

# ALABAMA A&M UNIVERSITY

## OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS



# ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

August 2026

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### ***Disclaimer***

Although Alabama A&M University strives for accuracy in the Academic Policy and Procedure Manual publication, any publication may contain inaccuracies or typographical errors. Changes, corrections and improvements may be made periodically to these publications and will be incorporated in new versions. Alabama A&M University may make corrections and/or improvements in its publications at any time without notice.

## **Purpose**

This manual is a compilation of general academic policies and guidelines for graduate and undergraduate programs that serve as a quick reference for faculty, staff and administrators. Additional details regarding these policies may be found in the Graduate Catalog and Undergraduate Bulletin.

This document is divided into eleven sections:

1. General Academic Standards
2. Continuity of Operations Plan/Policy
3. Program Development and Change Management at AAMU
4. Academic Program Evaluation
5. Guidelines and Procedures for Credentialing Faculty
6. Classroom Code of Conduct
7. Online Code of Conduct
8. Distance Education
9. Undergraduate Policies
10. Graduate Policies
11. Appendices

While this document cannot be all-inclusive in scope and detail, it is designed in part to facilitate continuity and to provide overall guidelines of academic standards. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information presented is current and accurate. The reader is cautioned, however, that from time-to-time policies and guidelines are subject to modification. Modifications are communicated in standard and electronic print.

# Academic Policy and Procedure Manual, Aug 2026

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## **Mission of the University**

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University is a public, comprehensive 1890 Land-Grant institution, committed to access and opportunity, and dedicated to intellectual inquiry. The application of knowledge and excellence in teaching, research and service is responsive to the needs of a diverse student population and the social and economic needs of the state and region. The University offers contemporary baccalaureate, master's, educational specialist and doctoral level degrees to prepare students for careers in the arts, sciences, business, engineering, education, agriculture and technology. As a center of excellence, the University is dedicated to providing a student-centered educational environment for the emergence of scholars, scientists, leaders and critical thinkers, who are equipped to excel through their contributions and leadership in a 21st century national and global society.

## **Organization**

The University is organized into four undergraduate colleges with undergraduate and graduate programs and one graduate school, namely:

- College of Agricultural, Life and Natural Sciences
- College of Business and Public Affairs
- College of Education, Humanities and Behavioral Sciences
- College of Engineering, Technology and Physical Sciences
- School of Graduate Studies

Each college offers programs leading to degrees in disciplines that may be selected for majors and minors.

## **Section I – GENERAL ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

### **Statement of Principles of Student Academic Conduct**

Faculty members are encouraged to identify, in each course syllabus, behaviors that constitute acceptable academic conduct. References may be made to existing stated rules, such as those in the STUDENT HANDBOOK, with additional expectations listed that may be particular to that discipline, department faculty member or course. Faculty members have the well-established prerogative to deal with academic misconduct committed by a student in a course by applying an academic penalty within the context of that course.

All students are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars, respecting themselves, fellow students, and faculty at all times. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid disciplinary action. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Plagiarism: Representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise. This includes plagiarism of works taken from the internet.
3. Fabrication: Unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
4. Aiding and Abetting Academic Dishonesty: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Acts of academic misconduct may be punishable by one or more of the following:

1. Letter of academic misconduct placed in the student's academic folder.
2. Temporary suspension from the University.
3. Expulsion from the University.
4. Expulsion from a class by the instructor which could possibly result in a failing grade.
5. Lowering of a final course average.
6. Academic discipline resulting in the loss of scholarships, non-participation in academic related activities, etc.

### **Examination Policy**

**Progress Reports:** During the semester, faculty are required to conduct periodic assessments to determine students' progress. A mid-term grade is required. These grades will be submitted to the Registrar electronically. Students may access them online. Sufficient work should be assigned and evaluated prior to midterm so that the student can clearly assess his/her progress in the course.

**Final Examinations:** Unless prior written approval is obtained, the University requires each faculty member to conduct a final assessment of each student officially registered for a course. The final assessment may be in the form of an examination, project, etc. This assessment is to be administered at the time specified on the Term Calendar that is posted on the website. No change by the instructor in the final assessment schedule may be made unless it is approved, in writing, by the dean of the college. When changes are approved, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Registrar must be notified by courtesy copy.

Students have the right to review with faculty members their final assessments. For this reason, final assessments should be kept on file for one calendar year. In addition to the final assessment, other assessments are to be administered and out-of-class work assigned in a manner deemed appropriate by the instructor and detailed in the course syllabus.

**Make-up Examinations for Excused Absences:** Students who are unable to take announced quizzes and examinations due to extenuating circumstances should report reasons for their absence to their professor. The faculty member may require documentation of the circumstances before administering a make-up examination or requiring other make-up adjustments. Absences from a scheduled final examination without prior arrangement with the course instructor (except in extenuating circumstances) will be classified as unexcused, and a failing grade on the examination will be assigned until the validity of a student's excuse is determined.

### **Course Syllabi**

The course syllabus and/or course outline along with the bulletin description upon which it is based constitutes the basis for instructional accountability, course evaluation, and quality assurance. Within one week after the official beginning of classes for a regular semester or within two days of the beginning of a summer session (but preferably the first day of classes), instructors are

required to provide students with course syllabi which conform to University standards. The document will include as a minimum, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

1. Course description
2. Student learning outcomes
3. Course procedures and/or requirements
4. Performance standards
5. Grading system and criteria to be used in calculating the final grade for the course
6. Instructor's office hours and location
7. ADA statement
8. Textbooks and/or required readings.

For courses with multiple sections, a common core syllabus must be used by all instructors.

A copy of each course syllabus and outline for each class being taught is required to be on file in the office of the department chairperson and school dean not later than one week after the beginning of classes. Course syllabi and outlines should be updated regularly to be current with changes in subject matter areas and pedagogical strategies

### Faculty Classroom Standards

For classroom experience to be meaningful, it should represent a partnership between student and instructor. Each faculty member, in conducting classes, must exhibit high standards of professional behavior, through scholarship, personal integrity and enthusiasm for the profession of teaching. More specifically, each instructor has a responsibility to students and the University to:

1. Provide, at the first meeting of class, a clear statement of specific course objectives and the manner in which they are to be attained.
2. Clearly identify and explain evaluation and grading procedures, including:
  - a. Number of examinations and approximate dates.
  - b. Grading system and method of determining the final grade.
  - c. Exercise care in the organization and presentation of all materials to attain the stated instructional objectives.
  - d. Utilize the allotted time efficiently, maintaining course integrity.
  - e. Grade and return examinations within a reasonable period of time.
3. Arrive promptly for all scheduled classes and provide instruction throughout the allotted time. If absence is anticipated the class should be informed in advance, and an appropriate substitute identified. If absence is unanticipated, then the instructor should inform the department chairperson as soon as possible and the chairperson has the responsibility to ensure that the class is informed.
4. Maintain regular posted office hours. The university requires a minimum of ten (10) office hours per week for full-time faculty during the regular semester.

### Grading System

The professor must be fully accountable for the grading of students. Each professor has the responsibility of maintaining class records to a reasonable level of detail on each student enrolled in class. These records must be submitted to the department chair within 24 hours of submission of grades to the Registrar's Office. Such records must demonstrate the grading system as described in the course syllabus.

Final grades for each course are required to be reported in the Banner System with the schedule published on the current University Calendar. The following system of grades is used:

- "A" Excellent performance of course requirements, far above minimum standards. Four quality points for each semester credit hour.
- "B" Good performance of course requirements, well above minimum acceptable standards. Three quality points for each semester credit hour.
- "C" Satisfactory performance of course requirements, clearly meets minimum acceptable standards for undergraduate work but is marginal for graduate level work. Two quality points for each semester credit hour.
- "D" Barely acceptable performance of undergraduate course requirements, clearly below average for graduate work. One quality point for each semester hour of credit.
- "I" Incomplete work; 75 % of course requirements completed satisfactorily, but work toward course completion suspended with prior permission of professor. No quality points awarded.

- “F” Performance failed to meet minimum acceptable standards. No quality points awarded, however, credit hours are computed in the grade point average.

### Collection of Fees from Students

Any regular or miscellaneous fees to be assessed and collected from students should be authorized by both the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Business and Finance, and listed in the University Bulletin and other publications outlining fees. Faculty members are not permitted to collect regular or miscellaneous fees from students in classes or to sell textbooks or other materials to them. Fees for registration or other required activities will be collected by the Business Office.

### Field Trips

Faculty wishing to take students off-campus on field trips or for any academically oriented purpose must include the following information that must be filed with the department chairperson: purpose, destination, type of transportation, sponsors (if any), identification of students, faculty member(s) in charge, and date and time of departure and estimated time of return. The department chairperson must approve such trips.

### Academic Advisement

Academic advisement is highly essential to the accomplishment of the University's mission. It is a requirement of the University that every student has the benefit of a continuous program of personalized academic advisement by freshman advisors or faculty members. All faculty members share the responsibility of providing advice and guidance to students on an individual basis. Moreover, each academic dean is responsible for the implementation of his/her college's program of academic advisement. The colleges must insure that each student with a declared major in that college is assigned a faculty advisor and records are kept of major advisement sessions.

Academic advising facilitates planning for successful achievement of educational goals. If the student has a minor or concentration, the student should also have an advisor for the minor or concentration.

The specific objectives of academic advising are:

1. To help students select the educational programs which are consistent with their interests and career goals;
2. To guide students in selecting courses in the appropriate sequence and term to facilitate their movement toward program completion.
3. To explain the educational requirements, policies and procedures, and regulations of the University; and
4. To provide periodic evaluation of the students' progress toward achievement of educational goals.

### Textbooks, Supplies and Equipment

Faculty, with the approval of their department chairperson, may select the desired textbooks and/or related materials for their respective courses. When there is more than one instructor for a given course or when there are multiple sections of the same course, common textbooks and core syllabi must be used. Textbook requests are sent electronically from faculty members to the chairperson for approval. After which, the requests are submitted electronically to all interested bookstores. The process must be completed at least 90 days prior to the beginning of the academic term.

The University does not provide desk copies to faculty. Instructors are encouraged to make their own request directly to the publisher for desk copies. Such copies are usually provided free of charge by publishers when the textbook is on order or being used for the course.

### Evaluation of Course Instruction

Students evaluate faculty near the end of the semester using the assessment of course instruction protocol given below:

1. All course evaluations will take place during the last three weeks of the semester, excluding the week of final examinations.
2. The department chair or program coordinator will arrange for a person other than the faculty of a given class to conduct the evaluation.
3. Completed evaluation forms will be transmitted to the office of institutional research.
4. The office of institutional research will analyze and distribute results of all assessments to deans, department chairpersons, program coordinators.

5. Department chairs or program coordinators are required to discuss results of the assessment with the faculty. A plan for the improvement of weak areas shall be established by the chair and faculty and communicated to the college dean.

### Guidelines for Children in the Workplace and/or Classroom

These guidelines address and outline the circumstances under which it is appropriate to bring non-student, minor children to the workplace or classroom. The guidelines are intended to foster respect for the needs of all parties impacted by the presence of non-student minor children on the campus, in the workplace, or in the classroom. As used in these guidelines, the term “non-student minor child” means a child less than age 12 who is not enrolled in classes or participating in official activities at AAMU. In addition, the term “parent” means any employee or student who has responsibility for a non-student minor child while in the workplace or classroom regardless of the employee’s or student’s relationship to the child.

1. In general, the workplace and the classroom are typically not appropriate places for non-student minor children.
2. Exceptions to this general rule include:
  - a. Minors who are enrolled as students at AAMU.
  - b. Officially sponsored institutional programmatic activities for non-student minor children with appropriate adult supervision.
  - c. Workplace assignments in which one of the conditions of the employment is residency in a campus facility, e.g., live-in resident hall director.
  - d. Brief visits, e.g., an employee brings the non-student minor child to introduce that child to co-workers, provided the employee supervises the child(ren) at all times during the visit.
  - e. Special occasions that are employer-sanctioned and at which attendance by children is encouraged. Special occasions should be coordinated with and approved by the employee’s supervisor after considering and satisfactorily addressing the factors set forth in paragraph 3 below. The employee’s schedule for the special occasion should take the child’s presence into consideration.
  - f. Visits coordinated with and approved by the employee’s supervisor after considering and satisfactorily addressing the factors set forth in paragraph 3 below. Children may be brought to the workplace by parent employees for brief visits or other exceptional times when common sense would dictate that it is more efficient for the employee to bring the child into a workplace (e.g., following or before a physician’s appointment). The parent employee must supervise the child(ren) on such visits and ensure that the child(ren) is not disruptive to the parent employee or other employees in the workplace. It is not appropriate for non-student minor children of any age to be in the workplace on regularly scheduled school holidays.
  - g. Visits coordinated and approved by the student’s instructor after considering and satisfactorily addressing the factors set forth in paragraph 3 below. Children may be brought into a classroom by a parent student for brief visits or other exceptional times when common sense would dictate that it is more efficient for the student to bring the child into the classroom (e.g., following or before a physician’s appointment). The parent student must supervise the child(ren) on such visits and must ensure that the child(ren) is not disruptive to the parent student, the instructor, or to other students in the class. It is not appropriate for non-student minor children of any age to be in the classroom on a regular basis, including after school each school day or on regularly scheduled school holidays.
  - h. In the event of an emergency, and if there are no other alternatives, parent employees may have children present in the workplace for brief periods of time provided the parent obtains the immediate supervisor’s prior approval. Similarly, in the event of an emergency, and if there are no other alternatives, parent students may have children present in the classroom for brief periods of time provided the parent obtains the instructor’s prior approval. Such arrangements are only to be temporary in nature and may be granted only in circumstances where the employee and supervisor or the student and professor have considered and satisfactorily addressed the factors set forth in paragraph 3 below. When authorized, the parent employee/student must supervise the child(ren) at all times and should not leave such children in the custody of another university employee or student, even for brief periods of time.
3. The exceptional circumstances under which children may be brought into a particular workplace or classroom setting should be established in a discussion between the employee and supervisor or the student and instructor, respectively, taking into account the following factors:
  - a. Whether the parent is willing to accept full responsibility for the child’s safety and for any damage to property or injury to persons that is caused by the child’s presence.
  - b. When considering the presence of children on campus, the extent to which the child’s presence in the workplace or the classroom creates a potential danger to the child or exposes the department and the university to liability must be considered. Safety is a primary concern for parents, supervisors and the university.
  - c. The extent to which the child’s presence in the workplace or the classroom poses a risk of breach of confidentiality with respect to information in the workplace.
  - d. The extent to which the child’s presence in the workplace or in the classroom disrupts or has the potential to disrupt the work or classroom environment and/or creates an atmosphere that is not conducive to achievement of the specific goals and objectives of the workplace or classroom.

- e. Whether the parent agrees to assume responsibility for the child at all times and to ensure that the child's presence does not disrupt his or her work or interfere with the workplace or classroom activities.
  - f. Whether the parent agrees to supervise the child at all times and agrees that he or she will not leave the child with another employee.
  - g. Such other factors as the supervisor or instructor deems appropriate.
4. The above exceptions are not applicable to, and non-student minor children are not permitted as visitors in work or classroom areas where safety and/or confidentiality factors exist unless prior permission from an appropriate university authority is obtained. Short-term visits may be authorized for approved guided tours or other reasons if:
- a. Permission from the appropriate authority is obtained, e.g., the director for access to the power plant and the employee's supervisor and laboratory head or principal investigator for laboratories or specialized areas.
  - b. Appropriate precautionary measures are taken and hazards have been considered or removed during the visit.
  - c. Direct adult supervision of children is required at all times in hazardous areas.
  - d. Department heads may require additional safety measures prior to such visits and may require written parental consent authorizing the site visit.
5. Examples of such high-risk safety areas generally include, but are not limited to:
- a. Power plants, shops, mechanical rooms, confined spaces, food preparation areas;
  - b. Any areas, indoors or out, containing power tools or machinery with exposed moving parts or rotating equipment;
  - c. Areas with excessive noise, temperatures, inadequate ventilation or pollutants;
  - d. University vehicles, heavy duty or other motorized equipment;
  - e. Any other high-risk areas (stairwells, elevators, doorways, rooftops, construction zones, etc.);
  - f. Laboratories or specialized work areas that include chemicals, biological hazards, radioactive hazards, flammables, explosives, compressed gases, sharp objects, lasers, research animals, hazardous wastes or other environmental hazards.

### Annual Policy Compliance

Annually (In late February or early March), conduct a review of all SACSCOC policies including current, as well as new and revised guidelines. This meeting is led by the University's SACS Liaison. During this meeting all new and revised rules are examined, and studied. After undergoing this process, the committee determines if changes are required to University policy and or operational procedure. If changes are needed, appropriate recommendations are submitted to the units responsible for implementing the compliance revisions. To ensure that the needed changes are incorporated into practice in late March the SACS liaison conducts a second review (in regard to SACS compliance) to ensure that the requisite changes have been undertaken and that the University is in compliance with all SACSCOC policy (See Attachment B: Review of SACSCOC Policy Spring 2023).

### UG & GR Verbiage Publishing

Any changes to the published verbiage of the Undergraduate Bulletin or Graduate Catalog must be approved through the appropriate academic program channels (i.e., Grad Council and/or ASCC) before performing.

## **Section II – CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN/POLICY**

### **Academic Affairs Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery**

#### **Hurricanes or other weather related incidents**

#### **Catastrophic Disaster Policy**

In the event of a catastrophic disaster which would cause the university not to meet the instruction benchmarks as set by SACSCOC and upon the approval of the University President and Cabinet, incompletes grades would be issued to all enrolled students. Once the catastrophic event has passed and the university is able to operate again, the Division of Academic Affairs should follow the procedures laid in this document.

#### **Introduction**

This document addresses disaster preparedness and response for the continuation of instruction and academic services during occasions that call for evacuation of the campus for longer than one week. The Division of Academic Affairs has primary responsibility for instructional activities. The guidelines in this document are intended to ensure the continuity of instruction in the event of an evacuation or suspension of on campus operations. Emergency Plans, as well as Continuity of Operations Plans, are activated when the campus is evacuated or campus operations are suspended. The procedures for the continuation of instruction are basically the same for either an evacuation or suspension of campus operations.

Faculty and students are expected to evacuate and be prepared to continue instruction by distance learning methods which may include Blackboard, other online methods, and completion of reading, writing or other assignments specified on individual course syllabi. Online courses and programs will continue normal operations. Faculty teaching in online programs, in consultation with online program directors, will notify their students of changes in availability while faculty members are traveling to their evacuation destinations.

#### **Context**

The number of instructional days lost to inclement weather to date and the possibility of additional weather-related closings was the impetus for the Academic Affairs team to develop a proposal to ensure students receive adequate instructional time. The proposal was made after consulting the SACSCOC policy on credit hours. That policy calls for a minimum of one-hour class time (and a minimum of two hours outside of class) each week for approximately fifteen weeks per semester for each credit hour and covers all modes of instruction, including distance and correspondence education. The University's spring calendar includes fifteen weeks of instruction for most students and fourteen weeks for graduating students. It is our opinion that the three instructional days lost to inclement weather fall within the "approximately fifteen weeks" language from the SACSCOC policy. However, a contingency plan is necessary to address any additional instructional days due to a catastrophic disaster.

#### **Proposed Solution**

The University's technological infrastructure (i.e., Blackboard) provides a means to address any additional instructional time lost due to weather. In the event of the University closing, instructors are directed to post instructional materials to Blackboard in lieu of a face-to-face class meetings. After consulting with the Office of Distance Education and Extended Studies, this strategy is feasible as the Office of Distance Education and Extended Studies estimates that 75% of faculty currently incorporate Blackboard into their courses in some fashion. Additionally, the Office of Distance Education and Extended Studies is poised to offer a series of workshops to assist faculty members who require additional support utilizing Blackboard. The University must provide additional guidance to instructors regarding the types of artifacts that can be loaded to Blackboard to replace face-to-face instructional time and provide evidence of sufficient instructional time materials.

#### **Assumptions**

1. Academic Affairs activities during emergency situations will be consistent with the overall University disaster preparedness, response, and recovery plan.
2. Academic personnel should secure their office area, and remove all personal items, all course materials needed to continue instruction, testing, assignments, etc. when an evacuation is ordered.
3. Deans and department heads are responsible for securing classrooms, labs, and equipment.
4. In the event of an extended campus closure during an academic session, the goal will be to continue instructional delivery via electronic or other appropriate delivery methods.
5. All academic employees must have current personal contact information and alternative contact information on file with their supervisor.
6. Faculty and staff are responsible for communicating with their deans or supervisors within 48 hours of an evacuation or campus closure notice.
7. The University intends to maintain Blackboard and/or other appropriate e-learning capability during an evacuation.

8. All faculty and instructional staff must maintain a level of Blackboard presence for each of their courses.
9. Faculty should inform students that they will be required to sign on to Blackboard or appropriate e-learning tools to keep up with course assignments within 48 hours of evacuation.
10. Academic rules and regulations will remain in effect during an evacuation or campus closure.

#### Enrollment Assumptions

1. Normal tuition refund policies will remain in effect during an evacuation.
2. Student enrollment and contact with students will be maintained.
3. Course instruction through distance learning will begin within 48 hours of an evacuation.
4. For extended evacuation or campus closure during an academic semester (more than two weeks), instruction will continue in all courses except those designated by the Provost as inappropriate for extended distance education (lab courses, private music instruction, etc.). Students may be assigned an incomplete in such courses.
5. The university will adjust the academic calendar as necessary to adhere to accreditation and federal financial aid requirements.

The responsibilities indicated in this plan are designed to provide general guidance for preparing and responding to a campus closure, and for resuming University activities as soon as possible. Emergency situations present various challenges which create a dynamic situation and require actions beyond the items listed in this document. In such instances employees can be called upon to perform duties outside their usual job description.

#### Emergency Temporary Relocation of Instruction

In emergency situations, Alabama A&M University may request temporary relocation of on-campus and off-campus instruction. Emergency relocations are for unforeseeable situations such as natural disasters, fires, or other extraordinary circumstances. Emergency relocations are not applicable to foreseeable situations such as renovations, one-time program offerings, or responses to employer requests. Unlike routine relocations in which a site permanently relocates to another single site, emergency relocations *temporarily* move instruction to another single site or to multiple other sites.

Alabama A&M University must submit requests in writing to SACSCOC via e-mail from the University's SACSCOC liaison or University President to the president of the Commission with a copy to the director of substantive change. Include, for each site to be relocated:

1. an explanation of the circumstances and rationale for the relocation,
2. the name and current physical address of instruction,
3. the name and physical address(es) to where instruction will temporarily be relocated,
4. the effective date of the relocation, and
5. the estimated date – no more than 60 days after the effective date – on which all instruction will return to the original site.

The Commission will accept notification for a maximum of 60 days. If instruction cannot return to the original location by the estimated date, A&M will contact the Commission, in advance, to request an extension up to 60 days. If instruction cannot return by the end of the extension, A&M may request another extension subject to approval by the Executive Council of SACCOC Board of Trustees. If the university determines a permanent relocation is necessary, Commission policies for campus relocation, off-campus instruction site relocation, and approval of new off-campus instruction sites will apply. The Commission will respond by letter and by e-mail.

### Academic Administration Responsibilities

#### Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research

##### **Pre-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Ensures each dean has college plans for academic instruction continuation, and each chairperson/director has plans for continuation of activities
2. Ensures the Registrar has plans continuation of activities to complete the academic session and begin the next session
3. Develops a plan for communications during an evacuation or campus closure
4. Develops and coordinates contingency plans with other University Divisions

##### **Post-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Establishes communication with deans and direct reports
2. Develops and implements plans for resumption of instruction and academic activities on campus
3. Communicates necessary changes in academic policy and procedures

Director of J. F. Drake Memorial Learning Resources Center**Pre-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Develops contingency plan to maintain library resource accessibility via electronic or other appropriate tools during evacuation or campus closure
2. Assigns responsibility for securing library items
3. Maintains accurate contact information for all library personnel and vice president for academic affairs

**Post-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Provides access to electronic resources
2. Provides reference assistance via electronic means
3. Maintains contact with university website for accurate information

College Dean**Pre-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Develops disaster preparedness, response, and recovery plan for the college or area of responsibility
2. Communicates plan to faculty and staff and vice president for academic affairs
3. Coordinates college wide evacuation policies for faculty, staff, and students
4. Coordinates college wide securing of equipment and facilities
5. Ensures current contact information for college personnel is on file and accessible

**Post-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Communicates with vice president of academic affairs regarding status of college activities
2. Establishes immediate contact with department heads and communicates knowledge of situation
3. Assists with maintaining academic operations
4. Provides access to electronic resources, including full-text journals and electronic books.
5. Provides 24/7 reference assistance.
6. In the event of an extended evacuation/suspension provides interlibrary loan/article delivery services and support for media applications.

Department Head/Directors**Pre-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Ensures current contact information for department personnel is on file and accessible (including part-time and temporary faculty)
2. Ensures faculty have plans in place for continuation of course instruction
3. Ensures faculty take personal belongings and necessary materials to continue instruction with them during the evacuation
4. Ensures all courses are on Blackboard, all syllabi are posted to Blackboard, and faculty have an understanding of utilizing Blackboard for instructional purposes
5. Ensures faculty, staff, and students are informed about the need to check the AAMU website for accurate and timely information pertaining to campus operations

**Post-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Maintains contact with dean and communicates with faculty and staff in department
2. Ensures instruction continues via e-learning or other appropriate means

Faculty**Pre-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Provide accurate contact information to department head and dean.
2. Participate in Blackboard training and have working knowledge of instructional delivery via Blackboard or other e-learning tool.
3. Ensure that each course has a Blackboard presence and syllabus posted to Blackboard.
4. Ensure that students have information about the steps to log on to Blackboard and access course information.
5. Become familiar with the University's Disaster preparedness, Response and Recovery Plan.
6. Inform students about emergency plans and expectations for continuing instruction; inform students to check the website for current information.
7. Ensure that all academic materials are taken to the personal evacuation site.
8. Whenever foreseeable, it will be the responsibility of the faculty to give students up to two weeks of content to be accessed offline in case of Internet disruption. These materials must be given to students 24 hours before a foreseeable emergency event.

**Post-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Communicate with Department Head regarding status of courses within 48 hours of an evacuation or campus closure; check the website for accurate information.
2. Within 48 hours of an evacuation or campus closure, tell students via Blackboard how each course will be conducted during the evacuation or campus closure.
3. Be accessible to advisees to answer questions and provide accurate information.

Students**Pre-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Learn about University emergency plans and learn how to log on to Blackboard and university websites.
2. Provide regular and alternative e-mail address or other contact information to each instructor.
3. Ensure all academic materials (books, notebooks, etc.) are taken to personal housing or evacuation site.

**Post-Evacuation/Suspension or Campus Closure**

1. Log on to University website within 48 hours.
2. Log on to each course through Blackboard or e-mail within 48 hours.

## **Section III – PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & CHANGE MANAGEMENT AT AAMU**

### **Definition of Terms**

Academic year--the annual period of sessions of an academic institution that usually begins in August or September and ends in May, prior to the summer session.

Degree--an award conferred by a college or university signifying that the recipient has satisfactorily completed a course of study.

Academic program--required and elective courses leading to a degree. Minimum semester credit hours (SCH) are 120.

Major--subject of concentrated study within an academic program. Minimum SCH are 24.

Concentration--a sub-field of concentrated study within a major field. Minimum SCH are 21.

Specialization--research focus area sometimes supplemented by coursework. SCH are 9 to 20.

Minor--secondary field of concentrated study that may be a required or elective part of an academic program. Minimum SCH are 18.

Track--tertiary field of concentrated study that may be a required or elective part of an academic program. Minimum SCH are less than 18.

Certificate--a document certifying that one had fulfilled the requirements of and may practice in a field. According to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, a certificate program of study may be long-term (30-60 semester hours) or short term ( $\leq$  29 semester hours).

### **Development of a New Academic Program, Concentration, Specialization, Minor, Track, Certificate**

Proposals for offering a new academic program, concentration, specialization, minor, track, or certificate must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate individuals and groups. Typically, substantive change issues emanate from departments. The steps to be used to get review and approval for an issue that amounts to a substantive change are given below.

1. The faculty member(s) who wish(es) to propose a substantive change should submit an "Intent to Plan" letter to Academic Affairs. This notification should include the following:
  - a. Justification of need
  - b. Availability of resources
    - i. Funding
    - ii. Students
    - iii. Faculty
    - iv. Facilities
  - c. Relationship to the mission of the University.
  - d. Relationship to other programs at the University.
2. Upon approval of the Intent to Plan, the faculty member(s) who wish(es) to propose a substantive change should submit a proposal for the change to the departmental curriculum committee. The following steps should be followed to prepare the formal proposal:
  - a. Feasibility study which addresses the criteria for establishing new degree programs should be conducted.
  - b. Curriculum development that includes:
    - i. Program description and curriculum in the form of a Program Checklist.
    - ii. Faculty qualifications
    - iii. Faculty load
    - iv. Faculty salaries
    - v. Facilities and equipment
    - vi. Faculty size
3. If the proposal is approved by the department committee, the chair sends it to the college curriculum committee for review.
4. After approval at the college level, the proposal is forwarded by the dean to the dean's council for review.

5. After approval by the dean's council, the dean's office submits a [Modifications for Standards or Graduate Council Form](#) with the proposal for review and approval of Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee for undergraduate programs, Graduate Council for graduate programs.
6. Approvals by the Graduate Council is forwarded by the graduate office to the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee for university-wide approval/notification.
7. After approval by the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee, the proposal is then presented by the Provost to the AAMU Presidential Cabinet and then the Board of Trustees for approval.
8. When the Board of Trustees approval is obtained, the dean's office develops (based on the Program Checklist) and forwards the paperwork to Academic Affairs for submission to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE).
9. When ACHE approval is obtained, a substantive change prospectus is developed and forwarded by the dean's office to the Office of Academic Affairs for transmittal to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

No new minor can be published or offered by the department until all approvals have been obtained through the Board of Trustees.

No new concentration, specialization, or track can be published or offered by the department until all approvals have been obtained through ACHE. If the item is informational only for SACSCOC, a program may be published/offered.

No new program or certificate can be published or offered by the department until all approvals have been obtained through SACSCOC.

### Obtaining ACHE Approval of a New Program or Certificate

The following steps should be used to obtain ACHE approval of a new degree program or certificate.

1. Submit a NISP ([Notification of Intent to Submit Proposal Form](#)) to the Office of Academic Affairs for submission to ACHE. All ACHE forms can be found at [ache.edu](http://ache.edu).
2. After reviews of the NISP have been received from other institutions in the state, the comments are used to prepare the proposal for the new program. Please note that the NISP must precede the proposal by at least two months.
3. The proposal is submitted by the dean's office to the Office of Academic Affairs for submission to ACHE.
4. The appropriate parties will be notified by the Office of Academic Affairs when the proposal is placed on the Commission's agenda.
5. It is expected that the chair of the department that will house the new program and the dean of the college will accompany representatives of the Office of Academic Affairs to the Commission meeting on the scheduled date.

After ACHE has approved the program, the program must be implemented within 24 months. If the program is not implemented within this timeframe, the approval will be null and void, and the program will be removed from ACHE's academic program inventory.

No new program or certificate can be published or offered by the department until all approvals have been obtained through SACSCOC.

### Obtaining ACHE Approval for the Addition of a Track, Specialization, or Concentration

The following steps should be used to obtain ACHE approval of a new track, specialization, or concentration.

1. The dean's office submits the [Proposal Form for the Addition of an Option, Track, Specialization, or Concentration, etc., to an Existing Program Form](#) to the Office of Academic Affairs for submission to ACHE. All ACHE forms can be found at [ache.edu](http://ache.edu). This form should be filled out using the relevant Program Checklist information.
2. The appropriate parties will be notified by the Office of Academic Affairs when the proposal is placed on the Commission's agenda.
3. It is expected that the chair of the department that will house the new item and the dean of the college will accompany representatives of the Office of Academic Affairs to the Commission meeting on the scheduled date.

Tracks, specializations, and concentrations cannot be published or offered by the department until approval has been obtained from ACHE.

### Obtaining SACSCOC Approval of a New Program or Certificate

The following steps should be used to obtain SACSCOC approval of a new degree program or certificate.

1. Submit a letter of intent to submit substantive change proposal (SCP) to SACSCOC.
2. After obtaining notification of receipt of intent and request to submit SCP from SACSCOC, SCP is prepared and submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs for review.
3. Final document is then submitted to the President's office (with a copy to the AAMU SACSCOC liaison) for transmittal to SACSCOC.

