

DOCTORAL STUDENT HANDBOOK



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
CORPUS
CHRISTI

COLLEGE OF
GRADUATE
STUDIES

6300 Ocean Dr., Unit 5843 • Faculty Center 151 • Corpus Christi, TX 78412 Phone
361- 825-2174 • Fax 361- 825-2755 • Email: gradcollege@tamucc.edu

*Discover Your Passion:
Inquire, Innovate, Inspire*

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Section I. College of Graduate Studies

Message from the Dean



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

It is our mission and practice to prepare our students to enrich the public good in South Texas and beyond. As part of your terminal degree, you will demonstrate your knowledge and expertise in your chosen discipline as well as contribute to the current literature base.

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

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

Karen McCaleb, EdD
Dean, College of Graduate Studies

College of Graduate Studies Staff



Karen McCaleb, EdD Dean

karen.mccaleb@tamucc.edu

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



Marvarene Oliver, EdD

Associate Dean

marvarene.oliver@tamucc.edu

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



Jessica Romero

Software Application Developer

jessica.romero@tamucc.edu

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



Shay M. Lee

Executive Assistant

shay.lee@tamucc.edu

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



Sandra Kureska, EdD Director

sandra.kureska@tamucc.edu

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



Leticia Bazan

Director

leticia.bazan@tamucc.edu

- Oversees GROW programming and events for graduate student retention
- Collaborates with other units to develop and plan graduate academic support offerings
- Oversees communications with graduate students and faculty
- Liaises with marketing and communications office



Amanda Bocanegra

Audit & Compliance Coordinator

amanda.bocanegra@tamucc.edu

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



Linda Ramon-Barbato

Outreach & Compliance Coordinator

(email)

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

*This handbook intended to be read in conjunction with the Graduate Catalog:
<https://catalog.tamucc.edu/graduate>*

College of Graduate Studies Academic Advisors



Maria Fonseca
Graduate Academic Advisor
Education and Human Development
maria.fonseca@tamucc.edu



Shannon Vo
Graduate Academic Advisor
Science and Engineering
shannon.vo@tamucc.edu



Conny Hauf
Graduate Academic Advisor
Nursing and Health Science
conny.hauf@tamucc.edu



Theresa Garcia Ruiz
Graduate Academic Advisor
Liberal Arts
teri.ruiz@tamucc.edu

Section II. Student Resources

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

Financial Assistance

Graduate Scholarships and Assistantships

<http://gradcollege.tamucc.edu/funding>

(361) 825-2174

Office of Student Financial Assistance

<http://osfa.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2338

Admissions & Records

<http://admissions.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2624

Student Services

Business Office

<http://businessoffice.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2600

Career & Professional Development

<https://www.tamucc.edu/institutional-advancement/career-center/index.php>

(361) 825-2628

IT Help Desk

<http://it.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2692

Disability Services

<http://disabilityservices.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-5816

Office of International Education

<http://oie.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-3922

University Center & Student Activities

<http://studentactivities.tamucc.edu> or
<https://www.tamucc.edu/university-center/index.php>

(361) 825-5200 or (361) 825-2707

University Police Department

<http://police.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-5710

University Services

(Banking, Bookstore, Dining, Mail, Printing, SandDollar)

<http://universityservices.tamucc.edu/>

(361) 825-5710

Veterans Affairs Office

<https://www.tamucc.edu/admissions/military-and-veterans/center-for-vr.php>

(361) 825-2331

Academic Resources

Graduate Resources & Opportunity Workspace (GROW)

<http://grow.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2507

Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA) Writing Center

<http://casa.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-5933

Mary & Jeff Bell Library

<http://library.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2643

Office of Academic Testing

<http://testing.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2334

SAIL

<http://sail.tamucc.edu>

The Island Online (Blackboard)

<https://iol.tamucc.edu> or bb9.tamucc.edu

(361) 825-2825

Health and Wellness

Recreational Sports

<https://recsports.tamucc.edu/>

(361) 825-2454

Student Health Plan

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

(800) 452-5772

University Counseling Center

<http://counseling.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2703

University Health Center

<http://healthcenter.tamucc.edu>

(361) 825-2601

Ask-a-Nurse Line: (361) 825-5735

Graduate Resources and Opportunity Workspace (GROW)

As part of the College of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Resource and Opportunity Workspace (GROW) offers graduate students exclusive space and resources tailored specifically to their academic needs and professional development. GROW is located in the Mary and Jeff Bell Library (Room 112) and is open during library hours. To reserve the small/group study room, students may complete an online form available on the GROW website: <http://grow.tamucc.edu>.

Dissertation/Thesis Formatting Workshop

We encourage all doctoral students to attend a Dissertation/Thesis Formatting Workshop. These workshops are held at least once every semester and provide information that will simplify the process of formatting and uploading the final document into ProQuest. We strongly urge attendance early in the writing process for your study. Workshops are announced via the College of Graduate Studies newsletter and are posted on the CGS website.

Topics covered include:

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

Doctoral Orientation

Graduate orientation is offered for new graduate students every Fall and Spring semester. Preregistration is requested so that we can best plan for you. For additional information on this event, please visit <https://tamucc.edu/grad-college/orientation>. A special orientation session is available for doctoral students upon request by the department/program. Topics can be tailored to fit particular needs of the department/program.

