

**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL  
PSYCHOLOGY**

**College of Education and Human  
Development**

**Texas A&M University**

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## Department Introduction

The **(Department of Educational Psychology)** encompasses students, faculty, and staff whose scholarship and interests center on the many different aspects of academics, teaching, and classroom education. The Department of Educational Psychology's mission is to create experiences that advance teaching, research, grantsmanship, and service through the application of knowledge in the preparation and development of quality researchers and educators. The Department of Educational Psychology places high value on collaboration, diversity, critical thinking, creativity, democratic governance, and global leadership.

The **Graduate Student Handbook** is an informational guide for potential and current students in the Department of Educational Psychology) at Texas A&M University. The handbook should serve as a supplement to the **Texas A&M University Graduate Catalog** and to the **Texas A&M University Student Rules**, that contain the policies of the **Graduate and Professional School(GPS)** and those of the university.

Graduate students in Texas A&M University's Department of Educational Psychology department major in Special Education The diploma and transcript will only list your official degree title and Texas Higher Coordinating Board approved degree programs . The academic program area and area of emphasis of student studies are not denoted on any official documentation. Graduate students have the opportunity to apply and study in one of the following Academic Program Areas: Master's in Special Education (online) and a Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis.

One of the four departments in the School of Education and Human Development, Department of Educational Psychology, is currently home to over 1,297 undergraduate students, 493 graduate students, 46 faculty members and 44 staff members. The Department of Educational Psychology produced 61 bachelors, 126 masters, and 27 PhD graduates for the 2021-2022 year.

The Department of Educational Psychology administrative offices are located in room number 704 and Faculty offices are located on the 6th and 7th floors of Harrington Tower. The Department of Educational Psychology Graduate Advising Office is currently located in room 704 in Harrington Tower.

The Special Education Program (SPED) functions within the Department of Educational Psychology (EPSY) and the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) at Texas A&M University. This handbook contains information for current and prospective students regarding the online Master's of Education (M. Ed.) program, as well as information required by legal statute or

the policies of Texas A&M University. Graduate students in the College are subject to the administrative control of the Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Studies (OGAPS). More information about the OGAPS can be found at <http://ogs.tamu.edu/>.

We (SPED) currently offer an M.Ed.\* in Special Education consisting of 36 semester credit hours and a 21 semester credit hour graduate certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis for qualified individuals. Faculty expertise in SPED includes the following: Autism, Behavioral Disorders, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Severe Disabilities, Reading, and Transition. More information about faculty expertise is available at <http://sped.tamu.edu/>. The department is consistently ranked as a top national program by *U.S. News and World Report* and has some of the most prominent national and international scholars in the field of Special Education. Thus, the application process is competitive and the program is rigorous.

\*A Master's of Science (M.S.) in Special Education is also available and may be discussed with an advisor for students interested in a thesis option. Attaining the M.S. requires the successful completion of a master's thesis in addition to the standard coursework.

### **Mission Statement of the Special Education Master's Program**

The Master's of Education program in Special Education at Texas A&M University prepares the highest quality professionals to meet the diverse educational and behavioral needs of students with disabilities. We prepare leaders, expert-level practitioners, and advocates in educational fields. Our greater goal is to enhance equity by improving the quality of education and treatment services for children and youth with disabilities including their families.

### **Purpose of the Special Education Master's Program**

The purpose of this program is to prepare expert-leaders who are well-equipped to implement high quality academic and behavioral interventions and programming for students with disabilities in the state, nation, and world.

### **Special Education Master's Program Philosophy**

Our training encompasses the knowledge and skills for effectively meeting the needs of students classified as having disabilities as well as those identified as "low-performing" and "at-risk". Our faculty supports the premises of FAPE (free appropriate public education) and LRE (least restrictive environment) across a continuum of placements including the integration of individuals with disabilities with their typically developing peers in inclusive settings (e.g., schools, community, and employment settings) with well-trained professionals. We require our Master's students to have an understanding of, and respect for, the ethnic and cultural diversity of the students and families with whom they may work and the communities they represent. We share a commitment to teaching

empirically-supported best practice interventions and methods in the identification, assessment, instructional programming, and progress evaluation of students with disabilities. Further, we strive to contribute to [Texas A&M's Vision](#), whereby we support transformational education, discovery and innovation, and impact on our state, nation and world. We further embrace the cohort as part of the university community.

We believe that graduates from our Master's in Special Education Program will encounter increasing changes and challenges in the field of special education. As a result, we teach problem solving, critical thinking, data analysis, collaboration, and communication skills as part of the leadership and professional development of our Master's students. Graduates from our online Master's program often gain admission to prestigious doctoral programs; acquire director, supervisory or other leadership positions in school districts, advocacy organizations, and state government; and advise or create non-profit organizations for the betterment of individuals with disabilities. While in the program, students can expect to interact with national scholars; learn the most current technological methodological, legal, and topical issues related to the education of individuals with disabilities. Students may also have the opportunity to engage in scholarly activities as desired and available. Coursework includes two courses on reading and literacy, two for behavior management and analysis, Leadership in ABA, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, Transition, Single Case Research, Multicultural and Bilingual Special Education, Ethics and Professional Conduct, Consultation in SPED, and Assessment.

### **SPED Masters – Who Should Apply?**

The SPED Master's program is an online, distance program intended for individuals with a solid background in education, behavior, disability, or related fields. A teaching certificate is not required, but teaching or clinical experience working with individuals with disabilities is highly desirable. We are also seeking individuals with a commitment to work in the field or pursue additional graduate training after receiving a degree. Additionally, our program works best for professionals who are self-motivated and can manage the rigor of a 36 credit hour, two-year fully online master's program. Successful graduates of our program have been general educators, special educators, behavior coaches, administrators, counselors, and therapists.

Strong applicants are those who have:

- Significant work with persons with disabilities (outside of family members)
- Significant work with culturally and linguistically diverse groups
- Interest and/or experience in Applied Behavior Analysis

### **What Can You Do with this Degree?**

- Develop experience in Autism and single case research

- Be prepared to implement academic and behavioral interventions and programming
- Complete coursework toward the BCBA
- Become competitive for doctoral level admissions and funding
- Gain advanced skills and marketability

### **The M.Ed. Special Education is currently offered completely online.**

The online Master's program consists of 36 hours (or 12 courses) designed to lead to a Master's degree in Special Education at the end of a two-year program of study. The courses are taken sequentially starting in Summer and ending in Spring. Incorporated into the program also are the necessary coursework for those who wish to go further and apply for BCBA certification. The following table represents the recommended program of study for the online master's degree program. Please note that deviations from this program are discouraged and may be prohibited. Acceptance to the program and your confirmation indicates that changes in scheduling for convenience, or non-medical or non-emergency reasons are generally not approved.

#### **Special Education Online Master's Degree Recommended Program of Study**

See <http://registrar.tamu.edu/General/Calendar.aspx> for academic calendar dates

Semester	Courses	
Year One Summer I	<b>SPED 604</b>	Introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis* (5-weeks, June-July)
Year One Summer II	<b>SPED 632</b>	Transition Education and Services for Individuals with Disabilities (5-weeks, July-August)
Year One Fall	<b>SPED 699</b>	Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis *
	<b>SPED 630</b>	Early Literacy for Students with Diverse Instructional Needs
Year One Spring	<b>SPED 617</b>	Adolescent Literacy Across the Content Areas for Students with Disabilities
	<b>SPED 601</b>	Assessment in School Settings*
Year Two Summer I	<b>SPED 628</b>	Consultation in Special Education (5-weeks, June-July)
Year Two Summer II	<b>SPED 642</b>	Prevention, Support, and Intervention for Students with Emotional and Behavior Problems * (5-weeks, July-August)
Year Two Fall	<b>SPED 602</b>	Ethics and Professional Conduct in Special Education and Applied Behavior Analysis*
	<b>SPED 611</b>	Multicultural and Bilingual Special Education
Year Two Spring	<b>EPSY 630</b>	Single-Case Experimental Design*
	<b>SPED 605</b>	Leadership in Applied Behavior Analysis*

\* Coursework required for students seeking certification as a Board Certified Behavior Analysts® and the ABA graduate certificate. Additional requirements are necessary, and information may be found at [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com).

**Program of Study Notes:**

- Courses are online and primarily synchronous. However, there may be courses that are asynchronous in nature (no live weekly meeting) with assignments due at appropriate times to support learning and progress toward educational goals.
- During synchronous class sessions, you will need to join via a desktop or laptop computer. A phone platform will not allow full functionality and will not fulfill this technical requirement
- Courses are held online and in the evening, typically starting at 5:30pm
- All SPED M.Ed. students start the program during the first summer session (Summer I). The first course in the program takes place over 5-weeks.
- Students progress through the program as a cohort. Should a student have a situation arise where a pause in the program is needed, the student is expected to present their request in writing to the Program Coordinator, faculty advisor, and their academic advisor. Breaks or pauses in the program will be evaluated and decided on a case by case basis.
- Courses are offered sequentially.
- Year one courses are prerequisites for year two.
- The entire online Master's of Education degree requires 36 credits. Each course is 3 credits.
- Course syllabi are available online through Howdy.
- Online education is not independent study.
- Students are expected to check syllabi for meeting time expectations.
- Courses during *Fall* and *Spring* semesters are usually offered from 5:30-8:30 PM. Each 3-hour class meets for up to 3 hours online per week.
- Students participating in online courses should expect to be online participating in course activities during the 5:30-8:30 PM time slot.
- Courses during the Summer typically meet at least twice per week for 3 hours each day in the evenings with many asynchronous classes.
- Courses identified with an asterisk (\*) are associated with the ABA Certificate. Students participating in the Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) graduate certificate option only (not the entire Master's degree) would take only these seven courses. Access to the other courses requires admission to the Master's program. The ABA graduate certificate is explained below.