A new program cannot be published or offered by the department until approval has been received from SACSCOC. The typical time frame for a SACSCOC response to the SCP is six months. Noncompliance with guidelines will result in loss of Title IV funding or requirement from the U.S. Department of Education to reimburse any money received by the institution for programs related to the unreported substantive change. In addition, the institution's case may be referred to SACSCOC for the imposition of a sanction or removal from membership.

Notification will be sent to all concerned when ACHE and/or SACSCOC approvals have been obtained.

Once the Office of Academic Affairs receives approval from ACHE for the new program, it will provide electronic copies of the ACHE approval letter to all concerned as well as a proposed Letter of Intent for the President to send to SACSCOC. The Letter of Intent expresses AAMU's intent to submit a Substantive Change Prospectus (SCP). The Letter of Intent must be submitted to SACSCOC at least six months prior to the implementation of the new program. The Letter of Intent is routed to the President through the Office of Academic Affairs. Electronic versions of the proposed Letter of Intent are sent to all organizations involved, and once the signed letter is ready to send, copies are distributed to all involved offices.

Upon receipt of ACHE approval, the initiator of the new program will prepare the SCP. Guidelines for the SCP may be obtained from the SACSCOC website at [www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp](http://www.sacscoc.org/SubstantiveChange.asp). An SCP for all new programs must be submitted to and approved by SACSCOC. This includes any program that is not in the approved inventory.

When the SCP is completed, it must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs for review and approval. The Office of Academic Affairs will develop the cover letter for the President's signature. Copies of the SCP are sent to SACSCOC with the cover letter. Electronic copies of the cover letter go to all involved, and after the letter is signed by the President, hard copies will follow within thirty (30) days.

### Expanding an Existing Program to a New Location

SACSCOC approval must be obtained before a current program can be offered at a location that has not been previously approved. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC), composed of all academic program assessment coordinators, must review and approve all proposals to offer an existing program at a new location before they are reviewed by the appropriate academic council. If the program is a graduate program, it must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Council, after submission by the proposing department. Undergraduate programs to be offered at a new location must be reviewed by the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee after submission by the proposing department.

### Expanding an Existing Program to an Already Approved Location

1. The Office of Academic Affairs will prepare a Letter of Intent for the President to send to SACSCOC informing them of AAMU's intent to offer an existing (approved) program for the first time at a location that has already been approved by SACSCOC.
2. The Letter of Intent should be sent to SACSCOC six months prior to the implementation of the existing approved program at the already approved AAMU location.
3. SACSCOC requires only a Letter of Notification to SACSCOC from the President for academic programs at approved locations providing 49% or less of the instruction in the classroom setting (over 51% through AAMU Online or some other approved method).
4. SACSCOC does not require a Letter of Notification when 24% or less of an academic program is offered at an approved teaching location (over 75% through AAMU Online or some other approved method).

Expanding an Existing Program to a Location that has not been Previously Approved by SACSCOC for AAMU

1. SACSCOC requires AAMU to submit a Letter of Intent six months prior to the implementation and to submit a Substantive Change Prospectus within three months of the implementation of an existing program for the first time at a location that has not been previously approved by SACSCOC for AAMU.
2. The dean of the college that is proposing to offer the program in the new location will be responsible for the preparation of the Substantive Change Prospectus.
3. The Office of Academic Affairs will send a Letter of Intent for the President to send to SACSCOC expressing AAMU's plan to submit a Substantive Change Prospectus. Electronic versions of the letter are to be sent to all involved. Once the President signs the letter, copies are sent to all concerned.

## Modifications to Existing Academic Programs

Changes to programs, including changes to course prefixes, changing track numbers, addition of courses, changing of course requirements for a program, must be provided as information items and approved by the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee (for undergraduate courses) or the Graduate Council for graduate courses.

Notification must be provided to ACHE on modifications, such as changing the name of a program, addition of concentration or track, or extending or altering a program. This notification should include the date the modification was implemented.

Approval must be requested from ACHE for the significant addition or extension of the content of an existing concentration or program. Further information on ACHE requirements for reporting modifications to existing academic programs can be found at [ache.edu](http://ache.edu).

The Vice President for Academic Affairs submits a letter and a completed form for each proposed extension to the ACHE Director of Instruction and Special Projects regarding these changes. The forms are:

1. [Form A](#): (alteration): Alteration of CIP Code, Program Title, and Degree Nomenclature Except at the Doctoral Level
2. [Form B](#): Description of Curriculum Changes
3. [Form C](#): Proposal Form for the Addition of an Option, Track, Specialization, or Concentration, etc., to an Existing Program

## Offering a Cohort

SACSCOC requires a Substantive Change Prospectus to be submitted six months prior to implementation of an academic program at any new location. This requirement includes offering a cohort program for one time at any non-approved teaching location, such as a school, hotel, hospital, or government building.

The university must submit a Letter of Notification and Substantive Change Prospectus to SACSCOC for approval for any cohort program where 50% or more of the program is being taught in a classroom (face-to-face) setting. If over 25% but less than 50% of the program offered to a cohort is being taught face-to-face, only a Letter of Notification must be submitted to SACSCOC.

## Closing a Program, Instructional Site, Branch Campus or an Institution

If an institution decides to close an educational program, approved instructional site, branch campus, or the entire institution, it must choose one of the following options:

1. The institution teaches out currently enrolled students; no longer admits students to programs; and terminates the program, the operations of an approved instructional site or a branch campus, or the operations of an institution after students have graduated. **(Teach-out plan)**
  - a. A teach-out plan is a written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides fifty percent or more of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between institutions. Teach out plans must be approved by SACSCOC in advance of implementation.
  - b. To be approved, a teach-out plan must include the following information:
    - i. Date of closure
    - ii. An explanation of how affected parties (students, faculty, staff) will be informed of the impending closure
    - iii. Submission of a completed [Individual Student Teach-out Plan \(ISToP\) Form](#) is required for each student affected with minimal disruption or additional expense.
    - iv. Signed copies of teach-out agreements with other institutions, if any
    - v. How faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment
    - vi. If closing an institution, arrangement for the storing of student records, disposition of final financial resources and other assets

2. The institution enters into a contract for another institution or organization to teach out the education programs or programs.  
**(Teach-out agreement)**

## **Section IV – ACADEMIC PROGRAM EVALUATION**

**Purpose:** The overriding purpose of program review is the improvement of program quality, utility, and efficiency.

**Assumptions:**

1. Program improvement should be a primary concern of institutions of higher education since, in the final analysis, improvements must occur at the institutional level. It follows that the review process should be one which is of greatest benefit to the institution.
2. Institutions of higher education, being concerned with the quality, utility, and efficiency of their programs, must objectively evaluate programs in order to determine strengths and weaknesses and propose strategies for improvement as needed.

**Criteria:** Each program should be evaluated in terms of quality, utility, and efficiency.

### **Program Requirements**

1. Each program has identified program goals/purposes and student learning outcomes. A mechanism is in place to inform students of these goals and outcomes.
2. Each major has sufficient breadth and depth.
3. The quality of each instructional program is maintained through course objectives, learning experiences, assessment of student learning outcomes.

### **Assessment and Continuous Improvement in Academic Programs**

All of Alabama A&M University's academic programs are expected to participate in the annual outcomes assessment process. Academic program here refers to a degree program. Programs in the same field/discipline but offered at different levels are considered distinct academic programs (e.g., B.S. Biology and M.S. Biology are two distinct programs). Concentrations within a degree program are not considered academic programs.

Each year, all programs are expected to assess a minimum of three student learning outcomes and two program outcomes.

- Student learning outcomes identify the knowledge, skills or attitudes students are expected to acquire or demonstrate as they progress through their academic programs. Programs are encouraged to use two assessment measures to evaluate each student learning outcome with at least with one direct assessment measure (i.e., measurement of actual student artifacts such as exams/tests, paper, projects, presentations, portfolios, performances, etc.).
- Program outcomes are intended to assess the performance of the academic program rather than the learning of students in the program. Examples of program outcomes include program enrollments and completions, course pass rates, licensure pass rates, faculty productivity, etc.

During the fall, in college or departmental planning meetings, academic programs develop and submit an assessment plan followed by a full assessment report at the end of the spring semester. Assessment plans identify the outcomes to be assessed for the academic year (three student learning outcomes and two program outcomes), the measures that will be used to assess performance on the outcomes and the minimal levels of acceptable performance for each outcome. Assessment reports extend the assessment plans by reporting and interpreting assessment results and where necessary, specifying plans for improvements to be implemented in the following academic year.

The outcomes assessment process is cyclical with results from one year informing the subsequent year's assessment plan. When students in an academic program fall short of the performance target for one or more student learning outcomes, the program is expected to identify actions it intends to take the subsequent academic year to improve student learning. These intended actions may include changes to curriculum (e.g., restructure course sequencing, modify existing courses, develop new courses, etc.), pedagogy (e.g., introduce novel instructional methods or technology, modify current or develop new assignments, etc.) or changes to assessment measures/performance targets (e.g., raise/lower performance targets, introduce a novel assessment measure, etc.)

The Southern Association for Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges published the following graphic illustrating the continuous improvement cycle in the 2018 edition of the Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation (SACSCOC, 2018). Steps 1-2 of this model correspond with the AAMU assessment plan, steps 3-4 correspond with the AAMU assessment report. Academic programs state their intended use of assessment results for improvement in the assessment report though the actual implementation of the actions intended for improvement occurs the subsequent academic year.



The focus of this process is improvement of student learning. When a program's students achieve or exceed performance targets the program is expected to assess a different student learning outcomes the following year. Programs must provide a written justification if they choose to assess the same student learning outcome the subsequent year. For programs whose students meet or achieve an assessment measure in consecutive years a different student learning outcome should be addressed the following year. Programs retaining the student learning outcome should increase the performance target and/or introduce a new assessment measure.

The office of Institutional Planning Research and Effectiveness (OIPRE) coordinates the annual assessment process and provides support to the academic programs (e.g., assessment workshops, assessment consultations, assessment resource library). However, outcomes assessment is the responsibility of the academic programs. Each academic program has a designated assessment coordinator who is responsible for submitting assessment plans/reports and is the primary point of contact for OIPRE. Though each program has an assessment coordinator student learning outcomes assessment is a shared responsibility among program faculty.

The annual outcomes assessment process report process ensures each academic program:

1. Identifies expected outcomes, operationalized via clearly defined assessment measures and performance targets,
2. Assesses the extent to which students achieve the stated outcomes, and
3. Where necessary, indicates plans for improvement to be implemented the subsequent academic year.

Full participation in the annual outcomes assessment process allows the University to demonstrate compliance with SACSCOC standard 8.2.a (student outcomes: educational programs).

### Strategic Planning

Each college, department and program unit must have a five-year strategic plan on file in the office of institutional research that has been approved by the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Each academic unit must prepare an annual plan of work in support of its five-year plan.

#### Procedures:

1. By September 1 of each academic year, each department, academic unit and college should prepare an annual plan of work in support of its five-year strategic plan to submit through channels to the Office of Academic Affairs.
2. By June 30 of each academic year, each department, academic unit and college should file an update of its five-year strategic plan in the office of institutional research. This update should be based on an evaluation of the annual plan of work, including attainment or nonattainment of goals and objectives.

## Five Year Program Evaluation

All academic programs of the University will be evaluated every five (5) years in accordance with established guidelines and approved criteria.

### Procedures:

1. Each department shall conduct a self-study for each academic program using the criteria and format in section two. The self-study shall include the following:
  - a. Program description and curriculum
  - b. Faculty size and qualifications
  - c. Faculty productivity (including research activities, service activities, course teaching, advising activities)
  - d. Faculty salaries
  - e. Number of graduates and placement of graduates
  - f. Enrollment (student credit hours generated, number of majors, and contribution to general education)
  - g. Facilities and equipment
  - h. Curriculum Assessment for each degree program
  - i. Summary of student evaluations of courses
2. The self-studies shall be submitted to external reviewers for assessment and recommendations.
3. The results of the self-study assessment will be submitted to the Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council for final decision. The appropriate action is then implemented through the Office of Academic Affairs.
4. Where appropriate, data compiled for accrediting agencies may be used for the program review. However, such reports will not substitute for the five-year review.

### Actions:

According to academic policies, one of the following actions will be taken:

1. Continue the program.
2. Place the program on probation.
3. Re-align with another program.
4. Terminate the program.

## Program Probation

Any program that is found to have significant deficiencies per the evaluation criteria during the general review will be notified of said deficiencies and placed on probation, pending further review.

### Procedures:

1. If a program is found to warrant probation, the Office of Academic Affairs will notify the dean of the status.
2. The department will then develop a detailed plan of action within 90 days to address the deficiencies that resulted in the probationary status. Prior to implementation, this plan must be approved by Standards or the Graduate Council.
3. The program shall have a maximum of three years to correct the identified deficiencies in order to be removed from probationary status.
4. Upon correction of deficiencies, the program shall complete a report requesting the removal of probationary status. The request must be submitted to Standards or the Graduate Council for approval.
5. Failure to sufficiently correct identified deficiencies within three years will result in termination of the program.

## Program Re-alignment Criteria

Programs may be realigned with other units based on the following:

1. Fewer than thirty (30) enrollees in the total program.
2. Fewer than an average of 7.5 graduates from the program over a three-year period.
3. Lack of adequate institutional financial support.
4. Relationship of program to projected occupational trends and societal demands.

## Program Termination

Once a program is placed on probation, it may remain on probation for no more than three years before being terminated. When the decision is made to terminate the program, immediately, no new students will be admitted, and the teach-out plan, that should last no more than three years, must be developed within one month.

**Procedures:**

1. If a program is found to warrant termination, the Office of Academic Affairs will notify the dean in a report that outlines the justification for that decision.
2. Within the first 30 days of the termination decision, a teach-out plan must be developed and submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, ACHE and SACSCOC for approval.
3. After approval of the plan, the teach-out will be implemented.

### Organization for the Management of Academic Policies and Standards

| Academic Standards and Undergraduate Curriculum Committee | Graduate Council                | General Education Committee       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Program Approval/Changes                                  | Program Approval/Changes        | GE Curriculum                     |
| Program Evaluation                                        | Program Evaluation              | GE Curriculum Outcomes/Assessment |
| Standards/Regulations                                     | Admission Standards/Regulations | AGSC/STARS Compliance             |
| Course Approval                                           | Academic Probation/Suspension   |                                   |
| Academic Policies                                         | Course Approval                 |                                   |
|                                                           | Faculty Standards               |                                   |
|                                                           | Faculty Approval                |                                   |
|                                                           | Academic Policies               |                                   |

All policies, standards, procedures and guidelines for each council must be approved by the Office of Academic Affairs and/or the President's Cabinet/Board of Trustees.

#### Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee

The Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee, chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, is responsible for the formulation and monitoring of all policies and procedures related to undergraduate education. The Committee is vested with the authority of approval/disapproval of all actions related to undergraduate academic programs. The Committee is composed of associate provosts, college deans and department chairs, University Registrar, and two representatives of the Faculty Senate. Some actions require approval by the President and/or the Board of Trustees.

#### Graduate Council

The Graduate Council, chaired by the Associate Vice President of Academic Administration and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, is responsible for the formulation and monitoring of all policies and procedures related to graduate education. The Council is vested with the authority of approval/disapproval of all actions related to graduate academic programs. Some actions require approval by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research, President and/or the Board of Trustees. The Council is composed of faculty representatives elected from each graduate major by the department, two graduate students, representative elected from the Faculty Senate, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research (ex-officio).

#### General Education Committee

The General Education Committee is advisory to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and is responsible for the formulation and alteration of all policies and procedures related to general education and its outcomes assessment. The Committee consists of the appointed chair and at least one representative from the major general education areas of English, mathematics, biology, physics, history, social science. Chairs of departments offering general education courses and deans of colleges are ex-officio members.

## **Section V – GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR CREDENTIALING FACULTY**

Alabama A&M University follows the guidelines established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools *Commission on Colleges, (SACS-COC) (Comprehensive Standard 6.2a)* of the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement Commission on Colleges, 2017 Edition) for determining whether faculty (full- and part-time) have the appropriate credentials *to teach in a given discipline*.

Appointments to teach at the undergraduate and graduate levels are primarily based upon consideration of the highest degree earned in the discipline. In order to teach on the bachelor's level, full-time and part-time faculty, must have a minimum of a master's degree or equivalent.

### **Undergraduate and General Education Courses**

Moreover, the University seeks to maintain compliance with the Commission on Colleges' *Faculty Credentials Guidelines* as approved by the College Delegate Assembly, 2006 and updated for the revised principles in April 2018:

1. "Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline)."
2. "Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses [are required to have earned a] doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or [a] master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline ([a] minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline)."
3. In rare instances, persons who achieve eminence in a field may be considered for a faculty appointment (e.g. Scholar/Artist-in-Residence).

### **Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Courses**

To teach "graduate and post-baccalaureate course work, full-time or part-time, [faculty must have] earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline." (Commission on Colleges' *Faculty Credentials Guidelines* as approved by the College Delegate Assembly, 2006 and updated for the revised principles in April 2018). The verification of educational credentials (e.g. official transcripts, letter of application, work experience, licensure and certifications, as appropriate, curriculum vita, and letters of recommendations) are housed in the Division of Academic Affairs. Graduate teaching assistants are also to be hired in accordance with the Commission on Colleges' *Faculty Credentials Guidelines* as approved by the College Delegate Assembly, 2006 and updated for the revised principles in April 2018: The requirements for graduate teaching assistants are a "master's in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations."

### **The Role of Alabama A&M University's Board and Administration**

Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University's Board and Administration embrace the belief that the selection, development, and retention of both undergraduate and graduate faculty are of major importance to the educational quality of the Institution. Consequently, the policies of the University are formulated to encourage and perpetuate the attainment of quality faculty, faculty growth, faculty participation in governance, and faculty security and academic freedom. Thus, appointments to the faculty and the promotion of the faculty reflect consideration of all SACS-COC criteria pertaining to faculty.

### **The Role of Faculty**

With the exception of graduate teaching assistants who are using their Alabama A&M University transcript to verify that they have eighteen (18) hours in the requisite discipline, it is the responsibility of the prospective instructor to provide the University with all of the documentation needed to verify their credentials. This documentation includes, but is not limited to, a curriculum vita, resume supplement, official transcripts (indicating terminal degree or other appropriate transcripts) appropriate licenses or certifications, and the verification of work related to teaching experience (as needed). The cost to obtain official transcripts and copies of licenses and certifications is borne by the prospective instructor. It is the responsibility of faculty members teaching in disciplines that require licensure and/or certification to acquire and maintain those credentials, and to provide documentation of licensure and certification for inclusion in the faculty members' credentialing file in the Office of the Provost. The University may periodically request updated documents from faculty members to maintain the credentialing files. New faculty members must provide an official transcript before the time of hire. Official transcripts are defined as those transcripts transmitted directly from the issuing institution to the University's department to which the instructor will be assigned.

## The Role of Department Heads/Program Heads

Prior to any instructor's appointment with the University, the Department Chair/Program Coordinator (as appropriate) will examine the prospective instructor's credentials to verify that the credentials meet the requirements of the position. If a transcript is unclear, the University will contact the institution producing the transcript, and request that the institution provide information regarding the transcript or courses in question. In the event, the institution ceases to exist and there are no records or method of verification, the instructor may be required to provide references to support academic course work. Transcripts from universities outside the United States (unless a branch campus of an American university) must be evaluated by external reviewers prior to the appointment of the instructor.

In cases where the instructor does not have the eighteen (18) hours in the discipline in which he or she will teach (as required by SACSCOC), exceptional alternative qualifications will need to be documented to justify the appointment of the instructor. These qualifications may include diplomas or certificates earned, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, publications and presentations in the field, and other demonstrated competencies. Relevant documentation beyond the curriculum vita will be forwarded to the dean of the college for verification and signature and subsequently to the Office of the Provost where the material will be placed into the instructor's file. The complete credentialing file is due at the Office of the Provost before any instructor is allowed to teach any class.

## The Role of Deans

Prior to any instructor's appointment with the University, whether as a tenured or tenure-track faculty member, a clinical faculty member, a senior lecturer, a lecturer, a part-time faculty member, or a teaching assistant who will be teaching and grading a course, the dean of the college shall examine and approve the prospective instructor's credentialing file to ensure that the credentials meet the requirements listed by the respective accrediting agency. The dean will work with the department chair or program coordinator (as appropriate) to acquire the documents required for the credentialing process. The dean will forward the completed credentialing form as well as the transcript, letters of recommendation, and curriculum vita for each instructor to the Office of the Provost where the documents will be recorded and stored.

## The Role of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research

The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research is responsible for the verification and validation of all faculty credential requirements. The verification and validation of these requirements will be compiled and listed on the appropriate credentialing form for tenured and tenure-track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, and graduate teaching assistants. These forms combine the educational and experience requirement information from applicable accrediting agencies and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC) and identify and list the credentialing requirements for faculty members teaching in each College at the University.

The forms, the transcripts, letters of recommendation, and the current curriculum vitae that will accompany the forms will be stored in the faculty members' files in the Division of Academic Affairs. The Division of Academic Affairs will also maintain an electronic database of faculty credentials. The Division of Academic Affairs will use the database to provide accurate, timely information to various accrediting agencies, federal, state, local agencies and to meet university administrative needs.

## Currently Employed Faculty with Insufficient Documentation

Once a semester, the Provost's Office will coordinate with the Offices of the Registrar and Human Resources to create a complete listing by department of all faculty of record. The Office of the Provost will perform a review to ensure a completed faculty credentialing file is available for all currently appointed faculty. The Office of the Provost will also periodically conduct an audit of faculty members who are currently employed to determine whether there is sufficient documentation to justify teaching the classes to which each instructor has been assigned. The Office of the Provost will notify the appropriate dean if there are any discrepancies or deficiencies in an instructor's credentialing file. If there are discrepancies or deficiencies, the dean must submit the required credential documents within forty-five (45) days for tenured and tenure-track faculty and thirty (30) days for clinical faculty, lecturers, part-time faculty, graduate teaching assistants, and all other instructors of record.

## Alternative Credentialing

When the credentials of the person do not meet the stated standards, but the prospective instructor possesses outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the teaching discipline, the individual may be alternatively credentialed on

recommendation of the dean and approval of the Provost. Sufficient objective documentation to support outstanding experience and demonstrated contributions are required to warrant consideration. The candidate for alternative credentialing must provide to the Provost, through the appropriate dean, the following documents:

1. Current resume or curriculum vita;
2. Copy of official transcript(s);
3. Three letters of recommendation; and
4. A completed credentialing form with appropriate documentation by the instructor that addresses specific outstanding professional experience and specific demonstrated contributions toward the teaching discipline.

### Official Transcripts

For purposes of this policy, an official transcript is defined as a transcript or other academic record that includes notation that it is official. Each individual official transcript must meet the authentication criteria based on that institution's standards. The transcripts must possess all of the following:

1. The issuing institution's official seal;
2. Signature of the appropriate authorizing agent, preferably the institution's registrar;
3. Date of issue.

The official transcripts are required to be sent to the instructor's department chair, program coordinator, or the Office of Academic Affairs (as appropriate). Official transcripts that are issued to the former student (i.e., the instructor of record) are acceptable as long as they meet the criteria defined above. With the exception of graduate teaching assistants who will be using their AAMU transcript to demonstrate that they have eighteen (18) hours in the appropriate discipline, it is the responsibility of the instructor to provide the official transcript. The dean and the Provost are responsible for ensuring the authenticity of the transcript.

### Foreign Transcripts

All transcripts submitted from foreign universities or schools by a prospective hire must be evaluated for equivalency to United States accredited course work by a University approved agency. All costs for these services will be borne by the individual faculty member. Only course work and degrees granted by an accredited college or university, or an acceptable evaluation of foreign course work and degrees will be accepted for credentialing faculty members. The Office of the Provost maintains and distributes information regarding the processing of foreign transcripts.

### Transcripts from Non-Regionally Accredited Institutions

The hiring of individuals whose qualifying degree is from a non-regionally accredited institution in the United States (U.S.) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. When hiring such individuals, deans must consider additional criteria beyond those listed in the Certification of Credential Form. Criteria to be considered include the degree issuing institution's reputation, whether the institution is accredited or recognized by other agencies or organizations, and a thorough evaluation of the candidate's course work and experience. If such a hire is deemed desirable, then the dean must fully evaluate the instructor's educational background and experience, and document the findings in a memorandum to the Provost. If the Provost agrees that the individual possesses the appropriate academic preparation and experience, the dean will prepare the instructor credentialing file in accordance with current standards and include the documentation of the findings in the file.

### Pending Credentialing File

In rare instances, it may be necessary to have a faculty member begin teaching prior to the receipt of an official transcript. In these cases, a file will be prepared by the dean containing all of the information (current resume or curriculum vita, three letters of recommendation, and a completed credentialing form, which is available in the Office of Academic Affairs) except the official transcript(s). An unofficial transcript must be included in the file to show that the individual meets the credential requirements. A copy of the request for an official transcript must be included in the file. The dean will call the university from which the potential faculty member or lecturer graduated to obtain over the phone confirmation of the degree and major field. Additionally, the dean will attempt to confirm receipt of the transcript request and if there is any type of hold on the release of the transcript. Once the official transcript arrives, it will be placed in the credentialing file and all necessary signatures will be obtained. For tenured and tenure-track faculty, there is a maximum forty-five (45) day period where a credentialing file can be listed as "pending" from the receipt of application. For all other faculty members, the file can be listed as pending for no more than thirty (30) days.

If after the respective thirty (30) or (45) day pending period has elapsed and the credentialing file has not been removed from "pending" status, the individual will not be considered for hire, or if already employed, the individual will be removed from his or her assignment. Removal may result in the instructor's placement on administrative leave without pay until the matter has been resolved.

When the required documents have been received, the faculty member's respective dean may re-certify and place the faculty member in the former assignment.

## **Section VI – CLASSROOM CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students are expected and required to abide by the Classroom Code of Conduct.

Individual breaches of codes of conduct or dress codes will be dealt with by the instructor, on a case-by-case basis, based on the severity of the infraction. Punishment can range from being marked "absent" for that day to being dismissed from the class. Severe or repeated infractions may be turned over to the appropriate body for judicial action.

### **General Decorum**

1. Students must be able to present their ID cards for inspection. It is recommended that the card be visibly displayed, whether clipped to a waistband or breast pocket or worn on a lanyard.
2. Students must attend class regularly, missing no more than the allowed number of absences:
  - a. Absent 1 hour of class for a 1 credit hour course
  - b. Absent 2 hours of class for a 2-credit hour course
  - c. Absent 3 hours of class for a 3-credit hour course
  - d. Absent 4 hours of class for a 4-credit hour course
3. Students whose absences exceed the above will receive a reduction in their final course averages as determined by the instructor. Exceptions to this policy on point reduction may be granted by the faculty upon presentation of documentation from the Vice President of Academic Affairs that an official excuse has been granted for the student's absence. Conditions warranting such an approval include cases involving death in the family, illness of the student or his/her immediate family members or for military duty (see UG policy on Class Attendance). It is the student's responsibility to provide legitimate, official documentation of excused absences to the instructor(s) of the courses involved. Other reasons for absences not covered here must be cleared with the appropriate dean.
4. Students must be on time to class and must remain until dismissed.
5. Students must prepare for each class meeting by reading assignments and completing any required preparatory work. It is thus imperative that students purchase their books in a timely manner (i.e., within the first two weeks of the semester).
6. Students must meet all deadlines, including those established by the instructor and those set by the University.
7. Students must never have electronic devices such as cell phones, PDAs, iPods, or similar items in use during class time unless recommended or approved by the instructor.
8. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect to instructors, guests, staff members, and fellow classmates and may not disrupt a classroom or a faculty member's conducting a class. For example, students should refrain from talking during class while the instructor or another student "has the floor." Failure to behave with proper courtesy and respect could result in disciplinary action. A student who disrupts a class may be removed or ejected from the class or classroom.
9. Students must not come to class under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
10. Food and drinks are not allowed in the classroom, lecture hall, or lab.

### **Student Dress Code**

1. Pajamas, sleepwear and inappropriate exercising clothes (i.e., P.E. uniforms, bicycle shorts, under armor, uncovered spandex) are not allowed in the classroom. Shirts/tops must be worn at all times. Sweat pants are allowed when worn with appropriate undergarments.
2. All students must wear shoes, boots, or other types of footwear made for outside wear: bedroom shoes/slippers, shower shoes, or similar footwear are not allowed in the classroom.
3. Dress and grooming that will disrupt the teaching/learning process or cause undue attention to an individual student; for example, no sunglasses are allowed in the classroom; excessive body piercings, tattoos, and "grillz" are not recommended.
4. Hats, hoods, caps, stocking caps, wave caps, do-rags, and other head coverings are not to be worn in the classroom; no hair curlers whether covered or uncovered are allowed in classrooms. Head coverings designed for religious, cultural, or medical/illness purposes are allowed.
5. Attire must not display language and/or images which are derogatory, profane, or sexually explicit, or abusive, or which "advertise" drugs or alcohol.
6. Dress must be modest and appropriate for a professional or serious setting; no midriff tops, halter tops, sports bras, strapless tops or dresses, camisole tops with spaghetti straps, see-through blouses or shirts, or extremely short or revealing shorts or skirts will be allowed in the classroom. If a student chooses to wear a midriff top, halter top, sports bra, camisole with spaghetti straps, or a tank top or sundress with straps less than 2 inches wide (male or female), the student must wear a shirt or jacket over it.
7. Clothing which allows undergarments to be seen is not permitted: NO SAGGING PANTS will be allowed. No undergarments should be visible at any time.

8. It is assumed that students will practice personal cleanliness. Additionally, clothing should not carry excessive odors, i.e., tobacco, body sprays, or colognes.

## **Section VII – ONLINE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students participating in academic programs or courses (online or hybrid) sponsored by AAMU Online will adhere to the AAMU Student Handbook – Life on the Hill. The following guidelines are specific to the online learning environment and are applicable to all Alabama A&M University students who enroll in online and/or hybrid academic courses and programs.

### **General Decorum**

1. Students' online learning activities must be conducted in a suitable, quiet area, and web cameras should be ideally positioned for a well-lit camera view.
2. Students may not operate a motor vehicle, while attending any synchronous online/livestreamed class session.
3. Students must make their video view available upon the instructor's request, as identity confirmation is a requirement of online learning at Alabama A&M University.
4. Students must attend class regularly, missing no more than the allowed number of absences:
  - a. Absent 1 hour of class for a 1 credit hour course
  - b. Absent 2 hours of class for a 2-credit hour course
  - c. Absent 3 hours of class for a 3-credit hour course
  - d. Absent 4 hours of class for a 4-credit hour course
5. Students whose absences exceed the above scale will receive a reduction in their final course averages as determined by the faculty member. Exceptions to this policy on point reduction may be granted by the faculty upon presentation of documentation from the Vice President of Academic Affairs that an official excuse has been granted for the student's absence. Conditions warranting such an approval include cases involving death in the family, illness of the student or his/her immediate family members or for military duty. It is the student's responsibility to provide legitimate, official documentation of excused absences to the instructor(s) of the courses involved. Other reasons for absences not covered here must be cleared with the appropriate College Dean.
6. Students must login on time for class and must remain logged in until dismissed.
7. Students must prepare for each class meeting by reading assignments and completing any required assignments. It is thus imperative that students purchase their books in a timely manner (i.e., within the first two weeks of the semester).
8. Students must meet all deadlines, including those established by the instructor and those set by the University.
9. Students are expected to act with courtesy and respect to instructors, guests, staff members, and fellow classmates and may not disrupt the online learning environment.
10. Students must not attend class under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### **Student Dress Code for Online Learning**

Students are expected to wear appropriate attire when logging in to join a class through a video conferencing tool or when submitting video-based assignments.

