

**DISCOVER YOUR PASSION – INQUIRE, INNOVATE, IMPACT**

## **MASTER’S STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
CORPUS  
CHRISTI**

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**COLLEGE OF  
GRADUATE  
STUDIES**

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*This handbook is intended to be read in conjunction with the Graduate Catalog: <http://catalog.tamucc.edu/index.php>.*

# DISCOVER YOUR PASSION – INQUIRE, INNOVATE, IMPACT

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## SECTION I. COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

### Message from the Dean



Congratulations on being accepted into one of our outstanding master's/MFA degree programs at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC). This is a major accomplishment that comes with significant financial, academic, and personal commitment on your part. The College of Graduate Studies at TAMU-CC has adopted as a mantra – *Discover Your Passion: Inquire, Innovate, Inspire*. This student handbook has been developed for students working towards a master's or MFA degree to ensure that you will be successful and kept informed every step of the way regarding University academic expectations and requirements, program specific expectations and requirements, and resources and services available to students.

The College of Graduate Studies is located on the first level of the Faculty Center, Suite 151. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Monday–Friday. Please feel free to stop by any time and/or share any suggestions on how to improve this resource for you.

Best of luck on your exciting, new undertaking. I look forward to seeing you at graduation, if not sooner.

Karen McCaleb, EdD  
Dean, College of Graduate Studies

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## College of Graduate Studies Staff



**Karen McCaleb, EdD**

Dean [karen.mccaleb@tamucc.edu](mailto:karen.mccaleb@tamucc.edu)

- Administers and supports graduate programs
- Collaborates with faculty and academic deans on all issues related to graduate education



**Marvarene Oliver, EdD**

Associate Dean

[marvarene.oliver@tamucc.edu](mailto:marvarene.oliver@tamucc.edu)

- Directs related graduate program activities and professional development initiatives
- Facilitates Graduate Council
- Monitors adherence to SACSOC principles



**Tim Boulan**

Programmer II

[tim.boulan@tamucc.edu](mailto:tim.boulan@tamucc.edu)

- Maintains databases and equipment
- Provides systems/application analyses, design, development and implementation of programming
- Generates correspondence to graduate applicants/students regarding admission, enrollment and policy information
- Generates reports to program faculty regarding admissions and student progress



**Shay M. Lee**

Executive Assistant

[shay.lee@tamucc.edu](mailto:shay.lee@tamucc.edu)

- Assist Dean and Associate Dean with administrative duties
- Organizes and maintains college data and records
- Serves as the logical liaison, with different units across campus, for all college events and activities.



**Sandra Kureska, EdD**

Director, Admissions Liaison

[sandra.kureska@tamucc.edu](mailto:sandra.kureska@tamucc.edu)

- Oversees daily operations of the college
- Serves as liaison to the Office of Admissions
- Oversees graduate college process and policies
- Serves as a liaison to graduate program coordinators and advisors for policy purposes



**Angela Speaker**

Audit & Compliance Coordinator

[angela.speaker@tamucc.edu](mailto:angela.speaker@tamucc.edu)

- Performs all audit and compliance processes including degree plan audits, academic standings, degree plan exceptions
- Process all information related to doctoral students
- Monitors and updates Degree Works and catalog
- Maintains matriculate graduate student records

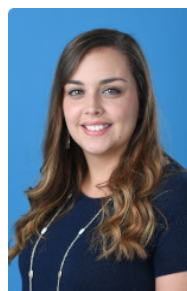


**Leticia Bazan**

Director, Recruitment Liaison

[Leticia.bazan@tamucc.edu](mailto:Leticia.bazan@tamucc.edu)

- Works with prospective and new students
- Serves as liaison to the Recruitment Office/Enrollment Management
- Coordinate social media presence; liaison with marketing and communication office
- Coordinates recruitment efforts in conjunction with recruitment office



**Sophia Zaner**

Outreach & Compliance Coordinator

[sophia.zaner@tamucc.edu](mailto:sophia.zaner@tamucc.edu)

- Manages day-to-day GROW Suite operations
- Assists with coordination of GROW and CGS events
- Assists with GROW and CGS social media
- Assists with student compliance processing

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## College of Graduate Studies Academic Advisors



**Alexandra J. S. Shaw, Ed.D.**  
Graduate Academic Advisor  
Education and Human  
Development  
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**Ronnie Emanuel**  
Graduate Academic Advisor  
Science and Engineering  
[ronnie.emanuel@tamucc.edu](mailto:ronnie.emanuel@tamucc.edu)



**Elizabeth Rivera**  
Graduate Academic Advisor  
Nursing and Health Sciences  
[elizabeth.rivera@tamucc.edu](mailto:elizabeth.rivera@tamucc.edu)



**Cindy Sheehy**  
Graduate Academic Advisor  
Liberal Arts  
[lucinda.sheehy@tamucc.edu](mailto:lucinda.sheehy@tamucc.edu)

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## SECTION II. STUDENT RESOURCES

Student fees paid entitle you to a number of student resources. Below is contact information for resources available to you.

