



# WT Student Handbook

## *WTAMU Student Rules 2023-2024*

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## **WTAMU Student Rules**

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the West Texas A&M University community! It is our hope that you find an environment that supports your success as a student, and to that end, this document outlines the community standards that, when upheld by all, will support that environment.

While this document outlines some general prohibitions of conduct contrary to the building of a positive learning environment, it also lays your rights as a student, and we hope you will pay close attention to those.

We seek a community of learners where mutual respect, between and among students, faculty, staff, and administration, allows for meaningful and productive dialogue, and this document represents our intent to balance those rights, responsibilities, and various levels of authority.

We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the processes and guidelines found within. If you have any questions along the way, please contact us in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, located in Suite 102 of the Jack B. Kelley Student Center.

Good luck and Go Buffs!

**Dr. Chris Thomas**

Vice President for Student Affairs

### **Foreword**

West Texas A&M University is a community that is dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Choosing to join the community obligates each member to a code of civilized behavior. The purpose of this handbook is to present the rules that govern the student conduct and student activities at West Texas A&M University and describe faculty and staff obligations in their work with students. These rules result from years of experience, and are the products of student, staff, and faculty thought. Each individual student, faculty member, and staff employee is expected to read this handbook carefully and observe its requirements.

No rule, no matter how carefully worded, can cover all eventualities completed. Beyond specific rules, we should all aspire to conduct ourselves with respect for others, the highest ethical standards, and personal integrity. That is what the Buff Spirit is all about.

## **Part 1 | Academic Integrity Code**

### **1.1 | Academic Dishonesty**

1.1.A | Academic dishonesty includes the commission of any of the following acts. This listing is not exclusive of any other acts that may reasonably be called academic dishonesty. Clarification is provided for each definition by listing some prohibited behaviors.

1.1.A.1 | Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices or materials in any academic exercise. Unauthorized materials may include anything or anyone that gives a student assistance and has not been specifically approved in advance by the instructor.

Examples include:

- i. During an examination, looking at another student's examination or using external aids (for example, books, notes, calculators, conversation with others, or electronic devices) unless specifically allowed in advance by the instructor.
- ii. Having others conduct research, or prepare work, without advance authorization from the instructor.
- iii. Acquiring answers for any assigned work or examination from any unauthorized source. This includes, but is not limited to, using the services of commercial term paper companies, purchasing answer sets to homework from tutoring companies, and obtaining information from students who have previously taken the examination.
- iv. Collaborating with other students in the completion of assigned work, unless specifically authorized by the instructor teaching the course. It is safe to assume that all assignments are to be completed individually unless the instructor indicates otherwise; however, students who are unsure should seek clarification from their instructors.
- v. Other similar acts.

1.1.A.2 | Fabrication: Making up data or results and recording or reporting them; submitting fabricated documents. Examples include:

- i. The intentional invention and unauthorized alteration of any information or citation in any academic exercise.
- ii. Using "invented" information in any laboratory experiment, report of results or academic exercise. It would be improper, for example, to analyze one sample in an experiment and then "invent" data based on that single experiment for several more required analyses.
- iii. Failing to acknowledge the source from which cited information was obtained. For example, a student shall not take a quotation from a book review and then indicate that the quotation was obtained from the book itself.
- iv. Changing information on tests, quizzes, examinations, reports, or any other material that has been graded and resubmitting it as original for the purpose of improving the grade on that material.
- v. Providing a fabricated document to any university employee in order to obtain an excused absence or to satisfy a course requirement; altering an official document such as a transcript.
- vi. Other similar acts.

1.1.A.3 | Falsification: Manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results, such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record. Examples include:



- i. Changing the measurements in an experiment in a laboratory exercise to obtain results more closely conforming to theoretically expected values.
- ii. Other similar acts.

1.1.A.4 | **Multiple Submissions:** Submitting substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor of the class for which the student submits the work. Examples include:

- i. Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course without the instructor's permission.
- ii. Making revisions in a paper or report (including oral presentations) that has been submitted in one class and submitting it for credit in another class without the instructor's permission.
- iii. Representing a group work done in one class as one's own work for the purpose of using it in another class.
- iv. Other similar acts.

1.1.A.5 | **Plagiarism:** The appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or working without giving appropriate credit. Examples include:

- i. Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without crediting the author or creator).
- ii. Failing to credit sources used in a work product in an attempt to pass off the work as one's own.
- iii. Attempting to receive credit for work performed by another, including papers obtained in whole or in part from individuals or other sources. Students are permitted to use the services of a tutor (paid or unpaid), a professional editor, or the University Writing Center to assist them in completing assigned work, unless the instructor explicitly prohibits such assistance. If the student uses such services, the resulting product must be the original work of the student. Purchasing research reports, essays, lab reports, practice sets, or answers to assignments from any person or business are strictly prohibited. Sale of such materials is a violation of both these rules and State law.
- iv. Failing to cite the World Wide Web, databases, or other electronic resources if they are utilized in any way as resource material in an academic exercise.
- v. Other similar acts.

1.1.A.6 | **General Information pertaining to Plagiarism**

- i. **Style Guides:** Instructors are responsible for identifying any specific style/format requirements for the course. Examples include but are not limited to: American Psychological Association (APA) style and Modern Language Association (MLA) style.
- ii. **Direct Quotation:** Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and must be properly acknowledged in text by citation or in a footnote or endnote.
- iii. **Paraphrase:** Prompt acknowledgement is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized, in whole or in part, in one's own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "To paraphrase Locke's comment..." and then conclude with a footnote or endnote identifying the exact reference.
- iv. **Borrowed Facts:** Information gained from reading or research, which is not common knowledge, must be acknowledged.

- v. **Common Knowledge:** Common knowledge includes generally known facts such as the names of leaders in prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc., basic historical information (e.g., George Washington was the first President of the United States). Common knowledge does not require citations.
- vi. **Works Consulted:** Materials that add only to a general understanding of a subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography and need not be footnoted or end noted. Writers should be certain that they have not used specific information from a general source in preparing their work unless it has been appropriately cited. Writers should not include books, papers, or any other type of source in a bibliography, “works cited” list, or a “works consulted” list, unless those materials were used in the research. The practice of citing unused works is sometimes referred to as “padding”.
- vii. **Footnotes, Endnotes, and In-text Citations:** One footnote, endnote, or in-text citation is usually enough to acknowledge indebtedness when several connected sentences are drawn from one source. When direct quotations are used, however, quotation marks must be inserted, and acknowledgement made. Similarly, when a passage is paraphrased, acknowledgement is required.
- viii. **Graphics, Design Products, and Visual Aids:** All graphics, design products, and visual aids from another creator used in academic assignments must reference the source of the material.

1.1.A.7 | **Generative AI:** Generative artificial intelligence (Generative AI) is a computer-based technology that produces a variety of data, such as pictures, videos, music, or words, which may look or sound like a person made them. Generative AI tools appear to be created by humans because they are derived from deep machine learning routines and large language models based on algorithmic comprehension of materials created by humans. West Texas A&M University recognizes that generative AI presents challenges and simultaneously offers stimulating opportunities in higher education. West Texas A&M University offers faculty members the following choices of three distinct approaches to this complex challenge:

- i. **No Use of Generative AI Permitted:** Because writing and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, it is a violation of academic integrity to employ generative AI at any point in this course.
- ii. **Use of Generative AI Permitted Under Some Circumstances with Permission:** There are specific situations within the course where you will use generative AI to explore how the technology can serve as a complimentary learning tool. The course faculty member will inform when, where, and how you may employ these tools, along with guidance for attribution. Any use of outside of faculty defined parameters constitutes a violation of academic integrity.
- iii. **Generative AI Permitted with Attribution:** The use of generative AI is permitted in this course to help prepare assignments and projects. When submitting work, students must clearly identify any generative AI content in contrast to student contributions (e.g., student citation of prompts, the generative AI platform used, the date the prompts were issued, and related). Using an AI tool without proper attribution qualifies as a violation of academic integrity.

1.1.A.8 | **Complicity:** Intentionally or knowingly helping, or attempting to help, another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. Examples include:

- i. Knowingly allowing another to copy from one’s paper during an examination or test.
- ii. Distributing test questions or substantive information about the test without the instructor’s permission.
- iii. Collaborating on academic work knowing that the collaboration will not be reported.



- iv. Taking an examination or test for another student.
- v. Signing another's name on an academic exercise or attendance sheet.
- vi. Conspiring or agreeing with one or more persons to commit, or attempting to commit, any act of academic dishonesty.
- vii. Other similar acts.

## **1.2 | Reporting Violations of WTAMU Academic Integrity Code**

1.2.A | As all members of the WTAMU community are responsible for maintaining the academic integrity of the University's mission, any member of the community may report and is responsible for reporting known violations of the academic integrity code to a faculty member, direct supervisor, academic dean, or Executive Vice President and Provost (EVPP). Violations shall be construed as any prohibited action outlined in the Student Handbook or the violation of any other university code or regulation that impacts the University's ability to meet the academic expectations that it has set forth in its mission.

1.2.B | Any student with knowledge of a violation who fails to report it shall be in violation of academic integrity. A student who believes their work has been stolen, copied, or inappropriately acquired by another student should report that information to the instructor. Additionally, any member of the community who reports themselves in violation of the code before it is likely that another might consider this possibility will be understood as repentant and acting in good faith toward the community as a whole. Though the confession will not excuse the student from the violation, the act will be considered with great weight by all hearing/sanctioning bodies and the violation should not result in suspension or expulsion except in the most extreme cases.

1.2.C | Before reporting a suspected violation, the accusing party should make a reasonable attempt to collect evidence (eyewitnesses, material facts, etc.) to present the case at a hearing. Teaching faculty who suspect a violation should confer with the suspected violation(s) and attempt to resolve the case at that point. If the faculty member and student can mutually consent to a solution, the faculty member should complete an Academic Integrity Code Violation Review Form (AICVRF) regarding the WT Academic Integrity Code. This form is to be signed by the student, faculty member, direct supervisor, and dean, then forwarded to the EVPP office for signature where it will be placed in the student's file.

1.2.D | A faculty member can choose to report to their direct supervisor. Additionally, if the faculty member and accused students cannot agree upon a resolution, or if the faculty member believes that suspension or expulsion is the only fair sanction, the case should immediately be reported, by the faculty member and in writing, to the appropriate direct supervisor.

## **1.3 | Initial Finding of Fact and Review of Case**

1.3.A | In a case where a non-teaching member of the WTAMU community reports a suspected integrity violation, the case will be referred to the appropriate faculty member, direct supervisor, or dean for initial review. The referral will come from the WTAMU community member to whom the suspected act was first reported.

1.3.B | In a case where a resolution between the student and faculty member has been reached, an AICVRF will be completed by the faculty member, signed by all parties, direct supervisor, and dean, and forwarded to the EVPP office to be placed in the student's file.

1.3.C | In a case where a resolution between the student and the faculty member cannot be reached, all materials will be presented to the direct supervisor who will then review the case (including evidence, students and professor testimony, any documents, etc.), determine if a violation occurred, and, in the case of a finding of violation, impose through their dean's office, then forward to the EVPP for the appropriate sanction. The direct supervisor will then notify both the student and the faculty member of their decision, as well as inform the student of their right to appeal to the College Integrity Committee (CIC).

1.3.D | Each college will create a CIC as needed. It will be comprised of the college dean (who will chair the committee and vote only in case of a tie), three students (appointed by Student Senate) and three faculty members from the college (one appointed by the dean for a two-year term, one chosen by the student, and one chosen by the dean). Should the dean feel that their chairing the committee would present some conflict of interest, they recuse themselves through the VPAA's office and have another dean appointed to chair the hearing.

1.3.E | In the case of the finding of guilt, the direct supervisor will forward this finding to the VPAA's office to be placed in the student's file. Upon any subsequent violation by the student (if another AICVRF, direct supervisor sanction or any combination is already present in the student's file), the EVPP office will notify the dean and have them examine the file to determine if a trend of violation needs to be addressed.

1.3.F | For undergraduate students, "dean" in this document refers to the dean of the college in which the most recent violation occurred. For graduate students, "dean" refers to the dean of the Graduate School. If the dean feels that there is a trend of violation, the dean will impose or request that the EVPP impose the appropriate sanction. The dean will then notify the student of their decision, as well as inform the student of their right to appeal to the CIC.

1.3.G | Should the student desire to appeal either a direct supervisor's or dean's decision, the student will notify the dean that they request an appeal hearing before a CIC. The notification must be in writing and delivered to the dean within ten (10) days of the student's initial notification of the direct supervisor's or dean's findings. Such an appeal must specify if the student is appealing the finding of violation or the fairness of the sanction.

#### **1.4 | Hearings Before a College Integrity Committee (CIC)**

1.4.A | The CIC functions only as an appeal committee. This committee will confer to hear the facts of the case and to render judgment regarding the appropriateness of the original finding and/or sanction.

- i. Once an appeal hearing has been requested, the dean's office will make a reasonable attempt to notify:
  - a. The appealing party and any accusing parties (as well as the accusing party's witnesses);
  - b. Any faculty member(s) involved; and
  - c. The selected members of the committee, not less than seven (7) working days before the scheduled hearing.
- ii. These time frames are contingent upon the academic calendar and the necessity of bringing closure to a situation and, at the discretion of the dean, may be adjusted as deemed necessary.
- iii. If the student is appealing the finding of violation itself, the accuser has the burden of proving their case by the preponderance of the evidence (proof that leads a reasonable person to conclude that the facts in issue are more likely to have occurred than not).
- iv. If the student is appealing the sanctions, only facts presented before the committee or that are present in the student's file (and have bearing on the present case) may be considered in judging the fairness of

the original sanction. It is the responsibility of the appealing student to offer evidence that supports a different sanction.

- v. The appealing party, during the course of the appeal, may, at their own expense, seek advice of legal counsel, or a legal advisor. Counsel may advise the student but may not present at the appeal. Additionally, the appealing party may have one person accompany them to the hearing. This person cannot act as a witness.
- vi. An opportunity will be provided for the appealing party to present their version of the facts and to present other evidence, including witnesses, in support of their appeal. Witnesses not having information directly pertaining to the appeal may not be allowed. The appealing student should notify their witnesses of their request that they present information at the hearing. The appealing student is responsible for making sure their witnesses attend the hearing and/or for providing any notarized written information or official university reports (the student may request these through the presiding dean's office) that they would like considered at the appeal. The appealing party, through the dean, will also have the right to hear and question evidence. The dean may impose reasonable limitations upon the presentation of evidence and the questioning of witnesses.
- vii. If the student chooses not to testify at the appeal, it will be assumed that the student revokes their appeal. Evidence that shows the student has been contacted should be entered into the record. In the event that the accused is late for the hearing, the CIC will assume that the student has chosen not to attend the appeal and the appeal will be withdrawn.
- viii. Disorderly or disruptive behavior by any individual in the appeal process may, at the discretion of the dean, result in the removal of that individual from the hearing and the hearing may continue in their absence. The University will provide a recording secretary. For sanctions resulting in less than suspension or expulsion, the recording will be destroyed following the conclusion of the appeal. Suspension/expulsion sanctions result in records being maintained permanently in the Office of Academic Affairs. The appealing party may, at their expense, make a personal recording of the hearing. Appeal hearings will be confidential with the exception of those directly hearing, or involved, in the case.

## **1.5 | Findings of a CIC**

1.5.A | The CIC is not responsible for adhering to strict rules of evidence or bound by precedent. The CIC will consider only the facts presented during the hearing and the facts already contained in the appealing student's academic file.

1.5.B | At the conclusion of the hearing, the CIC shall meet to adjudicate in a closed session. If the fact of violation is in dispute, the faculty and student members will first vote as to whether the original finding of violation -by faculty member, direct supervisor, or dean- has merit.

1.5.C | In the case that the CIC finds no violation, the student's file will be cleared of all documents that relate solely to this case. If it is the appropriateness of the sanctions that is under appeal, the CIC will vote on the fairness of the original sanction. If the CIC finds that the original sanction is not appropriate, the members will discuss alternative sanctions that may include more severe than those originally imposed/recommended.

1.5.D | The CIC may impose any of the sanctions described in the Student Handbook up to and including suspension or expulsion. The CIC can recommend to the dean of the college that suspension or expulsion is the appropriate sanction. In the case of such a recommendation, the case will immediately be referred to the dean and forwarded to the EVPP office, and all further action will be taken by the EVPP.

1.5.E | The appealing party will not be present for the discussion, voting and/or sanctioning portion of the appeal, and the university does not have to record the adjudication.

1.5.F | The CIC will, at the conclusion of the appeal, discuss its findings with the appealing party. Additionally, the dean's office will forward a written statement of the findings and the formal action to be taken by the university to the student within five (5) working days, as defined by the university.

## **1.6 | Student Registration**

1.6.A | Student Identification Cards: Upon initial registration, each student is issued a student identification card (more commonly called a Buffalo Gold Card or Buff ID). This card, designed to be a career identification card, is the property of West Texas A&M University and is validated each semester upon payment of fees.