## List of courses:

### **SPED 604: Introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis\***

The purpose of this course is to provide educators with an introduction to applied behavior analysis. Graduate students will be provided (a) an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of ABA, (b) principles and procedures of ABA, and (c) an introduction to data collection, assessment of behavior, and individualized interventions within an educational context. Emphasis will be placed on the application of ABA principles in multiple contexts to provide behavioral support to a diverse range of students. Course content through lectures, articles, discussions, and practice activities is delivered through Canvas and Zoom. It will be each student's responsibility to participate in these activities and demonstrate mastery of the course content. There are no prerequisites for this course outside of Graduate classification, however, this is a graduate course and should not be taken without the recommendation of your advisor.

Prerequisite: Graduate classification.

### **SPED 632 (3 credits) Transition Education and Services for Individuals with Disabilities**

Current issues and practices related to the transition of students from school to adulthood; foundations of lifelong transitions; assessment of post-school goals and identification of effective transition services to promote employment, postsecondary education, and community living; partnerships with parents and service providers.

Prerequisite: Graduate classification.

### **SPED 699 (3 credits): Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis\***

This course provides a rigorous repertoire of knowledge *and* skill in behavior analysis. This course is a comprehensive and contemporary description of applied behavior analysis. The principles and paradigms of theoretical and experimental aspects of behavior analysis require this course and the accompanying lab or field experience in which to apply them. It is not sufficient to be able to merely espouse theory if one cannot apply it successfully and ethically in the environments in which it is needed.

Prerequisites: SPED 604; Graduate classification.

### **EPSY 630 (3 credits): Single-Case Experimental Design\***

Teaches measurement, design, implementation, and analysis skills to conduct research with single-subject design; review and summarize the quality of single-case literature, plan and implement AB designs.

Prerequisites: SPED 604; SPED 699; SPED 601; SPED 602; SPED 642; Graduate classification.

### **SPED 617 (3 credits) Adolescent Literacy Across the Content Areas for Students with Disabilities**

Research-based strategies to teach reading and writing to 4th through 12th grade students with disabilities and other diverse instructional needs. The emphasis is on content area issues and strategies, as well as on assessment, motivation,

interventions, and other current issues. Prerequisites: SPED 630; Graduate Classification.

**SPED 601 (3 credits): Assessment in School Settings\***

Formal and informal assessment; state assessment and alternatives; techniques used with students with disabilities; using data to make educational decisions.

Prerequisites: SPED 604; SPED 699; Graduate classification; Approval of instructor.

**SPED 628 (3 credits) Consultation in Special Education**

Rationale, strategies, procedures and resources for providing consultation as systematic problem-solving to school procedures, and resources for improving services for children with disabilities, and those who are at-risk of school failure.

Prerequisite: Graduate classification.

**SPED 642 (3 credits): Prevention, Support, and Intervention for Students with Emotional and Behavior Problems\***

This course provides learners with engaging and effective management strategies needed to support individuals who exhibit challenging and/or severe behavior problems in education, clinic and community settings using prevention, targeted programming and individual interventions; includes methods for observing, assessing and analyzing challenging and severe behaviors. Prerequisites: SPED 604; SPED 699, SPED 601; Graduate classification.

**SPED 602 (3 credits): Ethics and Professional Conduct in SPED and ABA\***

Focus on ethical and professional conduct required for special educators and behavior analysts; information required for certified behavior analysts; ethics required by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board; highly relevant for those working with children or adults with disabilities in any capacity.

Prerequisites: SPED 604; SPED 699; SPED 601; SPED 642; Graduate classification.

**SPED 611 (3 credits): Multicultural and Bilingual Special Education**

This course provides learners with multicultural perspectives in special education; culturally responsive teaching; methods for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners in special education; bilingual special education; language acquisition, learning disabilities and language differences.

Prerequisite: Graduate classification.

**SPED 630 (3 credits) Early Literacy for Students with Diverse Instructional needs**

Research-based strategies for teaching beginning reading and writing to pre-K through 4th grade students with disabilities, with an emphasis on current issues, assessment, prevention, and intervention.

Prerequisite: Graduate classification.

**SPED 605: Leadership in Applied Behavior Analysis\***

Provide learners with literature and evidence-based practices for effective leadership and supervision in the field of applied behavior analysis (ABA); review the theoretical

underpinnings of ABA as they relate to supervision and training of staff, specifically those involving behavior-change procedures; master best practices in personnel supervision and management; practice supervision-based skills such as evaluation, behavior-skills training, and performance feedback.

Prerequisites: SPED 604; SPED 699; SPED 601SPED 602; SPED 642; SPED 602; EPSY 630; Graduate Classification.

## The Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Graduate Certificate

Approximately one in every 59 children in Texas has an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Without early intervention, the cost to care for a person with autism over his or her lifetime is about \$3.6 million (Cakir et al., 2020). A Texas A&M University transcribed certificate identifies individuals with specialized professional preparation at the graduate level in evidence-based interventions to improve the quality of life for individuals with ASD and others with challenging behaviors, as well as a framework for providing instruction to others with developmental disabilities. Texas A&M University supplies greatly needed professionals to challenge current proliferation of unproven or even dangerous interventions. Teachers who are unable to critically evaluate the research are susceptible to such practices.

This certificate relies on applied behavior analysis (ABA) practices and techniques rooted in ABA (e.g., Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) which have been repeatedly demonstrated to be effective with many students with ASD (Loiacono & Allen, 2008) and others with challenging behaviors. The courses, which comprise this certificate, are specifically designed to cover content recommended by professional organizations and guided by the National Competencies for Teachers of Children with ASD; the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards for Professional Practice; and recommendations by the CEC, the Autism Society of America (ASA), and the Network of Autism Training and Technical Assistance Programs (NATTAP).

Required Courses: 21 semester credit hours (see course program and descriptions above)

EPSY 630 (3 credits): Single-Case Experimental Design\*

SPED 601 (3 credits): Assessment in School Settings\*

SPED 602 (3 credits): Ethics and Professional Conduct in SPED and ABA\*

SPED 604 (3 credits): Introduction to Applied Behavior Analysis\*

SPED 605 (3 credits): Leadership in Applied Behavior Analysis \*

SPED 642 (3 credits): Prevention, Support, and Intervention for Students with Emotional and Behavior Problems \*\*

SPED 699 (3 credits): Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis\*

*Taking these seven courses will lead to a TAMU ABA graduate certificate but will not lead to BCBA® certification without additional requirements. Those interested in national BCBA certification should visit [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com) for more information.*

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**CERTIFICATION:**

Pass rate data for the BCBA exam may be found on the BACB website



### Information for Applicants

#### Admission and Application Process

Applications are reviewed by the Master's committee each Spring for Summer admission. Grants, scholarships, and fellowships are sometimes available and the nomination for this process is secondary to admission to the program. For more information about available grants, see [sped.tamu.edu](http://sped.tamu.edu) or contact the academic advisor by emailing [epsyadvisor@tamu.edu](mailto:epsyadvisor@tamu.edu). Strong candidates for our program have outstanding academic skills and preparation, experience teaching or working with individuals with disabilities, strong communication and analytic abilities, and potential for leadership in the field through teaching, service, or research. The application process is competitive; individuals with exceptional experiences and skills are encouraged to apply.

## Suggestions for Applicants

- Seek letters of recommendation from supervisors and/or former university instructors who can speak to your experiences with individuals with disabilities, your leadership potential, and your ability to succeed in graduate courses.
- Use the candidate statement to highlight your accomplishments and also to demonstrate your written communication skills and academic writing abilities; revise and edit your writing samples thoroughly.
- Begin the application process in advance to ensure completion by the application deadline.

## Administrative Issues

The TAMU Graduate Student Handbook may be found here: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/ogs-help-center/tutorial/graduate\\_student\\_handbook](http://ogs.tamu.edu/ogs-help-center/tutorial/graduate_student_handbook).

## Information for Current Students

### Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook

Upon receipt of this handbook, if you have any questions concerning the program, contact the program coordinator or your advisor. In addition, you are expected to acknowledge that you have received, read, and understood the contents of this handbook. Please follow [this link](#) to submit your acknowledgement.

### Prior Graduate Course Work and Waivers

Waiving a course requires the consent of the Program Chair, with the advisement and recommendation from the student's chair or temporary advisor and the instructor of the course. The procedure for this includes a written request by the student to the advisor with attached documentation such as prior course syllabi, syllabi for the course requested to be waived, and any relevant capstone requirements. In addition, faculty may require examination or competency demonstration prior to evaluating the course for waiver. Students may not receive transfer credit for courses that have previously been applied toward a degree. Undergraduate courses or courses for initial certification are not transferable. In most cases, transfer credits are limited to no more than 6 semester hours.

### From the Offices of the Dean of Student Life: Title IX Haven Training

This training is required by all students at A&M.

If you have not completed Part 1 of the training, complete Part 1 of the training. This training only needs to be done once and there will be a hold on class registration until it is completed. You may do this by clicking on the appropriate link below. When you log into the training, you will be leaving the Texas A&M University network. You will be logging into a web service hosted by EverFi on behalf of the Offices of the Dean of Student Life at Texas A&M University.

