

2025-2026

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

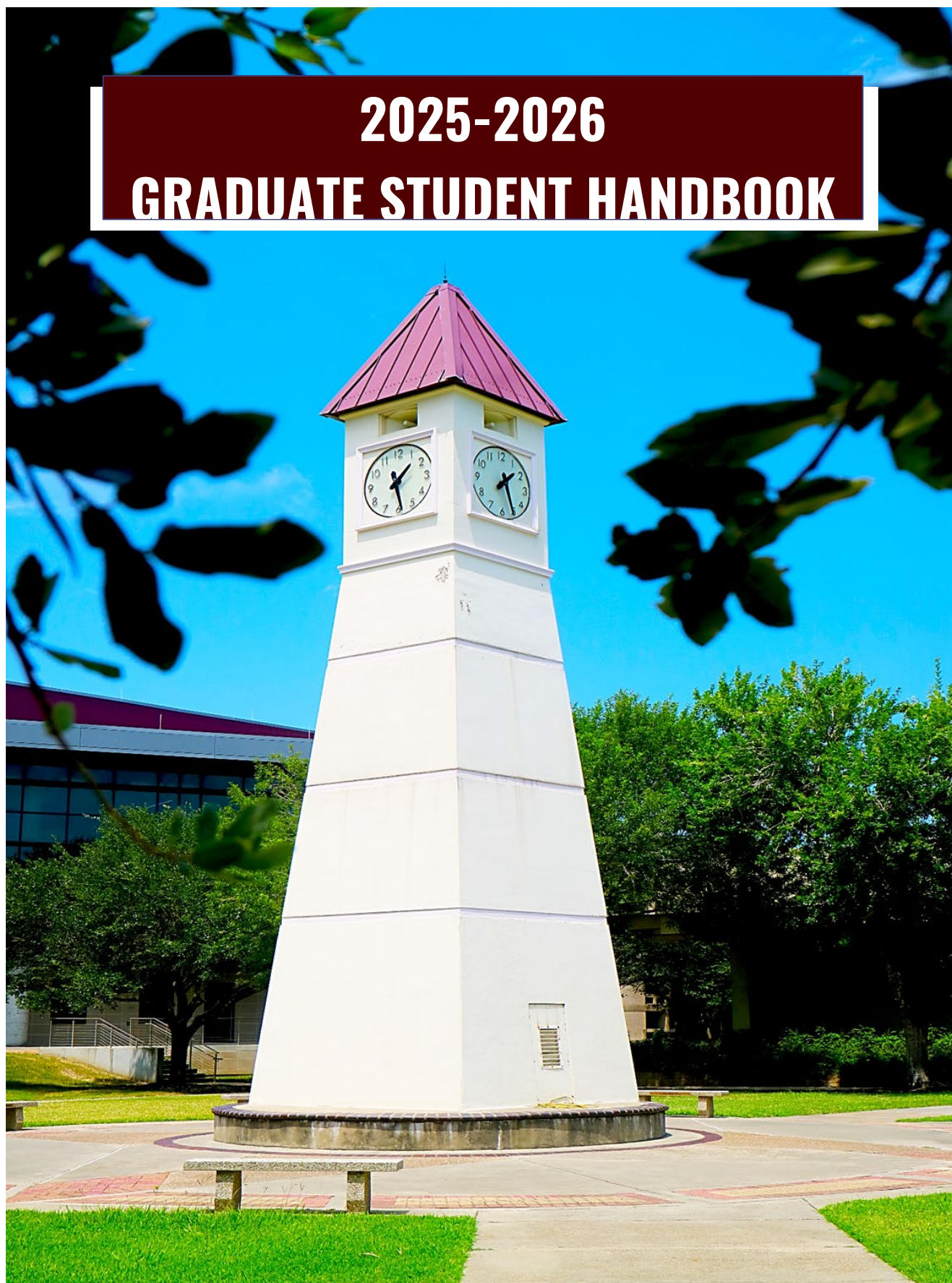
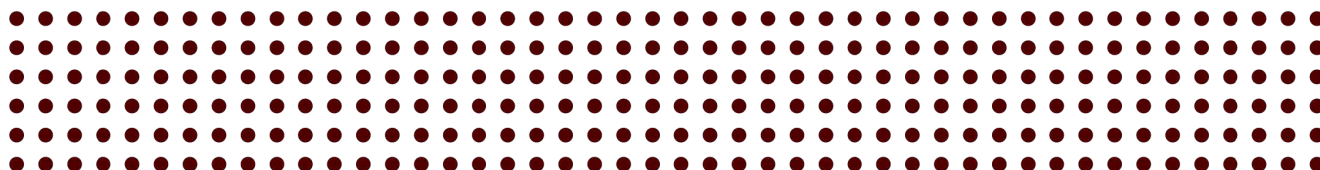


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HOWDY! AGGIES BY THE SEA!