- i. Possession, alteration, use or attempted use of an ID card for the purpose of identification or to receive services, by anyone other than the person whose name, ID number and photo appear on the card, is considered unauthorized use. The offender will be subject to penalties and confiscation of the ID card by university officials.
- ii. A student is required to produce their identification card upon the request of a university official.
- iii. It is a student's responsibility to report a lost or stolen identification card immediately by calling (806)-651-4653, Monday through Friday between 8am and 5pm. Students will be assessed a fee to replace the lost or stolen card.
- iv. The name as submitted at the time of the application to West Texas A&M University establishes the official record for the student at the university. This record is considered an official record for the State of Texas. Any change of name request must be accompanied by legal federal or state documentation. A social security card or driver's license cannot be used as documentation to request a change of name; a birth certificate, passport, court issued name change document, marriage license, or common-law certificate are acceptable.

1.6.B | Current Address: To avoid missing important communications from the university, it is the student's responsibility to keep the registrar informed of current, local, and permanent addresses. Communications mailed to either address of record, or to a student's official WT email account, will be deemed adequate notice.

- i. Every student is required to register when entering the university and thereafter as announced by the registrar.
- ii. Students who were previously enrolled at West Texas A&M but did not attend class through the official census date of the previous long semester must apply for readmission.
- iii. Registration is not complete until the student has paid their fees by the prescribed deadline.

1.6.C | Curriculum Violation: Degree-seeking graduate and undergraduate students.

- i. A student is expected to register for a schedule of courses that follows the program of study for a degree in their college. A student who elects not to follow the program of study must obtain approval from their academic advisor, department head or college dean or designee, and the dean or designee of the college offering the courses. A student who fails to obtain approval may be, by their dean or designee, held from registering, removed from the inappropriate course(s) and/or required to register for a prescribed schedule of courses.

- ii. A student whose work is unsatisfactory, or who is on scholastic probation, may be required by their college, or department, to register for a prescribed schedule.
- iii. A student whose work is held from registration because of the scholastic deficiency in a major and who changes their curriculum into a new college may not register for hours in their previous major during the next semester without specific approval from the new dean or designee. Violation of this rule constitutes academic dishonesty.
- iv. A student must be enrolled in order to use the facilities of the university or the time of any member of its staff in connection with work for which they expect to receive academic credit.
- v. A full-time undergraduate student is defined as one who is enrolled in at least 12 semester hours during a fall or spring semester, or either hours in a summer semester. A “Q” grade, or “W”, does not count toward the certification of enrollment status. Only hours for which a student is currently enrolled at West Texas A&M University can be used toward certification of enrollment. During their last semester prior to graduating, if an undergraduate student is enrolled at West Texas A&M in all remaining hours needed to complete their degree and has applied for graduation, they may be certified as a full-time student for that final semester even though they may be enrolled in less than 12 semester hours during a fall or spring semester, or eight (8) hours in the summer semesters.
- vi. Students participating in student teaching, internships, and cooperative education programs, and study abroad programs who are enrolled in less than 12 hours during the fall or spring semester, or either (8) hours in the summer, may be eligible to be certified as a full-time student with the approval of the dean of their college or their designee. These certifications listed above based on exceptions might not be used to qualify for Federal Financial Aid as federal regulations determine financial aid eligibility.
- vii. A full-time graduate student is defined as one who is registered for nine (9) semester hours during a fall or spring semester, or six (6) hours in a summer semester. A “Q” or “W” grade does not count toward the certification of enrollment status. During their last semester prior to graduation, if a graduate student is enrolled at West Texas A&M in all remaining hours needed to complete their degree, has applied for graduation, and does not hold a graduate assistantship, they may be certified as a full-time student for the final semester, even though they may be enrolled in less than nine (9) semester hours during a fall or spring semester, or six (6) hours in a summer semester. Student participating in student teaching, internships, and cooperative education programs who are enrolled in less than nine (9) semester hours during a fall or spring semester, or six (6) hours during a summer semester, may be eligible to be certified as a full-time student with the approval of the dean of the college or their designee. These certifications listed above based on exceptions might not be used to qualify for Federal Financial Aid as federal regulations determine financial aid eligibility.
- viii. A student participating in an advanced dental education graduate program may be classified as full time. These postdoctoral advanced dental specialty curricula require a mandatory course of study and various experiences including extensive patient treatment, internships, external rotations, research, and special studies defined and accepted by West Texas A&M University as adequate to constitute full time enrollment. Federal regulations determine eligibility for financial aid recipients. Policies and procedures within the Scholarship and Financial Aid Office will address enrollment definitions for financial aid purposes.

**1.6.D | Undergraduate Degree Plans:** All degree-seeking undergraduate students admitted to West Texas A&M University in or after Fall 2013 must complete and annually update an undergraduate degree plan.

- i. Initial Submission: All degree-seeking undergraduate students must submit their initial degree plan the term following the term in which they complete 30 semester credit hours. Students admitted with 30 or more cumulative semester credit hours must submit their degree plan the semester they are admitted.
- ii. Annual Review and Resubmission: All degree-seeking undergraduate students must review, update, and resubmit their undergraduate degree plan every year until graduation in accordance with deadlines published in the academic calendar.
- iii. Undergraduate Degree Plan Approval: All initial and resubmitted degree plans must be approved by one or two processes.
  - a. Self-Approval: The undergraduate degree plan as submitted by the student meets 100% of degree requirements.
  - b. Advisor Approval: An academic advisor or designee within the student's home department approves the undergraduate degree plan.
  - c. Registration Holds: Undergraduate students required to submit an undergraduate degree plan who do not have an approved initial or resubmitted undergraduate degree plan on file by the published deadline will be held from registering for the future semester.
  - d. Graduation Requirements: To be a candidate for a degree, a student must complete all academic requirements published in their catalog and meet all applicable requirements and deadlines published in West Texas A&M University student rules.
  - e. Completion of an undergraduate degree plan does not guarantee admission to a specific major or upper division. Federal regulations determine eligibility for financial aid recipients. Policies and procedures within the Scholarships and Financial Aid Office will address enrollment definitions for financial aid purposes.

#### 1.6.E | Undergraduates Registering for Graduate Courses

- i. A senior undergraduate student with a cumulative grade point ratio of at least 3.0 or approval of their academic dean or designee, is eligible to enroll in a graduate course and reserve it for graduate credit by filing a petition obtained from the student's undergraduate college and approved by the course instructor, the student's major department head, the dean or designee of the college offering the course, and the dean or designee of the student's undergraduate college. Graduate credit hours used to meet the requirements for a baccalaureate degree may not be used to meet the requirements for a graduate degree.

1.6.F | Registration Holds: A student may be held from registering for future semesters by the following offices, for the following reasons. This is not inclusive of all offices that can hold students, or all types of holds. A student who wishes to resolve the problem that resulted in the hold, or wishes to appeal the placing of the hold, should go to the department that placed the hold on their record.

- i. Office of Graduate Studies, Academic Departments or Colleges – For scholastic deficiency or for disciplinary reasons related to scholastic dishonesty.
- ii. Transportation Services – For an accumulation of overdue, unpaid parking violation citations.
- iii. Student Business Services – For an outstanding bill owed to the university.
- iv. Office of Admissions and Records, Office of Graduate Studies, Academic Departments and Colleges – For students admitted provisionally or on probation, or for information lacking to complete the admission



process and for enrolled students who have submitted questionable records (such as transcripts or residency documents) to the registrar's office.

- v. Office of Title IX, Office of Community Standards, and Department of Residential Living – For disciplinary reasons.
- vi. Athletic Academic Affairs Office – To ensure compliance with NCAA regulations.
- vii. International Student Services – To ensure compliance with university procedures and I.N.S regulations.
- viii. Academic Success Center – To ensure compliance with Texas Success Initiative mandate.

1.6.G | Maximum Schedule: An undergraduate student with an overall grade point ratio of 3.0, or better, may register for a course load in excess of 19 hours in the fall or spring semester, or six (6) hours (seven [7] if part is laboratory) in a summer term with the approval of their advisor. An undergraduate student with an overall grade point ratio of less than 3.0 must obtain approval from their dean or designee before registering for a course load in excess of 19 hours in a fall or spring semester, or six (6) (seven [7] if part is laboratory) in a summer term.

1.6.H | Maximum Schedule for Graduate Students: Graduate students may enroll for a maximum of 15 hours during a regular semester, six (6) hours for a 5-week summer session and 12 hours for a 10-week summer session with approval of their college dean or designee. A graduate student may enroll in more than 18 hours (regular semester), nine (9) hours (5-week summer session), or 15 hours (10-week summer session) with approval of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

1.6.I | Prerequisites: It is the responsibility of the student to be sure that course prerequisites are met. All prerequisites must be listed in the appropriate catalog or schedule of classes. A student may register for a course for which they have not met the prerequisites only with the consent of the head of the department in which the course is offered. Failure to meet course prerequisites could result in a student being dropped from the class.

1.6.J | Class Schedules: All classes will meet according to schedules prepared by the registrar. Modification in these schedules, including common night exams, may be made only when authorized by the registrar and approved by the dean or designee of the college in which the course is offered.

1.6.K | Scheduling of Courses: In case a section is dropped, because of insufficient enrollment, a student may substitute other courses approved by their advisor.

1.6.L | Change in Schedule: A student may enroll in a class the first five (5) class days of the fall or spring semesters, or during the first four (4) class days of the summer terms or a 10-week summer semester. A student requesting to add the course after these deadlines must have the approval of the student's dean or designee and department.

- i. A student may drop a course with no record during the first twelve class days of a fall or spring semester, and during the first four (4) class days of a summer term, or a 10-week summer semester. Following this period, if approved by the dean of the college or their designee, a student may drop a course without academic penalty through the 60<sup>th</sup> class day of a fall or spring semester, the 15<sup>th</sup> class day of summer term, or the 35<sup>th</sup> class day of a 10-week summer semester.
- ii. Undergraduate students will normally be permitted to four (4) "Q"-drops during their undergraduate studies at West Texas A&M University, regardless of transfer status. State law prohibits students from having more than six (6) dropped courses from all state institutions attended during their undergraduate

career, if they entered higher education as first-time enrolled freshman beginning the 2007 fall semester, and thereafter. For exceptions, see Rule 1.6.L.v.

- iii. Courses “Q”-dropped must have approval of the student’s dean or designee or department as determined by the respective college.
- iv. Undergraduate students will normally be permitted four (4) Q-drops during their undergraduate studies. State law prohibits students from having more than six (6) dropped courses from all state institutions attended during their undergraduate career. “Q”-drops in one-hour courses will not count in the West Texas A&M limit of four (4) but will be included in the State-mandated limit of six (6) dropped courses. If a lecture and companion lab are dropped at the same time, this will count as one “Q”-drop rather than two.
- v. Any course taught on a shortened format or between regularly scheduled terms will have add/drop, Q-grade, and withdrawal dates proportionally the same as if the course were offered in a regular term. These dates will be determined by the registrar’s office.
- vi. A “W” may be approved by the Dean of the college or their designee, if a student is allowed to drop a course anytime during the semester due to unusual or extenuating circumstances. These circumstances can include, but are not limited to:
  - a. A severe illness or other debilitating condition that affects the student’s ability to satisfactorily complete the course.
  - b. The student’s responsibility for the care of a sick, injured, or needy person, if the provision of that care affects the student’s ability to satisfactorily complete the course.
  - c. The death of a person who is considered to be a member of the student’s family, or who is otherwise considered to be a showing of good cause.
  - d. The active-duty service as a member of the Texas National Guard or the armed forces of the United States of either the student or a person who is considered to be a member of the student’s family or who is otherwise considered to have a sufficiently close relationship to the student that the person’s active military service is considered to be a showing of good cause.
  - e. The change of the student’s work schedule that is beyond the control of the student, and that affects the student’s ability to satisfactorily complete the course.
  - f. Other good cause as determined by the dean of the college or their designee.

**1.6.M | Parenting Student:** Per Texas Senate Bill 459, students that identify as a “parenting student”, which is a student enrolled at an institution of higher education who is the parent or legal guardian of a child under 18 years of age, are provided early registration for courses. Prior to the semester registration date, students that meet these requirements will need to contact the Registrar’s Office at 806-651-4911 and notify them of their eligibility status.

## **1.7 | Transfer Credit**

**1.7.A |** Transfer students have earned 12 or more transferable college-level credit at a regionally accredited institution the fall semester, or later, after high school graduation. College credits earned prior to high school graduation (dual credit) and courses taken immediately following high school graduation during the summer do not count towards the 12 needed to classify a student as a transfer student.

**1.7.B |** Applicants who hold an associate degree from a regionally accredited community college, or have a combination of transferable hours, and GPA outlined below, are guaranteed admission:

- i. Transferable Hours GPA.
- ii. 12+ hours and 2.0 or greater cumulative GPA.

1.7.C | Applicants that do not meet admission guarantee criteria above will be evaluated under a competitive review process. Factors considered may include but are not limited to: types of courses taken, rigor of curriculum, pattern of progress, and potential for success.

1.7.D | Students who are currently suspended from another college or university are not eligible for admission to West Texas A&M University.

## **1.8 | English Proficiency**

1.8.A | Any college may require an English Proficiency Examination of its students. Any student who fails the examination may be required to do remedial work in English, as recommended by the head of the student's department and approved by the dean, or designee, of the student's college.

## **1.9 | Student Drop Procedure**

1.9.A | If a faculty member charges a student in one of their classes with a violation of the Academic Integrity Code (AIC) and the student drops the class before the issue has been resolved, the faculty member may submit a grade change at the end of the semester to the Registrar's Office changing the student's grade from "X" to "XF", and indicating that the change is due to a violation of the Academic Integrity Code. This may only occur when the faculty member determines that the appropriate penalty for the AIC violation is a failing grade in the class.

## **1.10 | Withdrawal Procedure**

1.10.A | Withdrawing from WT: Withdrawing is dropping all classes in a semester (with the option of returning). Withdrawing, or dropping your last class, cannot be accomplished through Buff Advisor. Withdrawing by the deadline can be done through:

- i. Before Withdrawing: If there is anything that WTAMU can do to assist you in remaining enrolled, please contact The Registrar Office via email at [registrar@wtamu.edu](mailto:registrar@wtamu.edu). This office is available to advocate for your needs and assist with any questions or concerns you may have.
- ii. Completing and submitting the electronic withdrawal form.
- iii. In person at the Office of the Registrar.

1.10.B | Involuntary Withdrawal: Students who display dangerous, or disruptive behavior may be given a referral for an evaluation from an off-campus provider, and/or administratively (involuntarily) withdrawn from WTAMU.

- i. Notification of Involuntary Withdrawal: The student will be notified in person, if possible, and also in writing. Students who fail to respond in a timely manner, or otherwise participate in the Involuntary Withdrawal process will not invalidate or delay any action made by the university.
- ii. Cause for Involuntary Withdrawal: Dangerous or disruptive behavior can include, but is not limited to:
  - a. Poses harm to oneself, or demonstrates an inability to care for oneself;
  - b. Substantially interferes with the educational experience of others (including Residential Living);  
or
  - c. Causes a chronic, inordinate use of university resources, such as emergency services, counseling services, or other staff/time services that results in an undue burden on the university.

- iii. Appeal Process: If a student chooses to appeal the university's decision, they must provide this appeal to the Vice President for Student Affairs within five (5) business days. The appeal will be reviewed by our Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT), who will issue a determination within three (3) business days of receiving the information, unless the current information requires further investigation. An appropriate appeal would include:
- Information, or evidence, demonstrating that they are well enough to remain in the university environment.

### 1.11 | Change of Curriculum

1.11.A | Undergraduate students who have completed at least one term of full admission and enrollment at West Texas A&M University may initiate a curriculum change starting ten (10) business days following the posting of final grades of the previous semester and ending on the twentieth (20<sup>th</sup>) class day of the current semester per the academic calendar.

1.11.B | An undergraduate student in their first term of full admission and enrollment at West Texas A&M University may initiate a curriculum change before the end of the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) day of regular classes. Curriculum changes may once again be initiated after final grades have been posted.

1.11.C | Application for curriculum change shall be acted upon by the dean, or designee, of the college concerned. At the time of the change, the dean or designee of the college to which the transfer is being made shall determine if the application is being accepted or rejected. If accepted, the dean, or designee, shall indicate conditions for acceptance, including the date the change will become effective and terms of probation. The decision of the dean, or designee, regarding acceptance or rejection of curriculum change applications and any related conditions is final.

1.11.D | For graduate and professional students, a curriculum change (i.e., a change from one major department to another) is accomplished via petition approved by the original department, the new department and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

### 1.12 | Attendance

1.12.A | Students are responsible for attending the classes in which they are registered. Students who miss classes for reasons of official university business will be given the opportunity to make up for the missed work without penalty. However, students and/or the sponsor/coach of the official university activity must inform individual instructors prior to absence.

1.12.B | Students who miss a week or more of course content due to extenuating circumstances, such as illness or emergency, should contact the Office of Student Affairs for assistance. Upon receipt of the documentation detailing the illness or emergency, Student Affairs will contact each instructor indicated by the student's submission, in writing, explaining the nature of the absence and requesting consideration making up missed work without penalty.

