



## Graduate Student Handbook 2017-2018



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome: Aggies by the Sea

Mission Statement of TAMUG

Mission Statement of TAMUG Graduate Studies Office

## Academic Life

- Howdy and Email
- Registration
- Billing
- OGAPS Policies/Forms
- Study Abroad
- Departmental Policies
- Graduation

## Employment

- Assistantships
- Tuition Waivers
- Human Resources
- Benefits

## International Students

- International Student Services (ISS)
- Check-In
- Worker Certification

# WELCOME: Aggies by the Sea

Welcome to Texas A&M University at Galveston (A&M Galveston). This online handbook is a resource for graduate students in residence at Galveston.

In addition to this guide, students are encouraged to visit the following online resources: [A&M Galveston Catalog](#) and [Texas A&M University \(TAMU\) Graduate Catalog](#). Other resources are listed or linked as appropriate throughout this handbook and on our website.

Despite our efforts to provide as much information as possible in these publications, personal inquiries are always welcome in our office. So, please feel free to come by the Research and Graduate Studies Office, Suite 300 in Building 3026 (the Sea Aggie Center).

Welcome to Texas A&M University at Galveston. We're glad that you've decided to be an Aggie by the Sea.

Sincerely,

*Nicole*

Nicole Kinslow  
Director  
Graduate Studies  
[kinslown@tamug.edu](mailto:kinslown@tamug.edu)  
409-740-4937

# MISSION STATEMENT

## The Mission of Texas A&M University at Galveston

*Texas A&M University at Galveston (A&M Galveston) is a special-purpose institution of higher education for undergraduate and graduate instruction in marine and maritime studies in science, engineering and business and for research and public service related to the general field of marine resources. The institution is under the management and control of the Board of Regents of the Texas A&M University System, with degrees offered under the name and authority of Texas A&M University at College Station.*

## The Mission of A&M Galveston Graduate Studies

*Graduate Studies at Texas A&M University at Galveston supports student success and the academic mission of the graduate community. We foster broad collaborations with graduate studies stakeholders to expand knowledge, enhance skills, and champion personal and professional development. We strive to continually create new opportunities for graduate students to become global thinkers and their success is determined by their enduring commitment and ownership to their educational experience.*

# A&M Galveston Student Handbook 2017-2018

## Academic Life

### *Howdy and Email*

The [Howdy Portal](#) is a web portal connecting students to university records and resources. On Howdy, students pay tuition bills, register for courses, and view unofficial transcripts plus much more. Please note that students need to activate their Net ID and password in order to access Howdy. To activate your NET ID and password, please visit the [Howdy page on the Grad Studies website](#).

Every student is given an email.tamu.edu account. To activate this email, please visit [here](#). To request an A&M Galveston (tamug.edu) email address, please send us an email at [gradstudies@tamug.edu](mailto:gradstudies@tamug.edu).

### *Registration*

Registration should be done with careful consideration of your options. It is best to consult with your faculty advisor or the staff advisor. Students register online through the [Howdy Portal](#) using your Net ID and password and click the “My Record” tab.



Please note that on Howdy students can only enroll for courses at Galveston and College Station. For example, College Station students can register for courses at TAMU or A&M Galveston on Howdy. The same goes for Galveston students wanting to enroll for courses at TAMU. If you need assistance with registering for a course on Howdy, please email [gradstudies@tamug.edu](mailto:gradstudies@tamug.edu) with your UIN and course information.

### *Billing*

Students can view their tuition and fee bill on Howdy. Students are responsible for paying their bill on time in order to avoid a late fee. To challenge a bill, please view the university catalog.

# A&M Galveston Student Handbook 2017-2018

## ***OGAPS Policies/Forms***

The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) at Texas A&M University handles processing documents for each critical step toward obtaining your Master's or doctoral degree. Please see below for important websites to visit at [OGAPS](#).

### [OGAPS Current Student Webpage](#)

This site explains policies governing graduate education at TAMU and A&M Galveston.

### [Online Document Plan Submission System \(DPSS\)](#)

Every graduate student is required to submit a degree plan online. This site provides access for the online degree plan submission system.

