



Terry B. Rogers College of Education & Social Sciences

Committed to Advancing Society by Developing Professionals to

Lead | Serve | Educate

Monthly Faculty & Staff Newsletter



Dr. Gary Bigham
Professor | Dean

Greetings from the Dean

As we approach mid-term and spring break, I find myself asking how this can be? They say time flies when you are having fun. Well, I must be having the time of my life! You may recall that last month I shared some enrollment data that suggests we may have some recruitment work to do. Kudos to the programs in our college who participated in the AmTech career fair Thursday (2/29) (see p. 6). I am also aware of others who are attending conferences, visiting schools, etc. in efforts to recruit students. Our ARMR committee has already met, discussed, and made progress in the areas of advertising, recruiting, marketing, and recognition. In alignment with the traditional academic year, this is prime recruiting time. I know that at some level it is on everyone's mind and please know how much I applaud your efforts. We have several recruitment initiatives underway and are looking forward to welcoming an increased number of new students to our college in the upcoming academic year.

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wtamu.edu/coess

Looking at Our Narrative



Early in the video, Simon Sinek says, "Good marketing talks about the buyer and bad marketing talks about the seller." If there is merit to this statement, then as we market what we sell, we should be appealing to the needs of our potential students and constituents instead of trying to showcase how good we are.

As I replayed the video several times, I thought about how our new BUFF START program (see pp. 10-11) came to life. A group of superintendents in the region invited us (in this case, the Dept. of Ed. leadership) to the table, explained their staffing dilemma due to the nation- and state-wide teacher shortage, and requested that we create a high-quality, fast track to enable a particular subset of paraprofessionals to earn their B.S. degree and become certified teachers. Note that we did not invite our constituents to the table; they invited us. The conversation was focused 100% on their needs, not ours. Yes, we need enrollment, but as I shared with both our provost and president, increased enrollment was not the motivation behind the creation of BUFF START. The motivation behind its creation was to serve a need conveyed to us by external constituents in our region and I anticipate increased enrollment to come as a by-product.

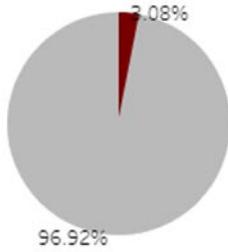
As you reflect on the video, and perhaps on the BUFF START story I just shared, I pose the following question to you as trusted colleagues. In recognition of our college's need to grow enrollment, should we change our sign, our narrative, or both?

2015-2020 All Degree Types (Bachelor & Master)

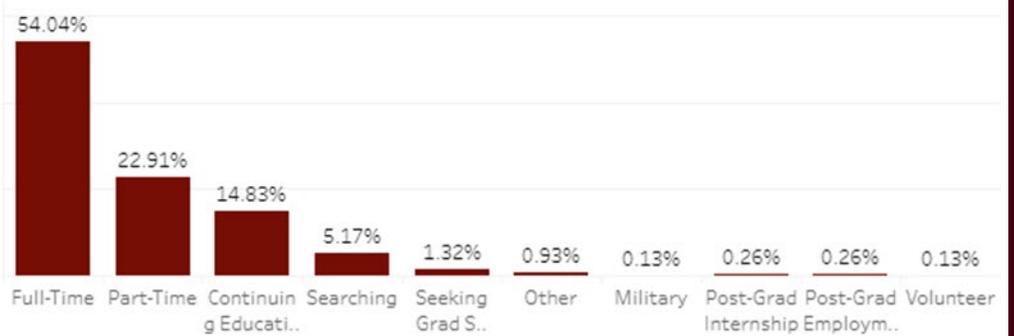
Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work

Employment Stats

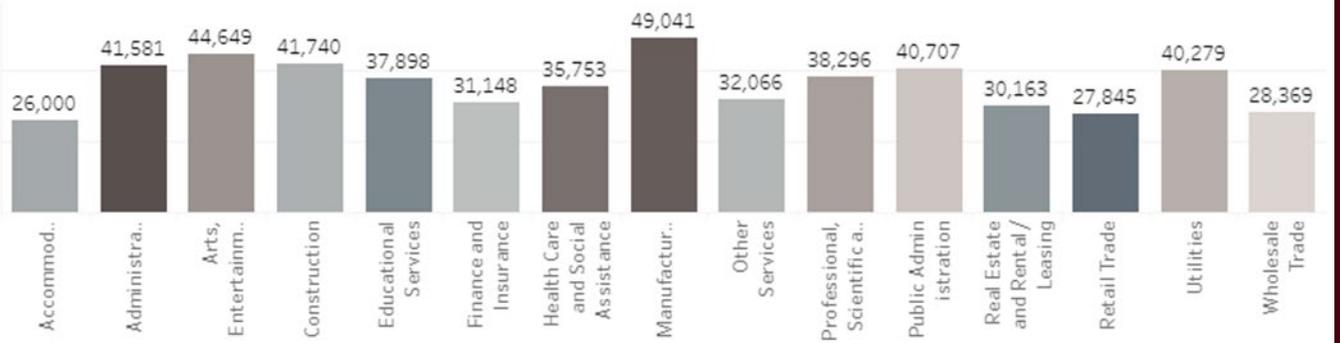
Response Rate



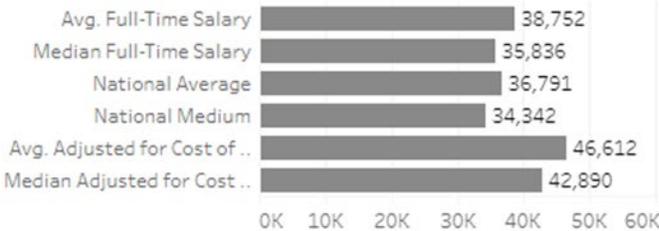
Post-Graduate Outcome



Industry



Salary



Top Employers

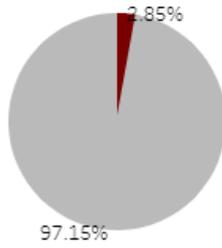


The employment data revealed that the three major concentration areas of employment of our PSSW graduates are in Health Care & Social Assistance (158), Educational Services (37), and Public Administration (29).

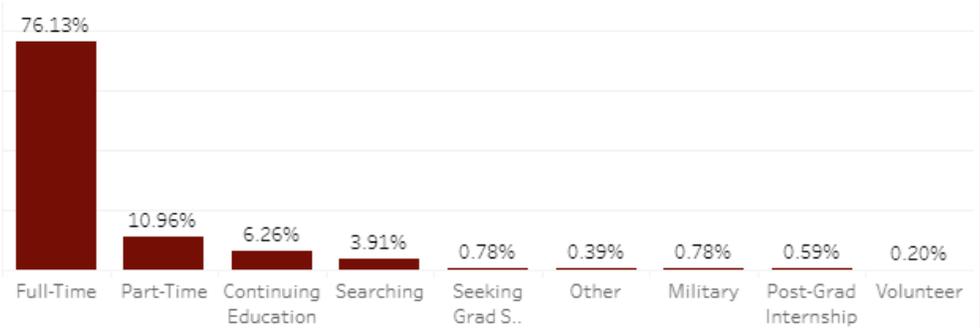
Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice

Employment Stats

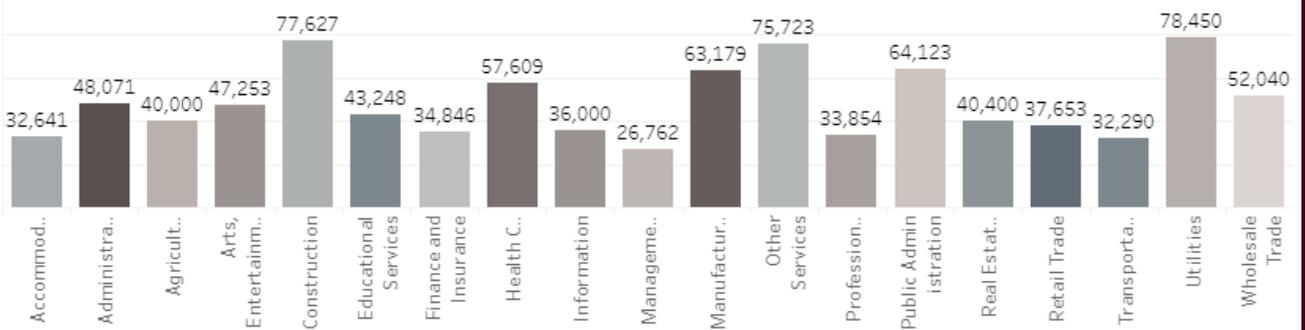
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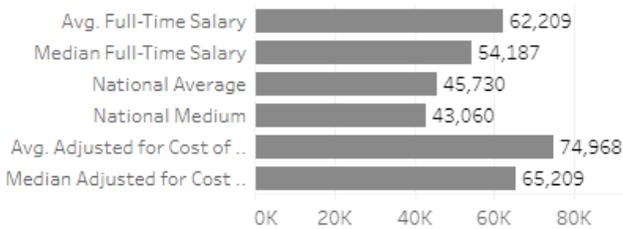
Post-Graduate Outcome



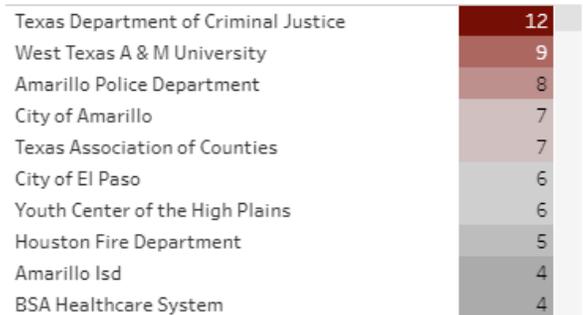
Industry



Salary



Top Employers

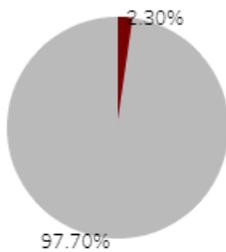


The employment data revealed that the three major concentration areas of employment of our PSCJ graduates are in Public Administration (193), Health Care & Social Assistance (29), and Educational Services (23).

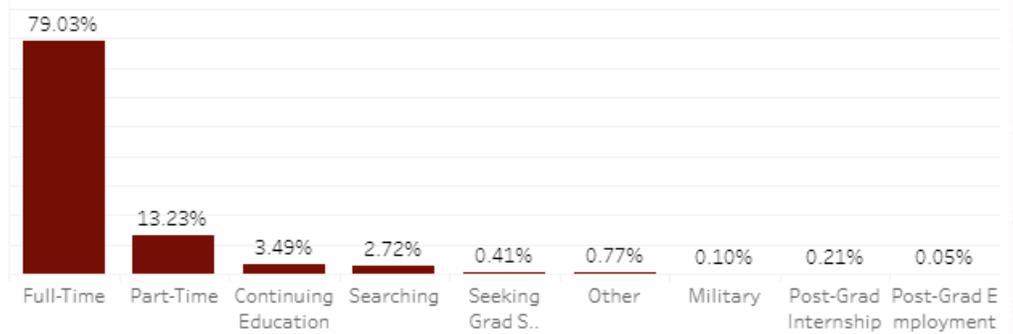
Department of Education

Employment Stats

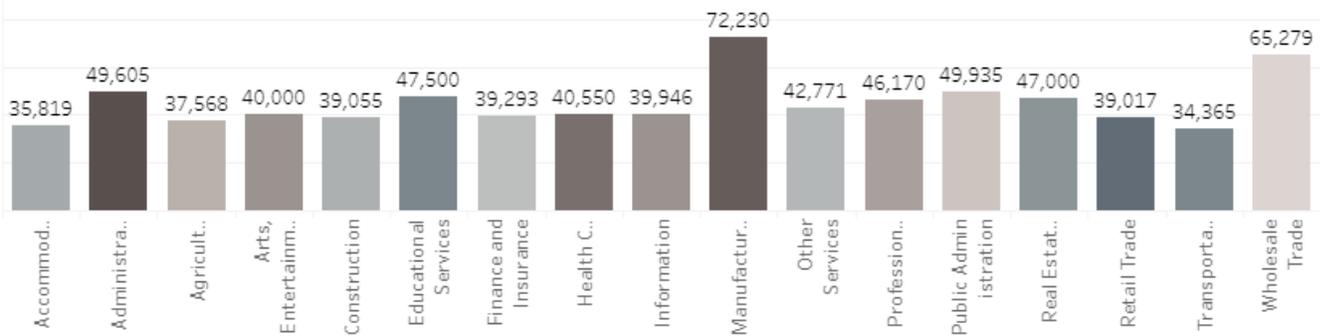
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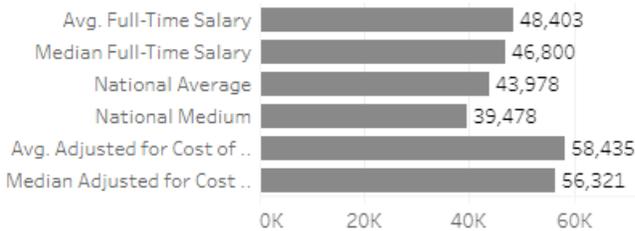
Post-Graduate Outcome



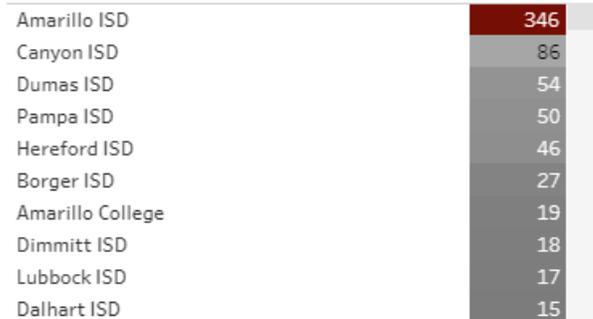
Industry



Salary



Top Employers

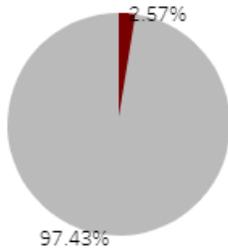


The employment data revealed that the three major concentration areas of employment of our EDUC graduates are in Educational Services (1041), Health Care & Social Assistance (42), and Public Administration (35).

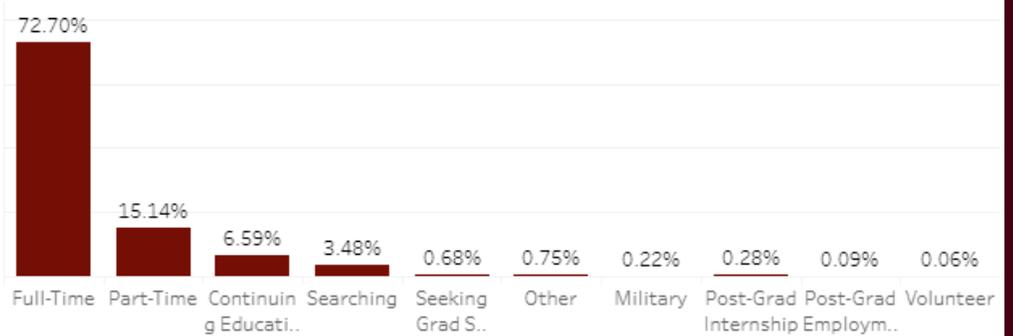
Terry B. Rogers College of Education and Social Sciences

Employment Stats

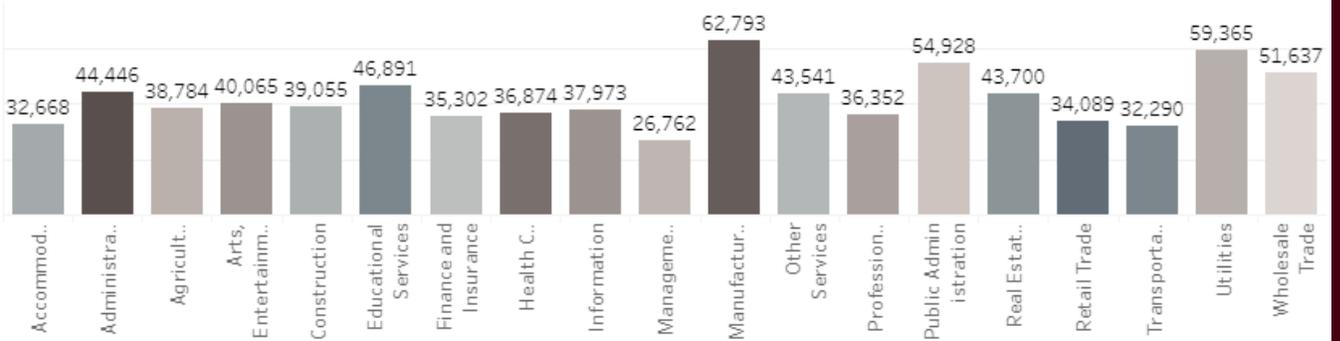
Response Rate



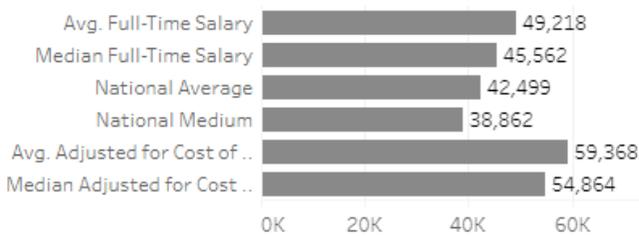
Post-Graduate Outcome



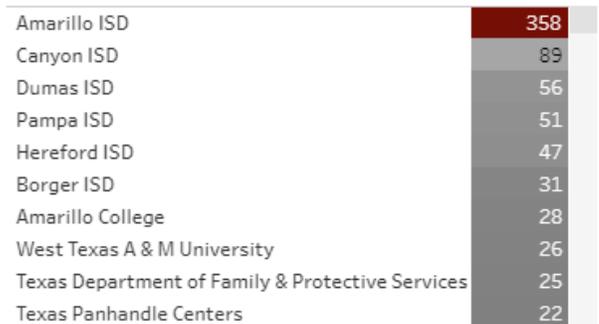
Industry



Salary



Top Employers



The composite employment data revealed that the three major concentration areas of employment of our RCOESS graduates are in Educational Services (1101), Health Care & Social Assistance (257), and Public Administration (229).

Recent Events



Faculty representing WT's social work and emergency management administration programs recently attended the AmTech Career Fair to recruit students.



Faculty in attendance included Nydia Sotelo-Estrada, Ruth De Anda, Dr. Reed Welch, Dr. Justin Moeller, Dr. Ming Xie, and Kristi Bartlett.



EVENTS

Upcoming Events



The **Educators EXPO** is the perfect opportunity to meet and network with employers who may be interested in hiring education students for full-time professional teaching opportunities now or in the future.

Not quite ready to graduate? Come anyway! The district representatives are here to answer your questions about their organizations as well as the world of work. It is a terrific idea to come before you are really searching for a job. This allows you to experience the job fair when the stakes are not so high!

Serious job seekers will be registered for the Educators Networking Night event happening on March 21st! This is an opportunity to learn what district representatives are looking for in their candidates as well as learn some tips and tricks on how to make the most of the EXPO.

EVENTS

Rural Community Leaders Fellowship

Educational and community leaders from around the nation have been selected for the second class of West Texas A&M University's **Rural Community Leaders Fellowship**.

The 2024 summit is scheduled for March 6 and 7 in Harrington Academic Hall WTAMU Amarillo Center, 720 S. Tyler St.



The RCL Fellowship—a program of the educational leadership doctoral program of WT's Terry B. Rogers College of Education and Social Sciences—is an opportunity to identify and recognize particularly talented and service-oriented rural leaders after their dedication and effectiveness has been proven in the field.

Professional Development Opportunities

Join the esteemed Dr. Michelle Simmons, a valued faculty member of the Terry B. Rogers College of Education and Social Science, as she presents **“Strategies and Tips to Prevent the Summer Slide”** at the Partners Resource Network Statewide Webinar on May 7th at 12:15 pm.



EVENTS

I

IGNITE
Early Teacher Success

APRIL 2, 2024

Empower **ASPIRING TEACHERS**
preparing for a career in education.

This one-day conference includes a keynote speaker, interactive breakout sessions, panel discussions, and networking opportunities.

Leave equipped with **TOOLS, STRATEGIES,**
and the *confidence* to thrive through teacher preparation courses,
setting you on a path for long-term success.

WTAMU HARRINGTON HALL
720 S. Tyler St, Downtown Amarillo

IGNITE Early Teacher Success

Please share this opportunity with all pre-service teacher candidates. This is a great way for them to establish a connection between pre-service education and the support network available after graduation, increasing retention in new teachers. WT is also the facility host this semester so we're hoping for a great student turnout.



New Embedded Associate Degrees



West Texas A&M University students soon can earn an associate degree enroute to completing their bachelor's degree, thanks to a new plan approved by The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents that will help combat student indebtedness.

Students who reach 60 semester credit hours — 42 hours of core curriculum courses and 18 hours aligned with their major, will automatically receive associate degrees beginning in fall 2024.

This unique offering is expected to aid in student recruitment and retention. Embedded associate degrees are not meant to compete with community colleges. The ultimate goal is to encourage students to complete their bachelor's degrees, but to provide our students with recognition of a milestone while keeping their indebtedness as low as possible.

Our college will have associate degrees in education and social sciences.

US News Ranking

West Texas A&M University's online bachelor's program ranked No. 45 in the nation and No. 3 in Texas, according to newly released 2024 rankings from U.S. News & World Report. Congratulations to the criminal justice and education programs for making the list!

- The graduate program in criminal justice and public administration rose to No. 17 from No. 30 (and No. 3 in Texas).
- The education program ranked No. 127 in best online Master's in Education programs.



New Education Certification Program

WT Terry B. Rogers College of
Education and Social Sciences
WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

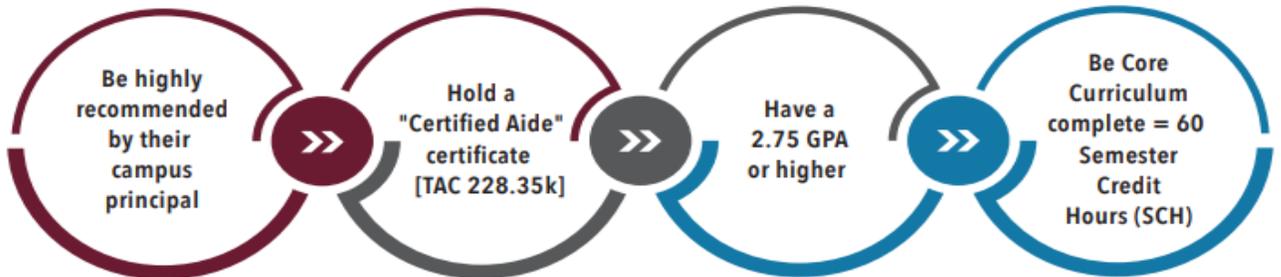
BUFF START



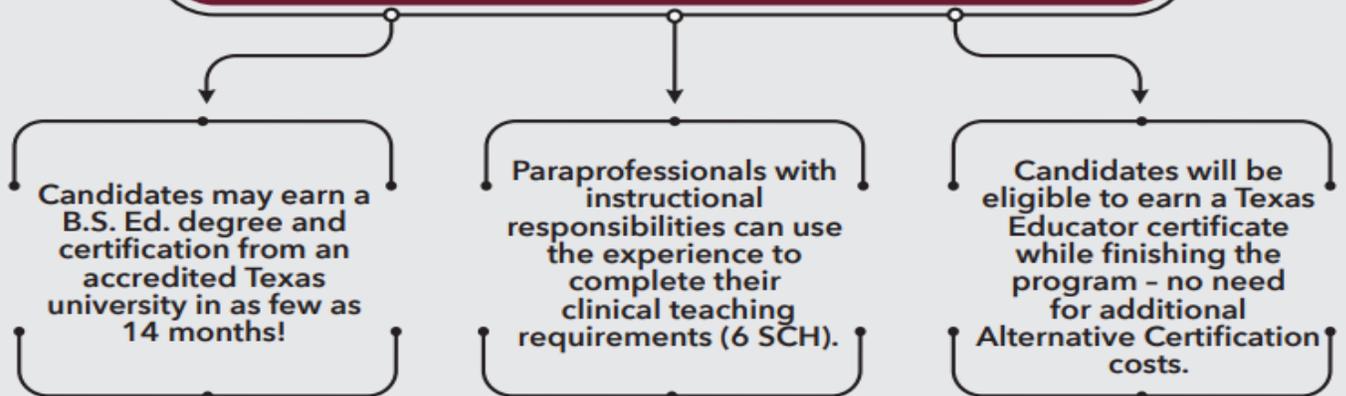
Stampede Track for Accelerated Readiness for Teaching

CURRICULUM AND ACCREDITATION

THE "IDEAL" BUFF-START STUDENT



Key Benefits of Buff Start



Come join the WTAMU STAMPEDE!

BUFF START

WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY (WTAMU)

- ▶ All transcript hours with a “C” or better from an accredited College or University can transfer with no age limitations.
- ▶ 84 out of 120 credit hours can come from outside WTAMU. WTAMU graduates must take their last 36 of advanced hours through WTAMU.
- ▶ WTAMU will try to incorporate district PD expectations as part of the required assignments in the 9 credit hours earned through WTAMU’s Education on Demand (EOD) self-paced courses.
- ▶ Paraprofessionals work responsibilities can be counted as clinical teaching experience in Texas [TAC 228.35]. 490 hours through a minimum of 28 weeks. No need for the additional cost and time of an Alternative Certification.
- ▶ District has the flexibility to fund all costs to candidates through the “WTAMU Sponsored Billing” process.
- ▶ Around \$18,500 for 60 hours. (Financial aid may be available to candidates through the FAFSA/PELL Grants, and opportunities to be awarded WTAMU university/department scholarships).
- ▶ Time to completion for B.S. Ed. Degree from WTAMU and Texas Teacher Certification = 14 months (May - July of the following year).

Currently WTAMU is approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to offer the following four certification pathways 100% online

EC-6

ELAR 4-8

Special Education (EC-12)

ELAR/ Social Studies (4-8)

Office of Educator Preparation Contacts |

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WTAMU has a Long-standing Partnership with the Texas Panhandle

WT125
From the PANHANDLE to the WORLD

Program Framework

- Education on Demand - 9 hours (self-paced, 12 months to finish)
- May Intercession - 3 hours
- Summer Session 1 - 6 hours
- Summer Session 2 - 6 hours
- Fall Semester - 12 hours (w/ 3hrs Clinical Teaching)
- Winter Intercession - 3 hours
- Spring Semester - 12 hours (w/ 3hrs Clinical Teaching)
- May Intercession - 3 hours
- Summer Session 1 - 6 hours

Panhandle Alternative Certification (PACE) Program

For candidates who already have a bachelor's degree or ≥ 60 hours of coursework, the WTAMU PACE program is available if needed.