Welcome to Texas A&M University at Galveston (TAMUG). 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 resource: [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 reach out to the Research and Graduate Studies (RGS) by emailing gradstudies@tamug.edu.

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

Sincerely,



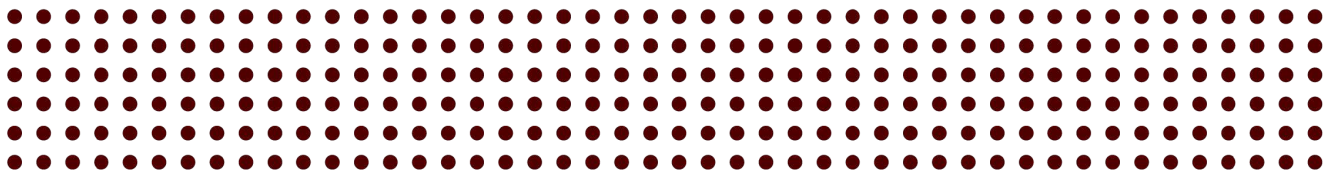
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[Campus Map and Directions](#)





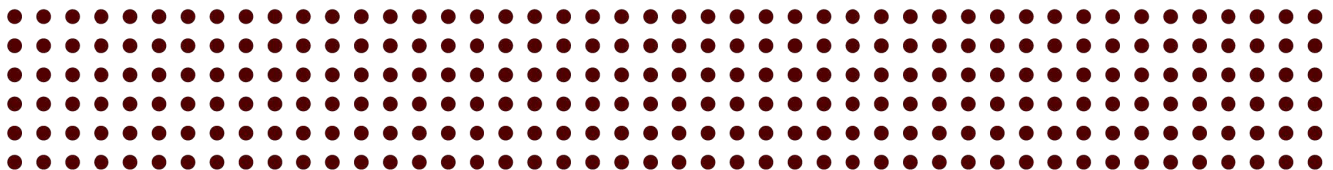
MISSION STATEMENTS

TAMUG

Texas A&M University at Galveston is the island campus of Texas A&M University dedicated to developing leaders who are changing the world. We educate nearly 2,300 undergraduate and graduate students annually in marine and maritime programs, whose commitment to our Core Values positions them to fuel the blue economy now and in the future.

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.



GRADUATE STUDIES TEAM



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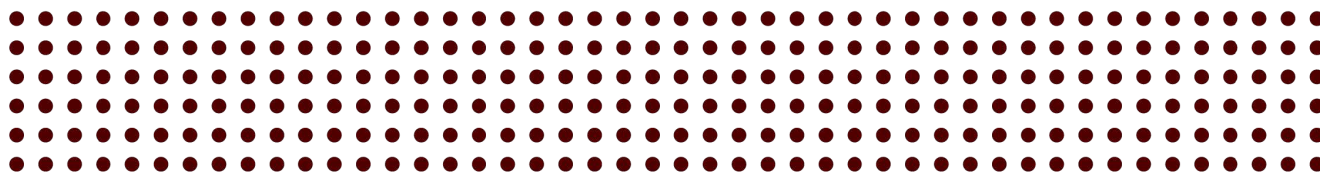
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The Graduate Studies team help graduate students in the College of Marine Sciences and Maritime Studies as well as graduate students in other TAMU colleges physically located on the Galveston campus. Services include admissions, procedural advising, graduate employment, and ombuds services.