[Sexual Assault Prevention Training – Graduate and Professional](#)

## Research Involving Human Subjects

Any research conducted with human subjects must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Texas A&M University. All students should take the online training and receive the certificate prior to conducting research with human participants, including applied, classroom research. The training and additional IRB information may be found at this URL: <http://researchcompliance.tamu.edu/irb>.

## Advising

The EPSY department has a full-time academic advisor ([epsyadvisor@tamu.edu](mailto:epsyadvisor@tamu.edu)) who is available to guide the application process and to answer any questions about the program or provide assistance in locating the appropriate staff or faculty member who might answer questions. The EPSY advisor and the EPSY website ([epsy.tamu.edu](http://epsy.tamu.edu)) are also sources of information regarding financial aid, deadlines, & registration information including drop/add/q-drop or in-absentia registration. The EPSY advisor is also available for any questions regarding student records, transcripts, grade changes, or variable credit course sign ups (i.e., 485, 685, 683, etc.) and departmental or program procedures.

The SPED program Master's Committee Chair, Dr. Marcia Montague is also available to answer relevant questions about the Master's degree ([mmontague@tamu.edu](mailto:mmontague@tamu.edu)). Individuals who are admitted to the program are assigned a temporary advisor. The faculty advisor is available to assist students in all program and professional advising.

The ABA Certificate Program Coordinator, Dr. Erinn Whiteside, is also available to answer relevant questions about the ABA graduate certificate ([erinnwhiteside@tamu.edu](mailto:erinnwhiteside@tamu.edu)).

## Temporary Faculty Advisor

The EPSY department has a full-time academic advisor ([epsyadvisor@tamu.edu](mailto:epsyadvisor@tamu.edu)) who is available to guide the application process and to answer any questions about the program or provide assistance in locating the appropriate staff or faculty member who might answer questions. The EPSY advisor and the EPSY website ([epsy.tamu.edu](http://epsy.tamu.edu)) are also sources of information regarding financial aid, deadlines, & registration information including drop/add/q-drop or in-absentia registration. The EPSY advisor is also available for any questions regarding student records, transcripts, grade changes, or variable credit course sign ups (i.e., 485, 685, 683, etc.) and departmental or program procedures.

The SPED program Master's Committee Chair, Dr. Marcia Montague is also available to answer relevant questions about the Master's degree ([mmontague@tamu.edu](mailto:mmontague@tamu.edu)). Individuals who are admitted to the program are assigned a temporary advisor. The faculty advisor is available to assist students in all program and professional advising.

The ABA Certificate Program Coordinator, Dr. Erinn Whiteside, is also available to answer relevant questions about the ABA graduate certificate ([erinnwhiteside@tamu.edu](mailto:erinnwhiteside@tamu.edu)).

Upon acceptance in the Department of Educational Psychology, all graduate students are assigned a temporary faculty advisor. For campus-based students, the temporary advisor is a graduate faculty member in one of the emphasis areas.

The role of the temporary faculty advisor is:

- To assist you with your first year's course work; and
- To respond to questions that you have about the graduate program in Educational Psychology

Once you receive the name of your faculty advisor, contact him/her immediately. If you do not hear from your faculty advisor in a reasonable amount of time, you may contact the advising office at [brigman@tamu.edu](mailto:brigman@tamu.edu) for grad advising or 979.845.1833. Once you contact your temporary faculty advisor, please provide him/her with your TAMU email address as a means to contact you.

## **Submission of Additional Curriculum Request form for the ABA Certificate**

All SPED Master's students, through following the required program sequence, will complete the coursework required for the Applied Behavior Analysis Certificate from TAMU. This Certificate will be included on your transcript at graduation, provided that you successfully complete the required coursework and submit an "Additional Curriculum Request Form" by established deadlines. Complete this form during your first semester of coursework. Once complete, send it to the EPSY graduate advisor: Peggy Brigman at [brigman@tamu.edu](mailto:brigman@tamu.edu)

Please note: Receipt of the TAMU Graduate Transcribed Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis does not constitute national certification. The Behavior Analyst Certification Board, Inc.® has verified this course sequence toward the coursework requirements for eligibility to take the Board Certified Behavior Analyst® (Option 1) Examination. Applicants will need to meet additional requirements before they can be deemed eligible to take the examination (See requirements at [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com)).

## **Filing the Degree Plan**

Please file your program of studies with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) in June of your first year by logging on to the OGAPS webpage.

- All courses are identified in your handbook.
- Identify the "chair" of your committee using either the assigned temporary advisor or any of the faculty with graduate status teaching in the master's program. A chair is someone who advises the student in the program of study

and any research or scholarship activities. Special Education faculty members and their research interests are listed on our webpage.

- Peggy Brigman ([brigman@tamu.edu](mailto:brigman@tamu.edu)) will email you detailed instructions during your 18th hour on how to complete this process.

## Email

Upon admission into the University, students will receive a Texas A&M official email address in the format of "NetID@email.tamu.edu." While some students prefer their personal email or school district generated email, University student rules and policies explicitly state that it is the student's responsibility to maintain and monitor their Texas A&M email address. Official correspondence from the University and the Department will be sent to official Texas A&M email addresses, and failure to properly monitor that account may result in missing important information and deadlines. Failure to monitor the official Texas A&M email is not an acceptable excuse for missed deadlines or requirements and resulting holds or fees will not be lifted for this reason alone.

## Expectations of Students

Students are held to the standards of the Student Rules at TAMU (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>) and the standards of the Office of Graduate Studies at TAMU. The TAMU Graduate Student Handbook is available at the following website: [http://ogs.tamu.edu/ogs-help-center/tutorial/graduate\\_student\\_handbook](http://ogs.tamu.edu/ogs-help-center/tutorial/graduate_student_handbook). Further, students in the SPED program are expected to maintain high levels of performance in the following areas:

**1) Academic performance.** The expectation for academic performance is that the student maintains a grade point average and continuous enrollment to meet the requirements set for good academic standing (3.0; Student Rules 10.4.3 and as stated in the Graduate Catalog). Although not required in all courses to the same extent, it is expected that students will demonstrate the ability to communicate their knowledge through papers, articles, reports, and other forms of written expression. Graduate students are expected to complete tasks with minimal assistance or support although faculty members are available for mentoring and guidance. The University procedures will be followed in cases where students are placed on probation due to GPRs below 3.0. (Student Rules 12.3 and 12.5)

**2) Ethical behavior.** Students will behave in accordance with professional ethical standards. They are also expected to adhere to the Aggie Honor Code, as promulgated by Texas A&M University. Students are required to be familiar with the TAMU Honor Code policies, which are found at this URL: [aggiehonor.tamu.edu](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu).

**3) Professional behavior.** Students have an obligation and expectation to behave in a professional manner. Professional behavior includes timeliness (e.g., completion of tasks by the due dates; being on time for class, meetings, or practicum settings; completion of course requirements in designated time frames), accepting constructive feedback from faculty or other supervisors, and behaving in a manner

that is supportive of others and not disruptive to the learning process (e.g., turning off cell phones in class or meetings). Further, this expectation extends to students' use of text messaging, emailing, instant messaging, cell phones, and other social network communications including, but not limited to internet communications using message boards, blogs, Facebook, and Twitter. Such professional behavior is exemplified by forming respectful relationships with faculty, staff, other students, other professionals in the community, and consumers.

**4) Online program expectations.** Because the Online SPED Master's degree and ABA graduate transcribed certificate programs are exclusively offered online, students must have continuous access to the required technology and high-speed internet access and must become proficient in the use of online course management systems and other online tools (such as Centra, MediaMatrix) that are used in the program. In addition, our program requires students to have access to a microphone and camera. It is each student's responsibility to work with the appropriate "Help Desks" to resolve any difficulties and to solve personal computing problems. The current program requirements are found here: <http://epsy.tamu.edu/degrees-and-programs/graduate-degree-programs/online-masters-special-education/technology>

**5) Continuous program progress.** Because of the professional nature of the training program, it is critical that students progress at a rate that is consistent with program guidelines. Grades of "Incomplete" are the rare exception and are given only under extraordinary circumstances, at the discretion of the instructor. Based on TAMU Student Rules (10.5), an incomplete can only be given if the student is making adequate progress in the course, but not able to complete specific requirements.

**6) E-folio Presentation.** A professional e-folio presentation is required for graduation. This portfolio of work allows for you to demonstrate competency in applying knowledge and skills of applied behavior analysis through a series of three or more practical applications in several courses, across the program. The professional e-folio development process begins early in your program and should be updated regularly. Following completion of assignments that demonstrate competency in ABA, review feedback from faculty. Make needed updates and revisions and post the products to your e-folio site. Your site must contain, at a minimum, the following products:

1. Functional Behavior Assessment - SPED 601: Assessment in School Settings (Spring, Year 1)
2. Behavior Intervention Plan Project - SPED 642: Prevention, Support, and Intervention for Students with Emotional and Behavior Problems (Summer II, Year 2)
3. Supervision Feedback Project - SPED 605: Leadership in Applied Behavior Analysis (Spring, Year 2)
4. Research-based Single Case Study - EPSY 630: Single Case Experimental Design (Spring, Year 2)

A recorded 5-10 minute presentation over your e-folio products is shared with faculty at the end of year 2, prior to graduation. A team of reviewers that include faculty

members will review your e-Folio site and presentation for demonstration of competency in ABA.

