



Department of Horticultural Sciences

# Undergraduate Student Handbook

**2023-2024**

Texas A&M  
Horticultural Sciences  
<http://hortsciences.tamu.edu/>

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# Introduction

Horticulture is a continually growing profession full of challenging, rewarding, and enjoyable careers. Horticulture encompasses the art, science, and technology of production, utilization, and distribution of fruits, vegetables, and nursery/floral crops throughout all facets of our society. The undergraduate program focuses on traditional areas of production, marketing, and processing of horticultural crops. In addition, horticultural programs in urban areas have added social sciences, creativity, and design. Students are provided with technical and scientific skills as well as communication, leadership, and interpersonal capabilities necessary to function effectively as horticultural professionals.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about the undergraduate program in horticulture so that you can get the greatest benefit during your studies at Texas A&M University. There are many programs and agencies available to assist you, offer opportunities, and help you solve problems during your stay at Texas A&M University. We hope this manual will help you to better understand our program and encourage you to use the many services available.

Each year a revised edition of the Texas A&M University Undergraduate Catalog is available at (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/>). This Undergraduate Handbook for the Department of Horticultural Sciences does not replace the Undergraduate Catalog and is intended to supplement the catalog with information specific to the Department of Horticultural Sciences. Each student should be familiar with the Undergraduate Catalog (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/>) at Texas A&M University and has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with and to comply with the Texas A&M University Student Rules (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>). Read the materials carefully and do not hesitate to seek help if you have questions.

We are happy that you are here! We hope that your experiences in the Department of Horticultural Sciences, both personally and professionally, will meet all your expectations, and we wish you the best for a great educational experience!

## People Who Can Help and Where to Find Them

**\*Please visit the Undergraduate advising office whether you are newly enrolling in the Department or need advising along the way. We will assist you in evaluating transfer credits, developing your degree plan, and planning your class schedule. We enjoy getting to know our students.**

### **LeAnn Hague | Senior Academic Advisor**

College of Agriculture & Life Sciences  
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### **Taylor Atkinson | Academic Advisor IV**

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## **Additional Departmental Contacts**

### **Tammy Neel**

#### ***High Impact Learning***

Program Coordinator  
Office: HFSB 204B  
Phone: 979.862.3116  
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### **Dr. Elizabeth (Betsy) Pierson**

Professor, Associate Dept. Head  
Office: HFSB 407  
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### **Dr. Amit Dhingra**

Professor, Department Head  
Office: HFSB 202  
Phone: 979.845.5341  
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## **Academic Dean's Office**

### **College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean's Office**

515 Agriculture and Life Sciences Building (AGLS)  
Phone: 979.845.3712  
<http://aglifesciences.tamu.edu/>

### **Dr. Chris Skaggs**

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Development  
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### **Robert Sturdivant**

Program Coordinator II – Student Development  
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# Faculty

One of the greatest assets in the Department of Horticultural Sciences is our devoted, caring, and knowledgeable faculty. As students enter the Department, they are encouraged to interact with our faculty who will guide them throughout their academic career. They may advise students in their areas of expertise and are trained to be effective referral sources to other Texas A&M University services for specific problems or concerns. Faculty members can be a nonjudgmental ear for students to talk with about topics including career choices, graduate school, internships, finding a job, academic burnout, course selection advice, joining social activities, letters of recommendation, and much more.

The following information can aid you in finding faculty members working in areas specific to your interests. Current contact information is also available at:

<http://hortsciences.tamu.edu/faculty/index.html>

## FACULTY MEMBERS AND RESOURCES FOR EMPHASIS AREAS

### Faculty Member – Specialty

Dr. Michael Arnold - Landscape Horticulture  
Dr. Andreea Botezatu-Enology  
Dr. Gerald Burgner-Landscape Design  
Dr. David Byrne - Fruit and Nut Production  
Dr. Luis Cisneros - Food Sciences  
Dr. Kevin Crosby – Vegetable Breeding  
Dr. Amit Dhingra\* – Plant Molecular Biology  
Dr. Mengmeng Gu – Ornamental Horticulture  
Dr. Charles Hall – Horticultural Marketing  
Dr. Tim Hartmann - Earthkind Specialist  
Dr. Patricia Klein – Plant Genomics  
Dr. Hisashi Koiwa – Plant Physiology  
Dr. Dan Lineberger – Technology (retired)  
Mr. Bill McKinley - Floral Design/Event Plan.  
Dr. Navreet Mahal – Sustainable Horticulture  
Dr. Monte Nesbitt – Pecan/Fruit/Citrus  
Dr. Bhimu Patil – Vegetable and Fruit Improvement  
Dr. Betsy Pierson\*\* – Plant-Microbe Interactions  
Dr. David Reed – Ornamental Production  
Dr. Oscar Riera-Lizarazu\*\* - Rose Breeding  
Dr. Justin Scheiner – Viticulture/Enology  
Dr. Isabel Vales – Potato Breeding & Genetics  
Dr. Shuyang Zhen – Controlled Environment

### Email

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\*Department Head

\*\*Associate Department Head

## WORKING WITH FACULTY

Our faculty, academic advisors, and program coordinator are dedicated to serve you and help you with your educational goals. In most cases, a scheduled meeting is the preferred method to meet with the Horticulture Faculty as well as other Professors for your courses. Once you have an appointment, please follow these guidelines to make the most of your meeting.