ACADEMIC LIFE

Howdy and Email

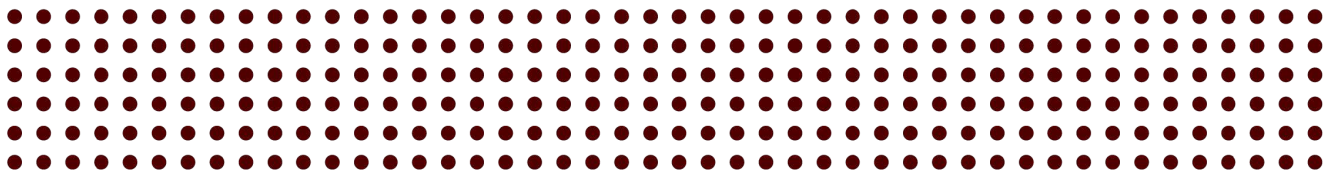
The [Howdy Portal](#) is a web portal connecting students to university records and resources. On Howdy, students pay tuition bills, register for courses, and view unofficial transcripts plus much more. Please note that students need to activate their Net ID and password to access Howdy.

Registration

Registration should be done with careful consideration of your options. It is best to consult with your faculty advisor or staff advisor. Students register online through the [Howdy Portal](#) using your Net ID and password. 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 TAMUG on Howdy. The same goes for Galveston students wanting to enroll for courses at TAMU or TAMUG. If you need assistance with registering for a course on Howdy, please email 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 to avoid a late fee. To challenge a bill, please view the policies within the university catalog.



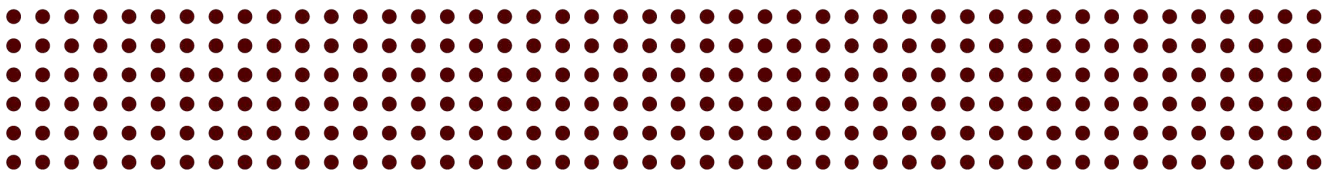
GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL POLICIES/FORMS

The Graduate and Professional School (Grad School) 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 [Grad School](#).

<p><u>The Grad School Current Student Webpage</u></p> <p>This site explains policies governing graduate education at TAMU and TAMUG.</p>	<p><u>Online Document Plan Submission System (DPSS)</u></p> <p>Every graduate student is required to submit a degree plan online. This site provides access for the online degree plan submission system.</p>
<p><u>Steps to fulfill a Master’s Degree</u></p> <p>Learn more about the critical steps required for all master’s students.</p>	<p><u>Steps to fulfill a Doctoral Degree</u></p> <p>Learn more about the critical steps required for all doctoral students.</p>

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.



Education (Study) Abroad

Many of our graduate students participate through Education (or Study) Abroad experiences through courses, research trips, or conferences. When the student conducting university business leaves the U.S., they are required to register with [Education Abroad](#). Although it is not required, it is recommended that you inform TAMUG Graduate Studies of your travel plans as well. International students traveling outside the US are advised to contact [International Student & Scholar Services](#) to ensure that they have 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 grade work conducted by another graduate student.

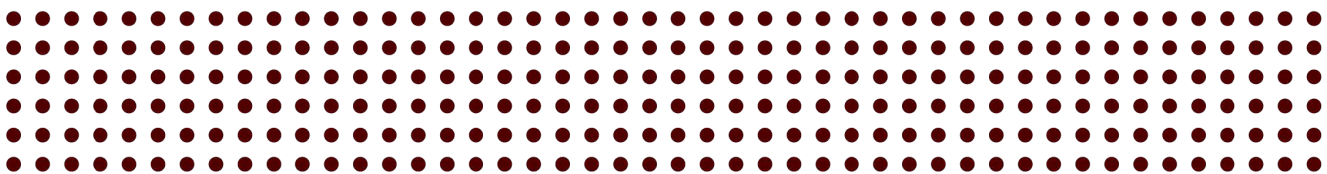
Departmental Policies

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](#).

It is recommended that graduate students attend a Graduation Advising session a semester or year before you graduate. Finally, research track students should know the pre-submittal requirements outlined by the [Thesis & Dissertation Services](#) a semester before or during graduation. These requirements will save you time with the editing process.



