



**STEPHEN F. AUSTIN  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

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**School of Human Sciences**

**GRADUATE STUDENT  
SURVIVAL HANDBOOK**

**11th Edition  
May 2022**

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## GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

We are delighted that you are interested in furthering your education with us in the School of Human Sciences. We pledge to make our best effort to meet your intellectual needs and nurture your professional growth.

Please submit the requirements outlined below to complete your application process for an [online Master of Science in human sciences](#). The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is no longer required for entry into the School of Human Sciences graduate program.

### Requirements of the SFA Graduate School

1. Apply online and be admitted to the Graduate School. The process is explained on the [Graduate School website](#). In addition to the application, you must submit all undergraduate transcripts.
2. You must meet the minimum GPA requirements of the Graduate School to be admitted to the program.

Please email inquiries about the program to:

Dr. Rachel Jumper

[jumperr@sfasu.edu](mailto:jumperr@sfasu.edu)

Graduate Coordinator

School of Human Sciences

Note: Financial aid is not available until you submit all documents and obtain “clear” admission. Graduate students admitted under “probationary” status (GPA below 2.5 overall) are not eligible for financial aid. Graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better to be eligible for financial aid.

## GRADUATION CHECKLIST FOR HMS MASTER'S STUDENTS

<b>To graduate and get a diploma, you must:</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
Be admitted to a degree program.	
Submit all required credentials including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. official transcripts from all colleges and universities you attended as an undergraduate student</li> <li>2. and an official transcript showing the graduate courses you are transferring from another university.</li> </ol>	
<b>First semester</b> — Receive your advisor assignment from the graduate program coordinators. Your assignment is based on your professional interests and advisor availability (you can change your advisors at any time). A copy of the email confirming your advisor is placed in your graduate file. The coordinator introduces you to your advisor via email.	
<b>First semester</b> — Develop a degree plan with a minimum of 36 hours for a nonthesis program and a minimum of 30 hours for a thesis program. Your advisor should approve and sign your degree plan during your first semester of coursework (see Degree Plan Form). You can work with your advisor to modify the degree plan.	
Select a committee in consultation with your advisor, who is your committee chair. For nonthesis students, the committee consists of the advisor/chair and two other members of the graduate faculty. For thesis students, the committee consists of the chair, who is your thesis director, and three other members of the graduate faculty. One of these members must be an external committee member (not in your program area) who is appointed by the school director from a list of candidates provided by the dean of Graduate Studies. Send each member of your committee a confirmation email and include copies of those emails in your graduate file. Thesis students must complete the <a href="#">statement of authorship</a> on page 8 of this handbook and give it to their advisor.	
<b>Second and third semester</b> — <b>Thesis students:</b> Register for HUSC 5389 and work with your chair/thesis director to prepare a thesis proposal; follow the guidelines in the <a href="#">Graduate School thesis guide</a> . Obtain approval of your thesis proposal from each committee member and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.	
After your thesis proposal has been approved, submit an institutional review board (IRB) application for thesis work to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, P.O. Box 13024, SFA Station, Nacogdoches, TX 75962.	
Enroll in HUSC 5190 to complete your thesis work (see <a href="#">Graduate School thesis guide</a> ).	
Complete all coursework, including transfer work, <b>within six years</b> of the time you started.	

Earn an overall GPA of 3.0 or better and a GPA of 3.0 or better in your major and minor, which are considered separately.	
<b>Thesis students:</b> Submit a draft of your thesis to the thesis committee and the Graduate School before filing the application for the thesis examination (defense).	
<b>Last Semester — Nonthesis students:</b> Schedule a room and time for your comprehensive exam, which is six hours. This exam can cover material from any MS coursework. <b>Thesis students</b> complete HUSC 5839 and HUSC 5190 before defending their theses with the entire committee. No comprehensive exam is necessary. <b>Thesis students:</b> Apply for your thesis examination (defense) in the Graduate Office one week prior to the exam and no later than three weeks prior to the end of the semester. See the <a href="#">Graduate School website</a> for specific dates and forms (Thesis Examination Form).	
Satisfactorily complete your comprehensive examination or thesis defense and submit your report to the Graduation Dean's Office.	
If applicable, complete all thesis requirements, including revisions to your thesis after the defense.	
Apply for graduation and pay all graduation fees by the deadline stated in the Graduation Bulletin (see <a href="#">graduation instructions for graduate students</a> ).	
Submit final thesis to Graduate Office.	
Remove deficiencies, if any.	

## AUTHORSHIP OF RESEARCH PUBLICATION POLICY

Graduate students are encouraged to publish the results of their theses and final research projects as soon as possible after project completion or graduation for maximum benefit to the industry and/or research community.

The Graduate School's goal is to recognize the research efforts of student researchers in relation to the effort expended and the nature of the project. Professional guidance and effort are also recognized, especially when student projects are a component of larger or longitudinal work.

Normally papers are drafted by the student and revised by the professors involved in the project. Authorship in such cases includes the student as first author, with one or more professors as joint authors.

The final manuscript must be accepted by a professor in the student's major and submitted for publication **within one year** of the research project's completion. If the student fails to submit publication copy in a timely manner, the professor has the authority to prepare the publication incorporating the student's work. In such instances, the professor is recognized as the primary author with the student's input recognized as appropriate.

This policy reflects the general philosophy and intent of the school. Note that individual professors may have differing personal policies. Students are encouraged to discuss the topic of authorship with their examining/graduation committee members before beginning research projects and to utilize the following form when appropriate.

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

### Stephen F. Austin University School of Human Sciences

SFA's School of Human Sciences has a strong commitment to the dissemination of research findings for the advancement of the profession. At the same time, the school desires to properly recognize the efforts of all researchers.

To meet these publication goals, all student research associates are asked to indicate agreements between thesis committee members and other faculty members who may have guided or participated in research projects. It is understood that many projects may be combined with others, and that significant time may pass before publication.