1. Pajamas, sleepwear, and inappropriate exercising clothes (i.e., P.E. uniforms, bicycle shorts, under armor, uncovered spandex) are not allowed in the online learning environment.
2. Shirts/tops must be worn at all times.
3. Hats, hoods, caps, sleeping bonnets, stocking caps, wave caps, do-rags, and other head coverings are not to be worn; no hair curlers whether covered or uncovered are allowed when attending in the online environment. Head coverings designed for religious, cultural, or medical/illness purposes are allowed.
4. Attire must not display language and/or images which are derogatory, profane, or sexually explicit, or abusive, or which "advertise" drugs or alcohol.
5. Attire must be appropriate for academic and professional settings; midriff tops, halter tops, sports bras, strapless tops or dresses, camisole tops with spaghetti straps, see-through blouses, or shirts, or extremely short or revealing shorts or skirts are not permitted. If a student chooses to wear a halter top, sports bra, camisole with spaghetti straps, tank top or sundress with straps less than 2 inches wide, the student must wear a shirt or jacket over it.
6. Clothing which allows undergarments to be visually observed is not permitted.

### **Consequences for Violations**

If a student's behavior is deemed to be in breach of the AAMU Online Code of Conduct, they may be subject to disciplinary action.

A student who receives three (3) or more violations of the AAMU Online Code of Conduct, during the course of a semester, will be restricted from enrolling in online/hybrid courses for a period of one (1) semester.

Faculty Procedure for Infraction

1. Verbal/Written Correction
2. Verbal/Written Warning
3. Verbal/Written Notice of Violation
  - a. Submission of the AAMU Online Code of Conduct Violation Form (CCVF)

AAMU Online Office Procedure for Student Infraction

## First Violation

- Upon receipt of the CCVF, the AAMU Online Office will investigate the incident. If the violation is confirmed, the student will receive electronic notification, including a copy of the AAMU Online Code of Conduct.
- The student must acknowledge receipt of the electronic communication.

## Second Violation

- Upon receipt of the CCVF, the AAMU Online Office will investigate the incident. If the violation is confirmed, the student will be required to complete the AAMU Online Student Code of Conduct Workshop
- If the student fails to complete the Code of Conduct Workshop, a Code of Conduct Violation hold will be placed on the student's account, which will prevent further registration in online courses.

## Third Violation

- Upon receipt of the CCVF, the AAMU Online Office will investigate the incident. If the violation is confirmed, a Code of Conduct Violation hold will be placed on the student's account, which will prevent further registration in online courses. The student will be notified of the restriction from enrolling in online courses for one (1) full semester. Online enrollment restrictions will not be applied to summer semesters.

## **Section VIII – DISTANCE EDUCATION**

### **General Policy Statement**

Alabama A&M University provides distance and online education courses and programs to extend its academic reach and promote educational access and opportunity. It is the policy of the university to ensure that all distance and online education courses and programs are of high quality; that appropriate support is available to students; and that enrollments in such courses comply with federal and state regulations and the principles and standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

### **Online Course Enrollment Policy**

Undergraduate students who live in University-sponsored housing may take a maximum of six (6) student credit hours, per semester, offered in an online delivery mode. Online delivery modes include Asynchronous, Synchronous, and AmFlex delivery methods.

A student in a traditional/campus-based program may take no more than 50% of their major courses online. Major undergraduate courses consist of all courses beyond Areas I-IV, the general education curriculum.

Traditional/campus-based academic programs, may offer online delivery mode options for up to 40% of their program.

- Undergraduate programs may offer up to 40% beyond Areas I-IV of the general education curriculum.
- Graduate programs may offer up to 40% of the total degree program.

Only students that are admitted to and enrolled in an online degree program, may register for Section-100-level courses.

### **New Courses of Distance Education**

New distance education (DE) courses must be approved for development by the department chair and the college dean, before the course can be submitted for evaluation and certification. The faculty course developer must complete and submit the New Online/Hybrid Course Development Form to include signatures by the department chair and dean.

### **Course Requirements of Distance Education**

All Distance Education courses will be evaluated and certified by the Office of Distance Education, Extended Studies, and Instructional Technology (ODEESIT). All Distance Education courses must be developed and taught by an instructor who has completed the AAMU Online Instructor Certification Program.

### **Course Certification of Distance Education**

Distance Education courses are certified for online delivery utilizing the AAMU Course Certification Tool, a modified version of the national, Quality Matters rubric, which includes additional standards, specific to institutional needs. This tool addresses the following categories:

- Course Overview and Introduction
- Learning Outcomes
- Assessment and Measurement
- Instructional Materials
- Learner Activities, Interaction & Support
- Course Technology and Tools
- Design and Layout
- Accessibility
- Instructor Interaction and Feedback
- Course certification must be completed prior to the course being listed in the university's registration schedule, for student enrollment.

### **Certification Procedures of Distance Education**

1. The certified instructor will complete and submit the New Online/Hybrid Course Development Application Form.
2. An email will be sent to the instructor/developer providing access to the AAMU Course Certification Tool.

3. The course developer should develop and complete the course in such a way that it would be ready for student enrollment and completion, at the time of review.
4. Once the review process is successfully completed, instructors seeking certification will receive letters of certification for their records.

### Quality Assurance of Distance Education

1. Distance Education courses will be subject to unannounced quality assurance checks in both the online environment and in-person. Online quality assurance checks are conducted to verify that online content and online instructional delivery is reflective of the standards of the academic program, the AAMU Certification Tool standards, and best practices reflected in the AAMU Online Certification Program. In-person quality assurance checks are conducted to verify class sessions are being held as scheduled. Academic programs will perform these checks in conjunction with the Office of Distance Education, Extended Studies and Instructional Technology.
2. Academic chairs must be enrolled into distance education courses, by faculty within their department.
  - Academic chairs will be given the Blackboard role of “Academic Admin.”
    - This role allows chairs to review course content in the same capacity as a facilitator in Blackboard.
3. Academic chairs reviewing courses for quality assurance purposes are required to attend the Academic Administrators Quality Assurance (AAQA) Workshop before being granted access to online courses, in the Academic Admin role.
  - The AAQA Workshop is facilitated by the Office of Distance Education, Extended Studies, and Instructional Technology. This workshop directly addresses how academic administrators are expected to review online course content, for quality assurance. The workshop's topics include the following:
    - Understanding Blackboard Tools as an Administrator
    - AAMU Online Course Standards
    - Protecting Academic Freedom in Evaluation

### Hybrid Course Development & Certification of Distance Education

#### Definition

The AAMU definition of a hybrid or blended course is as follows:

Hybrid Course – A course where the instructor interacts with the students in the same physical space less than 100%, but greater than 51% of the instructional time; with the remaining instructional time facilitated through the University’s online management system.

#### Requirements

All hybrid courses must be certified through the Center for Distance Education & e-Learning in order to be listed as an available hybrid course with the Office of the Registrar. All hybrid courses must be developed and taught by an instructor who has completed the AAMU Online Instructor Certification Program. Hybrid courses must submit a class session schedule to the Office of Distance Education & Extended Studies, no later than 72 hours prior to the first day of class. All hybrid classes are required to meet in person the 1<sup>st</sup> week of class.

#### Certification Procedures

1. The certified instructor will complete and submit the New Online/Hybrid Course Development Application Form.
2. The instructor should contact the Blackboard Administrator in ITS to request a course development shell, if needed. (If the course shell for the upcoming semester is available, an instructor may use that shell for development purposes.)
3. An email will e sent to the instructor/developer providing access to the Hybrid Course Certification Tool.
4. The course developer should develop and complete the course in such a way that it would be ready for student enrollment and completion at the time of review.
5. Once the review process is successfully completed, instructors seeking certification will receive letters of certification for their records.

#### Quality Assurance

Hybrid courses will be subject to unannounced quality assurance checks in both the online environment and in-person. Online quality assurance checks are conducted to verify that online content and online instructional delivery is reflective of the evaluated course and best practices reflected in the AAMU Online Certification Program. In-person quality assurance checks are conducted to verify class sessions are being held as scheduled. (Academic programs will perform these checks in conjunction with the Office of Distance Education & Extended Studies.) Any change in the submitted face-to-face class schedule must be sent to the Office of Distance Education & Extended Studies.

## Course Faculty of Distance Education

Faculty assigned to teach distance education courses must have completed the AAMU Online Instructor Certification program and must maintain said certification, through continued professional development, as required.

Evaluation of distance education course faculty is the responsibility of department chairs and academic deans. Annual evaluations of faculty whether they teach using a traditional format or a distance delivery format are conducted in accordance with the guidelines and procedures outlined in the AAMU Faculty Handbook.

## Course Delivery Modes

Course delivery modes are published in the University's registration system. The course delivery modes for Alabama A&M University are listed below:

- a. Traditional (TRD) – A course where the instructor interacts with students in the same physical space for 100% of the instructional time. A traditional course may include the utilization of an online learning management system, such as Blackboard, for viewing files/web-links, participating in discussion, and submitting assignments.
- b. Hybrid (HYB) – A course where the instructor interacts with the students in the same physical space less than 100%, but greater than 51% of the instructional time; with the remaining instructional time facilitated through the University's online management system.
- c. Online (ONL) – A course where the instructor interacts with students 100% through one or more forms of distance learning delivery. An online course will not require instructor-student interaction within the same physical space.

When at least one (1) student has registered for a course, the faculty member must commit to the course delivery mode (i.e., Traditional, Hybrid, or Online) that has been published in the registration system for that course.

## Course Delivery and Facilitation of Distance Education

### Learning Management System

AAMU uses Blackboard as the learning management system (LMS). All faculty teaching distance education (DE) courses will use the Blackboard platform and AAMU will provide technical support for DE course faculty and developers in Blackboard. Faculty using 3rd party tools must ensure integration with the Blackboard environment.

### Attendance Verification

In a distance education, asynchronous online course, logging into and accessing the online class is not sufficient, in and of itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. The student must be engaged in an academically related activity, such as by contributing to an online discussion, submitting an assignment or completing an academically related task in the online course.

### **Initial Student Identity Verification of Distance Education**

Upon admission, an Identity Verification hold will be placed on the student's account. Prior to being eligible to enroll in any academic courses, the student must complete the AAMU L.I.V.E. (Learner Identity Verification) course, facilitated by the Office of Distance Education & Extended Studies. The AAMU LIVE course schedules and conducts individual video identity verification sessions with each newly admitted student. Prior to the session, the student will submit a scanned front and back copy of a current, government issued picture ID to the University's secure server. In order to access the scheduled session, the student will be required to utilize their established secure login and passcode. During the video identification session, the student will visually present the government issued picture ID which was submitted prior to the session and verbally acknowledge their enrollment at Alabama A&M University. Their identity will be visually verified via video, by a staff member of the Office of Distance Education & Extended Studies, during this session. The secure login credential utilized to access the AAMU LIVE course and all other AAMU Online courses is directly associated with a student's unique ID, further insuring that the student participating in the course is the student receiving course credit.

### **Ongoing Student Identity Verification of Distance Education**

A distance education student may be subject to the requirement of additional student identity verification sessions either be random selection or due to identity fraud concerns. Further, all distance education students will be required to verify their identity at specific points throughout their matriculation, to include the junior year academic audit and graduation clearance.

### **Parameters for Verification of Attendance of Distance Education**

Synchronous Online, Staggered Synchronous Online and AMflex – Students must attend class at least twice (via the determined web conferencing tool, i.e., Zoom or Collaborate) for their attendance to be confirmed.

Traditional Hybrid and Synchronous Hybrid – Students must attend class at least once and complete an academic related activity in Blackboard such as an assignment, syllabus quiz, or discussion board post.

Asynchronous Online – Students must complete/submit an academically-related activity such as: student submission of an academic assignment; student submission of an exam, i.e., syllabus quiz, or; posting by the student in a discussion forum, i.e., self-introduction.

### Transient Distance Learning Courses

Distance Learning Courses are defined as those courses taken through correspondence, audio/video, teleconference, or other electronic means.

Distance Learning courses taken at another institution for credit toward a degree at this University must be authorized in the same manner as any other transfer work as stated in the policy on transfer credits. In addition, the following policies apply:

1. The student will be considered in a distance learning course from the time he or she received permission until the Registrar receives a grade or evidence of discontinuation.
2. Distance Learning course hours will be included in the computation of the student's load for the duration of the enrollment in such course, and hence become subject to total load restrictions.
3. Distance Learning courses taken at another university cannot be used in the calculation of the quality point average or GPA if the institution is not a part of the Visiting Student Program.

## **Section IX – UNDERGRADUATE POLICIES**

### **U.G. Policy #01 – Admissions – Requirements and Procedures**

**ACT/SAT Scores** – Before applicants can be accepted to the University, potential students must take either an American College Testing Program admissions test (ACT), or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) administered by the College Entrance Examination Board, and must have their test results sent to the Director of Admissions. These scores are evaluated as a part of the admission decision.

**Transcripts** – A transcript of the applicant’s high school record, or General Education Development (GED) Test results, must be received by the Director of Admissions before an application for admission can be considered complete. All transcripts must be official and must be received directly from the issuing institutions. Students may be “accepted” before the end of their last term at their previous educational institution, but the complete transcript must be submitted before they begin their matriculation at AAMU.

**High School Grade Point Average** – Students entering Alabama A&M University directly from high school must have maintained a grade point average of “C” in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, history and political science.

**Application Deadline** – Applications for admission to AAMU may be submitted as much as one year prior to expected enrollment. Below, however, are the last dates for which applications will be accepted for each term. Applications for admission to the University must be on file in the Office of Admissions prior to the beginning of the semester or session in which the student enrolls.

| Term   | Application Deadline |
|--------|----------------------|
| Fall   | June 15              |
| Spring | November 01          |
| Summer | April 15             |

The application can be completed and submitted online at [www.aamu.edu](http://www.aamu.edu); however, the application fee, admission test scores, transcripts, and other supporting materials must be received in the Office of Admissions by the deadlines listed above.

**Admission** – Upon being notified of admission to the University, a letter of acceptance and an enrollment response form are sent to the applicant. No student should report to the University for enrollment without having received the letter of acceptance. Students who report to the University for enrollment should bring the letter of acceptance.

**Fees** – The non-refundable application fee must accompany the application.

**Readmission to the University** – A student who has not attended AAMU for two or more regular terms should consult with the Office of Admissions to determine enrollment status and to apply for readmission. Students who are readmitted to the University after a two-year absence will be governed by the Bulletin under which they re-enter.

### **U.G. Policy #02 – Admission Categories**

#### **High School Graduates**

Alabama students must have passed all three parts of the high school graduation examination. For unconditional admission high school graduates must have earned a score of 18 on the ACT or the equivalent score on the SAT; maintained a grade point average of “C” in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, and political science. Students 26 years or older are exempt from college entrance examinations.

#### **High School Equivalency (GED)**

For unconditional admission the applicant must have earned an average score of 48 on the GED. Transcripts of last attendance in high school as well as the GED transcript are also required. Students must have a score of at least 18 on the ACT/equivalent SAT.

#### **High School Accelerated Program**

Unusually high performing students who have completed their sophomore or junior year of high school may be considered for admission through the High School Accelerated Program.

### Conditional Admission

Individuals who do not completely fit into one of the categories described above may be eligible for conditional admission and should make inquiries to the Office of Admissions. Conditional Admission, transfer and special students who are admitted to the University on a “Conditional” basis will have one semester to remove the “Conditional” status. If the “Conditional” status is not removed, the student will be notified of his ineligibility to register for the next semester.

### Transfer Students

Students transferring from other postsecondary institutions must have maintained a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (“C”) at the institutions from which credit is being transferred. Students who have 12 semester hours or equivalent quarter hours of acceptable academic credit at the college or university level may be admitted to AAMU as transfer students. Students with fewer than 12 transferable SCH will be admitted as high school graduates; however, appropriate hours will count toward the AAMU degree.

#### Transfer Students from Alabama Public Two-Year Colleges

Students who transfer from Alabama public two-year colleges are encouraged to secure a STARS Transfer Guide for the major(s) they are considering pursuing when they transfer to AAMU or other public four-year institutions in Alabama. The Guide will cover half of the courses the student will need for their degree in those majors at AAMU. AAMU will transfer all courses on the Guide for the credit listed just as they would do if the courses were taken at AAMU. For more information go to the STARS website at <http://stars.troy.edu>.

The STARS Transfer Guide is to be honored for a period of four years from the date printed from the STARS web site. Students should keep a copy of this guide for verification purposes. The Guide remains valid and is guaranteed only if the student continues in the major specified. Changes made by accrediting and/or other regulatory agencies could result in changes in specific graduation requirements. Any changes made by the University in its degree programs will affect the transfer student in the same manner as the students native to the University.

The students who use the STARS Transfer Guides will be graduated under the Bulletin in effect on the date that the guide is printed unless they choose to go under the Bulletin in effect at time of transfer or later. The guide is applicable for four years.

### International Students

In order to ensure that required long distance coordination may be completed in time to accommodate admission for the desired term, admission applications from outside the United States must be received by the following deadline dates:

| Semester Term/Session | Application Deadline |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Fall                  | May 15               |
| Spring                | October 01           |
| Summer                | March 15             |

All entering international students must provide an affidavit of financial support. Students must have maintained a grade point average of “C” in core courses and must have earned five passes on a national or a local examination. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Testing Systems (ELS) Certification Examination is required if the applicant’s first language is not English; the minimum score for admission on the TOEFL is 500 (paper-based test) or 61 (internet-based test), and 5.5 on the ELS Certification Examination. The Alabama A&M University Code is 1003. A letter of recommendation from an applicant’s principal or college advisor is also required. International students who receive certificates of eligibility (the I-20) from the University are eligible to transfer to other institutions after two semesters of attendance.

### Readmission to the University

A student who has not attended AAMU for two or more regular terms should consult with the Office of Admissions to determine enrollment status and to apply for readmission. Students who are readmitted to the University after a two-year absence will be governed by the Bulletin under which they re-enter.

### Special (Non-degree) Students

Persons who wish to register for courses without pursuing a degree may apply for admission as Special Students. Such students must show evidence of high school/GED completion. Applications for such persons will be considered by the Director of Admissions. Special students may take a maximum of twelve semester hours. This limit, however, does not apply to students seeking teacher certification as directed by the State Department of Education. A Special Student may enter a degree program if he/she meets all requirements for admission as a regular degree student. Once admitted as a regular student, credit earned as a Special Student can be counted toward the degree, unless the statute of limitations has expired.

All applicants who apply for Special Student status must apply for admission at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester or session for which he/she wishes to enroll in the University. Special students must reapply for admission at the beginning of each semester or session.

#### Transient Students

AAMU students who desire credits taken at other collegiate institutions to be applied toward their degrees at AAMU must receive approval before enrolling at the other institution. Criteria for approval include current enrollment at AAMU and a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0. The completed [Transient Student Form](#) must be signed by the student's advisor and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. Students who receive such approval must submit official transcripts documenting the work as soon as it is completed, whether they still desire credit for the work or not. The official transcript must be sent by the institution attended. The total number of hours taken at another institution or the sum of credits taken at AAMU and another institution during the same term cannot exceed the maximum allowed during the same enrollment term at AAMU: 19 credit hours for fall and spring semesters; 10 SCHs for an eight or nine-week summer session. Policies regulating grades for transient students are the same as those for other transfer credits.

Advisors will evaluate whether or not the courses for which the student intends to enroll will transfer back to AAMU based on a comparison of course descriptions in the AAMU Bulletin and the bulletin of the institution the student wants to attend. Approval of transient credit is contingent upon whether the intended course is acceptable for transfer credit at AAMU and whether or not it will be accepted by the major department for fulfilling of degree program course requirements.

Students and advisors are reminded that they should carefully review the number of credit hours that will be awarded for courses taken at another institution. Since AAMU awards credit for coursework based on semester hours, credit awarded for coursework completed at institutions which use a quarter system must be converted to semester hours upon transfer. In some instances, such conversion may result in the student receiving an insufficient number of credit hours to fulfill the required number of semester hours for a course. If this happens, missing credit hour(s) must be made up in the course subject.

Students enrolled at another institution who wish to pursue courses at AAMU to be transferred back to their institution may apply for admission as transient students. A letter of approval/good standing from the home institution is required. Transient students must apply for admission to AAMU at the beginning of each term.

#### Transfer Readmit

Alabama A&M University students who have attended another institution(s) after leaving the university must apply to return. Students must request that the registrar of each institution attended forward an official transcript to AAMU's Office of Admissions. Each school attended must be listed on their application for readmission to the university. Students must comply with all University guidelines governing re-entry and transfer student status. Students who are readmitted to the university after a two-year absence will be governed by the Bulletin under which they are readmitted.

#### Transfer of Students on Suspension from another Institution

1. Temporary, Indefinite or Permanent Academic Suspension: A student who has been suspended from another college or university is eligible to apply for admission to the university 12 months after the beginning of their suspension.
2. Disciplinary Suspension: Students on disciplinary suspension from another institution must be eligible to return to that institution before being considered for admission to Alabama A&M University.

#### Transfer of Students Expelled from another Institution

This situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

#### Second Baccalaureate Degree

Students desiring a second baccalaureate after completion of the first one must complete another application for admission to AAMU and be governed by the current bulletin.

### U.G. Policy #03 – Accelerated Program for High School Students

Qualified high school students who have at least completed their sophomore year may take a course or courses during the academic year or summer session.

The qualifications to be considered include:

1. minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
2. recommendation of principal or guidance counselor
3. ACT of 18 or higher or equivalent SAT or pre-ACT/SAT scores.

The following steps should be taken when applying to the Accelerated Program for High School Students:

1. Completion of a University application form for accelerated students. Return the completed application form to the Office of Admissions, Alabama A&M University, Normal, Alabama 35762.
2. Submission of a letter of recommendation from the principal or guidance counselor to the Office of Admissions.
3. Submission of an official high school transcript to the Office of Admissions, Alabama A&M University.

#### U.G. Policy #04 – Advanced Placement Credit for High School Students

The University awards semester credit hours to students who score three on the Advanced Placement Examination in the areas of biology, chemistry, English, foreign language, history, mathematics, physics, art and music. Students scoring 4 or 5 may be awarded additional credit upon the recommendation of the appropriate department chairperson.

The examination must have been taken upon completion of the appropriate course of study, and the applicant must apply for advanced placement credit and provide results of said examination to the Office of Admissions.

The applicant's counselor will recommend the student for placement, and the Admissions Office will evaluate the application for placement. Credit, if awarded, will be recorded without grades or quality points and will not be included in calculation of the grade point average.

The University awards three (3) semester credit hours to students who score three (3) on the Advanced Placement Examination in the areas of Biology, Chemistry, English, Foreign Languages, History, Mathematics, Physics, Art and Music. Students scoring 4 or 5 may be awarded additional credit upon the recommendation of the appropriate department chairperson.

#### U.G. Policy #05 – International Baccalaureate Credit

AAMU will award credit for courses taken toward the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma. Students who receive the IB diploma will be granted college credit for scores of four (4) or higher on both higher level and standard level examinations. Students who do not receive the IB diploma will be granted college credits for scores of five (5) or above on IB higher level examinations only. IB score reports should be sent to the Office of Admissions for evaluation. The academic unit responsible for the student's program of study will determine the application of credits toward specific degree requirements. If awarded, credits will be recorded without grades or quality points, and will not, therefore, be included in the calculation of the grade point average.

#### U.G. Policy #06 – Transfer Credits

Acceptance of Transfer Credit – The Office of Admissions accepts transfer credits for the University. The deans of colleges or department chairpersons approve transfer credits for degree programs. Developmental (remedial) courses, orientation, or religion courses in a specific religion are not acceptable. Exploratory/overview/survey courses that discuss more than one religion are acceptable.

Students who transfer from another four-year institution or two-year college must submit in advance for acceptance, transcripts of all previous work done on the college level. Such transcripts must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions from the institution at which the work was completed. Academic work completed at other schools not listed on the Admission Application will not be accepted for transfer credit.

Students transferring from colleges and universities must have maintained a "C" average and be in good standing with the institution from which they are transferring. Students currently on academic probation or suspension are not in good standing, and, therefore, will not be accepted by Alabama A&M University.

Courses may transfer from accredited colleges and universities if the grade for that course earned at the offering institution meets the requirement of the program offering the degree being pursued at Alabama A&M University. For example: Only courses with grades of C or better may transfer for ENG 101/102 because a C or better is required in ENG 101/102 for all programs at Alabama A&M University. Only a grade of C or better is required for transfer for MTH 112 for all business programs, but a D or better is required for general education social science courses. Students should check the grade requirements for specific programs to determine if the grade earned at the offering institution is transferable to Alabama A&M University.

Transfer Credit Hour Application –

Incoming transfer course has LESS hours than AAMU equivalent –

Accepted as an equivalency but if the total program hours are brought below 120, the student would have to make-up the difference in more classes and not necessarily in the content.

Incoming transfer course has MORE hours than AAMU equivalent –

The extra would be applied towards electives in the program so that the student does not lose the hours and not necessarily in the content.

Transfer of Distance Learning Courses – For the purpose of this section, distance learning courses are defined as those courses taken through correspondence, audio/video, teleconference, or other electronic means from another institution. Distance learning courses taken at another institution for credit toward a degree at AAMU must be authorized in the same manner as any other transfer work as stated in the policy on transfer credits.

Transfer Credits for International Students – Postsecondary credits earned by international students in colleges and universities which pattern after the Non-American System of Grading and Promotion must be evaluated by the World Education System, Inc., P.O. Box 745, Old Chelsea Station, New York, New York 10011 USA. Applications for the evaluation may be secured from the Office of Admissions. Courses recommended by the World Education Services, Inc., will be accepted by Alabama A&M University. It is the responsibility of the student to execute, request, and pay the charges for the evaluations.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP) – A nationwide system of credit-by-examination, is administered at AAMU to award college credit to those who earn the designated minimum acceptable score. There are five general examinations and 30 specific subject examinations. The general examinations measure college-level achievement in five basic areas of the liberal arts: English composition, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences-history. The subject examinations measure achievement in specific college courses and are used to grant exemption from and credit for these classes. Students must check with the Testing Services Center to determine the availability of and their eligibility for subject examination.

The Testing Services Center at AAMU is an open center for CLEP administrations. Examinations are scheduled on an individual basis and are available year-round, with the exception of the English Composition with Essay Examination. This test is only offered in January, April, June, and October.

Enrolled students who want to take CLEP examinations to substitute for specific courses or who want to obtain additional information about the CLEP, should contact the Testing Services Center. Credit awarded through the CLEP must be recorded on a student's transcript no later than the end of the semester in which the examination is taken.

Military Education/Training Evaluation – Alabama A&M University is a member of the Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC) Consortium, a group of national higher education associations with over 1,850 institutional members. The consortium functions in cooperation with the Department of Defense, the Military Services including the National Guard and the Coast Guard, to help meet the voluntary higher education needs of service members.

The Office of Extended Studies evaluates military transfer credits for AAMU. For evaluation, appropriate official copies of certificates, diplomas, or transcripts should be forwarded to the Office of Admissions. The Guide of the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services as sanctioned by the American Council on Education (ACE) is the standard reference work used by AAMU for awarding credit for learning acquired through the military.

Experiential Learning: Non-Traditional/Prior Learning Credits – The University recognizes and awards non-transferrable credit for prior learning. Universally accepted evaluation and prior learning assessment techniques are used to evaluate this type of credit resulting from professional training, work-related learning, certifications, and military training.

1. Experiential learning credits may not be used to meet requirements for general education courses.
2. They may be used for elective credit or major credit with the approval of the department.
3. Credits received through experiential learning do not count towards the minimum 25% credit residency requirement or satisfy the graduation requirement that one half of the major requirements must be taken at Alabama A&M University.
4. Any student applying for Experiential Learning Credit must be accepted to Alabama A&M University and enroll in at least one (1) credit hour.
5. Experiential Learning Credit will be awarded for a maximum for 18 credit hours.

Other Non-Collegiate Sponsored Instruction – AAMU considers for college credit non-collegiate sponsored instruction approved and sanctioned by the American Council of Education and listed in the National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs. Appropriate official copies of certificates, diplomas or transcripts should be forwarded to the Office of Admissions for evaluation.

Addendum of Modified Interim Grading Scale of Transfer Credit in response to COVID-19

Alabama A&M University will review and evaluate for acceptance any transfer credits earned with a modified grading scale (i.e., P, S, U, etc.) during semesters affected by COVID-19 Pandemic as needed.

### U.G. Policy #07 – Visiting Student Program

A cooperative arrangement exists with the University of Alabama in Huntsville, Athens State University, Oakwood University and Alabama A&M University, whereby a student at any of the participating institutions may request permission to attend a class at one of the other schools. Conditions governing the granting of permission include the following:

1. The student must be enrolled full-time during the time he/she is participating in the Visiting Student Program.
2. His/her total load must not exceed the established maximum number of hours established at the home school.
3. The student must have an overall GPA of “C” or better.
4. The course must be unavailable at the student’s home institution during that term.
5. The student’s request must be approved by his/her advisor and other appropriate personnel.
6. Permission of appropriate personnel at the visiting institution is required and will be dependent upon availability of space for the visitor after the school’s own students are accommodated.
7. Enrollment must be completed prior to the initial meeting of the class at the visiting institution.
8. Grades earned as a visiting student are calculated into the GPA at the home institution.
9. Courses taken under the Visiting Student Program can be counted in the GPA as a repeated course.

In order to participate in this program, students must complete the [Visiting Student Form](#), which may be secured from the Office of the Registrar or online at [www.aamu.edu](http://www.aamu.edu)

### U.G. Policy #08 – Residency Establishment for Fees

University Policy Pertaining to Student Entitlement to Resident Fees – For the purpose of assessing tuition, Alabama A&M University classifies students as Alabama “residents” or “nonresidents.” Residency for classification means domicile; domicile means living in Alabama with the intent to make Alabama a fixed and permanent home. Students may have more than one home address but only one domicile.

Information to assist the University in its administrative responsibility must be provided by the students. Residents of Alabama, as well as special categories of non-residents hereinafter identified, may be enrolled upon payment of resident fees as follows:

1. A student may register as an Alabama resident for tuition purposes only upon showing that he/she has been a resident of Alabama for a period of at least twelve months prior to initial registration. No emancipated minor or person nineteen years of age or older shall be deemed to have gained or acquired Alabama residency status for tuition purposes while attending any educational institution in this state, in the absence of a clear demonstration that he/she has in fact established residency in this state.
2. If a person is under nineteen years of age and living with parent(s) or guardian, he/she may register as an Alabama resident for tuition purposes only upon showing that his/her parent(s) or guardian has been a bona fide resident of Alabama for a period of at least twelve months prior to registration.
3. A full-time faculty member of Alabama A&M University and his/her spouse and dependent children under age 25 may register for the payment of resident fees even though they have not been bona fide residents of Alabama for the preceding twelve months.
4. The spouse of any person who is classified or is eligible for classification as an Alabama resident student for tuition purposes is likewise entitled to classification as an Alabama resident student for tuition purposes.
5. Military personnel and their dependents stationed in Alabama and on active military duty are entitled to Alabama residency classification for tuition purposes.
6. If either the student/applicant, spouse, parent or guardian who is not a resident of Alabama but has been employed full-time in Alabama for at least twelve (12) months and has filed an Alabama income tax return on which the student is claimed as a dependent or has filed jointly with the qualifying spouse for the tax year prior to the year in which the student is admitted, that student/applicant is entitled to Alabama residency classification for tuition purposes.
7. All international students shall be classified as non-resident students. However, an international student who is living in this country under a visa permitting the establishment of a permanent residence shall have the same privilege of qualifying for Alabama residency status for tuition purposes as a citizen of the United States.
8. Any Alabama resident student, who remains in the State after his/her parent or guardian (previously legal residents of Alabama or stationed in Alabama on military orders) move from the State, shall be entitled to remain classified as an Alabama resident student for tuition purposes as long as attendance remains continuous. Such students need not attend the summer session in order to render attendance continuous.
9. In the event that a bona fide resident of Alabama is appointed as guardian of a non-resident minor, such minor will not be permitted to register as an Alabama resident student for tuition purposes until the expiration of one year from the date of court appointment, and then only upon proper evidence that such appointment was not made to avoid payment of non-resident fees.

10. Students determined to be eligible for resident tuition purposes by an Alabama state supported college or university retain that eligibility upon transfer to Alabama A&M University.

Any student granted status as an Alabama resident student for tuition purposes whose status is based on a sworn statement which is false is subject to disciplinary sanctions as may be imposed by the University.

Change of Residence Status – Students/applicants who are classified by Alabama A&M University as non-residents but later claim to qualify as bona fide residents must file an [Application for Reclassification of Residency Form](#) with the Office of the Registrar (undergraduate students) or the Office of Graduate Studies (graduate students). With only a few exceptions, a student can change his/her status from nonresident to Alabama resident student for tuition purposes only by actually coming into the State for the period required with the intention of residence within the State indefinitely and establishing a physical presence and place in the State which he/she considers to be his/her true, fixed and permanent home and place of habitation. In determining whether the student is in fact an Alabama resident for tuition purposes, the burden of proof rests with the student.