EMPLOYMENT

Assistantships

Graduate assistantship positions are available at TAMUG. 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 the Human Resources Office. 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.

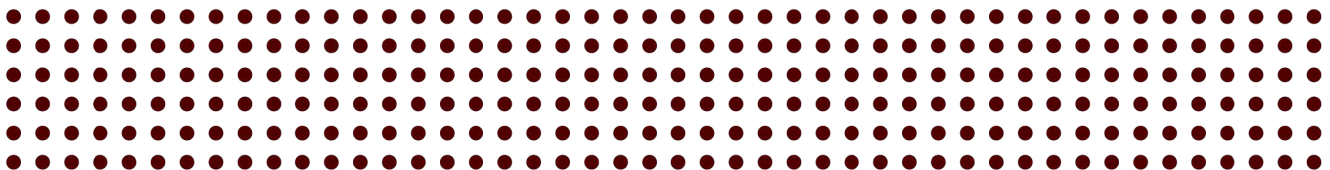
Please note that research track students who are employed as on an assistantship for the fall and spring semesters are required to register full time for the summer semester.

Non-Resident Tuition Waivers

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

Out-of-State (non-Texas resident) graduate students, employed as graduate assistants and registered full time, qualify for the non-resident tuition waiver. This waiver will allow the graduate student to pay resident tuition rates.

Graduate Studies files all waivers. Request for waivers and payments are sent out May, August and December for the respective semester. Students eligible for waivers and payments should reply to these requests in a timely manner. For questions regarding tuition payments and non-resident waivers for Graduate Assistants, contact our office at gradstudies@tamug.edu.



GAT Responsibilities

GATs may assist with distance education set-up, lecture, develop material, grade undergraduate student work only, and facilitate labs. All new GATs are required to complete the Teaching Assistantship Institute (TAI) training. GATs who neglect to complete TAI will forfeit their teaching position.

Human Resources (HR)

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 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.

To get on payroll, students must work with HR during August or January. Students will attend an Employee Orientation and should bring the appropriate identification as instructed by HR.

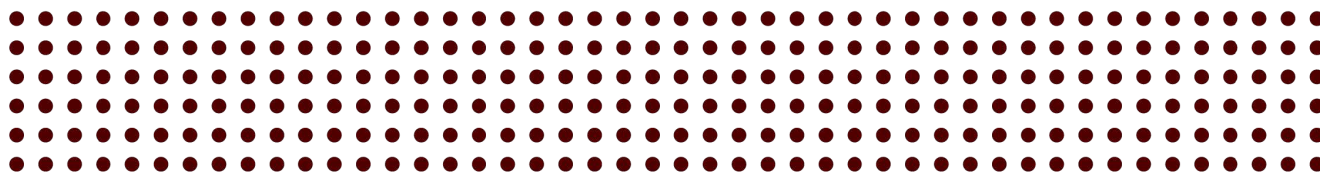
During your employee orientation, you must complete all mandatory HR training which includes "Ethics", "Creating a Discrimination Free Workplace", and "Lab Safety and HAZCOM" (where required). This training must be completed online within 30 days of hire.

HR Requirements for International Students

HR needs the following information for hiring: your 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 HR if you do not have a SSN card before applying for a SSN card), and I-94.

Benefits

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: <https://tamu.myahpcare.com/>.





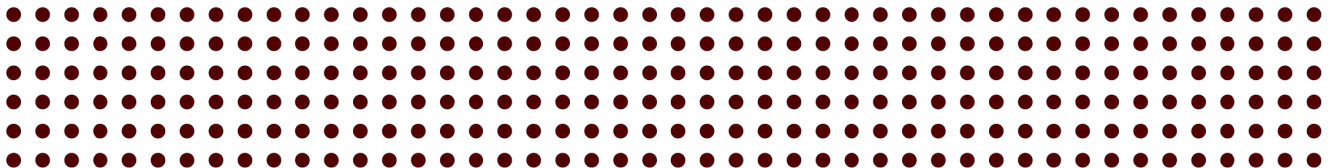
IMPORTANT NOTICE

International students -

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

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 hiring department and HR. Upon termination of your employment with TAMUG, you may have the option to use COBRA coverage for your medical benefits.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Student & Scholar Services

The mission of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) is to facilitate an international student's transition to life in the United States and at TAMU and TAMUG, 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

Campus Resources

ISSS (International Student & Scholar Services): <https://global.tamu.edu/iss/>

ISSS works with students to comply with immigration laws and regulations. The I20, Travel Signature and other related materials for international students can be found on their website.