- ✎ Give thoughtful consideration to your personal, educational, and career goals.
- ✎ Become familiar with your own academic program including all applicable requirements and policies.
- ✎ Accept responsibility for your choices and decisions.
- ✎ Ask questions if you do not understand.
- ✎ Be on time to all scheduled appointments and try to be organized so you can make the best use of everyone's time.
- ✎ Listen to your advisor and faculty rather than well-meaning friends and acquaintances when it comes to your academic progress.
- ✎ Keep your address and telephone numbers updated with your advisor and the Records Section of the Registrars Office (845-1031). You may update your own information on HOWDY (<https://howdy.tamu.edu>).

# Degree Plan

The degree plan is the framework of courses that a student is required to complete for their degree in the Department of Horticultural Sciences. Each degree plan is unique to the student's individual career goals and is developed by the student, in conjunction with the Advising Worksheets, academic advisors and the faculty. Advising Worksheets for each "Emphasis Area" are presented on the following pages. *The following sections include components of the degree plan that are common for all horticultural sciences students.*

## UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM

The core curriculum requirements are set by the Faculty Senate and are required of all students attending Texas A&M University. To be sure that your program is in accordance with the core curriculum, check the Undergraduate Catalog (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/>) for the core curriculum requirements in the year that you entered the University, or a more recent year. Ask your academic advisor what catalog might be best for your circumstances.

The University Core Curriculum also requires that each student earn two years of high school foreign language credit before attending TAMU or take two semesters of foreign language at the university level. Students seeking the BA degree have an additional language requirement and should ask an academic advisor for details.

## HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE & SUPPORTING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

The courses listed under these categories on the degree plans are required of all horticulture students seeking a BS or BA degree. Courses transferred from other universities must be approved by the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs of the Department of Horticultural Sciences and in some cases, by the instructor of the comparable course taught at TAMU.

## HORTICULTURE SPECIALIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to complete certain Horticulture electives based in the "Emphasis Area" he/she selects. Additional HORT electives will be chosen from approved electives on the Advising Worksheets.

## STUDY EMPHASIS ELECTIVES

The study emphasis allows you to view a recommended block of technical electives, both inside and outside the Department of Horticultural Sciences, which will best support your career goals. Once a student selects an "Emphasis Area", suggested electives are displayed from an approved electives list on the Advising Worksheets. A student may petition the use of additional courses not included on the Advising Worksheet by completing an Appeal Form for "Study Emphasis Electives". **It is highly advised that the student submit this paperwork prior to taking the course to guarantee that the course will be acceptable towards their degree plan.** (See the last paragraph on page 6 for procedure).

## GRADING

As per College requirements, courses taken to satisfy degree requirements must be taken for letter grades; and cannot be taken S/U. This would include all horticulture specialization courses and study emphasis and directed elective courses.

# Experiential Learning

The Department of Horticultural Sciences requires that horticulture majors enroll in Experiential Learning coursework. These opportunities allow students to gain course credit applicable towards the degree plan and to *'learn by doing'*. Experiential learning programs include **Internships, Study Abroad Programs, Undergraduate Research.**

To learn about experiential learning options, visit: speak with the Experiential Education Program Coordinator:

## **Tammy Neel**

High Impact Learning Program Coordinator

Office: HFSB 204B

Phone: 979.862.3116

Email: [tammy.neel@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:tammy.neel@ag.tamu.edu)

## PROFESSIONAL INTERNSHIPS

Professional Internships provide students with the chance to gain field-related work experience while at the same time trying out a potential career path and/or prospective employer. In addition, internships allow students to put what they learn in class into practice.

Internship opportunities abound; TAMU students have interned nationally and internationally. Public gardens, private landscape and retail firms, non-profit organizations, growers, florists, designers, and tree care companies are just a few of the places with which students can intern.

Although many students choose to intern in the summer months, there are opportunities year-round. Enrollment in HORT 484 allows students to receive academic credit and provides access to the Internship Coordinator who will help ensure an educational component in your internship. If you are interested in an internship, contact the Experiential Education Program Coordinator, Tammy Neel. More information.

## STUDY ABROAD

Study abroad programs give students a first-hand view of another country and culture. With today's global economy, an international perspective is more important than ever before for those entering the workforce. Students can earn core curriculum credit, elective credit, internship/research credit, or transfer credit from a foreign university depending on the details of the program.

Study abroad opportunities are available for all students and can last from a week to a year. With good planning, study abroad can help you gain valuable international experience while completing your degree on time. Funding resources are available, both through the Department of Horticultural Sciences and through the Study Abroad Programs Office.

Not sure if you want to study abroad? Talk to students who have done it. An active study abroad mentor program is available to help you make your decision and begin planning. Speak with the Experiential Learning Program Coordinator or visit to get started.



## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH & DIRECTED STUDIES

Undergraduate Research and Directed Studies enable the student to form special working relationships with faculty members within the department and, at the same time, gain valuable learning experiences. The student is responsible for contacting the faculty member that she or he wishes to work with, and together they must fill out the appropriate forms for HORT 491 or 485.

**HORT 491\* (Undergraduate Research)** allows students to gain hands-on experience in plant science and laboratory methods while working on a research project. Students may have the opportunity to travel to scientific meetings to present their findings.

