

## Academic Information and Regulations

### General Academic Information

#### *Courses and Credits*

##### **Transfer of Credit**

Graduate credit earned at another accredited institution, not exceeding six (6) semester hours, may be transferred and applied toward the master's or the doctorate degree at Prairie View A&M University. Only courses with a grade of "B" or better may be transferred. An "A" grade from another institution or earned in extension may not be used to validate a grade of "C" earned at Prairie View A&M University. An official transcript denoting the transfer course(s), year, and grade received must be on file in the Office of the Registrar before acceptance of transfer credit is official.

This institution will not consider credits from other institutions to meet requirements for a graduate degree unless the institution offering the courses will allow these credits to be applied toward the requirements of an advanced degree on its own campus. Under no circumstances will transfer course work be considered that will be more than six (6) years old at the time the degree is awarded.

##### **Grading System**

Course work for graduate students is reported as: "A" (95-100); "B" (85-94); "C" (75-84); "D" (65-74); "P" (Passing); "I" (Incomplete); "W" (Withdrawn).

##### **Grade Reports**

Final grade reports are mailed to the student's home address once in each fall and spring semester, and once during the summer. Mid-term grades are issued to students. Midterm grades are progress reports and are not recorded on the student's permanent record. Final grades are issued and recorded on the student's permanent record at the close of each semester and summer term. If an error in the recording of grades is suspected, the student should report this immediately to the instructor, department head, or college dean for verification or correction.

##### **Correction or Change of Grade**

Any change or correction of a grade recorded for a student must be made within the semester or term immediately following the term for which the grade was recorded.

##### **Grade Point Average**

The grade point average (GPA) is determined by adding all grade points earned during a grading period and dividing that total by the total credit hours attempted during the period. Withdrawal without record (W), and incomplete (I) will not be included among grades used to compute grade point averages. If a course is repeated, the official grade is the last grade earned at Prairie View A&M University. Transfer courses are not used in GPA calculations at Prairie View A&M University.

##### **Incomplete "I" Grade**

The grade of "I", incomplete, is assigned to students who are unable to complete a course due to circumstances beyond their control. The exception to this University policy is the awarding of "I", incomplete, for thesis, internship, practicum, project, or dissertation, provided the student remains enrolled and makes satisfactory progress as certified by the committee chair, dean, and director/coordinator of graduate programs. For lecture, seminar, independent study, and similar organized instruction courses, the student must complete the work necessary to remove the grade of "I" in one calendar year from the semester in which the "I" was awarded. All grades of "I" in courses that are included in the requirements for the degree must be replaced with a grade acceptable in the program. Students are not to re-enroll in a course for which a grade of "I" has been recorded.

##### **Course Load**

The following limitations on course load are in effect:

1. During a regular session, a graduate student may not enroll in more than 15 hours.
2. During a five- or six-week summer session, a graduate student may not enroll in more than six semester hours, except when one course is a four-hour course, in which case the student may enroll in seven hours. The total credit hours earned for the two summer sessions may not exceed fourteen.
3. A graduate student may not enroll in more than three semester credit hours during a three-week summer session.
4. A graduate student enrolled in a three-week session may not enroll in more than one three-hour course in the six week session being conducted concurrently.
5. This university defines full time enrollment for a graduate student as a minimum of 9 semester credit hours during the regular terms and a minimum of 4 semester credit hours during each summer term.

### **Scheduling of Courses**

In case a section is dropped because of insufficient enrollment, a student may add other courses approved by his/her advisor.

### **Independent Study Courses**

Independent study courses are permitted on a highly selective need basis. Any student enrolling in an independent study course must have the prior approval of the supervising faculty member, the Department Head in which the course is to be taken, Dean of the College and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. No more than 6 such credit hours may be counted toward a degree.

### **Course Auditing**

When space is available and the consent of the Dean of the College and the instructor is given, any person may audit a course by paying the regular tuition and fees. Students sixty-five years of age or older may audit a course by registering with the Registrar's Office but without the payment of fees.

Credit is not given for any audit course. Students wishing to audit may register only after late registration. Currently enrolled students shall have first priority for auditing space. A student who audits a course may not change registration during the semester to take the course for credit.