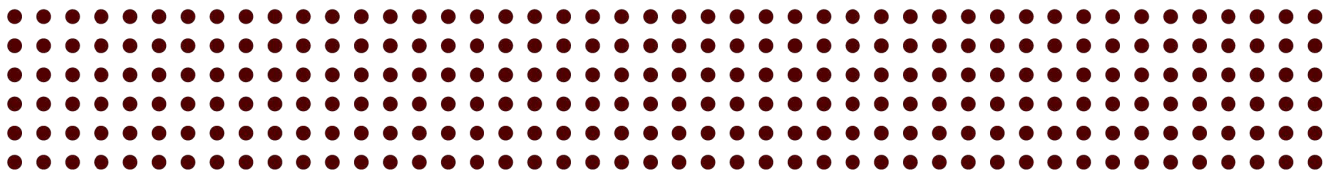
ISSS Office Hours and Services

Visit the updated Connect with ISSS webpage for full details.

<https://global.tamu.edu/iss/contact-us>

For new international students, you need to complete check-in steps:

<https://global.tamu.edu/iss/students#0-STEP3%3AStartyourrequestinTerraDotta>



Graduate Studies Office Procedural Advising

INCOMING STUDENTS

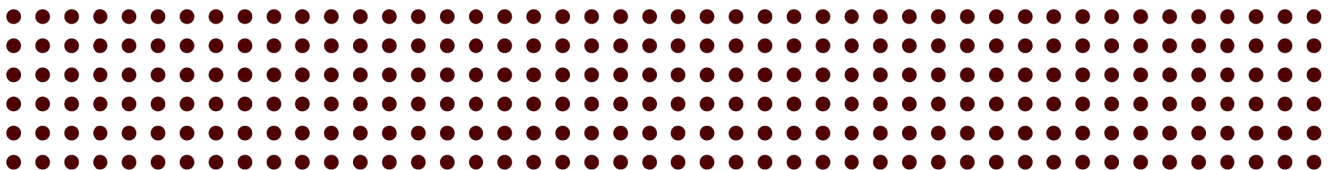
- All incoming students will receive information concerning their admission to Texas A&M University at Galveston and their orientation, handbook, and any registration procedures.
- All incoming students will be required to attend the New Graduate Student Orientation.
- All incoming students who will 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 Incoming Advising with a Graduate Studies 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

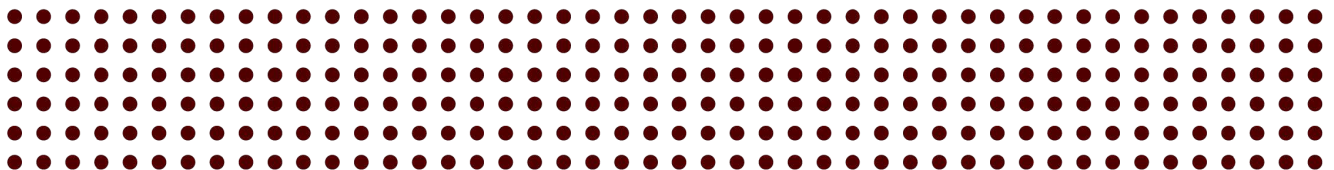
- Current students will have reminders sent to them concerning milestones within their degree program (degree plan, proposal, prelims, defense, etc.).
- All master's students must have a degree plan on file with the Graduate and Professional School by the end of their second semester of study. All doctoral students must have a degree plan on file with the Graduate and Professional School by the end of their fourth 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 Graduate and Professional School.

GRADUATING STUDENTS

- All graduating students are encouraged to attend a Graduation Advising Meeting with a Graduate Studies staff member.