### [Steps to Fulfill a Master's Degree](#)

Learn more about the critical steps required for all Master's students.

### [Steps to Fulfill a Doctoral Degree](#)

Learn more about the critical steps required for all doctoral students.

### [Petition](#)

At times, students need to change a course, committee member, or may need to take a leave of absence. A petition allows a graduate student to make these requests. Students cannot file a petition until a degree plan is filed and approved. Petitions are filed through DPSS.

## ***Study Abroad***

Many of our graduate students participate through Study Abroad

experiences through courses, research trips, or conferences. When the student leaves the U.S., he or she is required to register with [Study Abroad](#). Although it is not required, it is recommended that you inform the A&M Graduate Studies Office of your travel plans as well. International students traveling outside the US are advised to contact [International Student Services](#) to ensure that he or she has the proper, most updated documents to exit and re-enter the country.

## ***Grading***

Please note that only an Instructor of Record may grade work conducted by a graduate student. Graduate students in a Teaching Assistantship role cannot work of another graduate student.

## ***Departmental Policies***

It is not uncommon for departments to have additional policies for graduate education. To learn more about departmental policies, please contact your department.

## ***Graduation***

Graduation is a big event that requires planning. For the semester of your anticipated graduation date, please apply for graduation early and before the deadline. Critical dates for graduation are posted on the [Academic Calendar](#). For all graduate students, it is recommended that you visit your Academic Advisor the semester before you anticipate graduating in order make sure you are on track.

# A&M Galveston Student Handbook 2017-2018

For students preparing a thesis or dissertation, it is recommended that you attend a Thesis Workshop held by the [Thesis Office](#) a year before your anticipated graduation. Finally, it is recommended that graduate students schedule a pre-submittal conference the semester before or during graduation. This conference will save you time with the editing process.

## Employment

### *Assistantships*

There are graduate assistantship positions available on the A&M Galveston campus. Graduate students may be employed as a Graduate Assistant-Teaching (GAT) in an academic department on the Galveston campus. This employment position is handled through the individual academic department and interested students should contact the academic department for any position openings. First time GATs must go through training provided by the TAMU Center for Teaching Excellence.

In addition, graduate students may be employed as either a Graduate Assistant-Research (GAR), where you would be working with a faculty member in a lab setting or as a Graduate Assistant-Non-Teaching (GANT) where you would be working in a discipline related non-teaching position.

All three of these positions are 50% effort positions (20 hours/week),

benefits eligible and qualify for a non-resident tuition waiver and graduate student tuition payment (doctoral students only) in accordance with full-time registration requirements.

### **Tuition Waivers**

The University will continue efforts to improve the competitiveness of the graduate program by paying the resident tuition of doctoral graduate assistants involved in teaching (GATs), researching (GARs), and (GANTs) supporting teaching. An eligible graduate assistant does not have to apply for this award; instead each will have the appropriate amount credited to his/her fee statement, based on registration and information provided by the employing department.

Out-of-State (non-Texas resident) graduate students employed as a graduate assistant and registered fulltime qualify for the non-resident tuition waiver. This waiver will allow the graduate student to pay in-state tuition rates.

All waivers are filed by the Graduate Studies Office, for questions regarding tuition payments and non-resident waivers for Graduate Assistants, contact our office at [gradstudies@tamug.edu](mailto:gradstudies@tamug.edu).

### **GAT Responsibilities**

GATs may assist with distance education set-up, lecture, develop material, grade undergraduate student work only, and facilitate labs.

# A&M Galveston Student Handbook 2017-2018

## ***Human Resources***

For the hiring process, you will interact with Human Resources (HR) as well as several departments. Please make sure your hiring department here in Galveston notifies HR as soon as possible. Hiring dates and times should be observed in order for the process to go as smoothly as possible.

HR requires that every new hire complete a Criminal Background Check form. This form can take a long time to process.