Department of Education Pinning Ceremony

The Department of Education recently held its first pinning ceremony where 57 future teachers were formally welcomed into their profession.



This new tradition aims to further elevate the teaching profession and validate our students' decision to enter an increasingly demanding field. WT's history of training educators dates back to 1910. Today, about 75 percent of all teachers and administrators throughout the Panhandle region have at least one degree or certificate from WT.

STUDENTS

How to Prepare for SUCCESS as a DOCTORAL Student

INFORMATION SESSION

Explore what our esteemed **Agriculture, Ph.D.** and **Educational Leadership, Ed.D.** have to offer.

Let us help you navigate the specifics of a future doctorate at West Texas A&M University.

March 26, 2024
12:15 pm



WT Graduate School
WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.

Submit Nominations – The Silver Buffalo Award

The Silver Buffalo Award recognizes students whose efforts and talents distinguish themselves, their organizations, and the University with excellence in a national arena per academic year. The timeframe for nominations is annual (for example February 2023 through February 2024), to catch all national recognition accomplishments for the recognition at the All-University Honors event on Friday, April 19th 2024.

Students nominated for a national accomplishment that occurred in the annual timeframe, have already graduated, and are chosen to receive the award by the president, can opt to come back and attend the event to receive the award and be recognized.



Nomination process:

1. The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs seeks nominations from the University (including the President's Council) no later than the close of business on Friday, March 8th. A current member of the WTAMU family community-administration, faculty, staff, or students-can submit a nomination for consideration.
2. Nominations are submitted to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs via the Silver Buffalo Award Form.

Please submit your nomination no later than the close of business on March 8th, 2024.

Student Spotlight

Stan Heisel: Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership Student

Stan, who is currently pursuing his doctoral degree in educational leadership, just obtained his first journal publication. Stan Heisel (Cohort 4) recently had his article titled, *Navigating Pandemic Education in Smallville: Challenges of Socioeconomic Disparities, Leadership Dynamics, and Racial Tensions in a Rural School District* published in the *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership (JCEL)*. His research aims to improve the ability of public schools to prepare for, and respond to crises that may occur.



Joeziv (Joe) Hernandez: Senior Education Major



Joe Hernandez, a member of the McNair Scholars program, recently presented research at a national honors conference. His project is titled *Mexican American in World War II: Patriotism and Civil Rights*. McNair Scholars are an important component in WT's goal of becoming a Regional Research University, as outlined in the University's long-range plan, *WT 125: From the Panhandle to the World*.

Biak Nung: Senior Political Science Major

Biak, a WT Senior, is thriving after a difficult childhood in Burma. He was recently rewarded for his diligence, persistence, and academics. Biak earned the \$5,000 Maxine Durrett Earl Charitable Foundation Scholarship in Political Science as well as the \$4,000 Dr. Travis McBride Scholarship. The Earl foundation provides scholarships across Texas, while the McBride award is within WT's Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice.



Reminders



Submit your student nominations for the WT Chancellor's Century Council Award by Friday, March 8th.

A current member of the WTAMU family community-faculty, staff, or student can submit a nomination for consideration. A student may receive up to \$1,000 to support leadership development opportunities related to the future of Texas higher education, rural community development, and/or Texas public policy.

STUDENTS

Nominations open for **STUDENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**

Student employees are a vital part of WT's campus community, performing invaluable services with enthusiasm and dedication while balancing their individual academic commitments.

The Department of HR and Payroll invites all supervisors, as well as all other faculty and staff, to help us recognize our outstanding student employees.

NOMINATION DEADLINE:
5 p.m. Monday, March 4

Click here or scan the QR code for nomination details and form.

Late submissions will not be considered.

Winners will be announced April 8 at the Student Employee of the Year Ceremony.

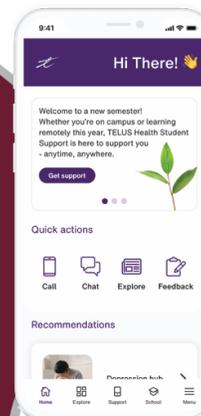
Questions? Email HR@wtamu.edu.



WT WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

TAKE CARE OF YOUR **MENTAL HEALTH**

STUDENT SUPPORT APP



VIRTUAL CARE
PROVIDED BY

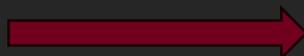


Download the TELUS Health Student Support app for 24/7 access to professional counseling by phone or chat in multiple languages.



**SCAN TO
DOWNLOAD
TODAY!**

Want to send an
email to students?



Let **BUFF** BULLETIN get the word out!

Submissions are due at
10 a.m. Fridays for Monday distribution;
email BuffBulletin@wtamu.edu

Political Activities, Conflicts of Interest

As we progress through the current election year, please refresh your understanding of The Texas A&M University System [Policy 07.03](#) regarding employee ethics and political activities.

1. Endorsement of Candidates and Office Holders

West Texas A&M University may not endorse, recommend, or otherwise indicate political support for any candidate for an elected office, or for any current officeholder of such an office.

2. Discrimination Based on Political Viewpoint

West Texas A&M University will not discriminate against any organization or individual on the basis of political affiliation or doctrine, nor will it favor any political organization or doctrine over another.

3. Political Campaign Events in WTAMU Facilities

Political Campaign Meetings or Speeches. Student organizations that are officially chartered and currently registered with the WTAMU Student Organizations Office, and faculty or staff groups that are recognized by WTAMU and which meet on campus, may sponsor partisan political activities or events on campus. Only organizations of students, faculty or staff that have been recognized and approved may sponsor partisan political activities or events on campus and may use WTAMU symbols, insignia or other identifiable WTAMU mark, in accordance with this rule.

4. Current Officeholders

When a holder of a political office visits West Texas A&M University, the officeholder shall be afforded all due respect and courtesies to which the officeholder is entitled. However, the officeholders may not engage in any partisan political activities, including campaigning for themselves or on behalf of others, unless they comply with the preceding sections of this rule. If the nature of an officeholder's visit is not clear prior to arrival, University officials should use their best efforts to determine in advance if the officeholder will be engaging in any partisan activities during the visit.

5. Use of WTAMU or TAMUS Symbols, Insignia, and Other Identifying Marks

Subject to Section 3, the use of any symbol, insignia, or other identifiable mark of West Texas A&M University or The Texas A&M University System in association with any partisan political activity, including campaigns by political candidates, is prohibited.



Technology Updates

Duo Verified Push

This is a new standard of cyber protection that is being quickly adopted by other universities. IT has already implemented this in areas that contain confidential and sensitive information, and will be implementing this campus-wide. It requires a 6-digit code that ensures authentication can only be completed with direct access to both the device accessing the web resource and the associated mobile device.

Data Classification Standard

This is a new requirement the legislature created aimed at protecting confidential information across the state. With the adoption of the cloud and a modern-day digital workforce, the university has data everywhere. Matt Lauterbach is our lead on this and will work with us to classify and protect university data.

Prohibited Technology Plan

This is being driven by our state government and includes a growing list of hardware and software that are banned from our computer networks. This has become synonymous with TikTok, but it's broader than that.

- If it's a university-owned computer or network, we are required to prevent access and block it through technology controls.
- If it's a personal device, we are to prohibit the technology on devices that conduct state business, like access to email.
- We are required to identify, catalog, and label locations that discuss confidential or sensitive information. The Board of Regents room is a good example. This also includes virtual meeting locations like Microsoft Teams and Zoom. This will most likely impact our E-Sports program, which runs popular online games from Tencent. The system office is looking at this issue right now, with more guidance forthcoming.

AI Guidelines From TAMUS

TAMUS is recommending that AI services that have not been inventoried and/or approved by each member institution be blocked by technology controls. Our first step in compliance with this guidance is to work with this council and identify any AI software-as-a-service that may be in use in our respective areas and then formulate a plan together to work in the spirit of the system's cybersecurity standards related to AI.

Colleague Financial Systems IT Audit

TAMUS Internal Audit is conducting an audit of the internal technology and security controls over our financial systems. The audit has started and will run through June with a final report being presented to the board, likely in August.

WT Alumni Association: College Loyalty Membership

The WT Alumni Association is partnering with each of the colleges in the College Loyalty Program. This program grants you membership to the WT Alumni Association, with all the perks, but it also gives half of your gift to the college of your choosing. These gifts support the college in various ways, such as scholarships, student programs, and more. If you'd like to learn more about the College Loyalty Program, you can click [here](#).

WT Alumni Association
WEST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.

College Loyalty Membership

- WT College Decal
- Half of your gift goes back to your college

*Based on College of your choice

Join the Herd - Support Your College!

Includes All Member Benefits, membership to your College specific network, plus a WT college car decal. Rather than receiving the traditional BUFF perks, half of your membership goes to the college of your choice.

Share

WT Alumni Scholars Program

WT Alumni have the opportunity to nominate high school students for free admission into WT. If you are interested in nominating high school students for our WT Alumni Scholars program, click [here](#) for the submission form.

While exceptions within reasonable bounds can be made, the expectation is nominees will meet the following general requirements:

1. Meet Texas Uniform Admission Policy
2. Top 25% — no minimum ACT/SAT score, 26-50% — 18 ACT or 960 SAT, 51-75% — 21 ACT or 1060 SAT, 76-100% — 23 ACT or 1130 SAT
3. 2.0 GPA



For the Fall of 2024 class, you are encouraged to submit your list as soon as possible and no later than May 1, 2024.