1.12.C | Documents may be sent to the Office of Student Affairs via [www.wtamu.edu/absence](http://www.wtamu.edu/absence), [studentaffairs@wtamu.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@wtamu.edu), fax to (806) 651-2926, call (806) 651-2050, or see <http://www.wtamu.edu/student-support/sees/index.html> for more information.

1.12.D | While the university does not have a standard requirement on attendance, individual instructors have the right to set reasonable and clearly explained attendance standards for their classes. If an attendance requirement is adopted because regular active participation is essential to satisfactory mastery of the course content, the requirement should be reasonable and clearly explained in the course syllabus.

1.12.E | If a student wishes to contest the fairness of an instructor's attendance policy, a complaint should be filed in accordance with the Student Grievance procedures.

1.12.F | Students called to active duty should tell instructors and must withdraw from the university by notifying the Office of Registrar of that intent in person, by email, by mail, or fax.

1.12.G | When an instructor believes that excessive absences have put a student's grade in jeopardy, the instructors should report this information to Advising Services who will contact the student and will attempt to resolve the problem.

### **1.13 | Distinguished Students**

1.13.A | Each fall and spring semester, undergraduate students are recognized for academic achievement, if they earn a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or higher in at least 12 semester hours of credit. To receive this recognition, a student must have no grade of "F", "XF", or "I".

- i. President's List: 4.0 semester GPA
- ii. Dean's List: 3.5 – 3.9 semester GPA

1.13.B | Graduating with honors: To receive honors notation on the diploma and transcript for a first or second baccalaureate degree, students must have at least a 3.5 GPA (no rounding up) for all work completed at WTAMU with a minimum of 39 hours in residence (courses for which tuition has been paid at WTAMU).

- i. 4.0 – 3.9 GPA: Summa Cum Lade
- ii. 3.89 – 3.75 GPA: Magna Cum Lade
- iii. 3.749 – 3.5: Cum Lade

### **1.14 | Semester Grading**

1.14.A | It is the responsibility of each faculty member to assess the student's performances of that at the end of a semester or summer term each student can be assigned a grade in accordance with the grading system of the university, which will properly show the extent of each student's achievements in the course. The faculty member determines the appropriate grade, subject only to the appeal process.

1.14.B | Each instructor and each department must assume responsibility for maintaining grading standards. Each faculty member must assign grades at the end of the term or semester, as noted in the WTAMU catalog. Final grades are determined only at the end of the semester or term. At the end of the term or semester, the faculty members will submit grades through WTClass for each student within each of their classes.

1.14.C | Public postings of student grades are prohibited. Use of WTClass gradebook allows students private access to their grades. For information regarding cheating/plagiarism, see section on Academic Dishonesty.

1.14.D | Quoted below are suggested meanings and values for grades. Hour's description:

- i. A | 4 – Excellent

- ii. B | 3 – Good
- iii. C | 2 – Average
- iv. D | 1 – Passing
- v. F | 0 – Failing
- vi. XF | 0 – Drop/withdraw failing after midterm (calculated in GPA)
- vii. N | 0 – No grade
- viii. X | Drop/withdraw prior to midterm, or passing after midterm (not calculated in GPA)
- ix. P | Pass grade for developmental courses prior to 2002 fall semester
- x. U | Fail grade for developmental courses prior to 2002 fall semester
- xi. I | Incomplete
- xii. S | Pass in CLEP, SAT, ACT and other specially approved courses
- xiii. IP | These/Dissertation progress

1.14.E | When a grade of Incomplete (I) is given by a faculty member, a Contract for Removal of Incomplete form must be completed and signed by the faculty member and the student. This form is to be turned into the Office of the Registrar. If the incomplete (I) is not changed to a letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F) by the date listed on the form, the incomplete (I) will automatically be changed to a failing grade (F).

1.14.F | When the instructor does not turn in grades by the deadline, the registrar will assign a grade of N to all students in the course. The instructor will then have to complete an individual grade change form for each student enrolled in the course in order to have the final grade recorded on the student's official transcript.

1.14.G | Grade Changes: Changes in grades after the grade has been reported are initiated by the faculty member at the Office of the Registrar on a Grade Change Form. These changes, except for grades I or N, require review and approval of the appropriate direct supervisor.

1.14.H | Grade Challenges Procedure for Students Who Challenge Semester Grades

- i. Academic Appeals Committee (Provost/EVPAA): The Academic Appeals Committee hears appeals involving disputes over final course grades. Membership consists of:
  - a. Chair – Faculty member (appointed by the Provost/EVPAA from among the elected members)
  - b. Six faculty (one from each college, elected by the colleges)
  - c. Six students (appointed by Student Government)
- ii. When the appeal is ready to be heard by the Academic Appeals Committee, the chair chooses a panel of two additional faculty members from the remaining five faculty members, and two students from among the six student members.

1.14.I | Challenge Procedure:

- i. Before a grade-challenge hearing can be scheduled with the committee, the student must make the initial appeal to the faculty member of that particular course; or if the faculty member is no longer with the university, the student must appeal to the head of the department that offered the course. If no resolution is reached at the department head level, the student may appeal to the dean of the college in which the course was offered. If at this point the problem has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the student, the student may file a formal appeal with the Academic Appeals Committee.



- ii. A student desiring a hearing before the Academic Appeals Committee must file a written request for an appeal hearing with the dean of the college in which the course was offered. The dean will forward the appeal to the EVPP.
  - a. Deadline to file a formal grade challenge:
    - i. If the grade being challenged was given during the spring semester, spring intersession or a summer session – October 1.
    - ii. If the grade being challenged was given during the fall semester or winter intersession – March 1.
  - b. The student must understand that the act of filing the written request is construed as authorizing all committee members to have access to all records, including academic, civil, and medical records where relevant and appropriate, that may have a bearing on deliberations.
- iii. The written request for an appeal hearing must be accompanied by a statement from the student outlining the basis for the appeal, copies of any evidence and supporting documents that will be introduced at the hearing, and the names of any witnesses who will be present. The faculty member also has the right to provide evidence or bring witnesses to the committee.
- iv. Upon receipt of the appeal, the EVPP shall notify the chair of the Academic Appeals Committee, who will, within three (3) business days, appoint the panel to hear the appeal. The chair will set a date for a hearing within 10 business days and inform the student, faculty member, the faculty member's department head, and the appropriate dean of the time and place for the hearing. All parties will be given notice five (5) business days before the hearing and the opportunity to confirm their attendance.
- v. Failure of the student to appear without justifiable cause terminates the right to appeal. The faculty member may waive the right to appear at the hearing, and a faculty member who has not waived the right to appear, but fails to appear without notice, will be deemed to have waived the right to appear. No hearing may take place in the absence of the faculty member unless the faculty member has specifically waived the right to appear or has failed to appear without notice.
- vi. The burden of proof shall be upon the student to prove their case by a preponderance of evidence. The student and the faculty member shall have the right to have counsel present, to present such witnesses. Legal counsel, if present, may offer counsel and advice, but may not participate in the hearing.
- vii. All parties shall be afforded the opportunity for reasonable oral argument.
- viii. Upon request, sufficiently in advance by either party, the chair shall cause testimony presented at the hearing to be recorded. A copy of the recording may be obtained from the chair at the expense of the requesting party.
- ix. Immediately after the appeal hearing, the panel will go into closed session to deliberate and render a decision that is approved by at least three members of the panel.
- x. The student and faculty member will be all interested parties, with a copy of the EVPP, will confirm the panel's decision.
- xi. If the panel finds that due to an arbitrary, capricious, or prejudiced action, a student received an unearned grade, the panel will recommend to the faculty member that the grade be changed. If the faculty member is no longer at the university, the department head or dean of the college will facilitate changing the grade.
- xii. Either party has the right to appeal the decision of the panel to the EVPP. Written notice of the appeal by either party will be given to the committee chair, who will notify the other party and the EVPP within

three (3) working days. All documents and any recordings of testimony at the hearing will be forwarded to the EVPP who will review them and render a decision within five (5) working days.

- xiii. There will be no further appeal from the decision of the EVPP.
- xiv. In the event that the faculty member loses the appeal at either level, they will be given the opportunity to change the student's grade. If the faculty member refuses to change the grade, the EVPP will direct the Registrar to change the grade, without prejudice to the faculty member.

### 1.15 | Academic Standing

1.15.A | Scholastic Deficiency/Probation: Continued enrollment in an undergraduate program at WTAMU is dependent upon a student maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward attaining a degree.

- i. To assist students in maintaining satisfactory progress, WTAMU has adopted academic standards designed to provide early identification through academic advising and academic support programs.
- ii. Delineation of Levels of Academic Standing:
  - a. Academic Warning: Is the least severe of the levels in Academic Probation and Suspension and does not appear on a student's official academic record. Academic Warning serves as an opportunity to address any academic difficulties with the goal of preventing a student from being placed on Academic Probation.
    - i. Students must meet with an advisor prior to each semester following inadequate performance to develop a plan and determine any necessary referrals to campus resources. Students must repeat this process every semester they are on Academic Warning.
    - ii. Students who have earned less than 30 hours must meet with an Advising Services advisor.
    - iii. Students who have earned 31 or more hours must meet with their academic advisor based on their major's advising model (see [www.wtamu.edu/advising](http://www.wtamu.edu/advising)). If the academic advisor is not available, the student should meet with the appropriate department head. If both the faculty advisor and department head are not available, the student should meet with the appropriate associate dean or dean of the college.
    - iv. At the end of the semester in which a student is on Academic Warning, the student will either:
      - 1. Be removed from warning status by earning at least 2.0 semester GPA and completing at least 75% of the courses in which they are officially enrolled, or
      - 2. Continue on academic warning (WRN2) by earning less than a 2.0 semester GPA or completing less than 75% of the semester credit hours in which they are officially enrolled, but maintaining a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0, or
      - 3. Be placed on Academic Probation by earning less than a 2.0 semester GPA and their cumulative GPA falls below 2.0, and
      - 4. A student remaining on Academic Warning must follow the procedures outlined.
    - v. Students who have received three consecutive semesters of Academic Warning (WRN3) must consult with their college dean or Associate dean.
  - b. Academic Probation: Is an indication of serious academic difficulty that may ultimately lead to suspension from the university. Probation appears on the student's academic record.

- i. Students will be placed on Academic Probation at the end of any semester when their cumulative GPA falls below 2.0.
- ii. Students placed on Academic Probation are required to be re-advised (greenlighted) and complete a Probation Conditions and Plan for Academic Improvement form. Failure to comply may result in the deletion of future semester registrations.
- iii. Students who have earned less than 30 hours must complete the Probation Contract and Plan for Academic Improvement with an Advising Services advisor.
- iv. Students who have earned 31 or more hours must complete the Probation Contract and Plan for Academic Improvement with their academic advisor based on their major's advising model (see [www.wtamu.edu/advising](http://www.wtamu.edu/advising)). If the academic advisor is not available, the student should meet with the appropriate department head. If both faculty advisor and department head are not available, the student should meet with the appropriate associate dean or dean of the college.
- v. The individual meeting with the student to complete the Probation Contract and Plan for Academic Improvement and submit a copy to the Registrar, provide a copy to the student, retain a copy, and send a copy to the student's faculty advisor, if applicable.
- vi. At the end of the semester on which a student is on Academic Probation, the student will either:
  1. Be removed from Academic Probation by earning a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above; or
  2. Continue on Academic Probation by earning at least a 2.0 semester GPA by the cumulative GPA remains below 2.0; or
  3. Be subject to Academic Suspension by failing to earn a semester GPA of 2.0 or higher.

### 1.16 | Classification

1.16.A | A student's class standing is measured by the number of college-level hours completed.

- i. 0 – 29 hours | Freshman
- ii. 30 – 59 hours | Sophomore
- iii. 60 – 89 hours | Junior
- iv. 90 plus hours | Senior

### 1.17 | Degree Requirements

1.17.A | Please see the degree checklist for the year of your first semester of college. Degree must be completed within six years, or a new catalog will be assigned.

### 1.18 | University Honors Program

1.18.A | The William H. and Joyce Attebury Honors Program at WTAMU is a place where exceptional Freshman, transfer, and current students participate in an enriched learning community. The experience shared by all honors students is highlighted by innovative discussion-based teaching, research, study abroad, mentoring, internships, leadership, and a host of wider opportunities. The program, however, provides incoming freshman with a welcoming and supportive environment, as they start their higher education careers and begin an amazing journey at WTAMU.

1.18.B | The program also takes into consideration the fact that Transfer students are each unique with their own previous academic backgrounds, so each student is advised and directed through the program based upon their own personal academic history. Current students who have a year or two experience but those who still have 4 long semesters, are always welcome and encouraged to become a part of the program. Honors faculty exemplify the highest level of teaching excellence and provide honors students with a learning experience like no other.

### **1.19 | Tuition Laws**

1.19.A | Statutory Tuition: Statutory tuition rates are set by the Texas Legislature. The rate for Texas residents is \$50 per semester credit hour. The Non-Resident, Out of State rate is \$80 per semester credit hour with the TEC 54.0601 waiver granted the student's first semester. Non-Resident, out of State graduate students that fall below a 3.0 GPA are billed at a rate of \$465 per semester credit hour. Non-Resident, International students are billed at a rate of \$465 per semester credit hour.

1.19.B | Graduate Tuition: Graduate tuition rates are set by the Texas Legislature. The rate for Texas residents is \$50 per semester credit hour. The Non-Resident, Out of State rate is \$80 per semester credit hour.

1.19.C | Texas Education Code 56.014: Requires a portion of a Texas Resident student's designated and differential tuition be set aside as scholarship funds to provide financial assistance for students enrolled with the university. Texas residents are notified by Buff email of the specific amount of their bill designated and differential tuition that has been set aside each semester they are enrolled. This notification is not a bill for amounts due, nor is it a promise of scholarship funds to be awarded to that student. Each student must apply for, and meet eligibility requirements, for any scholarships they desire in order to be awarded.

### **1.20 | Payments, Fees, and Charges**

1.20.A | Students are required to pay tuition, fees, and charges to the university when due. Failure to do so may result in:

- i. The student's being administratively withdrawn and removed from the rolls of the university with loss of credit for academic work performed that semester.
- ii. Assessment of a reinstatement fee.
- iii. Denial of future registration in the university until all past due balances, including late charges, and reinstatement fees, are paid.
- iv. Denial of an official WTAMU transcript until all past due balances, including late charges, and reinstatement fees, are paid.
- v. Removal from on-campus housing.
- vi. Disclosure of the delinquent debt to any credit bureau, collection agency, or attorney.
- vii. Assessment of amounts actually incurred by the university as court costs, attorney's fees, and reasonable cost for collection.
- viii. If a check accepted by the university is returned by the bank on which it is drawn, the person presenting it will be required to pay a returned check service charge. If the check is for tuition or fees, the student's registration for that semester or term may be canceled.
- ix. A student whose registration is canceled for failure to redeem an unpaid check, or checks within a specified grace period, will be assessed a \$50 reinstatement fee prior to being reinstated.

1.20.B | Students whose fees are billed to a sponsor, including, but not limited to, a government agency, will be held responsible for those fees should the sponsor fail to pay.

### **1.21 | Tuition Refunds**

1.21.A | Students that choose not to complete a class for the semester but intend to remain enrolled in other courses for the remainder of the semester should follow the procedure to drop the class. Dropping a course is not appropriate for students enrolled in only one course for the semester. If the student is enrolled in one course and does not wish to complete it, the student should follow the withdrawal process.

1.21.B | Students will have 100% of the charges associated with a dropped course reversed from their university balance, only if the course is dropped by midnight of the census date for the semester. Courses dropped after the census date will be due in full on:

- i. 12<sup>th</sup> class day for Fall and Spring semesters
- ii. 4<sup>th</sup> class day for Summer 1 term
- iii. 4<sup>th</sup> class day for Summer 2 term
- iv. 2<sup>nd</sup> class day for Winter Intersession
- v. 2<sup>nd</sup> class day for Spring Intersession

### **1.22 | Classroom Behavior**

1.22.A | Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class, or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable, or disruptive behavior, will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary actions or a referral to the university's Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, fieldtrips, etc.

### **1.23 | Computing Services: Rules for Responsible Computing**

1.23.A | Use of university computing resources and facilities is a privilege and requires that individual users act in compliance with university rules. The university provides users with an account that permits use of computing resources and facilities within guidelines established by WTAMU. Users must respect the integrity of computing resources and facilities, respect the rights of other users, and comply with all relevant laws (local, state, federal, and international), university rules and contractual agreements. The university reserves the right to limit, restrict or deny computing privileges and access to its information resources for those who violate university rules and/or laws. As an institution of higher learning, WTAMU encourages, supports, and protects freedom of expression and an open environment to pursue scholarly inquiry and to share information. Access to networked computer information in general and to the Internet, in particular, supports the academic community by providing a link to electronic information in a variety of formats and covering all academic disciplines. As with any resource, it is possible to misuse computing resources and facilities and abuse access to the Internet. The following statements address, in general terms, WTAMU's philosophy about computing use.

- i. *Freedom of Expression:* Censorship is not compatible with the goals of WTAMU. The university should not limit access to any information due to its content when it meets the standard of legality.