**7) Cell Phone Usage.** In 2017, Texas lawmakers passed legislation that bans the use of a wireless communication device for electronic messaging while operating a motor vehicle. Texting, reading messages, writing messages, etc. is prohibited while driving in Texas. <https://www.txdot.gov/driver/laws/cellphones.html>

Consistent with this legislation, and out of an abundance of caution for the safety of students in our Master's and ABA Certificate programs at Texas A&M University, the following program policy has been put in place.

SPED Master's and ABA Certificate students participating in online course activities (including Canvas Zoom sessions, discussion board participation, etc.) must engage in these activities while in a location that allows for the student's full participation and attention. Engagement in course activities **while driving a motor vehicle is not permitted.**

Further, participation in class activities via a cell phone can inhibit the level of Collaborate functions and student participation. For this reason, across all courses in the program, it is the expectation of faculty that students will not utilize their cell phones for class participation. Participation via a laptop or desktop computer is expected.

**8) Attendance.** Attendance is the student's responsibility and is essential for successful course completion. You are expected to arrive on time and actively participate in each synchronous class session (live meetings) for the duration of the session. Attendance and participation are monitored and should take place in a manner that is both appropriate and free from distractions (ie., crying children, co-workers, etc.). A laptop or desktop computer should be used to access synchronous class meetings. **Cell phones do not allow adequate course access; cell phones are not allowed as a means to join a synchronous class session.**

You must have high speed internet access, a webcam, speakers, and a microphone for each synchronous session. If you cannot attend a synchronous class, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor ahead of time and provide satisfactory documentation of the reason for the absence. Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code (See Rule 24). Section 7.4.2 indicates that, "The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" (see <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07/>).

The student is responsible for providing satisfactory documentation to the instructor to substantiate the reason for an absence. Additionally, assignments are to be completed and submitted on time. For any university excused absence, you will be expected to turn in any class work as assigned by the instructor by the time indicated. Make-up exams and projects will be up to the discretion of the instructor and will be permitted only with prior approval (at least 24 hours prior) in the case of a

documented emergency (e.g., doctor's note specifying the days of your illness that correspond with the due dates of the assignment). Makeup work is contingent on university-approved excuse.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### 1. What if a course is at capacity?

Should a class be full, please reach out to the instructor of the course and kindly request to be added to the course. If the instructor approves your request, forward the email to your graduate advisor, including your UIN and the CRN for the course. The EPSY advising office can then put in an override code in order for you to register in the course.

### 2. What if the course I selected for an elective is different from the one I filed on my approved degree plan?

- Confirm the elective you've selected will count on your degree plan with your faculty advisor
- Go to the Graduate School's website: (<https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu>)
- You will select "Create petition" and then "Long form petition"
- After that, you add and delete courses until your degree plan is correct
- Don't forget to click "Audit" and then reopen it to select "Submit."

### 3. What if the course needed on my degree plan is missing from the schedule?

If the course is an elective, you can likely substitute it for another offered elective. Double check with your faculty advisor, and do not worry! We will help you find a solution!

### 4. How do I know what instructional method (face to face, online asynchronous) will be used for each course?

Great question! Distance education students should choose "web-based" as the search parameter for their courses. Please reach out to your graduate advisor with any clarification questions. Here is a little clarification about course section numbers.

- 600 sections – these sections are on-campus sections of courses and require on-campus attendance at the scheduled times in Howdy
- 699 sections – these sections are online sections of courses for on-campus students. These will only be offered if there is not an on-campus section of this course offered.
- 700 sections – these sections are online sections of courses offered for online students only. This section waives on-campus fees for students. If you are a student earning a degree via one of our online programs, these are the sections for you.
- *\*International students- please note that you cannot sign up for more than one online course per semester or you will be out of compliance with most visa guidelines. Each student is responsible for ensuring you meet the requirements outlined by the ISS office.*

**5. Why is a course showing “0” enrollment and seats available?**

This course is mostly likely reserved for our on-campus students. If you need an override please email your graduate advisor, including your UIN and the CRN for the course.

**6. What classes should I take next semester?**

Please reach out to your temporary/permanent faculty advisor or chair to discuss courses for the upcoming. Staff advisors do not advise on coursework, but we are here to assist with any logistical questions you might have. Email faculty early to allow ample time for a response.

**7. I have a hold and can not register. How do I remove my hold?**

- Go to <https://howdy.tamu.edu/uPortal/normal/render.uP>
- Log in with your information
- Check your holds under “My Record,” “Grades and Transcripts,” “Holds” to ensure you do not have any holds on your account.
- If the hold is for your portfolio or advising, get right on it!

**8. What if my hold is for my portfolio or advising?**

- Get right on it!

**9. I have a Title IX training hold. How do I resolve this?**

If you are a new student, you will have the **Title IX hold from Student Affairs**. This is a required training through their office, and must be taken before you are able to be registered. **The EPSY advising office cannot clear that hold.**

- The training is a two-part process:
- The first is around 1 ½ hrs long
- The second is around 30 minutes. Although it says 30 days until you will receive the second link, we’ve seen this happen much more expediently. **If you have any questions regarding the training, please reach out to Student Life by calling 979.845.0977.**

**10. What if I have a hold from our department?**

Contact your graduate advisor for information about how to remove the hold.

**11. What if I have a hold from outside our department?**

You will need to call the phone number listed on the hold to see how this can be removed. Our department cannot remove holds from other entities.

**12. What if I have a degree-plan hold?**

You will need to file your degree plan in the Graduate School’s system as soon as possible. To do this, you need to have selected a chair/ committee for your degree plan. Please reach out to your staff advisor (listed below) if you cannot find your degree plan filing steps or if you need any assistance. This hold will not be removed until your degree plan is pending with the Graduate School.

**13. How to avoid financial aid issues?**

Contact financial aid before the semester starts to ensure everything is secured for payment of your classes.

**14. How do I know if I am eligible for financial aid?**

- You must take at least 6 hours of courses (half time) in the long semester and
- Maintain above a 3.0 GPR
- Courses must be in your degree plan
- Reach out to Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at 979-845-3236 with any questions

**15. What if I filed my degree plan and would like to see what courses I have taken and/or what courses I need to take??**

You will need to pull your degree audit/evaluation. Follow these steps to see the full list of courses you've taken

1. Login to Howdy
2. Click on "**My Record**"
3. Scroll down to the "**Degree Evaluation**" box
4. Click on "**View degree evaluation**"
5. Click "**Generate new evaluation**"
6. Click by your program
7. Click "**Generate request**"
8. Click "**Detailed Requirements**" to view your degree plan
9. You can see the courses you've listed on the left and the ones you've taken on the right. You will now want to take anything you listed on your plan (the left), but haven't yet taken (list on the right). These should be indicated in blue.

# Getting Started Guide for the Department of Educational Psychology

## School & Department Leadership

School of Education and Human Development (SEHD)	
Dean:	Dr. Michael de Miranda
Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs:	Dr. Beverly j. Irby
Department of Educational Psychology	
Interim Department Head:	Dr. Jeffrey Liew
Associate Department Head for Graduate Studies:	Dr. Wen Luo
Academic Advisor :	Peggy Brigman
Academic Advisor :	

## Graduate and Professional School Governance

The **Graduate and Professional School (GPS)** is a global leader in graduate education, committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the power of intellect. Through exceptional service and commitment to the highest standards, **GPS advocates for graduate education at Texas A&M** and throughout Texas. The Graduate and Professional School is committed to a diverse campus climate, enhancement of the graduate experience and the development of all students as global citizens.

GPS serves Texas A&M graduate students as an advocate for their graduate education and houses the Ombudsperson for University Graduate Education. This office:

1. establishes procedures to guarantee the highest quality educational experience at the graduate level;
2. fosters and facilitates interdisciplinary/intercollegiate graduate programs and research activities; and
3. strives to maintain and enhance an environment conducive to creative scholarship and scientific inquiry.

Graduate students must become very familiar with the GPS office webpage at <http://GPS.tamu.edu/>. GPS oversees degree plans, official deadlines, calendars for graduate students, petitions, graduation, Ombuds office (see Ombuds section), and processes all official documentation of a graduate student's degree. Prior to going to the GPS, please contact your department advisor.

## Graduate Student Association (GSA)

The Department of Educational Psychology GSA is an active cadre of graduate students in various disciplines of education, all a part of the *Department of Educational Psychology*, and at Texas A&M University. The organization strives to assist our fellow students in the completion of masters and doctoral level studies, helping them to acclimate to Texas A&M University, as well as to find success in their studies. In addition, GSA provides a number of social and professional development meetings during the academic year for students--for the purpose of networking and advancing the Department of Educational Psychology GSA's work at TAMU. All students are strongly encouraged to join the Department of Educational Psychology GSA, including online MEd and EdD students. PhD students must be a current member of GSA in order to be eligible for departmental travel funding. Web conferencing tools and technologies are available to facilitate distance participation. Please reach out to the Graduate Advising Office for GSA contact information. The organizations include:

- American Educational Research Association
  - Founded in 1916, the American Educational Research Association (AERA) works to advance knowledge, scholarly inquiry, and research related to education. AERA has over 150 special interest groups, including one on special education research. <http://www.aera.net/>
- Educational Psychology Student Organization (EPSO)
  - To support graduate students in the EPSY department by representing the student body to faculty, planning social events and enrichment events. The purpose of this organization is to serve as a liaison between the graduate students and faculty members of the department of educational psychology serve as a source of information for graduate students promote social activities involving both graduate students and faculty members promote participation in professional activities and impact departmental, college, and University policies affect EPSY graduate students. <https://maroonlink.tamu.edu/organization/epsos>
- Student Council for Exceptional Children (SCEC)
  - The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is widely respected as the most active organization in the world serving all exceptional children who have disabilities and those who are gifted. It is a network of 53,000 professional members from every state and province who are involved in all aspects of special education. <https://www.cec.sped.org/>
- Association for Behavior Analysis International
  - The Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) is a key organization for individuals interested in understanding, teaching, and applying behavior analysis. <https://www.abainternational.org/welcome.aspx>

## Transportation & Parking

Parking permits are required for all lots at all times. Permits can be purchased during registration as an additional fee option or you can purchase one online. Visit <http://transport.tamu.edu> for more information. Parking is also available for an hourly fee in garages located in various parts of campus. The nearest parking garages to the Department of Educational Psychology office are North Side Parking Garage and Central Campus Parking Garage. There are many free TAMU bus routes to get you to and around campus. Visit <http://transport.tamu.edu/transit.aspx> for the most up-to-date schedules and routes.