**HORT 485\* (Directed Studies)** allows students to work with the guidance of a faculty member to gain further knowledge in a particular area of Horticulture while participating in special projects.

\*Note students cannot earn a wage or stipend while they are enrolled in this course.

## Bachelor of Science Emphasis Areas **[Minor Optional]**

### **FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PRODUCTION**

More people today are aware of the importance of fresh fruits and vegetables in their diets than at any time in history. As a result, the production of these crops is increasing for domestic use and export.

The emphasis area of fruit and vegetable production specializes in the science and practice of growing, harvesting, handling, storing, processing, marketing, and breeding fruits and vegetables. This emphasis area provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to be current on new varieties, cultural practices, mechanization, weed and pest control, harvesting, storage, processing, marketing, and personnel and financial management. Students graduating in this emphasis area are prepared for careers as growers and farm managers; as production field advisors for fresh market, processing, and vegetable seed companies; or as field advisors for allied industries that manufacture production and harvest machinery, fertilizers, and agricultural chemicals. They can also find careers in fruit and vegetable marketing as managers of produce firms; as supervisors of storage; or as salespeople, field advisors, buyers, brokers, or managers of marketing and promotional organizations. Fruit and vegetable majors also enter the field of international horticulture as overseas supervisors for commercial companies, as participants in Peace Corps and other humanitarian endeavors, or technical assistants with USAID or international food production, research or teaching programs.

#### **Career Opportunities (*Not limited to*):**

- ☐ Orchard Manager
- ☐ Vegetable Farm Manager
- ☐ Technician or field representative for fruit or vegetable processor
- ☐ Federal or state inspector for fruit and vegetables
- ☐ Producer of fruits, nuts, vegetables, herbs
- ☐ Commercial Seed Producer
- ☐ Border, Port and Homeland Security Agents
- ☐ Sales or technical representative for seed, horticultural supply, or chemical companies
- ☐ Wholesale or retail purchaser/ sales/technical service dealing with fresh or processed fruits and vegetables for chain stores, garden centers, government institutions and wholesale distributors
- ☐ Marketing and Sales Representative of Fruits & Vegetables
- ☐ Marketing and Sales Representative of any product associated with the production of fruits and vegetables

### **NURSERY/FLORAL CROP PRODUCTION**

Production of floral and nursery crops has been a rapidly expanding industry and has become a major contributor to the economy of Texas and the nation. This industry requires college graduates who understand the basics of ornamental plant production and use and have a keen sense of business and management skills.

Greenhouses provide a protected environment for producing potted and bedding plants, cut flowers, transplants for field production and out-of-season fresh vegetables and berries. Excellent career opportunities exist for graduates specializing in greenhouse crop production.

Nursery production includes field and/or container growing of the many woody and herbaceous species utilized in landscapes or planted in orchards and vineyards. Crop types include shade and flowering trees, narrow-leafed evergreens, broad-leafed evergreens, deciduous shrubs, tree and small fruits, vines and ground covers and herbaceous perennials.

In addition, the demands for plants for environment enhancement and the need for personnel trained in the requirements of production, maintenance, marketing, and utilization of these plant materials are creating exciting career opportunities. Students who study production are employed as growers and production managers in greenhouses and nurseries and as research technicians, extension specialists, and teachers. Students with interests in marketing may work with producers, wholesale suppliers, garden centers and other retail outlets.

**Career Opportunities (Not limited to):**

- ☐ Producer of nursery/floral crops, cut flowers, herbs
- ☐ Greenhouse Crop Manager
- ☐ Wholesale Nursery Manager
- ☐ Plant Propagator
- ☐ Sales or technical representative for seed companies, horticultural supply firms and chemical companies
- ☐ Wholesale or retail purchaser/ sales/technical service dealing, cut flowers, nursery/floral crops for chain stores, garden centers, government institutions and wholesale distributors
- ☐ Marketing and Sales representative of nursery/floral crops
- ☐ Marketing and Sales representative of any product associated with the production of nursery/floral crops
- ☐ Retail Garden Center Manager

**LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT**

Landscape trees, shrubs, bedding plants, foliage and flowering potted plants and cut flowers have long been valued for their contributions to the quality of the environment in which we live, work and play. Successful landscape management companies provide an integrated approach to landscape contracting and managing landscape projects from inception through maintenance. The Landscape Management emphasis area focuses on plants and landscape materials, plant identification and culture, plant installation, and landscape construction and maintenance. Students in this emphasis area gain knowledge and skills to prepare them to create preliminary landscape designs, install plantings and steward their creations. Job opportunities are plentiful for individuals with targeted educational backgrounds and experience in landscape management including careers in installation, management, and maintenance of interior as well as exterior landscapes. Landscape management careers span from hotels and resorts, planned communities, corporate campuses, private estates, municipal properties, golf courses, theme parks, retail and entertainment centers, sports complexes, and residential developments.