### Financial Assistance

Graduate Scholarships and Assistantships  
<http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/funding>  
361-825-2177/2174

Office of Student Financial Assistance  
<http://osfa.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2338

### Student Services

Admissions & Records  
<http://admissions.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2624

Business Office  
<http://businessoffice.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2600

Career Services  
<http://career-services.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2628

Disability Services  
<http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-5816

IT Help Desk  
<http://it.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2692

Office of International Education  
<http://oie.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-3922

University Center & Student Activities  
<http://studentactivities.tamucc.edu> or  
<http://ucsa.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-5200 or 361-825-2707

University Police Department  
<http://police.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-4444

University Services  
(Banking, Bookstore, Dining, Mail, Printing,  
SandDollar)  
<http://universitieservices.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-5710

Veterans Affairs Office  
<http://vets.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2331

### Academic Resources

Graduate Resource and Opportunity Workspace  
(GROW)  
<http://grow.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2507

Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA)  
Writing Center  
<http://casa.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-5933

Mary and Jeff Bell Library  
<http://rattler.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2643

Office of Academic Testing  
<http://testing.tamucc.edu>  
361/825-2334

SAIL  
<http://sail.tamucc.edu>

The Island Online (Blackboard)  
<https://iol.tamucc.edu>  
or [bb9.tamucc.edu](http://bb9.tamucc.edu)  
361/825-2825

### Health and Wellness

Recreational Sports  
<http://recsports.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2454

Student Health Plan  
<https://tamucc.myahpcare.com>  
800-452-5772

University Counseling Center  
<http://counseling.tamucc.edu>  
361-825-2703

University Health Center  
<http://healthcenter.tamucc.edu>  
361/825-2601  
Ask-a-Nurse Line: 361-825-5735

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## Graduate Resource and Opportunity Workspace (GROW)

As part of the College of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Resource and Opportunity Workspace (GROW) offers graduate students exclusive space and resources tailored specifically to their academic needs and professional development. GROW is located in the Mary and Jeff Bell Library (Suite 220) and is open during library hours. To reserve the small/group study room, students may complete an online form available on the GROW website: <http://grow.tamucc.edu>.

## Dissertation/Thesis Formatting Workshop

We encourage all master's students who are or will be completing a thesis to attend a Dissertation/Thesis Formatting Workshop. These workshops are held every semester and provide information that will simplify the process of formatting and uploading the final document into ProQuest. We strongly urge attendance early in the writing process for your study. Workshops will be announced via the CGS/GROW newsletter and the CGS webpage.

Topics include:

- CGS website related to dissertation/thesis
- Important Dates
- Forms
- The submission process
- Copyright information
- Formatting and templates

## Graduate Orientation

Graduate orientation is offered every Fall and Spring semester. Preregistration is requested so that we can best plan for you. For additional information on this event, please visit [http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/new\\_students/orientation.html](http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/new_students/orientation.html)

## Title IX Information

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. Sexual harassment, which includes sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination, including discrimination based upon sex. The University provides resources to students, faculty, and staff to address concerns related to sexual harassment, sexual assault (rape), sexual misconduct, and sex discrimination. Mr. Samuel Ramirez has been appointed as the TAMU-CC Title IX Coordinator. For more information, please see <http://edcs.tamucc.edu/TitleIX.html>



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## SECTION III. ACADEMIC POLICIES

### Registration

The Office of the Registrar coordinates the course registration process for all current and incoming students. <http://registrar.tamucc.edu/Register%20for%20Classes/index.html>

Current and incoming students are able to register online through their S.A.I.L. account or at the Office of the Registrar.

- S.A.I.L.: <http://sail.tamucc.edu/>
- Office of the Registrar: Located in the Student Service Center
  - Phone: 361- 825-2624
  - Website: <http://registrar.tamucc.edu/>

### Enrollment Status

Enrollment status for graduate students is defined below. Consult the Graduate Catalog and your academic college for exceptions and further information.

Status	Fall or spring terms	Combined summer terms
Full-time	9 hours	6 hours
Three-quarter-time	7 hours	5 hours
Half-time	5 hours	3 hours

### Total Hours

Master's programs range from 30 to 60 approved graduate semester credit hours (SCH), which must be from courses at the 5000 level or higher. The MFA, which is a terminal degree, requires 60 semester credit hours.

