

# GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2021-2022

A Supplement to the TTU Student Handbook and the  
Graduate Catalog

*college of*  
**GRADUATE STUDIES**  
*[www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies)*



## Welcome to Tennessee Tech University!

The College of Graduate Studies works closely with the graduate departments and schools at the university to carefully select students who will be successful in graduate study. We also provide structure and support needed to help assure student success. We are available to answer your questions, guide your progress, and assist with your development. It is our goal to admit excellent students and do all we can to support them throughout their academic careers.

Pursuing a graduate degree is a journey into inquiry and learning that results in the attainment of a body of knowledge and the skills to discover new ways to solve problems. The attainment of a graduate degree will lead to the enhancement of your life and to using your knowledge for the betterment of society. We hope you have a rewarding experience at Tennessee Tech University.

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# CONGRATULATIONS!

## YOU ARE NOW A GRADUATE STUDENT.

### THINGS TO DO

1. **Financial Aid** Make sure all paperwork is in order.
2. **Graduate Assistantship**  
Applications can be found at <https://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/stipend.php>
3. **Student Email Account** Sign in, it's the main method of contact by the university.
4. **Advisement** Contact the person listed on your Certificate of Admission.
5. **Register** Login to Eagle online and register for courses.
6. **Parking permit** Get a permit if you will be parking on campus.
7. **Complete Admission Requirements** If you lack any requirements for admission it will be indicated on your Certificate of Admission. All admission requirements must be met by the end of the first semester or a registration hold will be placed on your account.
8. **Advisory Committee** Start thinking about which faculty members you want.
9. **Forms** Go to the Graduate Studies website and click on the Online Forms link and familiarize yourself with the forms we have available.
10. **International students** Check-in with the International Education office.

### THINGS TO BE AWARE OF

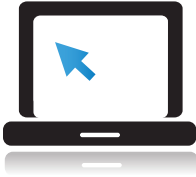
1. **Permissible Loads** There are limits in some situations.
2. **Grades** Know what grades are required to avoid dismissal or probation.
3. **Program of Study**  
Your program of study will be outlined in Degree Works. Your advisor will work with you on planning your program coursework.
4. **Appointment of Advisory Committee**  
Contact your department for instructions on selecting your committee.
5. **Changes** Learn how to make changes and the proper forms to use.
6. **Degree Completion Time Limits**  
Six consecutive years to complete a master's or specialist in education; eight consecutive years to complete a doctorate.
7. **Comprehensive Exam** Learn about your department and degree's comprehensive exam (when, where, and how).
8. **Thesis/Dissertation** TTU has a specific format for theses and dissertations. Attend an workshop before you begin writing.
9. **Graduation** You must apply for graduation one semester before you plan to complete your degree. All applications are due by the published deadline posted on our Graduate Student Calendar by semester.

## COMMUNICATION

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The College of Graduate Studies will communicate with students in the following ways:

### WEB



**[www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/index.php](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/index.php)**

The College of Graduate Studies has a dedicated presence on the university website with information for graduate students such as admissions, dates and deadlines, forms, thesis/dissertation, graduation, and more.

### TWITTER



**@TTU\_gradschool**

Important calendar information, events, and other timely information is shared through Twitter. Follow us and never miss another deadline.

### FACEBOOK



**Tennessee Tech University Graduate Studies**

The College of Graduate Studies Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/TTUGraduateStudies> shares important information. Use this page as a forum to discuss issues related to graduate students.

### CAMPUS EMAIL



The Tennessee Tech campus email is the official email and students are encouraged to check it regularly as this is how they will be contacted.

### INSTAGRAM



**TTUGradSchool**

Follow us on Instagram for interesting news.



## RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

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Students are responsible for the proper completion of their academic programs; for familiarity with requirements of the Graduate Catalog; for maintaining the grade average required; and for meeting all other degree requirements. A student may receive counsel from an academic advisor; however, **the final responsibility remains that of the student.**

### STUDENT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

Maintaining high standards of academic integrity in every class at Tennessee Tech is critical to the reputation of Tennessee Tech, its students, alumni, and the employers of Tennessee Tech graduates. The Student Academic Misconduct Policy describes the definitions of academic misconduct and policies and procedures for addressing Academic Misconduct at Tennessee Tech. For more information read Tennessee Tech's Policy 217 – Student Academic Misconduct.