- ii. **Privacy:** The general right to privacy is extended to the electronic environment to the extent possible. Privacy is mitigated by the Texas Public Information Act, administrative review, computer system administration, and audits. Contents of electronic files will be examined or disclosed only when authorized by their owners, approved by an appropriate university official or required by law.
- iii. **Intellectual Property:** All members of the university community should be aware that property laws apply to the electronic environment. Users should assume that works communicated through a network are subject to copyright unless specifically stated otherwise. Unless permission of the author is obtained, utilization of any electronically transmitted information must comply with the “fair use” principle.
- iv. **Criminal and Illegal Acts:** Computing resources of the university, which include the hardware, software, and network environment, shall not be used for illegal activities. Any such use of these resources will be dealt with by appropriate university authorities and/or other legal and law enforcement agencies. Criminal and illegal use may involve unauthorized access, intentional corruption, or misuse of computing resources, theft, obscenity, child pornography, and racial, ethnic, religious, or sexual harassment.
- v. **Authorized Use:** Computing resources are provided by the university to accomplish tasks related to the university’s mission. Some computers may be dedicated to specific research or teaching missions that limit their use. Computing resources may not be used for unauthorized commercial activities or any illegal activities.

## **Part 2 | Student Life Rules**

### **2.1 | Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

2.1.A | Students have the right to inquire about, and to recommend, improvements in rules and procedures affecting the welfare of students.

2.1.B | All students have the right to inform, or join, any association for the purpose of examining and discussing all questions or concerns to them including questions relating to university actions, procedures, and rules.

2.1.C | Students have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas or speech, the university is allowed to set parameters of time, place, and manner anywhere on university property.

2.1.D | All students shall be treated on an equal basis in all areas and activities of the university, regardless of race, creed, color, religion, gender, age, disability, national origin, and/or sexual orientation.

2.1.E | Students have the right to personal privacy, except as otherwise provided by law.

2.1.F | Students are responsible for regularly attending courses they are enrolled in and maintaining timely communication with faculty and staff through their WT provided email.

### **2.2 | Reporting Allegations of Dishonesty**

2.2.A | To file allegation(s) of dishonesty against student(s) or student organization(s), individuals should complete an Online Incident Report form. The written allegation should describe the action or behavior in question. Individuals may also file a report in person at the Office of Community Standards in the Jack B Kelley Student Center, Suite 102H.



### **2.3 | Leave Policy**

2.3.A | Any pregnant student(s), or student(s) planning to become pregnant, should consult their health care provider to determine what, if any, additional precautions are needed based on their individual situation. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate their needs to the Office of Student Affairs as soon as possible for risk reduction to begin when it can be most effective, and to determine if additional modifications are needed. While the university cannot mandate that the student notify that they are pregnant or are planning to become pregnant, the university strongly recommends that students do provide notification so appropriate steps can be taken to ensure the health of both parent and child. To communicate health circumstances or to request additional information contact the Office of Student Affairs.

### **2.4 | Community Standards**

2.4.A | The Office of Community Standards enforces behavioral standards developed by the University community for students, student organizations, and the related procedures for addressing misconduct. Students should be aware that the Student Conduct process is not a criminal or civil court proceeding.

2.4.B | Students and student organizations are responsible for actions that constitute misconduct, and violate rules outlined within the Student Handbook. Any student or student organization found responsible for misconduct may be subject to Student Conduct sanctions. The university provides a fair and equitable Student Conduct process, utilizing a thorough, neutral, and impartial investigation, from which is generated a prompt resolution.

2.4.C | The Office of Community Standards, and related processes, seek to educate students about their rights and responsibilities while prompting holistic development, self-worth, and mutual respect for all members of the university community. Freedom of discussion, inquiry, and expression is also fostered by an environment in which the privileges of citizenship are protected, and the obligations of citizens are understood.

2.4.D | The Office of Community Standards is committed to an educational and developmental process that balances the interests of individual students with the interests of the university community. No student will be found in violation by university police without sufficient information, and evidence showing that it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred. Any sanctions will be proportionate to the severity of the violation and to the cumulative conduct history of the student.

2.4.E | The Office of Community Standards exists to protect the interests of the community and to challenge those whose behavior is not in accordance with our policies. Sanctions are intended to challenge students' moral and ethical decision-making, and to help bring their behavior into accord with our community expectations and values. When a student is unable to conform their behavior to community expectations, the Student Conduct process may determine that the student should no longer share in the privilege of participating in this community.

2.4.F | Disciplinary Authority: The authority to enact and enforce regulations of the university is vested in the Board of Regents. The responsibility for enforcing the regulations and imposing penalties is delegated to the President of the university and any university officials and President designates. The Vice President for the Division of Student Affairs is the principal agency for the administration of Student Conduct. The Vice President for Student Affairs, or designee, shall implement the student discipline procedures. The VP of Student Affairs,

and Assistant VP of Student Affairs, or designee, will assume responsibility for the investigation of an allegation of misconduct to determine if the complaint has merit.

2.4.G | Jurisdiction: The Student Handbook shall apply to conduct that occurs on university premises and/or at university-sponsored activities or any other activity which adversely affects the university community and/or the pursuit of its objectives and mission. This action may be taken for either affiliated or non-affiliated activities.

- i. The university may act in situations occurring off university premises involving student misconduct demonstrating flagrant disregard for any person or persons; or when a student's or student organization's behavior is judged to threaten the health, safety, and/or property of any individual or group. Using their sole discretion, the VP of Student Affairs, or designee, shall decide whether the Student Handbook shall be applied to conduct occurring off campus, on a case-by-case basis.

2.4.H | Timeline: It is recommended that reports of alleged violations of the Student Handbook should be received by the Office of Community Standards within ten (10) university working days of the alleged incident to initiate Student Conduct procedures.

- i. There is no limit on reporting violations; however, the longer someone waits to report an offense, the more difficult it becomes to obtain information and evidence regarding the incident(s).
- ii. Incident(s) should be resolved within 60 days of notice regarding the incident, not including appeal. This timeline may vary depending on the availability of students to participate in the process, availability of evidence, delays for concurrent criminal investigations, breaks between academic semesters, and other delays.

2.4.I | Notice: Notice is deemed to have been properly provided when written notification is sent to the student's official assigned WTAMU email address, placed in First Class U.S. Mail, campus mail, or personally delivered to the student no less than five (5) university working days prior to the scheduled appearance. The failure of a student to receive notice which is properly delivered does not prevent the Student Conduct proceedings from being carried out. After proper notice has been given to the student, the Student Conduct officer or designee may proceed with the review process and may issue a failure to comply code violation against the student. Note: students are required to keep their most current email address, local address, permanent address, and Cellphone number updated in the student records system at:

<https://www.wtamu.edu/webres/File/Reg%20Change%20of%20Stu%20Info%20Form%202019.pdf>

2.4.J | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): Annually, WTAMU informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended. This act, with which the institution intends to comply fully, was designated to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records, to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings, and to submit an explanatory statement for inclusion in the education record if the outcome of the hearing is unsatisfactory.

- i. Students have the right to file complaints with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office of the Department of Education in Washington, D.C., concerning alleged failures by the university to comply with the act. Written complaints should be directed to:
  - a. Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.

- ii. Local rule/procedure explains in detail the procedures to be used by the institution for compliance with provisions of the act. Copies of the policy may be obtained at the Office of the Registrar, located in Old Main, Room 103 on the WTAMU Campus. Directory information includes a student's name, gender, local, and permanent address, telephone number, date, and the place of birth, marital status, major field of study, classification, enrollment status (full-time, part-time, undergraduate, graduate), participation in recognized activities and sports, height and weight (if a member of an athletic team), date of attendance, degrees, awards, and honors received, the most recent educational institution attended, and other information which would make the student's identify easily traceable. Students have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.
- iii. A school official is:
  - a. A person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff);
  - b. A person or company with whom the university has contracted (such an attorney, auditor, or collection agent);
  - c. A person serving on the Board of Regents; or
  - d. A student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks.
- iv. A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility. Upon request, the university discloses education records without the consent of officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- v. According to FERPA, the university may release information without the student's written consent to the following:
  - a. School officials, as identified by the university, determined by the university to have a legitimate education interest.
  - b. Officials of the other institutions in which the students seek to enroll.
  - c. Persons or organizations providing to the student financial aid or determining financial aid decisions.
  - d. Parents of the student who have established that student's status as a dependent according to IRS code of 1986, Section 152.
  - e. Persons in compliance with judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena.
  - f. Persons in an emergency, if the knowledge of information, in fact, is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student and/or other persons.
  - g. Directory information may be disclosed unless the students or parents' request, in writing, that specific information not be divulged. Requests must be filed with the Office of Registrar by the twelfth (12<sup>th</sup>) class day of each semester. For more information go to:  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/ferpa/index.html>

2.4.K | Disabilities Accommodations Appeals Committee: Students needing accommodations must request them through the Director of the Office of Student Accessibility (OSA). Any approved accommodations will be based on documentation demonstrating eligibility under state and federal law. If a student disagrees with accommodations will be based on documentation demonstrating eligibility under state and federal law. If a

student disagrees with accommodation decisions made by OSA, they may discuss the concern with the Director of OSA. Students must demonstrate that they have made a good-faith effort to resolve the complaint with the OSA Director. If the complaint is still not resolved satisfactorily, the student may visit with the assistant VP of Student Affairs. The assistant VP of Student Affairs may take up to five (5) working days to determine an appropriate resolution. During this process, informal discussions will take place, with all parties involved, to resolve the complaint.

- i. If no informal satisfactory resolution is determined within five (5) working days, the student may request the complaint be referred to the Disabilities Accommodations Appeals Committee. This request must be in writing to the VP of Student Affairs and must contain all the reasons for the appeal. This committee will consist of the following members or designated replacements:
  - a. VP of Student Affairs, Chair
  - b. Assistant EVPP
  - c. Director of Student Medical Services
  - d. Faculty (from special education or other discipline with expertise in disability issues)
- ii. Recommendations of the disability's accommodations appeals committee will be forwarded to the president for final approval and implementation.

2.4.L | Reporter: While WT maintains the individual confidentiality of reporters, the Office of Community Standards can disclose the source who reported the alleged misconduct. Reporters are broken down into one of the following sources:

- i. Student
- ii. Staff/Faculty/University Police Department
- iii. Alumni
- iv. Community Member

## **2.5 | Standard of Evidence**

2.5.A | The standard of proof used in WTAMU Student Conduct proceedings is the preponderance of evidence, or "it is more likely than not that it occurred". All Conduct Officers will make the decision of their cases based on this standard.

## **2.6 | Amnesty**

2.6.A | For Victims: The university provides amnesty to victims who may be hesitant to report to WTAMU officials because they fear that they themselves may be accused of rule/procedure violations, such as underage drinking, at the time of the incident. Educational options will be explored, but no Student Conduct proceedings or conduct record will result.

2.6.B | For Those Who Offer Assistance: To encourage students to offer help and assistance to others, the University pursues a rule/procedure of amnesty for minor violations when students offer help to others in need. At the discretion of the Office of Community Standards, amnesty may also be extended on a case-by-case basis to the person receiving assistance. Educational options will be explored, but no Student Conduct proceedings or conduct record will result.

2.6.C | For Those Who Report Serious Violations: Students who are engaged in minor violations, but who choose to bring related serious violations by others to the attention of the University are offered amnesty for their minor violations. Educational options will be explored, but no Student Conduct proceedings or record will result. Abuse of amnesty requests can result in a decision by the VP of Student Affairs not to extend amnesty to the same person repeatedly.

2.6.D | For Those Who Act in Good Faith: A person acting in good faith who reports or assists in the investigation of a report of an incident, who testifies or otherwise participates in a disciplinary process, may not be subject to disciplinary action. A student who reports being a victim of, or a witness to, an incident of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking may not be subject to institutional disciplinary proceedings.

2.6.E | Anonymity: WTAMU understands the sensitive nature of some incidents of alleged misconduct. Further, the university is mindful of a complainants' desire, in some cases, to report an incident without disclosing their nature or other identifying information. WTAMU will respect a student's request for anonymity to the extent allowed by law. Doing so can often make it more difficult to investigate an incident thoroughly and effectively. The university will work with each student to find the approach that best fits the student's wants and needs in accordance with applicable law.

2.6.F | Retaliation: Retaliation is defined as intentional, adverse action, or attempts at adverse action, (including online) taken that harms an individual as reprisal for filing or participating in a Student Conduct process, grievance process, Title IX investigation, or other protected activity. Any and all forms of retaliation are strictly prohibited.

## **2.7 | Student Conduct Proceedings**

2.7.A | Upon notice of an alleged violation of the Student Handbook, the Office of Community Standards will review allegations of misconduct and assign a Conduct Officer to the case. The Conduct Officer will inquire, gather, and review information about the reported student misconduct and will investigate the accuracy for factual sufficiency. Incidents will not be forwarded for an Initial Conference unless there is reasonable cause to believe a rule or procedure has been violated.

2.7.B | If an initial report of misconduct is filed but does not identify the victim, or the victim is not available, the Conduct Officer will fully investigate the reported incident with the information provided. Unsupported allegation(s) with no credible information will not be forwarded for an Initial Conference.

2.7.C | A Student will be given notice via their WT email of their involvement in an alleged violation of the Student Handbook. When preliminary information indicates that a student is associated with the reported incident, the student will be asked to meet with a Conduct Officer.

### **2.7.D | Student Responsibilities:**

- i. Failure of an alleged party to comply with, or respond to, a notice issued as part of the Student Conduct proceedings and/or failure to appear, may result in a hold placed on the student's account, additional alleged violations and a charge of Failure to Comply.
  - a. Case Resolution Form Completion: In the Informal Process, following the Initial Conference, the Conduct Officer assigned to that case will make a determination of Responsible or Not

- Responsible for each alleged violation. A Case Resolution Form will be sent to the student. The student has three (3) business days to either Accept or Reject this Initial Finding.
- b. Without good cause shown, if the student is late to their designated hearing, the Conduct Officer or Hearing Body may make a determination in their absence, and is not responsible for beginning the hearing over, recalling witnesses, or re-entering any evidence into record.
  - c. Disorder or Disruption: Disorderly or disruptive behavior by any individual during the conduct process may result in removal of the individual from the conduct process, at the discretion of the Student Conduct Officer.
  - d. When information on more than one student is contained in a single education record, each student may inspect the information specifically related to themselves. If a student requests their case documents sections may be redacted to protect confidentiality. If a student requests a recording, and the recording pertains to only the requesting student, arrangements may be made to review the recording.
  - e. Conduct proceedings will be open only to those parties and witnesses involved in the Case. Hearings will not be open to the public, or any form of media or live feeds.
  - f. At the university's discretion, notices and student conduct correspondence will be issued to the student via email to their University email account, to their local and/or permanent address or record, delivered by staff, and shall constitute full and adequate notice. It is the student's responsibility to keep the address of record change or forwarding address. The refusal to accept/receive a letter (sent either by first class mail or certified mail or by staff delivery), or failure to check university email shall not constitute good cause for failure to comply with the content of the official university correspondence. Disciplinary action may be taken against a student for failure to appear after proper notice.

2.7.E | Student Conduct Proceedings: All Student Conduct proceedings will adhere to the following procedures. Student Conduct cases that involved allegations of misconduct begin with the Informal Process. If a student receives a determination through the Informal Process and they reject that decision, their case will move onto the Formal Process. Student Conduct cases that contains complaints or incidents of misconduct involving a registered Student organization of WT will result in the Office of Community Standards initiating the Student Organization Accountability Process (SOAP).