### Graduate Courses

Graduate courses are numbered 5000 or higher. Courses at the 5000 level are open only to students with graduate standing and senior undergraduate students who meet specific criteria. Courses at the 6000 level and higher are limited to students admitted to a doctoral program or graduate students who meet specific criteria. Please consult the individual graduate program for additional details or requirements.

### Maximum Course Load

Graduate students may not register for more than 12 hours in a regular semester without the approval of the dean of the college in which they are enrolled. Approval is also required for more than 6 hours of coursework in a single session of summer school or 12 hours of coursework in the combined summer session (not counting Maymester) without the approval of the college dean.

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## **Repetition of a Course to Raise a Grade**

A course in which the final grade is C or lower may be repeated for a higher grade. A course in which the final grade is a B may be repeated only with the permission of the Graduate Dean. **A maximum of two courses** may be retaken during graduate study at the university. **Each course may be repeated only one time.** All grades received for the course will be **computed in the grade point average.**

## **Repetition of a Course for Multiple Credit**

A course may be repeated for multiple credit towards graduation only when so designated in the course description and approved by the faculty or program advisor as designated by the College in which the student is enrolled.

## **Time Limit to Degree and Recency of Credit for Master's Degrees**

The requirements for a master's degree at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi must be **completed within seven years** subsequent to admission to the program. The seven-year period begins with the first semester students are enrolled in a graduate program.

## **Credit that is more than seven years old will not be counted toward a master's degree.**

Exceptions, provided the courses were completed at this university, will require strong justification in writing from the student requesting the exception as well as a revalidation plan. Written approval from the major department chairperson, the dean of the college from which the degree is offered, the Graduate Dean, and the Provost are required. See revalidation process below.

## **Revalidation of Courses Beyond the Seven Year Limit**

Courses listed on the plan of study completed more than seven years prior to graduation are considered dated. The department chair or program coordinator/faculty advisor will recommend a revalidation plan. Revalidation will verify that the student's knowledge in a specific subject area is current and documented.

Options for course revalidation include a written examination, a paper, a project, a course retake, or other equally rigorous academic means appropriate to the discipline to determine the student learning outcomes have been met. Revalidation requests must be submitted on the [Revalidation Request Form](#) and accompanied by a written justification, updated degree plan, revalidation plan, and documentation used for revalidation. All revalidation requests and plans must be approved by the student's faculty advisor, the department chair, the College Dean, the Graduate Dean, and the Provost.

The student's faculty advisor, department chair, and College Dean are responsible for determining whether the student demonstrated sufficient course knowledge necessary for successful course revalidation. Successfully revalidated courses may be included in the student's plan of study. Failure to follow all designated requirements of the revalidation agreement may result in dismissal from the program. Subsequent requests for revalidation may be considered but will be denied absent a showing of extraordinary hardship.

**Graduate students will not be permitted to submit more than 12 semester hours** of the program's courses for revalidation. Courses beyond the 12-semester hour limit must be

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retaken. Courses must have been completed at this university to be eligible for revalidation.

### Request for Leave of Absence

There is no continuous enrollment requirement for master's students. However, all graduate students who have been inactive for one year or more will need to contact the College of Graduate Studies in order to register. Students who have been inactive for two or more years must reapply for admission. Some programs may require re-application after only a one-year absence. **Time spent away from the program without an approved leave of absence request (see below) will count toward a student's time to degree.**

Students experiencing **life-changing or catastrophic events** (e.g., serious illness of a student or immediate family member, death of an immediate family member, etc.) are encouraged to consult with their department chair and request a leave of absence in writing from the College of Graduate Studies using [Form K: Request for a Leave of Absence](#), especially if the recency of credit will be impacted.

**Requests for a leave of absence must be approved in advance by the faculty advisor, the Program Coordinator, the College Dean, and the Graduate Dean.** Leaves will be granted only under conditions that require the suspension of all activities associated with pursuing the degree including use of university facilities and faculty mentoring/advice. Counting of the time to the completion of the degree pauses when a leave of absence is granted and resumes when the student re-enrolls to continue the program.

