees.tamu.edu/>) (HROE) and International Student & Scholar Services (<https://global.tamu.edu/iss/contact-us/>) (ISSS) for information about their eligibility. International students with questions about maintaining legal status while registered *In Absentia* should consult with ISSS. A student going outside the United States and registering *In Absentia* should register their experience on the Education Abroad portal where they will complete online emergency notification information, so university assistance is available during crisis situations.

Additional details are available on the Education Abroad website (<https://global.tamu.edu/ea/>).

## Leave of Absence

Under special circumstances, a G7 or G8 student may petition for a leave of absence of up to one year by submitting a Petition for Waivers and Exceptions through the Document Processing Submission System (<https://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>) (DPSS) prior to or during the first semester of leave. The entire advisory committee (if formed) and department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair (if applicable) must approve the petition and route it to the Graduate and Professional School for approval by the Associate Provost and Dean. Students cannot be registered in the semester(s) of a leave of absence.

Leave will be granted only under conditions that require the suspension of all activities associated with pursuing the degree. For certain types of approved leave — such as medical or active-duty military — the time period for completion of the degree will pause with the start of leave and resume when the student returns to the program. Personal leave may not pause the time limit for the degree. Students should refer to the Time Limits section for their specific program requirements. In cases with extenuating circumstances, a leave of absence can be extended by the student's committee and the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School by submitting a second petition before the end of the leave.

A student who returns to the University at the conclusion of an approved leave of absence will not be required to submit an application for readmission to the Office of Admissions. A student who returns with an expired leave of absence will be required to reapply to the University. If a student returning from an approved leave of absence is unable to register, the academic unit should contact the Graduate and Professional School for assistance. International graduate students should visit with an International Student and Scholar Services advisor to find out how a leave of absence may impact their stay in or re-entry into the United States.

## Limitations for Texas A&M Faculty and Staff in Graduate Studies

The following limitations were set by the Graduate and Professional Council of Texas A&M University concerning enrollment in advanced degrees for members of the faculty and staff of the university.

1. Members of the faculty above the rank of Assistant Professor will not normally be granted a doctoral degree at this institution. They may, however, enroll in graduate studies.
2. A Graduate Committee Faculty member may not serve in the Graduate Committee Faculty of an academic unit in which the member is currently pursuing a graduate degree or certificate.
3. Any exceptions, individual or program, to the restrictions above must receive the written approval of an appropriate department head or chair of intercollegiate faculty, college/school dean, the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School, and the Provost and Executive Vice President before submission of an application for admission to graduate studies.

## Undergraduates Registering for Graduate Courses

A senior undergraduate student with a grade point average of at least 3.000 or approval of their academic dean or designee, is eligible to enroll in a graduate course and reserve it for graduate credit. Students can request this by working with their academic advisor to submit a request online through the Course Level Change (CLC) System (<https://registrar.tamu.edu/administrative-services/degree-audit/course-level-change-system/>). The request must be approved by the course instructor, the student's major department head, and the dean of the student's undergraduate college. Undergraduate credit hours used to meet the requirements for a baccalaureate degree may not be used to meet the requirements for a graduate degree.

An academically superior undergraduate student with a grade point average of at least 3.250 or approval of their academic dean or designee, is eligible to apply graduate credit hours toward their undergraduate degree program. Students can request this by working with their academic advisor to submit a request online through the Course Level Change (CLC) System (<https://registrar.tamu.edu/administrative-services/degree-audit/course-level-change-system/>). The request must be approved by the course instructor, the student's major department head, and the dean of the student's undergraduate college. Graduate credit hours used to meet the requirements for a baccalaureate degree may not be used to meet the requirements for a graduate degree.

## VA Education Benefits

In order to receive full Veterans Administration (VA) education benefits, eligible students must be enrolled full time in courses that are counting toward their program of study. The number of credit hours required for full time status may differ between degrees and may vary during the summer term. For hour requirements and courses that count for your degree, please review your degree plan as determined by your department or visit your academic advisor.