## Howdy Portal & Resources

Students will become very familiar with the Howdy Portal, <http://howdy.tamu.edu>. The Howdy Portal encompasses information regarding Financial Aid, paying your bill, Registration, Withdrawal, Grades, Transcripts, Personal Data, Parking Permits, Graduation Application, Academic Calendar, Degree Audit and Evaluation, Single Sign On (SSO), and Access to eCampus, Student email, Google Drive, Academic Services, Student Writing Center, TAMU Libraries, and so much more. This will be your primary source for university and student information.

### *TAMU NetID*

<http://gateway.tamu.edu> Your NetID is the main log on to access information at A&M. Your NetID will also serve as your TAMU email address. Email can be accessed via <http://google.tamu.edu>, TAMU Homepage ([www.tamu.edu](http://www.tamu.edu)), or Howdy Main Portal (<http://howdy.tamu.edu>).

### *TAMU Email*

Your @tamu email address will serve as your official email address for all TAMU communications, including those from faculty and staff. Texas A&M student rule 61 requires you read this email daily: <https://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule61/>

***Registering for Classes***

Newly admitted graduate students should contact their faculty advisor for assistance in course selections. Course registration is done through the Howdy portal, under the MyRecord tab.

***MyRecord***

MyRecord in the Howdy Portal provides access to all your records in one place. Students can check for holds, view schedule, grades, unofficial transcript, degree evaluation, and register at <http://howdy.tamu.edu>

***Online Learning Platform (Learning Management Systems)***

Canvas provides access to online learning and instructional resources.

Your Canvas

log-in is your TAMU NetID and password. Your Canvas account is linked to your TAMU email account. Information about getting set up in Canvas can be found here: <https://lms.tamu.edu/>. Students are required to check their TAMU email account daily. This is the **only** official means of communication across the Department, School, and University. Students are held responsible for any information sent to their official TAMU email account.

**Other Important Information & Resources*****Purchase Software***

As a student at A&M you can purchase software, such as Microsoft office, at greatly reduced prices. Log onto the site with your NetID and password, and you will see the software you are authorized to purchase. <https://software.tamu.edu>

***MyAggieCard***

The Aggie Card is your official ID at Texas A&M University. It shows your status as a member of the Aggie family. It is important for you to keep your Aggie Card on you at all times. It will allow you to access numerous campus services such as your assigned residence hall, the Rec Center, the library, dining halls, and much more. For information on obtaining your card, please go to <https://myaggiecard.tamu.edu/>.

***Medical Insurance***

All students are eligible for graduate student insurance. Please visit <http://tamu.myahpcare.com/> for more information.

***Aggie Ring***

You are eligible to order an Aggie Ring towards the end of your graduate studies. You can check your eligibility and find out more at <http://www.aggienetwork.com/Ring/>.

### *Important Resource Websites*

1. School of Education Human Development: <http://www.education.tamu.edu/>
2. SEHD Faculty and Staff Directory: <https://directory.SEHD.tamu.edu/>
3. Department of Educational Psychology  
t:<https://epsy.tamu.edu/academics/special-education-online-masters/>
4. International Student Services: <http://iss.tamu.edu>
5. Tuition: <https://sbs.tamu.edu/billing-payments/make-payment/index.html>
6. Library resources: <http://library.tamu.edu>
7. Childcare: <http://studentlife.tamu.edu/agoss.childcare>
8. Dining on Campus: <https://dineoncampus.com/tamu/>
9. Student Counseling Services: <https://scs.tamu.edu/>
10. Veteran's Services: <https://veterans.tamu.edu/>
11. Disability Services: <https://disability.tamu.edu/>
12. Student Business Services: <https://sbs.tamu.edu/>
13. Student Assistance Services, including LGBTQ+ services:  
<https://studentlife.tamu.edu/sas/>
14. Department of Multicultural Services: <https://dms.tamu.edu/>
15. Women's Resource Center: <https://studentlife.tamu.edu/wrc/>

### **Supports and Resources**

The following are support and resources you may want to seek if you are struggling with your mental health, thoughts, emotions, food insecurity and more.

1. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) office offers **24/7 counseling services free of charge to all students** (<https://caps.tamu.edu/myssp/>). Further, they also offer numerous tips for navigating all sorts of issues from exam preparation to anxiety to sleep tips (<https://caps.tamu.edu/self-help/>).
2. If you are struggling with food insecurity, there are programs across campus that offer support. (<https://12thcan.tamu.edu/>). The Swipe Out Hunger program allows students to donate unused meal swipes to other students who need a few extras. To learn more about donating or receiving, please visit their website at: <https://12thcan.tamu.edu/swipe-out-hunger/>.

# Registration & Enrollment

## Class Registration

Registration begins in April for the fall and summer semesters and in November for the spring semester. The specific dates will be noted on the Official University Calendar and on the main portal: <http://howdy.tamu.edu>. This is also the website where students are able to view the course schedule and register. Students should use Howdy (approximately mid to late March for Summer/Fall, and mid-late October for Spring) to view their assigned registration times.

Distance Education students must update their “Distance Education Location” in Howdy each semester. Otherwise, registration cannot be completed.

Students must clear all holds through outside departments such as the Registrar’s Office, Admissions, Student Affairs, Student Business Services, and Financial Aid prior to registration. Students must contact these offices in order for the holds to be removed. The department is unable to remove any holds except those placed by the Department of Educational Psychology.

All students who **fail to pay tuition and fees** by the payment date listed on the registration website will be **dropped from all courses**. Students who **register late** will be assessed a **financial penalty**.

## Enrollment Status

Full time	Halftime
A graduate student (domestic or international) is considered <b>full-time</b> when registered for a minimum of:	A graduate student (domestic or international) is considered <b>half-time</b> and eligible for financial aid, but not department or grant support, when registered for a minimum of:
<b>9 semester credit hours</b> during a fall or spring semester	<b>6 semester credit hours</b> during a fall or spring semester
<b>6 semester credit hours</b> in a summer	<b>3 semester credit hours</b> in a summer

### Add/Drop

When students need to add or drop a course, it is the student's responsibility to consult with a faculty advisor to identify reasonable substitutions and to complete the add/drop substitutions within Howdy by the deadline each semester. Cohorted students are assigned to schedules that cannot be changed. The Add/Drop period runs through the first five days of the semester. See the Academic Calendar for deadlines. After the fifth class day, a Q-drop will be required. A **Q grade before the 12th class day** does not count toward the certification of enrollment status.

### Q-Drop

Students may drop a course with no academic penalty (Q-Drop) during the official Q-Drop period; however, there are financial consequences. Students will become financially responsible for all tuition and fees. Students who drop below full-time status and are on graduate assistantship will forfeit the assistantship. The forms are available on the Registrar's Office [website](#). The form will need to be submitted to the Graduate Advising Office. A grade of Q will be recorded on the student's transcript. It is the student's responsibility to make certain the course is officially dropped by the deadline. Failure to do so may result in the record of a failing grade. **Students must consult with the course instructor and faculty advisor before submitting the Q-drop form to the Graduate Advising Office.**

### Withdrawal

A student who drops all courses in a given term will be required to withdraw from the university for the semester. An official withdrawal is initiated by the student in [Howdy](#), and routed to the student's Dean or designee for approval. A student may not initiate a withdrawal after the Q-drop period ends ([see Q-drop periods](#)). However, the student's Dean or designee may, in certain circumstances, initiate a request to the registrar to withdraw a student after the deadline. For additional information about withdrawing from the University, see [Part I, Section 17](#) of the [Texas A&M University Student Rules](#). Students are reminded that withdrawing from the University **does not** dismiss the tuition and fees or repayment of student loans borrowed and may impact payment and grace periods. For questions, contact Scholarships & Financial Aid at (979) 845-3236.

#### Certificate Enrollment: Advanced Research Methods (ARM)

The **Advanced Research Methods (ARM) Certificate** is a stand-alone graduate-level certificate in Education & Social Sciences Advanced Research Methods (ARM), offered by the School of

Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University. The program allows graduate and non-degree seeking students the opportunity to gain additional training in research methodology, and to obtain academic validation for their efforts. The Certificate testifies to a student's successful mastery of advanced competencies in education and social sciences research methods, with emphasis on quantitative or qualitative approaches. The ARM certificate facilitates students' initiation into the academic publication process, and allows them to become more 'marketable' in today's competitive hiring practices, especially in the context of Research Universities with Very High Research Activity. It is a 12-hour certificate that can be added to your curriculum. This certificate may require additional courses outside of degree plan coursework. Prior to starting the coursework Students must submit Intent & Additional Curriculum forms to the Graduate Advising Office and their Faculty Advisor for approval. The intent form will then need to be submitted online. For requirements and detailed information, please visit <https://education.tamu.edu/degrees-programs/advanced-research-methods-certificate/>

If you have questions or interest in this certificate, please contact the Graduate Advising Office or email [ARMcertificate@tamu.edu](mailto:ARMcertificate@tamu.edu)

# Financial Aid, Tuition & Fees

## Financial Aid

Texas A&M University offers many financial aid options to help you pay for School costs, including scholarships and loans. Offices for financial aid are located in the General Services Complex, and they can be contacted via phone at 979-847-1787. Additional information about Financial Aid can be accessed at <https://financialaid.tamu.edu/>. Students should consult the Department of Student Financial Aid if seeking financial assistance for tuition or other fees. All scholarships, grants and loans are applied to any outstanding charges before installments are calculated. Students who receive **Veteran's benefits** need to contact the Veteran Financial Aid Office and communicate immediately with the Department of Educational Psychology Graduate Advising Office.

Financial aid programs for graduate students include the Robert T. Stafford Loan (formerly the Guaranteed Student Loan), the Perkins Loan (similar to the Stafford Loan), the Hinson-Hazelwood Loan, College Work Study, the Texas Public Education Grant, the State Student Incentive Grant, and The Texas Aggie Graduate Grant (TAGG), which is a need-based award. If applying to TAGG please send the form to ([cmpresley@tamu.edu](mailto:cmpresley@tamu.edu)) and she will obtain the appropriate signature on your behalf. To be considered for all forms of aid available to graduate students, a student must file either the Financial Aid Form (FAF) or the Family Financial Statement (FFS).

A limited number of Educational Psychology Scholarships, Fellowships, and Graduate Assistantships are available for PhD students. For application information, please contact the Department of Educational Psychology Graduate Advising Office.

More information about the Graduate Assistantship is in its own section below.

## General Program Cost Information

Educational expenses for the months of enrollment will vary according to course of study. For details on the basic budget for a particular graduate or professional program, please visit <http://financialaid.tamu.edu>. Scholarships and Financial Aid considers tuition and fees, books and supplies, transportation, room and board, incidental and living expenses in the cost of attendance for programs. All tuition and fee amounts provided herein represent the most accurate figures available at the time of publication and are subject to change without notice. University Rules in place at the time of publishing are reflected here. All are subject to change. The most current information available will be maintained on the Student Business Services website <http://sbs.tamu.edu>.

## Payment of Tuition and Fees

A student must meet all financial obligations to the University by the due dates to avoid late penalties. Failure to pay amounts owed may result in cancellation of the student's registration and being barred from future enrollment and receiving official transcripts. A student who wishes to pay fees in installments can select the option on the website <http://howdy.tamu.edu>. The Emergency Tuition and Fees Loan is available to help students pay their Texas A&M University tuition and required fees. The Emergency Tuition and Fees Loans are for required tuition and fees only. The online process can be accessed at <http://financialaid.tamu.edu>.

## Obligation to Pay Tuition & Fees

By registering for classes, a student agrees to pay all tuition and required fees associated with his/her registration, optional services and other fees, whether paying in full or utilizing the installment payment option. Failure to pay tuition, fees, and other charges may result in penalties, late registration fees, and/or possible cancellation of classes.

## Graduating Students Financial Obligation

According to Texas A&M University Student Rules and Chapter § 54.007 (d) of the Texas Education Code, all financial obligations to the University must be paid by the end of the semester. Failure to settle all financial obligations will result in withholding a student's diploma at graduation. Additionally, a block will be placed on the student's account that will prohibit registration in subsequent semesters and receipt of official transcripts.

### Citations:

Section 14.15 of the Texas A&M University Rules states, "The student must have settled all financial obligations to the University."

Chapter § 54.007 (d) of the Texas Education Code states, "A student who fails to make full payment of tuition and fees, including any incidental fees, by the due date may be prohibited from registering for classes until full payment is made. A student who fails to make full payment prior to the end of the semester or term may be denied credit for the work done that semester or term."

## Installments

Tuition, most required fees, room, board and parking are payable in full, or in two to four equal installments. A \$35 per semester service charge to cover the cost of handling will be assessed to each student who chooses to use the installment plan. The service charge is not refundable once a payment is made under the installment plan or after the first installment due date.

### **Fees and Costs of Cancelling Your Registration**

Once a student has registered for classes, he/she must select one course of action from the following to remain in good standing with the University:

- pay all amounts due by the specified due date;
- prior to the first day of classes, use the online registration system to drop all classes or
- after the first day of classes, use the online withdrawal system to request official withdraw from the University; withdrawals must be approved through his/her School Dean's office

Following this procedure is especially important for a student who has been awarded scholarships or financial aid since the aid may automatically pay tuition and fees and cause the registration to be held even though the student has decided not to attend. Failure to drop all classes or withdraw from unwanted registration may result in grades of F or I in all courses for the semester. The student will be required to reimburse the University for scholarships and other financial aid applied to his or her account and will be held responsible for paying all fees for the semester, regardless of whether he or she attended classes.

### **Cancellation for Nonpayment of Tuition or Fees**

The University reserves the right to cancel a registration not paid by the due date, or the official census date for a semester or summer term, to comply with state laws requiring payment of tuition and fees, to free the classroom spaces for other students, and to ensure the most efficient use of University resources.

### **Distance Education and Nontraditional Fees**

Distance education students are required to pay tuition, some fees and a distance education cost differential for their coursework. The SEHD distance education cost differential is \$225 per credit hour in addition to any tuition and fees charged by the university.

Distance education students are exempt from paying the following fees: Cooperative Education Fees, Health Center Fee, Recreational Sports Fee, and the University Center Complex Fee.

<b>Required Tuition and Fees</b>	<b>Distance Education Students</b>
Tuition	Yes
University Advancement Fee	Yes
Cooperative Education Fee	No
Distance Learning Fee	Yes
Equipment Access Fees	Yes
Field Trip Fees	Yes
Health Center Fee	No
International Student Services Fee	Yes
Laboratory Fees	Yes
Property Deposit	Yes
Recreational Sports Fee	No
Sponsored International Student Fee	Yes
University Center Complex Fee	No

## The Department of Educational Psychology Graduate Student Travel Grants & Guidelines

The Graduate and Professional School's Graduate Student Research and Presentation (RAP) Travel Award supports educational and professional development opportunities for graduate students. The program reimburses students up to \$750 for travel expenses associated with academic conferences and research projects in the United States and abroad.

Additional support for the Graduate and Professional School's Research and Presentation Travel Awards is generously provided by the George & Barbara Bush Foundation. The George & Barbara Bush Foundation is a dynamic learning environment dedicated to the idea that public service is a noble calling. It works to preserve the historic legacy of President George Bush and support the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum, The Bush School of Government and Public Service and the local community.

### *Purpose*

To provide travel support for Department of Educational Psychology graduate students presenting scholarly papers, research posters, research driven presentations, round table discussions, and other forms of scholarship dissemination at domestic and international professional meetings and symposia.

### **Awards and Scholarships**

There are many awards and scholarships available to PhD students based on specific criteria. Some of these awards currently available are listed in the matrix below. Faculty members nominate PhD students for these awards. If you believe that you might be eligible for any of these awards, please speak with a faculty member. The Graduate Advising Office does not have information on these awards. If you would like more information, **please visit the available websites listed below and/or speak to a faculty member:** Additionally, please check with your Department for other competitive Departmental Scholarships

Award	Due Date	Origination
<b>Buck Weirus Spirit Award</b> <a href="https://www.aggienetwork.com/buckweirus/">https://www.aggienetwork.com/buckweirus/</a>	Late Dec/Early Feb	TAMU
<b>Graduate Merit Fellowship</b> awarded by GPS from SEHD nominations	January	GPS
<b>Aviles Johnson Fellowship</b> awarded by GPS <a href="https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/funding-and-benefits/what-is-the-aviles-johnson-fellowship">https://grad.tamu.edu/knowledge-center/funding-and-benefits/what-is-the-aviles-johnson-fellowship</a>	February	GPS
<b>Jane and Collie Conoley Fellowship</b> SEHD award	June	SEHD
<b>Lechner Graduate Grant</b>	June	GPS

# Academic Policies

## Honor Code

**"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."** Academic integrity is an essential force in the academic life of a university. It enhances the quality of education and celebrates the genuine achievements of others. It is, without reservation, a responsibility of all members of the Texas A&M University Community to actively promote academic integrity. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of academic dishonesty is not a neutral act -- failure to confront and deter it will reinforce, perpetuate, and enlarge the scope of such misconduct. Failure to comply with the honor code in any way can lead to dismissal from program. See section on Academic policies for further information.

The decision to be **removed from the program is made at the departmental level.** See section on Academic Policies for further rules and information. For a list of university wide graduate policies, see:

<http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/university-policies/university-policies.pdf>

## Scholastic Requirements

Students in graduate degree programs and non-degree students (G6 classification) must maintain a 3.00 cumulative GPR (computed as specified in Student Rules Section 10.4.3). After a degree plan is filed, degree-seeking students must maintain a cumulative 3.0 ratio for courses listed within the degree plan. Departments and Schools may establish higher GPR requirements for their students in graduate degree programs and for non-degree students (G6 classification). If either a student's cumulative GPR or the GPR for courses listed on the degree plan within the graduate degree programs and non-degree students (G6 classification) falls below the minimum of 3.0, he or she will be considered to be scholastically deficient. **If the minimum GPR is not attained in any two semesters, the student will be dismissed from the Department of Educational Psychology graduate program.**

A graduate student will not receive graduate degree credit for undergraduate courses taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. A graduate student may not receive grades other than satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) in graduate courses bearing the numbers 681, 684, 693, 695, 697, and 791. These officially designated S/U courses may be listed on the degree plan, along with other courses approved and noted as S/U in the graduate catalog. Grades of A, B, C, and S are acceptable for graduate credit. For graduate students, grades of D, F or Unsatisfactory (U) for courses on the degree plan must be absolved by repeating the courses at Texas A&M University and achieving grades of C or above or Satisfactory (S). EdD students may not take additional graduate courses beyond those on their degree plan. Students who are enrolled in either 691 or 692 courses will receive a grade of Satisfactory (S), Unsatisfactory (U), or

Incomplete (I). It is the practice of the Department of Educational Psychology faculty to assign a grade of 'I' when the work is in progress prior to the final defense. Upon successful defense and submission of all required paperwork, Incompletes (I) convert to Satisfactory (S).

A course in that the final grade is C may be repeated for a higher grade. If the second grade is higher, the original grade will remain on the student's permanent record, and the most recent grade will be used in computing the cumulative and degree plan GPRs. A student repeating a course in that a grade of B or better has been earned will not receive grade points for the repeated course, unless the catalog states the course may be repeated for credit.

The cumulative GPR (please refer to Student Rule 10.4.3) for a graduate student is computed by using all graded graduate (600- and 700-level) and advanced undergraduate (300- and 400-level) coursework completed at Texas A&M University and eligible to be applied toward a graduate degree. Those involving grades of W-drop (W), Satisfactory (S), Unsatisfactory (U), and Q-drop (Q) shall be excluded. Any eligible coursework not applied toward a prior graduate degree, and not exceeding time limits, will be included in the student's GPR for the subsequent degree program.

## **Academic Probation & Dismissal**

Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 GPR for every semester. If a GPR is below 3.0, the student is scholastically deficient. The student must earn at least a 3.0 in the next semester and take at least 6 hours of coursework that will be listed on the degree plan. Students who are scholastically deficient for any two semesters will be removed from the Department of Educational Psychology program. The procedures for dismissal are explained in the Texas A&M University Student Rules (refer to the website [student-rules.tamu.edu](http://student-rules.tamu.edu)).

Students with a semester GPR below a 3.0 will be blocked from registering for future semesters until they have met with their faculty advisor prior to the start of the next semester of enrollment. A written and signed remediation plan will be submitted to the faculty advisor and to the Associate Department Head or Director for Graduate Studies. Failure to meet and submit a signed remediation plan is a violation of probation rules and will result in dismissal from the program at the end of the semester. Students who raise their GPR to a 3.00 within the guidelines above will be removed from academic probation; however, students cannot be removed from academic probation with any I or X grades outstanding. Any course work not applied towards a prior graduate degree, and not exceeding time limits, will be included in the student's GPR for the subsequent degree program.

Students must comply with all University, GPS, and departmental policies. In

particular, degree plan requirements must be met or the student may be removed from the program by the Department . It is the student's responsibility to secure committee chair and members, as well as all other aspects of the degree plan.

Students have three attempts to complete each course required on the degree plan. After the third and final attempt, the student may be dismissed from the program by the department.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is paramount to the success of all students within the department to ensure the integrity of our programs and degrees offered. All students within your department must comply with the Honor System Rules with regard to all aspects of community responsibility and academic misconduct. Students identified as violating academic

honesty will be reported to the Aggie Honor Code office. **Any academic misconduct confirmed by the Honor Council could result in dismissal from the Department of Educational Psychology program.**

### Plagiarism

Student Rule 20.1.2.35 The appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

<https://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/Rules-and-Procedures/Rules/Honor-System-Rules#Plagiarism>

Plagiarism is not tolerated by the SEHD Graduate Programs , and is considered an Academic Honesty Issue.

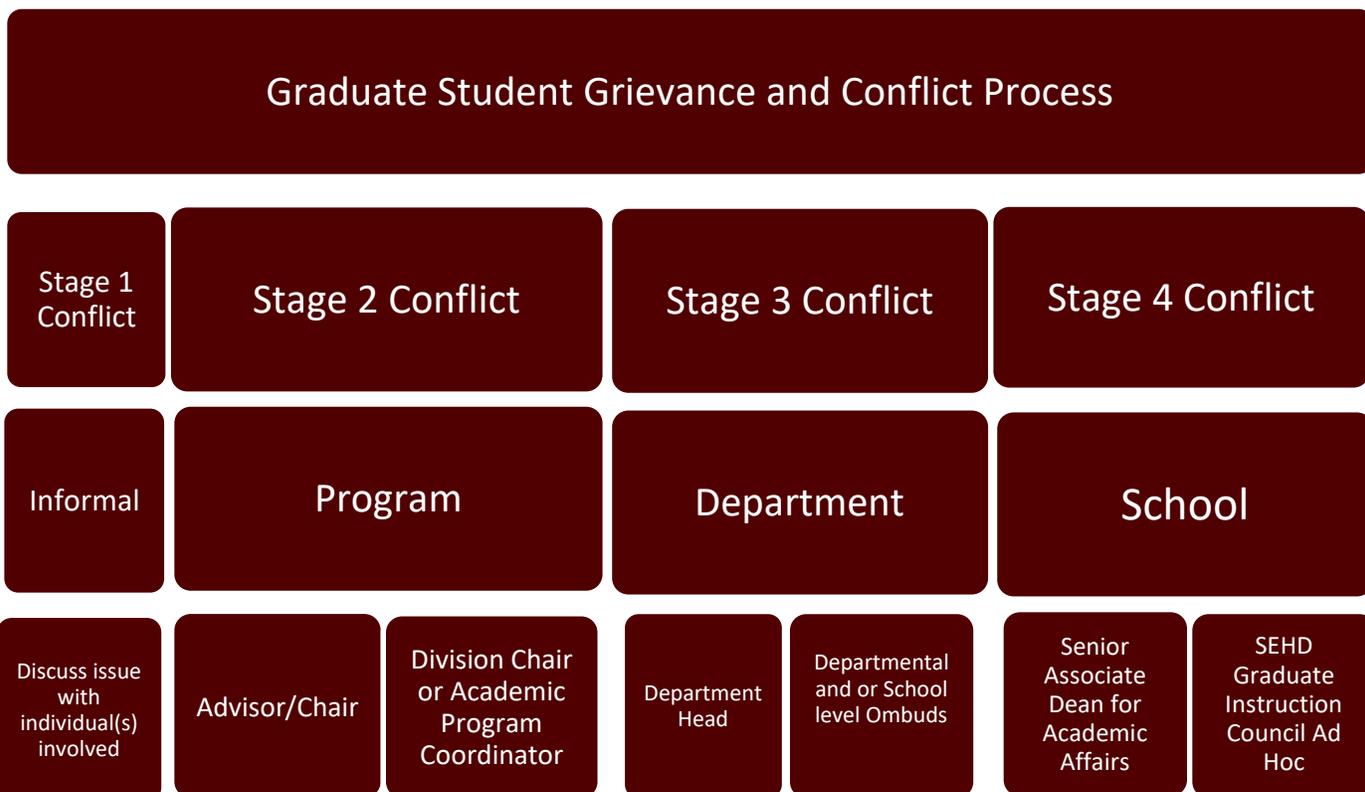
### Grievance Procedures

**Stage 1:** Grievance, issue, or conflict arises (student–faculty, student–staff, student–supervisor) and is handled informally.

**Stage 2:** Unresolved Stage 1 grievance or conflict will involve advisor/chair, division chair or academic program coordinator.

**Stage 3:** Unresolved Stage 2 grievance or conflict will involve the department head, departmental or school level Ombuds.

**Stage 4:** Unresolved Stage 3 grievance or conflict will involve Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and CEHD Graduate Instruction Council (GIC). Student may always seek assistance from the Graduate and Professional School (GPS) Ombuds.



Texas A&M University students are encouraged to seek clarification and advice regarding procedures before initiating a grievance. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the Ombuds Officer for your department.

[HOLD for link for the SEHD Grievance Process Online](#)

## **Changing Program Areas within the Department of Educational Psychology**

If a student wants to change program areas, we recommend that the student discuss the change with their current faculty advisor. Then, they will need to speak to the faculty in the other program area.

Once all parties are aware, the student will need to contact Peggy Brigman ([brigman@tamu.edu](mailto:brigman@tamu.edu)) and we will look to see if a petition is required.

## **Changing Committee Chair or Committee Members**

Graduate students are free to select committee members from faculty qualified and willing to serve based on department guidelines and university policies as documented on the degree plan. Students may change faculty membership in their degree plan with approval and signatures from current and future committee members. Students must secure willing replacement members prior to starting the process. Students are encouraged to consult with their current Committee Chair prior to considering changes in the composition of their Graduate Committee. If conflicts arise during this process, students should consult with the Associate Department Head/Director for Graduate studies. The most important thing for graduate students to remember is to consult with everyone involved in the process of formation and/or changing of the Graduate Committee prior to making any formal decisions. It is the graduate students right to change a committee member or chair or reconstitute the entire committee. Such an action must be taken prior to the final exam/final dissertation defense. A consultation with the Associate Department Head for graduate programs is strongly advised if such an action is taken.