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**Title of Research Project**

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I agree to publish the research findings within one year of research project completion and with an authorship priority as listed below:

First or Primary Author

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Contributing Author

---

Contributing Author

---

Contributing Author

---

Agreed deadline to submit manuscript to professor of major: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Student

---

Contributing Author

---

Date

Professor of Major

*Complete this form before your defense along with your project approval form.*



## ONLINE MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM

Note: The School of Human Sciences Graduate Student Survival Handbook outlines general policies and procedures regarding the completion of the *online* MS in human sciences at SFA. Faculty members can modify certain policies and procedures to meet student needs under extenuating circumstances. Specific program areas within the School of Human Sciences may have additional policies and protocols not listed in the handbook. Lastly, for information on the food, nutrition and dietetics master's program, refer to the [Dietetic Internship Student Handbook](#).

Also see these websites in addition to this handbook for more information:

- [SFA HMS master's program](#)
- [SFA Office of Research and Graduate Studies](#)

### Structure

The School of Human Sciences focuses on the preparation of professionals for emerging careers and entrepreneurial opportunities. Areas of study include human development and family studies, hospitality administration, fashion merchandising, interior design, construction management, and family and consumer sciences/certification for teaching. Students entering the MS program must have a Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Arts degree in a related field or relevant work experience. Prerequisite courses are required for students with other degrees and limited professional experience. You can earn an MS through one of two tracks: thesis or nonthesis. The MS in human sciences is a 30-hour online degree with a thesis option. This degree provides graduate education to professionals in the field of family and consumer sciences. With the online MS in human sciences, you can select from a variety of concentration areas in the field of human sciences including human development and family studies, family and consumer sciences, general interior design, and health care interior design. All courses are offered online.

#### *Thesis Program*

The thesis program requires a total of 30 hours of approved graduate courses including six hours of thesis research and writing (HUSC 5389 and HUSC 5190). Students seeking careers in higher education or improving their understanding of the research process in their careers should choose this track. To review specific guidelines and procedures for completing a thesis, refer to the [Graduate School thesis guide](#). Also see pages 14–17 of this handbook.

#### *Nonthesis Program*

The nonthesis program requires a total of 36 hours of approved graduate courses including 18 hours of core courses: 12 hours of human sciences courses and six hours of statistics. Students seeking content knowledge on a wide variety of topics, desiring a promotion in their organization or wishing to teach with a master's degree or specialize in an area of study should choose this track. Students wishing to teach at the college or university level must have 18 hours of coursework in the specific discipline in which they desire to teach.

## *Steps to Completing an Online MS in Human Sciences*

### **1. Consider your readiness**

Seriously consider your ability to complete an online program or course before you enroll. Online courses are not easy. The reading, assignments and tests are just as difficult as those in campus-based courses. In addition, successful online course completion requires you to be self-disciplined enough to log in regularly, focus on your assignments and complete your work by scheduled deadlines.

Obviously, technology plays a big role in online learning. To be successful, you must have easy access to a computer and the internet. You must also be proficient in a variety of computer-related skills, such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint and email.

### **2. Calculate costs and financial aid**

Answers to questions about tuition and fees, billing and payment options are available on the [SFA Business Office website](#) and by email at [businessoffice@sfasu.edu](mailto:businessoffice@sfasu.edu). You also may contact the business office by phone at (936) 468-1000 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday or visit the office on campus.

The online [tuition and fees calculator](#) can help you plan your expenses. A fee of \$25 per credit hour is added for all distance education courses to help cover the cost of delivery.

Students living outside Texas while taking an SFA Online course may be eligible for an [out-of-state electronic fee](#) price. Check with your academic department for eligibility and registration requirements. At the bottom of the [tuition and fees calculator page](#), you will find a calculator specifically designed for the out-of-state electronic fee.

Even though SFA Online courses are affordably priced, financial aid helps. As an SFA Online student, you are eligible to apply for financial aid. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships has posted the [information and forms you need](#) to apply for financial aid online for your convenience.

#### **Business Office**

P.O. Box 13053, SFA Station  
Nacogdoches, TX 75962-3053  
Phone: (936) 468-1000  
Fax: (936) 468-7213  
Email: [businessoffice@sfasu.edu](mailto:businessoffice@sfasu.edu)

#### **Financial Aid**

P.O. Box 13052, SFA Station  
Nacogdoches, TX 75962  
Phone: (936) 468-2403  
Fax: (936) 468-1048  
Email: [finaid@sfasu.edu](mailto:finaid@sfasu.edu)

### 3. Register for courses

Upon admission to the university and fulfillment of all departmental [advising requirements](#), you may register for SFA Online courses by web or phone. Information regarding registration is on the [registration page](#).

The registrar posts [registration dates](#) online every semester. Normal registration hours are 6 a.m.–10 p.m. Monday through Friday. To register for classes or add/drop classes, log on to [mySFA](#).

Class meeting time, place and instructor information is available in the [Schedule of Classes](#).

Bills are mailed only when students preregister. If you register during delayed registration, you must promptly pay your bills at the Business Office (Room 204) of the Austin Building or with a Visa or MasterCard by calling (936) 468-1000. Failure to do so may result in your courses being dropped. You may add/drop courses during the registration period.

If you have registration questions, call (936) 468-1370.

### 4. Prepare

**Order books.** You may purchase textbooks and materials for your online courses through the website of [SFA's Barnes and Noble bookstore](#). The bookstore can ship your books to your home or hold your books on campus.

**Know your Brightspace username and password.** Your Brightspace username is your mySFA username. If you do not know your mySFA username, visit the [Look Up mySFA Username page](#). Your Brightspace password is your mySFA password.

**Take the online orientation.** You can use [online Brightspace tutorials](#) to become familiar with the myCourses environment as you learn technical skills that will help you be successful in your online course. Online Brightspace tutorials are free, noncredit courses; they do not appear on your transcript or affect your GPA. All students are encouraged to take the online Brightspace tutorials during the semester to use the resources provided in them for specific course tasks.