## Course Load Requirements for International Students with F-1 or J-1 Status

A student with F-1 or J-1 status is required to be enrolled full-time in fall and spring semesters. Summer semester is traditionally a vacation period unless it is the student's first or graduating semester and the student is then required to enroll full-time. In order for the student to be enrolled less than full-time, the student must either receive written authorization from International Student and Scholar Services or be flagged as full-time by the Office of the Registrar based on an exception listed in student rules. (<https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule01/>) If the student does not take one of these appropriate actions, then the student may be out of legal status with the Department of Homeland Security or the Department of State. Loss of legal immigration status is serious and will result in a student being ineligible to be employed and may result in a student having to leave the United States. The student is responsible to uphold U.S. federal government and University regulations.

The U.S. government allows a student to register less than full-time in certain circumstances. These reasons may be found in the "Dropping Below Full-Time" section available on the International Student and Scholar Services website.

For immigration purposes, a student with F-1 status may request authorization from ISSS to co-enroll at another institution for full-time enrollment. J-1 students may not count co-enrollment toward their full-time enrollment. Federal regulations only allow F-1 and J-1 students to count one course (up to three hours) of distance learning credits toward their immigration requirement each term. Please visit the ISSS website ([https://global.tamu.edu/issss/students/maintain\\_status/enrollment-info/](https://global.tamu.edu/issss/students/maintain_status/enrollment-info/)) for more information.

## Classification

Classification indicates the type of degree program in which each student is enrolled and reflects the student's progress within that program at the professional level.

Code	Classification Definition
<b>G6</b>	<b>Post-baccalaureate Non-degree</b>
	<p>Post-baccalaureate non-degree classification denotes a student with a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education. Limitations may be placed on coursework taken while in G6 status if, at a later date, a post-baccalaureate non-degree student decides to pursue a graduate degree. Specifically, a college or a department may or may not decide whether to accept any G6 work toward a student's graduate degree; however, with the approval of the student's graduate advisory committee, the department head or chair of the interdisciplinary program, and the Graduate and Professional School, a maximum of 12 credit hours taken in post-baccalaureate non-degree status may be used on a student's degree plan. Admission to post-baccalaureate non-degree status does not establish eligibility for admission to degree-seeking status. A post-baccalaureate non-degree student is not eligible to register for 691 (Research) hours.</p> <p>An application for post-baccalaureate non-degree classification is handled on a first-come, first-served basis. An application submitted within one month of registration may not be processed in time to begin that semester or term.</p> <p>Enrollment of a G6 student in courses may be limited by college and departmental policies. Each post-baccalaureate non-degree student must be reviewed by his or her department of affiliation for continuation at the end of each semester.</p> <p>A post-baccalaureate non-degree student must maintain at least a 3.000 GPA on all coursework attempted to remain eligible for registration. University departments and colleges may have additional and higher requirements.</p> <p>For the scholastically-deficient post-baccalaureate non-degree student, the student's home department shall determine eligibility. It is the department's responsibility to place a registration block on these students. Post-baccalaureate</p>