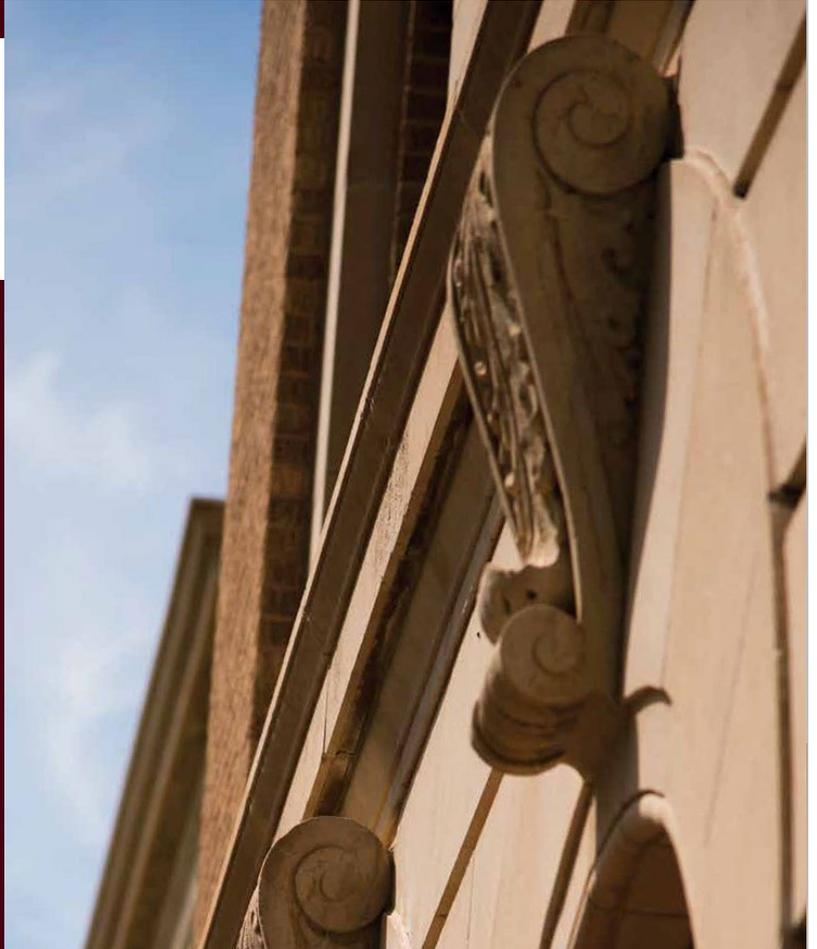
Procedural Updates

PAST, CURRENT, AND FUTURE FACULTY AWARDS

Faculty awards with monetary stipends received from the Terry B. Rogers College of Education and Social Sciences will have a one-year time limitation for expending funds moving forward. The one-year time clock will begin on or about the date of the announcement of the award.

Accordingly, for the teaching, research, and service awards that will be announced in late April / early May 2024, the time to expend said funds will extend from May 1, 2024 to April 30, 2025.

This new procedure will apply to all monetary awards received from the college this academic year. The new time limitation is applicable only to college-level awards. Faculty who have unspent award funds from previous years are encouraged to request and expend those funds by April 30, 2025.



Procedural Updates

CBA CARD USAGE

Business expenses charged to personal credit cards will not be reimbursed except in the most extreme of extenuating circumstances (broadly defined as beyond your control). The CBA card must be used as instructed in the applicable guides accessible from the College Travel Information webpage.

HOTEL V. AIRBNB

In the absence of a justified business need, Airbnb lodging is prohibited. If a legitimate business need exists, written justification must be submitted via email to travel@wtamu.edu and approved before reservations may be made.

GENERAL TRAVEL

All travel-related reservations must be in the WT Faculty or Staff member's name, otherwise the cardholder whose name the reservation was made will be responsible for the charge.

PERSONAL VEHICLE MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT V. RENTAL VEHICLE

If you drive your personal vehicle to your destination, you will be reimbursed the lesser of the actual mileage or the cost to rent a vehicle using the Rental Vehicle vs. Mileage Reimbursement Calculator, which is available on the intranet travel webpage. When renting a vehicle, a completed Motor Vehicle Rental Tax Exemption Certificate must be provided to the vendor. It is available on the intranet travel webpage.

Reminders



Please remain attentive to regularly updating and maintaining your information in [Interfolio](#).

EVERYONE'S Interfolio CVs must be up to date prior to the beginning of the Fall 2024 semester.

Midterm

Friday, March 8th

Spring Break

No Classes, but University Open

Monday, March 11th –

Friday, March 15th

Good Friday

No Classes, but University is Open

Friday, March 29th

Last Class Day

Wednesday, May 1st

Dead Day

Thursday, May 2nd

CALENDAR

TrainTraq Compliance

As a friendly reminder to all full- and part-time faculty and staff, including student workers, the following penalties will be assessed for being 20 days delinquent in any assigned training:

- 1. Graduate Assistants, Student Workers, and Staff Technicians will have their employment terminated by their department.** They are eligible for rehire if the manager chooses to rehire them. The department will be responsible for the cost of a new criminal history check.
- 1. Faculty and Staff employees will have their network access removed until their past-due training is completed.** Also, Faculty and Staff employees who are delinquent in their training at any time during the fiscal year will not be eligible for any merit increases.
- 2. Any part-time employee, including part-time instructors (PTIs) who are in training non-compliance, may not be eligible for rehire in the future.**

March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 2:00: IRB and IACUC Submission Deadline Post-Tenure Review Folder Due to CPE Committee Chair	2
3	4	5 Primary Election Day	6 RCL Fellows Summit	7 RCL Fellows Summit Faculty & Student Research Poster Session & Research Fair; Cornette Library	8 Midterm Last Day for Finals in 8-week Courses	9
10	11 Spring Break	12 Spring Break	13 Spring Break	14 Spring Break	15 Spring Break	16
17	18 Midterm Grades Due 2:00: IRB and IACUC Submission Deadline 11:30: CLD Advisory Board Meeting; Harrington Academic Hall	19 10:00: ARMR Committee meeting; Dean's Conference Room	20 8:40: Educators EXPO ; FUB	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Last Day to Drop/WD with Guaranteed X	29 Good Friday; No Classes	30
31						

Academic Affairs Calendar

Academic Calendar (Registrar)

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 2:00: IRB and IACUC Submission Deadline Registration Opens for Graduate Students	2 Registration Opens for Seniors	3	4 Registration Opens for Juniors	5	6
7	8 Registration Opens for Sophomores	9	10	11 Registration Opens for Freshmen	12	13
14	15 2:00: IRB and IACUC Submission Deadline	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	May 1 August Graduation Applications Due Last Class Day	2 Dead Day 10:00 Spring Faculty Address; Legacy Hall	3 Finals	4 Finals

Academic Affairs Calendar

Academic Calendar (Registrar)