In order to get on payroll, students must attend an HR session during August or January or schedule an appointment with HR. When you visit HR, please bring the following: photo identification card, banking info for direct deposit, and your original social security card. During this visit, please plan to complete new hire paperwork. If you do not, you will be: removed from payroll, not eligible to work, and not get paid for the time worked until you present the appropriate documentation. HR will accept a receipt from the Social Security Administration until the card is received. Once you receive your new card in the mail, bring it to HR so a copy can be made.

A new employee who does not have their original Social Security card, must go to the Social Security Administration office in League City (2835 Gulf Freeway South; located between the Petco and Kohl's) and request a replacement card. You only have 3 days from the hire date to provide proof of identification.

During your orientation with HR, you have to complete all mandatory HR training which includes "Ethics", "Creating a Discrimination Free Workplace", and "Lab Safety and HAZCOM" (where required). This training must be completed online within 30 days of hire.

## ***HR Requirements for International Students***

HR needs the following information for hiring: name, your hiring department, email, unexpired passport, visa, I-20 (if you are an F-1), DS2019 (if you are a J-1), social security card (\*contact Graduate Studies if you do not have a SSN card before applying for a SSN card), and I-94.

## **Benefits (based on % effort)**

Not all Graduate Assistants get benefits. If you are a benefits-eligible employee, you are entitled to medical insurance benefits. Please go to the following link for information on insurance premiums. <http://www.academichealthplans.com/tamus>



Make sure to select your benefits via sso tamu.edu within 60 days of your start date to select the Graduate Student Worker Insurance Plan to avoid the default A&M Care Plan which you will pay \$300+ per month.



# A&M Galveston Student Handbook 2017-2018

## Health Insurance

In April of each year you will be informed by Human Resources of the cost of your summer health insurance premiums that will be deducted from your June 1 paycheck. This information is sent to you with the assumption that you are returning for the fall semester in the same capacity (GAR, GAT, GANT). If you are not returning in the fall, please notify your employing department and HR. Upon termination of your employment with A&M Galveston, you may have the option to use COBRA coverage for your medical benefits.

## International Students

### *International Student Services*

The mission of [International Student Services \(ISS\)](#) is to facilitate an international student's transition to life in the United States and at TAMU and A&M Galveston, promote interactions between the US and international populations, and provide services necessary to meet the special needs of international students.

The services necessary to accomplish the office mission are as diverse as the student population itself. However, there are six general areas of services available:

- Immigration Services and Advising
- Personal Advising
- Liaison for International Students
- Community and Campus Outreach Activities

- Special Programs for International Students
- Administration of Scholarships, Grants and Loan Programs exclusively for International Students

For information specifically for international students attending A&M Galveston, please click [here](#).

### *Check-In*

All incoming international students are required to check-in through the ISS Liaison located at A&M Galveston. To schedule an appointment with the ISS Liaison, please email Dr. Kenyatta Dawson [dawsonk@tamug.edu](mailto:dawsonk@tamug.edu). Students who do not participate in Check-In will be unable to register or get on payroll (if on an assistantship). Also, students must complete an online orientation through ISS prior to scheduling a Check-In appointment.

### *Worker Certification*

All incoming international students on assistantships must work with their hiring department to complete worker certification, which involves the department verifying all standard documents needed to enter the country (i.e. I-20, DS2019, I-94, etc.). Once worker certification is complete, the department will notify HR who will proceed with the hiring process.

# Contacts

## A&M Galveston

### Marine Biology

Dr. Anna Armitage, Graduate Advisor  
M.S. and Ph.D. in Marine Biology  
Telephone: 409-740-4842  
Email: [armitaga@tamug.edu](mailto:armitaga@tamug.edu)

### Marine Sciences

Dr. Wesley Highfield, Graduate Advisor  
Master of Marine Resource Management  
Telephone: 409-740-4726  
Email: [highfiew@tamug.edu](mailto:highfiew@tamug.edu)

### Maritime Administration

Dr. Joan Mileski, Department Head  
Master of Maritime Administration and  
Logistics  
Telephone: 409-740-4978  
Email: [mmal@tamug.edu](mailto:mmal@tamug.edu)