A student who is in good standing may petition for a leave of absence of no more than two full academic terms. The maximum number of leaves of absence permitted is two. In case of extenuating circumstances, a one-semester leave of absence can be extended to a maximum of two full semesters by the student's Faculty Advisor and/or Program Coordinator and the Graduate Dean. A student who returns to the University after an approved leave of absence will not be required to submit an application for readmission. International students should consult with an advisor in the Office of International Education to find out how a Leave of Absence may impact their stay or re-entry into the U.S. *\*Note: Any consideration of requests submitted after the degree time limit has expired will be impacted by explanation of failure to request leave prior to expiration and continuous progress towards the degree as well as programmatic changes and faculty availability.*

Title IX regulations also require the university to treat **pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, and recovery therefrom as a justification for a leave of absence** for so long a period of time as is deemed medically necessary by the student's physician. At the conclusion of the leave of absence the student will be reinstated to the status held when the leave began. Students requesting leave of absence under this provision must **submit their request to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator (825-2765)**, who will initiate the process. The Associate Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify the student's instructors and coordinate the student's reinstatement as appropriate.

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## Transfer of Credit

Specific requirements must be met for courses that may transfer for credit. The following rules apply to these courses, with the exception of degrees offered jointly.

- The student must have earned transferred graduate credit at a regionally accredited institution.
- The student must have earned a grade of B or better in the transfer course work. Courses lacking letter grades (e.g., courses graded pass/no pass, credit/no credit, or satisfactory/unsatisfactory) will not be accepted as transfer credit.
- The work must be less than 7 years old at the time the TAMU-CC degree is awarded.
- Credit used for a degree earned at another institution cannot be applied to a graduate degree at TAMU-CC.
- No more than twelve semester hours of graduate level study may be transferred.
- Specific programs may limit the number of transfer courses allowed to less than twelve.
- All transfer work must be appropriate to the degree being sought.

Please see individual programs for specific requirements related to transfer credits.

## Degree Plans

All students will develop a degree plan in conjunction with their advisor that is consistent with the requirements of the program. Degree plans must be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies by the time students have completed 50% of the required coursework in the program. Copies should be forwarded electronically to the College of Graduate Studies to be approved by the Graduate Dean.

A student may petition to apply credits earned while in non-degree, certificate, or a previous master's-seeking status by submitting [Form I: Graduate Degree Plan Exceptions Form](#). However, no more than twelve credit hours may be applied to the master's degree.

## The Thesis Committee

**Students who choose the thesis option** within their program of study must form a thesis advisory committee. For committee composition and membership, students should consult the coordinator of their degree program. The Graduate Dean will review and approve the thesis committee after submission of [Form A: Thesis Advisory Committee Appointment Form](#). **All committee members must hold graduate faculty status at TAMU-CC** and must participate in all thesis-related activities (e.g., proposal hearings, thesis defense/final examinations) and are required to sign relevant documents. More than one dissenting vote in the thesis defense/final examination will constitute failure. Programs may have additional comprehensive or final examination requirements that involve the committee. Contact your program for more information. Master of Fine Arts students should consult their program handbook; requirements for the formation of the committee differ from those of other master's students, as does the thesis process itself.

Students who wish to change the composition of their thesis committee after approval should submit [Form D: Thesis Committee Member Change Request](#) to the College of Graduate Studies.

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## Academic Requirements

**Grade Point Average.** In order to remain in good standing, as well as eligible for university funding such as scholarships and assistantships, the university requires students to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) for all graduate work undertaken. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi uses a 4.0 scale for calculation of GPA. Please note that TAMU-CC calculates GPA based on all graduate coursework taken at TAMU-CC and not just coursework in the degree program. Students should ensure they are knowledgeable about both overall GPA required for good standing as well as GPA in the program in which they are enrolled.

Only grades earned at this university will be used to calculate the TAMU-CC grade point average as used in determination of eligibility for graduation.

Grades are made available to students at the end of each grading period at <http://sail.tamucc.edu>

## Scholastic Probation

The university places a student on probation if their **cumulative GPA** falls **below 3.0** at the end of a semester.

**Placement on Scholastic Probation.** A graduate student will be placed on scholastic probation if, at the end of any semester or term, the student's cumulative graduate grade point average falls below 3.0 (or a higher GPA set by the program). A graduate student receiving a grade of U or NC for the second time will also be placed on scholastic probation. **A student can be on scholastic probation only once** (see section on Enforced Withdrawal below).

**Removal from Scholastic Probation.** A student must achieve a cumulative 3.0 GPA (or higher GPA if required by the program) within completion of the next nine (9) semester credit hours to be removed from scholastic probation if scholastic probation was due to an unsatisfactory GPA. The courses included in the nine (9) semester hours must be approved by the program faculty for degree-seeking students.

A student who received two or more grades of U or NC may be removed from scholastic probation after one year if the student achieves a cumulative 3.0 GPA (or higher GPA if required by the program) and subsequently receives grades of S or CR.

- A student will not be placed on scholastic probation in a graduating semester if the cumulative GPA is 3.0 or higher and there are no more than two Cs for courses on the degree plan.
- A student who is removed from scholastic probation is not eligible for placement on scholastic probation a second time.