To receive consideration, petitions for change of status and all supporting documentation must be filed with the Registrar's Office or Graduate Office by the following deadline dates:

- Jul 15 – for consideration effective beginning with the impending Fall term
- Nov 15 – for consideration effective beginning with the impending Spring term
- Apr 15 – for consideration effective beginning with the impending Summer session

If the petition is approved, classification as a resident for tuition purposes will not be retroactive to the prior semester; however, any non-resident fees paid in advance for succeeding semesters will be adjusted. The Offices of Admissions and Graduate Studies will have the responsibility of classifying a student as an Alabama resident or non-resident for tuition purposes.

Appeals for Residency – A student/applicant wishing to appeal the decision resulting from his/her "Petition for Alabama Residency Classification for Tuition Purposes" may request a review of that decision before the University Committee on Residence. Appeals must be made in writing within ten (10) working days of the decision of the Director of Admissions or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## U.G. Policy #09 – Registration

General Registration Guidelines – Students are considered registered only when they have conformed to all University and College regulations applying to registration as published in the Schedule of Classes which is available on the Registrar's Office website. Students should consult with their academic advisor prior to registration. Students are required to register prior to the first day of classes in each semester. This is most conveniently accomplished for continuing students during the official registration period that is held during the second half of the preceding term. There will be a period of late registration for which there is an additional fee. All financial obligations to the University must be cleared before a student is permitted to register for courses.

Failure to Register and Improper Registration – Students who fail to register during a semester, or whose efforts to register fail to conform with University and College regulations, may not at the end of such semester receive credit for courses or parts of courses completed. It is a violation of University policy for an instructor to allow a student to remain in his/her class if the student does not appear on the official roster. A student who schedules courses during registration makes a financial commitment to the University. The University assumes no responsibility for students who attend classes without proper registration.

Late Registration – After the initial registration period, all eligible students who have not yet registered may register during late registration. Dates, times and procedures for late registration are available on the University Calendar and the Registrar's Office website. Enrollment during this period is considered as late enrollment for which an additional charge is made. No student may register after the close of late registration.

Withdrawal from Course(s) -- Withdrawal from a course ("dropping"). A student may withdraw from, or drop, an individual course two or more weeks prior to final exams. Student should refer to current University Calendar for date. A student contemplating withdrawal from a course is strongly encouraged to contact their academic advisor before doing so inasmuch as it can result in delayed graduation. Also, dropping below full-time status (> 12 credit hours enrollment) may impact insurance [health & auto], financial aid, and scholarships. Classes dropped two or more weeks before final examinations will receive a grade of "W." The grade and hours of courses with a grade of "W" will not be computed into the grade point average.

Students with holds that prevent registration must go to the Office of the Registrar to drop a course or to completely withdraw. The Registrar cannot drop courses after the deadline to drop has passed.

Addendum to Withdrawal from Courses in response to COVID-19

**Withdrawal Deadline:** The deadline for dropping or withdrawing from a class is extended from March 23 to the last day of class, May 1, at 11:59 pm. Prior to withdrawing from or dropping a class or courses, please discuss with your academic advisor to determine if and how it will affect your academic progression. If you are unable to withdraw from a course due to a hold on your record or account, please contact the Registrar's Office at [registrar@aamu.edu](mailto:registrar@aamu.edu).

### U.G. Policy #10 – Cancellation of Registration

Students who have registered for an academic term at Alabama A&M University and decide not to attend or return that term must contact the Office of the Registrar to file a Cancellation of Registration Form.

**Students who attend one or more class sessions are not eligible for a cancellation of registration.** Students who fail to cancel registration will be held accountable for fee payment for that semester. In the event a cancellation of registration is requested, students must complete the following steps:

1. Student will initiate the process by requesting cancellation in the Registrar's Office.
2. Student will proceed to Office of Financial Aid for verification of financial status. Cancellation of requests for financial aid must be verified or processed.
3. If approved by the Financial Aid Office, the student will return the form to the Office of the Registrar. Courses will be removed from the student's record.
4. Student will present approved document to Bursar for removal of charges for the term.

After the first day of class, the student must provide written verification of non-attendance on departmental letterhead from each instructor and then complete the steps above.

Students who attend one or more class sessions are not eligible for a cancellation of registration. If you register for classes and then decide not to attend, you will be held responsible for tuition and fees and also for grades received for your registered courses. Non-attendance of a registered class does not constitute a formal withdrawal from that class, nor does it entitle you to a refund.

### U.G. Policy #11 – Emergency Separation for Military Purposes

**Withdrawal when called to active military duty.** When a student or spouse of the student is called to active military service during an academic term, he or she may choose one of the following three options listed below. The student is responsible for notifying his/her instructors of the option they choose.

1. The student may request retroactive withdrawal to the beginning of the semester, with a full refund of tuition and fees.
2. If at least 75 percent of the graded work has been completed, the student may request that the faculty member assign a grade for the course based on the work completed. The final decision about grading is left to the faculty member.
3. If the faculty member assigns a grade of "I," the student must complete course requirements within one year after the student returns to campus.

Room and board will be refunded in accordance with the current University refund policy. All students who receive Title IV funds will be processed according to federal policies. Federal policy statements are available in the Office of Student Financial Aid.

#### Procedures:

1. Secure a copy of the Academic Affairs Form (Emergency Separation for Military Purposes).
2. Complete the form and secure appropriate documentation.
3. Submit the form to the Office of the Registrar, retaining the copy marked "student."

### U.G. Policy #12 – Withdrawal from the University

When a student finds it necessary to discontinue his or her enrollment at any time other than at the end of a semester or summer session, he or she must complete a Withdrawal Clearance Form obtained from the Registrar's Office. The student must clear all AAMU accounts as listed on the form. When a student withdraws before the last two weeks of any semester or summer session, the student will receive a grade of "W" in all courses. When enrolled for a regular semester, however, a student may not withdraw during the last two calendar weeks prior to the first day of final examinations. In a summer session, a student may not withdraw during the last calendar week prior to the first day of final examinations.

When a student leaves AAMU at any time during the semester or a summer session without filing a Withdrawal Clearance Form and without clearing all University accounts, the student will receive a grade of "F" in all courses. Further, he or she will forfeit all rights

to a statement of honorable dismissal, thereby jeopardizing re-entry into AAMU or transfer to another accredited institution. Withdrawal from the University does not relieve the student from any financial obligation owed at that time.

#### Withdrawal Procedures:

- Step 1: Secure and complete Withdrawal Clearance Form. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office. Obtain all appropriate signatures.
- Step 2: Complete exit interview with the Office of Special Student Services.
- Step 3: Obtain signature from Financial Aid Office.
- Step 4: Obtain signature from Cashier's Office
- Step 5: Return completed Withdrawal Clearance Form to the Office of the Registrar.

### U.G. Policy #13 – Credit Hours

Method of Converting Quarter Hours to Semester Hours:

| Quarter Hours | Semester Hours |
|---------------|----------------|
| 5             | 3.33           |
| 4             | 2.67           |
| 3             | 2.00           |
| 2             | 1.33           |
| 1             | 0.67           |

Per SACSCOC, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates

- Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or
- At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

### U.G. Policy #14 – Academic Year and Summer Session

The academic year is divided into two semesters, Fall and Spring.

Summer Session: The summer session usually covers a period of eight weeks. Class instruction is equivalent to that provided in the regular semester.

The University may offer interim sessions between the regular semesters or the spring semester and summer session or summer session and the fall semester. All accelerated courses must meet the minimum contact hours based on the course credit hours.

### U.G. Policy #15 – Full-Time Student

A full-time undergraduate student is one who is taking at least twelve credit hours during a semester or at least six credit hours in a summer session.

Any undergraduate student taking fewer than twelve credit hours in a regular semester or fewer than six credit hours in a summer session is a part-time student.

### U.G. Policy #16 – Student Classification

Persons other than special students are grouped in four classes according to total credits earned in semester hours as indicated:

|           |                                  |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Freshmen  | 0-30 semester credit hours (SCH) |
| Sophomore | 31-63 SCH                        |
| Junior    | 64-94 SCH                        |
| Senior    | 95 or more SCH                   |

### U.G. Policy #17 – Student Load

The maximum student load is 19 credit hours per regular semester. Under normal circumstances, a student may not register for more than 19 credit hours for any semester. Students who desire to register for more than 19 credit hours should submit a completed [Overload Request Form](#) signed by appropriate personnel and submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs for approval. Permission for an overload is restricted to students with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above or a GPA during the previous two semesters of 3.0 or higher.

The maximum load for the summer session is 10 credit hours. With permission from the Office of Academic Affairs, two additional credit hours may be allowed providing the student will be eligible for graduation the same semester by virtue of the additional hours. Under no circumstances will a student be allowed to earn more than 12 credit hours during a summer session. A student can take courses during the mini-term that some universities offer before and/or after the regular summer session.

### U.G. Policy #18 – Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at Alabama A&M University are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. Cheating - using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Plagiarism - representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise. This includes plagiarism of works taken from the internet.
3. Fabrication - unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
4. Aiding and abetting academic dishonesty - intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Penalties for Academic Misconduct – Acts of academic misconduct may be punishable by one of the following:

1. Letter of academic misconduct placed in the student's academic folder
2. Lowering of an assignment grade and/or final grade
3. Academic discipline resulting in the loss of scholarships, nonparticipation in academic related activities, etc.
4. Temporary suspension or expulsion from the University
5. Expulsion from a class resulting in a failing grade

### U.G. Policy #19 – Satisfactory Academic Progress

A student at Alabama A&M University is expected to make positive academic progress toward a degree objective. An undergraduate student is said to be making satisfactory academic progress when his or her cumulative grade point average and credit hours fall within the classification system below.

| Classification |                                  | Satisfactory Academic Progress |      |
|----------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------|
| Freshmen       | 0-30 semester credit hours (SCH) | 24-30                          | 1.50 |
| Sophomore      | 31-63 SCH                        | 31-63                          | 1.75 |
| Junior         | 64-94 SCH                        | >63                            | 2.00 |
| Senior         | 95 or more SCH                   |                                |      |

A student who fails to make such progress and accumulates excessive grade point deficiencies shall be placed on academic probation, suspended, or dismissed from the University. Students who fall below the required cumulative GPA for his/her classification must increase their cumulative GPA to the required minimum within two semesters. For example, a junior with a 1.80 cumulative GPA at the end of the Fall Semester will have until the end of the Fall Semester of the next academic year to acquire the required GPA. During the two-semester grace period, the student is required to show steady progress toward increasing the cumulative GPA. Further, during the two-semester grace period, the student's academic transcript will be stamped "Academic Probation."

### U.G. Policy #20 – Academic Alert/Warning, Probation and Suspension

Academic Warning (First-time Freshmen Only) – If at the end of the first semester of matriculation a student has not attained the minimum required grade point average, the student will receive an official warning notification from the Office of the Registrar. This notification shall warn the student that their academic performance is not up to par and that continued sub-par performance will result

in academic probation. While on warning status, a student may only enroll in a maximum of 12 semester credit hours. Students who transfer in less than 12 hours are treated as first-time freshman.

**Academic Probation** – A student will be placed on academic probation when his or her cumulative grade point average fails to meet the standard for satisfactory academic progress described above. Students who are placed on academic probation will have to raise their cumulative GPA to that required for satisfactory academic progress to end probation. To avoid academic suspension, a student on probation must earn a GPA within the required period equal to or above the level required for satisfactory academic progress.

During the period of academic probation, students will be allowed to enroll in a maximum of 12 semester hours. Students on probation who register for more than 12 credit hours will not retain credit for hours above 12. No student on academic probation may hold office in any campus organization, participate in any organized non-class off-campus trip(s), or officially represent AAMU. This regulation does not apply to participation in activities conducted completely on campus. A student on academic probation may be ineligible to receive financial aid, and could be required to repay aid that was previously awarded. Questions related to financial aid should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid.

**Academic Suspension** – A student who has been placed on academic probation and fails to acquire the minimum GPA for satisfactory academic progress within the required period will automatically be suspended. Academic suspension will result in the loss of one semester of matriculation. A student under suspension may not obtain credit toward a degree in courses pursued at another institution. Academic suspension may be followed by readmission on academic probation.

**Indefinite Suspension** – A student is declared on indefinite suspension and will not be granted permission for readmission to the University if the student has:

1. Completed two semesters on academic probation and failed to raise his or her grade point average to the required minimum.
2. Remained out of the University for one semester and is readmitted on probation or readmitted on appeal without staying out one semester, and is subsequently suspended.

**Appeal for Reinstatement Following Suspension** – A student on academic suspension is required to remain out of the University for one regular semester and may apply for consideration of readmission after the lapse of one semester. Appeals for reinstatement from academic suspension are available only for students who can provide documentation that has affected their academic status. A student may appeal for academic reinstatement after suspension only once during the student's academic career at Alabama A&M University.

**Academic Appeals Committee** – The Committee serves as a review and recommending body on matters of academic appeals filed by students and sets forth recommendations regarding issues against students that have been filed by faculty members. The actions reviewed by the committee include appeals regarding probation, suspension, and academic violations by students or grievances filed against faculty members by students. The Academic Appeals Committee consists of four faculty members, one from each undergraduate college, a representative from the Office of Retention and Persistence, and a representative from the Faculty Senate, appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Committee meets twice a semester. Other meetings are scheduled on an as-needed basis.

**Appeals for Reinstatement** –

Complete the Academic Appeals Reinstatement Application and submit to the Office of Academic Affairs.

## U.G. Policy #21 – Academic Honors

**The PRESIDENT'S MEDALLION.** Any undergraduate student who maintains a 3.7 or higher cumulative grade point average with at least 12 semester hours in the regular academic program each semester, will qualify for the President's Medallion. Recipients must have completed a minimum of 30 credits and have sophomore status. Eligible students will receive the following:

- 4.0 Gold Medallion (Note: 30 credit hours earned is also required for the Gold Medallion.)
- 3.8 – 3.99 Silver Medallion
- 3.7 – 3.79 Bronze Medallion

**The FRESHMAN PRESIDENT'S AWARD.** Recognition is given to any freshman student who obtains a 4.00 grade point average in their first semester of enrollment and completes at least 12 semester hours in the regular academic program. (No transitional courses.)

**The DEAN'S LIST.** Recognition is given to any undergraduate student who achieves an overall (cumulative) quality point average of 3.3 and above, for two consecutive semesters, has earned no grade below "C", enrolled in a minimum of 12 semester hours per semester in the regular academic program. (No transitional courses.)

The FRESHMAN HONOR ROLL. Any first-time freshman who achieves a grade point average of 3.3 and above with a minimum of 12 credit hours in the regular academic program after one semester is eligible for the Freshman Honor Roll. No transitional courses.)

The HONOR ROLL. Recognition is given to any undergraduate student who has attained a semester grade point average of 3.00 or better, has earned no grade below “C”, and has completed a minimum of 12 semester hours in the regular academic program. No transitional courses.)

Students enrolled in transitional courses are ineligible. Pass/Fail and Incomplete grades are not included in calculations.

### U.G. Policy #22 – Course Substitution

The following procedures and standards apply to requests for course substitutions to meet requirements for graduation:

1. Courses recommended for substitution credit must be comparable to those listed in the AAMU Bulletin in terms of content and competency requirements as indicated by course descriptions.
2. Requirements of the general education program must be strictly observed.
3. Lower-level (100-200) courses cannot be substituted for upper-level courses (300-400) without approval based on content from the chair of the department that houses the course.
4. Upper-level (300 and 400 level) college courses from two-year colleges will not be accepted for credit towards upper-level degree requirements at AAMU.
5. Technical subject course requirements cannot be substituted for general education requirements (i.e., electronics for physical science, Voice for Music Appreciation).
6. Courses designated as fulfilling core curriculum requirements in one category cannot be substituted with courses from another category (i.e., speech for history; math for art, philosophy for social science, etc.)
7. Course substitutions for graduating seniors should be completed by April 1st for May graduates; July 1st for July graduates; and November 1st for December graduates.
8. The student’s past academic program shall be evaluated, his/her new or continuing program shall be planned, and recommendations for substitutions as deemed appropriate shall be made during the student’s first semester in the degree-granting program.
9. Recommendations for substitutions must be signed and dated by authorized departmental personnel and then forwarded to the Office of the Registrar.

Intra-University Courses –

1. Courses recommended for approval must be comparable and designed to achieve the same basic educational outcome.
2. Technical subject requirements cannot be substituted for general education requirements.

All requests for substitutions must be included on one of the following forms: Admission/Transfer/Substitution Credits; [Departmental Transfer Credits Substitution Form](#).

### U.G. Policy #23 – Class Attendance

A student is permitted one (1) unexcused absence for each credit hour generated by the class. For example, two (2) absences are allowed in a two-hour class.

#### INSTRUCTORS

1. Instructors will keep accurate attendance records during the attendance throughout the term and be prepared to report attendance during the attendance verification period.
2. Instructors must include on their syllabi applicable penalties for unexcused absences beyond those permitted based on credit hours.
3. Each student who exceeds the number of unexcused absences will be counseled by the teacher regarding any applicable penalties as stated on the syllabus.

#### STUDENTS

1. Class attendance is expected as well as a privilege and students are required to be punctual and prepared.
2. Learning experiences proceed at such a rapid pace that attendance is necessary if students are to acquire the knowledge and develop the competence, skills and strategies that students need to meet the objectives of the course.
3. Students are required to carry out and submit all assigned work and to take examinations and quizzes at the class period designated.
4. Failure to take examinations and quizzes, and/or carry out assignments at the designated times may result in an appropriate reduction in the final grade, except as provided in items 6 below.
5. Arrangements for make-up work, due to excused absences, must be initiated by the student.

6. Excused absences can be obtained, upon presenting documentation to the Associate Dean of the College or School, in which the student is registered, for the following reasons:
  - a. Personal Illness or Illness of a Family Member. Documentation bearing the signature of doctors, residence counselors, infirmary and/or hospital officials, athletic trainers, etc. shall constitute proof.
  - b. Death in the Immediate Family. Funeral programs, newspaper obituaries, statements from funeral directors shall constitute proof. Students are allowed to be absent from classes a maximum of five (5) consecutive days for death in the family. The University defines immediate family as: spouse; spousal equivalent; children; step-children; children-in-law; parents; step-parents; parents-in-law; brothers; brothers-in-law; sisters; sisters-in-law; grandparents; grandparents-in-law; grandchildren; aunts; uncles; nieces; nephews; first and second cousins.
  - c. Subpoena for Court Appearance. The student's copy of the document shall constitute proof.
  - d. Emergencies or Circumstances over which the Student has no Immediate Control. Appropriate corroboration, documentation and/or explanation shall constitute proof.
  - e. Trips and/or Activities by members of student organizations sponsored by academic units, and activities officially authorized by the appropriate official. Authorized excuses, dispatched from the appropriate offices, instructors, coaches or sponsors over the signature of the department chairperson and dean or director, shall constitute proof. . *For additional information on University Sponsored trips please refer to the following policies: Academic Policy & Procedure Manual (2021 Aug), pg 8, Section I, General Academic Standards – Field Trips; Academic Policy & Procedure Manual (2021 Aug), pg 40, UG Policy #20 – Academic Alert/Warning, Probation and Suspension.*
  - f. Religious Observances. Students give faculty written notice prior to the absence.
  - g. Jury or Military Duty. A copy of an official document shall constitute proof.
7. In these instances, instructors will give students the opportunity to complete assignments in a way that corresponds as much as possible to the nature, scope and format of the original assignment.

Unresolved problems regarding attendance and/or procedures shall be appealed through appropriate University grievance channels.

### U.G. Policy #24 – Grading System

AAMU uses a letter system of grading which follows:

A-exceptional scholarship; B-distinctively above average; C-average quality; D-barely passing; F-failure; I-incomplete; IP-in progress; W-withdrew. The grade of "P" is used to indicate satisfactory completion of graduate writing and history departmental seminars. The grade "X" will be assigned for auditing a course; however, no credit will be allowed.

Grade Point Average or Quality Points – The University's grading system is based on a 4.00-point scale; quality points are assigned as follows:

A = 4.00      B = 3.00      C = 2.00      D = 1.00      F = 0.00      X = Audit

The following grades are not included in the calculation of the GPA: W, I, P, X, IP, WB, WM.

W= Withdrawal

I=Incomplete

P=Passing

X=Audit

IP = (In progress; projects; thesis; dissertation; research)

WB = Bankruptcy withdrawal

WM = Military withdrawal

Grades earned at another institution (except those designated as "Visiting") are not computed in the cumulative grade point average. Grades earned at another university can be used to improve a grade point average or eliminate a quality point deficiency if taken within the Visiting Student Program.

#### Addendum to Grading System in response to COVID-19

For the Spring 2020 semester the University will follow all current grading policies with faculty assigning grades per the requirements and/or standards for each course. After the conclusion of the course and grades are assigned, students can consult with their instructors and/or advisor regarding the option of changing a passing course grade to an "S" for "Satisfactory", and any failing course grade to a "U" for "Unsatisfactory" per the passing standard and requirement for each course. For both undergraduate and graduate courses "S" or "U" will be on the transcript, but will not be calculated in the grade point average on the transcript. The last day for opt-in is Thursday, July 9, 2020, which is the current withdrawal/drop date for summer classes.

Please be advised the “U” and “S” may not be accepted by graduate and/or professional schools. Again, all students are strongly encouraged to consult with their advisor before they make decisions about the grading scheme they choose for each course.

The Registrar will provide the form that must be completed for each course that is to be converted to “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U)”. The form will be available on the Registrar's Office website beginning Monday, June 1st. The deadline to complete the form with all required approvals/signatures to request “S/U” grading is 5:00 pm, Thursday, July 9, 2020. Your request, after approved, cannot be reversed. Therefore, you should carefully consider this option only after discussing with your academic advisor, departmental faculty advisor, athletics academic advisor and/or financial aid advisor to fully comprehend the impact this decision may have on your academic progress and/or degree program completion, along with current and future financial aid.

Students with documented challenges relative to having adequate technology and/or connectivity that were performing at a passing level prior to the university moving to electronic, web-based instruction, have the option of consulting with their advisors and instructors to request an Incomplete (I) for each applicable course. The University's policy regarding clearance of the “I” grade remains as is, with the exception of extenuating circumstances, which will be addressed per appeal with all appropriate approvals.

#### Impact of Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Grading on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)-Academic

A grade of S/U is not included in the calculation of Grade Point Average (GPA).

#### Impact of Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Grading on Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)-Financial Aid

Three components are used to measure SAP-Financial Aid

1. Academic Standing
  - a. A grade of S/U is not included in the calculation of the GPA. The minimum cumulative GPAs remain as currently stated in the Bulletin under Financial Aid Policy & Procedures.
2. Hours Earned/Hours Attempted
  - a. A grade of S/U is included in the calculation.
  - b. S grades would count as a completed course.
  - c. U grades would not count as a completed course, but the hours of the U course would be used in the calculation as Hours Attempted.
3. Maximum Time Frame
  - a. A grade of S/U will count towards what is currently stated in the Bulletin under Financial Aid Policy & Procedures.

This information is subject to change based on the U.S. Dept of Education guidance regarding the COVID-19 situation.

### U.G. Policy #25 – Grade Reporting

Grade Reporting – All grades must be submitted by the instructor of record. This includes Change of Grade Form, Missing Grade Form, and Removal of Incompletes Form.

Missing Grades – Missing grades must be received in the Registrar's office within forty-five (45) days immediately following the grading period (semester or summer session) in which the grade was given. All missing grades must be reported on the Missing Grade Form.

### U.G. Policy #26 – Changing of Grades

All course grades (except “I” grades) are intended to be final and permanent. It is expected that faculty will arrive at and report final grades as accurately and precisely as the nature of the evaluation of student achievement and the grading system will permit. It is the faculty's direct and personal responsibility to insure that grades are fair and reported correctly the first time. **Final grades cannot be improved by “make-up” or “missed work”, after the end of the term.**

If an error occurs in the calculation or recording of a grade, it can be corrected using the following procedures:

1. The faculty of record will complete the Change of Grade Form, which must include:
  - a. The student's name, student number, course designation by title and number, semester, and change desired.
  - b. A statement unequivocally identifying the person who made the error and explaining the nature of the error.
  - c. An explanation and documentation of how the new grade was computed.
2. The Change of Grade Form must bear the endorsement of the department chairperson and dean, and must be addressed to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
3. Removal of an “I” must be made by instructor of record for the course and submitted directly to the Office of the Registrar on forms provided for that purpose. In cases where the instructor of record is no longer employed at the University during the period when the grade of I can be changed, the department chair will act in the stead of the instructor of record.

4. Requests for grade corrections must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar by the end of the semester after the incorrect grade was submitted.

### U.G. Policy #27 – Incomplete Grades

An “I” grade is intended to be only an interim course mark. It is to be used only if a student has satisfactorily (hereby defined as a C average or better) completed at least 75% of the course requirements, and there is an excusable and acceptable reason for his/her not having completed all requirements prior to grade reporting time. With the awarding of the “I,” the instructor must include information (on the Removal of “I” Form) as to the specific requirements for changing the “I” to a permanent grade. Requests for removal of incompletes must be made by the instructor of record directly to the Office of the Registrar.

Students may obtain credit for courses in which their marks are “Incomplete” only by completing the work for the course in a satisfactory manner. The incomplete grade must be removed within one year of the end of the term when the “I” was awarded. If this is not done, the grade in the course automatically and permanently becomes a failure (“F”). The grade of “I” - Incomplete - shall be neutral in the calculation of the grade point average. A student does not have to be enrolled to remove the “I” grade.

An “Incomplete” must be changed to a permanent grade by the instructor of record within the time limit specified by submitting the proper INCOMPLETE GRADE REPORT FORM to the Registrar’s Office. Delinquent Incomplete Grade Report Forms will not be requested or processed without the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

A student does not need to re-register for a course in order to remove an “I” grade.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** All incompletes for graduating seniors must be removed by October 1 for December graduates, April 1 for May graduates, and June 15 for summer completion.

### U.G. Policy #28 – Repeating Courses

A student may repeat a course; however, they may only receive credit for the course once unless the course description specifically states that the course may be repeated for credit.

When students repeat courses, only the highest grade will be included in his/her cumulative and semester grade point average. All grades will be included on the student’s records. This policy applies only to courses repeated at AAMU. Courses taken under the Visiting Student Program can be counted as a repeated course.

### U.G. Policy #29 – Academic Appeals Process

Academic appeal is a formal procedure designed to provide students with an option to address academic issues and concerns such as: unfair grading, poor instruction, unfair treatment, etc. Students and faculty members are encouraged to handle issues of academic concern through informal discussion with the appropriate individual (student, faculty, advisor, department chairperson, and/or dean). If informal procedures fail to resolve the issue(s), students may pursue a formal appeal. The following steps describe the appeal process:

1. Appeals must originate from the student on the [Student Complaint Form](#) with documentation to support their position and must be processed through the department chair, dean of the college, and the Office of Academic Affairs, in that order.
2. The chair must complete an assessment or form an ad hoc unit appeals committee to complete an assessment of the issue(s) through (1) a hearing, (2) individual interviews, (3) acquisition and review of pertinent data, and/or other means as deemed appropriate by the Committee. After this assessment, a written response must be sent to the student with the decision at that level. These processes must be completed within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written petition from the student and the student must be notified of the decision.
3. If the student chooses to continue the appeal beyond the department level, the student must present a written petition with documentation to the dean. The dean must complete an assessment or form an ad hoc unit appeals committee to complete an assessment of the issue(s) through (1) a hearing, (2) individual interviews, (3) acquisition and review of pertinent data, and/or other means as deemed appropriate by the Committee. After this assessment, a written response must be sent to the student with the decision at that level. These processes must be completed within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written petition from the student and the student must be notified of the decision.
4. If the student chooses to continue the appeal beyond the college level, the student must present a written petition with documentation to the Office of Academic Affairs where it will be sent to the Undergraduate Academic Appeals Committee.

5. The Undergraduate Academic Appeals Committee shall complete an assessment of the issue(s) through (1) a hearing, (2) individual interviews, (3) acquisition and review of pertinent data, and/or other means as deemed appropriate by the Committee. These processes must be completed within fifteen (15) business days of receipt of the written petition from the Office of Academic Affairs.
6. The Undergraduate Academic Appeals Committee shall formulate recommendations based on the results of the assessment. The recommendations will be forwarded to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for final disposition.

The appeal can be ended at any level, with the consent of the applicant student. A copy of the decision will be forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Academic appeals will be reviewed during the fall and spring semesters while classes are in session when faculty are available to hear the appeal and faculty and students are available to present evidence. There will be no appeal hearings during the summer session or when classes are not in session.

An appeal of any grade must be made within one calendar year of receiving the grade.

### U.G. Policy #30 – Academic Bankruptcy

A student may petition the Undergraduate Academic Appeals Committee for academic bankruptcy of an entire semester or more of work after completing a minimum of two semesters at Alabama A&M University. Record of enrollment remains on the student's transcript. The designation of WB is assigned for all courses for which the student was enrolled during the bankrupted term(s). Petitions may be granted for one or more full semesters. A student will not be granted a grade-by-grade elimination. There must be a minimum of one calendar year between the date of the petition and the ending date for the period specified by the student's bankruptcy petition for application of relief. A student will be granted academic bankruptcy only once during the student's academic career at Alabama A&M University. For purposes of applying this policy, the student's academic career shall include all undergraduate work attempted. An academic bankruptcy approval is irrevocable.

The Academic Bankruptcy Form is available in the Office of Academic Affairs. Completed forms should be returned to that office.

### U.G. Policy #31 – Course Evaluations

Basic to the improvement of instruction is the input and evaluation conducted by students. Students will evaluate each course near the end of the semester as designated by the Office of Institutional Research. The evaluation forms will be completed by students enrolled in each course and will reflect students' perspective of the instructor's performance. The evaluations will be administered by an appointed staff member or graduate assistant. Faculty members will not be present in the classroom during the evaluation period. After the evaluation is completed and the forms are checked for proper identification information, the completed forms will be submitted to the Office of Institutional Research. After compilation, the analysis of the results will be sent to each college for review by the dean, department chair and appropriate faculty members. This information is critical to the faculty members in their attempts to improve their courses, and therefore will be returned to them prior to the end of the following semester.

### U.G. Policy #32 – Course Auditing

Students who do not wish to register in courses for credit may be permitted to register as auditors under the conditions that they pay the regular audit fees (no additional fee for students registered for a full-time credit load), obtain the consent of the instructor, and audit only courses for which there are adequate classroom facilities. Full-time students must obtain the consent of their advisors. Skill and laboratory courses are not open for auditors.

Permission to enroll and registration for auditing courses shall be filed in the Office of the Registrar. Regular registration procedures are to be followed after permission has been granted. The auditor assumes no obligation to do any work in the course. Auditors do not submit any work and are not required to take any tests or examinations nor receive grades on any part of the course.

### U.G. Policy #33 – Change of Major, Concentration, Minor

Students who wish to change their majors, concentrations or minors must complete an [Major/Minor/Concentration Declaration and Change Form](#). The form must be signed by the department chairperson and the advisor of the college major in which the student is currently enrolled. After action has been taken by this department chairperson and/or advisor, the application is sent to the department chairperson and advisor of the college in which the student desires to enroll. Once the gaining department chairperson and advisor

have responded, the application will be forwarded to the Office of the Registrar for appropriate action. All course work taken will remain on the transcript and will be computed in the cumulative grade point average.

If a student changes his/her major, the student will then be governed by the Bulletin in force when he/she enters the new program under which the student will be graduating.

### U.G. Policy #34 – Privacy Act

Alabama A&M University is required to bring to the attention of all students, parents and alumni provisions of Public Law 93-380, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, also known as “The Buckley Amendment” or FERPA. Under the provisions of this law, all students and former students of the University have the right to inspect their official educational records in the Office of the Registrar. The right of inspection does not apply to any information submitted to this office as confidential prior to January 1, 1975, nor to access by students to financial records of their parents or guardians. Parents or guardians of a student may not see records nor receive grades unless the student specifically designates that such records and/or such grades may be made available to the parents or guardian’s named on his/her registration forms. Grades can be retrieved by the student or parents with access from the online Student Information System.

