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# General Academic Policies and Regulations

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

*University personnel may assist students in progressing toward the degree that they are seeking. However, the final and ultimate responsibility for understanding and following the degree requirements rests with the students themselves.* Each student is held responsible for knowing degree requirements, for enrolling in courses that fit into degree programs and for taking courses in the proper sequence to ensure orderly progression of work. The student must seek advice about degree requirements and other university policies when necessary. The student is held responsible for knowing and abiding by university regulations regarding the standard of work required to continue in the University, as well as those dealing with academic integrity, scholastic probation, enforced withdrawal, suspension, and dismissal. Additionally, the student is expected to comply with the rules in the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct, as well as the processes in the latter, which are administered by the Office of Student Affairs. The Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct are accessible at <http://www.tamucc.edu/~students>.

## REGISTRATION

Students admitted to the University may register for course work. See the admission classification system in the “Admission” chapter of the catalog for limits. Former graduate students who have been inactive for two years or more must reapply for admission to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research prior to the term of re-enrollment. Please note that some programs may require re-application after only a one-year leave of absence. Specific information regarding dates, registration materials and course offerings may be found in the class schedule for each term (published during the preceding term). Students must register by the specified deadlines for the term in order to be eligible to receive course credit. Registration requires payment of tuition and fees. See “Tuition and Fees.”

## NON-CREDIT ADMISSION (Auditing)

A student may attend classes for a course without receiving credit if he/she completes an application for admission, submits a course audit form at the time of registration, and has the permission of both the instructor of the course and the dean of the college in which the course is offered. The fee is the same as that required for registration for credit, but no credit will be awarded, no records will be kept and the student may be restricted from lab work and tests. A student will not be given permission to audit a course until the first day of classes. Students may not change from credit to audit status after the 12th class day during a long semester or after the 4th class day during the summer. No refunds are given on audits. Senior citizens (over 65) may audit on a space available basis only with all fees exempted except material or field trip fees. Under no circumstance may audit be converted to credit.

## UNIT OF CREDIT

One semester hour is the unit of credit that is defined as the amount of credit given for one class hour a week for one semester or 15 class hours per semester.

## Transfer Credit Equivalencies

For purposes of transfer, and for calculation of the grade point average of an applicant for graduate admission, work taken on a trimester system will be converted to semester hours on a 1 to 1 basis. In the event that the work was taken on a class hour basis, 15 class hours will be equated to 1 semester hour. For conversion from quarter hours to semester hours, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has established the following equivalencies:

Quarter hours	Semester hours
1	0.7
2	1.3
3	2.0
4	2.7
5	3.3
6	4.0

This University will use the summation of the individual course equivalencies from the transferring institution to compute grade point average for admission purposes and/or credits earned. For credit systems other than those listed above, the Office of Graduate Studies and Research will determine an *ad hoc* mathematical relationship and apply it to the record in question.

### **ENROLLMENT STATUS**

Enrollment status for graduate students is defined below.

#### **Enrollment Status**

#### **Semester Credit Hours Required**

Full-time graduate student:

Fall or spring term = 9 hours

Combined summer terms = 6 hours

Three-quarter-time graduate student:

Fall or spring term = 7 hours

Combined summer terms = 5 hours

Half-time graduate student:

Fall or spring term = 5 hours

Combined summer terms = 3 hours

For information on enrollment status requirements for graduate students receiving financial assistance administered through the Office of Student Financial Assistance, please see the “Financial Assistance” section of the catalog. For rules applying to veterans benefits, please see “Veterans Educational Benefits.”)

### **COURSE NUMBERS**

Each course number includes a four-letter prefix (identifying the discipline or subject) and a four-digit number. The first digit indicates the level of the course. The second digit usually indicates the credit hour value of the course. The third and fourth digits differentiate the courses in a particular discipline. A list of course prefixes may be found in Appendix B.

Courses numbered in the 1000 and 2000 series are lower-division (freshman or sophomore) courses.

Courses numbered in the 3000 and 4000 series are upper-division (junior or senior) courses. Some courses in the 4000 series are designated for graduate credit.

Courses numbered 5000 or higher are graduate courses. Courses at the 5000 level are open only to students with graduate status and senior undergraduates who meet specific criteria. Courses at the 6000 level are open only to students admitted to a doctoral program or graduate students who meet specific criteria.

### **COURSES OF INSTRUCTION**

The catalog lists the courses offered in each field of study. Course descriptions may include projected course scheduling information. Although the lists of courses are based on the best information available at the time of catalog preparation, course offerings are subject to change without notice. This catalog was prepared well in advance of its effective date; therefore, changes may occur in course content or availability. Some new courses and modified courses are included in this catalog pending their approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

When registering for courses, students should always consult the semester class schedule, a separate publication that provides specific course offering information for a particular semester or session. The class schedule is issued before the registration period for each term.

### **ADDING OR DROPPING A COURSE**

A student may add a course during the time specified in the class schedule. To add a course the student must obtain a Class Scheduling Form from the Office of the Registrar.

The grade of W will be assigned to any student officially dropping a course by the date stated in the class schedule (end of the tenth week of classes in the fall and spring semesters and end of the third week during summer sessions). No student is eligible to receive a W

without completing the official drop process by this deadline. After the drop date listed in the class schedule, a student will not be allowed to drop a course. A change of section or a change to or from audit is a change of registration and requires that the add/drop process be followed.

Students should be aware that dropping courses may affect their eligibility for financial assistance.

**If a student should drop all courses for a given semester or term, a Withdrawal Form must be processed. Please refer to the following paragraph.**

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY**

A student who finds it necessary to withdraw from the University during a session must file a Withdrawal Form in the Office of the Registrar. The deadline for withdrawing from the University is the day before the last day of classes during a long semester (fall or spring) and the day before final examinations during summer sessions. Failure to file a Withdrawal Form can result in grades of “F” in courses in progress.

A student who withdraws from the University according to procedures stipulated for withdrawal will be allowed a grace period to rescind the withdrawal. A student may rescind a withdrawal no later than the end of the second University business day following the date of withdrawal. The date of reinstatement must be among the regular days of classes. Days of final examinations and thereafter are specifically excluded.

Should space no longer be available in a class, the student must secure the approval of the dean and/or instructor before reinstatement in class is allowed.

All indebtedness to the University must be satisfied prior to the reinstatement.

Reinstatement must be requested in writing by the student on a form provided by the University Registrar. All documentation and requirements for the reinstatement must be filed with the University Registrar by the end of the second business day (following the withdrawal), or else the reinstatement will not occur.

Students receiving veterans benefits for education should contact the Office of Veterans Affairs for specific policies concerning drops and withdrawals. These changes have a direct effect on VA benefits.

### **WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS CALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY**

Section 54.006 of the Texas Education Code states:

Beginning with the summer semester of 1990, if a student withdraws from an institution of higher education because the student is called to active military service, the institution, at the student’s option, shall

- (1) refund the tuition and fees paid by the student for the semester in which the student withdraws;
- (2) grant a student who is eligible under the institution’s guidelines, an incomplete grade in all courses by designating “withdrawn-military” on the student’s transcript; or
- (3) as determined by the instructor, assign an appropriate final grade or credit to a student who has satisfactorily completed a substantial amount of coursework and who has demonstrated sufficient mastery of the course material.

### **RETROACTIVE WITHDRAWAL**

A student may request that all grades in an academic period be retroactively removed and replaced by entries of “W” on his/her transcript. A retroactive withdrawal may be granted only when a student has experienced circumstances of such serious and compelling nature that s/he could not reasonably have been expected to satisfactorily complete the academic period or submit a petition for regular withdrawal by the deadline specified in the university catalog. Such serious and compelling circumstances may include (but are not limited to) hospitalization, incarceration, debilitating mental illness, or sudden absence at the end of the semester due to family crisis. Failure to academically perform due to factors such as bad habits, poor judgment, time management issues, failed relationships, roommate conflicts, or ignorance of university policies would not generally qualify a student for retroactive withdrawal.

To withdraw retroactively from the university, the student must request this action in writing through the Office of the Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs. The request must be accompanied by supporting documents which demonstrate serious and compelling reasons why action was not taken through the regular withdrawal process during the academic period in question. The time limit for making this request is the end of the next long semester following the academic period in question.

If retroactive administrative withdrawal is granted, the Office of the University Registrar will set all grades for the relevant term to a non-punitive mark of “W.” If the student should wish to appeal a decision on retroactive withdrawal, an appeal can be made, in writing, to the Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs within 14 days of the date of notification.

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Students are held responsible for class attendance and are advised that excessive absences may adversely affect their grades. Every instructor should make clear the policy on class attendance at the beginning of each course.

If students are absent from class on approved university business (e.g., intercollegiate athletics competition/travel, field trips, student research conferences, Board of Regents meetings), faculty members should count this as an excused absence and should not penalize the student for it. Students should be allowed to make up any required course work in advance or after their return to campus. Students are responsible for informing their instructors about the trip in advance so that the faculty members can make plans accordingly. If any doubt exists as to whether the activity in question is considered official university business, contact the Provost’s Office.

### **STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS**

In accordance with Texas Education Code 51.911, Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi will excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused for observance of a religious holy day may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

Texas Education Code, Section 51.911 defines a religious holy day as a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code. If a student and an instructor disagree that the absence is for the observance of a religious holy day, or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the Provost. The student and instructor shall abide by the decision of the Provost.

If a student’s academic course work includes patient care, the University may exclude from these policies and procedures any student absence for religious holy days that may interfere with patient care.

### **GRADES**

The letter grades used for graduate work are the same as those used in undergraduate work (A, B, C, D, and F), but graduate credit is allowed only for courses completed with grades of A, B, and C, although grades of D and F are used in computing grade point averages. Limits are placed on the number of C’s that are allowed for graduate credit. Grade points per semester hour are noted below:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Grade Points per Semester Hour*</b>
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1
F	0

Other grades for courses are reported by the symbols below:

CR\* Satisfactory, but without qualitative grading. See “Credit/No Credit Grading.”

NC\* No credit

P\* Pass. Satisfactory, but without qualitative grading of the credit hours earned. Applicable only to those undergraduate courses stipulated by the Pass/No Pass policy in the Undergraduate Catalog.

NP\* No pass. No credit is generated and the mark is not punitive. Applicable only to those undergraduate courses stipulated by the Pass/No Pass policy in the Undergraduate Catalog.

S\* Satisfactory. Applicable to specified graduate courses.

U\* Unsatisfactory. Applicable to specified graduate courses.

I\* Incomplete. An incomplete notation may be given to a student who is passing but has not completed a term paper, examination, or other required work for reasons beyond the student’s control other than lack of time.

IM\* Incomplete-Military. An “IM” notation may be given to a student who is called to active military service and who consequently cannot continue attending class. In order for this notation to be given, the student must be passing the course, must have completed a significant portion of the course work, and must have the approval of the instructor.

IP\* Assigned to a remedial course or a thesis/dissertation course indicating that at the conclusion of the semester the course was still in progress. This is a permanent notation that does not affect grade point average. To receive a qualitative grade, the student must register for the same course in the subsequent semester, paying the appropriate tuition and fees.

W\* Course dropped or withdrawal from the University. Automatically given, regardless of the student’s standing in class, when a student officially withdraws from the University or drops a course prior to the deadline as indicated in the class schedule. See “Adding or Dropping a Course” and “Withdrawal from the University.”

WP\* Withdrawal pass. Before the fall semester of 1996, this grade was assigned to a student who dropped a course or withdrew between designated dates in the semester or summer term and was passing the course at the time of the withdrawal. Grades of WP assigned before fall 1996 will remain on the transcript.

WF\* Withdrawal failure. Before fall 1996, this grade was assigned to a student who dropped a course or withdrew between designated dates in the semester or summer term and was failing the course at the time of withdrawal. Grades of WF assigned before fall 1996 will remain on the transcript.

\*CR, NC, P, NP, S, U, I, IM, IP, W, WP grades are not counted in computing the GPA. A grade of WF assigned before the fall semester of 1996 is counted in computing the GPA.

For a grade of W to be assigned, a student must officially withdraw from the course or University through the Office of the University Registrar. The receipt from the Office of the University Registrar should be kept as proof of withdrawal. If a student discontinues attending a class and fails to officially withdraw, and does not qualify for an “I,” a qualitative grade (A-F) will be assigned.

If no grade is submitted by an instructor, a temporary notation (X) will be placed on the student’s records. In such cases, the course grade must be submitted within 30 days from the beginning of the next semester. If the instructor does not or is unable to submit the grade within 30 days, the Dean in consultation with faculty will submit the course grade.

### **CALCULATION OF GRADE POINT AVERAGE**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi uses a 4.0 scale for calculation of Grade Point Average (GPA). GPA is determined by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the number of semester credit hours taken for a qualitative grade (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0).

Only grades earned at this University will be used to calculate the Texas A&M University-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> or by calling 825-7245 or 1-877-825-7245.

### **CHANGE OF GRADE**

A change of grade (among the values A,B,C,D,F) may occur only if there has been an error in computation or recording of the grade or if a change has been ordered as a result of the grade appeal process. A grade may not be changed because of consideration of work completed following the end of the grading period for which the grade was issued. If not associated with the grade appeal process, a grade change is initiated by the instructor of record and approved by the Dean of the college of record. In rare circumstances, the approval of the Provost may be required. To be valid, a grade change must be submitted to the University Registrar on or before the last day of the next regular semester following the term in which the grade was originally issued, and on the form provided for that purpose.

### **Grade Appeal Process**

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal.

A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the student may take the steps below.

1. Presentation of grievance to instructor. (This step must be taken within fourteen calendar days after the beginning of the next term.)
2. Appeal to department chair or area coordinator.
3. Written appeal to the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
4. Preliminary review and advising by an ombudsman appointed by the Provost.
5. Submission of file by department chair to the chair of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
6. Review of file by committee chair and submission of case to committee.
7. Proceedings of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee. (Committee holds hearing, reviews data, presents findings to all parties, and makes recommendation to Provost.)
8. Decision by Provost.
9. Final appeal in writing to the Provost if student or instructor thinks appropriate procedures have not been followed.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Website at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university\\_rules/index.htm](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

### **REMOVING THE GRADE OF INCOMPLETE**

The notation of "I" indicates that work in a course is satisfactory but incomplete (certain work is postponed by the student for substantial reason with the prior consent of the instructor). This work must be completed by the last class day of the next regular (fall or spring) semester, unless the instructor designates an earlier date for completion. If the work is not completed by the appropriate date, the qualitative grade provided by the instructor on the incomplete notation application will be submitted to the Office of the University

Registrar and will replace the “I.” An incomplete notation cannot remain on the student’s permanent record and must be replaced by a qualitative grade (A-F) at the conclusion of the next regular semester. If the grade of “I” has not been changed at the conclusion of the next regular semester, it will automatically be changed to a final grade of “F” by the Office of the University Registrar.

### **REMOVING GRADE OF INCOMPLETE-MILITARY (IM)**

The “IM” notation may be given to a student who is called to active military service and who consequently can no longer attend class. Such a notation may be assigned if the student is passing a course, but will not be able to complete a term paper, examination, or other required work for the course before the end of the semester or session because of the required active military service. Assignment of the “IM” notation requires the approval of the instructor. Normally the “IM” grade is not assigned unless the student has completed a substantial amount of course work. The remaining course work must be completed by the last day of the next regular semester (fall or spring) following the student’s return from active military service. The “IM” designation will remain on the student’s permanent record if the work is not completed by the appropriate date. For more information on options available to students who are called to active military service, see “Students Called to Active Duty.”

### **CREDIT/NO CREDIT GRADING**

Certain courses proposed by individual colleges and approved by the Graduate Council and Faculty Senate may use the alternate grading system CR/NC when the standard system authorized for the University (A, B, C, D, F, I, IP, W) is not considered appropriate. CR/NC is a designation of the University given to certain courses, all of whose students receive one of these grades. No more than 7 semester hours of CR/NC in a student’s major field of study may be applied toward a master’s degree. However, students in the College of Liberal Arts may take 3 semester hours graded CR/NC in addition to a maximum of 6 thesis credit hours of CR/NC. No more than 9 semester hours of CR/NC in a student’s major field of study may be applied toward a doctoral degree.

The hours graded CR (credit), given in those instances where standard letter grades are not used, will not be applied in computing grade point averages. Credit/no credit grading differs from pass/no pass, a grading option for undergraduates. Since fall 2002, pass/no pass grading has not been used in graduate courses. Consequently, courses graded as pass/no pass will not be allowed to transfer to a graduate program at this university.

### **FINAL EXAMINATIONS**

Final examinations must be scheduled during the regularly scheduled examination time listed in the official class schedule. If papers or take-home examinations are assigned in lieu of a final examination, the due date must be at the regularly scheduled examination time listed in the official class schedule. If final presentations or final critiques assigned in lieu of final examinations require multiple days to complete, then the final day for the critiques/presentations must occur on the regularly scheduled exam day.

Students are not required to take more than two final examinations in any one day. Any student with three or more final examinations scheduled on the same day may request to take one of the examinations on another day during the final examination period. The process is described below.

1. The student should first try to resolve the matter with the appropriate instructor(s).
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the student should submit a request for an alternative final exam time in writing to the Office of Student Affairs. This request must be submitted by the drop date (the last day to drop a course for the semester with an automatic grade of W as stated in the semester class schedule).
3. The Office of Student Affairs will select which of the exams should be taken at an alternative time and formally contact the faculty member at least 15 working days before the final examination period. Preference for selection of which course would

have an alternative final exam time must be based on the course with the smaller class size and, then, courses with final exam times in between other exams.

4. The faculty member will then arrange an alternative time for the student to take the final exam for that course that does not conflict with the student's final exam schedule or require the student to take more than two final exams in one day. If students have difficulties in rescheduling the examination, they should consult with the Office of Student Affairs. Final exams given outside the regularly scheduled time may vary in content and format at the discretion of the faculty member.

### **APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION**

Students intending to have a degree conferred must notify the appropriate dean's office and their academic advisor. Students who plan to participate in a graduation exercise and/or receive a diploma must complete an application for graduation by the deadline indicated in the Academic Calendar. An application for graduation must be obtained and processed through the student's academic advisor. Students participating in the graduation exercise will also be required to obtain an appropriate cap and gown. The application for graduation is not transferable to a subsequent semester. If a student does not graduate, the application will be canceled. A new application must be obtained and processed through the student's academic advisor.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

It is expected that university students will demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction and ability to manage their own affairs. Students are viewed as individuals who possess the qualities of worth, dignity and the capacity for self-direction in personal behavior.

However, in the interest of other students and the University in maintaining these standards, the University reserves the right, through due process, to place on probation, suspend or dismiss any student who violates academic integrity and regulations by providing false or misleading or incomplete information to the University, by falsification of University records, by plagiarism, by classroom misdemeanor, or by academic dishonesty. Students are expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the regulations of the University.

Should it become necessary to initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student attending this University, established guidelines for procedural due process will be followed. The University recognizes and accepts the basic contents and guidelines included in the 1967 Joint Statement of Rights and Freedoms for Students adopted by many recognized professional educational associations.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one's own work.)

Disciplinary action for academic misconduct is the responsibility of the faculty member assigned to the course. The faculty member is charged with assessing the gravity of any case of academic dishonesty, and with giving sanction to any student involved.

Penalties that may be applied by the faculty member to individual cases of academic dishonesty include one or more of the following:

1. Written reprimand;
2. Requirement to re-do work in question;
3. Requirement to submit additional work;
4. Lowering of grade on work in question;
5. Assigning grade of "F" to work in question;
6. Assigning grade of "F" for course;
7. Recommendation for more severe punishment, such as dismissal from the program or from the University.

If the faculty member determines that assigning a grade of “F” to the course is the appropriate penalty and this disciplinary action occurs prior to the deadline for dropping courses, the student forfeits his/her right to drop the course in question.

If the faculty member recommends more severe punishment, such as dismissal from the program or from the University, the faculty member will notify the appropriate chair/college dean, who in turn will notify the Office of Student Affairs. If dismissal from the University is recommended, the Office of Student Affairs will follow its procedure for such cases.

The faculty member must file a record for each case of academic dishonesty, including a description of the disciplinary action taken, along with any materials involved, with his or her college dean, who will forward a copy to the Office of Student Affairs. The office of the academic dean of the college in which the offense took place will maintain records of all cases of academic dishonesty reported for a period of five years. The Office of Student Affairs will also maintain records of such cases for a period of five years. The Office of Student Affairs will inform the Graduate Dean as appropriate.

Any student who has been penalized for academic dishonesty has the right to appeal the judgment or the penalty assessed. Students who wish to appeal an academic dishonesty decision should contact the Office of Student Affairs for guidance.

### **ACADEMIC RECORDS**

Permanent academic records are maintained in the Office of the University Registrar. Admission and matriculation information, including transcripts received from other schools, are also filed in this office.

When a transcript or other document has been submitted to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, it becomes the property of the University and will not be yielded back to the student as an original.

Academic files and degree plans are maintained in the offices of the college deans. The college deans are responsible for certifying that students receiving degrees have satisfied all college degree requirements. Degree plans for graduate students should be developed by the time students have completed half of the course work in the program, and copies should be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

The University Registrar, the college deans, and the Graduate Dean have specific responsibilities in certifying that University minimum requirements have been satisfactorily completed. The Graduate Dean will complete the degree audit for graduate students and report the outcome to the University Registrar.

### **CHALLENGE TO AN ACADEMIC RECORD**

A student who wishes to challenge the accuracy of the academic record (official transcript) established at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and held in his/her behalf, must notify the University Registrar in writing and explain in detail the nature of the error. The University Registrar will study the challenge and the contents of the student’s file, and consult with the appropriate academic personnel. The University Registrar will reply to the student within 20 working days.

The student has one calendar year from the date that the datum becomes a fact of record to initiate a challenge. If a challenge is successful and affects the student’s GPA, honors status or similar rubric, the historical record will be altered accordingly.

Application of this policy is not intended to abridge, supplant or supersede other deadlines. The University reserves the right to correct or amend an academic record at any time that an error may be detected. In each case, the student will be given written notice of the change.

### **CHANGE OF NAME OR ADDRESS**

Changes of name must be filed in the Office of the University Registrar. Address and/or telephone number changes may be processed through the Office of the University Registrar or through the web using the Student Academic Information Link (SAIL).

### STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

The University accumulates data and keeps records to enable staff and faculty to plan educational opportunities to meet the needs of individual students, to better understand students, to counsel them more effectively, and to assist them in placement in graduate education or employment after graduation.

The University maintains student records in several locations, including the University Registrar, Office of Graduate Studies and Research, Office of Student Financial Assistance, Business Office, offices of academic deans and faculty, Office of Student Affairs, Office of the Director of the University Core Curriculum Program, Office of Public Affairs, Career Services, University Health Center, University Counseling Center, Disability Services, and Alumni Office. Provisions are made in these offices for students to review and challenge the accuracy of records when appropriate and upon request.

The University complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and with the Texas Public Information Act. FERPA is a federal law intended to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the rights of students to inspect and review their education records and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading information through informal or formal hearings. Information in student records may be provided to parents without the written consent of the student if the eligible student is a financial dependent of his or her parents as defined under Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. Such requests should be submitted to the University Registrar.

Students have the right to inspect and review their education records, except for the following:

1. Financial records of the student's parents.
2. Confidential records and statements of recommendation, which were placed in the education records prior to January 1975.
3. Confidential records and statements of recommendation, which were placed in the student's education records on or after January 1, 1975, if the student has waived the right to review the letters or statements.

Education records, as defined by FERPA, do not include the following: a personal record of a University faculty or staff member that is in the sole possession of the individual who made it and that has never been revealed to any other person except the maker's temporary substitute; certain employment records; student health records; student records of personal counseling (records protected under other laws and regulations); and records maintained by a University law enforcement unit that were created by that unit for the purpose of law enforcement. (However, the University may release to an alleged victim of a crime of violence the results of a University disciplinary proceeding concerning the alleged perpetrator of the crime.)

The University maintains two types of student education records: directory information and other student records. Directory information is considered public information and will be released by the University upon request, in accordance with existing law. This public information includes: name; home address; local address; local telephone number; date of birth; field of study; enrollment status (full-time, part-time, undergraduate, graduate, etc.); classification (fr., so., jr., sr.); dates of attendance; degrees, certificates, and other awards received (if any); the type of degree received; date of graduation; name of most recent previous institution attended; and similar information. **A student who does not wish this public information to be released must complete the appropriate form and submit it to the Office of the University Registrar.**

With the exception of directory information, the University will not permit the release of personally identifiable information in education records without the prior written consent of the student, except as follows:

1. To appropriate University personnel who need access to educational records to perform their legitimate educational duties.

2. To officials of other schools in which the student seeks to enroll, provided the student is notified of what is being released and is given a copy if desired.
3. To federal, state, or local officials authorized by law.
4. In connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid.
5. To organizations conducting educational studies, provided that these organizations do not release personally identifiable data.
6. To accrediting organizations.
7. To the parents who certify that a student is carried as a dependent for federal income tax purposes.
8. To appropriate persons, in an emergency, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons.
9. To individuals requiring such information by means of a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena, provided a reasonable effort is made to notify the student in advance of compliance.

The University does not maintain records of membership in organizations or of political, racial, or religious affiliations.

The acquisition and dissemination of information for records is based on a respect and concern for the privacy and protection of the individual student. However, the obligation of confidentiality may lapse when the common welfare of the community or the welfare of the individual demands revelation such as in the case of suicidal preoccupations, expressed homicidal thoughts or actions, commission of a felony, or similar circumstances. Evaluation and interpretation of a student's records shall be done only by a professional and qualified staff person.

**POLICIES SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

Although every effort has been made to provide complete and accurate information in this catalog, changes may occur at any time, without notice, in academic policies and regulations.