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## Enforced Withdrawal

Enforced withdrawal is reflected on the student's academic record. A student who **is or has ever been on scholastic probation** will be placed on enforced withdrawal if:

- the student's GPA for **any subsequent term** falls **below 3.0**, or
- the student receives a third grade of U, NC, or NP, or
- other scholastic requirements are not met, or
- the student does not achieve the required cumulative GPA (3.0 or higher if required by the program) within completion of nine (9) semester hours, or
- the student is mathematically unable to achieve the required GPA within completion of 9 semester hours, or
- the student does not meet the specific program requirements as stated in their conditional enrollment agreement.

## Reinstatement

A student on enforced withdrawal **may not enroll** in any graduate program for a **minimum of 12 consecutive months**. A student **must reapply**, meet current requirements for degree-seeking students, and be accepted by the University and the program to enroll for graduate studies following the period of enforced withdrawal. The application may be submitted prior to the requested enrollment date. Colleges or programs may develop additional procedures or requirements related to re-enrollment following enforced withdrawal. Some colleges or programs may not permit reinstatement from enforced withdrawal. Please see the appropriate college or section of the catalog for specific requirements. Students should be aware that enforced withdrawal does not alter the 7-year time period for completion of the degree.

## Comprehensive Examination/Capstone Experience/Creative Project/Thesis

All graduate programs have a culminating experience. In addition to successful completion of all courses required for graduation, students are required to pass a comprehensive written examination, successfully complete a capstone experience or creative project, defend a thesis, or a combination of these as specified by the program.

The thesis must be checked for plagiarism and approved by the thesis committee prior to the defense. **Students must be enrolled the semester in which the thesis defense/final examination occurs and in the semester in which they graduate.**

## SECTION IV. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Programs to assist you in financing an education at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi are administered by the Office of Student Financial Assistance, including scholarships, grants, work study, and loan programs.

## Financial Aid

Application forms and detailed instructions on applying for financial aid are available through the Office of Student Financial Assistance at the following web address: <http://osfa.tamucc.edu>.

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## Scholarships

### Eligibility

Current graduate students who want to apply for a graduate scholarship can apply via <http://scholarships.tamucc.edu/index.html>.

Eligibility requirements for **receiving** a scholarship include:

- being admitted to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.
- submitting a completed Graduate Scholarship Application.
- being a graduate degree or certificate-seeking student.
- being enrolled in at least six (6) graduate student credit hours during a regular semester or three (3) graduate student credit hours during the combined summer terms for summer scholarships. Please note: individual scholarships or colleges (i.e., the College of Science and Engineering, College of Graduate Studies) may require full-time enrollment (9 graduate SCH) during the regular semesters.
- having a 3.0 GPA minimum (graduate GPA for returning students or last 60 SCH for new students).

Scholarships funds will normally be disbursed throughout the academic year. For example, a \$1,000 scholarship awarded for the academic year will be paid out as \$500 in the fall semester and \$500 in the spring semester.

### Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of graduate assistantships are available through the individual colleges and other academic units on campus. Students are encouraged to inquire with the coordinator of their graduate programs regarding assistantship availability. Graduate students interested in becoming Teaching Assistants in the First-Year Seminar Program should contact the First-Year Seminar Coordinator. Application instructions can be found [here](#).

In addition to individual Colleges, the following units may also hire graduate assistants. This is not an inclusive list.

College of Graduate Studies	Office of the Provost Office of Assessment & Continuous Improvement
Computer Services	Coastal Bend Business Innovation Center
Center for Water Supply Studies	Office of Marketing and Communications
Career Services	Office of Student Engagement and Success
Library Operations	Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies
Office of Student Financial Assistance	Research, Commercialization, and Outreach
Center for Coastal Studies	Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science
Garcia Education Center	

### Out-Of-State Tuition Waivers

Non-resident students receiving a 50% FTE graduate **assistantship** (research or teaching), as well as their spouses and children, are eligible for **in-state tuition and fees** at the rate charged to Texas residents **for the semester in which they hold the assistantship appointment**. To receive in-state tuition rates, students must maintain a graduate course load of at least six (6) hours during long semesters or three (3) hours during the summer session. Individual programs/departments/colleges may have additional qualification requirements (e.g., assistantships funded by the College of Graduate Studies and College of Science and Engineering require nine (9) SCH graduate enrollment during long semesters). Out-of-state

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tuition waivers will be rescinded if students register for too few hours or are not working in the qualifying position by the 12th class day of long semesters and the 4th class day of summer semesters.

To request an out-of-state tuition waiver:

1. download and complete the *Graduate Assistant In-State Tuition Form* available at <http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/forms/GradAssistant/GradAssistExemption.pdf>.
2. submit the completed form to the College of Graduate Studies for processing. This form must be completed **once every academic year**.

Graduate Assistants (GAs) appointed for more than one semester will receive notification from the College of Graduate Studies (CGS) in November to **complete and submit a reaffirmation form** online, confirming their eligibility to receive in-state tuition. **The reaffirmation form must be completed every semester** and is required to retain eligibility for in-state tuition. The form can be accessed at: [http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/TA\\_RA\\_waiver\\_request.html](http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/TA_RA_waiver_request.html).

Students receiving a University **scholarship of \$1,000 or more** per year **may be eligible** for in-state tuition contingent upon availability of Competitive Scholarship Waivers. The University Scholarship Office or the Office of the Provost determines how many waivers are available each year. There is no separate form required.

## **SECTION V. GRADUATION**

### **Graduation Deadlines**

Students must submit a completed application for graduation online through their S.A.I.L account **by the posted deadline**. Graduation deadlines and costs are posted by the Office of the Registrar (<https://registrar.tamucc.edu/>). Graduation application fees are non-refundable.

### **Commencement**

For dates, times, and location of the commencement ceremonies please visit <http://commencement.tamucc.edu/>.

### **Regalia**

Graduates must wear official regalia to the commencement ceremony. These items can be rented or purchased at the Campus Bookstore. For more information, please contact the campus bookstore.

### **Diploma**

Diplomas will be made available to the students once an audit has confirmed completion of all requirements. This process may take a few weeks after graduation. After confirmation, diplomas may be picked up or are mailed to the graduate by the Registrar's Office. For more information contact 361-825-2624. Master's graduates will receive a diploma folder at commencement with a congratulatory letter from the University President.

## **SECTION VI. THESIS GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines were developed to help thesis option master's candidates and their

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committee members to prepare the thesis manuscript. The thesis should be presented in a scholarly, well-integrated, and properly documented manner and should report the original work done by the student under the supervision of the advisory committee.

*For Master of Fine Arts (MFA) students: Some of the remaining information in this section may not apply to you. Please see the [MFA Graduate Handbook](#), available on the Department of Art & Design website, for information regarding the MFA committee, MFA thesis project schedule and deadlines, and other program requirements.*

### Research Compliance

The responsibility for the ethical conduct of student research is jointly held by the instructor and the student, each being fully responsible for the research. Approval to conduct research involving **human subjects, animals, or biohazards**, which may require Institutional Review Board, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, and/or Institutional Biosafety Committee review. Review must be obtained prior to conducting **any** data collection. The determination concerning requirement for review is made by the Compliance Officer and not by the researcher. Contact the Compliance Officer for additional information.

Compliance Officer    <http://research.edu/compliance>  
Faculty Center 168    361-825-2497

### Plagiarism Check for Thesis

Plagiarism is not tolerated at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. All thesis must be electronically checked for plagiarism. The College of Graduate Studies requires that the student's faculty advisor **certify** that the thesis has been electronically checked for plagiarism. [Form B - Preliminary Agreement to Schedule the Thesis Defense/Final Examination](#) must be used to transmit the certification to the College of Graduate Studies.

Departments will determine their own guidelines for thesis checks, how they deal with the results revealed, and remedies to address indications of plagiarism, consistent with existing rules and regulations, including [University Rule 13.02.99.C0.04 Student Academic Misconduct Cases](#).

The Office of Research Compliance CITI training account includes a Responsible Conduct of Research course. This course covers research misconduct, including plagiarism, and is available for both faculty members and students. Instructions for accessing the course can be found on the compliance webpage: <http://research.tamucc.edu/compliance/forms.html#irb> (see FAQ, 700.04, CITI Training Requirements).

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## Master's and MFA Thesis Student Checklist