### **Ordering Transcripts**

A transcript is the record of an individual's course work at the University. All requests for transcripts must be in writing and the requester's signature must appear on the request letter, as well as on the Transcript Request Form. The first transcript issued is free. Subsequent transcripts are \$5.00 each and the University must be paid prior to the release of the transcript. Transcripts will be ready for pick-up or will be mailed within 3-5 weekdays from the date the request was received, except during peak periods when the transcript will be ready for pick-up or will be mailed within 10 weekdays.

Completed Transcript Request Form's, letters of requests, and any checks or money orders accompanying request should be sent to the following address:

Office of the Registrar  
Prairie View A&M University  
P.O. Box 3089  
Prairie View, TX 77446

Without the written consent of the student the University will not release a transcript except when directed by a court ordered subpoena.

### ***Academic Advising, Registration, and Degree Plans***

Graduate students are assigned to one or more faculty advisors during the first semester in which they are enrolled at the university. New students are required to meet with an advisor before enrolling in classes for the purpose of planning and obtaining approval of plans of study. Continuing students should confer with their faculty advisor at least once per semester to discuss objectives, course selection and sequencing, and

other degree/program related matters. Consultation on all academic concerns should begin with the major advisor.

### **Class Schedule**

An official class schedule, prepared each semester by the University, includes the registration schedule, procedures for registration, fees, classes offered by hours and instructors, and other pertinent registration information. The schedule is available several weeks in advance of registration each semester and may be obtained from the Office of the University Registrar.

### **Tentative Degree Plans**

The student should file a degree plan within the first semester of matriculation in the university. Degree plan forms may be obtained from the major advisor. The major advisor, department head, dean of the college and graduate dean review and approve the degree plan.

### **Concurrent Study for Two Different Degrees**

A student pursuing a graduate degree program at Prairie View A&M University may not simultaneously enroll and complete course work for the purpose of meeting requirements for any other degree offered by this institution unless the student is pursuing a specifically designed and approved dual degree program. Each degree must be completed in its entirety before work may be taken for the purpose of meeting requirements for a new degree. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Dean of the Graduate School.

### ***Grading/Class Related Appeals***

Generally, student complaints about grades or other class related performance assessments can be addressed by the instructor of record and the student. When that cannot be achieved, the student may have his/her complaint addressed by the procedure outlined below. Faculty, other classroom professionals, and students' rights are to be protected and their human dignity respected. Grading and other class related complaints are to be filed initially within thirty days following the alleged precipitating action on which the complaint is based. Except where extenuating circumstances render it unreasonable, the outcome of a complaint that reaches the level of department/division head (exception Dean of Architecture and of Nursing) will be reviewed within thirty days and a written notification of outcome will be provided to the student. Where a complaint must be reviewed at each level, the entire process should be completed within ninety days of receipt of the complaint.

In those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by following the procedure listed and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint:

1. The student should meet with the instructor of record, preferably during his/her office hours, to present the grievance and any supporting documentation that the grade or outcome of a class related concern should have been different.
2. If the instructor is no longer at the university or if the subject of the grievance arises when faculty are not expected to be on duty for a week or more, the student should report to his or her advisor or the absent faculty member's immediate supervisor (department head, division head, or dean if in School of Architecture or College of Nursing).
3. If the issue is not resolved at the faculty level and the student wishes to pursue the issue beyond the instructor, he/she should meet with his/her academic advisor even if the grade or other issue is not in the department, division, school, or college in which the student's class is being offered. The advisor will intervene appropriately, but if unable to negotiate an agreement between the student and his/her instructor, will direct the student to follow each level of the appeals procedures items 4 through 10 below.
4. If no agreement can be reached following discussion among the advisor, the student, and the instructor, the student should write a letter, or complete a published form used for this purpose and submit it to the instructor's immediate supervisor. In the School of Architecture; or School of Nursing the Dean;

in all other colleges the immediate supervisor of faculty, teaching assistants, laboratory assistants and other classroom professionals is the department or division head. The letter or form should present the grievance, the rationale for it, and the remedy sought. The letter or form should be sent at least one week prior to the student's scheduled appointment to meet with the instructor's immediate supervisor.