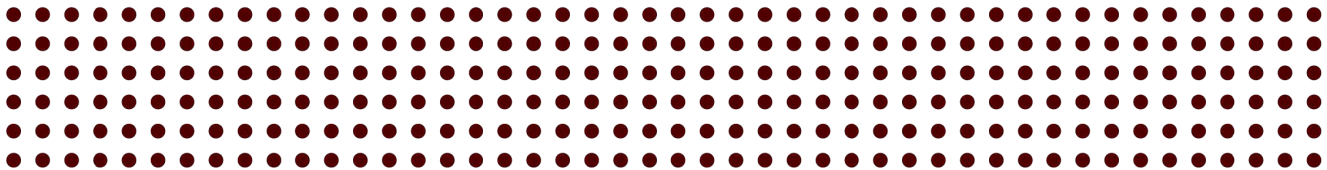
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- All graduating students will be briefed on the specific requirements of their degree and the expected timeline for completion of milestones within the program (degree plan, proposal, prelims, defense, etc.) as related to graduation.
 - Student records will be checked for completion by Graduate Studies. Needed petitions, corrections, or other forms will be communicated with impacted students.
 - Graduating students must meet deadlines published by the Graduate and Professional School to be eligible to receive their diploma. Failure to do so may delay graduation.



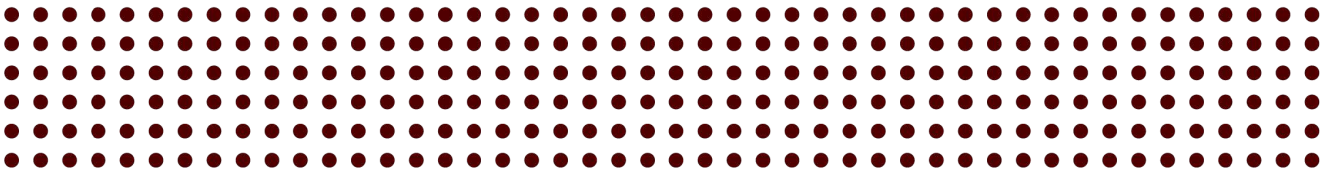
CONTACTS

TEXAS A&M GALVESTON

<u>Department</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Research and Graduate Studies	Dr. Pete van Hengstum	Associate Vice President, Associate Dean, College of Marine Sciences & Maritime Studies, Texas A&M University	409-740-4919	vanhenp@tamug.edu
Research Operations	Patty Gonzales	Director	409-740-4748	evansp@tamug.edu
Marine Biology	Dr. Dave Wells	Graduate Advisor, M.S. and Ph.D.	409-740-4717	wellsr@tamug.edu
Marine and Coastal Environmental Science	Dr. Ashley Ross	Graduate Advisor, Ph.D. of Marine and Coastal Management and Science	409-740-4485	ashleydross@tamug.edu
Marine and Coastal Environmental Science	Dr. Meri Davlasheridze	Graduate Advisor, Master of Marine Resources Management	409-741-4338	davlashm@tamu.edu



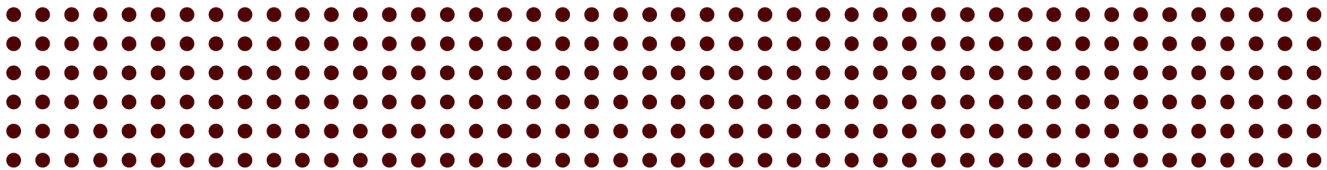
Maritime Business Administration	Dr. Jean-Paul Rodrigue	Graduate Program Chair Master of Maritime Business Administration and Logistics	201-290-6147	ecojpr@tamug.edu
Human Resources	Amanda Shirey	HR representative	409-741-4061	amanda.shirey@tamug.edu



CONTACTS

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

<u>Department</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Graduate and Professional School	Dr. Fuhui Tong	Associate Provost and Dean	979-845-3631	grad@tamu.edu
Oceanography	Dr. Chrissy Stover Wiederwohl	Assistant Department Head	979-845-7191	chrissyw@tamu.edu
Ocean Engineering	Dr. Vijaykumar Panchang	Associate Department Head		panchanv@tamug.edu
Ocean Engineering	Peggy Rutkowski	Program Specialist IV	979-458-5523	peggyr@tamu.edu





TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY AT GALVESTON
Research & Graduate
Studies