No-option “Directory Information” may be released by the University without the student’s written permission. No-option “Directory Information” includes the student’s name and enrollment status. The student must (at the time of registration) indicate if he or she approves additional directory information given without specific approval.

The Office of the Registrar, as custodian of the educational records of students, will make access of such records available to assistants, school officials and other designated persons for indicated specific and legitimate interests as outlined in the amendment. All requests from campus organizations to release a student’s grade point average to other students to determine the student’s eligibility for membership in that organization will not be honored unless the student involved has specifically requested the release of this information.

Students who have questions concerning their records should address them to the Office of the Registrar. To ensure prompt delivery of all AAMU correspondence, students should complete [Address Update Form](#) and Change of Name Form in the Office of the Registrar immediately after such changes in status occur.

### U.G. Policy #35 – Request for Transcript

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Alabama A&M University does not release transcripts of a student’s work at the University except upon the student’s written request on the [FERPA Release Form](#) (Registrar’s web page). Students or former students requesting transcripts should state all possible names under which their records may be located. Telephone or faxed requests cannot be honored.

A student may secure an unofficial transcript for his/her use through Banner, but official transcripts must be sent by the Registrar’s Office directly to the student, other colleges, organizations, companies and other specified entities. “Official” transcripts are not normally hand-carried without prior permission of the receiving institution. However, if this permission is granted, the transcript must be in a sealed envelope and marked “issued to student.”

A fee is charged for each additional transcript, whether it is an official or unofficial copy. Transcripts are not issued to or for students who have outstanding obligations to the University.

### U.G. Policy #36 – Degree Requirements

Basic Requirements – Baccalaureate degrees are awarded to the candidates who have met the particular requirements of each degree and University scholastic regulations. This is done by authority of the Board of Trustees based upon recommendation of the faculty of each college. Degrees are awarded only to students who are in good standing and who have met their obligations to the University.

Students are referred to the detailed statements of the various college and departments for additional specific requirements. Each degree must meet the minimum requirement of 120 credit hours. If a particular course for the degree has been waived by the department with approval by the college dean and the Office of Academic Affairs, the number of credit hours for the waived course will be subtracted from the total number of credit hours required for the degree. If the total then falls below 120 credit hours, another course must be taken to ensure that the minimum credits required for the degree is obtained. However, if the total is above 120 credit hours after the subtraction, no additional course is needed.

### U.G. Policy #37 – Minors and Concentrations

Pursuing a minor allows a student to receive specialized and focused training in an academic discipline other than his or her major. The minimum University requirement for a minor is 18-20 credit hours. This does not include the hours needed to satisfy the prerequisites for the courses in these 18-20 hours. There should be no more than 50% overlap in the coursework between the major courses and the minor courses.

Pursuing a concentration allows a student to receive specialized and focused training in a particular sub-discipline within the major. The minimum University requirement for a concentration is 21-23 credit hours. This does not include the need to satisfy the prerequisites for the courses in these 21 hours. There should be no more than 50% overlap in the coursework between the concentration and the major.

Department/core courses cannot be overlapped with a major, minor or concentration.

### U.G. Policy #38 – Double Major

A double major allows students in-depth exploration of two fields of study. Students with diverse or multiple areas of interest have the option of expanding the breadth of their academic specialization by choosing double majors.

A double major is the awarding of one degree with two majors, each from a different program. The student must complete all course requirements to qualify for the baccalaureate degree plus extra credit hours required for the second major. Students opting for double majors must complete all requirements for the chosen majors in two programs. Thus, a student with a double major will have completed the minimum number of credit hours required by the program of the first major plus additional credit hours required by the program of the second major.

Requirements for a Double Major –

1. The student must, when applying for graduation, declare the two majors he or she intends to complete on the appropriate form available from the Registrar's Office.
2. The student must complete all course requirements for the major degree in both programs with no more than 50% overlap of major courses.
3. The student must have two advisors, one from each program in which they propose to study.
4. The student must have the approval of both department chairs and from the dean of the college of the first major.

The only courses that can be used twice are the courses required to fulfill General Education requirements. If the General Education courses are used for both degrees, then the higher course number level General Education requirement must be fulfilled.

### U.G. Policy #39 – Second Baccalaureate Degree

Second Baccalaureate Degree – To earn a second bachelor's degree, a student must complete all the requirements for each degree.

Students who are completing a second degree simultaneously – must comply with all the same grade point requirements and residency requirements for each degree. Students may elect to pursue and to receive the two degrees simultaneously, if program requirements can be met simultaneously. Courses taken toward one degree may count toward fulfilling parallel requirements in the other, but the total credits in the two degree programs must be at least 150 semester hours. Students should consult with their advisor concerning eligibility for a second degree.

The only courses that can be used twice are the courses required to fulfill General Education requirements. If the General Education courses are used for both degrees, then the higher course number level General Education requirement must be fulfilled.

Second Baccalaureate Degree for a Returning Student – With the approval and recommendation of the faculty, students may qualify for a second baccalaureate after completion of the first degree if they fulfill all requirements specified in the Bulletin under which they begin the course of study for the second degree. The previous coursework to be used for the second degree must be current (within the statute of limitations) when the second degree is received.

The only courses that can be used twice are the courses required to fulfill General Education requirements. If the General Education courses are used for both degrees, then the higher course number level General Education requirement must be fulfilled.

Students who earned their first baccalaureate from another institution – must meet requirements for a new major as specified by the undergraduate Bulletin in effect by the degree program at the time of admission to the University.

The only courses that can be used twice are the courses required to fulfill General Education requirements. If the General Education courses are used for both degrees, then the higher course number level General Education requirement must be fulfilled.

Credit hours included in a second baccalaureate program may not be applied to a graduate degree. Candidates for second baccalaureates are eligible for the Dean's List or other semester academic honors according to the same criteria as candidates for first degrees.

### U.G. Policy #40 – Statute of Limitations on Earned Credits

Credits required for an undergraduate degree, whether earned at Alabama A&M University, transferred from another institution or received through advanced placement, must have been earned within ten (10) years of the date of awarding of credit to the student. Students wishing to continue toward the degree after the ten-year period must submit a request for [Waiver of Academic Statute of Limitations Form](#) to the dean of their college. An evaluation of content and credits will be made in terms of the curriculum requirements at the time of request. Additional courses may have to be taken beyond those required in the original curricular plan if a waiver of the statute of limitations is not granted.

Evaluation of degree credits and content will be completed by the program advisor, the chair of the department and the dean or designee. A waiver of the statute of limitations must be approved by the dean of the college and go to the Vice President of Academic Affairs office for final action. In instances where a waiver is granted, the waiver covers specific courses and is intended for a specific period during which the program must be completed.

### U.G. Policy #41 – Responsibility Statement

While Alabama A&M University will endeavor to provide timely and accurate advisement, each student is held responsible for reading, understanding, and meeting the requirements for graduation as set forth in the University Bulletin. Such requirements include the general education requirements as well as those specified by each degree-granting program.

### U.G. Policy #42 – Graduation Requirements

#### Bulletin for Clearance

A student applying for graduation will be processed using the AAMU Undergraduate Bulletin in effect at the date of the student's initial entry into the selected major. When a change of major occurs, the student must follow the Bulletin in use at the time of the change. If the period of enrollment is interrupted for two or more years, the student must follow the Bulletin in use at the time of re-entry. Students may move forward to a more recent Bulletin by submitting a [UG Bulletin/GR Catalog Acknowledgement Form](#) with the permission of their advisor and chair. Students must comply with all requirements, both general education and major field of study, in the Bulletin being followed. Only one bulletin must be adhered to; two or more cannot be used together. All other changes require the approval of the University's Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee.

In addition to, or in place of the above paragraph where applicable, TEaL Students:

Teacher Education and Leadership (TEaL) students will be cleared based on the Bulletin in effect at the time of admission to the Center for Educator Preparation and Certification Services (EPP) for course requirements. If there is an ALSDE-mandated change in GPA for TEaL students, the Bulletin would still be based on admission to EPP but the GPA requirement would change effective the date ALSDE changed it. Any TEaL student graduating after the effective date must have the new GPA. Any other ALSDE-mandated change will be effective the date ALSDE changed it. TEaL Class B students admitted into an Educator Preparation Program are required before graduation to submit to the ALSDE a "Declaration of Citizenship or National Status of Applicant for Educator Certification" Form (CIT) with the Teacher Certification Application for an initial certification. Not US Citizen – Each time a new certification is requested, the CIT Form must accompany the certification application.

#### Graduation Clearance Protocols

##### Midpoint Degree Audit Procedure

1. At the end of each fall term, the Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Effectiveness will generate and submit a list of students who have earned a minimum of 45 and a maximum of 65 credit hours to the Office of Student Success.
2. Academic Coordinators for each college will conduct the midpoint degree audit with students who have earned between 45-65 credit hours. The primary purposes of this audit are for students to understand their remaining degree requirements and develop a personalized degree plan for completion.

3. Contact and meet with each student to:
  - a. Collaboratively review the student's Degree Works and confirm remaining requirements.
  - b. Check for minor/concentration/track requirements, if needed.
  - c. Guide students through correctly submitting the midpoint audit form.
4. The midpoint degree audit form will be routed sequentially for digital signatures in Laserfiche:
  - a. Academic Coordinator
  - b. Program Coordinator
  - c. Department Chair
  - d. Associate Dean for Student Success
5. Accuracy Verification
  - a. Any necessary corrections identified by a reviewer must be clearly noted in the Laserfiche form.
  - b. Forms containing inaccuracies will be rejected and returned to the student for correction before approval.
  - c. Once corrections are made, the student resubmits the audit for final review and re-signature, if required.
6. If the audit is not completed by the deadline, a registration hold will be placed on the student's Banner account until the midpoint audit has been conducted.
7. The Academic Coordinator will remove the registration hold once the audit has been submitted.
8. The Degree Works audit will outline the remaining courses, helping determine the student's expected graduation date.

#### Senior Audit for Graduation Procedure

1. The student will meet with their faculty advisor to initiate the Senior Audit for Graduation form in Laserfiche. The form will be signed by the student, the faculty advisor, the program coordinator, the department chair, and the Office of the Registrar.
2. The Office of the Registrar will review and confirm the audit for accuracy and note any discrepancies in Degree Works.
3. The Degree Works audit will outline the remaining courses, helping determine the student's expected graduation date.
4. The student will complete the application for degree candidacy in Self-Service Banner.

#### Application for the Diploma and Graduation

Students who anticipate graduation must make a formal [Application for Undergraduate Graduation](#) the semester of their expected date of graduation. The application must be approved by the student's advisor, chair, and dean before being submitted to the Office of the Registrar (see the University Calendar and Class Schedule for deadline dates.) The graduation fee will be assessed in the semester that the graduation occurs.

#### Residence Requirements

The student must have earned a minimum of 25% of program coursework at the University. Fifty percent (50%) of major coursework credit hours must be completed via coursework offered by Alabama A&M University, except as approved by the department chair. (See UG # 51).

#### Participation in Commencement

Only students registered for all courses necessary to complete requirements for graduation at the time of application for graduation may participate in Commencement. No student may participate in commencement unless final academic clearance is given by the Registrar; final financial clearance is given by the Business Office and Office of Financial Aid, and final clearance by Career Development Services.

Students are expected to have completed all degree requirements prior to participation in commencement exercises. However, at times students request to participate in a commencement ceremony prior to completion of all degree requirements due to extenuating circumstances which will make participation in a later ceremony impractical. For example, a student who only needs one or two classes in the summer session to graduate may request to participate in the spring commencement rather than wait until the following fall ceremony.

The following criteria will be used to determine whether a student can participate in commencement ceremonies. Appropriate documentation is required.

1. The extenuating circumstance must be exceptional.
2. The student has the required GPA in the major, minor(if required),and overall program of study to be on track for graduation;
3. There is an approved plan of action in place for the student to complete the required coursework within the next six months.

#### Procedures:

1. The student meets with their advisor to review program of study and plan of action for completing the coursework.
2. Student completes the Graduation Application, indicating the desired date of graduation.

3. Degree Auditors (Office of the Registrar) review the student's record to ensure that all degree requirements are met, noting any outstanding requirements.
4. The student provides evidence that they have registered for the outstanding classes in the upcoming semester.
5. Student request, Degree Audit review by Office of the Registrar and all supporting documentation is forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs (AVP) for consideration.
6. After a decision is made by AVP-Academic Affairs, all documents are sent to the Office of the Registrar. The student will be "flagged" in BANNER as an applicant for graduation and will receive the \$100 graduation fee on account. This will enable the student to order graduation regalia, etc.

#### Attendance at Commencement

All students who complete degree requirements are required to attend the commencement practice, exercises and Founder's Day Convocation. Absences must be approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

#### Summary of General Graduation Requirements

To become eligible for graduation from the University, a candidate must:

1. Complete satisfactorily a curriculum in the program in which he/she is enrolled.
2. Achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.00 or "C" average or higher GPA as required by some programs.
3. Earn at least one-half the courses in his/her major at Alabama A&M University except as approved by the department chair.
4. Submit to the chair of the major department an [Application for Undergraduate Graduation Form](#) by the date indicated on the University Calendar.
5. Satisfy all due and payable financial obligations to the University.
6. Participate in the commencement practice and exercise of his/her graduating class unless excused in writing by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. An [Excused from Commencement Form](#) must be submitted by the student.
7. Complete financial aid exit counseling (if applicable).
8. Register with Career Development Services (if not done earlier).

#### Graduation with Honors

Candidates for graduation whose work has been of superior quality are honored at the commencement exercises as indicated below:

| <u>Award</u>    | <u>Cumulative GPA</u> | <u>Minimum Credit Hours at AAMU</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cum Laude       | 3.0 – 3.49            | 30                                  |
| Magna Cum Laude | 3.5 – 3.79            | 30                                  |
| Summa Cum Laude | 3.8 or above          | 75                                  |

Students with fewer than three (3) years at Alabama A&M University who have demonstrated superior achievement will be honored "Cum Laude" or "Magna Cum Laude."

### U.G. Policy #43 – Degree Revocation

When there is a need to investigate an allegation of academic impropriety that would justify the revocation of a degree that has been awarded by the University, the following policy and procedures will be followed:

1. The Registrar's Office will make an assessment of the student transcript under question and prepare a statement of findings and recommendation(s) to revoke the degree.
2. The Registrar will transmit the statement of findings and recommendation(s) to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
3. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will transmit the findings and a review determination statement to the Dean of the College where the student in question was enrolled.
4. The dean will convene the appropriate department(s) faculty and chairperson(s) to present the statement of findings and recommendations and the Vice President for Academic Affairs' review and determination statement.
5. The faculty that recommended the degree will then review the former student's record with the above stated documentation and take a formal (recorded) vote to recommend affirmatively or negatively to revoke the degree.
6. The student record, with a set of minutes from the faculty meeting with the recorded vote, will be transmitted to the Dean.
7. The Dean will transmit the recommendation on behalf of the faculty to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who in turn will transmit the recommendation to the President of Alabama A&M University.
8. The President will review the folder, make a determination based on the record, and transmit the final recommendation to the Board of Trustees of Alabama A&M. The Board's Committee on Academic Affairs will review the President's recommendation and the student folder and transmit its final recommendation to the full Board of Trustees.

Only the Board of Trustees holds the authority to revoke a degree that has been granted. The Board of Trustees' decision is final and not subject to further administrative and/or policy review.

### U.G. Policy #44 – Overlap of Courses

General Education – The courses required to fulfill General Education requirements can be used to fulfill requirements for satisfaction of minor, concentration or major requirements.

The courses required to fulfill General Education requirements can be overlapped with a major, minor, or concentration based on the 50% rule of overlap.

Department/core courses and Tracks cannot be overlapped with a major, minor or concentration. When the Department/core or Track has the same course as a major, minor or concentration, a discipline-specific course must be substituted in the minor/concentration/secondary major, that is approved by the faculty of the minor/concentration/secondary major.

For example – a CRJ major declares a PSC minor and PSC 205 and PSC 206 are required in both the major program Dept Block and the minor. The Political Science faculty must approve a substitute for the PSC 205 and PSC 206 requirement in the minor for that Criminal Justice major student.

Major/concentration – A maximum of 50% of the minimum concentration credit hours (21) can be used to satisfy requirements for a concentration. Because of the decimal, the 50% is rounded to 11.

Major/minor – A maximum of 50% of the minimum minor credit hours (18) can be used to satisfy requirements for a minor.

Major/major – 50% overlap of minimum major credit hours (24) is allowed.

Minor/minor – 50% overlap of minimum minor credit hours (18) is allowed.

Concentration/concentration – 50% overlap of minimum concentration credit hours (21) is allowed.

The overlapped hours in the concentration, minor, or secondary major do count towards the total hours for that concentration, minor or secondary major, but do not count toward total hours for the degree. If this leads to less than the minimum required 120 hours in the baseline program, an additional course(s) must be taken to make up the shortfall. There should be a distinct 120 hours for the program.

Note: The 50% rule of overlap is waived for the Liberal Studies Program.

### U.G. Policy #45 – Posthumous Awards

Posthumous awards will be considered under the following conditions:

1. Requested or approved by the family
2. Recent attendee (within two years of last date of attendance)
3. Student met the residency requirement
4. Student was in good academic standing

To be awarded the degree, the student must have been no more than one semester from graduating. Persons not meeting these requirements will be considered for other posthumous awards.

### U.G. Policy #46 – Curricular Changes Applied to Students

Curricular changes are applied to students based on the publication date of the Bulletin. The Bulletin is published annually by the beginning of each Fall semester. Therefore, any curricular changes made during one academic year will be applied to students who enter the University the following academic year. For example, if changes are made in Spring 2016, those changes will not be published/applicable until Fall 2016 when the Fall 2016 through Summer 2017 Bulletin is published.

### U.G. Policy #47 – Courses Graded as Pass/Fail

There is no limit on the number of pass/fail classes or credits allowed per degree, major, concentration or minor. The total number is defined by the degree program and approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

### U.G. Policy #48 – Independent Study

Independent study courses cannot be used to fulfill major, minor or concentration requirements unless approved by the chair, dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs. This includes major electives.

### U.G. Policy #49 – Declaration of Major

Students are expected to declare a major by 60 credit hours earned.

### U.G. Policy #50 – Internships

There is no limit on the number of internship credits allowed per degree, major, concentration or minor. The total number is defined by the degree program.

### U.G. Policy #51 – Residency Requirements for Programs

Twenty-five percent of program coursework credit hours must be completed via coursework offered by Alabama A&M University.

Fifty percent of major coursework credit hours must be completed via coursework offered by Alabama A&M University, except as approved by the department chair.

### U.G. Policy #52 – Retroactive Withdrawal Policy

Students who leave the University (for any reason) without submitting the retroactive withdrawal form have one year from the time of departure to complete the form. To be considered for retroactive withdrawal, substantive documentation for their departure along with the form must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs.

### U.G. Policy #53 – Courses Required to Fulfill General Education Requirements

1. Courses must be collegiate-credit courses at the freshman or sophomore levels (i.e., 100 or 200 level).
2. Courses must be broad in scope, present major intellectual or aesthetic ideas, and not be specialized or vocational in purpose.
3. Courses must present the essential characteristics and basic processes of inquiry and analysis in the discipline.
4. Courses must encourage the development of critical thinking skills and require students to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge.
5. Courses must consider the subject in its relation to other disciplines and its application to human concerns.
6. The courses required to fulfill General Education requirements can be used twice for Double Majors and for Second Baccalaureates. If the General Education courses are used for both degrees, then the higher course number level General Education requirement must be fulfilled.
7. The courses required to fulfill General Education requirements can be used to fulfill requirements for a major, concentration or minor.
8. The same courses required to fulfill General Education requirements can be overlapped with courses needed to satisfy requirements for earning a major, minor, or concentration based on the 50% rule of overlap.

### U.G. Policy #54 – No-Show & Attendance Verification

Beginning with the 2011 Fall semester, Federal regulations mandated by the U.S. Department of Education require that students must have begun attendance in classes to be eligible to receive Federal Financial aid. Federal financial aid funds such as Pell Grants, Federal Loans, Federal SEOG, etc., will not be credited to the student's account until their attendance is verified. Students must attend all of their scheduled classes and their attendance must be properly noted by instructors. Failure to report attendance will result in the delay or ultimate forfeiture of the disbursement of Federal financial aid funds to the student's account.

### U.G. Policy #55 – Security and Confidentiality of Student Files

To be compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of the U.S. Department of Education, student records that are maintained in any academic office must be kept confidential and must be secured at all times.

At the Department level, student records should be actively maintained for the duration of the student's matriculation and at least two years thereafter before being archived.

### U.G. Policy #56 – Transitional Education

Freshmen whose placement scores fall below the requisite levels are required to register for the appropriate Transitional Education Course(s). Students remain in the program(s) until they achieve specified competency levels. Grades earned in these courses will not be computed into a student's grade point average. Credit hours earned cannot/will not be applied toward the completion of degree programs. Transitional Education Courses cannot be used in calculations for Academic Honors.

## **Section X – GRADUATE POLICIES**

### **GR. Policy #01 – Admission Policies**

Applicants for admission to graduate study at Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university (or the equivalent of a four-year baccalaureate degree from another country). In many degree programs, the number of applications received from individuals qualified for graduate study regularly exceeds the number of students who can be accommodated. In such cases, only the most highly qualified are offered admission. The number of spaces available in various departments is limited according to the availability of faculty, special resources, and funds for students requiring financial assistance. The decision to admit an applicant is based primarily on a combination of the following criteria:

1. Quality of undergraduate and previous graduate work. As such, applicants must demonstrate adequate academic preparation in their proposed area of study. Those with deficiencies in academic preparation may be required to take additional coursework to strengthen their backgrounds.
2. Official, GRE/GMAT scores for programs that require entrance exams. Test scores over five years old or results brought by the applicant to the Office of Graduate Studies will not be accepted.
3. Letters of recommendation that speak to the applicant's potential for successful completion of the degree program to which the applicant is applying. Usually letters of recommendation are from the applicant's former professors. But, additional recommendations may come from employers or supervisors who are familiar with the applicant's work experience.
4. Supplemental evidence of potential success for graduate studies. Some programs require other evidence of potential for success, such as a portfolio, personal interviews, examples of scholarly work, and or research.
5. Available space in the program, and competitive rating within the applicant pool for the given term of entry.
6. Students who previously attended other graduate schools must be in good standing when seeking admission to a graduate degree program.

### **GR. Policy #02 – Application for Admission**

Application for admission must include the following:

1. Completed "official" Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University Application for Admission to Graduate Studies and a non-refundable application fee.
2. Official transcripts from each collegiate institution attended sent directly to the School of Graduate Studies from the collegiate institution.
3. Official test scores of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) is required for many programs.
4. Two letters/forms of recommendation on official Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University "Graduate Admission Reference" forms. These recommendations should speak to the applicant's potential for successful completion of the graduate program to which he/she is applying (usually, letters of recommendation are from the applicant's former professors). Additional recommendations may come from employers or supervisors who are familiar with the applicant's work experience.
5. Submission of a resume or vita is required for many graduate programs.
6. Submission of a letter of intent is required for many graduate programs.
7. Other requirements specified by the particular degree program to which the applicant is applying.

NOTE: Please see the School of Graduate Studies website for more details about application admission packet requirements for each graduate program at Alabama A&M University.

#### **Disposition of Application Materials**

Credential or supporting materials submitted for admission to Graduate School become the property of Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University and are not returned. Copies will not be provided to the student or to a third party outside of the University even at the applicant's request. Copies may be provided to appropriate offices at the University in the interest of academic matters or financial awards relative to the applicant.

### **GR. Policy #03 – Regular/Full Admission**

To be admitted unconditionally, applicants must:

1. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75 (4.00 scale) or a GPA of 3.00 (4.00 scale) in the major curriculum during the final two years of undergraduate study at the undergraduate level from a regionally accredited college/university. Students who previously attended other graduate schools in the United States must also be in good standing (i.e., 3.00) at the institution previously attended.
2. Sufficient score on either the GRE or GMAT examination.
3. Hold a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from a regionally accredited college or university.
4. Meet all program-specific requirements.

NOTE: Please see the School of Graduate Studies website for details on individual graduate program requirements for GRE/GMAT scores or other specific requirements.

### GR. Policy #04 – Conditional Admission

Conditional admission is available to applicants with a complete admission application packet but do not qualify for full admission. This could be because of a bachelor's degree GPA being below 2.75, or other departmental requirements.

Students admitted conditionally must possess a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 on the undergraduate level, or a GPA of 2.3 with a 3.0 in the major curriculum during the final two years of undergraduate study. After completing nine graduate hours, a conditional student must attain an overall graduate grade point average of 3.00 or higher. Failure to achieve the minimum 3.0 GPA after completing nine graduate hours will result in suspension of the student from further graduate study.

Conditional status is also extended to students who do not meet the GRE/GMAT requirements, if the GRE/GMAT is required by the degree program. Students admitted in this category are allowed one semester to fulfill the GRE or GMAT requirement. Students failing to meet these standards can be, at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies, dismissed from graduate study.

Conditionally admitted students who fail to meet other departmental requirements have two semesters (inclusive of summer sessions) to remove all provisions outlined in the original letter of admission. Students who fail to remove conditions at the end of two semesters will be ineligible to receive student loans or other forms of financial assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to be acquainted with all requirements related to a desired program and to fulfill these requirements.

The Office of Graduate Studies updates the records of students, who were admitted conditionally, during the first two weeks of each semester and during the following periods:

April 15-25

July 15-25

November 15-30

### GR. Policy #05 – Transient Admission

An applicant, who is a graduate student in good standing at another university, may be admitted to graduate study as a transient student upon submitting a supporting certificate or letter signed by the Graduate Dean of his home institution. Departmental degree programs may have more specific requirements; see departmental sections for details.

Transient students enrolling in Education courses must notify the specific departments of their status in the School of Education at Alabama A&M University.

### GR. Policy #06 – Non-Degree Admission

This is a category for students who do not intend to seek an advanced degree from Alabama A&M University. Persons seeking to enroll as non-degree students must possess an undergraduate degree from a regionally or nationally accredited institution. They also must have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale). Non-degree students usually include:

1. Those who intend to transfer graduate credit earned at Alabama A&M University to other institutions.
2. Those who intend to use graduate credits earned for professional certification, except for teacher education certification programs.
3. Those that enroll for personal satisfaction.

A non-degree student who subsequently seeks full admission must satisfy requirements for admission to the specific program. Non-degree students are only allowed to transfer a maximum of 9 semester hours if they get approval to enter an AAMU graduate degree program.

Immigration laws should be consulted to determine eligibility of international students seeking non-degree status. In many instances, a non-degree seeking international student may not qualify for the issuance of the Form I-20.

### GR. Policy #07 – International Students

Alabama A&M University welcomes applications from students from other countries. Applications should be sent three to six months before the registration date for each term. All applicants must meet Graduate School and departmental requirements as described in this catalog. In addition, international students must submit an official academic transcript accompanied by official/or notarized English translations. These documents must be sent directly from the institution(s) attended. Personal copies are not accepted. All foreign (non-U.S.) transcripts must be translated and evaluated by the World Education Services (WES) or a current member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation. This review must provide conclusive evidence that the applicant is the recipient of a degree comparable to the American bachelor's degree, which normally terminates 16 years of full-time study, 4 years of which are at the post-high school level. The official transcripts must show all post-high school work attempted, including grades or marks in each course, examination grades and standing in examinations and classes, or whatever other credentials are available to give a clear description of the student's academic accomplishments. Other requirements for international students include:

1. Scores of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). Test results must be sent directly to the School of Graduate Studies from the Educational Testing Services (Alabama A&M University Code: 1003).
2. A certified financial statement indicating the applicant's ability to pay for the cost of education. An original/official bank statement no more than six months old at the time of registration must be submitted to the Graduate School in order to obtain the I-20 for the F-1 student visa. In certain cases, advance payment of tuition and fees may be required.
3. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required if an applicant is from a country where English is not the official language or if an applicant's degree is from an institution where English is not the language of instruction. The Alabama A&M University's TOEFL code is 1003. The TOEFL essentials required minimum score for admission is Level 8, the suggested score for a PHD student is Level 10. The TOEFL IBT required minimum score for admissions is 72, the suggested score for a PHD student is 95. To meet the English proficiency admission requirement, students can also use the International English Language Testing System (IELTS); the required minimum score is 6.5, with a PHD student suggested score of 7.0, or the Duolingo English Test; the required minimum score is 105, with a PHD student suggested score of 125.
4. All international students seeking admission into Alabama A&M University's School of Graduate Studies, who have previously attended a U.S. graduate school, must be in good standing (3.0) at the graduate school in which they previously attended. Failure to disclose information about attendance at another U.S. graduate school is grounds for immediate denial of the application or subsequent dismissal.
5. All international students are required to maintain an international student health insurance once admitted to the University. Coverage for a spouse and/or dependent is available and must be purchased separately at the Student Health Center. A brochure explaining the coverage of the student health insurance program is available at the Student Health Center.

All requirements indicated above must be met before a Form I-20 will be issued.

### GR. Policy #08 – Readmission

A student who has not registered for at least three credits during a twelve-month period will be transferred to inactive status and must file an application for readmission. Readmission is not automatic, nor does it necessarily reinstate the student in the status accorded prior to becoming inactive. Students not enrolled over a twelve-month period, who have not exceeded twenty-four months, may apply directly to the Dean of Graduate Studies for readmission. Students not registered in more than twenty-four months must submit a new admission application (along with required fees and appropriate credentials) directly to the Office of Graduate Studies and have their credentials reviewed by their respective department before a decision on readmission can be rendered.

### GR. Policy #09 – Special Exemption (SE) for Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses

Undergraduate students enrolled in a bachelor's degree program in good academic standing with 75 or more credit hours, including at least 18 hours earned at AAMU, and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher may enroll in graduate-level classes on a Special Exemption (SE) basis with administrative approval. Equivalent standards shall apply to undergraduate transient and non-degree students. The student must apply for permission to enroll in each graduate course using the Special Exemption for Graduate Course Enrollment and Substitution Authorization Form.

The student must receive authorization for course registration for each graduate course from the program coordinator for their primary major, department chairperson for the major, chairperson of the department offering the course (if not the department of the student's major), college dean for the major, dean of graduate studies, and the office of academic affairs through submission of the Special Exemption for Graduate Course Enrollment and Substitution Authorization Form (via Laserfiche) for execution by the Office of Graduate Studies.

The student must fulfill any eligibility requirements for graduate course enrollment, including course prerequisites or program requirements. Course enrollment may be denied based on space availability, cohort enrollment size restrictions, or other factors determined by the program's graduate coordinator offering the intended course.

Graduate courses taken through Special Exemption (SE) while an undergraduate student may be used as substitutes for specific course requirements in the student's undergraduate degree program as indicated on the Special Exemption (SE) for Graduate Course Enrollment and Substitution Authorization Form or may be taken as non-substitute elective courses.

An undergraduate student may not enroll for more than six (6) hours of graduate coursework in a semester through Special Exemption. An undergraduate student may earn no more than 12 graduate credit hours through an SE.

Credit for courses taken through SE may not be applied to requirements for future enrollment in a masters-level graduate program at AAMU. Undergraduate students wishing to earn credit toward an eligible master's-level graduate program at AAMU must apply for Accelerated Master's Pathway (see GR #64).

### GR. Policy #10 – Education Program Admission While Still an Undergraduate

Students seeking admissions into graduate degree programs in Elementary, Special, and Pre-Elementary Education, who have not completed an undergraduate degree, but are scheduled to complete an undergraduate degree (prior to the term for which they are seeking admission) into an AAMU Education degree program, may be admitted, with provisions, as a teacher education prospect, by the Graduate School. The student may be admitted as provisional, non-degree seeking, until final transcripts are received. The student must provide documented evidence of their (unofficial) undergraduate transcript indicating they are performing at or above the requisite GPA. These students must furnish a final and official transcript showing completion of the undergraduate degree before they are admitted into the Elementary, Special, or Pre-Elementary Education programs. Students who fail to submit a final transcript with the published date of degree conferral, within thirty (30) days of the semester of admission, will be ineligible to enter graduate teacher education degree programs.

### GR. Policy #11 – Admission Medical Record

The Admission Medical Record is a part of the Admission Application and must be completed, including the required immunizations, before admission is granted and class registration is permitted.