[www.tntech.edu/policies/](http://www.tntech.edu/policies/)

## FINANCIAL AID

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Students who have been admitted with full-standing in a degree-seeking program may wish to complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Financial Aid (FAFSFA)**. Recipients of federal direct loans must be U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens enrolled for at least five (5) semester hours (for federal aid purposes, halftime status is defined as enrollment for five (5) hours, three-quarter time status is defined as enrollment of six to eight (6-8) hours, and full-time is defined as enrollment of nine [9] hours). The interest on these loans is a variable amount (set by the federal government each year); interest and principal repayment may be deferred while the student is enrolled. The FAFSFA may be found at [www.tntech.edu/financialaid/](http://www.tntech.edu/financialaid/)

In some instances graduate students may qualify for positions as head residents in the university's housing program. For more information visit the Residential Life website at [www.tntech.edu/reslife/](http://www.tntech.edu/reslife/).

There are four (4) classifications of **graduate assistantships**: Graduate Teaching Assistant, Graduate Teaching Associate, Graduate Support Assistant, and Graduate Research Assistant.

Unless other arrangements are specified, it is assumed the graduate assistant will pursue a degree objective in the department where the assistantship assignment is made. Applications for assistantships are online at [www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/ga-studentinfo.php](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/ga-studentinfo.php).

Additional assistantship and fellowship awards are available for qualifying graduate students. Consideration is given on the basis of academic preparation, major area of study, and the availability of funds. Information regarding additional funding sources may be found at [www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/financial.php](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/financial.php).

A student must be in full-standing to be offered an assistantship. The period of appointment is normally for one (1) academic year at a stipend determined by the department in which the assistantship is available. The graduate assistant is required to maintain a minimum quality point average of 3.0.

**Veteran's Benefits** - TTU has a full-service veteran's center to assist our military and veteran students. Information is available at [www.tntech.edu/veterans/index.php](http://www.tntech.edu/veterans/index.php).

## ADMISSION TYPES

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Admission standing is not to be confused with academic standing (good or probation) or enrollment level (full-time or part-time).

### **Provisional Standing**

Some colleges allow students provisional admission with the agreement that all outstanding admission requirements be met within the first semester of enrollment. By mid semester a hold will be placed on the student's account to prevent future enrollment until all admission requirements are satisfied. Students admitted in provisional standing are allowed a maximum load of nine (9) hours.

### **Full Standing**

Students admitted in full standing have met all admission requirements and are entitled to all freedoms as a graduate student.

### **Special Standing**

This classification enables students to enroll for graduate credit in certain academic areas but it does not guarantee that such credit will be counted toward a degree objective. If a student transfers to a degree program and wishes to use courses taken during special standing, only nine (9) credit hours (approved by the department of major) can count towards a degree objective.

Students in special standing are not eligible for financial aid.

### **Reclassification**

Students admitted in full standing are not required to be reclassified. Students who have been admitted to graduate study in provisional standing may, upon the approval of the department chairperson or program director, request and be granted full standing. Students are not required to apply for reclassification. Students files are reviewed each semester by the College of Graduate Studies and all students eligible for reclassification will be processed automatically.





## ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND PROGRAM OF STUDY

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### **Advisory Committee**

All degree seeking students are required to have an advisory committee and are responsible for its formation and maintenance. The advisory committee may be appointed during the student's first term but no later than the term in which 15 credits will be earned. If not filed by this time, a hold will be placed on the student's account to prevent further registrations.

Master's — requires minimum of 3 members.

Specialist in Education — requires minimum of 3 members.

Doctorate — Engineering requires 5, Education requires 4, Environmental Sciences requires 5.

See Graduate Catalog for specific member composition requirements as it varies by department.

If changes in membership of the student's advisory committee are desired or required, see "Changes" section of this handbook for instructions.

### **Program of Study**

Upon admission to a degree program, your program of study will be available in Degree Works. Your advisor will provide you with the particular courses that you will take and when you will take them. As you enroll and complete your courses, you will see your degree progression within Degree Works. Your degree is awarded based upon your Degree Works Program of Study. Courses that do not fall into the Degree Works framework will require an advisor approved substitution form.

## ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

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### **Admission to Candidacy**

Admission to Candidacy is required of all degree seeking students. For master's and specialist in education it must be filed by the end of the semester in which 15 hours of course credit will be earned. A hold will be placed on the student's account to prevent further registrations mid-semester of the semester in which the 15 hours will be earned. To be admitted to candidacy, a student must:

- be in full standing.
- have completed at least 9 semester hours of graduate credit with a minimum quality point average of 3.0.
- successful completion of any examination which may be required by the student's department.

Master's — filed with Program of Study (second page of the form).