**Career Opportunities (Not limited to):**

- ☐ Development and maintenance supervisor of landscapes in parks, recreation areas, residential homes, businesses, estates, botanical gardens, public and private gardens
- ☐ Landscape supervisor
- ☐ Lawn and grounds maintenance manager
- ☐ Landscape contractor
- ☐ Arborist
- ☐ Landscape Construction manager
- ☐ Landscape Installation manager
- ☐ Botanical gardens research scientist- plant identification and research
- ☐ Horticulturist in city, state, or national parks
- ☐ Horticulturist in golf courses or other recreational parks
- ☐ Environmental consultant
- ☐ Corps of Engineers employee

**SCIENCE & BIOTECHNOLOGY**

The Science and Biotechnology emphasis area is intended for, but not limited to, those students who feel

they will go to graduate school and provides these students with a strong foundation in basic sciences. Career opportunities for graduates in this area who complete advanced graduate degrees include teaching and research at universities, private industry research, and research at federal facilities. Graduates with good communication skills may also have career opportunities with consulting firms and the Cooperative Extension Service communicating scientific research findings to the public in an applicable and understandable format. Students graduating with BS and MS degrees, with research experience and skills, will be very competitive for lab bench positions, but the MS will facilitate promotions to supervisor and leadership positions. In addition to larger companies, there are many smaller companies and start-ups looking for recent biotechnology graduates. Skills in tissue culture, transformation, and gene-editing, recombinant DNA and molecular biology, protein and nucleic acid biochemistry, genomics, proteomics, and bioinformatics are particularly useful.

**Career Opportunities (*Not limited to*):**

- ☐ Research scientist or technician at a university or government agency (USDA, NSF, germplasm resource centers)
- ☐ Industry research scientist (agrochemical, pharmaceutical, food, seed, and nursery)
- ☐ Professor, lecturer, instructor or teacher in a college or university, K-12 or museums, parks, nature centers
- ☐ Science writing and communication
- ☐ Science advisor for patent law, public policy, lawmakers

# Bachelor of Arts Emphasis Areas [Minor Required]

## URBAN HORTICULTURE

The urban horticulture concentration is intended for students interested in professional careers which promote horticulture and emphasize people and their education and enjoyment of plants in an urban setting. Students in this emphasis area can choose to gain skills and experiences in a broad range of areas. This emphasis area prepares students for a variety of career opportunities including careers in public gardens, federal, state, and city horticulture programs, Cooperative Extension Service, professional garden writer/editor or publication manager, horticulture marketing, horticulture education and print and electronic media. Directed technical electives allow the student to concentrate in an area of their interest while encouraging the development of good people skills.

### Career Opportunities (*Not limited to*):

- ☐ Horticulture teacher in high schools
- ☐ Garden writer for magazines, newspapers, TV, radio, and computer technology.
- ☐ Director of public garden education and administration
- ☐ Employee of federal, state and city horticulture program education and administration

## FLORAL DESIGN/EVENT PLANNING

This emphasis provides a strong foundation for undergraduate students who wish to receive a BA degree in Horticulture that is concentrated in the area of the art of floral design. Graduates in this area are highly skilled for careers in many areas of floral design including retail floristry, international and national wholesale and retail floral marketing, floral design publishing, event planning, and floral design education.

### Career Opportunities (*Not limited to*):

- ☐ Floral designer
- ☐ Retail florist
- ☐ Floral crops wholesaler
- ☐ Floral design educator
- ☐ Floral design garden writer
- ☐ Event planner

## HORTICULTURE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

This emphasis is tailored to provide the skills necessary for undergraduate students who wish to receive a BA degree in Horticulture that is concentrated in the area of landscape design. This expanding field allows students with artistic capabilities to work in the horticulture arena. Landscape designers create aesthetic concepts and practical plans for improved outdoor living. Students electing this emphasis will gain the skills necessary for designing residential and small-scale landscapes. Landscape designers are highly sought by garden centers, botanical gardens, arboreta, landscape maintenance and installation firms, nurseries, and governmental agencies. Private consulting is also a possibility. Some jobs will involve consumer relations and retail sales including landscape communication and publishing, landscape marketing and landscape design education.

### Career Opportunities (*Not limited to*):

- ☐ Landscape designer
- ☐ Interiorscaper
- ☐ Landscape garden writer

- ☐ Landscape marketing representative
- ☐ Landscape design educator
- ☐ Landscape customer sales and service representative
- ☐ Garden Artist/Consultant

## Second Degrees, Double Majors, Minors, and Certificates

Students at Texas A&M University have the option of seeking second degrees, double majors, and minors. These programs enable students to gain valuable information in more than one academic department, and gain University recognition on the transcript and/or diploma. Students majoring in Horticulture may pursue these options in other Departments. Interested students should consult with the academic advisor in the Department that they wish to seek a second degree, double major, or minor about the requirements of the program.

### SECOND DEGREE

A **second degree** is awarded to students who have completed all the requirements for two separate degrees. A candidate pursuing a second degree will receive two separate degrees and diplomas (i.e., two BS degrees, or a combination of two degrees, such as a BS and a BA). Students who have pursued second degrees in horticulture have commonly come from majors within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; however, students from other colleges are also eligible to apply.

### DOUBLE MAJOR

A candidate for a **double major** receives one degree (i.e., BS), with both majors indicated on the diploma. This program is designed to give a student an excellent background in another related field of study.

Students currently enrolled at Texas A&M University must receive approval for the second degree or double major before the student reaches senior standing.