	non-degree status is not normally available to an international student.
<b>G7</b>	<b>Graduate (Master's)</b>
	G7 classification denotes admission of a student to a master's-level program of study or to a doctoral program who has not yet completed a master's degree or 30 hours of eligible coursework taken at Texas A&M University.
<b>G8</b>	<b>Graduate (Doctoral)</b>
	G8 classification denotes admission to a doctoral-level program of study.
<b>G9</b>	<b>Graduate (Master's/Doctoral Admitted)</b>
	G9 classification denotes admission to graduate study, but that documents must still be completed before a student is allowed to file a degree plan. Upon receipt of the required documents, the student's classification will change. Approval of the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School is required to change a student from G9 classification to the appropriate classification (i.e., G7 or G8).
<b>D1</b>	<b>Dentistry, First Year</b>
<b>D2</b>	<b>Dentistry, Second Year</b>
<b>D3</b>	<b>Dentistry, Third Year</b>
<b>D4</b>	<b>Dentistry, Fourth Year</b>
<b>D6</b>	<b>Dentistry, Post-professional Certificate</b>
<b>L0</b>	<b>Law, Non-degree</b>
<b>L1</b>	<b>Law, First Year</b>
<b>L2</b>	<b>Law, Second Year</b>
<b>L3</b>	<b>Law, Third Year</b>
<b>M1</b>	<b>Medical, First Year</b>
<b>M2</b>	<b>Medical, Second Year</b>
<b>M3</b>	<b>Medical, Third Year</b>
<b>M4</b>	<b>Medical, Fourth Year</b>
<b>N1</b>	<b>Professional Nursing</b>
<b>P1</b>	<b>Pharmacy, First Year</b>
<b>P2</b>	<b>Pharmacy, Second Year</b>
<b>P3</b>	<b>Pharmacy, Third Year</b>
<b>P4</b>	<b>Pharmacy, Fourth Year</b>
<b>V1</b>	<b>Veterinary, First Year</b>
<b>V2</b>	<b>Veterinary, Second Year</b>
<b>V3</b>	<b>Veterinary, Third Year</b>
<b>V4</b>	<b>Veterinary, Fourth Year</b>

## Semester Credit Hour

A lecture course which meets one hour per week for 15 weeks is worth 1 semester credit hour. Thus, a course worth 3 semester credit hours meets

three hours per week. Credit hours for laboratory courses are determined to be some fraction of the number of hours spent in class.

For further information, see Texas A&M University Rule 11.03.99.M1 Definition of a Credit Hour (<https://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/11.03.99.M1.pdf>), which complies with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board definition of minimum course lengths as part of the Texas Administrative Code, "Minimum Length of Courses and Limitation on the Amount of Credit that a Student May Earn in a Given Time Period." For more information, please see the Texas Administrative Code online ([https://texas-sos.appianportalsgov.com/rules-and-meetings/?\\$locale=en\\_US&interface=VIEW\\_TAC\\_SUMMARY&queryAsDate=04%2F15%2F](https://texas-sos.appianportalsgov.com/rules-and-meetings/?$locale=en_US&interface=VIEW_TAC_SUMMARY&queryAsDate=04%2F15%2F))

## Steps to Fulfill a Masters Program

The Master's degree curriculum is designed to develop new understanding through research and creativity. Students have the option to pursue a thesis or non-thesis (as available) master's degree.

## Steps to Fulfill Master's Degree Requirements

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| 1.  | Meet with departmental graduate advisor to plan course of study for first semester (if required).   | <b>When:</b> before first semester registration<br><b>Approved by:</b> graduate advisor or interdisciplinary degree program chair (if required)  |
| 2.  | Establish advisory committee. Submit a degree plan.   | <b>When:</b> prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college/school and no later than 90 days prior to final examination<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School   |
| 3.  | If thesis is required, submit Thesis Research Proposal to the Graduate and Professional School.   | <b>When:</b> at least 20 working days prior to the submission of the Final Examination Request<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School  |
| 4.  | Apply for degree. Pay graduation fee.   | <b>When:</b> during the first week of the final semester (see the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines Calendar for specifics)   |
| 5.  | Ensure degree plan and advisory committee are up-to-date, and coursework is complete.   | <b>When:</b> at the beginning of the graduating semester, prior to submitting Final Examination Request  |
| 6.  | Complete Residence Requirement (see Academic Expectations in the Graduate and Professional Catalog).  | <b>When:</b> before or during final semester (if applicable)<br><b>Approved by:</b> the Graduate and Professional School   |
| 7.  | Submit Final Examination Request.   | <b>When:</b> must be received by the Graduate and Professional School at least 10 working days before exam date (see the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines Calendar for specifics)<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School |
| 8.  | Successfully complete the Final Examination.  | <b>When:</b> must be held by the deadline on the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines Calendar, and Results should be submitted by the advisory committee within 10 days following the Final Examination<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee and the Graduate and Professional School  |
| 9.  | If required, upload one approved final copy of thesis manuscript as a single PDF file to the Thesis and Dissertation Submission System ( <a href="https://etd.tamu.edu">https://etd.tamu.edu</a> ) and submit Thesis Approval Form to the Graduate and Professional School. | <b>When:</b> see the Graduate and Professional School Dates and Deadlines Calendar for specifics<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School  |
| 10. | Arrange for cap and gown and graduate.  | For more information, visit <a href="http://graduation.tamu.edu">http://graduation.tamu.edu</a>  |