### Research & Graduate Studies

Dr. Antonietta Quigg, Associate Vice  
President for Research & Graduate Studies  
Telephone: 409-740-4990  
Email: [quigga@tamug.edu](mailto:quigga@tamug.edu)

Dr. Tammy Holliday, Associate Vice  
President for Research Operations  
Telephone: 409-740-4941  
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Nicole Kinslow, Director  
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Holly Richards, Academic Advisor IV  
Telephone: 409-740-4957  
Email: [richardh@tamug.edu](mailto:richardh@tamug.edu)

Patty Gonzales, Business Coordinator III  
Telephone: 409-740-4748  
Email: [evansp@tamug.edu](mailto:evansp@tamug.edu)

Patti Lambert, Administrative Coordinator  
Telephone: 409-740-4479  
Email: [lambertp@tamug.edu](mailto:lambertp@tamug.edu)

### Human Resources

Ms. Tina Pennington, HR Rep  
Telephone: 409-740-4534  
E-Mail: [penningt@tamug.edu](mailto:penningt@tamug.edu)

## TAMU

### International Student Services

Samantha Clement, Sr Int'l Student Advisor  
Telephone: 979-845-1824  
E-Mail: [sclement@oar.tamu.edu](mailto:sclement@oar.tamu.edu)

Dr. Kenyatta Dawson, A&M Galveston Int'l  
Advisor  
Telephone: 409-740-4582  
Email: [dawsonk@tamug.edu](mailto:dawsonk@tamug.edu)

### Oceanography

Brady Dennis, Academic Advisor II  
Telephone: 979-845-5346  
Email: [brady-dennis@tamu.edu](mailto:brady-dennis@tamu.edu)

### Office of Graduate and Professional Studies

979-845-3631  
E-Mail: [ogaps@tamu.edu](mailto:ogaps@tamu.edu)  
<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>

Dr. Mark Zoran, Acting Associate Provost  
for Graduate and Professional Studies  
E-Mail: [ogaps@tamu.edu](mailto:ogaps@tamu.edu)

### Thesis Office

979-845-3631  
E-Mail: [thesis@tamu.edu](mailto:thesis@tamu.edu)  
<http://ogaps.tamu.edu>

### Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences

Lindsay Hutchins, Coordinator of Advising  
Telephone: 979-845-5704  
E-Mail: [lstroup@tamu.edu](mailto:lstroup@tamu.edu)

## Graduate Studies Office Procedural Advising

### INCOMING STUDENTS

- All incoming students will receive information concerning their admission to Texas A&M University at Galveston and their orientation, handbook, and any registration procedures.
- All incoming students will be sent informational videos related to preparation of their first semester at Texas A&M University at Galveston.
- All incoming students will be required to attend the New Graduate Student Orientation.
- All incoming students who will serve as Teaching Assistants will be required to attend the Teaching Assistantship Training hosted by the Graduate Studies Office and the TAMU Center for Teaching Excellence.
- All incoming students will be required to attend a mandatory First Semester Advising Meeting with a Graduate Studies office staff member.
- All incoming students will be briefed on the specific requirements of their degree and the expected timeline for completion of milestones within the program (degree plan, proposal, prelims, defense, etc).

### CURRENT STUDENTS

- Current students will have reminders sent to them concerning milestones within their degree program (degree plan, proposal, prelims, defense, etc).
- All current students must have a degree plan on file with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies by the end of their second semester of study. Failure to do so will result in registration holds being placed on your student account.
- Students must follow the calendars and timelines published by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

### GRADUATING STUDENTS

- All graduating students will be required to attend a mandatory Graduation Advising Meeting with a Graduate Studies office staff member.
- All graduating students will be briefed on the specific requirements of their degree and the expected timeline for completion of milestones within the program (degree plan, proposal, prelims, defense, etc) as related to graduation.
- Student records will be checked for completion by Graduate Studies Office staff. Petitions, corrections, or other forms required for graduation will be overseen by the Graduate Studies Office.
- Graduating students must meet deadlines published by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies to be eligible to receive their diploma. Failure to do so may delay graduation.