

1 GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

1.1 EXPECTATIONS FOR GRADUATE STUDY

The major goals of graduate and professional education at Texas A&M University include instilling in each student an understanding of and a capacity for scholarship, independent judgment, academic rigor, and intellectual honesty. Faculty and graduate students have a shared obligation to work together to foster these goals through relationships that advance freedom of inquiry, demonstrate individual and professional integrity, and encourage common respect.

Both the committee chair/co-chair and a graduate committee guide and evaluate student progress. These individuals give direction and support for the appropriate developmental and learning goals of graduate students. The committee chair/co-chair and the graduate committee also evaluate a graduate student’s academic performance. The graduate student, committee chair/co-chair, and graduate committee constitute the basic core of graduate education. The quality, scope, and extent of interaction among this group determines the significance of the graduate experience.

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

1.2 DIRECTORY SUMMARY

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Dr. Shannon Walton
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Dr. Julie Harlin
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Trent Smith
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Amy Fritcher
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Jackie Perez
 Director
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Dr. Rob Dixon
 Director
rdixon@tamu.edu

NOTES:

Name	Title	E-mail
Erika Brigham	Assistant to Associate Provost and Dean	Erika.brigham@tam.u.edu
Cory Raney	Assistant to Leadership Team	corylynn@tam.u.edu
Dr. Stephen Caster	IT Business Analyst	scaster@tam.u.edu
Dr. Linda Castillo	Ombuds Officer	lcastillo@exchange.tam.u.edu
Savanah Sanchez	Graduate Student Specialist	sdsanchez@tam.u.edu
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Cori Eckert	Communications Specialist	corirutheckert@tam.u.edu
Mark Gleason	Graduate Program Specialist	mark.gleason@tam.u.edu
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Vacant	Special Projects Coordinator	
Kourtney Hennigan	Business Services Coordinator	Kourtney.hennigan@tam.u.edu
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Dr. Jamie Saucier	Thesis and Dissertation Specialist	Jamie.saucier@tam.u.edu
Jane Brewer	Thesis and Dissertation Specialist	ejbrewer@tam.u.edu
Amy Motquin	Thesis and Dissertation Specialist (Part-Time)	acmotquin@tam.u.edu
Vacant	Technology Specialist	
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Dr. Jessica Connor	Fellowships Specialist	jconnor@tam.u.edu
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Dr. Morgan Schweller	Professional Development Coordinator	mschweller@tam.u.edu
Karen Seago	Graduate Records Specialist (Part-Time)	kseago@tam.u.edu
Kim Widdison	Graduate Records Coordinator	k-widdison@tam.u.edu
Raiden Sawyer	Graduate Records Processor	Raiden.sawyer@tam.u.edu
Layne Wells	Graduate Records Processor	Layne4@tam.u.edu
Vacant	Graduate Records Processor	
Julia Williams	Thesis and Dissertation Specialist (Part-Time)	julia-williams@tam.u.edu
Dr. Yu-Chen Yeh	Data Analyst	yuchen188@tam.u.edu

1.3 ASSOCIATE PROVOST AND DEAN AND LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Graduate and Professional School advocates for continual improvement in graduate education at Texas A&M University. The Graduate and Professional School aims to provide customer-friendly, accurate, and timely support services to graduate and professional students, faculty, and staff.

The Leadership Team also works to create and nurture an office climate that leads to excellent performance and collegiality among staff.

Dr. Fuhui Tong, Interim Associate Provost and Dean, Graduate and Professional School

NOTES:

Erika Brigham, Executive Assistant to the Associate Provost and Dean, Graduate and Professional School
 Dr. Julie Harlin, Associate Dean
 Dr. Charles Criscione, Associate Dean
 Dr. Shannon Walton, Assistant Dean, Student Development Success
 Amy Fritcher, Chief of Staff
 Jackie Perez, Director, Business Services
 Trent Smith, Assistant Director, Graduate Records Processing
 Dr. Rob Dixon, Director of Graduate Marketing and Communications
 Cory Raney, Executive Assistant, Graduate and Professional School

1.4 GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL SERVICES

1.4.1 Data and Survey Coordination

The Graduate and Professional School Data Services Team provides external and internal data collection, analysis, and reporting across a variety of graduate and professional student activities. The team supports participation in national-level research projects; required reporting to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB); and many adhoc needs within the university, unit, and the academic colleges.

Please use this table to help determine where different types of data may be available at Texas A&M University:

	DARS	Accountability	EIS Compass Reports	EIS CWR	EIS ARGOS	OIEE
Reported externally; aggregate counts on student populations.	X	X		X		
Individual student level to be used for internal tracking and performance monitoring.			X	X	X	
Feed/file of individual student data to be shared with a vendor or used in an internal system.				X		
Student survey responses.						X

Notes. DARS: Data and Research Services, <https://dars.tamu.edu>. Accountability: <https://accountability.tamu.edu/>. EIS: Enterprise Information Systems: <https://eis.tamu.edu/compass>. CWR: Compass Work Request. OIEE: Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Evaluation, <https://assessment.tamu.edu>. ARGOS: Adhoc Report Generation Output Solution.

graddata@tamu.edu – Data Services team email.

