



New International Student Orientation Information Packet

Office of International Student & Scholar Services

It is the mission of the Office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) to serve the international students, scholars, and their family members at our university and to enhance the global awareness of the Texas A&M University- Commerce community. Our goal is to assist international students and scholars in their transition to life in the United States and at Texas A&M University- Commerce, and to assist them in maintaining their immigration status. We strive at the ISSS to provide services necessary to meet the special needs of international students and scholars, and to provide programs that will promote cultural exchange with our international population, the university, and the surrounding community. Some of the services we provide include:

- Comprehensive orientation for all new and transfer international students and scholars
- Advisement for cultural adjustment
- Immigration advising
- Employment authorization
- Cultural and educational programs
- Serve as liaison for international students with university faculty/ staff and members of the community

Office Hours and Information:

Monday – Friday

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

www.tamuc.edu/isso

intl.stu@tamuc.edu

903-886-5097

Skype- TAMUCISSO

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Appointments with the ISSS Staff:

Students are welcome to visit the ISSS in Halladay 104 if they have any questions or concerns and if an advisor is available they will be glad to meet with you. However, students are strongly encouraged to schedule an appointment if their situation is more in depth or may require some lengthy discussion. Appointments are available through Skype or Google Hangouts for students who do not live in the Commerce area. Appointments may be made by calling 903-886-5097 or emailing Intl.Stu@tamuc.edu. Students applying for CPT employment or other employment benefits, or a reinstatement will need to schedule their appointment at least one business day in advanced.

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ISSS Services

ISSS Request form

The ISSS has online request forms on the ISSS website at www.tamuc.edu/isso and select Forms and Online Services. Students may request:

- Verification of enrollment letter (purpose of letter must be provided)
- Invitation letter for immediate family (B-2 visitor visa)
- Report a change of address (required within 10 days of moving)
- I-20 update, lost or stolen I-20, or adding a dependent
- Social security letter (original letter of employment is required)

Types of Letters

Verification of enrollment- Students *may* need a letter verifying their enrollment to open a bank account, apply for a credit card, or for their sponsor. Please note that a verification of enrollment letter for a Texas driver's license/state ID is not required.

Social Security Number (SSN) letter- F-1 and J-1 international students are **ONLY** eligible to apply for a SSN if they are employed or have been offered employment. Generally, international students will only be eligible for on-campus employment until after they have been enrolled for an academic year at A&M-Commerce (fall/spring). If you have been offered employment on-campus you will need to submit the original letter of employment on the department letterhead. The letter will need to include a brief job description and the employment start date. Please note that students may begin their on-campus employment without having the SSN (except employment through Sodexo).

Letter for family member to visit- The ISSS will issue a letter for immediate family member(s) of students to apply for a B-2 visitor visa. Please note that U.S. Consulates in many countries and the U.S. Department of State has indicated this letter is not required or reviewed during the application process for family member(s). There is a deadline for submitting requests.

ISSS Events and Programs

Lion Cousins (LC)- In the LC program, an American student and international student will be paired together for the semester or year. Students in the LC program are required

to meet twice a month to develop a friendship and learn more about each other's culture.

Dinner in An American Home- In this program, international student(s) are connected with individuals or families in the community who will host the student(s) in their home for a dinner. The program requirements are for participants to meet one time for a dinner in the host(s) home with the hope that the friendship and cultural exchange will continue.

International Education Week- each year in November, the U.S. Department of State sets aside a week to celebrate international education. The ISSS will partner with international student(s) and student groups to host events during this week. Events may include International Coffee Hour, International Movie Night, and a cultural night to focus on a specific culture.

Multicultural Festival- Each spring semester usually in late March or early April, the ISSS in partnership with international student(s) and student groups will host the Multicultural Night. Activities include food tables from different cultures, display tables, talent show, and fashion show.

International Coffee Hour: The ISSS hosts a large coffee hour as part of International Education Week in November but we also host smaller coffee hours monthly in the ISSS. It is a great opportunity to make new friends, learn about other cultures, and have fun.