## **APA & Reference Document Style**

In general, the Department of Educational Psychology faculty support the *Publication Manual of the American Psychology Association* (APA) 7th edition for papers written in classes, as the APA style is used for theses and dissertations. Students are encouraged to purchase or otherwise utilize such works as the *Thesis Manual* or the *Publication Manual*, both available at the University Bookstore. Information on the APA style may also be found in the Evans Library Reference section, or found on the Internet.

## Research and Data Ethics

### *Introduction*

Graduate students often work closely with faculty in the conduct of research aligned with priorities of the faculty member. Graduate students work towards dissemination of their original research at venues, conferences, and symposia appropriate to their level of development as scholars. Please refer to IRB, APA and/or GPS for questions of authorship and data ownership. All conference proposals and manuscripts must be submitted with permission of faculty members and in accordance with their role on the IRB. If you work as a GAR or GANT on a grant or for a center please check with the Director or Principal Investigator.

### *Responsible conduct of research policy*

Graduate students work with faculty on various types of projects. Typically, that work is categorized into one of two primary types. First and most common is the chair –doctoral student relationship. Once the two of you have mutually agreed to enter into this relationship, the graduate student is obligated to request permission to submit work for presentation or publication regardless of where the data are derived from or the focus of the presentation. If the data are part of the student’s own research agenda and was collected from a study designed as part of their paid assistantship, at the least, the chair/co-chair should be a co-author (subordinate to the student) on all conference proposals and manuscripts for publication. If the student is pursuing independent lines of research apart from their dissertation related research while a graduate student, and plans to present/publish this work, it should be with the chair’s approval and separate from the paid assistantship. In such cases, co-authorship with the chair may or may not be required but the deciding factor should be governed by the data ownership and who is listed as the PI on IRB application and subordinate to that guidelines from the American Psychological Association and American Educational Research Association. When in doubt no conference proposal or manuscript should be submitted without prior discussion and approval by the faculty supervisor.

The second most common research related relationship is that of Faculty Member–Graduate Assistant for Research (this can also be a chair or co-chair – Graduate Assistant for Research). If the data are or were part of a funded project or any other project under the direction of the faculty member, the data belongs to the faculty member not the student, regardless of the graduate student’s role in collecting, organizing, storing, or analyzing the data and the student has no rights to that data. Therefore, the graduate student must obtain permission to use the data even when that data are already in the graduate student’s possession. Any document (conference or grant proposals, or manuscripts) developed should have the faculty member’s name first, only be undertaken with permission of the faculty member, and only be developed under the faculty member’s direct supervision.

There are times when the faculty member might direct another author order but this should happen before the document(s) are developed. All authorship order that is different from the prescribed order should be negotiated before the development of any document. Because obtaining a doctorate is an apprenticeship endeavor, students should never undertake a document development task in which the faculty member is not fully engaged. It is not acceptable to develop a document and include a faculty member's name without the faculty member's prior consent *and* their participation in its development. The faculty member is the Principal (PI) on every IRB, thereby requiring that all activities involving data collected under that IRB only be performed with the permission and supervision of the PI.

Data use granted for a dissertation by a PI, dissertation chair, co-chair, or faculty member is for the strict use in the dissertation and the production of that product. The student is typically granted the right to use the data under the circumstances prescribed by the data owner after having met all university guidelines, rules, and policies that include IRB requirements. Once the student has completed the dissertation use of the data are revoked and any subsequent use of the requires a new approval. If a traditional dissertation is undertaken no articles can be derived without meeting IRB requirements and permission of the data owner. For students submitting the article version dissertation they, have the right to revise the articles generated after graduation for publication, make edits required for publication or required as a result of the blind review process, but under no circumstances can data be reanalyzed or new articles developed without written permission to use the data and applicable IRB approvals. Presentations derived from the dissertation should include the names of committee members (including chair/co-chairs) whose contributions merit inclusion.

The following links informed the development of this section. While these links do not form the Department of Educational Psychology's policy they may be helpful to novices in building their professional persona:

- <https://www.apa.org/research/responsible/publication/>
- <https://www.apa.org/science/leadership/students/authorship-paper.aspx>
- <http://www.aera.net/About-AERA/AERA-Rules-Policies/Professional-Ethics>
- <https://www.apa.org/science/leadership/students/authorship-paper.pdf>

***Necessary pre-requisites to dissertation, thesis, or record of study defense***

In addition to university guidelines for eligibility for defense of the final product for MS, PhD, or EdD, the student must submit to the chair before the defense the following:

1. The data used in the study or studies in an organized and systematic way. The data must be identified, in an applicable format required by chair (e.g. Excel, STATA, SPSS) on media specified by the chair. The Department of Educational Psychology recommends the student provide a flash drive that is clearly labeled with the student name, IRB Protocol number, and year of the defense. The

chair/co-chair may have additional requirements.

2. Evidence that the IRB was closed.

If the student intends to develop additional products based on the data and all permissions are secured, the student should seek IRB approval at their new institution. Failure to complete items 1 and 2, will result in the defense being cancelled and recorded as a failure. The second attempt will not be scheduled until the student has submitted the required documentation and it is satisfactory to the chair/co-chair.

## Ombuds Officer

The Ombuds Officer serves as an informal, neutral, and confidential 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, instructor, technician, 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 you do not know where to turn. The Ombuds Officer is here to help graduate students identify options for addressing concerns and will promote a fair and impartial process for all parties involved.

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 promotes the University mission of excellence in graduate education by providing a service to support and facilitate environments in which graduate students can thrive and prosper.

### *The Ombuds Officer can:*

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

### *The Ombuds Officer cannot:*

11. Advocate for the University or the student, or any particular point of view.
12. Make or change University decisions, rules, or policies.
13. Set aside a decision or supersede the authority of another University official.
14. Participate in formal grievance procedures.
15. Provide legal advice.
16. Conduct formal investigations.

### *You might want to contact the Ombuds Officer when:*

17. You need an impartial, independent, and confidential person to listen.
18. You think someone at the university has treated you unfairly.

19. You have an issue that you and others have not been able to resolve and that you would prefer not to address through formal channels.
20. You are not sure how to interpret a University policy or procedure or how it applies to your situation.
21. You feel that a University policy, procedure, or regulation has been applied unfairly, or itself is unfair or ambiguous.
22. You have a problem that requires an outside party to help facilitate communication and/or negotiate a solution.

*The Ombuds Officer hears about a wide range of graduate student experiences and concerns. Some common concerns include:*

23. Academic related issues (grade disputes, testing procedures, instructor/student misunderstandings, etc.)
24. Intellectual property
25. Interpersonal conflicts, lab politics, and problems with workplace climate
26. Professional ethics
27. Advice on how to have difficult conversations
28. Concerns about procedural fairness or due process
29. Conflicts between graduate students and their research advisors
30. Concerns about inequities in work expectations and/or funding opportunities
31. Disagreements with or misunderstandings of university policy/procedure
32. Cultural conflicts
33. Concerns about unethical or inappropriate behavior

***Ombuds Officer contact information***

EAHR	Krista Bailey	kristabailey@tamu.edu
EPSY	Krystal Simmons	ktcook@tamu.edu
KNSM	Paul Batista	pbatista@tamu.edu
TLAC	Patrick Slattery	pslattery@tamu.edu

**Ombuds Officer for Graduate and Professional School** 112 Jack K. Williams Administration Building  
1113 TAMU School Station, TX 77843-1113  
979-845-3631  
[ombuds@tamu.edu](mailto:ombuds@tamu.edu)

Please be advised that confidentiality cannot be ensured in email communication. Thus, we discourage you from sending sensitive information via email.

# Graduate Student Advising

## Degree Plans

A graduate student must file a degree plan which includes those courses to be applied toward a particular degree and formally establishes the advisory committee. Doctoral students in the Department of Educational Psychology must file their degree plan during the semester in which they are enrolled in the 36<sup>th</sup> hour, and no later than 90 days prior to the preliminary examination. Masters students in the Department of Educational Psychology must file their degree plan during the semester in which they are enrolled in their 18<sup>th</sup> hour. Peggy Brigman ([brigman@tamu.edu](mailto:brigman@tamu.edu)) will email you detailed instructions during your 18th hour on how to complete this process.

Students will file their degree plans using the [Document Processing Submission System \(DPSS\)](#). The degree plan is then circulated electronically for approval from the departmental graduate advisor, committee Chair/Co-Chairs, committee members, department head, and GPS.

## Student Petitions

Students needing to make course changes to their degree plan, or make changes to their advisory committee, will need to submit a petition to GPS. They will do this using the [Document Processing Submission System \(DPSS\)](#). The petition is circulated electronically for approval from the departmental graduate advisor, committee Chair/Co-Chairs, committee members, department head, and GPS. Petitions for Waivers/Exceptions (time limit extensions, residency waivers, etc.) are also submitted using this system.

## Google Team Drive

Each active student will receive access to their respective program's Team Drive through Google. This Drive contains all documents, resources, and information the Department of Educational Psychology students may need throughout their time as a student, including GPS forms, the student handbook, travel request forms, degree plans, and other resources, with 'how-to's' and essential information for completing official documents.

## Student Degree Evaluations in Howdy

The Degree Evaluation in Howdy lists all requirements that must be met for a successful completion of a student's program and a timely graduation. To view, students can go to their My Record section in Howdy:

1. Degree Evaluation

2. Generate New Evaluation
3. Choose your program; Generate Request
4. Detail Requirements:
  - a. After the student's degree plan is approved on all levels within the GPS system, the student will be able to see their courses required for their degree, as well as coursework that they've taken that do not directly count towards the degree.
5. Additional Information:
  - a. This section can be used to track the program non- course requirements, such as when the degree plan was submitted.