#### ***Post-Baccalaureate Initial Certificate***

The Post-Baccalaureate Initial Certificate program is available to individuals holding an undergraduate degree in a human sciences specialization area and pursuing a teaching certification. You must meet requirements for admission to teacher certification. The PBIC in family and consumer sciences broadens your employment opportunities.

## Student Responsibilities

- Read [graduate bulletin](#) thoroughly.
- Complete diploma application.

Meet Graduate School deadlines in the current bulletin regarding:

- plan of study
- thesis research
- thesis
- comprehensive examination
- completion of graduation application
- and admission to candidacy.

Exhibit professional challenging attitudes toward the rigors of academic performance indicative of graduate education.

Develop a personal timeline for completion.

## GUIDELINES FOR MASTER'S THESIS

For a full list of procedures and all forms referenced below, see the [Graduate School thesis guide](#).

The thesis should be an independent and original study. That does not mean that it must explore a subject never before considered; instead it should treat the subject in an original way. The thesis is derived from original research, such as that conducted in the laboratory, field or library, and it must be prepared under the guidance of a thesis director and advisory committee. The thesis must be acceptable in both content and expression, and it must be presented in a format consistent with the discipline and the [Graduate School thesis guide](#).

### Thesis Advisory Committee

The initial step in establishing an advisory committee is to select a thesis director. With the advice of this person, you should select a thesis topic as soon as possible. Following completion of these two steps, the balance of the committee can be formed. The committee comprises a chair (thesis director) and at least three other members of the graduate faculty. Two committee members are selected by you and approved by the thesis chair, and one committee member (“external committee member”) is appointed by the school director from a list of candidates provided by the dean of Research and Graduate Studies. Committee members with adjunct graduate faculty membership may serve where deemed appropriate with the approval of the dean of Research and Graduate Studies but may not serve as the thesis chair.

### Thesis Proposal

Under the direction of the thesis advisor, you need to prepare a thesis proposal and submit it to the advisory committee for approval. The approval process involves an oral defense. Students should follow the thesis proposal preparation guidelines outlined in the [Graduate School thesis guide](#). After each committee member has signed the Proposal Approval Form, the form with the attached proposal is submitted to the school director and the dean of the James I. Perkins College of Education for approval. Finally, the form and the proposal is sent to the dean of Research and Graduate Studies. At the latest, the thesis proposal must be submitted the semester prior to the semester of intended graduation.

Any research proposal that uses human participants, laboratory animals or hazardous materials must be accompanied by a memorandum of approval from the chair of the appropriate university committee. These committees are as follows: the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, the Institutional Biosafety Committee, and the Environmental Safety and Health/Radiation Committee.

### Registration for Thesis Writing and Research: HUSC 5389 and 5190

As you begin to work on your proposal, you should enroll in HUSC 5389. After receiving the approval of the thesis proposal from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, but not before, register for the appropriate thesis-writing course (HUSC 5190). You must be enrolled in HUSC 5190 during the semester or summer session in which the thesis examination/defense is conducted. However, enrollment in HUSC 5190 is not required for the semester or summer session in which you graduate unless it is the same semester you are defending your thesis. Following your initial enrollment in HUSC 5389 (thesis research) and until you have defended your thesis, you must continue to register for HUSC 5389 or 5190 each fall and spring semester and each summer session during which you use the resources of the university (faculty, library, laboratories and so on). Until you complete your thesis, you receive a grade of WH (withheld) for each section of HUSC 5389 or 5190 in which you have enrolled. When the final copy of your thesis has been approved and signed by the advisory committee, the thesis advisor is responsible for turning in grades for all your thesis courses.

### Thesis Research/Writing

You conduct thesis research and complete writing the thesis under the supervision of the thesis director and advisory committee. Follow manuscript preparation guidelines outlined in the [Graduate School thesis guide](#) and ensure that your thesis document includes all required content (for example, title page, signature page and abstract) and all required formatting specifications (for example, margins, spacing and headings).

### Thesis Defense: Draft/Manuscript

Either a final draft or final manuscript may serve as the basis for the thesis examination/defense. A final draft must meet the following requirements:

- complete in all aspects
- clearly readable in letter-quality print but on inexpensive paper such as that used in word processors and copy machines
- mechanically correct (see [“Final Manuscript Preparation”](#) in thesis guide)
- contain figures, plates and tables in their final form, but photographs may be high-quality reproductions
- approved for content by all members of the thesis advisory committee
- and be scored from a 3 (Acceptable) through a 5 (Substantially Developed) on the examination rubric for each item (see rubric in Appendix A).

The advisory committee members, dean of the Perkins College of Education and dean of Research and Graduate Studies sign the final manuscript, which is subsequently bound. Specifications for its preparation are outlined in the thesis guide. Check the [Graduate School thesis guide](#) for formatting guidelines and mechanical specifications.

## Thesis Examination/Defense: Application

You file your application for the thesis examination (thesis examination form) in the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at least one week prior to the defense and no later than three weeks prior to the end of the semester. You cannot file it until the draft/manuscript has been approved by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. Copies of the final draft/manuscript must be in the hands of the thesis examination committee at least two weeks prior to the defense and submitted to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at least one week prior to defense. For final drafts, at least one copy must contain original figures and plates and be in the custody of the thesis director.

The thesis examination is held at a time and place agreed upon by the graduate student and all members of the thesis examination committee. If the thesis examination committee requires changes or additions to the thesis more extensive than just improvements in language, punctuation, format or illustrations, approval of the thesis is delayed until each committee member has a chance to examine a new draft incorporating the changes.

## Thesis Defense: Report

Following the defense, the chair of the thesis advisory committee submits the report of the examination to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

## Thesis Submission to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies

Next, you submit the final manuscript with the thesis examination committee's changes and corrections and the thesis advisory committee's signatures to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

The final manuscript is the document that is signed by the thesis advisory committee and the dean of Research and Graduate Studies and subsequently bound and placed in the library and uploaded to [SFA ScholarWorks](#). Therefore, the manuscript must be of the highest possible quality with respect to content and presentation.