### GR. Policy #12 – Application Petition/Appeal

An applicant who is denied admission to any of the University's degree programs may submit a petition to the Graduate School. The [Denial of Admission Appeal Form](#) may be obtained from the Graduate School's web page. A copy of the completed petition should be submitted to the Graduate School for review by the Graduate Admissions Review Committee. Recommendations or resolutions made by the Graduate Admissions Review Committee will be communicated in writing to the applicant. Decisions made by the Graduate Admissions Review Committee are final.

### GR. Policy #13 – Transfer Credit

Transfer credit must be acceptable to the student's advisory committee and be pertinent to the student's planned degree program. A petition for transfer of graduate credit and one official transcript upon which the transfer courses are recorded must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Only courses with grade "B" or better will be approved. Courses with a "P" grade are not acceptable. Alabama A&M University only accepts transfer credit from institutions of higher education that have been accredited by one of the regional accrediting commissions recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

Students seeking master's degrees may, upon departmental approval, transfer a maximum of twelve semester hours of approved graduate credits from an accredited institution. Credits must have been earned within the past six years. A student who has completed course credits in a certification program at Alabama A&M University may transfer such credits into a master's degree program with

the consent of the departmental program or school. Such credits may be transferred only if they fall within the past six years set for the master's degree.

For students admitted to the Educational Specialist program, previous and appropriate post-master's degree credit earned at the Alabama A&M University or any regionally accredited university before a student applies for admission to the Ed.S. Program can be applied toward the Ed.S. degree provided:

1. It meets the time limitation test.
2. The student meets residency requirements.
3. The Graduate Dean of Alabama A&M University approves such credit for acceptance.

The Ed.S. degree may differ from that of the AA-Certificate. Credit earned in an AA program at Alabama A&M is not automatically applicable to an Ed.S. program. Instead, if a holder of an AA-Certificate enters an Ed.S. program at a later date the Ed.S. Advisory Committee will recommend to the School of Graduate Studies, Office of the Dean, how much of the credit earned in the AA certificate should be credited toward the Ed.S. program. The Ed.S. Committee and the School of Graduate Studies, Office of the Dean, in light of the objectives of the department, will decide to accept toward an Ed.S., as much as all, or as little as none, of the credit earned in an AA-Certificate program. The only exception is the residency requirement.

Students seeking a Ph.D. may transfer credits subject to the following conditions:

1. All credits submitted for transfer must be evaluated by the department and approved by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.
2. Only such courses, which are the same or similar in content as the courses listed for the particular specialization, will be approved for transfer.
3. A student who has earned the master's degree can transfer up to a maximum of 24 semester hours of credit, whereas a student who does not have a master's degree can transfer up to a maximum of 12 semester hours of graduate credit.

#### Graduate Credit for National Board Certified Teachers

There is a possibility for a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) to receive up to 3 semester hours of graduate credit to apply to an elective course in a program of study at Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University. To pursue this possibility a graduate student must be admitted into one of the College of Education's graduate programs and must have completed the NBPTS process and awarded National Board Certification. To pursue this possibility, the graduate student must do the following:

1. Confer with his/her graduate advisor and the Dean of the School of Education to determine if National Board Certification can be applied to his/her specific program of study. If approved, credits for National Board Certification can only be used as elective credits. All persons receiving approval to use National Board Certification must complete the National Board Certification Credit Acceptance Form and receive approval from his/her graduate advisor, the program Department Chair, the Dean of the School of Education, and the Dean of Graduate Studies. In addition, persons receiving approval to use National Board Certification must submit a new program of study to reflect the elective course(s) in which the credits would replace. In all cases, credits for National Board Certification must be submitted by the start of the second semester of enrollment. The University will not accept National Board Certification credits submitted after the second semester of enrollment.
2. The NBCT must contact ACE and request two transcripts. To do this, he/she can go to the NBPTS website and click on "click here to apply for graduate credit" in the top right corner. That link takes them to the ACE web site. ACE verifies that they are a NBCT and issues them a transcript showing between six and nine academic credits (Alabama A&M University will only accept a maximum of 3 semester hours of National Board Certification credits). There is a \$100 application fee for each transcript that the student will pay to ACE for this service. Transcripts must be mailed to Alabama A&M University, Office of Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 998, Normal, Alabama 35762. The transcript that is issued means that NBPTS recommends the NBCT for graduate credit for consideration by the NBCT's university. As stated, it is up to the university to decide if it will recognize those credits.

#### Foreign Transfer Credits

All non-English transcripts must be translated and evaluated by the World Education Services (WES). This review must provide a conclusive course-by-course evaluation of all coursework the student seeks to transfer.

### GR. Policy #14 – Definition of Residency

For the purpose of assessing tuition and fees, AAMU classifies students as Alabama residents or non-residents. Residency, for this purpose, means domicile; domicile means living in the state of Alabama with the intent to make Alabama a fixed and permanent home. For example, students may have more than one home address but only one domicile. All out-of-state students must pay non-

resident fees. A student who comes to Alabama for the purpose of attending an institution of higher education is considered a non-resident student. Registration for voting, obtaining an Alabama driver's license, purchasing of property, and employment in Alabama are considered necessary components of establishing residency. Students from outside of Alabama will be assumed to be non-resident students, unless they affirmatively fall within the criteria specified below.

### GR. Policy #15 – Residency Classification for Tuition Purposes

In Alabama, as in all other states, tuition at publicly supported four-year universities is higher for non-resident students than for resident students. The rules used in determining residency seek to ensure that only legal Alabama residents are assessed the resident fee. Many of these rules appear below:

1. Residency is a person's true, fixed, and permanent home and place of habitation. It is the place where a person intends to remain and to which the person expects to return when the person leaves without intending to establish a new domicile elsewhere. In order to establish a domicile in Alabama, a person must maintain a predominant physical presence in Alabama for 12 consecutive months after moving to the state.
2. No emancipated minor or person 19 years of age or older shall be deemed to have gained or acquired Alabama residency status for tuition purposes while attending any educational institution in this state, unless the individual makes a clear demonstration that he/she has established residency in this state.
3. A financially dependent person who is claimed as a dependent by another person who has not established and maintained an Alabama residency shall be presumed to be a nonresident. This presumption may be overcome by evidence of the student's long-standing presence in Alabama and demonstration of other factors (For complete details, contact the Office of the Registrar).
4. A full-time employee of AAMU, his/her spouse, and dependent children under age 25, may register for the payment of resident fees, even though they have not been residents of Alabama for the preceding 12 months.
5. Military personnel and their dependents stationed in Alabama and on active military duty are entitled to Alabama residency classification for tuition purposes.

For full details about residency, contact the Office of the Registrar.

### GR. Policy #16 – Residency Appeals

A student who wishes to appeal the decision resulting from his/her petition for Alabama residency may request a review of that decision before AAMU Residency Review Committee. Appeals must be made in writing to the Dean of Graduate Studies within 10 working days of the decision.

### GR. Policy #17 – Changes in Residence Status

Applicants who are classified by AAMU as non-residents but who later claim to qualify as legal bona fide residents of Alabama must file a Petition for Alabama Residency Classification for Tuition Purposes with the Office of Graduate Studies. To receive consideration, petitions for change of status and all supporting documentation must be filed with the Office of Graduate Studies for the prospective session on or before:

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| Fall Semester   | July 15  |
| Spring Semester | Nov. 15  |
| Summer Sessions | April 15 |

In determining whether the student is in fact an Alabama resident for tuition purposes, the burden of proof rests with the student.

When a petition is approved, classification as a resident for tuition purposes will not be retroactive to the prior semester; however, any non-resident fees paid in advance for succeeding semesters will be adjusted.

### GR. Policy #18 – Financial Aid

Admission to graduate study does not carry any implication concerning the award of financial aid. Assistance for graduate students in the form of assistantships (Application for Graduate Assistantships) is available from some departmental programs and administrative units, but applicants from abroad are in competition with U.S. students for available awards. The University reserves the right, even after the arrival and enrollment of students from another country, to make individual curricular adjustments whenever particular deficiencies or needs are found. Students may be required to take such courses without credit and at their own expense. This could also apply to additional course work in English as a foreign language whenever necessary.

Alabama A&M University attempts to provide financial support for as many graduate students as possible. The University has a complete financial aid program composed of the following forms of aid:

Assistantships (research or teaching)

A number of graduate assistantships are available in departments that offer graduate degree programs. To maintain a graduate assistantship (Teaching or Research) a student must be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) graduate hours offered by Alabama A&M University during the regular academic semester. During summer sessions students must enroll in 3 semester hours offered by Alabama A&M University to qualify for a graduate assistantship. An assistantship is limited to four semesters (two academic years) not inclusive of summer sessions. Students must apply for extensions. Master of Science students are limited to 20 hours per week maximum on assistantships. The [Application for Graduate Assistantship Form](#) can be obtained in the Graduate Studies Office.

Fellowships (research or teaching)

A number of graduate fellowships are available in departments that offer graduate degree programs. Students interested in graduate fellowships should address inquiries to: The Dean, School of Graduate Studies, Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, P.O. Box 998, Normal, AL 35762 or inquire directly with the Department/Programs they desire to enter.

Loans & Part-time Employment

Student part-time jobs are open to graduate students. Students interested in loans or part-time employment may obtain detailed information by writing to: Director of Financial Aid, Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, P.O. Box 907, Normal, Alabama 35762.

Scholarships

The University has designated a limited number of scholarships for graduate students. These scholarships are awarded through an application process. Applications are available in the Graduate Office. In addition, many degree programs also have a limited number of scholarships available for graduate students. For information of departmental scholarships, please contact individual programs for details.

**GR. Policy #19 – Satisfactory Academic Progress**

A student must meet the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress in order to receive Title IV funds. The concept of Satisfactory Progress goes beyond good standing to mean evidence of positive movement toward the student's degree.

Alabama A&M University is required by federal regulation, to establish standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy for students receiving assistance through the below named programs:

1. Federal Direct Loan Program
2. Federal Carl D. Perkins Loan
3. Federal Work Study (FWS)
4. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
5. Federal Stafford Loan Program
6. Federal Parent Loans
7. Federal Pell Grant
8. Alabama Student Assistance Grant
9. Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)
10. National SMART Grant
11. Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant (TEACH)

Graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00. The maximum allowable hours that a graduate student can attempt and remain eligible to receive Title IV funds are outlined below:

| Maximum Credit Hours | Description                                                                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 70                   | Traditional master's degree                                                           |
| 80                   | Graduate business degree                                                              |
| 100                  | Specialist's degree or 2 <sup>nd</sup> master's (Both includes master's degree hours) |
| 120                  | Doctoral degree (includes master's degree hours)                                      |

1. Grades of "I" received during the first two semesters, by graduate students enrolled in Thesis or Dissertation courses are exempt from being included in the total hours attempted.

2. Title IV funds will not be granted to graduate students who have attempted more than 120 credit hours.

Each of the following components must be met by the aid recipient:

1. Qualitative Component (the grade point average you must maintain)
2. Quantitative Component (the number of hours you must successfully pass)
3. Time Frame Component (the length of time you will be eligible to receive aid).

To receive aid, students must successfully earn the required percentage of attempted hours, obtain the grade point average and not exceed the number of hours of eligibility. All students who desire to become or who are recipients of Title IV funds must meet the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy requirements.

However, in all cases graduate students are required to earn at least 67% of the hours which they attempt. All periods of a student enrollment count when calculating Satisfactory Academic Progress, even periods in which the student did not receive Title IV funds.

## GR. Policy #20 – Financial Aid Appeals Process

Students losing aid may appeal to have their Title IV aid reinstated only under the following conditions:

1. Undue hardship as a result of extenuating circumstances such as;
  - a. Student's illness
  - b. Illness or death of a parent or spouse

All students seeking to redress a financial aid decision must file an appeal within two weeks of the date the student is notified of the financial aid suspension.

For more information on the Appeals process visit the financial aid web site at:

<http://www.aamu.edu/Admissions/fincialaid/importantinformation/Pages/Satisfactory-Academic-Progress-Policy.aspx>.

Students who fail to meet the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress may file a financial aid appeal. Appeals can be submitted online via the financial aid website. The appeals must include the reason why the student failed to make "Satisfactory Academic Progress" as well as a plan of action that will allow the student to make SAP at the next evaluation. If an appeal is approved, the student is placed on probation for a one semester period. Students who have not met the requirements after the probationary period are required to submit a new appeal along with an academic plan which will ensure that they are able to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress by a specific point in time. This timeframe must coincide with the maximum timeframe outlined in the University's Satisfactory Academic Policy.

## GR. Policy #21 – Registration

### General Registration Guidelines

Every graduate student is expected to become familiar with the University regulations and all Graduate School regulations. The information and educational requirements in the catalog represent a flexible program that may be altered where such alterations are thought to be in the mutual interest of the University and its students.

Once admission has been granted, students are required to complete registration within the set time period stipulated by the university calendar. It is imperative that students enter accurate and complete information on all registration cards/forms. Students are considered registered only when they have conformed to all University and School of Graduate Studies regulations.

Failure to Register and Improper Registration – Students who fail to register during a semester, or whose efforts to register fail to conform with University and College regulations, may not at the end of such semester receive credit for courses or parts of courses completed. It is a violation of University policy for an instructor to allow a student to remain in his/her class if the student does not appear on the official roster. A student who schedules courses during registration makes a financial commitment to the University. The University assumes no responsibility for students who attend classes without proper registration.

Late Registration – After the initial registration period, all eligible students who have not yet registered may register during late registration. Dates, times and procedures for late registration are available on the University Calendar and the Registrar's Office website. Enrollment during this period is considered as late enrollment for which an additional charge is made. No student may register after the close of late registration.

Class Schedule Changes -- Withdrawal from a course ("dropping"). A student may withdraw from, or drop, an individual course two or more weeks prior to final exams. (Student should refer to current University Calendar for date.)

A student contemplating withdrawal from a course is strongly encouraged to contact their academic advisor before doing so inasmuch as it can result in delayed graduation. Also, dropping below full-time status\* may impact insurance [health & auto], financial aid, and scholarships. \*Full time status is 9 credit hours for graduate students.

Classes dropped two or more weeks before final examinations will receive a grade of "W." The grade and hours of courses with a grade of "W" will not be computed into the grade point average.

Students with holds that prevent registration must go to the Office of the Registrar to drop a course or to completely withdraw. The Registrar cannot drop courses after the deadline to drop has passed.

#### Cross-Registration

Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University and the University of Alabama at Huntsville offer graduate students in the Biological Sciences the opportunity to cross register. Each department retains the authority to establish the prerequisites for admission and the maximum enrollment in its home courses and to grant priority in registration to its own graduate students.

#### Federal Regulations

Alabama A&M University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, marital, or handicapped status. This commitment is made by the University and required by federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including Title IX, 86.9. Each student at the University has the right to inspect his/her student records as per Federal Register, Vol. 40 Number 3, Part III, Privacy Rights of Parents and Students.

#### Course Enrollment

A maximum of nine (9) graduate credit hours is considered a full academic load during the regular academic semesters, Fall & Spring. However, to maintain a graduate assistantship (Teaching or Research) a student must be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) graduate hours offered by Alabama A&M University during the regular academic semester. During summer sessions students must enroll in three (3) semester hours offered by Alabama A&M University to qualify for a graduate assistantship.

#### Fees and Expenses

Tuition rates and fees are posted on the University's web site. The University reserves the right to change fees, charges, rules and regulations without prior notice.

### GR. Policy #22 – Grading

Letter Grades: One of two types of grading systems is assigned to each course: (I) the Letter Grade System, and (II) the P-No Quality Point System. Each department has the responsibility for developing supplemental procedures that will enable the student and interested persons to learn about the faculty's judgment of the student's competence.

|         |   |                    |
|---------|---|--------------------|
| Type I  | A | Superior           |
|         | B | Satisfactory       |
|         | C | Below Expectations |
|         | F | Failure            |
| Type II | P | Satisfactory       |
|         | F | Failure            |

Type II (explanation and authorization for its use): The "P" grade is a critical and evaluative grade indicating at least satisfactory graduate attainment. Each department, in cooperation with the School of Graduate Studies, determines when Type II grading will be available for a graduate course. With respect to each of its graduate courses, each department may forbid or request the use of the Type II system.

In addition, the following non-evaluative letters are used, when appropriate:

|    |                                              |
|----|----------------------------------------------|
| W  | Withdrawal                                   |
| WM | Military Withdrawal                          |
| X  | Non-credit Audit                             |
| I  | Work Incomplete                              |
| IP | In-Progress (thesis, dissertation, research) |

### Auditing

A student may register to audit a course only with the approval of the instructor. The letter "X" will be recorded on the transcript if the student satisfies the conditions agreed upon with the instructor. All students who audit courses are required to be registered as auditors.

### Incomplete Work

The letter "IP" is recorded for incomplete work in programmatically designated research, thesis and fieldwork courses. The letter "I" may be given in other courses in which the scope of the student's project requires more time for its proper completion. An "I" grade given for courses other than thesis or dissertation research is to be removed within one semester after the end of the term of registration for the course. A course for which an "I" or "IP" is recorded is not included in the calculation of the GPA, and no credit is awarded until the course is completed with a quality grade. Removal of an "I" must be authorized by the instructor and approved by the School Dean on a Change of Grade Form. A student may not graduate without removing "I" or "IP" grades from his/her record.

### Credits and Quality Points

Each credit for which letter grades are recorded has the following quality value: A=4; B=3; C=2; D=1 and F=0. The GPA is defined as the total number of quality points earned in courses divided by the total number of credits attempted. Each credit for which "P" is recorded carries no designated number of quality points but implies a performance in the range of 3 or 4. Courses for which "W", "I", or "AU" are recorded do not contribute either credits or quality points toward graduation. When a course is repeated, only the last grade received is counted in computing the GPA. Graduate students must achieve the minimum GPA established by their programs, in no case less than 3.00, in order to be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, to be admitted to candidacy or to be eligible for graduation.

### Withdrawal

A student may withdraw from a course under the conditions listed below:

1. Classes dropped after the first week of the regular semester and through the end of the withdrawal period specified in the course schedule will carry a grade of "W."
2. Classes dropped after the withdrawal period will carry the actual grades obtained.

### Repetition of Courses

In every case, all "D" and "F" grades must be repeated (graduate and undergraduate courses) if the courses are to be listed on the official student's program of study submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. Graduate students normally are not permitted to repeat courses for which they have received credit, but, under unusual circumstances, a department may authorize an exception to this policy. When a graduate student repeats a course in which the subject matter has not changed, only the last grade received is counted in computing the quality point average.

However, graduate students are only allowed to repeat a course once if it is listed on the official student's program of study. Any student who repeats and fails a course the second time may be dismissed from the graduate degree program.

### Grade Changes

A grade given by an instructor for completed work will not be changed unless an error has been made in reporting or recording the grade. Re-examination or extra work may not be used as a basis for a change of grade.

### Grade Reporting

All grades roster must be signed and submitted by the instructor on record. This includes midterm and end of term rosters, Removal of Incompletes Form, Change of Grade Form, and Missing Grade Form. Persons submitting the grades to the Registrar's Office must also sign a roster indicating all reported grades submitted.

### Missing Grades

Missing grades must be received in the Registrar's office within forty-five (45) days immediately following the grading period (semester or summer session) in which the grade was given. All missing grades must be reported on the Missing Grade Form.

### Independent Study

Students who are using University facilities to an extent greater than represented by their formal course load (and those required by a fellowship or other appointment to be full-time students) are required to register for an appropriate number of additional credits of Independent Study to reflect their correct status. All graduate study not under the direct supervision of a specific faculty member is, by definition, Independent Study. This includes study for comprehensive and overview examinations, the preparation of research proposals, etc. Before a student is permitted to take an independent study course, the student must have completed a minimum of 12 semester hours of graduate work.

### Field Research

Registration for Directed Study is limited to students in good academic standing who wish to study or carry out a project in an area not normally available in a formal course. The work must be under the direct supervision of a faculty member who has approved the proposed work in advance of registration. A detailed description of the work should be recorded by the directing faculty member in the student's file in both the department and the School of Graduate Studies, Office of the Dean.

## GR. Policy #23 – Catalog Rights and Exclusions

Students' academic requirements are based on the Catalog that is in force during their first semester of enrollment at Alabama A&M University. Students are not allowed to switch from one catalog to another without the written approval of their Program Advisor, Department Chairperson, and Academic Dean using the Catalog Acknowledgment Form (available on-line). Students who transfer from one program to another are admitted to the new program under the catalog-in-force at the time of admission. Dismissed students are reinstated under the catalog- in-force at the time of reinstatement.

## GR. Policy #24 – Responsibility Statement

While Alabama A&M University will endeavor to provide timely and accurate advisement, each student is held responsible for reading, understanding, and meeting the requirements for graduation as set forth in the University Graduate Catalog.

## GR. Policy #25 – Request for Transcript

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Alabama A&M University does not release transcripts of a student's work at the University except upon the student's written request. A student or former student who desires a transcript of his/her record from the University must make this request in writing to the Registrar. Students or former students requesting transcripts should state all possible names under which their records may be located. **Telephone requests cannot be honored.**

A student may secure an unofficial transcript for his/her use, but official transcripts must be sent by the Registrar's Office to other colleges, organizations, companies and other interested sources. "Official" transcripts are not normally hand-carried without prior permission of the receiving institution. However, if this permission is granted, the transcript must be in a sealed envelope and marked "issued to student."

Each student is entitled to one (1) transcript without charge. A fee of \$5.00 is charged for each additional transcript, whether it is an official or unofficial copy. Each student should consult the University's fee schedule or contact the Office of the Registrar to verify the current fee for a copy of the transcript.

Transcripts are not issued to or for students who have outstanding obligations to the University.

## GR. Policy #26 – Academic Loads

Nine (9) graduate credit hours are considered a full academic load during the two regular academic semesters. Six (6) graduate credit hours are considered a full academic load during the Summer Session. To maintain a graduate assistantship (Teaching or Research), a student must be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) graduate hours during the regular academic semester and three (3) during the summer session. During summer sessions students must enroll in 3 semester hours offered by Alabama A&M University to qualify for a graduate assistantship. As an assistant, a student may enroll in up to nine (9) graduate hours during the regular academic semester and six (6) during the summer session with the Graduate Dean's approval. Enrollment in more than 10 hours is not permitted.

## GR. Policy #27 – Graduate Co-Op

To register for Graduate Co-op, the following must be met:

1. 3.0 GPA or higher.
2. Must have completed all CORE courses in program.
3. Co-op must be on the students Planned Degree Program at the time of registration.
4. Letter from the Department Chairperson stating that the Co-op is approved.
5. The Registration Form requesting registration in Graduate Co-op must have the signatures of the Department Chairperson and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.

Graduate Co-op sites and Co-op supervisors must be visited and recommended for approval by the Graduate Co-op Coordinator. Exception to this policy must have the approval of the Department Chairperson and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. A site visit and an interview with the potential supervisor of the Graduate Co-op must be made. Once a site is "officially" approved, only the Co-op supervisor need be contacted.

Students may not register for a Graduate Co-op at a site if employed by that site. International students on "Practical Training" may not register for Graduate Co-op credit or for any classes at A&M while in Practical Training.

See the Career Development Services Office for additional requirements.

### GR. Policy #28 – Transient Students

Students registered at AAMU who desire credits taken at other collegiate institutions to be applied toward their degrees at AAMU must receive approval before enrolling at the other institution. The completed [Transient Student Form](#) must be signed by the student's advisor and submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. Students who receive such approval must submit official transcripts documenting the work as soon as it is completed, whether they still desire credit for the work or not. The total number of hours taken at another institution or the sum of credits taken at AAMU and another institution during the same term cannot exceed the maximum allowed during the same enrollment term at AAMU: 10 credit hours for fall and spring semesters; 9 credit hours for the summer session. All transfer grades must be "B" or above to be accepted.

Advisors will evaluate whether or not the courses for which the student intends to enroll will transfer back to AAMU based on a comparison of course descriptions in the AAMU Bulletin and the bulletin of the institution the student wants to attend. Approval of transient credit is contingent upon whether the intended course is equivalent to a course at AAMU and whether or not it will be accepted by the major department for fulfilling of degree program course requirements.

Students and advisors are reminded that they should carefully review the number of credit hours that will be awarded for courses taken at another institution. Since AAMU awards credit for course work based on semester hours, credit hours awarded for course work completed at institutions which use a quarter system must be converted to semester hours upon transfer. In some instances, such a conversion may result in the student receiving an insufficient number of credit hours to fulfill the required number of semester hours for a course. If this happens, missing credit hour(s) must be made up in the course subject.

### GR. Policy #29 – Class Attendance

All students are expected to attend classes on a regular basis. No absences of any nature will be construed as relieving the student from responsibility for the completion of all work assigned by the instructor. A student registering late for a class will be responsible for all work assigned and material covered during the class sessions that were missed. The first class meeting of an evening class, which meets one night per week for 15 weeks, represents about seven percent of the total class time; this first meeting is a regular class. If students wait until the second class meeting to enroll, the class could be cancelled due to inadequate enrollment at the first class meeting. During the first week of each course, the instructor shall inform students of the attendance policies for the course. Class attendance policies are determined by the instructor and should allow for a reasonable number of absences which are required due to documented official university-sponsored activities, health problems and other emergencies. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements, which are acceptable to the instructor, to complete work missed during the student's absence from class.

### GR. Policy #30 – Statute of Limitations

There is a statute of limitations on all graduate courses of six years, with the exception of Urban and Regional Planning, Communicative Sciences & Disorders, and Social Work, which have seven years. The statute of limitation for all Ph.D. programs is eight years. In extraordinary cases, students may apply for an extension of the statute of limitations. The request must be approved by the department and submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final action. Requests for an extension of the statute of limitations must be accompanied by a written departmental assessment of the work and its relevance to the current curriculum mandates of the degree program. Courses over 12 years will not be accepted for credit toward any degree program.

### GR. Policy #31 – Withdrawal from Class(es)

Students who withdraw from classes officially or unofficially should understand how withdrawals affect their eligibility for financial aid as determined by this Satisfactory Academic Progress procedure. Withdrawals affect students Cumulative Grade Point Averages. Financial aid will not be awarded, if the Grade Point Average (GPA) falls below the required level. Moreover, hours enrolled in which a student failed to complete will affect the student's completion rate. If the student falls below the required number of hours that must

be completed, the student will be ineligible for further aid until all deficiencies have been resolved. In determining whether the student meets the qualitative and quantitative components, the following will not be considered as credits successfully completed: Grades of "F", "I" (Incomplete), "W" (Withdrawals), "WP" (Withdrawals while Passing); or "FA" (Failure to Appear). These grades, however, are counted as hours attempted. Transfer hours accepted toward completion of a student's program must be counted as hours attempted and hours earned. Repeated courses will also be included in the total hours attempted and earned.

### GR. Policy #32 – Withdrawal from the University

When a student finds it necessary to discontinue his or her enrollment at any time other than at the end of a semester or summer session, he or she must complete a [Withdrawal Clearance Form](#) obtained from the Registrar's Office. The student must clear all AAMU accounts as listed on the form. When a student withdraws before the last two weeks of any semester or summer session, the student will receive a grade of "W" in all courses. When enrolled for a regular semester, however, a student may not withdraw during the last two calendar weeks prior to the first day of final examinations. In a summer session, a student may not withdraw during the last calendar week prior to the first day of final examinations.

When a student leaves AAMU at any time during the semester or a summer session without filing a Withdrawal Clearance Form and without clearing all University accounts, the student may receive a grade of "F" in all courses. Further, he or she will forfeit all rights to a statement of honorable dismissal, thereby jeopardizing re-entry into AAMU or transfer to another accredited institution.

#### Procedures for Withdrawing From the University

- Step 1: Secure and complete Withdrawal Clearance Form. Forms are available in the Registrar's Office. Obtain all appropriate signatures.
- Step 2: Complete an exit interview with the Office of Special Student Services.
- Step 3: File completed Withdrawal Clearance Form with the Office of the Registrar.

#### Emergency Separation for Military Purposes

Students who exit the University because of a military call-up or spouses of those called may withdraw without academic penalty. After the normal University withdrawal period, the student may choose to make arrangements with the instructor and/or department chairperson to complete the course work.

Students who withdraw due to being called to active duty or spouses of persons called to active duty may be eligible for a full refund of required tuition and fees. Room and board will be refunded in accordance with the current University refund policy. All students who receive Title IV funds will be processed according to federal policies. Federal policy statements are available in the Office of Student Financial Aid.

#### Procedures for Emergency Separation for Military Purposes:

- 1. Secure a copy of the Academic Affairs Form (Emergency Separation for Military Purposes).
- 2. Complete the form and secure appropriate documentation.
- 3. Submit the form to the Office of the Registrar, retaining the copy marked "student".

### GR. Policy #33 – Leave of Absence

A leave of absence permits a student to continue under the curriculum requirements which applied prior to the absence and may be granted for a maximum of one year. Students in good standing who have completed at least six (6) semester hours of course work towards a degree may qualify for a leave of absence. A "Request for Leave of Absence" letter is the responsibility of the student and must provide the academic unit graduate advisor and the Dean of Graduate Studies appropriate information in order to make a decision. Any one of the following circumstances may be grounds for requesting a leave of absence

- 1. Illness or disability (permanent or temporary) or similar personal exigencies including pregnancy which make it impossible or inadvisable for a student to register for class.
- 2. Activities which enhance a student's professional career objectives.
- 3. Active duty in the armed forces of the United States.
- 4. Other reasons at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies. After review by the Graduate Studies Office, the academic unit, and the Registrar's Office, a response is mailed to the student. A first-time leave of absence of one semester only will normally be granted upon request for students who qualify and will not require an application for readmission to the university. Registration materials for the semester following the leave will be sent to the student. Students requesting a subsequent leave or a leave longer than one semester are required to provide appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's recommendation, verification of employment). Such requests must also be endorsed by the academic program advisor. A leave granted for more than one semester does not reserve a place for the student at this university, nor does it guarantee financial assistance. An application for admission must be

filed in order to be readmitted and permitted to enroll when the leave terminates. The leave of absence, however, will not count as part of the time limitations required for a degree.

A leave of absence does not negate adherence to the policy on statute of limitations.

### GR. Policy #34 – Academic Integrity

The integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in all aspects of its endeavor. Maintaining academic integrity is therefore the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students at Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of Alabama A&M University. Sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. Cheating – use, or attempted use, of trickery, artifice, deception, breach of confidence, fraud, or misrepresentation of one's academic work. Submission of the same work in its entirety for credit in two courses without obtaining the permission of the instructors constitutes cheating. Collaborating with others when not explicitly allowed by the instructor constitutes cheating.
2. Fabrication – falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise (including the graduate school application process).
3. Plagiarism – representing, whether intentionally or unintentionally, the words or ideas of another as one's own work in any academic exercise.
4. Facilitating dishonesty – helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty, including substituting for another in an examination, misrepresenting oneself, or allowing others to represent as their own one's papers, reports, or academic works.

### GR. Policy #35 – Academic Probation

Students enrolled in graduate degree programs offered by Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University are expected to maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade-point average. Students whose cumulative grade-point average fall below 3.0 and are above 2.5, or who fail to make satisfactory progress, will be placed on academic probation. Students placed on academic probation are required to restore their cumulative grade point average to 3.0 within nine additional semester hours of graduate work, including repeated and dropped courses. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from graduate study. Graduate students whose cumulative GPA falls below 2.5 in any given semester are subject to dismissal, at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies. However, if permission is granted for an additional semester of study, the student will remain on probation and will be limited to six credit hours of enrollment. Students must attain a semester GPA of 3.0 at the end of the probationary semester. Failure to attain the requisite GPA will result in the student being dismissed. Students who attain the requisite semester GPA will remain on probation. Individual departments may have other requirements.

### GR. Policy #36 – Dismissal

Students wishing to be readmitted following a suspension must wait at least one year before applying. (One year is defined as two semesters or one semester and one summer session.) During this period, they are ineligible for admission to any program at Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University. However, a grade below B after readmission in any course will result in dismissal from further graduate study.

### GR. Policy #37 – Student Appeal Process

Any graduate student may appeal for variations in university-wide graduate policies and regulations by submitting a completed [Graduate Student Grievance Form](#) to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### GR. Policy #38 – Graduate Student Grievance Procedure

NOTE: In extreme cases, the Dean of Graduate Studies has the right to convene a Grievance Committee.