Vacant, Director

Dr. Stephen Caster, IT Business Analyst

NOTES:

Dr. Yu-Chen Yeh, Data Analyst

1.4.2 Dual Enrollment Graduate Student Special Support

This area addresses the specialized questions and needs of students dually enrolled at Texas A&M University and another institution of higher education, including branch campuses in Galveston and Doha, Qatar. Common questions include those related to registration, enrollment, funding, and financial aid.

Trent Smith, Assistant Director

1.4.3 Graduate Student Awards

The Graduate and Professional School offers the Graduate Student Research and Presentation Travel Award Program, which is supported by the George Bush Presidential Library Foundation. The purpose of the program is to reimburse travel expenses associated with graduate students' domestic and international travel related to conferences, academic presentations, and research projects. Students may receive only one (1) of these travel awards during their degree program. Additionally, up to 15 graduate students receive Distinguished Graduate Student Awards for Research or Teaching annually. The students are nominated by their committee chair/co-chairs in the spring semester with strenuous eligibility requirements.

For other awards opportunities, please see Section 3: Student Funding and Development.

grad-award-admin@tamu.edu – Graduate and Professional School awards administrator's email address

grad-travel-award@tamu.edu – Graduate and Professional School Travel Award email address

1.4.4 Graduate Student Professional Development

Professional Development refers to training outside one's discipline-based graduate coursework and research. It is the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and transferable skills related to one's career goals. Engaging in professional development programs can help master's and doctoral student progress to degree completion and prepare for a wider range of employment opportunities, and bridge the gap between graduate education and the workforce. The Graduate Resources and Development for Aggies (G.R.A.D. Aggies) professional development program, facilitated by the Graduate and Professional School, includes a comprehensive curriculum of workshops and activities covering 7 different skill areas (see Section 3.9). In addition, the Graduate and Professional School maintains several professional development resources and services for graduate and professional students, including the Professional Development Portal, a searchable inventory of professional development workshops, seminars, and courses offered by individual departments and colleges across campus.

G.R.A.D. Aggies Program – <http://grad.tamu.edu/academics/professional-development/grad-aggies>

Professional Development Opportunities – <http://grad.tamu.edu/academics/professional-development>

Dr. Morgan Schweller, Professional Development Coordinator

1.4.5 New Graduate Student Orientation

Coordinated by the Graduate and Professional School, the New Graduate Student Orientation provides an overview of

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graduate education and services at Texas A&M University – including information on financial aid, procedures and processes, campus safety and security, the English Language Proficiency Program, and additional campus services. New graduate students will get the chance to meet campus leaders, administrators, and fellow graduate and professional students. Experienced graduate students will be present to answer questions and provide insight about thriving in graduate school, balancing work and personal life, and making the most of living in Bryan/College Station. Designed to get new graduate students off to a good start in their experiences, students will also have the opportunity to mingle and explore the resource fair and meet representatives of campus services and organizations who serve the graduate and professional student community.

Vacant, Graduate Recruitment Coordinator

1.4.6 Graduate Student Ombuds Services

The Ombuds Officer serves as an informal and neutral resource for graduate students to discuss questions and concerns related to their graduate experience. The university is a large and complex institution, and graduate students often play multiple roles (e.g., student, research collaborator, teacher, technician, and peer). Misunderstandings and conflicts can arise in any one of these roles. Having a safe, off-the-record conversation with an Ombuds Officer can be a first step if students do not know where to turn. The Ombuds Officer is here to help graduate students identify options for addressing concerns and promote a fair and impartial process for all parties involved. The Ombuds officer is also a resource for faculty and administrators who have questions about the institutional policies and procedures as they relate to graduate students.

The Graduate and Professional Student Ombuds Officer is guided and informed by the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the International Ombudsman Association.

The Ombuds Officer Can:

- Listen and help you achieve a greater understanding of the problem.
- Help you find information applicable to your situation and identify possible solutions to your problem.
- Explain University policies and procedures and how they apply to your specific case.
- Help you identify options for resolving conflicts with colleagues, staff, faculty, and advisors.
- Help you achieve fair and equitable solutions to problems.
- Facilitate communication among people in conflict.
- Provide other types of assistance to help you resolve a problem informally.
- Refer you to formal grievance or appeal procedures if you wish to engage in a formal process.
- Offer recommendations for changes to policies/procedures that appear outdated or problematic, while maintaining confidentiality.