Trips each semester- Each semester the ISSS will sponsor a trip(s) to the Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) area for international students. Destinations may include a shopping mall, cultural market area, Six Flags, or other attractions in the DFW area. There is usually a minimal cost for the trips. In spring, the ISSS will host a 3-5 night spring break trip to destinations such as San Antonio, TX.

Practical Training Employment Workshops- Each semester the ISSS will host Curricular Practical Training (CPT) workshops and Optional Practical Training (OPT) workshops. The CPT workshop is generally the first Friday of each month. Students are required to attend an OPT workshop in their final semester before being eligible to apply for OPT with the ISSS. For a schedule go to www.tamuc.edu/isso and select Upcoming Events.

Campus Safety

Texas A&M University - Commerce has a safe campus surrounded by a residential community within the town of Commerce located in North East Texas. We understand many parents and students are concerned about safety on college/university campuses. We acknowledge that concern and accept our responsibility to enforce security policies and practices.

Services provided by University Police Department (UPD):

- Vehicle unlock
- Battery boosts (on-campus)
- Education Programs

Parking Permits may be purchased at the Cashier's Window in McDowell Administration (BA) building lobby, at the Student Access and Success building, or online through myLEO. A permit is required to park your vehicle on-campus. Students studying off-campus may contact off-site instructional sites regarding parking.

Pride Alert Warning Systems (PAWS): If a serious incident were to occur (inclement weather, emergency on-campus, campus closings), students will be notified by PAWS via phone call or text to mobile or personal phone. *Every student is strongly encouraged to participate and students may sign up through their myLEO.* If you do not have the option to sign up through myLEO contact Technology Services at 903-468-6000.

Personal Safety: When walking on or off campus, keep these tips in mind:

- Walk with someone or with a group of people, especially at night.
- Keep to well-lit walkways.
- Let your roommate or a friend know when you are leaving and when you should arrive at your destination.
- Be observant to your surrounding.
- If you are being followed, head toward crowds, buildings, or emergency phones.
- Have your car key in your hand, ready to unlock your car as you approach your vehicle.
- Check underneath your car before getting too close and look in the backseat to make sure no one is hiding in the floorboard.
- ALWAYS keep your car locked whether you are out or in your car.
- Program the University Police Department's emergency number into your cell phone. (903)-886-5111.
- ALWAYS lock your door especially when you are out or sleeping even if you are just "running down the hall" or "stepping out for just a moment".
- DO NOT let strangers in your room.
- If you need to work in an isolated area, make sure someone knows where you are.

It is a good idea to keep your personal information to yourself in many situations:

- DO NOT post notes on your door memo board saying where you are, what your schedule is, etc.
- DO NOT give out information about yourself over the phone.

Identity Theft: If you ever lose your purse or wallet or think someone has your personal information, you need to protect yourself by doing the following:

- Cancel your credit cards immediately.
- Have the toll free phone numbers handy so you know whom to call. File a police report immediately.
- Many credit providers require that a report be filed before they will take any action.

Call the three national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and social security number.

- Equifax-1-800-525-6285
- Experian 1-800-301-7195
- Trans Union-1-800-680-7289
- The Social Security Administration also has a fraud reporting line at 1800-269-0271.

Your Property: Be smart and take time for some extra precautions to ensure that your property stays safe.

- DO NOT leave your backpack or any items unattended. Use the lockers and bring your own lock, where they are provided.
- ALWAYS lock your bike and be sure to register your bike with the University Police Department.
- DO NOT leave valuables in plain sight.
- DO NOT leave large amounts of cash in your room, even if it is “hidden”.
- Keep your blinds pulled down at night and when you are out so no one can take inventory of your property or attempt to steal your property.
- Take advantage of the University Police Department’s P.I.D. program (Property IDentification). This is a program designed to mark your property and make you a list of your valuables with the appropriate information.
- Protect your textbooks by putting identifying characteristics along the binding on the same page in each textbook.

Community Safety: Living in a university environment, it is everyone’s responsibility to be mindful of community safety.

- DO NOT prop open outside doors. You may be doing it to let a friend inside but you do not know whom else you may be letting inside. It may not affect you directly, but it will directly affect someone living in your hall.
- If you see someone who needs help, assist them by getting a resident life staff member or the police. Do not inadvertently let someone become a victim. (For example: go to www.sampadefoundation.org)
- Report strangers to resident hall staff or the police department.
- DO NOT let strangers into your hall, if they are there visiting, let their host escort them.
- Let the resident hall staff know about any problems, i.e. bathroom leaks, wet floors, missing or damaged window screens and any lights that are out.

For computer protection, let CTIS (Computing, Telecommunication and Information Services) obtain your computer’s MAC address (your network cards unique number) for you so if your computer is ever stolen, having the MAC address can help track it down.

Facts about Alcohol: The following is some information to get you to start thinking of your safety as well as your friend’s safety.

- Alcohol is the #1 cause of death for people ages 14 to 24 in the U.S.
- 15-20 year olds account for 45% of all alcohol related deaths.
- 1,400 college students die annually due to alcohol related incidents. 500,000 injuries, 70,000 sexual assaults, 600,000 students a year are assaulted by another student who has been drinking, 400,000 students report to having unsafe sex when drinking, 150,000 students develop health issues from drinking and 300 students a year die from alcohol poisoning.
- 95% of violent crime on campuses involve alcohol. (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse)
- ½ of all sexual assaults involve alcohol.

Alcohol Laws and Common Sense: Individuals must be at least 21 years of age to purchase, possess, or consume alcohol in the state of Texas. Individuals who purchase and/or provide alcohol to individuals under the age of 21 may be severe.

How to Obtain a Texas Driver License

If you are applying for a Texas driver license, you must comply with the following procedures. If you are required to obtain a CDL, in addition to the following procedures you must also complete several forms.

Application for a Texas Driver License

Application for a driver license must be made in person. You can obtain an application at any driver license office or download an application from our website at www.dps.texas.gov.

Needed Documents and Information for Application

To apply for a Texas driver license be prepared to provide the following documents and information.

1. Your full name, residential address, mailing address, place of birth, and date of birth
2. Lawful presence/residency documentation at <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/internet/forms/Forms/DL-57.pdf>
3. Identification documents (For a list of documents that will be accepted, visit www.dps.texas.gov or contact your local driver license office.)
4. Social security card or other acceptable evidence of a social security number (See the *Social Security Number (SSN)* section in this handbook for more information.)
5. Thumbprints
6. Physical description
7. Provide answers to the medical status and history questions listed on the application. Individuals with certain medical limitations may have their cases reviewed by the Medical Advisory Board (MAB) before the license may be issued.
8. Surrender valid out-of-state driver licenses
9. Current county of residence

Evidence of Financial Responsibility (Insurance)

If you apply for an original driver license then you must provide evidence of financial responsibility or a statement that you do not own a motor vehicle which requires the maintenance of financial responsibility.

Evidence of financial responsibility must be in at least the minimum amount required and cover each motor vehicle the applicant owns that requires maintenance of financial responsibility.

Vehicle Registration

A new Texas resident must submit with the application evidence that each motor vehicle owned by the person is currently registered in Texas or indicate they do not own a motor vehicle required to be registered. Registration receipt issued by the county tax assessor-collector of the county in which the new resident resides is satisfactory evidence a motor vehicle has been registered in Texas.

Fees

The required fee(s) must be submitted before any tests will be given for an original Texas driver license. The fee allows you to take three tests for each type of exam required. If you fail after three attempts, a new application and fee must be submitted before any additional tests can be taken. The required tests must be completed within 90 days. The application fee is valid at any driver license location.

Driver Education

Individuals who are under the age of 25 are required to successfully complete an approved driver education course. For more information on licensing requirements for applicants who are under the age of 25, visit our website at www.dps.texas.gov.

Minors

If you are under 18 years of age, your application must be signed under oath by the parent or guardian with custody. If there is not a guardian, the employer or county judge may sign the application. The person who signs, before your 18th birthday, may ask DPS to cancel your license. This request must be in writing and sworn to before an officer authorized to administer oaths. In addition, the minor applicant and cosigner must sign a zero tolerance notification document which explains the zero tolerance law. See *Chapter 10: How Alcohol and Drugs Affect Your Ability to Drive* for more information.

Social Security Number (SSN)

All applicants who apply for a Texas driver license are required to present evidence of their SSN. Since international students are not eligible for an SSN unless they have secured lawful employment, they will sign a SSN waiver form when they visit the DPS office.

Testing

Before any tests are given, you must pay the required fee unless the fee was paid with the original application. Your picture will be taken and you will be given a receipt which you may use as a temporary license for 45 days or until you receive your permanent license in the mail.

If you do not pass the knowledge and driving tests on your first attempt, your application will be held in the driver license office for 90 days. After 90 days or three failed tests, a new application and fee will be required.

The knowledge and driving tests are not required for applicants who surrender a valid out-of-state license.

Part 1: The Knowledge Test

As part of the Less Tears More Years Act, all applicants who are under 25 years of age is required to take a driver education course to apply for a driver license. Upon successful completion of the course, the person is not required to take the knowledge test, also known as the written test.

There are three types of knowledge tests.

1. Class C – Knowledge test for all original applicants
2. Class M – Motorcycle road rules for motorcycle and moped applicants
3. Class A or Class B – Rules for operators of Class A and Class B vehicles

You need a grade of 70 percent or better to pass the knowledge test.

Part 2: The Vision Test

Your vision will be tested when you are at the driver license office. Depending on the results, you may be required to wear corrective lenses while driving if the lenses will improve your vision and help increase the safety of your driving. If the results are inconclusive, you may be referred to your doctor.

Part 3: The Driving Test

The driving test is given only after all other tests have been passed and evidence of financial responsibility is presented or the vehicle is exempt under the Less Tears More Years Act. The type of vehicle that must be used for the driving test depends on the class of license applied for. No one under the age of 18 is exempt from taking the driving test.

Individuals who complete the DPS-approved basic motorcycle operator training course are not required to take a driving test for a Class M license if the person already has a valid, unrestricted Texas license. Also, the driving test is not required for anyone applying for a learner license.

Driver's License requirements may be found on the Texas Department of Public Safety website at <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/>. Students whose country is part of the validity of license agreement may drive in Texas for up to one year as long as:

- Their country is on validity of licenses agreement at [http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=37&pt=1&ch=15&rl=91](http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=37&pt=1&ch=15&rl=91)
- Student is between ages of 18-75
- Licenses are only valid for private vehicles
- License must be valid (not expired) in the country of origin
- Licenses are valid in this state only 1 year from date of entry into the United States
- The license or booklet provided to the peace officer must contain identification and a photograph of the bearer with pages included in English

The ISSS provides a FREE shuttle to the closest Social Security Administration Office and Driver's License Office in Greenville, TX on the 3rd to 4th Friday after the start of the fall and spring semesters.

Health Insurance and Student Health Services

All F-1 and J-1 international students are automatically enrolled in the System Student Health Insurance Plan (SSHIP) each fall, spring, summer semester. There are very limited exceptions from this mandatory enrollment in the SSHIP allowed by the A&M System. Students who meet one of the exemptions below must submit their waiver to the SSHIP by the end of the first week of classes:

1. Student is sponsored by the U.S. government
2. Student is sponsored by a foreign government recognized by the U.S. or certain international, government-sponsored or non-governmental organizations, and student is covered under a health plan that is compliant with the Affordable Care Act (ACA). If the health plan does not include medical evacuation and repatriation, a rider must be purchased providing coverage at equal limits to the SSHIP
3. Student is enrolled in an employer-provided group health plan that is compliant with the ACA. If the health plan does not include medical evacuation and repatriation, a rider must be purchased providing coverage at equal limits to the SSHIP
4. Student is enrolled in only distance learning programs
5. Student is involved in intercollegiate athletics and coverage for all medical insurance is provided through a policy as part of the current sports accident medical policy approved by System Risk Management.