You bear the primary responsibility for quality, but you must realize that each member of the thesis advisory committee also bears responsibility and is not obligated to sign the manuscript until satisfied with the overall quality of the thesis. Before making copies of the manuscript, you should thoroughly proofread all pages of the thesis to make sure all mechanical specifications have been met. Failure to meet one or more specifications could result in the manuscript being returned for correction, thereby causing the expenditure of additional time and money that could otherwise have been avoided.

You submit the revised thesis to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies for approval. After receiving approval from that office, you must submit a minimum of one copy of the thesis

that meets all specifications of the [Graduate School thesis guide](#) to the Steen Library. The final product must also be uploaded into [SFA ScholarWorks](#). It is your responsibility to check the [thesis guide](#) for proper arrangements and page numbering on each thesis. See the [Graduate School website](#) for final thesis due dates.

Five copies of the manuscript are required. After binding, two copies are retained by the library, one copy is sent to the major department, one copy is sent to the thesis director and the original is sent to you.

### ***Binding, Shipping and Microfilming Fees***

Prior to graduation, you need to:

- determine the number of copies to be bound; you must have one deposit (library) copy bound for archival purposes, and additional bound copies are at the school's discretion or for personal use
- complete the thesis/dissertation worksheet including contact information
- deliver copies of the approved thesis/dissertation to the library to be bound in the correct page number order
- and pay your fees at either the circulation desk or online through the [Steen Library website](#).

### ***Checklist of Thesis Procedures***

- 1. Request a thesis director.
- 2. Form a thesis advisory committee.
- 3. Enroll in a thesis course/prepare and submit a thesis proposal.
- 4. If appropriate, submit your protocol for human or animal subjects review and biosafety and/or environmental safety and health/radiation committee review.
- 5. Enroll in thesis course(s) and write a thesis.
- 6. Submit your thesis to committee.
- 7. Receive approval of thesis draft from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
- 8. Submit application for thesis examination form.
- 9. Complete thesis examination.
- 10. Make final thesis changes and obtain thesis advisory committee signatures.
- 11. Submit your signature page(s) to the dean of Research and Graduate Studies for signature and seal.
- 12. Upload your final thesis into [SFA ScholarWorks](#).
- 13. Pay fees for binding and shipping to Steen Library.
- 14. Submit final thesis to Steen Library.



## **Grades for HUSC 5389 and 5190**

When the final copy of the thesis has been approved and signed by the thesis advisory committee, the thesis director turns in your grades for HUSC 5389 and 5190.

## **NONTHESIS TRACK: FINAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

Each degree program has a culminating requirement for a student's final semester or summer session of work. A nonthesis degree requires a comprehensive examination over the major field, and some programs specify a final requirement such as passing a national test or completing a capstone course.

When you enroll in a program, the program's graduate advisor or school director provides a written description of the culminating requirement and how to qualify for and pass (or reattempt) it. You must be registered during the semester or summer session in which you satisfy the culminating requirement.

In programs with a comprehensive examination, the examination committee comprises graduate faculty members appointed by the relevant department. The deadline for reporting the results of your comprehensive examination or other culminating requirement is shown in the calendar in the [graduate bulletin](#). If you fail to satisfy the culminating requirement within the time frame or the maximum number of retakes specified by the graduate program or allowed by Graduate School policy, you are not awarded the degree.

The procedures for advisory committee formation and the administration of graduate comprehensive examinations in the School of Human Sciences follow.

### **Student Committee for Nonthesis Students**

Nonthesis students form a committee composed of three graduate faculty members as early as possible but at the very latest by the beginning of the last semester of study.

The committee may include one faculty member from outside the School of Human Sciences with approval of your major advisor. Your committee serves as the comprehensive examination committee. In some circumstances, exceptions may be made.

Your major advisor works with you to develop a degree plan. Per School of Human Sciences graduate policy, you should file the graduate degree plan during the first semester of coursework. You can work with your advisor to modify the degree plan using the Petition to Change Degree Plan form.

If you wish to change a committee member, you must submit a written request to your major advisor, who will evaluate the merit of your request and make a final decision. If you wish to replace your major advisor, you must submit a written request to the director of the School of Human Sciences, who will evaluate the merit of the request and make a final decision.

## Written Comprehensive Examination Procedure

Note: Students in the [dietetics master's program](#) have their own comprehensive exam procedures and should see the dietetics handbook for more information.

For students starting the Master's in Human Sciences in Summer/Fall 2021 and forward, the comprehensive exam procedures will be as follows - In your last semester of coursework, you will complete a take-home comprehensive exam to be completed over a period of two weeks. Your three-person committee will develop a writing prompt that encourages you to apply the knowledge you gained from your courses in the program. You will then have two weeks to write a 15-18 page paper (exam) over the prompt and must include a Reference list in APA format (reference list is not included in the page count).

Your exam should reflect the knowledge that you have gained in the graduate program including both your knowledge of content and mechanics (APA formatting). In your exam you should show the committee that you are able to research information, synthesize what you have read, and analyze information in the field.

It is expected that your exam is edited and free from major grammatical errors, uses APA formatting, includes in-text citations, incorporates paraphrased information more than quotes, and meets any other requirements outlined by the three-person committee.

Prior to the start of your exam, you may, in conjunction with your advisor, select the dates and times to write for each committee member. In some cases, you may be assigned to a specific two-week writing time period based on faculty schedules.

Once the student has completed the written exam and uploaded it into Brightspace by the required time, the graduate advisor will forward an electronic copy of the student's response to all committee members for evaluation within two (2) days of completing the exam. Not uploading the paper by the required deadline may result in a failed attempt at the comprehensive exam.

You should exhibit ethical behavior during the comprehensive examination process. Any suspicion of cheating will be investigated with the potential of examination failure. Refer to [University Policy 4.1](#) for information on academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

It is your responsibility to meet with each committee member at the beginning of the semester in which you will be completing the exam to discuss the topics you should study for the exam. This information may be broad or specific, but it can help guide your exam study.

Each committee member needs to sign the Intent to Take Comprehensive Exam form before you submit it to the major advisor.

### **Oral Examination Procedure**

All nonthesis students must take an oral exam on-site or via technology (for example, BRIGHTSPACE software or teleconference). The major advisor should schedule the oral exam within seven to 10 days following completion of the written exam.

You must score from a 3 (Acceptable) through a 5 (Substantially Developed) on the examination rubric for each item. See rubric in [Appendix A](#).

The committee discusses your performance on the written and oral exam privately and decides on a passing or nonpassing grade. The major professor notifies you of the results within 24 hours after the oral examination is completed. Results are either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

If you pass the composite written/oral examination, all forms should be completed for you and submitted to the school director and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

If you fail one or more sections of the composite written/oral exam, you are notified of which section (written and/or oral) you failed and which question you failed in that section. You must repeat the failed section(s); the committee decides whether you must repeat both written and oral components. The major advisor then works with you to reschedule the written and/or oral examination(s). One repeated effort on the comprehensive exam (written and/or oral) during the same semester is allowed and counts as one attempt.

If you fail the repeated written and/or oral exam, you must confer with the major advisor regarding remedial course work to be taken the following semester at the student's own expense and future rescheduling of the second and final opportunity for the comprehensive examination (the second and final opportunity includes a written/oral examination and one repeated effort of written and/or oral, if needed). The second and final opportunity for the comprehensive examination does not take place during the semester in which the exam was first attempted. A contract for remedial work is developed by the major advisor and signed by you, the major advisor and the director of the School of Human Sciences. Failure to pass the second and final opportunity for examination results in dismissal from the program and no degree awarded.

### **Online Exam Information**

Once the student has successfully completed and passed their comprehensive exam, the Report of Comprehensive Final Examination form should be signed by all committee members and sent to the College of Education and Graduate School contacts. You can find advising forms for the Perkins College of Education on the [PCOE graduate advising website](#).

## AFTER ADMISSION

Following admission to a graduate degree program, you must confer with the graduate advisor in the major department and, if applicable, the minor department to obtain advice about the courses to take. As soon as possible and preferably during the first semester or summer session of enrollment, you should have a degree plan. In the case of a minor, a representative of the minor department must be included on your advisory committee.

Thereafter, at stipulated stages, you must:

1. apply for admission to candidacy for the graduate degree
2. complete all requirements of the degree plan and apply for the degree
3. and take a comprehensive examination administered by the major department and, if applicable, the minor department.

The guide below outlines the step-by-step procedure:

### Limitation of Time

With the exception of Doctor of Education, Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Fine Arts degrees, all work on a graduate degree must be completed within six years of the time you first enroll in graduate courses, whether you take the courses at SFA or elsewhere. If you serve on active duty with the armed forces of the United States between the dates of matriculation and graduation, the six-year limitation is extended one year for each year of active duty up to a maximum extension of four years. Time limits for the EdD, PhD and MFA degrees are specified under the respective program descriptions in the [SFA graduate bulletin](#).

### GPA Requirements

To remain in good standing in the Graduate School and to graduate, you must maintain a B average. If you have clear admission to graduate study and your GPA falls below a B during any semester or summer session, you are placed on academic probation and will need to follow/make satisfactory progress toward the required plan of action outlined by your main advisor. If you are on probationary admission, you are placed on academic suspension. If you are placed on academic probation and you fail to restore an overall B GPA the following semester or summer session, you will be placed on academic suspension.

If you are placed on academic suspension, you are denied the continuation of an academic program as well as the privilege of registering for coursework. This suspension period is for one semester or one summer session, whichever follows the period when the suspension occurred. Thereafter, you revert to post-baccalaureate admission status and are permitted to take coursework not applicable toward a degree program. To be reinstated to a degree

program, you must be recommended by the appropriate academic department and approved by the academic dean, the [Graduate Council](#) and the associate vice president.

## Transfer Hours

With the approval of the major department and the academic dean, you may transfer from another accredited graduate school up to six semester hours of graduate work toward a master's degree with a thesis and up to 12 semester hours toward a nonthesis master's degree. Transferred work must be completed with a grade of B or better and is accepted only for credit toward a graduate degree at SFA and not for raising the GPAs you earn at SFA.

You must have earned those hours no more than six years prior to your first graduate course enrollment at SFA. Moreover, if you fail to complete work on the graduate degree at SFA before the expiration of the six years, the work is no longer applicable toward a degree at SFA. Graduate credit earned by correspondence is unacceptable for application toward the graduate degree requirements.

To transfer any credit from other institutions, you must submit an official transcript of the courses to be considered and receive the approval of the appropriate academic department and academic dean.

## Degree Requirements

Coursework used to satisfy requirements for a previous master's degree (whether taken at SFA or elsewhere) may not be used to satisfy requirements for a second master's degree at SFA.

Under certain circumstances, an undergraduate student may simultaneously pursue work toward bachelor's and master's degrees.

To earn a graduate degree, you must have major and overall GPAs of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale. The computation of the overall GPA includes all courses in the major and minor and those elective courses you selected to complete the degree requirements. In the case of repeated courses (you may repeat a maximum of six semester hours of work to raise your GPA), only the higher grades are used to compute GPAs, according to university policy. No course with a grade below C can be used to satisfy degree requirements.

Work offered for the graduate degree should be in courses numbered 500 and above. In certain circumstances, you may take a maximum of nine semester hours of 400-numbered courses carrying graduate credit toward a nonthesis degree and six semester hours of 400-numbered courses carrying graduate credit toward a thesis degree. *You must repeat any courses you fail.*

With the exception of the MFA, no more than two Advanced Graduate Studies (HUSC 5175 and 5376) courses or a total of eight hours may count toward any master's degree without special permission from the academic dean.

In addition to satisfying all coursework for the graduate degree, you must satisfy all other requirements, as well as the final comprehensive examination and/or the thesis.

All work on a graduate degree must be completed within six years of the time you first enroll in graduate courses, whether the courses are taken here or elsewhere. For exceptions, see the statement (above) on the limitation of time.

## GRADES

- A** — Excellent
- B** — Average
- C** — Fair
- D** — Poor, not applicable as credit toward a graduate degree
- P** — Passing
- W** — Withdrew
- WF** — Withdrew failing
- WH** — Withheld
- WP** — Withdrew passing
- QF** — Quit failing
- F** — Failing

A grade of **A** for a semester gives you four grade points per semester hour; **B**, three grade points per semester hour; **C**, two grade points per semester hour; and **D**, one grade point per semester hour. A grade of **D**, however, makes the course ineligible for application toward a graduate degree.

A grade of **WH** is assigned only when the completion of the work is not possible because of circumstances beyond your control. A grade of **QF** is assigned only when you quit attending classes without officially dropping the course. In the case of awarding a **WH** grade, the work must be completed within a calendar year or the grade automatically becomes an **F**. Exceptions to that regulation are thesis research and writing courses (HUSC 5389, 5190, 5191) in which the work is permanently awarded a **WH** grade until the thesis is completed. You may not receive a grade of **WH** upon dropping a course.

To graduate, you may not discard any courses in the major or the minor to improve your GPA.

All courses, except those repeated, in the major and minor are computed in the GPA. You cannot use a course with a grade below **C** to satisfy your degree requirements. You may repeat a maximum of six semester hours of work to raise the GPA. In the case of these repeated courses, the higher grades are used only to compute GPAs, according to university policy.

You may take electives outside the major and minor, and only those you select to complete the degree are counted in your GPA.



## INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Each year, the university welcomes international students into the graduate program. In recent years, a close and cooperative educational program was developed between SFA and sister universities in China, Korea and Japan.

If you are an international student, the following information may facilitate your introduction to the campus.

Noncitizens or applicants who hold student (F-1) or other types of temporary visas should obtain the brochure "Information for International Students" from the Office of Admissions. Permanent or temporary residents who have graduated from an accredited United States college or university with a bachelor's degree or other higher degree must follow the instructions in this brochure because they are responsible for registering under the correct residency classification. Generally, all Graduate School applicants who have resided or have been employed in the state of Texas for 12 months prior to enrollment are eligible for state resident tuition rates. Foreign nationals and holders of F-1 or other types of temporary visas must pay the nonresident tuition charges. Students who receive teaching or research assistantships may be eligible for a waiver of nonresident tuition depending upon the amount of equivalency granted. Thus, international students should consult with their department and the Office of Admissions if changes occur in their status.

International students and any applicants who completed their education outside the United States should make certain they have submitted, and the university has on file, all required original or certified transcripts of previous educational experience, both in the original language and English translation, as well as any required official test scores. It is recommended that students keep an extra copy of such documents as well.

If, as an international student, you are requesting the transfer of credits, then you may be required to submit a syllabus, catalog or bulletin translation or a letter from a supervising teacher describing the work accomplished before receiving official approval of transfer credit.

For some international students, the cultural and linguistic challenges of graduate education seem intimidating. International students must satisfy English proficiency requirements. In 1989, the 71st Texas Legislature passed House Bill 638, which requires that all public university courses be taught in English. Certainly, in both a teaching and studying capacity, the higher standards and demands of graduate programs require a solid command of written and spoken English. If your native language is not English, you must achieve a score of at least 550 on the paper and pencil version or a 213 on the computer-based version of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). If you score below these levels, you must be able to demonstrate the competency in English needed to accomplish graduate studies successfully. You may request information concerning these tests as well as application forms, test schedules and test locations from the Educational Testing Service, CN6155,

Princeton, NJ 08541-6155 or from the Office of Research and Graduate Studies on campus. Unless you are part of a university-sponsored exchange program, a \$25 test fee is required.

Nevertheless, remember that your admission to SFA is based on the recommendations of those who know your English language capabilities, and this should reassure you that you can survive and complete your degree program. The university has a strong language department and one of the newest and finest language laboratories in the nation. If you have difficulty, help is available. Continued effort and patience will build upon abilities you already possess and ultimately provide the confidence and skill in English that will not only facilitate your intellectual growth but also may inspire others to learn a second language.

As an international student at SFA, you will share some of the issues and problems common to the graduate experience. Yet some of your experiences will undoubtedly be unique to your situation and background. In addition to natural anxiety and the confusing culture of a new country, you may experience trepidation regarding language skills or simple shyness. Remember that your status as an international student adds an exciting and stimulating dimension to the classroom and community. International students sometimes find different standards of educational flexibility and informality in American universities than they experienced in their native educational sphere. That does not have to be intimidating — just different. American universities believe in healthy, challenging debate within a relaxed and friendly student-centered atmosphere. Again, plan to participate and don't be a stranger to department members or fellow students. Get to know your faculty and student colleagues and give them a friendly opportunity to know you and assist you in making this experience one of the best of your life.

## SFA CAMPUS RESOURCES AND SERVICES

### Steen Library

[library.sfasu.edu](http://library.sfasu.edu)

In addition to traditional services, the library provides a major microlab, the Library Information and Networking Center (LINC), where students can access the internet and search the electronic catalog. It also offers the East Texas Research Center (ETRC), which collects and preserves original and important source materials relating to the culture, economic development and history of East Texas. The librarians also serve as excellent resources for students conducting research.

The librarian appointed to the School of Human Sciences is Tina Oswald ([toswald@sfasu.edu](mailto:toswald@sfasu.edu)).

### How do I find articles on the topic\_\_\_\_\_?

Search for articles by subject or keyword in library article databases.

### How do I locate a list of available databases and select an appropriate one for my topic?

On the [library homepage](#), select the “Research” button to see a list of research guides, and select the one that fits your topic.

### How do I know which of the numerous databases to use first?

For most topics, [Academic Search Complete](#) is the best place to start.

The screenshot shows the EBSCO Academic Search Complete search interface. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "visual impairment and falls". To the right of the search bar are buttons for "Search", "Clear", and a help icon. Above the search bar, it says "Searching: Academic Search Complete" and "Choose Databases »". Below the search bar, there are links for "Search Options", "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", "Visual Search", and "Search History".

The "Search Options" section is expanded, showing several settings:

- Search modes:**  Boolean/Phrase,  Find all my search terms,  Find any of my search terms,  SmartText Searching [Hint](#)
- Apply related words:**
- Also search within the full text of the articles:**
- Limit your results:**
  - Full Text:**
  - Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals:**
  - References Available:**
  - Published Date from:** Month:  Year:  to Month:  Year:

A "Reset" button is located in the top right corner of the "Search Options" section.

### **Do I need to go through all the search options listed on the page before I conduct a search?**

No. If you are not an experienced searcher, do not change the search modes. Look at the “Limit Your Results” features and choose “Full Text.” For most assignments, choose “Scholarly Peer Reviewed Journals.” As you gain experience searching, you may want to use some of the other limits. *The more limits you choose, the fewer articles you retrieve.* You can change the limits on a search you’ve started by using the update options in the left frame of your screen.

### **How do I construct my query?**

#### **Searching Strategies**

- Develop a topic statement.
- Identify the important concepts.
- Identify synonyms or other terms for these concepts.
- Use the connecting word “and” to limit your search: child development and siblings.
- Use “or” to broaden your search: family or relatives.
- Put terms in quotes to search as a phrase: “child development.”
- Use nesting for a complex search with both “and” and “or” connectors: “child development” and (speech or language or talk\*).
- Use \* as a wildcard to look for any form of the root word; develop\* will retrieve develop or developed or developments or developing.

Enter appropriate keywords in the search box: “visual impairment” and (falls or safety or accidents).

### **Will every item I retrieve using the “Scholarly Peer Reviewed Journals” limit be a peer reviewed article?**

No. In many cases the entire peer reviewed journal is available. Other sources might include book reviews, letters to the editor, editorials and brief informational announcements or articles. All these items are useful, but if your assignment is to use a peer reviewed journal article, they do not fulfill this criteria.

Look through the list of citations for articles that most closely fit your topic. Since you used the full text limit, either the PDF (for HTML articles, audio is also an option) or HTML version of the full article is included. You can print, save or email the article to yourself or someone else.

### **What if I don’t find appropriate articles or enough articles?**

If you need additional articles, vary the keywords used in your search. Find new keywords in the abstract of the articles you have retrieved. Using more than one search query is almost always necessary when writing a paper.

## Does the library have any of the articles for the citations that are retrieved when I do not use the “Full Text” limit?

Yes. We do have many articles that are not full text in the database. For a thorough search on any topic, you need to remove the full text limit and review additional citations.

## How do I locate the article when I have a citation?

With your citation in hand (including journal title, date, volume, page numbers, the article title and author), follow the instructions below:

1. Use the Search Box on the library homepage at <https://library.sfasu.edu/>.
2. Enter the journal title (not the article title) and click the button that says Journal Titles.



The image shows a search interface with a text input field containing the words "child development". To the right of the input field is a button labeled "Search". Below the input field, there are two radio buttons: "Books & Other Media" and "Journal Titles". The "Journal Titles" radio button is selected, indicated by a blue dot.

3. On the list you retrieve, find the exact journal title you need. The list is in alphabetical order.
4. Below the journal title, review the list of databases.
5. Compare the date you need with the dates available listed with each database/publisher.

### **Child development (0009-3920)**

from v. 1, 1930 to v. 76, 2005 in [Stephen F. Austin State University's Print Holdings](#)

from 03/01/1930 to 1 year ago in [Academic Search Complete](#)

from 03/01/1930 to 1 year ago in [Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection](#)

from 03/01/1930 to 1 year ago in [SocINDEX with Full Text](#)

6. Choose the database or publisher that matches the date you need.
7. Follow the link to the appropriate database or journal. Then, select the year or volume you need. Next, look for the article title or page numbers you need.
8. If you do not see an electronic match for your journal title and date:
  - a. Look for a link that says “in [Stephen F. Austin State University's Print Holdings](#).”
  - b. Follow this link into the catalog and look at the dates of SFA's holdings.
  - c. If the library has the year you need, note the call number and retrieve the journal. Current issues are on the first floor. Older volumes are on the third or fourth floor depending on the first letter of the call number: A-N 4<sup>th</sup>; P-Z 3<sup>rd</sup>.

If you really need the article and the library doesn't have it, use the [Interlibrary Loan link](#) to register with SFA's interlibrary loan system and request the article you need.

### **How can I tell if the scholarly article I retrieve is a research study or a literature review?**

Look for these key sections of scholarly primary research study articles (some of these elements may be combined or have different labels):

- Introduction or Purpose
- Literature Review
- Methods or Study Design
- Statistical Analysis or Data Analysis
- Results
- Conclusion

Normally just reading abstracts of articles is enough to help you identify them as reports by the authors on actual experiments, surveys or studies they've conducted. A literature review (secondary research) cites studies done by other people and summarizes results. Use the list of references from both literature reviews and research studies to identify other studies on the topic.

### **Do I need to search any of the other library databases?**

Maybe. For many undergraduate assignments and some graduate assignments, you can find enough material in the **Academic Search Complete** database. For some disciplines, specialized databases are recommended. ERIC is the most complete database for education, and PsycInfo is the best for upper-level psychology. The Dissertations and Theses database is the best place to look for dissertations or theses on any topic.

### **Is there a complete list of all the library databases?**

Yes. The Databases A-Z list links from the library homepage.