Graduate students who believe they have been subjected to unfair treatment in the administration of academic policies may seek resolution of their complaints under this Graduate School Grievance Process. The School of Graduate Studies administers the Graduate School Grievance Process (GSGP) for pursuing resolution of complaints and grievances for most academic aspects of a graduate student's program. This includes issues related to the program of study, research, comprehensive exams, scholarship, or artistic production, which comprise the core of graduate degree programs. However, as indicated above not all issues are covered

under the GSGP, these include: (a) students who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a disabled veteran (students who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of race should refer to the Student Handbook, “Student Complaints: Handling and Resolution,” pg. 19-20); (b) students seeking to overturn a disciplinary proceeding for misconduct, including plagiarism and cheating (disciplinary hearing for misconduct fall under the provisions of the Student Conduct Code contained in the Student Handbook. See page 19-20); (c) students seeking adjustment in financial aid award amounts must appeal directly to the Office of Financial Aid (students seeking to adjust their status from conditionally admitted to fully admitted, after the specified clearance dates posted in the Graduate Catalog, will not be processed); and (d) students seeking to dispute or overturn a decision about residency (students seeking to overturn a decision about residency must submit a letter of appeal to the University’s Residency Committee for deliberation).

Sincere attempts should be made to resolve student grievance regarding grades or other academic matters promptly, yet in an informal manner. The University believes that such matters should be resolved at the lowest level possible. Only after the student has made serious efforts at solving the problem by consultation with the instructor should he/she pursue a formal appeal to higher administrative levels. Grievance hearings are held during the fall and spring semester. Students who believe that they have been subjected to unfair treatment in the administration of academic policies during summer sessions can file the appropriate grievance paperwork during the summer session. However, the University will not hold any grievance hearing during the summer. Grievance hearing for such cases will be held within the first three weeks of the start of fall semester.

Listed below are the procedures for dissolving student grievances:

### Level I

The objective of the (GSGP) is to achieve a fair and equitable resolution of complaints or grievances at the earliest possible time at the lowest possible level. A graduate student who elects to pursue a complaint or grievance through the GSGP must first attempt to resolve the issue with the faculty member, supervisory committee, or administrator involved. If the conflict remains unresolved, the graduate student should make a written appeal to the department head or immediate supervisor, and, if pertinent, with any relevant departmental faculty member or Departmental Grievance Committee. If the complaint involves the department head or chair, the student should discuss the conflict with their respective College Dean who will appoint another faculty member within the student’s department or from a related area to discuss the problem. The outcome of this conflict resolution process shall be a **written document**. The document should be signed by all participating parties to confirm their receipt. Copies of the signed document will be provided to the complainant (via certified mail), relevant faculty members, and College Dean in the conflict resolution session. The official copy shall be sent to the Graduate School to be retained in the student’s file. Departmental Grievance Committees usually consist of at least 3 graduate faculty members from the department or a related department and the Director of Institutional Research who will serve in an ex-officio capacity. Departmental Grievance Committees may also but are not required to contain at least one student. Grievances filed by students on the Departmental level must contain a letter outlining the problem as well as the student’s suggested resolution. Within fifteen days of receipt of the written appeal, the department head or immediate supervisor will schedule a meeting of a Departmental Grievance Committee. The department head will also notify the student and all concerned faculty members of the date and time of the meeting of the Departmental Grievance Committee. During the meeting of the Departmental Grievance Committee the students and relevant faculty members, individually, may present pertinent information related to the dispute. Each side has twenty minutes to present relevant facts about the case. Within seven days of the hearing, the Departmental Committee will produce a **written document** that denotes the findings of the committee as well as recommended resolution(s). The document should be signed by all participating parties to confirm their receipt. Copies of the signed document will be provided to the complainant (via certified mail), relevant faculty members, and the College Dean in the conflict resolution session. The official copy shall be sent to the Graduate School to be retained in the student’s file.

### Level II

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome within the Department and wishes to appeal the decision, he or she must petition, within ten days of receipt of the conflict resolution letter by providing notification to the respective College Dean. Notification must be made in the form of a letter that details the issue(s) in question as well as the student’s suggested resolution. Upon receipt of the letter, the College Dean will notify the student in writing, within fifteen days, informing him or her of the date and time of a college-level hearing. College-Level Grievance Committees will consist of at least three faculty from the College (to exclude faculty from the department or class from which the issue arose), the College Dean or their designee (who will serve as chair), and the Director of Institutional Research. The Committee may also include one or two graduate students from the College (excluding students from the department or class from which the issue arose).

College-Level Grievance Committees (CLGC) may decide to conduct a further review of the case, with the option of calling in parties to the dispute. The College Dean will, in that case, solicit documents pertinent to the case (at a minimum, the original grievance to the department, documentation used by the department in deciding the grievance, the department’s written notification of its decision to

the student and all reports relevant to the case). The Dean of Graduate Studies, or his or her designee, will be present at all College-Level Grievance Committee meeting. The College-level Grievance Committee releases the results of its findings within ten days of holding its meeting. The College Dean will notify the student (via certified mail), and the department chair of the Committee's verdict. The official copy of the decision shall be sent to the Graduate School to be retained in the student's file.

### **Level III**

If a student is not satisfied with the outcome rendered by the College-Level Grievance Committee, he or she must (within ten days of receipt of the letter from the CLGC) submit a formal appeal application to the Dean of the Graduate School. Appeal applications must also be accompanied by copies of the findings from the Department and College-Level Grievance Committees. Within fifteen days of receipt of the completed application, the Dean of Graduate Studies will convene a University Grievance Committee that consists of at least three graduate faculty (to exclude faculty from department or class from which the issue arose and faculty who served on the College-Level Grievance Committee). The Dean of Graduate Studies will also identify a member of the graduate faculty to serve as chair of the committee. The Committee may also include a graduate student (to exclude students from the department or class from which the issue arose) and the Director of Institutional Research who will serve in an ex-officio capacity. At least seven days before the hearing, the Office of Graduate Studies will submit to members of the Committee any documents or physical evidence to be presented at the hearing. The Committee chair shall establish a time and place for a hearing to be held no later than ten days from the date of final determination of the Committee membership, unless for good reason stated in writing to the complainant and other concerned parties the Committee chair schedules the hearing for a later specified date. Hearings are conducted, with the Committee chair presiding, in closed session. Only evidence submitted in a timely manner, to the Graduate School, is considered in determining the validity of the complaint. Hearings are conducted with reasonable dispatch and terminated as soon as fairness to all parties involved permits. Students submitting a complaint are not allowed to bring an associate or companion. Moreover, the presence of an attorney is neither necessary nor recommended. However, if the student elects to have counsel present, the University's attorney must also be afforded an opportunity to attend. Accordingly, the student must notify The Graduate School, in writing, at least seven days prior to the Hearing if he/she intends to have an attorney present. The attorney's presence at the Hearing does not change the proceeding. Examination of witnesses, questioning of parties or direct participation in the proceeding by the attorney is not permitted. An attorney may speak in an unobtrusive manner with his/her client in an advisory capacity.

Within 15 days after the Hearing adjourns, the Committee shall present to the Dean of The Graduate School its report, including findings, conclusions, and recommendations for action. A written summary of the proceedings and an audio recording of testimony are retained for at least one year.

The Dean of The Graduate School, within 5 days after receipt of the Committee report, shall approve and transmit the report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and ratification. At this juncture, the report is sent back to the Dean of Graduate Studies for dispensation. The dispensation process shall include an evaluation of the validity of the grievance and a statement of the action to be taken. Copies of the decision shall be transmitted to the student, the faculty and staff member(s) involved, the Dean of the College, within fifteen days of receipt of the signed document, by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

The decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies shall become final at the close of the seventh day after issuance of the final document with the Vice President for Academic Affairs' review and ratification unless the student or any other party directly involved files a written request for consideration of the findings to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, whose review will be limited to the hearing record. The Vice President for Academic Affairs upon review of the hearing record has the option of sustaining the decision of the University Grievance Committee or requesting a second hearing by another University Grievance Committee, composed of new members. If a second University Grievance Committee is requested the body will meet within fifteen days of the Vice President for Academic Affairs' decision. Within five days of the hearing, the University Grievance Committee will submit a written report of their findings to the Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and ratification. At this juncture, the report is sent back to the Dean of Graduate Studies for dispensation. The dispensation process shall include an evaluation of the validity of the grievance and a statement of the action to be taken. Copies of the decision shall be transmitted to the student, the faculty and staff member(s) involved, the Dean of the College, within fifteen days of receipt of the signed document, by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The decision of the second University Grievance Committee is final unless a written request for consideration is received within five days of the issuance of the final document by the Dean of Graduate Studies. At this point student may request a final appeal to the University President whose review will be limited to the hearing records.

### **GR. Policy #39 – Quality of Work**

Students enrolled in graduate programs must produce work of high quality and must earn a cumulative average of "B" (3.00 GPA) or better in courses for which credit is given towards the graduate degree. Other than one grade of "C" being allowed in each program, no grades below "B" will be acceptable for graduate credit.

### GR. Policy #40 – Program of Study

Each graduate student is required to prepare a program of study in consultation with his or her major advisor(s). A completed [Program of Study Form](#) must be received from each student by the start of the second semester of enrollment. Students who do not file a program of study within the specified deadline will not be allowed to register for the next term. Programs of study must include a detailed listing of the available options within each student's area of emphasis. Only under extreme circumstances and with adequate justification should changes be made to programs of study. All changes to programs of studies must have the approval of the student advisor, Department Chairperson and the Dean of the respective School.

All changes in the planned degree program must be made at least one semester prior to the student's application for graduation. Under no circumstances should a change in the program of study be requested for failing a required course.

### GR. Policy #41 – Change of Program

Students who wish to change their major will complete an advising session with either the current program advisor or a program advisor for the intended major. The student will complete a [Change of Program Form](#) (available on-line), which must be approved by the Program Advisor, Department Chairperson, and Dean of the School in which the student wishes to enroll. The signed application is sent to the Office of Graduate Studies for processing. All coursework regardless of major remain on the student's transcript and is used to calculate the grade point average.

### GR. Policy #42 – Degree Requirements

#### Basic Requirements

The degrees of Master of Science, Master of Education, Master of Engineering, Master of Business Administration, Master of Social Work, Master of Urban & Regional Planning, Education Specialist, and Doctor of Philosophy are awarded by authority of the Board of Trustees based upon recommendation of the faculty of the School of Graduate Studies to the candidates who have met the particular requirements of each degree and University scholastic regulations. Degrees are awarded only to students who are in good standing and who have met their obligations to the University.

Students are referred to the detailed statements of the various programs and departments for additional specific requirements in the Graduate Bulletin.

### GR. Policy #43 – Credit Hour Requirements

Candidates for a Master of Science degree must earn a minimum of 30 or more semester credit hours (SCH), depending upon the specific degree requirements. Degree requirements are found in the graduate catalog currently in force at the time the student's degree plan was approved by the graduate dean. For most Master of Science degrees, 18 semester hours of the total 30 consist of core requirements and thesis.

Most M.Ed. degree programs are 30-36 semester hour programs. Students seeking licensure must meet all requirements as specified by the state, which may entail more than the minimum 30 credit hours. The specialist degree program is designed primarily to provide professional preparation for students involved in school-site administration and those individuals who have district-wide administrative responsibilities.

The Specialist degree program requires completion of a minimum of 36 graduate semester hours with the number of actual credit hours a function of the previous educational background of each student and his or her goals.

The Doctor of Philosophy degree is the highest academic degree conferred by the university. The student who receives the Doctor of Philosophy must demonstrate proficiency in content matter of the chosen discipline. Students also must demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate work in the chosen field of study. The student must have shown ability to work independently in the field and must have made an original contribution to the advancement of knowledge. However, Ph.D. requirements vary among programs and change from time to time (For more details see specific requirements listed in this catalog under each degree program).

### GR. Policy #44 – Concentrations

Pursuing a concentration or specialization allows a student to receive focused training in a particular sub-discipline within the major as listed in the Graduate Bulletin. The minimum requirements for a specialization is 9 credits to a maximum of 20 credits. The minimum requirements for a concentration is 21 credits. Generally, a concentration or specialization must be less than half of the total credits needed for the graduate program.

### GR. Policy #45 – Academic Year

Alabama A&M University is organized on the semester system. The year is divided into two semesters and a summer session. Summer classes are scheduled so that an equivalent amount of time spent during the regular semester is also applicable. Each semester must include a minimum of fifteen (15) weeks. The number of credit hours translated to clock hours must be arranged during the summer to equal a semester. The University may offer interim sessions between the regular semesters or the spring semester and summer school or summer school and the fall semester. All accelerated courses must meet the minimum contact hours based on the course credit hours.

### GR. Policy #46 – English Writing Proficiency

Each graduate student must demonstrate a minimum level of competency in written communication. Students may meet this requirement by:

1. Scoring a minimum 146 on the verbal section of the Graduate Record Examination.
2. Scoring 24 or more on the verbal section of the Graduate Management Admission Test for students entering the MBA Program.

Students who fail to obtain requisite scores on the GRE or GMAT are required to enroll in ENG 500 and pass the course with a grade of B or A.

Enrollment in ENG 500 is not a substitute for the GRE Verbal Exam. Nor is enrollment in the course a substitute for low GRE performance. Students who fail to obtain the requisite GRE scores are urged to take the GRE a second time. Failure to obtain requisite scores by the end of the first year of enrollment may lead to dismissal from Graduate Study.

However, in every case, the English Writing Proficiency requirement must be fulfilled during the student's first semester of enrollment. Students who fail to complete this requirement within the specified deadline will not be allowed to register for the next term unless permission is granted by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### GR. Policy #47 – Basic Mathematic Skills

Each graduate student must demonstrate a minimum level of competency in mathematics. Students may meet this requirement by:

1. Scoring a minimum combined (verbal and quantitative) score of 286 or a minimum 140 in the quantitative section of the Graduate Record Examination.
2. Scoring a combined score of 350 in the Graduate Management Admission Test for students entering the MBA Program.

Students who fail to obtain requisite scores on the GRE or GMAT are required to enroll in MTH 500 and pass the course with a grade of B or A.

Enrollment in MTH 500 is not a substitute for the GRE Mathematics Exam. Nor is enrollment in the course a substitute for low GRE performance. Students who fail to obtain the requisite GRE scores are urged to take the GRE a second time. Failure to obtain requisite scores by the end of the first year of enrollment may lead to dismissal from Graduate Study.

However, in every case, the Mathematics Skills Proficiency requirement must be fulfilled during the student's first semester of enrollment in an Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical graduate degree program.

Students who fail to complete this requirement within the specified deadline will not be allowed to register for the next term unless permission is granted by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

### GR. Policy #48 – Thesis/Dissertation

Students who choose the option of writing a thesis or dissertation must adhere to the following:

1. Each student is responsible for identifying a major professor, choosing a research topic, and writing and editing the thesis or dissertation. The major professor serves as the chairperson of the student's advisory committee. The student and the major professor select the members to serve on the research advisory committee. The committee usually consists of four to five

members; at least one comes from outside of the student's major area of emphasis. Once the advisory committee has been selected and approved, they will serve as advisors for the candidate in the development of the research proposal.

#### A. Thesis Students

Before the end of the second semester of enrollment, the thesis student must complete:

- a. A Planned Degree Program.
- b. The thesis/dissertation preparation workshop.
- c. An acceptable thesis or dissertation proposal. All thesis papers must conform to the APA, Chicago, or MLA writing styles (depending on the preference of the specific department).

#### B. Dissertation Students

After completing at least 24 credit hours of required courses including nine (9) credit hours of research, the dissertation student must complete:

- a. A Planned Degree Program.
  - b. The thesis/dissertation preparation workshop.
  - c. An acceptable thesis or dissertation proposal. All dissertation papers must conform to the APA, Chicago, or MLA writing styles (depending on the preference of the specific department).
2. The subject of the thesis/dissertation should be chosen from the candidate's field of major interest and must be approved by the departmental advisory committee. The thesis/dissertation should reveal a capacity to carry on independent study or research.
  3. The student is advised to consult the School of Graduate Studies and the publication "Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines for Graduate Students" for general information regarding the preparation of a thesis/dissertation.
  4. Each student is required to enroll in at least one hour of thesis/dissertation writing during the semester they expect to defend the thesis/dissertation. The student must also submit a committee-approved draft to the Office of Graduate Studies using the ETD process (for more information see: Action Research/Final Research paper submission criteria on the Graduate School website) at least two weeks prior to the scheduling of the oral defense. All thesis and dissertation papers must be submitted electronically by the following dates:

For more details about the electronic submission of thesis and dissertation papers see the Thesis and Dissertation Guide). Immediately following the candidate's oral defense examination, the student should consult either the advisor or the Graduate Office or the Thesis and Dissertation Guide for specific directions concerning binding, labeling and other routine procedures.

### GR. Policy #49 – Non-Thesis Research Project/Paper

All students completing the non-thesis option of master's degree programs (except MBA, CSD) must submit a copy of the final paper/final research project and the [Master's Report Submission Form](#) (electronically) to the Office of Graduate Studies (for more information see: final paper/final research project submission criteria on the Graduate School website). All papers submitted to the Graduate School must be received in a timely manner before the end of the semester in which the student seeks to complete the degree program.

### GR. Policy #50 – Action Research

All students seeking Ed.S. degrees must complete an Action Research project. Action Research projects are designed to solve practical problems through the application of the scientific method. Most projects are concerned with a local problem and are conducted in a local setting. Action research problems may employ either a quantitative or qualitative methodology. In the completion of the Action Research Project students must adhere to the following:

1. Enroll in the courses FED 696 and FED 697 (courses must be taken in sequence).
2. Prepare an Action Research paper proposal in conjunction with the instructor of FED 696. Each proposal must:
  - a. Briefly state the rationale for the study.
  - b. Describe the population from which the study will target. How many subjects will be used and how will they be selected (If consent will have to be given by proxy, be sure to include a statement of why this particular project is merited with this population).
  - c. Describe in non-technical terms the experimental research procedures to which subjects will be exposed. Include sufficient detail so that the instructor of FED 696 can independently evaluate the risks to subjects. If questionnaires will be used, include copies of these items with your proposal.
  - d. Describe the procedures you will use to insure that information gleaned from participants will remain confidential, or give reasons why this cannot be done. In cases involving sensitive or potentially harmful information, where subject identities are to be retained please describe your security procedures.
3. Once project has been approved by the instructor of FED 696 student continue to development of the Action Research proposal in FED 697.

4. After the final paper has been approved by the instructor of FED 697 the student must submit a copy of the paper [Action Research Submission Form](#) electronically to the Office of Graduate Studies using the ETD process (for more information see: Action Research/Final Research paper submission criteria on the Graduate School website). All papers submitted to the Graduate School must be submitted at least three weeks before the end of the semester in which the student seeks to complete the degree program.

### GR. Policy #51 – Changing from Thesis to Non-Thesis

Students are allowed one change from thesis to non-thesis for all degree programs. Thesis courses will not be counted toward the requirements of the non-thesis option. Students seeking to change from the thesis to non-thesis must:

1. Officially withdraw from all thesis courses.
2. Complete a new program of study which shows the additional courses the student will need to complete to finish the non-thesis option.
3. Reapply for graduation and admission to candidacy.
4. Complete all of the identified requirements (including curriculum) of the new-degree program curriculum.
5. All students who change from thesis to non-thesis are prohibited from graduating in the semester in which the change from thesis to non-thesis was initiated.

### GR. Policy #52 – Comprehensive Examination

Students eligible to take the Comprehensive Examination must formally apply for the test on the [Application for Comprehensive Examination Form](#) in the office of Graduate Studies. Students who fail to apply in a timely manner will be prohibited from sitting for the Comprehensive Examination.

The scores of students who sit for a Comprehensive Exam without receiving certification to sit for the exam from the graduate program and prior approval from the Graduate School will be voided.

If a student fails the Comprehensive Examination, a second exam may be given in the following semester. If the student fails this examination a second time, the student will be dismissed from further graduate study.

Comprehensive exams are designed to evaluate the candidate's proficiency in the theory and practice in both the major and minor fields of the designated area of study.

Before sitting for the Comprehensive Exam, the Graduate Program must certify the student(s) meets the following requirements:

1. Obtain Regular/Full admission status.
2. Maintain a GPA of 3.00 or above.
3. Complete all required deficiency courses for the degree.
4. Complete a certain percentage of the credits required for the degree, i.e., at least 66% for Master's and Educational Specialist programs and 80% for Doctoral programs.
5. Remove all I's, except thesis grades.
6. Remove all grades of "D" and "F" in the student's current program of study.
7. Approval of graduate advisor and coordinator.

A student who applies to take the Comprehensive Exam must be enrolled for the entire semester in which they intend to sit for the Comprehensive Exam.

#### M.S./M.Ed.

All non-thesis master's students, with the exception of students enrolled in the following degree programs are required to pass a written comprehensive examination –

- Business Administration
- Systems and Materiel Engineering
- Class Alternative A TEaL
  - students use a passing score in the PRAXIS II Exam in lieu of taking the Comprehensive Exam
- Urban and Regional Planning
  - URP 529, Professional Practice is taken in lieu of Comprehensive Exam
  - URP 529 can be waived if a passing score in the AICP Exam is obtained
  - If URP 529 is waived, hours are to be replaced with an additional elective.

Ed.S.

All Ed.S. students are required to pass a written comprehensive examination and write an Action Research paper.

Ph.D.

All Ph.D. students are required to write a dissertation and defend it successfully. They are also required to pass qualifying and/or candidacy examination(s) as required by the department. Eligibility requirements for these tests are defined in the departmental section of this bulletin.

## GR. Policy #53 – Graduation

Application for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation before the deadline dates given below. All students seeking to graduate must be enrolled in courses at Alabama A&M University in the semester in which they seek to graduate. Revision approved 09-20-11 at Graduate Council] The [Application for Graduation Form](#) can be obtained in the Graduate Studies Office.

|                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Dec. Graduation        | September 20 <sup>th</sup> |
| May Graduation         | January 24 <sup>th</sup>   |
| July Degree Completion | May 29 <sup>th</sup>       |

If the student fails to meet degree requirements for the semester applied, they must reapply for graduation.

Clearance for Degree

Each candidate for a degree will receive a letter from the Graduate Office verifying clearance after final grades are submitted.

Conferring of Degree

Advanced degrees are conferred at the close of the fall, and spring semesters. A student completing requirements during a fall semester receives a diploma at the Spring Commencement. Attendance at the commencement exercise is strongly encouraged.

Participation in University Commencement

The Alabama A&M University School of Graduate Studies recognizes the importance of Commencement Ceremony in our students' lives. On occasion, a student is unable to complete graduation requirements in accordance with School of Graduate Studies criteria and deadlines. Students who are projected to graduate but do not meet the graduation requirements may, with the support of their advisor, program chair, and dean of academic college, request to participate in the University Commencement Ceremony. A Request to Participate in University Commencement Ceremony Form must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies by April 15 for the Spring term or November 15 for the Fall term.

Second Master's Degree

With the approval of the appropriate department and the Graduate Dean, a graduate student who has completed a master's degree from Alabama A&M University may transfer up to ten appropriate credits from the first program to the second. All requirements for the master's degree in the second program must be met. Students holding a master's or other advanced degree from Alabama A&M University seeking a second master's or other advanced degree from Alabama A&M University are not required to submit a new GRE/GMAT score if the original GRE score is five years old or less.

## GR. Policy #54 – Intellectual Property

Alabama A & M University recognizes and encourages the publication of works and the development/creation of inventions as an integral part of learning, research and service. The University acknowledges that research graduate students usually prepare for publication through individual effort and initiative. Publications and inventions however, may also result from work supported either partially or completely by Alabama A&M University. With the advent of innovative techniques and procedures, the variety and number of materials which might be created in a university community have increased significantly, causing the ownership of such patentable and copyrightable materials to become increasingly complex.

Alabama A&M University is aware that the value of patent materials and copyrights comes from the ability of its owner to control its use and that such value is directly related in the degree of protection it enjoys under the law. Alabama A&M University encourages the protection of such expressions of knowledge through the use of patent & copyright laws. This policy governs the ownership and disposition of intellectual property and creative works developed by students of Alabama A & M University.

### Student Rights to Intellectual Property

The rights, ownership and disposition of all intellectual properties shall be determined as follows:

#### Copyrights

Except as provided below, copyrightable works authored by a graduate student shall be presumed to be owned by the student. Such works may be registered, sold and licensed by the student without permission or payment to the University. Works that were assigned by and submitted to a professor must first be released to the student by the professor.

The University may assert ownership of copyrightable works created under the following conditions: Works created pursuant to agreements with the Deans of the Colleges of the University, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Council. Governmental or private entities shall be governed according to such agreements. Additionally, the work must be within the scope of the student's assigned research.

The creation of the work involving substantial University resources as determined by the Intellectual Property committee. The use of University libraries, classrooms, office space, word processors or other minor uses of University computers shall not by themselves, be considered the use of substantial University resources.

Where the Intellectual Property committee determines that the University has an ownership interest in a work, the student shall, upon request, promptly execute all contracts assignments, waivers or other documents necessary to vest in the University.

Notwithstanding the student's ownership rights of the work, the University shall have the right to use, at no cost and for educational purposes only, all intellectual properties created while the student is enrolled at the University and utilized during the course of their teaching or employment activities.

#### Inventions

Inventions arising from research sponsored by the Federal Government shall be controlled by the terms of the contract, grant, or cooperative agreement, and any applicable federal regulations. Where patent rights are not claimed or are waived by the Federal Government, such inventions or discoveries shall be controlled by this policy.

Ownership of patentable and copyrightable material developed by research graduate students of Alabama A & M University, where AAMU provides support of their efforts or use of institutional resources in more than a purely incidental way (unless such resources are available without charge to the public) shall be shared by the student inventor and by AAMU. Alabama A&M University may at its sole discretion determine to release its ownership rights in the intellectual property or creative works to developer/inventor upon conditions the University deems beneficial and fair to all parties. Any such release will be provided in writing to all parties.

### Intellectual Property Administration

The Intellectual Property Committee shall be generally responsible for administering the Intellectual Property Policy.

1. Receive all disclosures of properties submitted under this Policy.
2. Determine the ownership of properties in accordance with guidelines developed by the Committee and approved by the President.
3. Determine whether a property, which the University owns, is subject to protection through patent, copyright or trademark registration.
4. In consultation with the student, the Office of the General Counsel and outside consultants, evaluate potential commercial use and investigate possible courses of action for protecting and/or marketing properties in which the University has an ownership interest.
5. Authorize the negotiation of licensing and technology transfer agreements.
6. Maintain complete records on all disclosures and other intellectual property matters of interest to the University administration.
7. Prepare periodic reports of the Intellectual Property Committee to the President and the Board of Trustees as requested.
8. General Counsel shall serve as an ex-officio member of the committee and serve as an advisor to the committee.

### Invention Management

With respect to all inventions to which the University asserts ownership, the patent rights shall be assigned by the student to the University.

For all patent rights assigned to the University under this Policy, the University will at no expense to the student make reasonable efforts to evaluate the interest of others in commercializing the property, seek licenses and options for licenses, have applications for property protection filed and prosecuted, and otherwise manage the properties or arrange for their management by recognized management organizations

If the University determines that neither commercial possibilities nor the potential contribution to the public good warrants proceeding further, the patent rights of the invention will be returned to the student and shall belong to him or her unless such action is precluded by prior agreement with sponsors. The University shall make such determination within three months from the date of disclosure, unless additional time is agreed to by the parties.

In recognition that the evaluation of inventions and the development and processing of patents and licensable inventions involves substantial time, expense and special expertise, the University may contract with outside organizations covering specific inventions believed to be patentable and patents developed therefrom, or covering all such inventions and patents in which the University claims an ownership interest.

#### Appeals

The graduate student researcher shall have the right to appeal the decisions of the Intellectual Property Committee by filing a grievance (Level III) through the Graduate Student Appeals process. For more information on the Graduate Student Appeals process visit: <https://www.aamu.edu/admissions-aid/graduate-admissions/forms.html>.

#### Changes in Policy

The University may change this policy on the recommendation of the Intellectual Properties Committee and the approval of the Board of Trustees.

#### Conflict

In the event of conflict between the policy and the Board of Trustees, legal counsel shall assist the Intellectual Properties committee with any legal matter arising out of the Intellectual properties Program.

### GR. Policy #55 – Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is the principal legislative body of the Graduate school. Its' purpose is to study, formulate, and recommend to the Vice President for Academic Affairs general policies and procedures concerning graduate studies and graduate student academic affairs. Actions of the Graduate Council are subject to approval by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Graduate Council meets at regular intervals during the academic year and minutes of the council meetings are distributed to all department chairpersons and deans in order that they may inform the graduate faculty and students of the action taken by the Council. (The policies, rules, and procedures established by the Graduate Council serve as the framework, and set the minimum standards within which the Graduate Studies Committees in the various academic units formulate, publish, and make their own graduate policies, rules and procedures). This purpose is fulfilled, in part, as the Council:

1. Initiates Graduate School policies and acts on questions affecting those policies.
2. Establishes rules governing graduate programs.
3. Submits recommendations about proposals for adopting new courses and curricula involving graduate credit or for altering or abolishing existing ones.
4. Submits recommendations about adopting or abolishing academic degrees administered by the Graduate School.
5. Encourages and stimulates scholarly research and creative activities.
6. Improves, modifies, or reverses actions taken by the standing committees.
7. Approves, modifies or reverses actions taken by the Graduate Studies Committees of the Academic Units.

#### Membership

Graduate Council – responsible for oversight of the University's graduate programs, reviews and makes recommendation to the Academic Council on changes needed to improve the quality of graduate education. The Graduate Council will decide the breakdown between higher and lower level graduate factors and is responsible for reviewing, revising, and approving all matters which affect graduate education.

#### Membership

1. One (1) representative for each graduate major elected by the department to serve a two-year term.
2. One (1) representative elected from the Faculty Senate.
3. Associate Vice President of Academic Administration and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, who will serve as the chairperson of the Graduate Council.
4. Two graduate student representatives selected by the Associate Vice President of Academic Administration and Dean, School of Graduate Studies.
5. Provost and Vice Present for Academic Affairs and Research (ex-officio).

Student members of the Graduate Council are elected for a one-year term. One is elected by the Graduate Student Association and the other is appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. The work of the Graduate Council encompasses the entire spectrum of graduate study at the University. While the Council is primarily concerned with the formulation of policies and regulations which will assure the maintenance of a high level of scholarship, it is equally concerned with the development of new programs and courses consistent with the mission of the University and the demands of society. Some specific functions of the Council are:

1. To periodically review and make recommendations for improving policies, procedures, and regulations in the graduate program.
2. To act on proposals for new graduate courses and degree programs.
3. To act on applications for admission to the Graduate school in cases where applicants do not clearly meet unconditional admission requirements.
4. To study trends in new graduate program development.
5. To seek ways to stimulate proposal development and research activities by faculty and students.
6. To develop proposals for programs to strengthen graduate education at the University.
7. To study the graduate curriculum and recommend changes that will facilitate improvement of graduate education at the University.
8. To develop and implement plans which will facilitate the recruitment of students who have potential for successful graduate study.
9. To act on recommendations for approval of nominees as graduate faculty members.
10. To review graduate degree requirements and recommend changes.

#### Standing Committees

Each member of the Graduate Council will serve on at least one of the standing committees of the Graduate Council each year of his/her tenure on the Council. The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will appoint members to the standing committees. Graduate Council work is carried out by six (6) standing committees: The Executive Committee; Graduate Assistantship and Scholarship Committee; Research and Curriculum Committee; Recruitment and Admission Committee; Policy and Standards Committee; and International Student Evaluation Committee.

#### Executive Committee

The Executive Committee which consists of the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies (or his/her appointed representative), of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean of each school (or their appointed representative), and the President (or his/her appointed representative) (ex-officio):

1. Acts on the Graduate Faculty nominations made by the Graduate Council.
2. Makes final decisions concerning all students' petitions.

#### Graduate Assistantship and Scholarship Committee

1. Recommends policies and rules related to the administration of graduate assistantships.
2. Serves as an advisory committee to the Dean of Graduate School with reference to recommendations for scholarship awards.
3. Develops proposals for funding to support additional scholarship and assistantship awards.
4. Develops proposals requesting funds to support new teaching, administrative and research assistantships.
5. Carries out other assignments which are consistent with the functions of the Committee.