### MINOR

Horticulture students may also pursue a **minor**. The minor program provides a concentration of study in another scholastic department, and is recognized on the transcript after graduation, but not on the diploma. Classes taken for a minor may count as **Study Emphasis Electives**, depending on the Emphasis Area selected by the student. Minor requirements include a minimum of 15-18 hours of course work in a department, of which at least 9 must be 300-400 level. **Students interested in pursuing a minor should contact an academic advisor in that Department and proceed with the necessary paperwork.** Program Requirements for the Horticulture Minor can be found at:

<https://catalog.tamu.edu/undergraduate/agriculture-life-sciences/horticultural-sciences/horticulture-minor/>

### CERTIFICATES

The Department of Horticultural Sciences offers three certification programs that require 15-16 h (depending on the program) of directed course work in each of these focus areas:

- [Floral Design Certificate](#)
- [Landscape Management Certificate](#)
- [Viticulture and Enology Certificate](#)

Click on the program to access web links that provide more information on the application process and program requirements for each certificate.

## Dates, Deadlines, and Policies

### FULL-TIME STATUS

- ☐ Twelve hours or more is considered a full-time load. Part time students (those taking 1-11 semester credit hours) will be charged tuition and fees based on the number of hours they

take, plus course fees and other fees charged on a fixed rate per semester basis. Full-time undergraduate students (those taking 12 semester credit hours or more) will be charged a flat rate for designated tuition regardless of the number of hours taken. Students are encouraged to take at least 15 semester credit hours to receive full value under the flat rate policy and will benefit from significant savings for hours in excess of 15.

- ☒ A student who drops below 12 hours in a given semester may become ineligible for certain campus activities (i.e., Corps of Cadets, athletics, fraternity or sorority pledging, campus or college organizations); become ineligible for scholarships, financial aid, loans, campus housing (must carry a minimum of nine hours) or be dropped from your family insurance and/or Social Security or Veteran's benefits. You may also fall behind the pace required to graduate in four years.

## TRANSFER CREDIT

Many students transfer into the Department of Horticultural Sciences from other curricula at Texas A&M University or from other colleges or universities. Guidelines for the acceptance of credits earned in other program(s) include:

- ✎ Once a student has selected an "Emphasis Area" he/she may use the designated Advising Worksheet to determine if the transfer course credit is appropriate for their degree plan. If a student has taken a course not included on the Advising Worksheet the student may submit an Appeal Form to have the course considered for inclusion on the degree plan. (see page 6 for details)
- ✎ Credits earned within TAMU will be evaluated by TAMU course number. Students will receive credit on courses with a grade of "D" or above.
- ✎ Students will receive credit on courses with a grade of "C" or above when transferred from institutions outside of TAMU.
- ✎ Courses transferred by **number** from institutions outside TAMU are considered the equivalent of the numbered courses at TAMU.
- ✎ Courses transferred by **title** from institutions outside TAMU either have no comparable course at TAMU or an evaluation to determine which course is comparable has not been made by the department offering the course. The academic advising staff and the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs will determine whether, and how, these courses can be used in the degree plan. In many cases, that student will need to discuss the course with the instructor of a comparable course at TAMU.
- ✎ As a general rule, only horticulture courses that transfer in by number or where a 2+2 agreement has been developed will be accepted within the Department. Approval of any other horticulture courses must be determined by the comparable course instructor in the Department of Horticultural Sciences. A letter verifying equivalent course work must be submitted to the Advising Office (Heep Center 217).
- ✎ Grades from transfer courses from other colleges and universities are not included in your grade point average at Texas A&M University.
- ✎ **A minimum of 36 semester hours of 300 and/or 400 level course work must be successfully completed in residence at Texas A&M University to obtain a baccalaureate degree. A minimum of 12 of these 36 semester hours must be in Horticulture.**



## CO-ENROLLING

It is very common for students to co-enroll at TAMU and Blinn College. It is the responsibility of the student to meet all the admission requirements, course prerequisites and procedures of Blinn College (<http://www.blinn.edu>).

If you plan to take courses at another community college, equivalent course numbers may be found under on the TAMU Course Equivalency Guide website (<https://howdy.tamu.edu/uPortal/p/tce-ui.ctf1/max/render.uP>).

It is the responsibility of the co-enrolled student to ensure that courses are transferred from the cooperating institution if they are to be applied to their Horticulture degree program at TAMU.

## CHANGING YOUR MAJOR

For many reasons, a TAMU student may wish to change from one curriculum to another. After consultation with his/her academic advisor, a student should initiate a change of curriculum by scheduling an appointment with an academic advisor in the new college or department. Students in good academic standing, with a GPA of 2.0 or higher, may be permitted to transfer into the Horticulture Department.

- ✎ First semester freshmen may initiate a curriculum change through the fifth day of the semester. After the fifth class day, no curriculum change will be considered until after the end of the semester.
- ✎ New transfer students cannot change majors until final grades are recorded after completion of the first spring or fall semester at TAMU.
- ✎ A student in good academic standing (based on the receiving college's requirements) may initiate a curriculum change during the semester no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> class day.
- ✎ The day following posting of final grades, curriculum changes may once again be initiated for all students. (See TAMU Student Rule 5 <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule05>)
- Change of curriculum requests are completed online in HOWDY.  
<https://us.tamu.edu/Change-of-Major>

## ADDING/ DROPPING A COURSE OR ENROLLING FOR THE TERM:

- ✎ Adding/Dropping a class is permitted during the first 5 class days during Fall/Spring.
- ✎ Adding/Dropping a class is permitted during the first 4 class days during summer semesters.
- ✎ A student requesting to add a course after these deadlines must have the approval of the student's dean and department.