The Ombuds Officer Cannot:

- Advocate for the University or the student, or any particular point of view.
- Make or change University decisions, rules, or policies.

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- Set aside a decision or supersede the authority of another University official.
- Participate in formal grievance procedures.
- Provide legal advice.
- Conduct formal investigations.
- Testify in in formal proceedings with respect to confidential communication.

If a student is unable to resolve a problem within the student’s department (most often by working with the student’s Committee Chair/Co-Chair, the department’s Graduate Advisor, and /or the Graduate Program Chair), the student can request a meeting with a Graduate Ombuds Officer. These are private, informal meetings in which to explore potential solutions to the dilemma.

The Ombuds Office values and protects the privacy and identity of students seeking assistance. We do not disclose confidential communications unless required by state law such as in situations of child abuse or neglect; imminent risk of serious harm to the visitor or another person; or a court order with appropriate authority.

According to Texas A&M System Regulation 08.01.01, Ombuds Officers are considered Mandatory Reporters and are required to report any alleged sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, discrimination, or any other prohibited conducted committed by or against a person who was a student or employee at the time of the incident. Ombuds Officers are also obligated to report discrimination based on a protected status.

Appointments can be requested by emailing ombuds@tamu.edu or calling 845-3631.

Dr. Linda Castillo, Graduate Ombuds Officer

1.4.7 Administrative and Programmatic Support

Administrative and Programmatic Support Services fields all incoming phone and walk-in inquiries to the Graduate and Professional School, connects students and other stakeholders with resources and information to assist the mission of graduate studies, supports internal HR needs, coordinates internal and external fiscal-related transactions, and works with campus stakeholders to disseminate best practices related to graduate student employment benefits. The team manages the retention of graduate student records.

Jackie Perez, Director
Erika Brigham
Kourtney Hennigan
Theresa Reyes

1.4.8 Graduate Records Processing

The Graduate and Professional School is responsible for maintaining all University graduate degree requirements and records, and receiving proper documentation for each major milestone in a graduate student’s degree program. In addition, we offer training and guidance for graduate advising staff related to university requirements and resources.

Trent Smith, Assistant Director

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Kim Widdison
Raiden Sawyer
Layne Wells
Karen Seago
Mark Gleason

Records Processing: gradprocessing@tamu.edu

1.4.9 Interdisciplinary Degree Graduate Student Special Support

The Graduate and Professional School addresses the specialized questions and needs of students participating in TAMU's interdisciplinary degree programs (IDPs). Because these programs are not housed in the traditional department model, certain matters related to IDP graduate students are structured in unique ways.

More information related to master's, doctoral, and certificate programs is available [here](#).

Dr. Charles Criscione, Associate Dean

1.4.10 Thesis and Dissertation Services

[Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) reviews each electronic thesis, dissertation, and record of study (ETD) for uniformity, consistency, and adherence to [university formatting guidelines](#). In addition, we provide a wide range of [preparation support](#) and coordinate the timely release of the ETD for public access.

Our goal is to help each student produce a professional document that meets the quality standards of Texas A&M University. Students are encouraged to use the [resources](#) available from our website (including [Word and LaTeX templates](#) and [Overleaf technical support](#)) and to participate in a pre-submittal conference prior to their final defense.

The thesis, dissertation, or record of study must be [submitted in electronic form](#) as a single PDF file, while the Approval Form must be routed by the posted deadline for each term. Thesis and Dissertation Services [deadlines](#) are published in the Graduate and Professional School calendar.

Dr. Charles Criscione, Associate Dean (administrative oversight)
Dr. Jamie Saucier, Senior Graduate Student Specialist II (Team Lead)
Jane Brewer, Graduate Student Specialist
Amy Motquin, Editorial Assistant (part time)
Julia Williams, Editorial Assistant (part time)

1.4.11 General Contacts

G.R.A.D. Aggies – grad-aggies@tamu.edu

Graduate and Professional School – grad@tamu.edu

Thesis and Dissertation Services – thesis@tamu.edu

Graduate Records Processing Team – gradprocessing@tamu.edu

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Data Team – graddata@tamu.edu

Graduate Ombuds Officer – ombuds@tamu.edu

Graduate Student Employment and Benefits – grad-employment@tamu.edu

Graduate and Professional School awards administrator – grad-award-admin@tamu.edu

Graduate and Professional School fellowship administrator – grad-fellowship-admin@tamu.edu

Graduate and Professional School travel award – grad-travel-award@tamu.edu

Graduate and Professional School Council Administrator – GPCAdmin@tamu.edu

Responsible Conduct of Research – rcr.grad@tamu.edu

For Graduate Operations Committee (GOC) Deans to request that the Graduate and Professional School lift degree plan holds – dpblocks@tamu.edu

Non-Resident Tuition Waivers – gradbusinessservices@tamu.edu

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