#### Research and Curriculum Committee

1. Formulates plans which will help stimulate interest in research by faculty and students.
2. Develops proposals for funding to support research.
3. Periodically reviews research activities of graduate students which are associated with thesis preparation and advises the Graduate Council on the status and quality of the research.
4. Meets periodically with research committees in the various departments in order to stimulate research activities and promote the needs of the University relative to research functions.
5. Periodically reviews the curricular offerings with the Schools and consults with the department chairpersons and the deans about new curricula and proposals for new programs.
6. Studies the graduate curricula and makes suggestions for the development of interdisciplinary courses in order to eliminate unnecessary duplication.
7. Studies the curricula relative to the demand or lack of demand for existing courses and reports findings to the Council.
8. Makes periodic reports to the Council on trends in graduate degree program development, and new approaches in teaching methodology.
9. Reviews proposals for new degree programs and courses and makes recommendations to the Graduate Council.
10. Carries out other assignments which are consistent with the functions of the committee.

Recruitment and Admission Committee

1. Studies and presents plans to increase the recruitment of students qualified to pursue graduate studies at Alabama A&M University.
2. Studies Graduate Emphasis Day (a program used to recruit current undergraduates from Northern Alabama) and makes suggestions on improving it.
3. Makes recommendations on key ways which the graduate program might be made more visible on and off-campus.
4. Reviews applications for admissions from students who do not clearly meet the unconditional admissions requirements of the University.
5. Makes periodic review of the University's admissions requirements and recommends changes that are consistent with the goals, purposes, and academic programs of the University.
6. Makes periodic reports to the Council on new trends in admission policies, procedures, and standards in American graduate schools.
7. Develops plans which will facilitate a more active involvement of students in the development of enrichment activities such as seminars, exhibits, tours, etc.
8. Develops plans and activities and assists in the activities of the Graduate Student Council.
9. Carries out other assignments which are consistent with the functions of the committee.

Academic Policy and Standards Committee

1. Periodically reviews the academic policies of the Graduate School and makes recommendations for amendments.
2. Recommends new policies and procedures which facilitate the improvement of graduate education at the University.
3. Serves as an advisory committee to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies with reference to the interpretation of Graduate School policy as it relates to specific areas wherever interpretation becomes necessary.
4. Periodically reviews the overall and specific standards and requirements for degrees, and recommends additions, deletions, and other changes.
5. Meets at various times with department chairpersons and deans in order to exchange ideas relative to the improvement of standards and policies.
6. Reviews periodically the academic quality of the graduate faculty relative to degrees held, research, publications, and other academic accomplishments and makes recommendations on the same to the Dean of Graduate School.
7. Investigates and reports on programs, workshops, fellowships, research, and other opportunities that are available to the graduate faculty.
8. Develops proposals requesting funds to support faculty development.
9. Carries out other assignments at various times, which are within the preview of the Committee.

International Student Committee

1. Assists in the evaluation of international student credentials and makes recommendations of international students to the Graduate Dean for admission.
2. Assists in developing hospitality programs for International Students.
3. Assists in the development and implementation of an orientation program for International Students.
4. Assists in the development and implementation of a welcoming ceremony or a welcome wagon (i.e., this could be in cooperation with the undergraduate and/or community international programs, both the hospitality orientation programs and welcome wagon type activities should also be coordinated with the International Student Organization).

**GR. Policy #56 – Appointment of Graduate Faculty**

The Graduate Faculty directs work and research towards graduate degrees and serves in an advisory capacity to the Graduate Council. Membership demonstrates high attainment and high professional standing. The Graduate Faculty is composed of those members of the general faculty of the university (full-time teaching, research or extension) who meet the requirements based on academic qualifications, experience on graduate committees, teaching of graduate courses, and research attested by scholarly publications or other proof of creativity; professional excellence, activity, and dedication. Full (five years) or associate (three years) member appointments are made by the Graduate Dean upon the recommendation of the Graduate Council. Recommendations to the Graduate Council are made by the Credentials Committee. Members of the Graduate Faculty are listed in the Graduate Bulletin and on the Graduate School Website. In some cases, outside experts (non-Alabama A&M University employees) are appointed to the Graduate Faculty as Special Members for a fixed duration upon the approval of the Graduate Dean.

Procedure for Nomination

Each nomination to the Graduate Faculty must be approved by a majority of the members of the Graduate Faculty in the nominee's department, by the department chairperson, and by the academic dean. The nomination letter must be signed by the nominee, graduate coordinator of the unit, the department chairperson, and the academic dean. It is then sent to the Dean of the School of Graduate

Studies who in turn forwards the applications to the Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee, which meets once a semester, evaluates the applications and makes recommendations to the Graduate Dean.

#### Qualifications

Nominees to the Graduate Faculty must hold the terminal degree, Ph.D./Ed.D., in their teaching or research discipline. However, in certain disciplines where the accrediting bodies recognize master's level degree as the terminal degree (examples: MFA, MLS), that degree is considered as the terminal degree. If the terminal degree is not held, exceptional achievement is expected in research or other scholarly and creative activities which establishes the faculty member as a recognized authority or leader in the field involved. The nominee must have three years' experience in participating regularly in the graduate program at Alabama A&M University, or at another institution of higher education, or has demonstrated, in some outstanding manner, their ability to direct graduate level research. If experience has been gained in other than academic institutions, it must be documented. Participation in a graduate program includes service on graduate student advisory committees, teaching graduate courses, participation in graduate seminars, and direction of graduate research. However, it is not specifically required that the nominee should have taught at the graduate level during the three years. Experience in industry, government, and similar activity which may prepare a faculty member to direct the scholarly development of graduate students may be considered. The nominees must have served on at least three examining committees. These may be three final master's examinations or three doctoral examinations, general or final, or combinations of these. Waiver of this requirement is rare and must be justified on the basis of exceptional research and publication achievements, as well as other experience.

#### Scholarly and Creative Activities

Publication requirements are satisfied by at least two full-length research articles carried in reputable refereed journals as identified by the faculty in the nominee's department or academic area. Research methods or other analytical methods and techniques in these articles should be appropriate to the nominee's field. The nominee must be the senior author of at least one of these articles. Publication of a book or research monograph satisfies this requirement completely if it makes a scholarly contribution to the field of specialization and demonstrates clearly the author's research competence. Papers or manuscripts accepted but not yet published may be used to meet these requirements upon proof that the work has been accepted for publication. Where publication is not the customary goal of scholarly and creative activity, proof of comparable achievement is required. When evaluating artistic fields, the originality, scope, and depth of the nominee's work determine the criterion for artistic merit. Distinguished exhibition or quality performance is evidence of excellence in research and creativity. In addition, evidence of scholarly commitment may also include: reading papers before learned and professional organizations; writing book reviews, scientific and industrial reports, popular articles, or similar materials; rendering consulting service demonstrating professional standing; participating in activities of appropriate scholarly, scientific, and/or professional organizations by holding office or serving in other responsible capacities; performing significant administrative duties connected with the graduate program of department or of the University; and obtaining extramural support.

#### Full Graduate Faculty Members

Full members are subject to re-evaluation at the end of their five-year appointment. Requests for reappointment are made by the faculty member to the department chairperson, who calls for a vote by the department's Graduate Faculty members and follows the procedures described under the Procedures for Nomination section. Here, the contributions made by the nominee primarily since the last nominations are considered. Not showing evidence of scholarly accomplishments, described under the Scholarly and Creative Activities, since the last appointment may result in the denial of reappointment. Those denied reappointment may not serve as a major advisor to graduate students. They may, however, serve on advisory committees for students. They may teach 500-level courses but not those at the 600 level or above. Department chairpersons should reassign the individual's graduate students and higher level classes as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the spring semester following written notification of denial of reappointment.

#### Associate Graduate Faculty Members

Those with terminal degrees but not yet qualified to be a full member on the Graduate Faculty may be granted associate membership. The nomination procedure is similar to the one followed for the full membership and described under Procedure for Nomination. These members assume the responsibility and exercise the privileges of full membership except they may not direct doctoral committees. They can chair master's level committees and serve on doctoral and masters level thesis committees. An associate member is appointed for 3 years, during which time application for full membership may be initiated when the faculty member believes qualifications have been met.

#### Appeals

Those denied appointment or reappointment to the Graduate Faculty may appeal by letter to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. The letter should have the approval of the departmental chairperson and the academic dean, and should detail the reasons for the appeal. An Appeals Committee shall be appointed by the Graduate Dean. The report of the Appeals Committee is acted on by the Graduate Dean except when the Appeals Committee is deadlocked. Such cases go to the full Graduate Council.

Reapplication

University faculty members denied Graduate Faculty membership, reappointment, or associate membership may reapply at any time the requirements for membership have been met.

Graduate Faculty Appointment Exceptions

The Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the Credentials Committee, and the Graduate Council have the responsibility of determining whether nominees are qualified to direct the research and scholarly development of graduate students. Exceptions to the rules may be made for faculty members with outstanding records of achievement and national standing in their fields who may not in all cases meet the other requirements.

Special Members

Special membership is reserved for scientists, scholars, artists, and other highly qualified individuals from other universities, federal and state agencies or international bodies that are willing to serve on graduate student advisory committees or teach a course or conduct a workshop, etc. The nomination in this case is made by a single Graduate Faculty in a department and approved by the department chair, academic dean and the Graduate Dean. The lengths of these appointments are specific to the duration of the task for which the person is appointed.

**GR. Policy #57 – Appointment and Criteria for Graduate Teaching Assistants**

A graduate teaching assistant (GTA) is one who serves in an instructional role in a class or laboratory within a specific department at Alabama A&M University and who performs pedagogical functions such as preparing lectures, teaching classes, constructing and grading tests, holding conferences, assigning course grades, or provides support for a faculty member in charge of a course. In all cases, the GTA MUST work under the supervision of an experienced faculty member. To this end, the GTA works to gain teaching skills and a better grasp of the essentials of his/her academic discipline.

Criteria For Appointment

Baccalaureate level courses

1. Must hold a Master in the discipline or a Master in another discipline with at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline.
2. Must be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline
3. Must participate and receive regular in-service training
4. Must be regularly evaluated (monthly basis)
5. GTAs for which English is a second language may be appointed only when a test of spoken English, or other reliable evidence of applicant's proficiency in oral or written communication and speech, indicates the appointment is appropriate.

Academic Load for GTA

To be a Graduate Teaching Assistant, a student must be enrolled in a minimum of six (6) graduate hours during the regular semester and three semester hours during summer session. Assistants may enroll in nine (9) graduate hours each academic semester except the summer session. NO OVERLOAD IS PERMITTED WHILE THE STUDENT IS A TEACHING ASSISTANT.

Responsibilities of Graduate Teaching Assistants

A Teaching Assistant incurs the same responsibilities as the teaching faculty. The Assistant may serve as the instructor for no more than two (2) undergraduate courses ONLY during a given semester. Posted office hours are expected, as are obligations to provide an appropriate syllabus, to make clear grading policies, and to carry out student evaluations of work done. Other responsibilities may be assigned by the chairperson of the respective departments. Teaching Assistants will be evaluated in the same fashion as temporary faculty. Since this program is new at Alabama A&M University, appointment dates may change as experience in administering the program grows. However, it is projected that Teaching Assistants will be nominated by April 15 of each year for the following academic semester.

Eligibility for Graduate Teaching Assistant

To be eligible for Graduate Teaching Assistantship, students may not hold a non-degree, special, or probationary status at the University. Exceptions to this regulation must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate Studies. The GTA must be fully admitted to a graduate program devoting full time toward the degree. To qualify for a GTA appointment, a student must satisfy the following eligibility requirements:

1. Must be pursuing a graduate degree at Alabama A&M University.
2. Must be registered in the Graduate School for a minimum of six graduate credit hours except in summer when three credit hours are accepted.
3. Must maintain reasonable academic progress towards a graduate degree (Complete 18 hours/academic year).

4. Must satisfy other requirements published by the employing department.

International students applying for assistantships must score a minimum of 500 on the "Test of English as a Foreign Language" (TOEFL) and must also submit satisfactory scores on the "Test of Spoken English" (TSE). These scores should be sent directly to Alabama A&M University from the testing agency. All other scores will be unofficial.

### **GR. Policy #58 – Academic Misconduct**

All students in attendance at Alabama A&M University are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. All acts of dishonesty in any academic work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Cheating – using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Plagiarism – representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own in any academic exercise.
3. Fabrication – unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
4. Aiding and abetting academic dishonesty – intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty.

#### **Penalties for Academic Misconduct**

Acts of academic misconduct may be punishable by one of the following:

1. Letter of academic misconduct placed in the student's academic folder.
2. Lowering of a final grade.
3. Academic discipline resulting in the loss of scholarships, nonparticipation in academic related activities, etc.
4. Temporary suspension from the University.
5. Expulsion from a class resulting in a failing grade.
6. Lowering of a grade on a test or examination.

Any case of academic dishonesty must be reported in writing to the Graduate Council. The Council makes a determination as to what punishment in items 1-6 above is applicable. The decision of the Council is communicated to the student by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. The student may appeal the Council's decision to the Academic Appeals Committee (See GR Policy #52 for additional information).

### **GR. Policy #59 – Degree Revocation**

Periodically in a University of the size and complexity of Alabama A&M, there is a need to revoke a degree that had been awarded by the University. The following policy and procedures will be followed to revoke a degree:

1. The Registrar's Office will make an assessment of the student transcript under question and prepare a Statement of Findings and Recommendation(s) to revoke the degree.
2. The Registrar will transmit the Statement of Findings and Recommendation(s) to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
3. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will transmit the Findings and a Review Determination Statement to the Dean of Graduate Studies who will then notify the Dean of the School where the former student was enrolled.
4. The Dean of the School will convene the appropriate department(s) faculty and chairperson(s) to present the statement of Findings and Recommendations and the Vice President for Academic Affairs' Review and Determination Statement.
5. The faculty that recommended the degree will then review the former student's folder with the above stated documentation and take a formal (recorded) vote to recommend affirmatively or negatively to revoke the degree.
6. The student folder, with a set of minutes from the faculty meeting with the recorded vote, will be transmitted to the Dean of the School.
7. The Dean of the School will transmit the recommendation on behalf of the faculty to the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies who will contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs who in turn will transmit the recommendation to the President of Alabama A&M University.
8. The President will review the folder, make a determination based on the record, and transmit the final recommendation to the Board of Trustees of Alabama A&M. The Board's Committee on Academic Affairs will review the President's recommendation and the student folder and transmit its final recommendation to the full Board of Trustees.

Only the Board of Trustees holds the authority to revoke a degree that has been granted. The Board of Trustees' decision is final and not subject to further administrative and/or policy review.

### GR. Policy #60 – Posthumous Award

Posthumous awards will be considered under the following conditions:

1. Requested or approved by the family.
2. Recent attendee (within two years of last date of attendance).
3. Student met the residency requirement.
4. Student was in good academic standing.

To be awarded the degree, the student must have been no more than one semester from graduating. Persons not meeting these requirements will be considered for other posthumous awards.

### GR. Policy #61 – Time Limit on Graduate Funding

The maximum number of years that a graduate student can receive funding via a graduate assistantship or fellowship is three years as a master's student, six years as a doctoral student, or eight years in doctoral programs in which students enter with a baccalaureate degree only. Departments or programs may impose stricter limits. Requests for an extension beyond the maximum terms here specified must be made in writing by the academic unit to the Dean of Graduate School. Established time limits for completion of graduate programs also apply to all graduate assistants.

### GR. Policy #62 – Academic Integrity Training

Starting in Spring 2019, all students newly admitted to graduate programs must complete training designed to inculcate an awareness and understanding of the fundamental issues of academic integrity and the responsible conduct of research (RCR) in a manner that is consistent with federal regulations. This required training includes: (1) the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) "Responsible Conduct of Research" training module in the appropriate disciplinary area; and (2) four face-to-face ethics/RCR workshops coordinated by the School of Graduate Studies and the Office of Research Compliance, or an approved alternative training offered as a program requirement for all students in the program. Students in a program that has approved alternative ethics/RCR training must still complete the online CITI Responsible Conduct of Research training in the appropriate disciplinary area.

#### Deadlines

1. The CITI module should be completed by the end of a student's first major (Fall/Spring) term of enrollment.
2. All academic integrity/RCR training requirements must be completed prior to a student's advancement to candidacy.
3. All academic integrity and RCR training requirements must be completed in a manner that is consistent with federal regulations.

A graduate student who has not completed the required training in academic integrity and the responsible conduct of research will not be advanced to candidacy or cleared for graduation.

#### Workshops

The School of Graduate Studies and the Office of Research Compliance offer a series of workshops to enable students to fulfill the four-workshop requirement (**Note:** CITI module covering the relevant topics can be substituted for a workshop). Students must take at least two workshops from a set of core workshops which focus on: personal integrity in the classroom; plagiarism; data management (including fabrication, falsification, and confidentiality); authorship and peer review; mentor and trainee responsibilities; collaborative research; and conflicts of interest. Students must complete two additional workshops from among the set of core workshops or a series of additional workshops, which will provide more specialized training such as human subjects, animal welfare; and other areas of ethical concern unique to a discipline or research area.

Programs may develop alternatives for the training workshops that focus on issues of particular relevance to their specific disciplines and fields, or that better accommodate the schedules of their students. Alternative training must be offered as a program requirement for all students in the program. The training content must be specified in the syllabus/syllabi of required formal courses and include the core topics listed above as well as other topics appropriate to the specific discipline. Alternative training content must be submitted for review and approval by the School of Graduate Studies and the Office of Research Compliance prior to student attendance.

Further information concerning workshop sessions and registration and how to complete the CITI training module may be found at [AAMU RCR Training](#).

## GR. Policy #63 – Credit Hours

Per SACSCOC, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

## GR. Policy #64 – Accelerated Master’s Pathways (AMP) for Undergraduate Students in Graduate Courses

### I. Policy Statement and Purpose

In accordance with the university’s educational mission, this policy establishes the requirements and criteria for allowing undergraduate (UG) degree-seeking students to enroll in graduate (GR) level courses. Alabama A&M University (AAMU) standards are based on comparable practices at other higher education institutions, SACSCOC 9.2 Standard, and state regulations.

### II. Eligibility Requirements for Undergraduate Students Enrolling in Graduate Courses

An undergraduate student enrolled in a bachelor’s degree program at the university and who meets the following requirements may be eligible for an Accelerated Master’s Pathway:

- The student must be in good academic standing and have earned a minimum of 75 semester hours of credit, with at least 18 hours earned at the university;
- The student must have a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 3.00 at the university and a combined GPA of 3.00 on all college coursework attempted on the student’s academic transcript;
- The student must have fulfilled all General Education requirements (Areas I-IV) and all pre-professional requirements (Area V) in their undergraduate program;
- The student must fulfill any program-specific eligibility requirements for graduate course enrollment, including course pre-requisites or program requirements; and
- The student must receive approval for course registration each semester from their advisor, the program coordinator for their primary major, the department chairperson for the major, the chairperson of the department offering the course (if not the department of the student’s major), the college dean for the major, and the dean of graduate studies via submission of the AMP Application and Course Substitution Form (via Laserfiche) for execution by the Office of Graduate Studies.

Upon approval of an AMP Approval and Course Substitution Form, the undergraduate student will be allowed to enroll for a maximum of six (6) hours of graduate coursework in a semester. A total of no more than 12 graduate credit hours may be earned by an undergraduate student while pursuing an undergraduate degree.

Course enrollment may be denied based on space availability, cohort enrollment size restrictions, and any other factors determined by the program’s graduate coordinator. Graduate courses taken through Accelerated Master’s Pathways (AMP) while an undergraduate student may be used as substitutes for specific course requirements in the student’s undergraduate degree program as indicated on the AMP and Course Substitution Form or may be taken as non-substitute elective courses.

### III. Admission to Masters-Level Graduate Programs

Enrollment in graduate courses as an undergraduate does not constitute acceptance or guarantee acceptance into a graduate program, and due to potential year-to-year catalog changes in graduate degree requirements, the use of credits earned through Accelerated Master’s Pathways (AMP) toward future enrollment in a graduate degree program is not guaranteed. Credits earned through AMP as an undergraduate student can only be applied to the approved master’s degree programs with the same CIP Code (See Catalog for the most updated list).

Students must apply for admission to an eligible master’s degree program pending completion or upon completion of their undergraduate degree according to the usual graduate admissions procedures and fulfill all requirements for the specific graduate program. A student must enroll in an eligible master’s degree program within one year of receipt of their undergraduate degree to use credits earned through AMP toward an eligible master’s degree program.

### IV. Use of Credits Earned by Accelerated Enrollment for Master’s Degree Programs

If accepted to a master’s degree program, graduate courses taken as an undergraduate through Accelerated Master’s Pathways (AMP) and completed with a grade of “B” or higher may be used to fulfill the graduate program’s course requirements subject to administrative approval of the student’s Program of Study. Use of credits earned by AMP as an undergraduate to a master’s degree

program must be indicated on the student's Program of Study for approval by the program coordinator, department chair, academic dean, and dean of graduate studies before the completion of the student's first term of enrollment as a graduate student.

#### **V. Program Length**

A student with credit from AMP may be permitted to graduate from a master's degree program with less than the stated number of total required credit hours for the degree in the Graduate Catalog in a manner commensurate with the number of credits earned through AMP; however, the student must earn at least a total of 150 semester credit hours to be eligible for graduation (in compliance with SACSCOC standard 9.2).

#### **VI. Withdrawal**

Students may withdraw from the Accelerated Master's Program at any time. A student who chooses to withdraw from the program must do so by submitting a Change of Program Form via Laserfiche. This form is then routed through the Program Coordinator, Chairperson, and Dean of Graduate Studies. The completed graduate courses may be used to satisfy undergraduate degree requirements. If the student wishes to return to complete the AMP, they must return within one year of their withdrawal date.

#### **VII. Graduate Status**

Students do not have graduate status until their undergraduate degree is conferred.

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A – [Faculty Evaluation Form](#)

## OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## FACULTY EVALUATION FORM

Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

Rank and/or Position Title:

Tenure Status: ☐ Tenured ☐ Non-Tenured

College: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

## Faculty Member Load Assignment (Percent for each category)

Teaching \_\_\_\_\_ Research \_\_\_\_\_ Service \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Other, explain:

Length of Time Teaching/Research in Discipline at AAMU: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Time at University: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Covered by this Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Evaluator and Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: This instrument is to be used for evaluation of faculty members.

The rating scale is:

- 5 – Exceptional: Performance which is consistently carried out in an exceptional manner. “Exceptional” ratings must be accompanied by a written justification from the supervisor which clearly shows extraordinary accomplishment.
- 4 – Excellent: Performance is frequently carried out in an extraordinary manner above what is expected for “Good.”
- 3 – Good: Performance which is usually carried out well. This level of performance exceeds expectations for “Acceptable” performance.
- 2 – Acceptable: Performance in which the faculty member competently fulfills the general expectations for the position. Performance above this level should result in an “Above Average” rating.
- 1 – Needs Improvement: Performance fails to meet the “Acceptable” standard, with identifiable weakness. Performance at this absolute minimal level will require the faculty member and supervisor to develop and complete a Plan of Work which will raise performance to “Acceptable” by the next rating period. “Needs Improvement” ratings must be accompanied by a written explanation.
- 0 – Not Acceptable: A “Not Acceptable” rating will be noted on the faculty member’s record and requires remedial action. It may be the basis for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. “Not Acceptable” ratings must be accompanied by a written explanation from the supervisor.
- X – Not Applicable: Place an “X” in the N/A column.

|     |                          |                                                                                                      |                 |            |
|-----|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1.  | Teaching Performance:    | 0                                                                                                    | Rating<br>(0-5) | N/A<br>(X) |
| 1.1 | Presentations            |                                                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | A.                       | Encourages independent thinking, problem solving, critical thinking                                  |                 |            |
|     | B.                       | Accommodates various levels of development                                                           |                 |            |
|     | C.                       | Arouses enthusiasm                                                                                   |                 |            |
|     | D.                       | Explains concepts skillfully                                                                         |                 |            |
|     | E.                       | Encourages class participation                                                                       |                 |            |
|     | F.                       | Is prepared for the class                                                                            |                 |            |
|     | G.                       | Is punctual for class                                                                                |                 |            |
|     | H.                       | Use of technology in instruction                                                                     |                 |            |
|     | I.                       | Communicates clearly                                                                                 |                 |            |
|     | J.                       | Attends class sessions                                                                               |                 |            |
| 1.2 | Assessment measures      |                                                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | A.                       | Evaluates fairly with clear rubrics                                                                  |                 |            |
|     | B.                       | Uses teaching/assessment instruments which are relevant to the goals and expected outcomes of course |                 |            |
|     | C.                       | Returns students' work promptly                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | D.                       | Keeps students abreast of progress in class                                                          |                 |            |
| 1.3 | Course design            |                                                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | A.                       | Sets appropriate course objectives and outcomes                                                      |                 |            |
|     | B.                       | Uses effective teaching methods                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | C.                       | Develops new courses                                                                                 |                 |            |
|     | D.                       | Requires students to conduct research                                                                |                 |            |
|     | E.                       | Covers appropriate subject matter                                                                    |                 |            |
|     | F.                       | Requires students to complete reading/writing assignment                                             |                 |            |
| 1.4 | Course management        |                                                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | A.                       | Syllabi are available to student on the first day of the course                                      |                 |            |
|     | B.                       | Syllabus follows university format                                                                   |                 |            |
|     | C.                       | Maintains proper records of students' performance                                                    |                 |            |
|     | D.                       | Ethical behavior in teaching                                                                         |                 |            |
| 1.5 | Availability to students |                                                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | A.                       | Maintains office hours                                                                               |                 |            |
|     | B.                       | Efforts in placement                                                                                 |                 |            |
|     | C.                       | Effective academic consultation                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | D.                       | Maintains an inviting and comfortable environment                                                    |                 |            |
| 1.6 | Other                    |                                                                                                      |                 |            |
|     | A.                       | Participates in structural learning that strengthens teaching skills                                 |                 |            |
|     |                          | Sum of input                                                                                         | 0               | 0          |

$$\text{TEACHING RATING} = \frac{0}{29} - \frac{0}{29} = \frac{0}{29} = 0.00$$

Comments (required for "Exceptional" (5), "Needs Improvement" (1), and "Not Acceptable" (0) ratings)

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|              |                                                                      |   |                 |            |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------------|------------|
| 2.           | Scholarly Activity and Research:                                     | 0 | Rating<br>(0-5) | N/A<br>(X) |
| 2.1          | Scholarship and research                                             |   |                 |            |
|              | A. Presents lectures, workshops, seminars, creative works            |   |                 |            |
|              | B. Makes presentations at professional meetings                      |   |                 |            |
|              | C. Has non-refereed publication or creative works                    |   |                 |            |
|              | D. Has refereed publication or creative works                        |   |                 |            |
|              | E. Has published books or book chapters                              |   |                 |            |
| 2.2          | Funded research/scholarly activity                                   |   |                 |            |
|              | A. Participates in proposal writing                                  |   |                 |            |
|              | B. Secure non-competitive grants                                     |   |                 |            |
|              | C. Secure competitive grants                                         |   |                 |            |
|              | D. Manages funded research in a timely manner                        |   |                 |            |
|              | E. Manages research budgets effectively                              |   |                 |            |
|              | F. Obtain significant results from activities                        |   |                 |            |
|              | G. Submit reports timely                                             |   |                 |            |
| 2.3          | Professional organization activity and service                       |   |                 |            |
|              | A. Serves on review committees for conference proceedings and        |   |                 |            |
|              | B. Serves on review committees for competitive grants and proposals  |   |                 |            |
|              | C. Serves on review committees/panels of creative work for           |   |                 |            |
|              | D. Received awards or honors from professional organizations for     |   |                 |            |
|              | E. Membership in professional societies                              |   |                 |            |
|              | F. Serves on editorial board for scholarly journals                  |   |                 |            |
|              | G. Chairs panels for session at professional meeting                 |   |                 |            |
|              | H. Serves as responder for panel or session at professional meetings |   |                 |            |
|              | I. Reviews scholarly work (articles, book reviews, etc.)             |   |                 |            |
|              | J. Other scholarly activity (explain below)                          |   |                 |            |
|              | K. Ethical behavior in research and scholarly activities             |   |                 |            |
| Sum of input |                                                                      |   | 0               | 0          |

$$\text{SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY RATING} = \frac{0}{23 - 0} = \frac{0}{23} = 0.00$$

Comments (required for "Exceptional" (5), "Needs Improvement" (1), and "Not Acceptable" (0) ratings)

| 3. Service: 0                     |                                                                                 | Rating<br>(0-5) | N/A<br>(X) |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| 3.1 Student Activities            |                                                                                 |                 |            |
| A.                                | Advises students toward their academic progress                                 |                 |            |
| B.                                | Sponsors or advises student organizations                                       |                 |            |
| C.                                | Acts as mentor or counselor to students                                         |                 |            |
| D.                                | Works with students outside of classes                                          |                 |            |
| E.                                | Serves on graduate supervisory committees                                       |                 |            |
| 3.2 Department                    |                                                                                 |                 |            |
| A.                                | Participates in activities and committees                                       |                 |            |
| B.                                | Acts as a leader in the departmental technology                                 |                 |            |
| C.                                | Complies with departmental requirements                                         |                 |            |
| D.                                | Effectively completes assigned services                                         |                 |            |
| E.                                | Acts as a leader in department activities                                       |                 |            |
| 3.3 College / University          |                                                                                 |                 |            |
| A.                                | Participates in activities and committees                                       |                 |            |
| B.                                | Effectively completes assignments                                               |                 |            |
| C.                                | Acts as a leader in school activities                                           |                 |            |
| D.                                | Participates in voluntary university activities                                 |                 |            |
| E.                                | Serves on university committees                                                 |                 |            |
| F.                                | Complies with university regulations                                            |                 |            |
| G.                                | Acts as a leader university activities                                          |                 |            |
| 3.4 Community                     |                                                                                 |                 |            |
| A.                                | Participates in professionally-related community activities                     |                 |            |
| B.                                | Submits reports as agreed upon                                                  |                 |            |
| C.                                | Educational programs for non AAMU students                                      |                 |            |
| 3.5 Other professional activities |                                                                                 |                 |            |
| A.                                | Participates actively in local professional organizations                       |                 |            |
| B.                                | Attends state, regional or national professional organizations                  |                 |            |
| C.                                | Participates actively in state, regional or national professional organizations |                 |            |
| Sum of input                      |                                                                                 | 0               | 0          |

$$\text{SERVICE RATING} = \frac{0}{23 - 0} = \frac{0}{23} = 0.00$$

Comments (required for “Exceptional” (5), “Needs Improvement” (1), and “Not Acceptable” (0) ratings)

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## PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

Instructions: Each faculty member will be rated in the three areas of teaching, scholarly activity and research, and service, according to a percentage related to load assignment as documented on the faculty activity/load forms each semester and averaged for the two or three semesters of assignment. Since service is expected of all faculty, at least 10% of the faculty member's performance score should be based on service. The remaining percentage should be allocated between scholarship and teaching, based on the faculty member's load assignment. Since scholarly activity is a requirement of all faculty, at least 10% must be based on scholarly activity and research. The total must add up to 100%.

For example, if a faculty member is assigned  $\frac{1}{2}$  time to research and  $\frac{1}{2}$  time to teaching, the percentage weighting could be: teaching 40%, scholarly activity 40%, and service 20%.

|                                   | % Weighting<br>Related to<br>Assignment Score |          |                         | % Weighting<br>x Score<br>Col 1 x Col 2 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|                                   | Column 1                                      | Column 2 |                         |                                         |
| Teaching                          |                                               | 0.00     | (from end of Section 1) | 0.00                                    |
| Scholarly Activity (at least 10%) |                                               | 0.00     | (from end of Section 2) | 0.00                                    |
| Service (at least 10%)            |                                               | 0.00     | (from end of Section 3) | 0.00                                    |
| Total                             | 0                                             | 0.00     | Total                   |                                         |
| Overall Performance Rating        |                                               |          |                         | 0.00                                    |

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Exceptional       | 5.00      |
| Excellent         | 4.00-4.99 |
| Good              | 3.00-3.99 |
| Acceptable        | 2.00-2.99 |
| Needs Improvement | 1.00-1.99 |
| Not Acceptable    | 0.00-0.99 |

Other Evaluations \_\_\_\_\_  
 B. STUDENTS \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Conference and Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Response: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Member's Comments:

Signature of Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature does not necessarily indicate that you are in agreement with the evaluation. Your signature only indicates that you have had the opportunity to review the evaluation and that you have discussed the content with your supervisor. Your failure to sign does not negate this as an evaluation of record.

Supervisors'/Chairs' Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: