

FAQ For Comprehensive Exam:

Why do we take a comprehensive exam?

- We use the comprehensive exam for two way accountability. The first administration lets TAMU SPED program committee know the knowledge and skills of the incoming cohort of students so that we can make curricular adjustments as needed.
- We use the comprehensive exam to monitor student progress. The second administration of the exam, mid-way through the program allows the SPED program committee and faculty to know how students are comprehending and retaining information. This allows us to advise students who may need additional tutorials, advise students who may need additional assistance to grasp content, and to inform instructional and curricular changes to the program.
- The final exam is held in late April prior to application for graduation. This ensures that TAMU SPED graduates are of the highest caliber and meet requirements for the program in their demonstration of knowledge and skills.

How long is the Comprehensive Exam and what is the format?

- The exam has a 2 hour time limit.
 - Individuals needing accommodation for registered disabilities should notify the Chair of the Masters Committee and/or the official graduate assistants for the program prior to the examination. The Texas A&M Disability Service office has a Testing Administration Center where you are able to take the assessment with the accommodations needed. However, you would need to be in contact with them in order to receive the accommodations. Please see (<http://disability.tamu.edu/tac>)
- The comprehensive exam is approximately 36 questions (multiple choice, True False, short answer) selected randomly from a large data base of questions and stratified across all courses in the program

How do I access the Comprehensive Exam?

- The exam is accessed by log-in through e-campus and listed under “ORGANIZATIONS” just below “COURSES.”
 - In order to access the exam, you will need to log onto ecampus.tamu.edu. You will then click on the SPED Distance Masters link under organizations. On the left side of the page you will see a tab called content. Click on that tab and the assessment link will be in there. Once you click on that link, if passwords are required, you will be sent that material in an email with the information about the exam.
- The first administration is prior to the start of coursework.
- The second administration is after the first two semesters.
 - Individuals requiring advising may take a 2nd exam at the end of the summer.
- The final examination for which you are held accountable is held at the end of your program prior to applying for graduation. You must pass this exam to apply for graduation.
 - See our academic advisor for graduation application related questions.
- You will receive an email alerting you to when the 2-4 day window opens and closes.
 - The exam will become “visible” and available at the start of the window and will close at the end of the window.
 - It is important to schedule the exam with your proctor during the window.
 - Exams will not be reopened. Individuals have months, even years to plan availability for the exams. The exception to this falls under University Regulations regarding illness

- (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>)

Is there anything I need to know about taking the Comprehensive Exam?

- Once you begin the exam **you must finish it in that sitting**. The time does not stop running and if you close out of the tab; it will **not** let you reopen it. So before opening, please check to make sure you have a strong Internet connection and have the time available to take the exam.

What if I have technology problems?

- Minimum technology requirements are signed by all students at the beginning of the program and every semester thereafter. It is your responsibility to have working and reliable systems for your use.
- We recommend a hard-wire Internet connection for a high-stakes exam, and not wireless. We recommend you use a system with which you are familiar and comfortable. This is not a good time to test out new technology hardware or software operating systems. You are responsible for the compatibility of your operating systems and the exam. eCampus will allow you to check your operating systems prior to any course or exam.
- TAMU tech support is standing by during the exam 24-7
 - (<http://ecampus.tamu.edu/student-help.php>).
- SPED program tech support in the form of two graduate assistants are also standing by to assist and will provide information to you when exam details are sent out each administration.

What if I need accommodations for the assessment?

- Please notify someone within the program as soon as possible. At Texas A&M, our Disability Service office has a Testing Administration Center where you would be able to take the assessment with the accommodations needed. However, you would need to be in contact with them in order to receive the accommodations.
 - (<http://disability.tamu.edu/tac>)

Why am I not getting emails?

- Chances are if you have not received any information from a graduate assistant their emails are filtering to your TAMU email address, or whatever email address you have on file with the university. Please look through your junk email because these important emails may be filtering there.
- Once you find the missing emails add the graduate assistants' emails to your contact so that the emails do not go to your junk.