Specialist in Education — often filed before Program of Study, signatures by committee, department chair and department dean or program director.

Doctorate — presentation to committee, memo to College of Graduate Studies. Once the comprehensive exams are complete, the student's advisor will send a memo to College of Graduate Studies indicating such and requesting that the student be admitted to candidacy.

If the student's application for admission to candidacy is not approved due to academic deficiencies, the student cannot continue graduate study with a major in any of the departments of the college in which he/she is studying.

## CHANGES

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### **Change of Major**

A student is admitted into a degree program only upon a declaration of a major area of study. This major area can be changed if the department of the original major releases the student, and if the department of the new major is willing to accept the student. Student must meet the admission requirements of the new major. The online “Change of Major Concentration” form must be initiated to begin this process.

### **Change of Concentration**

A student may wish to change concentrations within a degree program major. The concentration may be changed if the department of the major allows. Student must meet the admission requirements of the new concentration. The online “Change of Major Concentration” form must be initiated to begin this process.

### **Program of Study**

Due to course offerings and a change in focus of research, students may have to alter a few courses on the Degree Works program of study. A “Substitution Form” must be initiated and approved by your academic advisor to modify/update your Degree Works program of study.

### **Advisory Committee**

Due to change in focus of research or faculty changes, students may need to adjust the approved advisory committee. To change members on a committee, the online “Change of Advisory Committee Request” form should be initiated.

### **Contact Info and/or Legal Name**

In the event of the need to update or change legal name or contact information, students are to contact the Office of Records and provide the appropriate required documentation.

To access any of the above forms, just visit the Graduate Studies online forms page: [www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/forms.php](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/forms.php)

## THESIS/DISSERTATION AND DEFENSE

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All graduate students submitting a thesis or dissertation are provided with guidelines on the Graduate Studies website. Personnel from the Volpe Library are available for one-on-one formatting assistance.

### **Thesis/Dissertation Final Draft**

The advisory committee will review the student's thesis prior to the defense to ensure the thesis/dissertation is of suitable caliber and presents a valid investigation.

### **Thesis/Dissertation Defense**

Schedule the defense with the advisory committee well in advance of the deadline. Student should take approved Certificate of Approval and Defense Form to the defense for the advisory committee to sign, if they choose. The results of the defense must be received by the College of Graduate Studies by the deadline date posted on our Graduate Student Calendar each semester.

The **Certificate of Approval page**, also referred to as the signature page, is a required form that is attached to your thesis/dissertation. The format of the form is defined on our website. [www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/etd/formatting/approval.php](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/etd/formatting/approval.php)

### **Thesis/Dissertation Submission**

The final copy of the paper must be submitted electronically to ETD ProQuest by the deadline date posted on our Graduate Student Calendar each semester. Instructions and assistance may be found at [www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/etd/index.php](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/etd/index.php)

Upon receipt of the Certificate of Approval signed by all committee members, Graduate Studies personnel will begin reviewing the ETD Proquest submission.

For additional information on thesis/dissertation resources, go to the Graduate Studies website, [www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/etd.php](http://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/etd.php).

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

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### **Comprehensive Exam**

For master's and Ed.S. students, the comprehensive (comp) exam is scheduled directly with the department, not the College of Graduate Studies. This is normally taken in the last or next to last semester prior to graduation.

For Ph.D. students, consult with the advisory committee chairperson regarding the timing and specific requirements of the Comprehensive Exam and Admission to Candidacy for the doctoral program.

## WITHDRAWAL

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Students who desire to withdraw from the university before the end of an academic term must make formal application for withdrawal to the Office of the Registrar. The withdrawal application is found online at [www.tntech.edu/records/universitywithdrawal.php](http://www.tntech.edu/records/universitywithdrawal.php).

If no administrative holds have been assigned to the student account, such as a disciplinary hold, the student requesting to withdraw will receive a grade of "W" in all courses if an official, signed withdrawal application is received by the Office of the Registrar prior to the last day of classes.

## PROBATION AND DISMISSAL

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### **Probation for Unsatisfactory Performance**

A graduate student is required to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least “B” on all graduate courses taken as a graduate student. When a student’s cumulative average on courses falls below 3.0, but not less than 2.0, the student will be placed on probation. If the cumulative average falls below 2.0, the student will be dismissed.

If the term average, on all courses presented as part of the hours required for graduation, during any semester is less than 2.0, the student will be dismissed.