5. If the instructor's immediate supervisor cannot resolve the issue to the student's satisfaction and the student wishes to pursue the matter, the instructor's immediate supervisor will refer the matter to a three to five person faculty appeals panel, one of whom must be a part-time faculty person if part-time faculty are employed in the department, school or college. The panel will review the grievance and make a recommendation to the instructor's immediate supervisor.
6. If no agreement is reached and the student decides to appeal the matter further, he/she should send a letter or any published form used for this purpose to the person above the instructor's immediate supervisor.
7. If the student believes that the decision of the highest official in the College or School, the dean, deserves further review due to flaws in the previous reviews or due to his/her having information of such nature as to potentially impact the outcome, the student should provide a written request for review to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs who will employ a review process appropriate to the situation and notify the dean of the outcome. The dean will notify the student of the outcome. A decision that has reached review by the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee is final.
8. Grading and other class related academic issues are referred in writing to the Office of the President only in instances where a preponderance of the evidence reveals that a student's Constitutional rights or human dignity may have been violated. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will transmit to the President the entire record of reviews conducted at each level if requested by the President following his/her receipt of the student's written appeal. The President will employ a review process appropriate to the matter presented and notify the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and dean of the outcome. The dean will notify the student of the outcome.
9. If the class related complaint is related to issues including but not limited to sexual harassment, violence, drug use, possession of firearms, or other behaviors prohibited by federal law, state law, Texas A&M University System policy or University regulations, the student may select one of the following options:

Option A: Report the incident, in writing, to the instructor's or other classroom professional's immediate supervisor (department head, division head, or dean).

Option B: Report the incident, in writing, to the Director of Human Resources in Room 122 W.R. Banks Building or to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs in Room 214 A.I. Thomas Building.

10. If the class related complaint involves another student(s) and is related to issues including, but not limited to sexual harassment, violence, drug use, possession of firearms, or other behaviors prohibited by federal law, state law, Texas A&M University System policy or University regulations, the student should report the incident to the Office of the Vice President for Student and Enrollment Services.

### ***Course Changes and Withdrawals***

Course changes and withdrawals are accepted only as designated in the academic calendar. All such changes in registration require the approval of the student's advisor and/or dean. No change in registration is complete until filed with the Office of the Registrar for recording. A student who wishes to withdraw from a course other than an undergraduate pre-college developmental course (reading, writing, mathematics, study skills) but whose advisor, department head, or dean will not approve may appeal to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### ***Voluntary Withdrawal From a Course***

1. A student may withdraw from a course before the Change of Program Period ends without having the course recorded on his/her permanent record.

2. Withdrawal from a course will be allowed until two weeks after mid-term examinations period during the fall and spring semesters, and one week before the date of the final examination during a summer term. No Withdrawal from a course will be allowed after that point. Withdrawals must be approved by the advisor/department head/dean.
3. Upon official notification that a student has withdrawn, a grade of “W” will be assigned. The “W” will not be calculated in the GPA.
4. Withdrawals from courses may affect housing, graduation, financial aid, membership in organizations or other opportunities.

#### ***Voluntary Withdrawal from the University***

Students seeking to withdraw from the University may seek advice and counsel from several sources: Registrar, Course Instructors, Department Head, or Dean. Whatever the initial contact, the student will be referred to a Transition Coordinator in the Division of Student and Enrollment Services, Evans Hall, Room 307. The Transition Coordinator is the official starting point for the withdrawal process.

A student may be required to meet with a transition coordinator who will assess the student’s rationale for withdrawal, and will, through referral, coordination, counseling, or other University resources, assist the student with remaining enrolled if possible.

A student who officially withdraws after the Change of Program period will receive a grade of “WV” for all courses affected by the withdrawal.