<http://libguides.sfasu.edu/az.php#/? k=phnqjs>

### **Computer Facilities — Internet**

<http://libguides.sfasu.edu/faq/technology#/? k=00cp5f>

The campus features several computer labs for student use. The library and other locations on campus are equipped with wireless internet.

### **Health Services — Insurance**

[sfasu.edu/life-at-sfa/health-safety/health-clinic](http://sfasu.edu/life-at-sfa/health-safety/health-clinic)

Health Services does not provide obstetrical care, x-rays, dental work, physical therapy, eye exams or surgery. There is no on-campus pharmacy where you may have prescriptions filled. You may purchase optional health insurance at competitive rates through [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas](#). Two local facilities offer emergency room service: Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital and Nacogdoches Medical Center.

## **Student Activities Association — Office of Student Affairs Programs**

<https://sfasu.edu/studentaffairs>

The SAA strives to provide an educational and recreational experience outside the classroom through programs that culturally enlighten, intellectually stimulate and entertain the university community. The SAA produces over 100 events each year ranging from concerts and comedy performances to game shows and lectures.

## **Barnes & Noble Bookstore**

[sfasu.bncollege.com](https://sfasu.bncollege.com)

The university bookstore is owned and operated by Barnes & Noble and is located on the first floor of the Baker Pattillo Student Center. It serves the entire campus community. The store sells texts, general educational books and materials, magazines, Starbucks coffee, clothing, cards, stationery, gifts and other items. Official university rings may be ordered through the services of the bookstore as well as caps and gowns for graduation ceremonies.

## **Baker Pattillo Student Center**

[sfasu.edu/studentervices](https://sfasu.edu/studentervices)

The student center houses student affairs offices, a food court with national brand restaurants, study lounges, movie theaters, a copy center, an atrium, a TV room, retail vendors, Starbucks and more.

## **Office of Multicultural Affairs**

[sfasu.edu/multicultural](https://sfasu.edu/multicultural)

The mission of OMA is to provide the SFA community with educational programs and services that promote respect for diverse cultures and to enhance students' success in a global community.

## **Office of International Programs**

[sfasu.edu/oip](https://sfasu.edu/oip)

OIP offers international students three different options for pursuing studies at SFA: 1) English as a second language, 2) study abroad and 3) full SFA admission.

## **Center for Career and Professional Development**

[sfasu.edu/ccpd](https://sfasu.edu/ccpd)

The CCPD assists students in job searches, coordinates corporate visits to campus, holds workshops and seminars, provides resume advice, maintains folders of essential documentation such as letters of recommendation, and processes thousands of requests by prospective candidates and employers.

## **Counseling Services** [sfasu.edu/counselingservices](https://sfasu.edu/counselingservices)

Counseling Services is staffed with professional counselors who help students deal with both personal and psychological problems, including eating disorders and alcohol or other drug abuse. It also helps international or nontraditional students transition to campus life. Additionally, the faculty and graduate students of the Department of Psychology staff a clinic that provides some assessment and therapy programs for accepted clients as well as initial preprofessional training for advanced students.

## **University Police Department**

<https://www.sfasu.edu/upd>

In addition to 24-hour police service, including 911 emergency response, UPD offers crime-prevention programs, regulates campus parking, provides escort service in emergencies and provides assistance with vehicle difficulties or if you lock your keys in your car.



## GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS AND EMPLOYMENT

Some administrative graduate assistantships are available across campus. For more information, refer to the [Assistantships and Employment Guide](#).

## APPENDIX A — ASSESSMENT

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADVISOR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE ADMINISTERED: \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Learning Outcome 1:** The student will analyze and demonstrate familiarity with the current literature of the discipline.

**Assessment 2:** Comps/Thesis Rubric

<b>1. Identifies and summarizes the problem/question at issue (and/or the source's position).</b>	
1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Scant	Acceptable
Does not identify and summarize the problem; is confused or identifies a different and inappropriate problem. Does not identify or is confused by the issue, or represents the issue inaccurately.	Identifies the main problem and subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects of the problem; identifies it clearly by addressing the relationships to each other. Not only identifies the basics of the issue but also recognizes nuances of the issue.
<b>2. Identifies and presents the STUDENT'S OWN perspective and position as it is important to the analysis of the issue.</b>	
1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Scant	Acceptable
Addresses a single source or view of the argument and fails to clarify the established or presented position relative to one's own. Fails to establish other critical distinctions.	Identifies, appropriately, one's own position on the issue, drawing support from information.
<b>3. Identifies and considers OTHER salient perspectives and positions that are important to the analysis of the issue.</b>	
1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Scant	Acceptable
Addresses only a single perspective and fails to discuss other possible perspectives, especially those salient to the issue.	Addresses perspectives noted previously, and additional diverse perspectives drawn from outside information.
<b>4. Identifies and addresses the key assumptions.</b>	
1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Scant	Acceptable
Does not surface the assumptions and issues that underlie the issue, or does so superficially.	Identifies and questions the validity of the assumptions and addresses the dimensions that underlie the issue.
<b>5. Identifies and addresses the quality of supporting data/evidence and provides additional data/evidence related to the issue.</b>	
1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Scant	Acceptable
Merely repeats information provided, taking it as truth, or denies evidence without adequate justification. Confuses associations and correlations with cause and effect. Does not distinguish between fact, opinion and value judgments.	Examines the evidence and source of evidence; questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, completeness. Observes cause and effect and addresses existing or potential consequences. Clearly distinguishes between fact and opinion, and acknowledges value judgments.
<b>6. Identifies and addresses conclusions, implications and consequences.</b>	
1-----2-----3-----4-----5 Scant	Acceptable
Fails to identify conclusions, implications and consequences of the issue or the key relationships between the other elements of the problem, such as context, implications, assumptions or data and evidence.	Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications and consequences considering context, assumptions, data and evidence. Objectively reflects upon his/her own assertions. Cites appropriately.