Title IX Information

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

Section III. Academic Policies

Registration

The Office of the Registrar coordinates the course registration process for all current and incoming students. <https://tamucc.edu/academics/registrar/register-for-classes>

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

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

Enrollment Status

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

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

Total Hours

Normally, the Ph.D. and Ed.D. doctoral degrees will consist of a minimum of 90 hours beyond the bachelor’s degree for students admitted to a doctoral program directly after completion of the undergraduate degree. For students who have completed a master’s degree, a minimum of 60 hours is generally required for the doctoral degree. The majority of the doctoral degree plan coursework must be doctoral-level courses. Students should consult with program faculty and advisors; individual program requirements vary.

The DNP degree curriculum is 40 semester credit hours. Students should study their program handbook carefully for sequencing and timing of requirements.

Continuous Doctoral Enrollment and Residency

Unless on an approved leave of absence, students in terminal degree programs **must be registered continuously for a minimum of 3 semester credit hours per long semester** (fall and spring semesters) during the academic year and pay the designated tuition and fees. Individual programs may have additional credit hour requirements. Students working on research/scholarly activity toward their dissertation should enroll in the number of credit hours that reflects the extent of their study or research activity. Students who have completed their dissertation/thesis/culminating project, including successful defense and submission to CGS/ProQuest but were unable to do so by the deadline for graduation may be eligible to take only one (1) semester credit hour in their graduating semester. Students should consult with their individual colleges for additional program directions. International students may have additional registration requirements depending on their visa status and should consult with the Office of

International Education to obtain current information. Students who are not continuously enrolled and do not have an approved Leave of Absence may be required to reapply to their program. Readmission is not guaranteed.

In addition, some terminal degree programs require students to continuously register in courses for a minimum of two consecutive terms, which may include summer. The purpose of the residency is to permit professional interaction with program faculty and students. The residency provides an opportunity for sustained intellectual effort/creative output by enhancing exposure to new concepts in the discipline, to research methodologies, and to development of research competency with the outcome resulting in a dissertation containing original research or a final project. For specific residency requirements, consult the degree requirements sections of the individual terminal degree programs.

Students must be enrolled the semester in which the dissertation defense/final examination occurs and in the semester in which they graduate.

Graduate Courses

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

Maximum Course Load

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

Repetition of a Course to Raise a Grade

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

Repetition of a Course for Multiple Credit

A course may be repeated for multiple credit towards graduation only when so designated in the course description and approved by the faculty advisor.

Recency of Credit

Students admitted Fall 2015 or later

In general, all requirements for a terminal degree at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi must be completed within a **maximum** of ten years subsequent to admission to the terminal degree program. However, individual programs may require a shorter maximum time in program. The ten-year (or less) period begins with the first semester students are enrolled in the graduate program. Doctoral students, unless their individual programs specify shorter time periods, have a **maximum** of five years to advance to candidacy and a **maximum**

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of five years from candidacy to successfully defend the dissertation.

Remember to check with your program faculty or academic advisor regarding requirements about recency of credit, time parameters for advancing to candidacy, qualifying examinations, and other program specific timelines.

Students who exceed the candidacy deadline may request an extension. Candidacy extensions require strong justification in writing from the student and must include a plan for timely completion of the comprehensive examination, the proposal, and the final dissertation. The extension must be approved by the student's advisor, the department chair, the college dean, and the graduate dean. Credit that is more than ten years old will not be counted toward a terminal degree. Exceptions will only be considered for courses completed at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and will require strong justification in writing from the student requesting the exception as well as a revalidation plan. Written approval from the department chair, the dean of the college from which the degree is offered, the graduate dean, and the provost are required. See the revalidation process below.

Revalidation of Courses

Students admitted Fall 2015 or later

Courses listed on the plan of study **completed more than ten years prior to graduation** are considered dated. The department chair or program coordinator recommends revalidation of dated courses. Revalidation will verify that the student's knowledge in a specific subject area is current and documented. Options for course revalidation include written examinations, a project, paper(s), course retake, or other equally rigorous academic means appropriate to the discipline to determine the student learning outcomes have been met.

Revalidation requests must be submitted on the [Graduate Degree Plan Revalidation Request](#) and accompanied by a written justification, updated degree plan, revalidation plan, and documentation used for revalidation.

All revalidation requests and plans must be approved by the student's advisor, the department chair, the college dean, the graduate dean, and the provost. The student's faculty advisor, department chair, and college dean are responsible for determining whether the student demonstrated sufficient course knowledge necessary for successful course revalidation. Successfully revalidated courses may be included in the student's plan of study. Failure to follow all designated requirements of the revalidation agreement may result in dismissal from the program. Subsequent requests for revalidation may be considered but will be denied absent a showing of extraordinary hardship. Graduate students **will not be permitted to submit more than 12 semester hours** of their program's courses for revalidation. Courses beyond the 12-semester hour limit must be retaken. Only courses completed at this university are eligible for revalidation.

Students admitted prior to Fall 2015

For students admitted prior to Fall 2015 who have not officially changed catalogs, the following information applies. Courses listed on the plan of study **completed more than seven years**

prior to graduation are considered dated. The faculty advisor or college graduate committee recommends a revalidation plan. Revalidation will verify that the student's knowledge in a specific subject area is current. Written examinations normally are required.

Successfully revalidated courses may be included in the student's plan of study. Failure to follow all designated requirements of the revalidation agreement may result in dismissal from the program. Subsequent requests for revalidation may be considered but will be denied absent a showing of extraordinary hardship. Graduate students **will not be permitted to submit more than 12 semester hours** of the program's required courses for revalidation. Courses must have been completed at this university to be eligible for revalidation. All revalidation plans must be approved by the student's advisor, the department chair, the college dean, the graduate dean, and the provost.

Request for Leave of Absence

Students experiencing **life-changing or catastrophic events** (e.g., serious illness of a student or immediate family member, death of an immediate family member) are encouraged to consult with their department chair and request a leave of absence in writing from the College of Graduate Studies using [Form K: Request for a Leave of Absence](#). A student who is in good standing may petition for a leave of absence of no more than two full academic terms. The maximum number of leave of absence requests permitted in a program is two. A request for a leave of absence must be approved in advance by the faculty advisor, the program coordinator, the college dean, and the graduate dean. If the graduate dean approves the petition, the registration requirement will be set aside during the period of leave. Leaves of absence require the suspension of all activities associated with pursuing the degree, including use of university facilities and faculty mentoring/advice. Counting of the time to the completion of the degree ceases when a leave of absence is granted and resumes when the student re-enrolls to continue the program. Absences from the university other than approved leaves of absence, depending on the program and degree level (doctoral or master's), will result in the student being required to re-apply to the program and/or the university.

In case of extenuating circumstances, a one-semester leave of absence can be extended to a maximum of two full semesters by the student's faculty advisor and/or program coordinator and the graduate dean. A student who returns to the University at the conclusion of an approved leave of absence will not be required to submit an application for readmission. In no case will a leave of absence be extended for more than one academic year. International student should visit with an advisor in the Office of International Education to find out how a leave of absence may affect their stay or entry into the U.S.

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

Transfer of Credit

In addition to general transfer of credit requirements, specific requirements must be met for courses that may transfer for terminal degree credit. The following rules apply to these courses, with the exception of degrees offered jointly.

- Credit used for a degree at another institution cannot be applied to a graduate degree at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi.
- Transferred graduate credit must have been earned at a regionally accredited institution.
- The student must have earned a grade of B or better in the transfer course work. Courses lacking letter grades (e.g., courses graded pass/no pass, credit/no credit, or satisfactory/unsatisfactory) will not be accepted as transfer credit.
- The coursework must be less than 10 years old at the time the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi degree is awarded.
- The student must have been enrolled as a terminal degree student when the coursework was completed.
- The maximum amount of transfer credit from another doctoral degree program accepted toward the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi degree is one-fourth of the credit hours required for the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi degree.

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

Grade Point Average

In order to remain in good standing as well as maintain eligibility for university funding such as scholarships and assistantships, the University requires students to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) for **all graduate work undertaken and in the program of study**. In addition, students must earn a grade of S, IP, or CR on all coursework that does not affect GPA. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi uses a 4.0 scale for calculations of GPA. Students should ensure they are knowledgeable about both overall GPA required for good standing as well as GPA required in the program in which they are enrolled. A higher GPA may be required by some programs. In such cases, the higher standard will be used.

Only grades earned at this University will be used to calculate the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi grade point average as used in determination of eligibility for graduation.

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

Scholastic Probation

Placement on Scholastic Probation

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

Removal from Scholastic Probation

A student must achieve a cumulative 3.0 GPA (or higher GPA if required by the program) within completion of the next nine (9) semester credit hours to be removed from scholastic probation if

scholastic probation was due to an unsatisfactory GPA. The courses included in the nine (9) semester hours must be approved by the program faculty for degree-seeking students.

A student who has received two grades of U or NC may be removed from scholastic probation after one (1) year if the student achieves a cumulative 3.0 GPA (or higher if required by program) and receives grades of S or CR.

- A student will not be placed on scholastic probation in a graduating semester if the cumulative GPA is 3.00 or higher and there are no more than two Cs for courses on the degree plan.
- A student who is removed from scholastic probation is not eligible for placement on scholastic probation a second time.

Enforced Withdrawal

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

- the student's grade point average for **any subsequent term** or semester falls **below 3.0**, or
- the student receives a third grade of U, NC, or NP, or
- other scholastic requirements are not met, or
- the student does not achieve the required cumulative GPA (3.0 or higher if required by the program) within completion of nine (9) semester hours.
- In addition, a student may be placed on enforced withdrawal if they do not meet specific program requirements as stated in their conditional enrollment agreement.

A student on enforced withdrawal may not enroll in any graduate program for a minimum of 12 consecutive months.

Reinstatement

In order to be reinstated following a period of enforced withdrawal, a student **must reapply**, meet current requirements for degree-seeking students, and be accepted by the University and the program to enroll for graduate studies. The application may be submitted prior to the requested enrollment date. Students should be aware that the period of enforced withdrawal does not alter the 10-year time period for completion of the doctoral degree program.

Colleges or programs may have additional procedures or requirements related to re-enrollment following enforced withdrawal or unapproved absences. Some colleges or programs may not permit reinstatement from enforced withdrawal. Please see the appropriate college or program section of the catalog for specific requirements.

Texas 99-Hour Rule

The Texas State Legislature has enacted a rule that provides that students at all state universities with over 99 doctoral hours may be subject to the payment of nonresident tuition. A student will generally be able to study at A&M-Corpus Christi full-time for five complete academic years, including summers, before being affected by the 99-hour rule. For students staying beyond five years, in a number of cases there is still the possibility of a programmatic or individual exemption from the rule. For more information, contact the coordinator of your graduate program.

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Graduate Academic Standing Reassessment Policy

A graduate student who has previously attended Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and whose attendance has been interrupted for a period of at least twelve consecutive months may qualify for academic standing reassessment provided all specific criteria are met and the interruption was not for conduct issues or academic misconduct. A graduate student may apply to have up to two consecutive semesters of the graduate credits and grades earned at TAMU-CC prior to the separation removed from their grade point average.

The request for academic standing reassessment may be made upon application or request to re-enter the university. Students are encouraged to apply for academic standing reassessment prior to re-entry. Requests for reassessment may be made up to a year following re-entry. The approval of a request for academic standing reassessment requires signatures of the student's prospective graduate program coordinator, the prospective academic college dean, and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

A graduate student wishing to re-enter TAMU-CC and seeking academic standing reassessment should submit the following documentation to the graduate program coordinator of the program they wish to (re)-enter:

- An academic standing reassessment request form indicating the semester(s) for which reassessment is requested (Maximum of two consecutive semesters);
- A personal statement describing the extenuating circumstances that contributed to the prior academic situation, explaining how present circumstances are different, and detailing steps that will be taken to ensure success; and
- A letter of support from a graduate faculty member within the student's proposed program of study.

The graduate student's prospective program coordinator will forward the request, if approved, and accompanying material to the academic college dean. If the academic dean approves, the signed form and accompanying material will be sent to the Dean of the Graduate College. The Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will approve or disapprove the request.

Academic reassessment may be granted only one time, is irreversible, and includes all credits earned during the semester(s) for which it is requested. The student's grades for the semester(s) will remain on the transcript; however, they will not be factored into the GPA. A transcript notation of "academic standing reassessment granted" and the effective date will be added.

Academic standing reassessment cannot be granted for courses that have been applied to an awarded degree or certificate. Students should be aware that other universities to which a student may later apply may not consider the reassessment in how they determine GPA or make determinations about other entry requirements.

Doctor of Nursing Practice Committee

In accordance with the timeline for the program, DNP students should set up their doctoral project committees and submit [FORM C: Doctoral Dissertation/Project Advisory Committee Appointment Form](#). DNP students should also refer to the [DNP Student Handbook](#) available on the CONHS website (<http://conhs.tamucc.edu/current-students/>) for additional information regarding the DNP committee. *All members of the committee must attend both the proposal and the defense for the project and must complete relevant documents related thereto.*

The Ph.D./Ed.D. Doctoral Committee

As a first step, students should choose a doctoral committee chair from among the regular graduate faculty members of the doctoral program. The remainder of the committee will be selected by the student in consultation with the committee chair. All Ph.D. and Ed.D. doctoral committees will be composed of a minimum of four Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi graduate faculty members, including the doctoral committee chair, two additional TAMU-CC graduate faculty members (or members of the participating faculty for interdisciplinary degree programs), and a graduate faculty representative (GFR) from a different discipline who is selected by the graduate dean. The graduate dean will officially appoint the doctoral committee after submission of [FORM C: Doctoral Dissertation/Project Advisory Committee Appointment Form](#). Normally, the committee chair and committee members will be faculty members from the program offering the degree. Persons with unique and appropriate expertise may be appointed to the dissertation committee upon approval of the graduate dean for the dissertation portion of the doctoral program. Graduate faculty status will be required; thus, the department should begin the nomination process for the individual as soon as possible if the individual does not hold that status.

Doctoral committee members are required to participate in proposal hearings and dissertation defense/final examinations and are required to sign relevant documents. In some programs, all doctoral committee members representing the student's discipline may be required to review and approve degree plans and participate in qualifying examinations in addition to the dissertation proposal hearing and defense. Academic colleges may have additional requirements for committee members with the exception of the Graduate Faculty Representative.

The Graduate Faculty Representative

The Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) helps ensure that the quality of the graduate degree is appropriate for Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and that students receive fair and reasonable treatment in their graduate experience. The graduate faculty representative is not required to attend or evaluate materials related to the comprehensive examination. However, the GFR is required to participate in the proposal hearing and dissertation defense/final examination.

Degree Plans

All students will develop a degree plan that is consistent with the requirements of the program by the time a student has completed half of the coursework in the program. Degree plan development will be documented on the student's online DegreePlanner by the CGS Academic Advisor. Degree plans must be consistent with the requirements of the program. Exceptions to the degree plan must first be approved by the doctoral committee chair and college dean. The signed exceptions document should then be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies for approval by the graduate dean.

Changes in the degree plan must be approved by the Doctoral Committee Chair, the College Dean, and the Graduate Dean using [Form I: Graduate Degree Plan Exceptions Form](#)

Ph.D./Ed.D./DNP Program Forms

Please use the checklist on the next page for a timely submission of required forms. These can be found at <https://tamucc.edu/grad-college/forms>. Students will work with their doctoral advisors to initiate and submit forms at appropriate times during their degree process. The College of Graduate Studies will route forms for electronic signatures.

Ph.D./Ed.D./DNP Checklist

Please use the checklist below for a timely submission of requirements.
Forms can be found at <https://tamucc.edu/grad-college/forms>
Important dates: <https://tamucc.edu/grad-college/current-students/doctoral-dates.php>

		EHD	SCI, EN	NHS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form A – Degree Plan (signed)	*	*	*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form B – Comprehensive Examination and Advancement to Candidacy Report	*	*	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form C – Doctoral Dissertation/Project Advisory Committee Appointment	*	*	*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form D – Doctoral Dissertation/Project Proposal Hearing Request Form	2 weeks prior to anticipated proposal date		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form E – Agreement to schedule the Dissertation/Project Defense & Final Examination <i>The dissertation/project must be submitted to committee at least two weeks prior to defense.</i>	8 weeks prior to graduation		
<input type="checkbox"/>	**Form F – Report: Dissertation/Project Oral Defense and Document	4 weeks prior to graduation	2 weeks prior to graduation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form G – Graduate Faculty Representative Report (circulated and monitored by CGS)	N/A		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form H – Doctoral/Dissertation Committee Member Change Request	As Needed		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form I – Graduate Degree Plan Exceptions Form	As Needed		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form J – Graduate Degree Plan Revalidation Request	As Needed		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Form K – Request for a Leave of Absence	As Needed		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Final Version of Dissertation/Project Submitted to ProQuest https://www.etsdadmin.com/main/home?siteId=246 Note: Templates for all front matter and style of dissertation/project may be found at: https://www.tamucc.edu/grad-college/current-students/dissertation-thesis.php	4 weeks prior to graduation	3 weeks prior to graduation	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Survey of Earned Doctorates (Ph.D. only): https://sed-ncses.org/login.aspx Email a copy of the completion certificate to gradcollege@tamucc.edu	4 weeks prior to graduation (Ph.D. students only)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dissertation Service Charge: https://tamucc.edu/grad-college/current-students/doctoral-students.php	4 weeks prior to graduation		

**Requirements may vary depending on the program. Check program and academic college requirements.*

***Form F is used to report the outcome of the defense and has a different due date than the last day to defend.*

Amended 08/2022

*This handbook intended to be read in conjunction with the Graduate Catalog:
<https://catalog.tamucc.edu/graduate>*

DNP Project Defense/Final Examination

The DNP Comprehensive examination is administered in NURS-6308 as the final examination for the course. DNP students may not begin conducting their DNP project or advance to the next course without successfully completing this examination.

The DNP project defense will cover the project only. More than one dissenting vote in the defense will constitute failure. The DNP project defense must be scheduled for a minimum of four weeks prior to graduation.

All committee members, including the GFR, will be provided a completed copy of the project document at least two (2) weeks before the defense. The defense must be scheduled using Form E (see table above). Submission of Form E indicates preliminary acceptance of the project and should not be signed if committee members determine that further study or major changes are required.

Presentation/defense of the DNP project is unique to the DNP program. Students should refer to the DNP Handbook for specific information regarding the defense process.

Subsequent to the project defense, and only after all changes to the project manuscript requested by the committee have been made, the student will submit an electronic copy of the DNP Project paper to ProQuest/UMI as a single PDF file. Submission must be made no later than three (3) weeks prior to graduation.

Dissertation Defense/Final Examination

The comprehensive examination must be passed and courses in the plan of study completed with a GPA of 3.0 or greater before the dissertation defense/final examination will be scheduled. The dissertation defense/final examination must cover the dissertation but need not be limited thereto. More than one dissenting vote in the comprehensive examination or final examination (which includes the dissertation defense) will constitute failure. The dissertation defense must be held a minimum of six weeks prior to graduation.

All committee members, including the GFR, will be provided a completed copy of the dissertation at least two (2) weeks before the defense of dissertation and final examination. The defense must be scheduled using Form E (see table above). Submission of Form E indicates preliminary acceptance of the dissertation or project. Form E should not be signed if major changes are required or if committee members determine that further study is required.

There are some common elements as well as variations across the Ph.D./Ed.D. programs related to both the presentation of the dissertation and the final examination. Please see individual doctoral program handbooks for more specificity regarding each program's requirements.

Subsequent to the dissertation defense/final examination, and only after all changes to the dissertation manuscript requested by the committee have been made, the student will submit an electronic copy of the dissertation, no later than four (4) weeks prior to graduation, to ProQuest/UMI as a single PDF file.

Programs vary with regards to how many research/dissertation hours are required and how those hours are represented in the degree plan. Students not completing all requirements of the final dissertation defense by the end of semester, including submission of an approved final draft by published deadlines, may receive a grade of In Progress (IP). An IP is a permanent notation and requires the student to register

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for the same course in the subsequent semester, paying all appropriate tuition and fees, to receive a final grade for the course. Both instructors and students should be aware that a grade other than IP in dissertation research courses sufficient to meet program requirements is required for graduation.

Section IV. Financial Assistance

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

Financial Aid

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

Scholarships

Eligibility

Graduate students who wish to apply for a graduate scholarship can apply via the [Graduate Scholarships](#) web page.

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

Acceptance in a graduate degree or certificate-seeking program

- Enrollment in at least six (6) graduate student credit hours in a regular semester or three (3) graduate student credit hours during the combined summer terms for summer scholarships. Please note: individual scholarships or colleges (e.g., College of Science) may require full-time enrollment (9 graduate SCH).
- A 3.0 GPA minimum (graduate GPA for returning students or last 60 SCH for new students)

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

Graduate Assistantships

A limited number of graduate assistantships are available through the individual colleges and other academic units on campus. Students are encouraged to inquire with the coordinator of their graduate programs regarding assistantship availability. Graduate students interested in becoming Teaching Assistants in the First-Year Seminar Program should contact the Director of the University Core Curriculum Program for information.

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

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

Out-Of-State Tuition Waivers

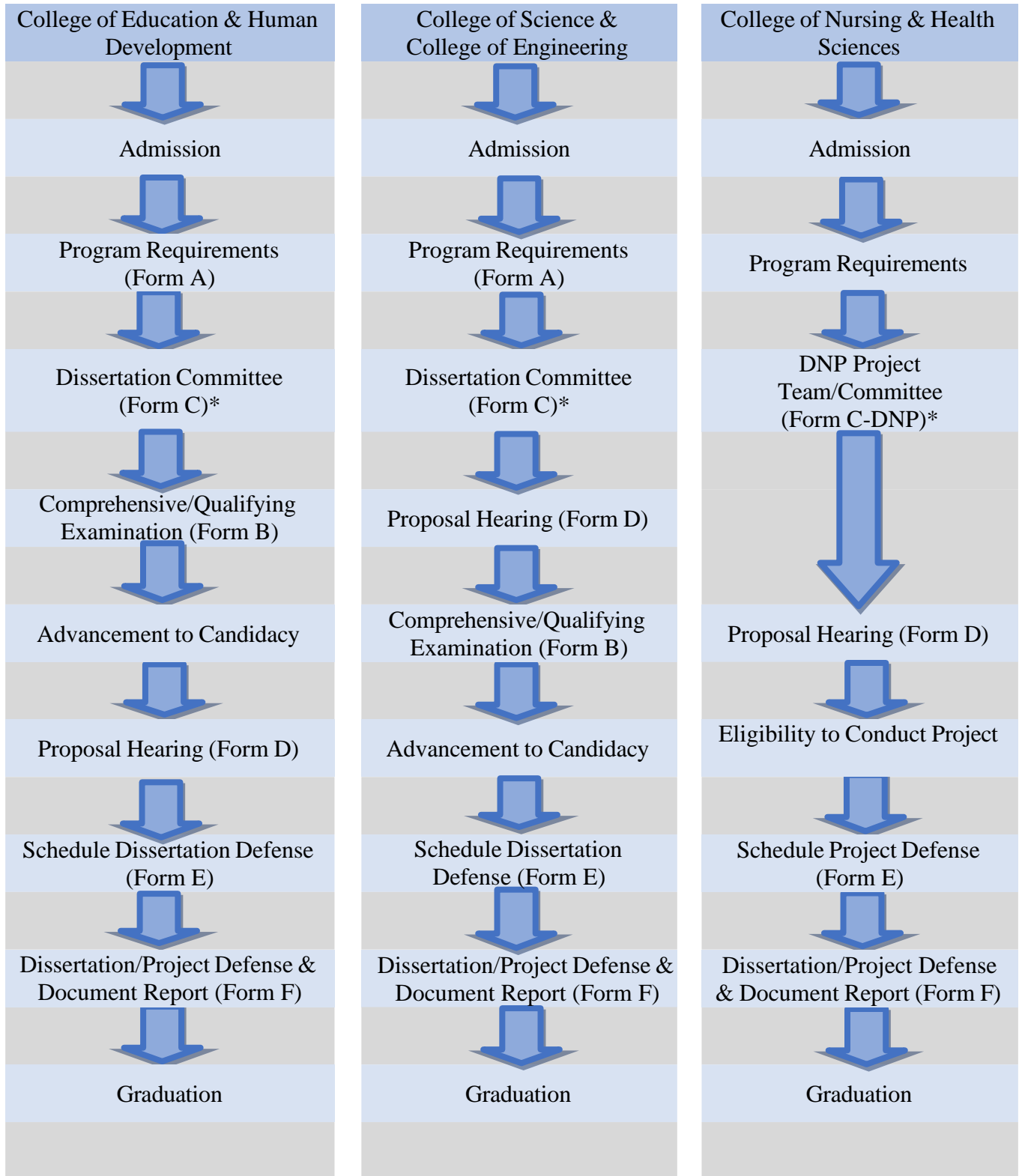
Non-resident students receiving a 50% FTE graduate assistantship, as well as their spouse and children, will receive **in-state tuition and fees** at the rate charged to Texas residents **for the semester in which they hold the assistantship appointment**. To receive in-state tuition rates, students must maintain a graduate course load of at least six (6) hours during long semesters or three (3) hours during the summer session. Individual programs/departments/colleges may have additional qualification requirements (e.g., assistantships funded by the College of Graduate Studies and College of Science and Engineering require nine [9] SCH graduate enrollment during long semesters). Out-of-state tuition waivers will be rescinded if students register for too few hours or are not working in the qualifying position by the 12th class day of long semesters and the 4th class day of summer semesters.

Students wishing to receive in-state tuition must complete the [GA/GR/GAR Assistant Waiver Form](#) and obtain required signatures. Students will also need their Notice of Appointment Letter (NOA). Upload the documents to <https://tamucc.edu/grad-college/forms/ta-ra-waiver-request.php>

The Graduate Teaching/Research/Administrative Research Assistant Waiver Form must be completed each semester.

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

Section V. Steps to Graduation



*This handbook intended to be read in conjunction with the Graduate Catalog:
<https://catalog.tamucc.edu/graduate>*

Graduation Deadlines

Students must submit a completed application for graduation online through their S.A.I.L account **by the posted deadline**. Graduation deadlines and costs are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Graduation application fees are non-refundable.

Commencement

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

Regalia

Graduates must wear official regalia to the commencement ceremony. These items can be rented or purchased at the Campus Bookstore. For more information, please contact the [campus bookstore](#). Students are encouraged to consult with their faculty regarding hood trim colors as discipline-specific colors recommended through the bookstore may not reflect what is used here.

Option	Processing/Delivery
Rental	Must be ordered at the bookstore. May take up to 4 weeks for delivery. <i>(Rental is recommended for those who do not intend to work in academia.)</i>
Purchase	Must be ordered at the bookstore. Takes approximately 4-6 weeks for delivery.

Please order as early as possible to ensure your regalia arrives on time. Delays can and do happen and are not controlled by the bookstore.

Diploma

Diplomas will be made available to the students once an audit has confirmed completion of all requirements. This process may take a few weeks after graduation. Once complete, diplomas may be picked up or are mailed by the Office of the Registrar. For more information, contact 361-825-2624; press option 2 to be connected. Doctoral graduates will receive a diploma tube at commencement. In the tube will be a congratulatory letter from the University President. Additionally, there will also be a congratulatory letter from the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, with instructions on the availability timeframe and process for obtaining transcripts and the diploma.

Graduation Cost Estimate Worksheet

Fee	Type
\$100	Dissertation Service Charge
\$48	One Institutional Dissertation Copy
\$56	Personal/Program Required Dissertation Copies (Optional)
\$95	Open Access Fee (optional)
\$55	Copyright Fee (optional)
\$150 and up	Regalia – Rental
\$800 - 1200	Regalia – Purchase
	Graduation Invitations (optional)
	Miscellaneous
Starts at \$298	ESTIMATED REQUIRED TOTAL

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Section VI. Dissertation Guidelines

The following guidelines were developed to help doctoral candidates and their committee members to prepare the dissertation manuscript. The dissertation should be presented in a scholarly, well-integrated, and properly documented manner and should report the original work done by the student under the supervision of the advisory committee.

Research Compliance

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

Plagiarism Check for Dissertations

Plagiarism is not tolerated at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. It is the doctoral committee chair's responsibility to electronically check for plagiarism. All dissertations must be checked through Turnitin or an instrument of equivalent rigor as approved by the relevant college prior to the defense. The College of Graduate Studies requires that the student's committee chair certify that the dissertation has been checked for plagiarism. [FORM E: Agreement to Schedule the Dissertation/Project Defense & Final Examination](#) must be used to transmit the certification to the College of Graduate Studies.

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

Dissertation/Project Formatting Guidelines

The dissertation/project must conform to academic and institutional standards. Guidelines include requirements regarding margins, fonts, spacing, and other elements of the document. In addition to face-to-face and online formatting workshops, the College of Graduate Studies provides [dissertation formatting guidelines and templates](#) online. *Please be aware that multiple issues with formatting will likely result in multiple returns for correction.*

Acceptable formats for the *body* of the dissertation may vary by program area; however, if there is disagreement between the discipline and the TAMU-CC guidelines and templates the TAMU-CC guidelines must be followed.

It is critical that all candidates consult the formatting guidelines and templates available on the [Current Students](#) page of the CGS website. Close attention to the templates and guidelines will streamline the ProQuest submission process.

Deadlines

To maintain eligibility to graduate in a given semester, students must meet the scheduled deadline

for submittal of (1) the signed Preliminary Agreement to Schedule the Dissertation Defense/ Final Examination, (2) the Dissertation Defense & Written Dissertation Report, and (3) the dissertation in final form as a PDF file. This date, along with other dates of interest, is posted on the College of Graduate Studies [important dates webpage](#). There are no exceptions for late submittals. Students submitting after deadline day cannot graduate until the following semester and will be required to enroll in dissertation hours in the semester of graduation.

Final Steps to Submitting Your Dissertation

After your **Dissertation Defense & Written Dissertation Report** (Form F) is submitted and all requested content changes from your committee have been made, you can submit your dissertation electronically. Before you begin the submission steps, please be sure you have the following:

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

Submission Guidelines

Go to <http://www.etdadmin.com/tamucc> to create an account or login using an existing account. When signed into the account, a list of submission steps will be visible on the left-hand side of the computer screen. These steps will serve as a guide through the submission process. A checkmark will appear once each step is completed.

Students and faculty should be aware that multiple revisions are common. The templates provide some information about common mistakes. Where such errors occur, the dissertation/project will be returned to the student with a list of needed changes. The original document should be corrected and resubmitted as a new document. All original submittal deadlines must be met during the re-submittal process in order to graduate that semester. Unacceptable manuscripts returned to the student after deadline day may not be accepted for graduation in that semester.

Dissertation Review

The following are approximate turn-around times to be expected for feedback and requests for revisions after the dissertation has been submitted to ProQuest/UMI. Documents are reviewed in the order received. The student will receive requests for revisions from the College of Graduate Studies via email through ProQuest/UMI. Candidates are encouraged to make corrections within the recommended timeframe provided and to attend to all noted issues. Timing is especially important since *more than one round of corrections is likely*.

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

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

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

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

Publication of your Research; Copyright Issues

[Reference: TAMU Thesis-Dissertation Manual (2021), [https://grad.tamu.edu/getmedia/15a29fe1-89ab-4262-8898-f15eb0b69b83/Thesis-Dissertation-Manual-\(April-2021\)_1.pdf](https://grad.tamu.edu/getmedia/15a29fe1-89ab-4262-8898-f15eb0b69b83/Thesis-Dissertation-Manual-(April-2021)_1.pdf) (pgs. 4-6)]

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

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

Graduate students may publish material that will later be used as part of the dissertation (TAMU-CC policy). However, students should be aware of the publishing agreement they sign when a journal accepts an article for publication (journal policies). At that time, the student/lead author typically transfers copyright to the journal as publisher, and you/he/she no longer possess the right to use this material without permission. **However, the publishing agreement form may be modified before it is signed so that the student retains the right to include the material in the dissertation.** The publisher would still have the rights it needs to print, distribute, and sell the work. When negotiating with the publisher, remember to inform them that the dissertation will be available worldwide through the Internet (dissertations will be sent to ProQuest/UMI and can be purchased through them).

If you have **not** retained the right to use your previously published material in the dissertation, you must get permission from the copyright holder to include it. If the journal retains the right to an article and does not allow its exact reproduction in your dissertation, we recommend that you contact them to ascertain whether a revised or reworded chapter is acceptable.

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

Students who plan to publish dissertation material in future articles need to investigate whether the journal of choice will publish material already made available to the public and consider this when choosing an option for making the dissertation available after graduation. You have the option to restrict full-text access to your dissertation for a period of time before releasing it to the Internet to allow time to publish in journals whose policy is to be first publisher. Students who choose to restrict access during the ProQuest process should understand that while TAMU-CC will honor the initial ProQuest restriction, any extensions awarded by ProQuest do not govern TAMU-CC's determinations regarding extension. A separate request for extension must be made.

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

If the manuscript contains any material (figures, tables, text, etc.) taken from copyrighted sources, the student has the responsibility to determine if permission from the copyright holder is needed. The student should consider several factors when utilizing material from other sources, including whether or not the material is in the public domain or can be used under the provisions of Fair Use. Regardless of whether or not permission is required, proper credit must be given in the text. For material that requires permission, acknowledgment should be included in the text, per the instruction of the copyright holder. For additional information regarding copyright and fair use, refer to the [Copyright and Fair Use](#) document available at the TAMU-CC library website.

To summarize, when using published material:

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

Binding

Dissertation binding will be handled through the ProQuest/UMI ETD Administrator. During the submission process, an opportunity to order personal copies, along with the required University copy for the library will be presented.

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

- Brilliant white 32 lb. paper stock: acid-free and archival-grade, this photographic-quality stock is brighter and more opaque for better ink contrast and readability.
- Any color graphics included in the digital copy of the dissertation received by ProQuest/UMI can now be reproduced in color at no extra charge. Photographs, charts, and other illustrations are printed as faithfully as they were provided electronically.
- Durable hardbound copies are 8½"x11" with black covers made from 2.5 mm-thick board covered in washable linen. Titles are embossed in gold foil on the spine. Handmade thread-sewn bindings and generous margins enable volumes to be opened flat.
- Manuscript copies are shipped approximately **8 to 12 weeks** after submission of the manuscript to the address provided by the student.

Distribution

Distribution Copies (1)	Copies for distribution will be delivered directly to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi College of Graduate Studies and then delivered to CGS to the Mary and Jeff Bell Library.
Personal Bound Copies	All personal copies will be delivered to the shipping address provided during the electronic submission process.

Fees

Fee Type	Required	Amount	Payment Methods
Distribution Copies (1)	Yes	\$48	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
Personal Bound Copies	Optional	Varies by type and amount ordered	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
Dissertation Service Fee (TAMU-CC)	Yes	\$100	Pay online at https://tpg.tamucc.edu/C20207_ustores/web/product_detail.jsp?PRODUCTID=210
Copyright Fee	Optional	\$55	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
Open Access Publishing	Optional	\$95	Pay online (ProQuest) during submission process.
*Note: Tax may be added to the total based on your shipping address.			