#### ***Withdrawal of Students Ordered to Military Active Duty***

A student called to active duty after November 15, 1990, should be given a grade of “MW” in each of his or her academic courses. The student should provide a copy of the military order to the academic dean. The Dean will ensure that the Registrar has a copy of this order to keep in the permanent file and that grades of “MW” are recorded for courses in which the student is enrolled. The instructor for each course will prepare the necessary documentation for removing the “MW” grade and forward the information to the department head for storage in the student’s record in the college, or school. In addition, a copy of the documentation will be forwarded to the Registrar for storage in the student’s permanent file. The time limit for the removal of a grade of “MW” for a student called to active military duty after November 15, 1990, shall be one calendar year from the official date of release from military active duty. Failure to enroll as a student during the one calendar year following release from military active duty will result in the grade of “MW” remaining permanently on the academic record. The student will be required to register for and repeat the course.

#### ***Administrative Withdrawal***

To be administratively withdrawn from the University is to be dismissed from the University. A student may be dismissed from the university for failure to make satisfactory academic progress, failure to pay legitimate debts on schedule or for inappropriate behavior that is detrimental to good order. Administrative withdrawal does not relieve the student of the responsibility for all debts, including tuition, fees, room and board, and other incidental charges for the full semester. Administrative withdrawal due to failure to meet financial obligations will result in the following:

- Transcripts being withheld
- Room and board privileges being lost
- Classroom admittance being denied

A student who has been dismissed for financial reasons can have privileges restored upon payment of all outstanding charges and a reinstatement fee.

#### ***Academic Progress Standards***

##### **General Standards**

In order to show satisfactory progress toward an advanced degree, a student must maintain an average grade of “B”. A course in which a grade below “C” was earned cannot be counted toward graduation

requirements. A student who, in any two consecutive semesters or summer terms, has a cumulative grade point average below 3.00 is subject to academic dismissal. The work of a graduate student performed in connection with the thesis is reported as a regular grade.

### **Doctoral Program Standards**

Ph.D. students remain in good standing when they maintain a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 for coursework. Only grades of “B” or better count toward required coursework (i.e., all but the elective courses) and dissertation hours. Any grade lower than “B” in a required area course will necessitate that the course be retaken and passed with a grade of “B” or higher. While one grade of “C” in an elective course may be counted toward the Ph.D., only grades of “B” or better indicate satisfactory completion of courses required for the Ph.D. If a student receives a “C” for a class grade, there will be an automatic review of that student’s progress within one semester of when the grade is received. The Doctoral Committee will meet with the student to develop an appropriate response. If a second such grade is earned, the student will be dismissed from the program, but may petition the Doctoral Committee for readmission. After reviewing the petition, the committee may allow readmission under such conditions as it deems appropriate. A third grade lower than “B” will result in permanent dismissal from the program with no recourse to petition.

In the Spring semester of each academic year, a formal evaluation will be made of the progress of each doctoral student by the Doctoral Committee. This evaluation will focus on the student’s progress toward the Ph.D. degree. Students, attending full time and taking 12 units each semester, should be able to complete formal doctoral coursework within two full years. However, this constitutes a heavy course load and student progress in the program will be measured against the more reasonable average of 9-12 credit hours per a semester. Where needed, the Committee will provide recommendations and guidance to students. The Graduate Program Coordinator will provide evaluation forms the Committee is currently using. Committee decisions related to student progress will be one of the following:

1. Progress is satisfactory, student is encouraged to continue in the program;
2. Progress is potentially unsatisfactory, remediation work is suggested, student is encouraged to continue in the program, or
3. Progress is unsatisfactory, student should be terminated from the program.

Students receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation may petition the Dean to remain in the program. A copy of the petition form may be obtained in the Doctoral Program office. One petition is allowed.

### ***Class Attendance Policy***

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Attending all classes supports full academic development of each learner whether classes are taught with the instructor physically present or via distance learning technologies such as interactive video. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student’s course grade being reduced or in assignment of a grade of “F”. Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class during regular semesters and summer terms. Each faculty member will include the University’s attendance policy in each course syllabus.

### **Excused Absences**

Absences due to illness, attendance at university approved activities, and family or other emergencies constitute excused absences and must be supported by documentation presented to the instructor prior to or immediately upon the student’s return to class. Students are always responsible for all oral and written examinations as well as all assignments (e.g., projects, papers, reports).

### **Excessive Absences**

Accumulation of one week of unexcused absences (for the number of clock hours equivalent to the credit for the course) constitutes excessive absenteeism. The instructor is not required to accept assignments as part of the course requirement when the student’s absence is unexcused.

### **Absences on Religious Holy Days**

In accordance with Texas Education Code, Section 51.925, subchapter (Z), a student may be absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day and will be permitted to take missed examinations and complete missed assignments provided the student has notified the instructor of the planned absence in writing and receipt of the notice has been acknowledged by the instructor in writing. "A religious holy day means a holy day observed by a religion whose place of worship is exempt from property taxation under the Texas Tax Code, Section 11.20."

### ***Academic Dishonesty Policy***

Course credit, degrees, and certificates are to be earned by students and may not be obtained through acts of dishonesty. Students are prohibited from participation in acts of academic dishonesty including tampering with records or falsifying admissions or other information. Disciplinary action will be taken against any student who alone or with others engages in any act of academic fraud or deceit.

It is the responsibility of students and faculty members to maintain academic integrity at the university by refusing to participate in or tolerate academic dishonesty. Each instance of academic dishonesty should be reported to the department in which the student has declared a major so that it can become a part of the student's file; to the department head of the instructor of the course in which the alleged infraction occurred; and to the Office for Academic Affairs as deemed necessary.

## **Graduation Requirements**

### ***General Requirements***

The following requirements apply to all graduate degree programs. Specific degree requirements may be found in the appropriate college sections of this catalog. All candidates expecting to graduate must file an application for the degree. The deadline for filing an application for the degree is published each semester by the registrar. Upon completion of all requirements for the master's degree, candidates are certified for graduation by the dean of the Graduate School. Degrees are publicly conferred at each university commencement.

1. Consult the graduate major advisor in the proposed field of study and the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. Obtain from and file with the graduate school a change of major form signed by the graduate major advisor in the proposed field of study and the graduate advisor in the field from which the transfer request is made.

### **Graduate Thesis and Dissertation Committees**

The dean, school/college graduate program coordinator, department head, and the University graduate program director are responsible for approving the assignment of faculty to graduate committees. Members of the departmental faculty chair thesis and dissertation committees. It should be noted on all documents, including thesis, when the graduate committee chair is not the thesis/research advisor.

### **Approval of Thesis, Dissertation or Project Report**

The graduate thesis, dissertation or project report must be prepared in a style and format that is prescribed by the specific degree program. No later than two weeks prior to the last day of classes for the term or semester the student must submit a final draft of the thesis, dissertation or project report to the Graduate School for approval. If the manuscript meets the style and format criteria established by the faculty of a specific degree program, the student will be permitted to submit the document to the student's graduate advisory committee for approval and signature.

The bound copies of the signed thesis, dissertation or project report must be submitted to the Graduate School on or before the last day of classes for the Dean's approval and signature (the specific number of copies will be designated by the College or School). The Graduate School will be responsible for distributing the copies to the appropriate offices.

### **Oral Examination**

An oral examination is required of thesis and dissertation students. The oral examination is designed to test verbal and explanatory abilities of students as they explain and defend their research. The examining body is the student's Graduate Thesis/Dissertation Committee and may include other interested departmental faculty. The graduate school may assign a member of the graduate council to attend or monitor an oral examination. The examination can be repeated only once.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

The graduate student admitted to full degree status does not automatically become a candidate for the master's degree. To become a candidate, the student must complete the following minimum requirements:

1. Achieve a satisfactory score on the GRE or GMAT as stipulated by the department and college;
2. Prepare and submit an official Application For Candidacy Form showing the applicant's successful completion of 12 semester hours of required graduate courses with an average of "B" or better.
3. The application, when approved by the department head and college/school dean, must be submitted to the Graduate Dean for final approval.

Advancement to candidacy for doctoral programs is governed by the procedures of the program. Information for the specific program is found in this catalog under the degree description.

### **Registration Requirement**

Students completing work required for a degree must be enrolled during the term in which the work is completed and the application for graduation is filed. A fee is required for registration in absentia.

### **Application for Graduation**

Students should apply for graduation at the beginning of the semester or summer term in which they expect to complete all requirements for the degree. Application deadlines are included in the academic calendar for each year. Application forms may be obtained from the registrar. A fee is required as part of the application process.

### **Commencement and the Conferring of Degrees**

Students may not graduate until completion of all degree requirements has been certified by the registrar. Formal conferring of degrees and awarding of diplomas take place at the earliest commencement exercise following graduation. Commencement exercises are scheduled in May, August and December of each year. Participating students must wear appropriate academic attire. Graduating students who wish to receive their diplomas in absentia may do so by filing a request with the registrar at least one week prior to commencement.

The university has the right to rescind a previously granted degree if it becomes aware of information leading to the determination that the degree should never have been granted.

#### ***Master of Architecture and Master of Community Development***

A minimum of 36 semester hours of course work is required for the Master of Architecture and Master of Community Development degrees. The objective is to prepare graduates for entry into their professions and/or to prepare students for further graduate study.

#### ***Master of Arts and Master of Science***

A minimum of 30 semester hours exclusive of thesis, with an average grade of "B" or better in courses approved for graduate credit, is required for the Master of Arts and Master of Science degrees. Up to six semester hours of thesis credit may be counted toward a degree.

In addition to the thirty semester hours in graduate courses, all candidates for the degree Master of Science must present an acceptable thesis on a subject germane to the major course of study. The thesis must be

written under the direction of a member of the graduate faculty in the program offering the degree. The thesis subject must be approved by the thesis committee chairman at least six months before the date of intended graduation. The thesis must have the approval of each member of the student's thesis committee and must be acceptable with respect to both scholarship and literary quality. One copy of the approved bound thesis must be filed in the Office of Graduate Programs.

After the thesis has been completed, the candidate is required to pass an oral examination which shall be a test of the candidate's knowledge of the study pursued. This examination is conducted by the student's thesis committee, of which the representative of the major field shall act as Chair. Any member of the graduate faculty may attend the examination as a visitor. A candidate who fails the oral examination must register for an additional semester or summer term before an opportunity will be given for a second examination, unless special permission for an earlier examination is approved by the school or college offering the program.

The Master of Arts degree is an applied science and arts degree. A thesis is optional. However, a creative product, approved by the school or college, may be presented as the option to the thesis requirement for the Master of Arts degree.

#### ***Master of Science in Computer Science and Master of Science in Computer Information Systems***

The Master of Science in Computer Science and Master of Science in Computer Information Systems require 36 semester credit hours, and offer both thesis options (30 semester credit hours of coursework and 6 semester credit hours of a thesis) and non-thesis options (33 semester credit hours of coursework and 3 semester credit hours of a project).

#### ***Master of Education and Master of Business Administration***

A minimum of 36 semester hours of course work, with an average grade of "B" or better in courses approved for graduate credit, is required for the Master of Education and Master of Business Administration degrees.

#### ***Master of Science in Engineering and Master of Science in Electrical Engineering***

The Master of Science in Engineering (M.S.E.) and Master of Science in Electrical Engineering (M.S.E.E.), with thesis options, require 30 semester hours. The M.S.E. and M.S.E.E. with non-thesis options require 33 semester hours. Both options in both programs require 12 credit hours of graduate core courses in engineering and science plus a minimum of 12 hours in a chosen area of concentration.

#### ***Master of Science in Juvenile Justice***

Two options are available for students: thesis or non-thesis. Students opting for the thesis curriculum must successfully complete 30 hours of coursework in addition to 6 hours of thesis. The non-thesis option requires the successful completion of 36 hours of coursework and passing a comprehensive examination.

#### ***Master of Science in Nursing***

The Master of Science in Nursing, Family Nurse Practitioner is a clinical program requiring 46 SCH for degree completion. The student must earn a "B" average in course work, complete the required clinical experience with grades of "B" or better and satisfactorily meet exit examination requirements.

#### ***Doctor of Philosophy in Juvenile Justice***

The Ph.D. in Juvenile Justice requires a minimum of 49 semester hours of course work and 12 semester hours of dissertation. Following completion of course work, the student must pass a comprehensive examination prior to beginning the dissertation. A master's degree is necessary for admission to the doctoral program.