## Steps to Fulfill a Doctoral Program

Work leading to a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree is designed to give candidates a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of their professional fields and training in methods of research. The final basis for granting a degree shall be a candidate's grasp of the subject matter of a broad field of study and a demonstrated ability to do independent research. In addition, a candidate must have acquired the ability to express thoughts clearly and forcefully in both oral and written languages. Degrees are not granted solely for the completion of coursework, residence and technical requirements, although these must be met.

For a student who has completed a master's degree, a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS), Doctor of Medical Dentistry (DMD), Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), or Doctor of Medicine (MD) at a United States institution, a minimum of 60 hours is required on a degree plan for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. For a student who has completed a baccalaureate degree but not a master's degree or a United States DDS, DMD, DVM, or MD, a minimum of 90 hours is required on a degree plan for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Some programs may have higher credit requirements. Please see the credit requirements in the program requirements in the Graduate and Professional catalog.

## Steps to Fulfill Doctoral Degree Requirements

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| 1. | Meet with departmental/intercollegiate graduate advisor to plan course of study for first semester. | <b>When:</b> before first semester registration<br><b>Approved by:</b> graduate advisor (if required)  |
| 2. | Establish an advisory committee.<br>Submit a degree plan.   | <b>When:</b> prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college/school, department, or interdisciplinary degree program, and no later than 90 days prior to Preliminary Examination<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School |
| 3. | Complete course work detailed on an approved degree plan.   | <b>When:</b> before Preliminary Examination  |

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| 4. | Complete a preliminary examination (see Preliminary Examination for Doctoral Students in the Graduate and Professional Catalog). | <b>When:</b> a student should complete a Preliminary Examination no later than the end of the semester following the completion of formal coursework on the degree plan<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School                     |
| 5. | Submit Research Proposal for dissertation or record of study to the Graduate and Professional School.                            | <b>When:</b> at least 20 working days prior to the submission of the Final Examination Request; students must have an approved research proposal in order to be admitted to candidacy<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School       |
| 6. | Complete Residence Requirement (see Academic Expectations in the Graduate and Professional Catalog).                             | <b>When:</b> before submitting Final Examination Request   |
| 7. | Apply for degree. Pay graduation fee.  | <b>When:</b> during the first week of the final semester (see the Graduate and Professional School Calendar for deadlines)   |
| 8. | Submit Final Examination Request.  | <b>When:</b> must be received by the Graduate and Professional School at least 10 working days before requested exam date (see the Graduate and Professional School Calendar for deadlines)<br><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School |



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| 9.  | Successfully complete Final Examination.  | <p><b>When:</b> must be held by the deadline on the Graduate and Professional School Calendar, and Results should be submitted by the advisory committee within 10 days following the Final Examination</p> <p><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee and the Graduate and Professional School</p> |
| 10. | Upload one approved dissertation or record of study manuscript as a single PDF file to the Thesis and Dissertation Submission System ( <a href="https://etd.tamu.edu">https://etd.tamu.edu</a> ) and submit the Dissertation/Record of Study Approval Form to the Graduate and Professional School. | <p><b>When:</b> see the Graduate and Professional School calendar for deadlines</p> <p><b>Approved by:</b> advisory committee, department head or interdisciplinary degree program chair, and the Graduate and Professional School</p>   |
| 11. | Arrange for cap and gown and graduate.  | For more information, visit <a href="http://graduation.tamu.edu">http://graduation.tamu.edu</a> .  |

*Note: Once formal coursework is complete, students must still satisfy the Continuous Registration Requirements (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#registrationandacademicstatustext>) until all degree requirements have been met. This includes submission and clearance of the dissertation or record of study.*