- i. Informal Process: The student will be informed in writing of the allegations made and the date, time, and place of the Initial Conference with their assigned Conduct Officer. This information will be sent to the accused student's WTAMU email address. For university-related correspondence, it is the student's responsibility to check their university email account, check it regularly, and provide an accurate local mailing address.
  - a. Evidence Review: (optional) Prior to the Initial Conference, a student may request to schedule an Evidence Review meeting with the Conduct Officer, or designee. This provides an opportunity for the student to review the evidence, excluding official University Police Department reports on cases pending action in the district attorney's office or while the case is still under investigation. An appointment must be set up with the Office of Community Standards, or designee, located at the Jack B. Kelley Center 102H and available by phone at (806)-651-2389. The following rules apply to Evidence Reviews:



- i. Protected information may be redacted from the documents provided. This could include reporter(s) identity, victim information, and/or other information made confidential under state and federal law.
  - ii. During the Evidence Review case materials will be provided to the student. The student is allowed to take notes but may not take photographs or record images of the materials, and all materials will be collected by staff prior to the end of the meeting.
- b. Initial Conference: The Initial Conference will be conducted by the Conduct officer assigned to the case. The Conduct Officer is responsible for collecting information from all involved parties, including their perspective and any evidence to support their narrative. The Conduct Officer will explain the Student Conduct process and answer any remaining questions from the involved parties.
  - i. Election of an Advisor: Students may elect to bring an advisor of their choosing to the Initial Conference. An advisor, in this context, is an individual selected by the student involved to provide support. An advisor can be a family member, friend, teacher, or attorney. Students are responsible for contacting their assigned Conduct Officer not later than two (2) business days prior to their scheduled Initial Conference to elect for an advisor to be present. An advisor may advise the student, but may not actively participate in the Initial Conference. Advisors who impede or disrupt the Student Conduct process may be removed.
- c. Informal Resolution: After the assigned Conduct Officer has met with all involved parties the Officer will have three (3) business days to issue a determination for each party on whether a student is Responsible or Not Responsible for each alleged violation. When circumstances warrant, the three business-day deadline may be extended. If a student is found Responsible for one or more violations they will be issued a Sanction, and if applicable, Conditions and/or Restrictions. The Conduct Officer will issue notification to each party via their WT email.
- d. Case Resolution Form: A student will receive a Case Resolution Form via their WT email. The Case Resolution Form will contain the Conduct Officer's determination of Responsible or Not Responsible for each alleged violation, along with any applicable rationale for their decision. Upon receipt of the Case Resolution Form the student will have three (3) business days to select one of the following:
  - i. I accept the decision made as a result of my Initial Conference and agree to adhere to all sanctions, conditions, and/or restrictions assigned as a result of a Responsible finding.
  - ii. I reject all or part of the decision made as a result of my Initial Conference and request a Formal Hearing as outlined in the Student Handbook.
    - 1. If a student rejects all or part of the decision made in their Informal Resolution, their case will be assigned to a new Conduct Officer by the Office of Community Standards and referred through the Formal Process.
- e. In-Abstentia: If the student chooses not to appear at the Hearing, no inference may be drawn from this decision. The hearing will proceed, and a decision will be made based on the facts presented. If a Conduct Officer completes an In-Abstentia Hearing they will issue the student notification of their determination via a Case Resolution Form within the specified three (3) business day period the Conduct Officer may finalize their determination.

- ii. **Formal Process:** The student will be informed in writing that their case has been forwarded onto the Formal Process. The assigned Conduct Officer will send notification to the student's WT email no less than five (5) business days prior to the date and time of the Formal Hearing.
- a. **Election of Advisor:** For the Formal Hearing process, the student may elect to be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor can be a family member, friend, teacher, or attorney at their own expense. The advisor may advise the student privately, but may not present or participate in the case. The advisor cannot be a witness to the proceeding. Students must notify their assigned Conduct Officer no later than two (2) business days when electing to have an advisor for the Formal Hearing. Advisors who impede or disrupt the Student Conduct process may be removed.
  - b. **Formal Hearing:** The Formal Hearing will be conducted by the assigned Conduct Officer and recorded. The recording will remain the property of the institution. Deliberations will not be recorded. The university will present evidence supporting the allegations first and has the burden of proving its case by the preponderance of evidence. A determination of the facts will be based only on the evidence as presented. Rules of evidence applicable to civil and criminal cases shall not apply. An opportunity will be provided for the student to present their own version of the facts and to present other evidence in support of the current case including witnesses. Witnesses will also have the right to hear evidence and question the Student Conduct Officer. The Conduct Officer may impose reasonable limitations upon the presentation of evidence and questioning of witnesses. A student may not be compelled to testify. If the student chooses not to testify during the Hearing, no inference may be drawn from this action. The hearing will proceed, and a decision will be made based on the facts presented. Suspension/Expulsion sanctions result in records being maintained in the VP of Student Affairs office.
  - c. **Formal Resolution:** Upon conclusion of the hearing, the assigned Conduct Officer will provide a written statement of the findings, the formal action to be taken by the university, and a description of the appeals process. This will be sent to the student's WT email within five (5) business days of the date of the Formal Hearing.
  - d. **Appeal Procedure:** A student may appeal the decision or the sanction(s), condition(s) and restriction(s) imposed by the Office of Community Standards by submitting a written petition to the VP of Student Affairs office within five (5) business days of receiving the Formal Hearing decision. The Appeal form can be completed at:  
[cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WestTexasAMUniv&layout\\_id=4](http://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WestTexasAMUniv&layout_id=4)
    - i. The petition must clearly set forth the grounds for the appeal, together with the evidence upon which the appeal is based. A disagreement with the decision alone shall not constitute grounds for appeal. The Office of Community Standards has ten (10) business days to make a decision on the appeal. The only proper grounds for appeal are as follows:
      - 1. A procedural (or substantive error) occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, etc.).
      - 2. The discovery of new evidence, unavailable during the original hearing or review of the case, which could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact must be included.

3. The sanctions imposed substantially vary from the range of sanctions normally imposed for similar infractions.
- iii. Student Organization Accountability Process (SOAP Case): All complaints and reported incidents of misconduct will be investigated by the Office of Community Standards. All evidence and case materials will be provided to the Student Organization Accountability Board (SOAB) who will issue a determination of Responsible or Not Responsible, and any Sanctions or Conditions included in the finding.
  - a. Hearing Body: The SOAB will be comprised of:
    - i. Chair - the Director of the Office of Community Standards
    - ii. Two faculty/staff member seats
    - iii. Three trained student board member seats
  - b. Notification: The president or chief student leader of the organization will be notified via WT email of the report and applicable process. This notification will be issued via email to their University account, the student's local and/or permanent address or record, or delivered by staff, and shall constitute full and adequate notice. It is the student's responsibility to keep the address of record change or forwarding address. The refusal to accept/receive a letter (sent either by first class mail, certified mail, email, or by staff delivery) shall not constitute good cause for failure to comply with the content of the official university correspondence.
  - c. Investigations: The Office of Community Standards will conduct a preliminary investigation and may meet with selected members or associated individuals to gather information pertaining to the incident(s) and allegation(s). The Office of Community Standards will create a Summary Report, which will include all evidence collected and case materials available. If the report contains information that supports alleged violations to the Student Handbook, the case will be sent onto the SOAB for a Hearing date, time and location to be scheduled.
  - d. Interim Measures:
    - i. Interim Suspension of Recognition: Based upon a student organization's alleged behavior, the Vice President for Student Affairs, or the Office of Community Standards may impose an interim disciplinary action prior to the initiation of investigation. Reasons for Interim Suspension of a Student Organization include, but are not limited to:
      1. Barring or limiting some, or all of the organization's activities and/or privileges, including but not limited to: social activities, intramural competitions, organizational competitions, eligibility to receive any leadership or responsibility in any university student organization, governing body, publication, or activity, and the ability to represent the university in an official capacity or position.
  - e. SOAB Hearing: Following the receipt of the investigation report, the SOAB will notify involved parties of the Hearing time, date, and location at minimum five (5) business days prior to the date of the Hearing. The university will present evidence supporting the allegations first and has the burden of proving its case by the preponderance of evidence. A determination of the facts will be based only on the evidence as presented. Rules of evidence applicable to civil and criminal cases shall not apply. An opportunity will be provided for the organization to present their own version of the facts and to present other evidence in support of the current case including witnesses. The SOAB may impose reasonable limitations upon the presentation of evidence and questioning of witnesses. A student may not be compelled to testify. If the student

chooses not to testify during the Hearing, no inference may be drawn from this action. The hearing will proceed, and the decision will be made based on the facts presented.

- f. Determinations: Following the SOAB Hearing, the SOAB will have three (3) business days to issue a determination. Determinations will be based upon a preponderance of the evidence and must include:
  - i. A finding of either Responsible or Not Responsible for each alleged violation;
  - ii. Sanctions or conditions for each allegation determined to be a violation.
- g. SOAB Appeal: Organization presidents may appeal a finding of responsibility or the sanction(s), condition(s) and/or restriction(s) imposed by SOAB by submitting a written petition to the VP of Student Affairs office within five (5) business days of receiving the determination. The Appeal form can be completed at:  
[cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WestTexasAMUniv&layout\\_id=4](http://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WestTexasAMUniv&layout_id=4)
  - i. The petition must clearly set forth the grounds for the appeal, together with any evidence upon which the appeal is based. A disagreement with the decision alone shall not constitute grounds for appeal. The VP of Student Affairs has ten (10) business days to make a decision on the appeal. The only proper grounds for appeal are as follows:
    - 1. A procedural (or substantive error) occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, etc.).
    - 2. The discovery of new evidence, unavailable during the original hearing or review of the case, which could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact must be included.
    - 3. The sanctions imposed substantially vary from the range of sanctions normally imposed for similar infractions.

## 2.8 | Interim Measures

2.8.A | The university may take immediate action to prevent misconduct, its recurrence, and address any effects on members of the community. This includes immediate steps to protect parties before the final outcomes of the investigations. These steps will attempt to minimize the burden on a reporter, witness, or alleged, while respecting the due process rights of all. Interim measures can include, but are not limited to:

- i. A hold placed on a student's account, limiting their ability to register for courses, pull transcripts, etc.
- ii. Revocation of access to on campus buildings/areas/halls.
- iii. No Contact order placed between two parties, which prohibits individuals from contacting one another through any means.
- iv. Interim Suspension of a Student: At any point in the process, an alleged may be subject to removal from WT or the program/activity on an emergency basis, provided that an individualized safety and risk analysis (conducted by, or in conjunction with a WTAMU's Behavioral Intervention Team) has determined that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations justifies immediate removal. The interim suspension does not replace the conduct process, which shall proceed on the normal schedule. The student should be notified in writing of this action and reasons for the interim suspension.
  - a. Conduct, on or off campus, which typically results in interim suspension:

- i. A significant and articulable threat to the health or safety of a student or other member(s) of the university community.
- ii. Sexual assault, other forms of sexual misconduct, stalking, and relationship violence that create a hostile environment for the victim, and the remedy for the harassment requires a temporary separation.
- iii. Criminal felony charges related to weapons, drugs, aggravated assault, and/or terroristic threats.
- iv. Severe disruption in the academic community related to erratic behavior, threats, property damage, and/or verbal aggression with another student, where the offending student is uncooperative with staff requests.
- v. Violation of a No Contact determination.
- vi. Retaliatory harm, discrimination, or harassment.

2.8.B | Resources and Referrals: Referrals and/or resources may be offered to students involved in the Conduct Process. These are assessed and issued on a case by case basis. These can include, but are not limited to:

- i. Counseling Services appointment
- ii. Victim's advocate assistance
- iii. Modifications to on-campus housing
- iv. Modifications to academic schedule

2.8.C | Interim Suspensions of a Student organization: If it is determined that a student organization's actions or activities are detrimental to the educational purposes of the university, and/or not in accordance with the Student Handbook, the student organization will lose its official registration with the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership. The registration of a student organization may be temporarily suspended while an investigation is pending involving an alleged violation of registered student organization rules and regulations, as outlined in the Student Handbook. The student organization will be afforded all due process guidelines as described in the Student Handbook. Conduct, on or off campus, of members of a student organization that may results in interim suspension:

- i. Violent or harassment-type behavior.
- ii. Organization events and activities resulting in allegations against individual students that may result in individual student interim suspension.
- iii. Cease and desist directives from regional or national.
- iv. Alcohol/drug rule/procedure violations during recruitment or social events.

2.8.D | Student Conduct Findings: A student conduct officer may impose sanctions, conditions, and/or restrictions as a result of an Informal Resolution or Formal Resolution where a student is found Responsible.

- i. Sanctions: Sanctions are defined as the primary outcome of the alleged violation.
  - a. Disciplinary Reprimand: An official warning that the student's conduct is in violation of WTAMU Student Rules.
  - b. Social Probation (for organizations): A period of time during which a student group or organization will not be allowed to have, host, or attend social gatherings as an entity of their organization.

- c. **Disciplinary Probation:** A period of time during which a student's conduct will be observed and reviewed. Further violations during this time may result in Interim Measures.
  - d. **Deferred Disciplinary Suspension:** A period of time where a disciplinary suspension may be deferred for a period of observation and review.
  - e. **Disciplinary Suspension:** A specific period of time in which a student is not allowed to participate in class or university-related activities.
  - f. **Disciplinary Expulsion:** Occurs when a student is permanently withdrawn and separated from the university.
- ii. **Conditions:** Conditions are additional components of a disciplinary sanction. A condition is usually an educational element that is to occur in conjunction with the assigned sanction. Some examples of conditions include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Personal and/or academic counseling intake session. This condition is attached to the outcome of the intake requiring a certain number of follow-up session to be determined by the intake administrator.
  - b. Educational conditions and/or programs of educational service to the university and/or community.
  - c. Residence hall relocation and/or contract review/cancellation of Residence Hall contract and/or use of dining facilities.
  - d. Restitution or compensation for loss, damage, or injury, which may take the form of appropriate service and/or monetary or material replacement.
  - e. Completion of an alcohol or drug education program.
  - f. Completion of personal growth or development education program. For example, Anger Management, Diversity & Inclusion, Hazing, Stress Management, etc.
  - g. A specified number of hours of community/university service.
  - h. **No Contact Order:** This is an official directive from WT that two parties not have any contact with one another. This mutual No Contact Order asks both students to refrain from communicating in person, through electronic communications, or contacting one another via a third party.
- iii. **Restrictions:** A restriction is an additional component of a disciplinary sanction. A restriction is to occur in conjunction with the sanction and will usually be time specific. Some examples of restrictions include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Revocation of parking privileges.
  - b. Denial of eligibility for holding office in registered student organizations.
  - c. Denial of participation in extracurricular activities.
  - d. Prohibited access to university facilities and/or prohibited direct or indirect contact with members of the university community.
  - e. Loss of privileges on a temporary or permanent basis.

## 2.9 | Student Conduct Files and Retention

2.9.A | **Record Retention:** Student records, disciplinary records, and other reporting records will be retained and removed per the current and approved TAMU system records retention schedule, <http://www.tamus.edu/legal/records-management>. Disciplinary records resulting in suspension or expulsion are maintained permanently in the Office of Community Standards.



2.9.B | Copy of File Procedure: Individuals seeking photocopies of files must present the request, in writing, for specific documents to the Office of Community Standards. Upon receipt of the written request, the Office of Community Standards will determine the cost of reproducing the specific documents and send a memo stating the cost. Upon payment, the Office of Community Standards will determine how long it will take to reproduce the documents and will inform the individual of when the documents will be ready. Requests for files are governed by the TAMU system Policies and Regulations 61.01.02.

## **2.10 | Departure from Campus Following Suspension or Dismissal and Request for Reinstatement**

2.10.A | Students who have been required to withdraw from the university by Involuntary Withdrawal or Student Conduct determinations shall leave the premises within three (3) days after being notified, or sooner, if directed by the Office of Community Standards, or the Vice President for Student Affairs.

2.10.B | Students who have been required to withdraw from the university for Student Conduct reasons, and who desire to be reinstated, shall present their requests in writing to the Office of Community Standards.

- i. If a student was removed with a Criminal Trespass Warning (CTW), the student must first contact UPD in order to be escorted to the Office of Community Standards.

2.10.C | Students who have been required to withdraw from the university by Involuntary Withdrawal, and who desire to be reinstated shall follow reenrollment procedures obtained from the Registrar's Office.

2.10.D | After obtaining clearance, students must comply with all deadlines and/or requirements of the current university catalog for readmission.

## **2.11 | Parental Notification**

2.11.A | Violations of alcohol beverages, narcotics, or drugs standard may result in notification to the parents/guardians of dependent students under the age of 21. Typically, parental notification will only take place after a second violation, however, the VP of Student Affairs and their delegate in the Office of Community Standards reserves the right to notify parents based on the severity of an offense, or when there is a concern for the safety or wellbeing of a student, or the campus community.

## **2.12 | Alcohol Beverages - Prohibited**

2.12.A | Use, possession, sale, delivery, manufacture, and/or distribution of alcoholic beverages, except in accordance with federal, state, and local law.

2.12.B | Being under the influence of alcohol and/or intoxication as defined by federal, state, and local law.

## **2.13 | Firearms, Ammunition, and Weapons**

2.13.A | Firearms and Ammunition: The use, or threatened use, of firearms or ammunition on university property or at university function is prohibited. The possession of these items outside of a locked, privately owned, or leased, motor vehicle, unless the person is authorized to carry by the State of Texas. Concealed handguns must be carried in accordance with University Rule 34.06.02W1. These items, or those similar in nature, may not be used for display or decoration in university buildings.

- i. Students living in the Residence Halls:

- a. In accordance with Texas SB 11 (Texas Government Code 411.2031), the “Campus Carry” law and WTAMU Rule 34.06.02W1, only residents who have a license to carry a concealed handgun will be permitted to have their handgun and ammunition in their Residence Hall room. The aforementioned law allows WTAMU to establish rules, regulations, or other provisions concerning the storage of handguns in the Residence Halls. Any student who has a license to carry a concealed handgun and will store the weapon in the Residence Halls must rent a university owned safe. The use of personal safes for this reason is not permitted.
- b. For more information, visit Carrying Concealed Handguns on Campus 34.06.02W1:  
<https://www.wtamu.edu/about/campus-concealed-carry.html>

2.13.B | Explosives, Fireworks, and Weapons: The possession, use or threatened use of these items is strictly prohibited on university property, or at university functions, except for approved events. This includes, but is not limited to: paint ball guns, orbeez guns, stun guns, pellet guns, blow guns, air-powered guns, nun chucks, sling shots, brass knuckles, projectiles, bow and arrows, axes, swords, and knives with blades longer than 6 inches, etc. These items, or those similar in nature, may not be used for display or decoration in university buildings.