### **Dismissal for Unsatisfactory Performance**

A graduate student will be dismissed from the graduate program if any one of the following conditions occurs:

1. Two consecutive semesters of probation (summer semester is not included if the student did not take a summer course).
2. The student's current or cumulative GPA falls below 2.0.
3. Two grades of “F.”
4. Two consecutive semesters of “No Progress” grades assigned in thesis or dissertation courses.
5. Several graduate programs have more stringent dismissal criteria. Students should confer with the department about such criteria.

A student who has been dismissed for unsatisfactory performance may request reinstatement, provided he/she produces evidence of extenuating circumstances that would prevent dismissal. The request must be approved by the department chair, director of the student’s graduate program, the dean of the college, and the Graduate Studies Executive Committee. The decision of the Graduate Studies Executive Committee is final. Details may be found in TTU Policy 281 at [www.tntech.edu/policies/](http://www.tntech.edu/policies/).

## GRADES AND COURSES

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### **Grade of Incomplete**

An instructor may assign an incomplete “I” grade when a student’s performance has been satisfactory, but for reasons beyond the student’s control, he/she has not been able to complete course requirements within the allotted time as determined by the instructor. Students are **not** to register for the course again but must complete the original course requirement with the instructor.

Students have up to one calendar year or until the time of graduation, whichever comes first, to remove the “I”. The “I” is excluded from calculation of the student’s QPA. If the “I” is not removed within the time limits, it converts to an “IF” and remains permanently on students’ records.

### **Course Repetition Policy**

Each college in which graduate programs are offered may permit courses to be repeated, provided the cumulative repeat credit does not exceed nine (9) hours. If the repetition is for courses taken for graduate credit either before or after admission to the Graduate School, the grade on repeated work as well as the original grade will be included in the calculation of the quality point average in hours attempted.

The grade received for retaking the course **does not** replace the first grade as is the procedure at the undergraduate level.

### **Course Offerings**

The course offerings and requirements of the institution are continually under examination and revision. The Graduate Catalog presents the current offerings and requirements at the time of publication but is no guarantee that they will not be changed or revoked. Adequate and reasonable notice will be given to students affected.







**Early Registration** Students may register for the coming semester at the end of a given semester in advance of the official registration dates.

**Financial Aid** Loans, grants, or assistantships to assist students in paying tuition and fees.

**GPA** An average obtained by dividing the total number of grade points (A=4; B=3; C=2; D=1) earned by the total number of hours of coursework attempted.

**Graduate Catalog** Annual online bulletin reflecting the current policies, rules and regulations of Graduate School; admission requirements, degree requirements, and course offerings.

**IRB** Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects reviews applications for research involving human subjects.

**Major** A particular subject or specialization.

**Prerequisite** A course requirement that must be met before enrolling in a particular course.

**Problem Paper or Project** A research project resulting in a report or project for students not pursuing a thesis track.

**Program of Study** The course requirements defined by your advisor for your degree program.

**Provost** The senior administrative officer in the university.

**QPA** An average obtained by dividing the total number of grade points (A=4; B=3; C=2; D=1) earned by the total number of hours of coursework attempted.

**Syllabus** A precise outline of course expectations stating the required textbook(s), assignments and dates due, test dates, grading and policies, research papers, as well as other requirements.

**T# (Student ID)** Identification number assigned to student and is used in place of social security number.

**Tech Express** The TTU online one stop portal for email, registration and access to software.

**Thesis/Dissertation** A thesis or dissertation is a document submitted in support of candidature for an academic degree or professional qualification presenting the author's research and findings.

**University Calendar** The university's calendar is determined and published annually.

# RESOURCES

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Bookstore.....	931-372-3131
Bursars Office .....	931-372-3311
Campus Mail / P.O. Boxes .....	931-372-3282
Office of Career Development.....	931-372-3232
College of Graduate Studies.....	931-372-3233
Counseling Center .....	931-372-3331
Disability Services .....	931-372-6119
Diversity and Legal Affairs.....	931-372-3016
Eagle Card.....	931-372-6232
Financial Aid.....	931-372-3073
Fitness Center .....	931-372-6215
Health Services .....	931-372-3320
Human Resources.....	931-372-3034
International Education .....	931-372-3634
Library .....	931-372-3326
Multicultural Affairs .....	931-372-3392
Records .....	931-372-3317
Recreation/Fitness .....	931-372-6212
Residential Life .....	931-372-3414
Scholarships .....	931-372-6159
Student Affairs.....	931-372-3411
University Police.....	931-372-3234
Veterans Benefits.....	931-372-3205

Advisor and departmental contact information are listed on your Certificate of Admission.

## *Your frequently called numbers*

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