## Q-D ROP POLICY (EFFECTIVE AUGUST 23, 2013)

- ✎ Allowed through the 60th day of classes during Fall/Spring.
- ✎ Allowed through the 15th day of classes during 5-week summer sessions.
- ✎ Allowed through the 35th day of classes during 10-week summer semester.
- ✎ Student completes form requesting Q-drop and receives approval from the Department. The form is processed by the HORT Advising Office (Heep Center 217). This form is available at: [Q-Drop Form.pdf \(tamu.edu\)](#)
- ✎ The course will appear on your transcript with the designation "Q". A Q-drop does not affect grade point ratio.
- ✎ No money will be refunded.
- ✎ You are allowed only FOUR (4) Q-drops during your undergraduate studies at TAMU.
- ✎ **After the Q-drop period, individual courses may NOT be dropped - you must complete the**

**class.**

- ✎ Simply not attending class is NOT considered dropping the class. If a student fails to drop a course(s) by filling out and submitting the appropriate forms, the student will earn a grade of "F" in the course(s).

## SCHOLASTIC PROBATION AND SUSPENSION

Scholastic Probation will occur in any semester that your cumulative or major GPA drops below 2.0. The department follows probation and dismissal policies in alignment with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The full COALS probation and dismissal policy can be found here:

<https://aglifsciences.tamu.edu/undergraduate-academic-probation-dismissal-policy/>. For purposes of probation and dismissal, Horticulture considers the summer semester for academic deficiency determination.

A grade point deficiency is calculated by determining the number of grade points below a C average (below a 2.0). Please see the university website for how to calculate a grade point deficit.

<https://us.tamu.edu/students/calculate-grade-point-deficit>

- A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0 is automatically on academic probation.
- A student who has a single semester in which the grade point ratio is below a 2.0, even though the cumulative grade point ratio is above a 2.0, is issued a warning. A second semester in which the semester grade point ratio is below a 2.0, even if the cumulative grade point ratio is above a 2.0, a student is automatically on academic probation.
- Following the first semester in which a student earns a cumulative grade point deficiency, or the second semester where the semester grade point ratio is below a 2.0, the student will have probation requirements set by the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs and the student will be required to have a conference with the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs before continuing at TAMU in the Bachelor of Science in Horticulture or Bachelor of Arts in Horticulture programs. This probation conference should be scheduled through the academic advisor for the Department as soon as possible after the conclusion of the semester in which the deficiency occurs. Registration will be blocked until the student has had the probation conference with the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs and probationary terms are set. If it is determined that the student will be permitted to continue with their studies at TAMU, the student will be required to sign a probationary contract.
- A student on probation will not be permitted to change the terms of the probationary contract without the prior approval by the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs.
- A student on probation who fails to meet his/her probation requirements as set by the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs in a preceding semester will be blocked from registration. If the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs, in consultation with the academic advisor, determines that insufficient progress has been made in meeting the terms of probation, the student will be suspended or terminated from the program. If the Associate Head or Undergraduate Programs thinks sufficient progress was made to merit additional consideration for retention, the student must attend a conference with the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs, after which the student will be notified of the consequences. Depending on the circumstances surrounding the individual case and the magnitude of the probationary deficiency remaining, the student may on the basis of the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs' judgment be: 1) terminated from the program; 2) required to sit out one

or more semesters but may apply for readmission; or 3) be granted another semester to make-up the probationary deficiency. Failure to comply with terms of probation or to participate in required meetings may result in dismissal from the Department of Horticultural Sciences.

- Once a student returns to good standing from probation and then during a subsequent semester earns a grade point deficiency below 2.000, they will be indefinitely suspended from their program of study for at least one semester and must apply for readmission. A longer term may be assigned at the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs' discretion. A suspension meeting to determine potential terms related to actions that may influence decisions for readmission will be conducted. Readmission will be considered only after the required minimum term of suspension and with documentable evidence of the student addressing the issues discussed during the suspension meeting that would improve the likelihood of academic success if the student were readmitted.
- If a student is readmitted from a suspension for a cumulative grade point deficiency, or repeated semester grade point ratios below a 2.0, and then earns a grade point deficiency below 2.000 during any subsequent semester, they will be automatically terminated from their program of study.
- If special circumstances warrant, exceptions may be made to these policies at the discretion of the Associate Head for Undergraduate Programs.
- Appeals to these policies should be made through the Department Head for Horticultural Sciences. Where conflicts with College or University policies occur, the University or College policy will supersede Departmental policy.

## REGISTRATION BLOCKS

Registration blocks prevent you from registering for the next semester. Many offices at TAMU can block you from registering. Only the program that put the registration block in the computer can remove it.

For example, registration blocks are used in the Horticultural Sciences Department when a student is on academic probation. Lifting or removing a block to allow registration activity can only be done by meeting with the Associate Department Head for Undergraduate Programs or the academic advising staff. You may check for blocks at Howdy (<https://howdy.tamu.edu>)

- ✎ WITHDRAWAL
- ✎ Students are responsible for personally withdrawing from the University.
- ✎ It is recommended that you talk with your professors or academic advisors before withdrawing.
- ✎ The last date to withdraw from the University is the last day of the Q-drop period.
- ✎ No student will be allowed to withdraw from the University after final exams begin.
- ✎ The Withdrawal process is completed in HOWDY. More information can be found at <https://aggie.tamu.edu/registration-and-records/classes/withdrawing-from-the-university>
  
- ✎ The student's department, the student's Dean's Office, or professors cannot withdraw a student from the University. Should mitigating circumstances arise and the student is unable to "personally" withdraw from the University, the University Department of Student Affairs (979-845-5262) should be contacted for the correct steps.