**Please use the checklist below for a timely submission of requirements.**  
**Forms can be found at <http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/forms.html>**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Degree Plan ( <i>Master's and MFA</i> )	Before completing 50% of required program SCH
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Form A</b> – Thesis Advisory Committee Appointment ( <i>Master's and MFA</i> )	Before state of data collection/creative activity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Form B</b> – Preliminary Agreement to Schedule the Thesis Defense/Final Examination ( <i>Master's and MFA</i> )	Five (5) days prior to defense
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Form C</b> – Thesis Defense & Written Thesis Report <b>*Form should not be signed until student has passed the defense AND made all necessary thesis changes requested by the committee.</b>	<b>Master's</b> - Two (2) weeks prior to Graduation  <b>MFA</b> – Friday prior to graduation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Form D</b> – Thesis Committee Member Change Request ( <i>Master's and MFA</i> )	As needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Form I</b> – Graduate Degree Plan Exceptions Form ( <i>Master's and MFA</i> )	As soon as needed for exception
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Form J</b> – Graduate Degree Plan Revalidation Request ( <i>Master's and MFA</i> )	As needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Form K</b> – Request for a Leave of Absence ( <i>Master's and MFA</i> )	As needed, prior to requested leave period
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Final Version of Thesis Uploaded to ProQuest</b> <a href="http://www.etdadmin.com/tamucc">www.etdadmin.com/tamucc</a> Thesis submission deadlines can be found online at <a href="http://gradschool.tamucc.edu/current_students/masters_students.html">http://gradschool.tamucc.edu/current_students/masters_students.html</a>  Note: Title Page, Committee Member Page, and Copyright Page templates can be found online at <a href="http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/current_students/doctoral_dissertation.html">http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/current_students/doctoral_dissertation.html</a>	<b>Master's</b> - 2 weeks prior to graduation  <b>MFA</b> – 5 days prior to graduation

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## Thesis Formatting Guidelines

Your thesis must conform to academic and institutional standards. Guidelines include requirements regarding margins, fonts, spacing, and other elements of the document. In addition to face-to-face and online formatting workshops, the College of Graduate Studies provides [thesis formatting guidelines](#). Acceptable formats for the body of the thesis will vary by program area. For more specific guidelines, please see individual graduate program handbooks.

## Deadlines

To maintain eligibility to graduate in a given semester, students must meet the scheduled deadline for submittal of (a) the signed [Preliminary Agreement to Schedule the Thesis/Dissertation Defense/Final Examination](#), (b) the [Thesis Defense & Written Thesis Report](#), and (c) the thesis in final form as a PDF file. This date, along with other dates of interest, is posted on the [College of Graduate Studies website](#). There are no exceptions for late submittal. Students submitting after deadline day cannot graduate until the following semester and will be required to enroll in thesis hours in the semester of graduation. **MFA student deadlines are established separately.** Please see the Thesis Student Checklist in this Handbook.

## Final Steps to Submitting Your Thesis

After your [Thesis Defense & Written Thesis Report](#) (Form C) is submitted and all requested content changes from your committee have been made, you can submit your thesis electronically. Before you begin the submission steps, please be sure you have the following:

- a) Full text of your thesis in PDF format. This must be one file with embedded fonts. The maximum file size that can be uploaded is 250 MB. The PDF file name cannot contain periods (except for the .pdf extension). Instructions about PDF conversion and embedding fonts are available at the ProQuest/UMI ETD Administrator site under the “Submission Steps/PDF” tab.
- b) Optional supplementary files. This includes images, data, etc. that are an integral part of the thesis, but not part of the full text.
- c) Advisor and other committee members’ names with correct committee designations.
- d) Subject Category. Please choose up to three subject categories from the Subject Category List ([http://www.etsadmin.com/UMI\\_SubjectCategoriesGuide.pdf](http://www.etsadmin.com/UMI_SubjectCategoriesGuide.pdf)) that best describe your thesis.

## Submission Guidelines

Go to <http://www.etsadmin.com/tamucc> to create an account or login using an existing account.

When signed into the account, a list of submission steps will be visible on the left-hand side of the computer screen. These steps will serve as a guide through the submission process. A checkmark will appear once each step is completed. For a detailed presentation on the electronic submission process, see the [ProQuest Dissertation Submission Guide](#).

A thesis or dissertation may be declared unacceptable by the College of Graduate Studies and returned to the student and department head/thesis chair with a list of needed

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changes if the requirements outlined in this manual are not followed. In this situation, the manuscript must be corrected and resubmitted as a new document. All original submittal deadlines must be met during the re-submittal process in order to graduate that semester. Unacceptable manuscripts returned to the student after Deadline Day may not be accepted for graduation in that semester.

### **Thesis Review**

The following are approximate turn-around times to be expected for feedback and requests for revisions after the dissertation has been submitted to ProQuest/UMI. Documents are reviewed in the order received. The student will receive requests for revisions from the College of Graduate Studies via email through ProQuest/UMI.

Early in the semester – 2-3 business days  
Week before Deadline Day - 5-7 business days

The student will make requested **corrections in the original Word** (or other) file, convert the revised document to a new PDF file, and upload the new PDF to the ETD.

All corrections must be made promptly and meet the College of Graduate Studies' deadlines. Graduation **WILL BE POSTPONED** if corrections are not made on time.