2.13.C | The possession of key chain pepper sprays, or kubatons, are allowed; however, use of such items may result in disciplinary proceedings, as these are considered deadly weapons.

## 2.14 | Fire Safety

2.14.A | Persons who jeopardize the security or safety of any resident will be subject to severe disciplinary action. Tampering with fire equipment, or acts of arson, can result in civil prosecution, disciplinary measures, and/or possible fines.

2.14.B | Failing to evacuate a building anytime a fire alarm is sounded will result in disciplinary sanctions. Additionally, causing the fire alarm to sound due to negligence, or by tampering with equipment, may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, remuneration of fees assessed by local authorities.

2.14.C | Fire Drills: The university will hold fire drills to acquaint the people with fire evacuation procedures. All people are required to follow directions during the drills. Failure to evacuate the building may result in disciplinary action, a monetary fine, a possible suspension.

2.14.D | Fire Equipment: It is imperative that fire and safety equipment functions properly when it is needed, the following acts are prohibited:

- i. Tampering or playing with fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, exit lights, emergency lights, or door and door frame fire-rating labels.
- ii. Tampering with or pulling a fire alarm under false pretense.
- iii. Removing smoke detector batteries, or otherwise rendering a smoke detector inoperable.
- iv. Propping open fire doors.
- v. Obstructing halls and stairwells with furniture, debris, and other materials.
- vi. Hanging objects from smoke detectors and sprinklers.
- vii. Presence on fire escapes in non-emergency situations.

2.14.E | Smoke Detectors: All rooms and offices are equipped with smoke detectors. People that detect a problem with their smoke detector should contact the hall staff immediately. Disciplinary action will result if the

smoke detector is removed or otherwise renders the detector inoperative. Disciplinary action could also result for persons who cause potential fire hazards through unsafe practices (i.e., overloading circuits, use of inappropriate extension cords, power taps, use of unauthorized cooking appliances, etc.).

2.14.F | Sprinkler Systems: The university is not responsible for damage caused by the sprinkler system. Residents who cause the system to activate will be held accountable for any damage caused to their personal property, other residents' property, and to university property. Residents tampering with the system will be fined based on state regulations and will face disciplinary and possible legal action. Sprinkler systems are very sensitive. Please be aware of the following:

- i. Never cover a sprinkler head.
- ii. Do not hang items from the sprinkler head or piping.
- iii. Sprinkler heads may never be obstructed or altered.
- iv. Nothing may be stored within 18 inches of the sprinkler head.
- v. Any items that hits the sprinkler head may cause it to activate.
- vi. The sprinkler system is activated by contact or heat, not smoke.

2.14.G | Open Flames: No items that have open flames, flammable fuels, or open coils may be used in any campus building. This includes, but is not limited to, candles, lanterns, heaters, and incense. These items will be confiscated immediately.

## **2.15 | Failure to Comply and Disorderly Conduct**

2.15.A | Disruptive Activity: Activity that interferes with the teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings, residential communities, academic mission or pursuits, free flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic on university premises, or other university missions, processes, or functions, including public-service functions or other university activities.

2.15.B | Harmful, Threatening, or Endangering Conduct: Intentional or reckless behavior that harms, threatens, or endangers the physical or emotional health or safety of self or others, including but not limited to:

- i. Physical or Verbal Abuse or Assault: Assault is threatening someone with imminent bodily injury, intentionally causing bodily injury, or intentionally causing physical contact when the person knows such contact will be considered offensive.
- ii. Threats: Written or verbal act that would cause significant distress or fear in a reasonable person, or that a reasonable person would interpret as a serious expression of a threat or intent to inflict bodily harm upon specific individuals or groups of individuals.
- iii. Intimidation: An implied threat, or act that causes a reasonable fear of harm in another.

2.15.C | Failure to Comply: Failure to comply with a reasonable directive and/or request, or to present student identification, or identify oneself, to any university official acting in the performance of their position.

## **2.16 | Damage, Destruction, Tampering with or Vandalism of Property**

2.16.A | Behavior that damages, destroys, tampers with, vandalizes or litters any property of this, or another educational institution, or of another person or entity on university premises, or at university-sponsored activities.

## **2.17 | Abuse of the Student Conduct System**

- 2.17.A | Failure of a student to respond to a notification to appear before a student conduct officer during any stage of the conduct process.
- 2.17.B | Falsification, distortion, or misrepresentation of information in Conduct Proceedings.
- 2.17.C | Filing an allegation known to be without merit or cause.
- 2.17.D | Discouraging, or attempting to discourage an individual's proper participation in, or use of, the Conduct Process, Disciplinary Proceedings, etc.
- 2.17.E | Influencing, or attempting to influence, the impartiality of a member of a disciplinary body prior to and/or during the disciplinary proceedings.
- 2.17.F | Influencing, or attempting to influence, another person to commit an abuse of the discipline system.
- 2.17.G | Failure to comply with the sanction(s), condition(s), and/or restriction(s) imposed by a Student Conduct Officer under the Student Handbook.

## **2.18 | Harassment**

- 2.18.A | Behavior that is severe, pervasive, or persistent, to a degree that a reasonable person similarly situated would be prevented from accessing an education opportunity of benefit. This behavior includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, coercion, and/or acts that occur on social media.

## **2.19 | Sexual Misconduct**

- 2.19.A | Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct, or attempted conduct, of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive, that it unreasonably interferes with the student's educational experience, or creates a hostile educational environment.
- 2.19.B | Sexual Exploitation: Taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for the benefit of oneself or a third party. Prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to:
- i. Photography or video recording of another person in a sexual, intimate, or private act, without that person's full knowledge and consent.
  - ii. Purposeful distribution or dissemination of sexual or intimate images or recordings of another person, without that person's full knowledge and consent.
  - iii. Sexual voyeurism.
  - iv. Inducing another to expose one's genitals, or private areas.
  - v. Prostituting another student.
  - vi. Engaging in sexual activity while knowingly infected with an STD.
- 2.19.C | Public Indecency: Engaging in private or sexual acts in a publicly viewable location, such that it is offensive to accepted standards of decency. Including, but not limited to, exposing one's genitals or private area(s), public urination, defecation, and/or public sex acts.

2.19.D | Nonconsensual Sexual Contact: Intentional sexual touching, however slight, and with any object or part of one's body, of another's private areas without consent. Private area includes buttocks, breasts, mouth, genitals, groin areas, or other bodily orifice.

## 2.20 | Hammock Regulations

2.20.A | Attaching rope, wire, or other material, or device, to any tree, shrub, bush, or plant is prohibited on university property. Designated hammock areas exist in multiple locations on campus. Hammocks must not be attached to anything other than the established posts in these designated areas.

## 2.21 | Animals on Campus

2.21.A | Animals will not be allowed to run at large on campus and must be leashed at all times. Animals shall not be left unattended, or secured to university property.

2.21.B | Students are not allowed to engage with wild animals while on university property. Wild animals may include but are not limited to; squirrels, feral cats, skunks, geese, pigeons, etc. Students found to be responsible for, including but not limited to; feeding, attempting to capture, harm, or engaging with wild animals on university campus will be subject to disciplinary action.

2.21.C | With the exception of fish (limited to 20-gallon aquarium), those trained for work, or emotional support, residents are not allowed to keep animals and/or pets in the Residence Halls.

2.21.D | Aquariums must be unplugged, and all animals must vacate the Residence Halls anytime their owner leaves for an extended time.

2.21.E | Emotional Support Animals (ESAs): An ESA is an animal that provides therapy, comfort, and/or companionship. Emotional support animals are not considered Service Animals under ADA, and are not allowed in areas that are open to the general public, or attending students classes. ESA's can be approved through the Office of Student Accessibility, but must be approved prior to the animal coming to campus.

- i. ESAs in University Housing: In compliance with federal and state law regarding provision of reasonable accommodations for students who have documented a disability with the Office of Student Accessibility, students can apply to have an Emotional Support Animal on campus. Students are prohibited from bringing animals on campus prior to being formally notified from the university of their approval status.
  - a. ESA Application Process: In compliance with all applicable federal and state laws regarding the provision of reasonable accommodations for students who have a documented disability, the Office of Student Accessibility offers an Emotional Support Animal Application for students residing in on campus housing. Students are encouraged to visit the Office of Student Accessibility to begin this process.
  - b. ESA Approval Status: After receiving final confirmation from the Office of Student Accessibility approving your ESA to be housed in your assigned Residence Hall room, you can bring your animal to campus. Any animal, regardless of purpose, service or emotional support, may not cause a disruption to the campus community.
    - i. Disruption: ESAs that cause significant disruption to the community, damage to university property, or have been documented for consistent issues seen over an extended amount of time, will be subject to documentation through Student Conduct.

Student's found Responsible for one or more violations as a result of the actions of their ESA may be subject to revocation of their approval status by the Office of Student Accessibility.

- ii. Ownership: ESAs are allowed within the approved students assigned room, common area of the students assigned hall, and the routes of entry or exit through the assigned hall. ESAs are prohibited from all other rooms, halls, or campus buildings. Owners must leash their animal at all times, crate the animal during extended leaves, and is responsible for all loss, damage, injury or violation as a result of the action of the animal. Owners found Responsible for violations associated with their ESA are subject to revocation of their approval status from the Office of Student Accessibility, and will be asked to remove the animal.

2.21.F | Service Animals: A Service Animal is defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as a dog that is individually trained to do work, or perform tasks, for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other psychological disabilities. Service animals are allowed in public places, due to the owner's need for the animal at all times. Students who intend on bringing their Service Animal to campus, or to live with them in the Residence Halls, must go through the Office of Student Accessibility (OSA) to complete an application for this accommodation.

2.21.G | Approved Animals on Campus: Students who apply through the Office of Student Accessibility for a Service Animal or ESA to reside with them in the Residence Halls, must obtain approval from the Director of OSA prior to the animal coming to campus. The approval status of a student to have an ESA or Service Animal is reliant upon both animal and handler behavior, see Handler's Responsibilities for more information.

2.21.H | Handler's Responsibilities: An approved ESA or Service Animal has one handler, the student who applied for the accommodation. That is the only person authorized to handle the animal. If a Service Animal or ESA is found to be disruptive or violating any of the rules surrounding approval status, the student will be documented through Student Conduct, which may result in the approval status being revoked. Handler responsibilities and expectations include, but are not limited to:

- i. The approved animal must be under the control of its handler at all times.
- ii. The approved animal must be leashed at all times, unless the individual's disability prevents the use of these devices, or the use of these devices interferes with the service animals' ability to perform safe or effective work/task(s). In this case, the handler must maintain control of the approved animal through voice, signal, or other effective measures.
- iii. The handler is responsible for the overall supervision and care of the approved animal. This includes, but is not limited to: feeding, grooming, and veterinary care.
- iv. Disruptive behavior from an approved animal includes, but is not limited to, uncontrollable barking, approaching or jumping on people, or trying to get away from the handler.

## 2.22 | Illegal Substances – Prohibited

2.22.A | Use, possession, sale, delivery, manufacture, distribution, and/or being under the influence of any narcotic, drug, and/or medicine prescribed to another person, chemical compound, or other controlled substance, except in accordance with federal, state, and local law, is prohibited.



2.22.B | Possession of drug-related paraphernalia, except in accordance with federal, state, or local law, is prohibited.

2.22.C | Smoking/Tobacco: The West Texas A&M University (WTAMU) campus is a smoke-free campus. The use of tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco products (i.e., vape pens, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, and hookahs), legal and illegal smoking products are prohibited at any university property, facility, and/or state vehicle. This will include the use of these products in personal vehicles while on university property. All buildings on the WTAMU campus are tobacco free.

## **2.23 | Food & Beverages**

2.23.A | The sale of food and beverages is prohibited without the appropriate, and prior, approval from necessary university officials is prohibited. The consumption of food and beverages in academic buildings and libraries shall be confined to the concession's area and designed common areas.

## **2.24 | Misuse of Transportation**

2.24.A | Use of skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, bicycles, or other similar modes of transportation in university buildings, or on university premises, in such a manner as to constitute a safety hazard or cause damage to university, or personal property, is prohibited.

2.24.B | The use, possession, charging, or storage of self-balancing boards, or similar personal devices, within university buildings, including the Residence Halls, is prohibited.

2.24.C | Bicycles and scooters need to be secured to university provided bike racks, or designated university scooter/charging stations. Any property in violation of these rules will be impounded by the University Police Department. These items are not permitted in any university buildings.

2.24.D | Battery Powered Scooters & Other Transportation Devices: Electric scooters are available for campus visitors, students, staff, and faculty in outdoor sections of the WT campus. Those who utilize electric scooters must operate them according to campus rules and regulations. The following rules apply to the use of electric scooters on campus:

- i. Scooters are not allowed inside any university-owned buildings.
- ii. Users are responsible for following all traffic laws. This includes, but is not limited to, stopping at stop signs and stoplights, yielding, and not surpassing the speed limit.
- iii. Scooters should be operated in areas where bicycle traffic is allowed.
- iv. Scooters must be operated in a safe manner, and may be subject to Student Conduct sanctions if operated in a manner that is determined to be reckless.
- v. Scooters are meant for single riders only.
- vi. Scooters should be parked in preferred designated scooter parking spaces/areas when possible.
- vii. Be mindful not to impede pedestrian and ADA access. Do not park on sidewalks, ADA ramps, curb cuts, or staircases.
- viii. Access to electric scooters may be limited by the university or the City of Canyon, at any time.

2.24.E | WTAMU has the right to revoke scooter privileges on campus for anyone found in violation of the Student Rules outlined in the WTAMU Student Handbook.

2.24.F | If you see a battery-powered scooter/bike/hover board inside a building, please ask the individual to take it outside. The lithium batteries could pose a fire hazard inside the buildings.

2.24.G | Reckless riders should be reported within the Bird app, or the Office of Community Standards at [studentconduct@wtamu.edu](mailto:studentconduct@wtamu.edu).

2.24.H | Drones: All drone flights on the WTAMU campus must be approved by the University Police Department (UPD), which works in conjunction with the Environmental Health and Safety and Risk Management offices; unless the flight has an approved flight plan in a designated location prior to the flight taking place. FAA guidelines for all drone flights can be found at [www.knowbeforeyoufly.org](http://www.knowbeforeyoufly.org). The TAMU system is also finalizing a drone policy which can be found at [www.tamus.edu/legal/policy](http://www.tamus.edu/legal/policy).

2.24.I | Parking Barricades: The University Police Department and Physical Plant often have to block off spaces for special events, construction projects, and routine maintenance. Students caught tampering with cones, barricades, or signs could be subject to disciplinary action.

## **2.25 | Soliciting on Campus**

2.25.A | Solicitation of commercial products or services within the Residence Halls is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: solicitation/sales within student rooms, common areas, and entry areas (inside or outside) of the halls. If sales personnel approach you, do not allow them to enter your room, and inform UPD, or your hall staff immediately.

## **2.26 | Lost, Found, or Abandoned Property**

2.26.A | The WTAMU Police Department is the central depository for all lost and found property on campus. This is established in WTAMU Rule No. 21.99.04.W1 in 1998.

2.26.B | Lost and Found collects, accepts, stores, releases, and disposes of abandoned and found property. Diligent attempts are made to reunite the property with the proper owner. Lost and Found maintains custody of all abandoned/found property until properly disposed of in accordance with TAMUs Regulations and university rules. Found items are held for a minimum of 90 days, at which time they are disposed of in accordance with TAMUs Policy 21.99.04 and WTAMU Rule No. 21.99.04.W1. Persons claiming property must present valid government-issued identification, or their Buff Gold Card.

2.26.C | The Lost and Found is located in Room 104 across the hall from the University Police Department and Parking Services in the Old Sub Building at 301 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Canyon, Tx 79016. The hours of operation are 7:30am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday. Closed weekends and holidays.

## **2.27 | Student Organizations**

2.27.A | The Office of Student Engagement and Leadership is committed to the success of campus organizations because it is through organizations that WTAMU students make connections and learn valuable skills that will help them succeed in life.

2.27.B | All organization will be held to the Student Handbook as well as guidelines given by the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership.

**2.28 | Hazing**

2.28.A | Intentional, knowing, or reckless acts directed against a student, by one person acting alone, or by more than one person, occurring on or off university premises that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of pledging, or associating with, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, seeking and/or maintaining membership in any organization or program whose membership consists of students. Consent and/or acquiescence by a student, or students subjected to hazing, is not a reasonable defense in a disciplinary proceeding. Hazing includes, but is not limited to:

- i. Any type of physical brutality, such as whipping, beating, using a harmful substance on the body, or similar activity.
- ii. Any type of physical activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm, or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of a student, such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or calisthenics.
- iii. Any activity involving consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverages, drug, or other substance which subjects a student to an unreasonable risk of harm, or which adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of a student.
- iv. Any activity that intimidates, or threatens a student with ostracism, subjects a student to extreme mental stress, shame, or humiliation, adversely affect the mental health or dignity of a student, or discourages a student from entering or remaining enrolled at the university, or may reasonably be expected to cause a student to leave the organization, or the university rather than submit to acts described above.
- v. Any activity in which a person solicits, encourages, directs, aids, or attempts to aid another in engaging in hazing; intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly permits hazing to occur; has firsthand knowledge of the planning of a specific hazing incident which has occurred and knowingly fails to report the incident to the Office of Community Standards, or the University Police Department.
- vi. Any activity in which hazing is either condoned or encouraged or any action by an officer or combination of members, pledges, associates, or alumni of the organization of committing, or assisting in the commission of hazing.

