

UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Mission Statement

Texas A&M is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication and application of knowledge in a wide range of academic and professional fields. Our mission of providing the highest quality undergraduate and graduate programs emerges from our mission of developing new understandings through research and creativity.

We prepare students to assume roles of leadership, responsibility and service to the greater good. We assume as our historic trust the maintenance of freedom of inquiry and an intellectual environment that nurtures the human mind and spirit.

We welcome and seek to serve citizens of all racial, ethnic and geographic backgrounds, in keeping with our land-grant mission of educating a broad cross-section of the state's population while meeting the challenges of our increasingly diverse, global economy.

History and Development

Texas A&M is the state's first public institution of higher education. With a student body of more than 66,000 and more than 5,200 acres on the College Station campus alone, Texas A&M is also among the nation's largest universities.

Our origins, however, are much humbler. We owe our existence to the Morrill Act, approved by the U.S. Congress on July 2, 1862, which provided for donation of public land to the states. The land was to be sold at auction, with the proceeds set aside in a perpetual fund, and the interest generated supporting a college "to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanical arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life."

In November 1866, the Texas Legislature agreed to provide for the state's land-grant college. Five years later, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas was established through an act that appropriated \$75,000 for the construction of buildings and that bound the state to defray all expenses of the college exceeding the annual interest from the endowment. Proceeds from the sale of the 180,000 acres of land scrip received under the Land Grant College Act were invested in \$174,000 of Texas gold frontier defense bonds, forming a perpetual endowment for the institution. A commission created to identify a location for the college accepted the offer of 2,416 acres of land from the citizens of Brazos County in 1871, and the College opened its doors five years later.

In 1888, the faculty initiated programs of instruction at the graduate level, and in 1890, two Master of Science degrees were conferred. Initially, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas emphasized graduate programs in agriculture and engineering, which were administered by a faculty committee for graduate studies. In 1898, a single Master of Science degree in horticulture was awarded, followed by a scattering of Master of Science degrees in agriculture over the next 22 years. The acceleration in the awarding of Master of Science degrees after 1920 prompted the College to establish the Graduate School in 1924, with the dean of the college serving as graduate dean.

In 1936, the Board of Directors approved "certain programs of study and research leading to the doctorate." That same year, the Academic Council established the graduate faculty, and in 1940, the first Ph.D.

was awarded. In the 1960s, the Board of Regents created programs of graduate instruction in each of the academic colleges.

In 1963, the Texas state legislature officially changed the College's name to Texas A&M University, with the "A" and "M" being a symbolic link to the school's past but no longer officially standing for "Agricultural and Mechanical."

Texas A&M underwent many other significant changes in the '60s, as well. Under Gen. Earl Rudder's administration, Texas A&M also opened its doors to African American students and formally admitted women students. Participation in the Corps of Cadets was made voluntary.

Since then, Texas A&M has become an academic powerhouse. It is one of only three Tier 1 universities in the state (along with Rice University and the University of Texas at Austin). Texas A&M was designated a sea-grant institution in 1971 and a space-grant institution in 1989, making it among the first four universities to hold this triple distinction, and one of only 17 nationwide.

In 2001, Texas A&M became a member of the Association of American Universities, which is restricted to the 62 top public and private institutions of higher learning in the United States and Canada. In 2004, the Kappa of Texas Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa was installed at Texas A&M.

As the State of Texas has grown, so has the University. Today, women comprise nearly half of the student body of 68,000, and membership in the Corps of Cadets is more than 2,500, the largest it has been in decades. Historically, the Corps of Cadets has produced more officers than any other institution outside the military academies. The George Bush Presidential Library and Museum opened in 1997, making Texas A&M one of only a few universities to host a presidential library.

Texas A&M has a presence in 250 of the state's 252 counties through its extension agencies, and also has two branch campuses: a marine campus in Galveston, and an engineering campus in the Middle Eastern country of Qatar (fully funded by the Qatar Foundation). The university has research expenditures of more than \$892 million, ranking it 16th nationally by the National Science Foundation.

Classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a Research Intensive University, Texas A&M embraces its mission of advancing knowledge and human achievement, helping to drive the economic engine of the state and nation, and preparing students to be life-long learners and leaders in today's knowledge-based, global society.

Texas A&M's focus on excellence and innovation in teaching, research and service has led to rankings among the nation's top universities. Texas A&M today seeks even greater preeminence among the nation's top public universities, while continuing to respect the history and traditions that set us apart.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes summarize the knowledge and skills Texas A&M expects students to gain during their educational experience as Aggies. These learning outcomes ask students to connect their course- and degree-level learning to their overall goals as they take on leadership positions in their professions and communities, and prepare them to engage in learning for a lifetime.

First and foremost, Texas A&M expects students to have mastered the material presented in their individual courses, from entry-level general education courses required of all undergraduates, to capstone courses restricted to seniors in a major, to specialized graduate seminars.

The broader institutional student learning outcomes ask students to connect the pieces of their education into a whole that synthesizes what they have learned. Students graduate not only knowing facts and understanding basic concepts, but also demonstrating an ability to apply and explain those facts and concepts creatively in new situations. Through this process, students gain the skills and knowledge that allow them to thrive in our complex world.

Master's

A student who graduates from Texas A&M with a master's degree will:

- Master degree program requirements, including theories, concepts, principles and practice, and develop a coherent understanding of the subject matter through synthesis across courses and experiences.
- 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 and to conduct critical, reasoned arguments.
- Know how to communicate effectively.
- Use appropriate technologies to communicate, collaborate, conduct research and solve problems.
- Develop clear research plans and conduct valid (data-supported), theoretically consistent and institutionally appropriate research.
- Choose ethical courses of action in research and practice.

Doctoral

A student who graduates from Texas A&M with a doctoral degree will:

- Master degree program requirements, including theories, concepts, principles and practice; develop a coherent understanding of the subject matter through synthesis across courses and experiences; and apply subject matter knowledge to solve problems and make decisions.
- Apply a variety of strategies and tools, use a variety of sources and evaluate multiple points of view to analyze and integrate information and put forth critical, reasoned arguments.
- Communicate effectively.
- Develop clear research plans, conduct valid, data-supported, theoretically consistent, and institutionally appropriate research and effectively disseminate the results of the research in appropriate venues to a range of audiences.
- Use appropriate technologies to communicate, collaborate, conduct research and solve problems.
- Teach and explain the subject matter in their discipline.
- Choose ethical courses of action in research and practice.