*\*Note: Once the thesis has been uploaded to ProQuest, all communication regarding the submission should be made through the ProQuest platform.*

### **Publication of your Research; Copyright Issues**

[Note: based on information in the Texas A&M University Thesis Manual]

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to U.S. copyright laws regarding the thesis and its contents. If copyrighted content is used by the student in the thesis, the student may need to seek permission or license for including the content.

*If you are using your own previously published material in the thesis:*

Graduate students may publish material that will later be used as part of the thesis. However, students should be aware of the publishing agreement they sign when a journal accepts an article for publication. At that time, the student/lead author typically transfers copyright to the journal as publisher, and you he/she no longer possess the right to use this material without permission.

**However, the publishing agreement form may be modified before it is signed so that the student retains the right to include the material in the thesis.** The publisher would still have the rights it needs to print, distribute, and sell the work. When negotiating with the publisher, remember to inform them that the thesis will be available worldwide through the Internet (thesis will be sent to ProQuest/UMI and can be purchased through them).

If you have **not** retained the right to use your previously published material in the thesis, you must get permission from the copyright holder to include it. If the journal retains the right to an article

and does not allow its exact reproduction in your thesis, we recommend that you contact  
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them to ascertain whether a revised or reworded chapter is acceptable.

*If you are planning to use your thesis material in a future publication:*

Students who plan to publish thesis material in future articles need to investigate whether the journal of choice will publish material already made available to the public and consider this when choosing an option for making the thesis available after graduation. You have the option to restrict full-text access to your thesis for a period of time before releasing it to the Internet to allow time to publish in journals whose policy is to be first publisher. This process is called an **embargo** or delayed release. More information is available during the submission process through ProQuest. **ProQuest embargo options include 6 months, 1 year, and 2 years. If a student needs to delay the release for longer than two years, contact the College of Graduate Studies for instructions.**

*If you are planning to include others' copyrighted material in the thesis:*

If the manuscript contains any material (figures, tables, text, etc.) taken from copyrighted sources, the student has the responsibility to determine if permission from the copyright holder is needed. The student should consider a number of factors when utilizing material from other sources, including whether or not the material is in the public domain or can be used under the provisions of Fair Use. Regardless of whether or not permission is required, proper credit must be given in the text. For material that requires permission, acknowledgment should be included in the text, per the instruction of the copyright holder. For additional information regarding copyright and fair use, refer to the [Copyright and Your Dissertation or Thesis](#) document available on our website ([http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/current\\_students/assets/copyright\\_dissthesis\\_ownership.pdf](http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/current_students/assets/copyright_dissthesis_ownership.pdf)).

To summarize, when using published material:

- Determine whether the material is copyrighted. Non-copyrighted material may be reused freely, as long as credit is given to the original source.
- If the material is copyrighted, determine if it may be included in your thesis under the provisions of Fair Use. If Fair Use applies, do not seek permission. Check with your advisor or Alexa Hight (Library) to confirm your determination.
- If Fair Use does not apply, obtain permission (in either the publisher agreement or in a letter or email from the copyright holder).
- Give proper acknowledgment of all work created by others and included in the thesis.
- Students must inform the copyright holder that the thesis will be sent to and sold on demand by ProQuest/UMI.

### Binding

Thesis binding, if desired, will be handled through the ProQuest/UMI ETD Administrator. During the submission process, students have the opportunity to order personal copies, along with the required university copy for the Library.

Each volume is rendered with respect for the scholarly research, featuring:

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- Brilliant white 32 lb. paper stock: acid-free and archival-grade, this photographic-quality stock is brighter and more opaque for better ink contrast and readability.
- Any color graphics included in the digital copy of the thesis received by ProQuest/UMI can now be reproduced in color at no extra charge. Photographs, charts, and other illustrations are printed as faithfully as they were provided electronically.
- Durable hardbound copies are 8½” × 11” with black covers made from 2.5 mm-thick board covered in washable linen. Titles are embossed in gold foil on the spine. Handmade thread-sewn bindings and generous margins enable volumes to be opened flat.
- Thesis copies are shipped approximately **8 to 12 weeks** after submission of the manuscript to the address provided by the student.

### Distribution

Library Copy	The library copy will be delivered directly to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, College of Graduate Studies and then delivered by CGS to the Mary and Jeff Bell Library.
Personal Bound Copies	All personal copies will be delivered to the shipping address you provide during the electronic submission process.

### Fees

Fee Type	Required	Amount	Payment methods
Library Copy (1)	Yes	\$48	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
Personal Bound Copies	Optional	Varies by type and number ordered	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
Copyright Fee	Optional	\$55	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
Open Access Publishing	Optional	\$95	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
<b>* Note: Tax may be added to the total based on your shipping address.</b>			