2.28.B | Students who are recipients and/or victims of hazing (and who have not perpetrated hazing behavior on others involved in the fact pattern for which they are reporting) and who report the activities to the VP of Student Affairs, and/or the University Police Department, will not be charged with a violation of the Hazing rule. Note: For more information on hazing, see Texas Education Code, Sections 37.151-37.155 and Section 51.936 at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/?link=ED>.

**2.29 | Photography and Recording of Students and Employees**

2.29.A | West Texas A&M University reserves the right to photograph and record (through the use of still, video, audio, or other medium) students and employees on campus and at University-sponsored functions and events. The university reserves the right to use, broadcast, distribute, and/or publish any part of such images, likenesses, voices, appearances, and/or performances for promotional, advertising, educational or other honorable purposes.

**2.30 | Violation of Published University Rules or Regulations**

2.30.A | Violation of any published university rules or regulations that govern the student body or student organizations behavior. Information pertaining to each department or office can be found on their university website pages:

- i. Parking Services Regulations: [http://wtamu.edu/university\\_police/upd-parking-services.aspx](http://wtamu.edu/university_police/upd-parking-services.aspx).
- ii. Residential Living Handbook: <http://wtamu.edu/student-life/residential-living.aspx>.
- iii. Virgil Henson Activities Center Policies: <https://www.wtamu.edu/student-life/recreational-sports/vhac-policies.html>.
- iv. West Texas A&M Operating Rules and Procedures: <https://www.wtamu.edu/about/rules-and-procedures.aspx>.
- v. System Operating Policies: <http://www.tamu.edu/legal/policy>.
- vi. Acceptable Use Policy: <https://www.wtamu.edu/it/files/PDFs/acceptable-use-standard.pdf>.

## **2.31 | Violation of Federal, State, Local Law and/or University Rules and Procedures**

2.31.A | Misconduct which may constitute a violation of federal, state, local laws, and/or WTAMU rule/procedure will be considered a violation of this rule/procedure and will be investigated and adjudicated through the university conduct system. A lack of conviction in any criminal proceeding will not, in and of itself, serve as evidence in a university conduct proceeding.

## **2.32 | Campus Security Report**

2.32.A | The Campus Security Report is available in the Division of Student Affairs or online at: <http://www.wtamu.edu/reports>.

## **2.33 | Behavior Intervention Team (BIT)**

2.33.A | The Behavior Intervention Team (BIT) exists to help promote the development of a healthy campus community at WT. The BIT will be comprised of university staff and faculty appointed by the VP of Student Affairs. BIT's mission is to provide intervention and support to students who may display behavior that causes reason for concern for the welfare of the individual, or the university community. BIT will meet on a weekly basis throughout the regular academic year. During these meetings, cases will be reviewed and determinations will be made on student referrals and intervention plans. In cases where the safety of a student or others is at risk, or when there is significant disruption, or potential disruption, to the learning environment at the university, the BIT has the authority to require a student to complete an intervention plan. Students who do not comply with the directives of the BIT may be referred to Student Conduct.

2.33.B | Referral to university and/or community counseling, or other resources: The BIT may refer the student to Counseling Services for intervention and connection with appropriate university and community resources.

2.33.C | Referral to Student Conduct: The BIT will refer cases to Student Conduct that involve behavior that is in violation of the WTAMU Student Rules.

2.33.D | Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program (DAAPP) West Texas A&M University is dedicated to providing a safe, drug- and alcohol-free environment for students, employees, and visitors. The following Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program (DAAPP) will support WTAMU's commitment to promoting and maintaining an alcohol and drug free campus.

2.33.E | The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 (20 U.S.C. 1101i, 34 C.F.R. Part 86), requires that all colleges adopt and implement a drug and alcohol abuse prevention program (DAAPP) to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs, and alcohol by all students and employees on College premises, or as part of any of its activities. The DAAPP must be distributed annually to all enrolled students and employees.

2.33.F | Threat Assessment: WT is licensed to use the WAVR-21 to assess a student's level of threat to the campus community. Students found to be at high risk for danger to self or others will be required to participate in a Behavioral Intervention Plan.

- i. Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIPs): BIT may work directly with the student to create an Improvement Plan. These will be developed individually and created with the purpose of educational development and student support.

## **PART 3 | Civil Rights and Title IX**

### **3.1 | Title IX, Sex-Based Misconduct and Civil Rights Adjudication Process**

3.1.A | Upon receipt of a complaint, and if deemed to be a Title IX Discrimination complaint, the Office of Title IX will assign the complaint for investigation. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the investigative report and exhibits will be submitted to the Executive Director of Title IX (EDTIX) for adjudication and sanctioning considerations. The EDTIX will then assign the case to a hearing body consisting of one to three (1-3) members, also referred to as Designated Administrators (DAs). A DA is a decision-making entity who determines whether allegations of misconduct rise to the level of a violation based on the evidence provided.

3.1.B | The EDTIX will provide the final investigative report and exhibits, which may be redacted, to the parties. The Director will also provide written notice of the complainant(s) and respondent(s) which will include an acknowledgement of receipt of the complaint along with a description of the adjudication process.

3.1.C | The case will then be submitted to the selected hearing body for adjudication and resolution. Hearings will be conducted in accordance with the Formal Hearing Procedures set forth in this document, and in accordance with the TAMUs Policy 08.01.01 and university rule 08.01.01.W1.

3.1.D | The complainant(s) and respondent(s) will be informed in writing of the date, time, and location of the hearing. This information will be sent to the student's WT email address. For university-related correspondence, it is the student's responsibility to check their university email account, check it regularly, and to provide an accurate local mailing address.

3.1.E | A complainant and a respondent must have an advisor with them at a hearing. In cases in which a party does not have an advisor, the university will provide a trained advisor to assist them in the hearing process.

3.1.F | The burden of proof for the formal hearing will be based on a preponderance of the evidence, which means proof that leads a reasonable person to find that the facts in issue are more likely to have occurred than not. A determination of the facts will be based only on the evidence as presented. The technical rules of evidence applicable to civil and criminal cases shall not apply.

3.1.G | Cross-examination of the complainant, respondent, and any witnesses may not be conducted by the opposing party but must be conducted by their advisor. Questions are to be directed to the conduct officer or hearing panel chair, who will determine whether each question will be admitted into the hearing. If a question is

deemed repetitious, or non-relevant, the decision-maker(s) must explain the decision to exclude it. When parties are subject to cross-examination, the advisor may not answer on behalf of the party.

3.1.H | If a complainant or respondent is late to the hearing, the hearing body reserves the right to make the determination on participation in the hearing, and the hearing body is not responsible for beginning the hearing over, recalling witnesses or re-entering any evidence into the record. If no parties participate in the hearing, a decision will be reached based on evidence gathered prior to the hearing.

3.1.I | Disorderly or disruptive behavior by any individual during the hearing process may result in removal of that individual from the hearing process, at the discretion of the hearing body and the hearing process may continue.

3.1.J | Attendance at a hearing may be in person or may be conducted through remote means, provided that all parties and the conduct officer, or hearing panel, can see and hear one another in real time during the course of the hearing.

3.1.K | If a complainant, respondent, or witness is not in attendance at a live hearing, the conduct officer or hearing panel cannot rely on the previously submitted statements of the absent party in reaching a determination, but may utilize all other evidence, including witnesses who interacted with the absent party, but not hearsay testimony of what the absent party told that individual. A complainant, respondent, or witness statement can also not be utilized in a determination if that person refuses to submit to cross-examination at a live hearing.

3.1.L | The hearing body will record the hearing and that recording remains the property of the institution. Deliberations will not be recorded. FERPA provides that when information on more than one student is contained in a single education record, each student may inspect only the information specifically related to that individual. If the recording pertains to only the requesting student, arrangements may be made to review the recording. An appointment will be required to review the recording, if applicable. Suspension/expulsion sanctions result in records being maintained permanently in the VP of Student Affairs office.

3.1.M | Upon conclusion of the hearing, a written statement of the findings, the formal action to be taken by the university, the rationale for those actions, and a description of the appeals process will be forwarded (delivered or postmarked) to both the complainant(s) and respondent(s) within ten (10) business days, as defined by the university.

3.1.N | Formal Hearings will be closed except for those directly involved in the hearing. Proceedings will not be open to the media, social media, or any form of live streaming (outside of the online hearing platform).

3.1.O | All cases involving sex-based misconduct that are not Title IX are to be investigated and adjudicated under the Title IX procedures previously stated, noting that; the process is to determine whether the allegations are substantiated and, if substantiated, created a hostile environment.

### **3.2 | All Others Civil Rights Complaints (Non-sex Based)**

3.2.A | The following applies to all civil rights complaints based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, and/or veteran status:



- i. The investigative authority will have five (5) business days to create a final draft report and share that document electronically with both the complainant and the respondent.
- ii. The complainant and respondent will have ten (10) business days to review the report and submit responses and/or written, relevant questions that the party wants asked of any other party or witness.
- iii. The investigative authority will provide each party with the other party's questions and answers, and allow for the additional, limited follow-up questions from each, provide each party with the questions and answers and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.
- iv. The investigative authority will have ten (10) business days to complete this process.

3.2.B | The investigative authority must explain to the party proposing the questions any decisions to exclude a question as repetitious or not relevant. The investigative authority will then have five (5) additional business days to prepare a final report for review by OGC and SECO. Once approved by OGC and SECO, the final report shall be submitted directly to the Designated Administrator by the Director.

### **3.3 | Decisions (Non-sex Based Cases) Involving Employees as Respondents**

3.3.A | For a complainant against an employee, or third party, the Designated Administrator will review the investigation report and provide a draft decision to OGC for review within five (5) business days after receiving the investigative authority's report. OGC will coordinate with SECO and provide its review of business days to finalize the decision and provide it to the complainant(s), and respondent(s), and the investigative authority. In cases in which the allegations are substantiated, the final decision will be provided to the respondent's supervisor.

3.2.B | When the respondent(s) is an employee, both the complainant(s) and the respondent(s) may review a copy of the investigation report and exhibits, with admonishments regarding privacy, after the decision is rendered. The report will be redacted in accordance with state and/or federal law.

### **3.4 | Appeal of Decisions and/or Sanctions**

3.4.A | With respect to allegations of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sex-based misconduct, the Designated Administrator's decision and the sanction(s) imposed by the sanctioning authority can be appealed by the complainant(s) and/or the respondent(s), but only on the following bases, as applicable:

- i. A procedural irregularity that affected the outcome.
- ii. New evidence, not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome. The new evidence must be provided at the time of the appeal with the appropriate member appeals form.
- iii. The Executive Director of Title IX, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest, or bias for or against complainant(s) or respondent(s) generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome.
- iv. The appropriateness or severity of the sanctions.

3.4.B | The appeal will be confined to a review of the written documentation and record of the investigation and/or hearing, and pertinent documentation regarding the grounds for appeal. The appeal does not create an entitlement to a new investigation or a full re-hearing, but not necessarily identical. A request for appeal must be submitted in writing, within five (5) business days to the Designated Administrator chairperson after the final decision and sanction have been issued.

3.4.C | Members must notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equitably for both parties. Parties will be given three (3) business days to review the appeal and submit any written response in support of, or challenging, the outcome to the appellate authority.

3.4.D | If the respondent is an employee or third party, the appellate authority will provide a draft decision to OGC for review within five (5) business days after receiving the appeal(s). OGC will coordinate with SECO and provide its review of the draft decision within five (5) business days. The appellate authority will have five (5) additional business days to finalize the decision and provide it to the complainant(s), the respondent(s), and the investigative authority simultaneously, to the extent possible. If the complaint on appeal is substantiated, the respondent's supervisor will also be informed. Circumstances may warrant extensions to the timeframes in this section. The appellant should send extension requests, if needed, to the office, or individual(s) who appointed them. Both the complainant(s) and the respondent(s) must be notified of any extensions in writing.

3.4.E | For student cases, the appellant has ten (10) business days to reach the decision and provide it to the complainant(s), the respondent(s), and the investigative authority simultaneously to the extent possible. Appellants are exempt from obtaining OGC review of the decision prior to issuance but may request assistance from OGC and SECO when needed.

3.4.F | The appellate authority may reach one of the following outcomes:

- i. Affirm the original finding and sanction.
- ii. Affirm the finding and modify the sanction.
- iii. Remand the case to a new conduct officer for review.

### **3.5 | Appeals – Allegations of Discrimination Not Based on Sex**

3.5.A | Any employee disciplined pursuant to this regulation may appeal that action in accordance with System Policy 12.01, Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure; System Policy 32.01, Employee Complaint and Appeals Procedures; System Regulation 32.01.02, Complaint and Appeal Process for Non-faculty Employees; and/or other system policies or regulations as appropriate.

3.5.B | Any student receiving a sanction of separation (expulsion or suspension) pursuant to this regulation may appeal the sanction in accordance with the member rule and/or code of conduct for student grievances.

3.5.C | Employees appealing sanctions issued pursuant to this regulation will receive an unredacted copy of the investigation report and exhibits, upon request, with admonishments regarding privacy.

3.5.D | During business hours, you are strongly urged to contact the Executive Director of Title IX in Old Sub Building Room 108, or by phone (806) 651-3199.

3.5.E | In order to report an alleged violation of the Title IX Sexual Misconduct Policy, you may report directly to the EDTIX at (806) 651-3199, University Police Department at (806) 651-2300, or you may complete the Online complaint form at: <https://apps.wtamu.edu/forms/complaint.php>

## **Part 4 | Residential Living**

### **4.1 | Alcohol Containers**

4.1.A | The possession of any alcohol containers within the Residence Halls is prohibited. Alcohol containers are defined as any container with alcohol in it at the time of purchase. This includes any alcohol containers used for decorative purposes.

### **4.2 | Balconies**

4.2.A | No item should be thrown, pushed, dropped, or allowed to fall from any balcony. Residents should not spit, pour, or drop any materials, including liquids, from a balcony. Residents are not permitted to climb in, or out of, balconies. Residents must use doors to gain access to the balconies. No personal items can be stored on balconies (bicycles, chairs, grills, etc.).

### **4.3 | Business Operations**

4.3.A | Babysitting, Hair Care/Salon, or running any other type of business is not allowed in the Residence Halls.

### **4.4 | Candles and Incense**

4.4.A | “Scentsy” or similar type products are permitted if it is UL/FM approved. Candle warmers are prohibited. Anything that burns, or smolders, is not permitted on campus. This includes candles and incense. This rule includes decorative candles with burned, or unburned wicks. Residents found with these objects will face disciplinary action, and these objects will be confiscated by staff. Confiscated items will be disposed of at the end of each semester.

### **4.5 | Chalking**

4.5.A | The use of chalk on any buildings is prohibited. Students are able to use chalk on campus, under the following conditions:

- i. The use of powdered, temporary chalk.
- ii. Chalking is only on the sidewalk or ground.

4.5.B | Any use of liquid chalk, non-removable materials, or use of profanity will be considered damage to university property and be adjudicated through Student Conduct.

### **4.6 | Damages of Losses**

4.6.A | Residents are responsible for keeping the premises (room/hall) and its contents in good order, free from damage, both by themselves and their guests. Residents will be held accountable for any damage they cause in common areas, university property, and resident rooms.

4.6.B | In situations where no individual can be held accountable for damages, the Office of Residential Living reserves the right to “group bill” all residents that may have been associated with damages. Each resident understands and agrees that they are responsible for the replacement cost for any insurance for loss or theft of personal items. See the Group Billing Section of the Residence Hall Handbook for more information.

#### **4.7 | Decorations**

4.7.A | Pictures, posters, and other items used to decorate a student's room, are encouraged as long as they do not create a health, fire hazard, or cause damage to the room.

4.7.B | Appropriate adhesives: Residents may not nail or drill into the walls. Use of command strips is allowed, however, students are responsible for correct application and removal. If removal causes damage to the wall, cost will be assessed and charged to the student upon check-out.

4.7.C | Decor: Decorations must be limited to no more than 20% of your door and walls, and should not be offensive in nature.

4.7.D | Public View: All decorations visible through the window or on the door should be appropriate. Pictures and other materials that may be considered objectionable should not be displayed in areas that may be visible outside the student's room.

4.7.E | Painting: Residents are not permitted to paint any section of their Residence Hall room. Students will be charged for altering any portion of their room, and/or the cost of repainting.

4.7.F | Lights: Miniature holiday string lights, or rope lights, may be used year-round if: they are appropriately hung/attached to the wall, are UL/FM approved, and are plugged directly into the wall outlet, or approved surge protector.