## TUITION CHARGED FOR EXCESS CREDIT HOURS

Texas A&M University will charge tuition at the non-resident rate to all students who exceed the semester credit hour limit for their program. Excess semester credit hours are those which accrue after the student exceeds by 30 hours the number of semester credit hours required for the completion of the degree program in which the student is enrolled. Thus, the student may accumulate up to 30 hours beyond those required for the chosen degree program and not exceed the limitation.

Information on this policy is available at: <https://aggie.tamu.edu/billing-and-payments/cost-and-tuition-rates/tuition-charged-for-excess-credit-hours>

## THIRD REPEAT SUPPLEMENTARY FEE

A non-repeatable course that is attempted by a student more than twice at a public institution of higher education in Texas may not be reported for state funding. As a result, the institution must either pass the non-funded portion to all students or charge a supplementary fee to the student who is repeating the course. Texas A&M University has chosen to assess a supplementary fee to only those students repeating the course more than twice.

A student attempting certain courses more than twice at Texas A&M University will be subject to a supplementary fee of \$125 per semester credit hour (\$375 for a 3-hour course) for the repeated course, in addition to tuition and required fees associated with the course.

Information on this policy is available at: <https://aggie.tamu.edu/billing-and-payments/cost-and-tuition-rates/three-peat>

## Clubs, Student Organizations, and Society Chapters

### TAMU HORTICULTURE CLUB

The Horticulture Club enables members to increase their knowledge and skills in many areas of horticulture while enhancing people skills and positive work attitudes. It provides opportunities to meet people within the department, industry, and profession. The Horticulture Club is a great place to meet new friends, gain experience, and have a lot of fun. Members also may pursue an optional path toward Master Gardener certification. The TAMU Horticulture Club is a growing organization and would love to have you as a member. The club meetings and announcements are posted on the departmental bulletin boards, banners in the Atrium, and their web site (<https://sites.google.com/site/tamuhorticultureclub/>).

### STUDENT CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF FLORAL DESIGNERS (SAIFD)

This organization's primary functions are in floral design. Any student with an interest in floral design may join. Students sponsor speakers, attend field trips, and participate in special programs of the Benz School of Floral Design. SAIFD participates in several social activities each semester and holds meetings each month. SAIFD earns its funds, and members acquire vital hands-on design experience, by doing floral arrangements for other organizations on campus, by decorating area homes for the Christmas holidays, and by special floral sales. More details can be found at <https://sites.google.com/site/aggiesaifd/home>

### PI ALPHA XI

This organization is the national floriculture and ornamental horticulture honor society. Members invited to join must have at least a junior standing and have a minimum GPA of 3.25. The organization promotes at least one major project each year. Among its activities is an annual initiation event.

### SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (SASA)

The Sustainable Agriculture Student Association (SASA) is a student organization formed to unify a body of volunteers and foster an experiential learning community to expose students to aspects of local and organic agriculture in conjunction with the Howdy! Farm. The association accomplishes this goal by creating educational opportunities for those individuals interested in sustainable agriculture. The Howdy Farm currently sees around 350 students a semester from a combination of volunteer students and courses offering credit for service. Students involved with the farm come from various colleges and backgrounds. Learn more at <http://tamuhowdyfarm.weebly.com/>

## Special Programs

### HORTICULTURAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIPS

A large number of scholarships are available to Horticulture students. These scholarships are usually awarded at the Departmental Annual Awards Banquet held on Parent's Weekend each spring. Students apply using the University Continuing Student Scholarship Application. You may obtain application forms from the following website: <https://scholarships.tamu.edu/>. Application deadline for these scholarships is February 1.

### COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES SCHOLARSHIPS

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences offers scholarships to qualified students. Students apply using the University Continuing Student Scholarship Application. You may obtain application forms from the following website: <https://scholarships.tamu.edu/>. Application deadline for these scholarships is February 1.

### UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

The Honors Programs at Texas A&M University challenges promising students to participate in an intellectual community of life-long learners who excel academically, advance knowledge through research, and pursue cultural understanding through international experiences. Incoming freshmen apply to the University Honors Program by December of their senior year in high school. Continuing students at Texas A&M may apply to the University Honors Program up until they have completed 60 hours at TAMU. Any continuing student with a 3.5+ cumulative GPA may register for Honors courses, but only students admitted to the University Honors Program or those participating in college or departmental Honors tracks have access to resources such as specialized advising, Honors Priority Registration, Honors Course Contracts, etc. Honors courses are noted in the Schedule of Courses with the designation of 200-series section numbers for the fall and spring semesters. A list of available Honors courses for each semester is available by searching the schedule of courses in Howdy by the Honors course attribute. Honors and Undergraduate Research also provides opportunities for students to get involved with research and other hands-on learning opportunities. For more information go to: (<http://honors.tamu.edu>).

### SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

Texas A&M University's Supplemental Instruction (SI) program targets traditionally difficult core curriculum courses, and provides regularly scheduled, out-of-class study sessions. The SI sessions are led by undergraduate students who have taken the course and been trained in pro-active learning and study strategies. The SI leaders attend all course lectures, take notes, and read the assigned materials. They serve as leaders for organized group study, and help students develop pro-active learning skills. Supplemental Instruction works. Nationally, SI participants earn course grades between one-half and one full letter grade higher than the average course grade of students not participating. SI is offered for many Texas A&M University core curriculum courses. Sessions are open to all students in the course section; participation is free and voluntary. If you are interested in this program, contact Student Learning Center at 979.845.2724 (<http://slc.tamu.edu/>).

## ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

The Academic Success Center, located on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of Rudder Tower (979.458-4900), recognizes every Aggie is different, so their programming is designed to identify and address individual needs. Students participate in an initial online learning skills assessment to ensure that they pursue the right track. Scholastic performance specialists help each student develop an individualized plan that incorporates campus academic support services. Academic coaching helps students accomplish their plans and chart their progress. The Academic Success Center also provides targeted workshops, discussion groups, and other events to help students identify and access the information and skills they need to succeed. Visit <https://asc.tamu.edu/> to learn more and schedule an appointment.

## Counseling & Psychological Services








Texas A&M Counseling and Psychological Services (979.845.4427) is dedicated to improving skills in academic, career planning, and personal areas. In support of the mission of TAMU and the [Division of Student Affairs](#), Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) contributes to student learning and development. We provide exceptional services and programming focused on student mental health. CAPS exists to advance student development and academic success by providing personalized and evidenced-based mental health care to Aggies.

Counseling provides an opportunity to talk about yourself, your feelings, your values, the way you relate to other people, or any other topic that concerns you. There is no charge for these services.

Academic or personal counseling appointments are available from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. If you find yourself in a crisis/emergency situation, you are encouraged to immediately go to Cain Hall, 8-5 weekdays. After hours, students may call the *Helpline* at 845-2700, or go to the nearest hospital emergency room (<https://caps.tamu.edu/about/>).



## Graduation

In order to graduate with a degree from Texas A&M University, the following requirements for graduation must be met (<http://graduation.tamu.edu>)

-  Completion of all course work on the degree plan.
-  A minimum overall GPA of 2.0.
-  A minimum GPA of 2.0 in course work within your major field.
-  A minimum of 36 semester hours of 300 and/or 400 level course work must be successfully completed in residence at Texas A&M University to obtain a baccalaureate degree. A minimum of 12 of these 36 semester hours must be in Horticulture.
-  Graduation application and payment of diploma fee during the semester in which graduation is to occur.
-  Other requirements as outlined in the catalog year of the degree plan.
-  As per College requirements: With the exception of general elective requirements, courses taken to satisfy degree requirements must be taken for letter grades.

## APPLICATION

The application deadline for graduation occurs shortly after the semester begins. The procedure includes the following:

-  Apply for graduation using Howdy → My Record tab → Degree Evaluation section → Apply for Graduation. Follow the deadlines posted on <http://graduation.tamu.edu>.
-  If you have not had the diploma fee included with your tuition fees, it will be assessed at the time you apply online. All questions should be directed to the Registrar's Office (979.845.1089) at the General Services Building.

## GRADUATION WITH HONORS

In order to **graduate with honors**, a student must have completed at least 60 credit hours at Texas A&M University and have at least a 3.50 GPA. The following categories are recognized:

- **Summa cum Laude (GPA of 3.90 - 4.00)**
- **Magna cum Laude (GPA of 3.70 - 3.89)**
- **Cum Laude (GPA of 3.50 - 3.69)**

## COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

The graduation ceremony is held at Reed Arena. For fall/spring semester graduates, there are 3 - 4 separate exercises; the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences only participates in one of them. The commencement ceremony in which COALS students will participate is announced around mid-semester.

## SENIOR EXIT INTERVIEWS

Senior exit interviews are conducted by the Head of the Department of Horticultural Sciences. The student will receive an e-mail from the Program Coordinator telling them when and where to sign up for these interviews. The interviews are usually held during the last few weeks of the semester. These interviews are very important to our department. We solicit and respect your opinions and concerns about the teaching program and encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity.

## DEPARTMENTAL BREAKFAST/LUNCHEON

The Department of Horticultural Sciences holds a breakfast, luncheon, or reception for its graduates, their relatives, and the faculty in conjunction with the commencement exercises. This event gives the faculty an opportunity to meet the students' families and gives the families an opportunity to learn a little about the department. All graduates are encouraged to attend even if their families are unable to attend.

## AGGIE RING

Aggie Rings may be ordered at the Former Student's Association Building. To be eligible to order an Aggie Ring as an undergraduate, you must have:

- **90** total completed undergraduate hours
- **45** completed institution undergraduate hours
- **2.0** minimum cumulative GPR
- must not be on academic probation, suspension, dismissal, expulsion, or on honor violation probation from the university

**-OR-**

- You must have a degree from Texas A&M University and be in good standing with the university.

Visit <http://www.aggienetwork.com/ring/qualifications.aspx> for more details on the qualifications and requirements. Applications for rings are taken at the end of the semester when 90 hours have been completed and verified by the Registrar's office. Rings are usually available 3 months after they are ordered and paid for (<http://www.aggienetwork.com/ring>).