4.7.G | Holiday Decorations: If students decorate their rooms for the holidays these guidelines must be followed:

- i. Trees and other greenery must be artificial, and must have proof of flame resistance.
- ii. Fire alarm pull stations, fire extinguisher cabinets, smoke detectors, sprinkler heads, and exit signs must not be covered, and exits must not be impeded.

4.7.H | Street/Road Signs: Street/Road signs are considered the property of the respective government agencies where the sign is located and any inappropriate removal or possession by authorized individuals may result in judicial or legal action. Individuals possessing street/road signs may be requested to provide proof of ownership.

4.7.I | Wallpaper and Border: The use of wallpaper and/or border is not permitted within the Residence Halls.

#### **4.8 | Exterior Door Locking**

4.8.A | The exterior doors with card access are always locked. Residents are expected to carry their keys and University ID card to gain access to locked halls. Propping of exterior doors and/or tampering with locks are considered serious security violations. Residents are expected to aid in maintaining the security of their hall. ID cards are never to be given to another person to gain entry into the hall. Violating this policy will result in disciplinary action.

4.8.B | "Tailgating" is defined as allowing another student, or individual, to enter the building ahead of, or behind you, without swiping their University ID. Tailgating is prohibited. The card access system is in place for the safety of residents of each building; allowing individuals to enter without swiping their ID puts the safety of the community at risk. Additionally, residents providing their ID card to a guest will be subject to disciplinary action.

4.8.C | Room keys and outside door keys will be issued to each resident at check-in. Outside door keys will not be issued to residents in halls with card access systems. If a key is lost or broken students are expected to report that information to a Residence Hall staff member as soon as possible. Students will be charged a minimum of \$100 per lost key. The room key charge will cover the cost of lock replacement and printing the new set of keys. Residents failing to return their keys at the time of check-out or during vacation periods will be charged the replacement fee. Excessive lockouts may result in disciplinary action, or fines. Duplication of university keys is prohibited. Possession of university keys other than those assigned is not permitted.

#### **4.9 | Furniture**

4.9.A | Furniture must remain in its designated space. Students may not leave any type of furnishings or property outside of their room or in the hallway. No university property may be moved or taken from the hall without written authorization from the Hall Coordinator.

4.9.B | Room furnishings are to remain in the rooms at all times. Any damages incurred during an official occupant's stay in their assigned Residence Hall room may result in damage fees being charged at the time of check-out.

4.9.C | No university furniture should be moved to an outside or balcony location, as outdoor elements can damage the furniture.

4.9.D | University furniture is not to be altered, or lofted. Students may be responsible for repair or replacement costs to damaged furniture.

#### **4.10 | Guests**

4.10.A | A guest is defined as a person who is not assigned to the room they are visiting. Residence Hall students are allowed to host guests in their rooms according to the rules outlined below. However, violating a roommate's right of entry into the room, or hindering a roommate's ability to study and/or sleep within their room is considered a violation of guest's privileges. Roommates have the right to deny guests. Guests are not to enter, or be present in a room, suite, or lobby area without their host being present.

4.10.B | Host Responsibilities: Hosts are responsible for the behavior of their guests at all times and are obligated to inform the guest of all university and Residence Hall rules. Any violation of rules or regulations by a guest may result in disciplinary action being taken against both the host and guest.

4.10.C | Overnight Guests: Overnight guests are allowed to spend the night in a student's Residence Hall room, if they have permission from all official occupants within that space. Official occupants are students assigned to that room by the Department of Residential Living.

4.10.D | Escorting Guests: A guest must be escorted by their host at all times within the Residence Halls. Guests are required to wait for their escort before proceeding to their host's room. Guests should be escorted completely out of their host's Residence Hall. Escorting must also take place in enclosed courtyards. Never escort anyone who is not your guest. Violating this policy will result in disciplinary action.

4.10.E | Visitation Hours: 24-hour visitation is permitted in the Residence Halls, however, this does not supersede the overnight guest policy or necessity of permission from all official occupants of the Residence Hall room.

#### **4.11 | Hall Sports**

4.11.A | Hall sports are prohibited within the Residence Halls. Hall sports is defined as authorized activities involving projectiles, sticks, rackets, rope, and/or miscellaneous sports equipment inside the Residence Halls.

4.11.B | Darts/Dartboards: Due to the potential danger to both persons and property, darts and dartboards are prohibited in the Residence Halls, without permission from the Senior Director of Residential Living, or designee.

4.11.C | Projectiles: For reasons of health and safety, propelling devices such as rockets, paint guns, water balloons/launchers, catapults, slingshots, or any homemade device for the purpose of launching an object, are prohibited.

4.11.D | Rappelling: Rappelling off of any university building is prohibited.

4.11.E | Running/Roughhousing: Residents must refrain from running, rollerblading, skateboarding, skating, roughhousing, scuffling, use of water guns, use of scooters, use of motorized vehicles/cycles, throwing, bouncing, or kicking of objects in halls, stairwells, and other common areas.

4.11.F | Hover Boards: Hover boards are not permitted inside any Residence Hall.

#### **4.12 | Laundry, Ice or Vending Machines**

4.12.A | Abuse of laundry, ice, or vending machines only aggravates whatever problem the machine may have, and is prohibited.

4.12.B | Only residents of the hall are permitted to use laundry machines. Laundry machines are for resident's personal use only. Residents using machines for non-personal use may face disciplinary sanctions and have their laundry privileges removed.

#### **4.13 | Offensive Odor**

4.13.A | An offensive odor is any odor, or aroma, of such intensity that it becomes apparent and is offensive to others. Any odor can become offensive when it is too strong. Some examples are: perfume, air freshening spray, or large amounts of dirty laundry. Hall staff will address offensive odors when complaints are received. Residents identified as being responsible for the offensive odor will be asked to eliminate the cause of the odor.

#### **4.14 | Prohibited Items**

4.14.A | Air Conditioners: For safety, and electrical concerns, no student may install an air conditioner, or water cooler in their room. This includes portable air conditioning systems. Fans are permitted.

4.14.B | Appliances: Electrical appliances must be plugged directly into a wall outlet, and are not permitted to be plugged into a power strip. Electrical appliances that are not allowed include, but are not limited to: camping stoves, ceiling fans, electric skillets or woks, griddles, "Insta-pot" or similar multi-cooker, deep fryers, convection cooker, "George Foreman" type grills, any halogen torchiere lamp or lamps that use halogen bulbs, potpourri pots, hot oil popcorn poppers, hot plates, oven broilers, power tools, any appliance with an open coil, space heater, toaster ovens, or chest freezers. Allowed appliances include: coffee pots, rice cookers, blenders, and crock pots.



4.14.C | Only university issued refrigerators and microwaves are permitted. The hall staff will confiscate unauthorized or misused appliances, and the individuals responsible will be subject to Student Conduct proceedings. It is the resident's responsibility to seek approval for any appliance in question.

- i. Buff Hall Only: Residents are permitted to bring their own microwave, as these are not provided in individual rooms.

4.14.D | Extension Cords: Extension cords of any type are not permitted in the halls. Only UL or FM rated surge protectors are permitted. The UL/FM sticker on the surge protector must note "surge protected device". Those listed as "relocatable power taps" or otherwise are not permitted. Daisy Chaining (connecting multiple surge protectors together) is a fire safety hazard and prohibited.

4.14.E | Heaters: For safety and electrical concerns, no portable heating units are allowed within the Residence Hall.

4.14.F | Waterbeds: Waterbeds are not permitted in any student room, due to safety and maintenance concerns.

#### 4.15 | Quiet/Courtesy Hours

4.15.A | Quiet hours are maintained to help provide an atmosphere that is conducive to academic success and to promote an environment where individuals can learn from the experience of group living. The enforcement of quiet hours is the responsibility of each resident, with the assistance of the Hall staff as needed. Each living area must observe quiet hours from:

- i. Sunday to Thursday: 10pm to 8am.
- ii. Friday and Saturday: midnight to 8am.

4.15.B | Each living area may vote to extend these hours. The Office of Residential Living reserves the right of final approval for such hours.

4.15.C | Courtesy hours are in effect throughout the halls 24 hours a day. Therefore, noise (stereo, radio, TV, musical instruments, voices, etc.) must be maintained at levels that will not interfere with the study or sleep of other residents. If you encounter excessive noise, first request that the offenders reduce their noise level. If they persist, contact your CA or the staff member on duty.

4.15.D | Quiet Hours During Finals: To help promote an intense study period, there will be 24-hour quiet hours in effect during final exams in all Residence halls.

#### 4.16 | Solicitation

4.16.A | Solicitation of commercial products or services within Residence Halls is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: solicitation/sales within student rooms, common areas, and entry areas (inside or outside) of the Residence Halls. If sales personnel approach you, do not allow them to enter your room and inform UPD, or your Hall Staff immediately.

**4.17 | Unauthorized Areas**

4.17.A | Students found in, or having been in, unauthorized areas, are subject to disciplinary action. Unauthorized areas include, but are not limited to, mechanical rooms, rooftops, opposite sex community restroom, another students room without permission, tunnels/crawl spaces, etc.

**4.18 | Vandalism**

4.18.A | Residents who remove, destroy, or deface any property or area related to the university or Residential Living (including vandalism of the elevators, ceilings, and grounds surrounding the buildings) are subject to disciplinary action and will be required to pay any damages, as well as any criminal charges as outlined by Texas law.

**4.19 | Window/Window Screens**

4.19.A | Windows are not to be used as a room exit unless residents do so for emergency purposes. Window screens should not be removed. Residents will be charged for damage to screens and for the reinstallation of any removed screens. Throwing, hanging, or spitting objects from windows or balconies is prohibited. Excessive window coverings are not allowed (including paper or foil).

**4.20 | Residential Living Handbook**

4.20.A | Please visit the link below to be taken to the Residential Living Handbook:  
<https://www.wtamu.edu/student-life/residential-living/rl-handbook/index.html>

**Part 5 | Student Grievance & Procedures****5.1 | Grievances**

5.1.A | Types of grievances may include, but are not limited to:

- i. Discrimination
- ii. Disability Accommodation
- iii. Title IX, Sex-Based Misconduct
- iv. Grade Disputes
- v. Academic Suspension and Holds
- vi. Student Conduct Separation and Appeals
- vii. Parking Citations

5.1.B | Disabilities Accommodations Appeals Committee: Students in need of accommodations in response to a physical or mental disability must request them through the Director of the Office of Student Accessibility (OSA). Any approved accommodations will be based on documentation demonstrating eligibility under the state and federal law. If a student disagrees with accommodations decisions made by OSA, they may discuss the concern with the Director of OSA. Students must demonstrate that they have made a good-faith effort to resolve the complaint with the OSA Director. If the complaint is still not resolved satisfactorily, the student may visit with the Assistant VP of Student Affairs. The Assistant VP of Student Affairs may take up to five (5) working days to determine an appropriate resolution. During this process, informal discussions will take place, with all parties involved, in an attempt to resolve the complaint.

5.1.C | If no informal satisfactory resolution is determined within five (5) business days, the student may request the complaint to be referred to the Disabilities Accommodations Appeals Committee. This request must be in writing to the VP of Student Affairs, and must contain all reasons for the referral. This committee will consist of the following members, or designated replacements:

- i. VP of Student Affairs, Chair
- ii. Assistant EVPP
- iii. Director of Student Medical Services
- iv. Faculty (from special education, or other discipline with expertise in disability issue)

5.1.D | Recommendations of the disability's accommodations appeals committee will be forwarded to the president for final approval and implementation.

## **5.2 | Procedures**

5.2.A | Types of university procedures that can be appealed include, but are not limited to:

- i. Discrimination/Civil Rights Appeal
- ii. Disability Accommodation Appeals
- iii. Title IX Appeals
- iv. Academic Appeals
- v. Student Conduct Appeals
- vi. Parking Citation Appeals

5.2.B | A student may appeal against the decision, or the sanction(s), condition(s), and restriction(s) imposed by the Office of Community Standards, by submitting a written petition to the VP of Student Affairs office within five (5) business days of receiving the written decision.

5.2.C | The petition must clearly set forth the grounds for the appeal, together with the evidence upon which the appeal is based. A disagreement with the decision alone shall not constitute grounds for appeal. The only proper grounds for appeal, and the only issues that may be considered on appeal are as follows:

- i. A procedural (or substantive error) occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, etc.).
- ii. The discovering of new evidence, unavailable during the original hearing, or review of the case, could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact must be included.
- iii. The sanctions imposed substantially vary from the range of sanctions normally imposed for similar infractions.

5.2.D | The VP of Student Affairs, or designee, has ten (10) business days to review and make a determination about the appeal. The student will be notified in writing of the appeal determination.

## **5.3 | Rule & Policy Resources**

5.3.A | Resources:

- i. Human Resources | HR Information – <https://www.wtamu.edu/business-finance/human-resources/index.html>

- ii. Residential Living: <https://www.wtamu.edu/student-life/residential-living/rl-handbook/index.html>
- iii. Texas A&M University System Policy Manual: <https://www.tamus.edu/legal/policy/policy-and-regulation-library/>
- iv. Office of Community Standards: <https://www.wtamu.edu/student-support/student-judicial-affairs/index.html>
- v. Parking: <https://www.wtamu.edu/university-police/parking-services.html>

## **Part 6 | Propose Revisions**

### **6.1 | The Student Handbook Rule Revision Process**

6.1.A | The Student Handbook Committee is charged with reviewing proposals for revisions to the West Texas A&M University Student Handbook. Proposed revisions approved by the Student Handbook Committee are sent to the President for final approval. Final approval from the President must be received prior to inclusion in the published rules. Only current faculty, staff, or students may submit a rule change to the student rules.

6.1.B | Federal, State, and local education law updates, that directly impact the Student Handbook, will be posted to the “Rule Additions, Changes, and Deletions page”. If you would like to propose a revision to any WT Student Rule, please follow the steps below:

- i. Use the following link to access the Proposed Revision Form:  
<https://baseline.campuslabs.com/wtau/studenthandbookrevisionform>
- ii. Complete the form and submit.
- iii. The Student Handbook Committee will confirm receipt of the submission.
- iv. The committee will follow up with the individual once a decision on the revision has been made.

### **6.2 | Rule Additions, Changes, & Deletions**

6.2.A | Additions, deletion, and changes may occur over the course of the academic year. Significant revisions will be communicated through WT’s Community Standards website.

## Definitions Section

**Alleged:** This role defines an individual who is believed to have broken a policy or regulation.

**Classification:** A student's classification refers to the number of years they have been enrolled in higher education. This is measured by the number of college-level hours completed.

**College Integrity Committee:** The Appeal committee for Academic Dishonesty cases.

**Complainant:** This role defines an individual who submits a formal complaint against another party.

**Conduct Officer:** An employee of West Texas A&M University who serves as a case manager, investigator, and decision maker in the Student Conduct cases assigned to them. The Office of Community Standards currently has three Conduct Officers; Jessica Dotson, Compliance Coordinator for the Office of Community Standards, Itzel Anett-Enriquez, Area Coordinator of Centennial Hall, and Cody Ragsdale, Area Coordinator of Jarrett Hall.

**Full-Time Graduate Student:** One who is registered for nine (9) semester hours during a Fall or Spring semester, or eight (8) in a summer semester.

**Full-Time Undergraduate Student:** One who is enrolled in at least 12 semester hours during a Fall or Spring semester, or eight (8) in a summer semester.

**Hold:** A hold can be applied to a student's account, this would limit the persons ability to register for upcoming courses, or receive a transcript from the university.

**Letter:** In the context of Student Conduct proceedings, a Letter is defined as the official notification sent to the student via the Office of Community Standards. This Letter will go to the student's WT email account and will require the student to sign in with their university credentials.

**Non-Student:** An individual who has not been admitted into West Texas A&M University, or a former student that does not have a current or upcoming course schedule.

**Respondent:** This role defines an individual who was named in a Formal Complaint submitted in reference to alleged misconduct.

**School Official:** A school official is a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff), a person or company with whom the university has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent), a person serving on the Board of Regents, or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks.

**Student:** An individual who is admitted into West Texas A&M University and is either currently taking courses or has completed a course schedule for the upcoming academic term.

**Student Identification Cards:** More commonly called "Buffalo Gold Card" or "Buff ID", a student identification card is the personal identifier issued to the student upon initial registration with the university.

**Student of Concern:** This role defines an individual who is exhibiting behavior outside the typical scope, that leads others to worry about their safety and/or wellbeing.

**Victim:** A role that defines an individual as a person who was negatively impacted by the actions of another.

**Withdrawal:** When a student is no longer enrolled in current or upcoming courses with the university.

**Witness:** This role defines an individual who witnessed the incident being reported.

**Common Acronyms:**

AIC | Academic Integrity Code

BIP | Behavioral Intervention Plans

BIT | Behavioral Intervention Team

CIC | College Integrity Committee

CTW | Criminal Trespass Warning

DA | Designated Administrators

DSA | Division of Student Affairs

EDTIX | Executive Director of Title IX

EVPP | Executive Vice President and Provost

FERPA | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

OSA | Office of Student Accessibility

SOAB | Student Organization Accountability Board

SOAP | Student Organization Accountability Process

VP | Vice President

VPSA | Vice President of Student Affairs