Insurance Charge: Students will be charged for the health insurance on their student account. The insurance charge is a separate charge from tuition, fees, and housing and students will need to make payment for the health insurance by the 12th class day. Students will be charged for the insurance each fall and spring semester. Summer coverage is included and students are not charged for the summer unless the summer is their first semester at A&M-Commerce.

Waiver Eligibility: Students eligible for one of the waivers listed above will need to submit their waiver eligibility information (proof of alternate health insurance coverage) to the SSHIP provider by the end of the first week of classes (Friday). **The ISSS does not process any waiver requests.** Students who fail to submit their waiver request by the deadline will be charged for the health insurance, required to make payment, and a refund will be processed at a later date if requested within 60 days of coverage start date. Please note that students with effective graduate assistantship insurance are not required to submit a waiver request.

Health Insurance Coverage Information: Students will receive their insurance card usually about 4-6 weeks after the beginning of the semester. Insurance coverage is from January 1 to August 31 and then renewed automatically from September 1 to December 31. Students with medical emergencies or needs may contact the ISSS to request proof of coverage. Please allow up to 3 business days for the SSHIP to provide proof of coverage. DO NOT prevent the lack of proof of coverage (insurance card) prevent you from seeking any medical treatment if needed. Coverage is automatic for all international students and the ISSS can work with the SSHIP to secure proof of coverage if needed.

Student Health Services: The A&M-Commerce Student Health Services office offers affordable health care to A&M-Commerce students and faculty/staff. Currently enrolled students may visit Student Health Services for free. There may be additional charges for labs, x-rays, minor procedures, etc.

Student Health Services is located in [Henderson Hall](#) (B19 on campus map) and they are open Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm (closed for lunch from 12pm-1pm). For more information or to schedule an appointment call 903-886-5853.

Funding Your Education

On Campus Employment: F-1 and J-1 international students are eligible to work on-campus without prior authorization from the ISSS and/or USCIS beginning their first semester. There are three basic types of on campus employment:

- Student worker- positions pay a minimal salary each month for students
- Graduate assistantship- salary for GA position is more significant than student worker, full-time GA positions include in-state tuition waiver, and some GA positions for research (GAR) *may* include tuition remission.
- Work-study- international students are not eligible for work study positions. If a position asks for a “work permit” then this is a work study position.

Students may find postings for on campus employment positions through the Lion Tracks website at www.hirealion.com/students.

Off Campus employment: F-1 international students may be eligible for practical training after they have been enrolled in courses at Texas A&M University-Commerce for an academic year (fall, spring). ***F-1 and J-1 students may not work off campus without first being approved by USCIS and/or the ISSS. Students who are employed off campus are in violation of their visa status and their SEVIS record and I-20 will be terminated.*** There are two basic types of practical training:

- **Curricular Practical Training-** Curricular Practical Training (CPT) allows students in research and internship courses to gain paid work experience outside the classroom. To be eligible for CPT, you must be enrolled for at least one academic year at A&M-Commerce (fall/spring) See below for more information. The ISSS host workshops the first Friday of each month each semester.
- **Optional Practical Training-** All F-1 students are eligible for 12-months at each level after completion of their academic program. Students in certain STEM majors may be eligible for an additional 17-months or OPT, 17-month OPT Extension, one time. Students are required to attend an OPT workshop in their final semester before they are eligible to apply.

Career Development: Students seeking on campus employment are encouraged to visit the Career Development Office in the Student Access and Success building (One Stop Shop) or go to www.tamuc.edu/careerdevelopment.edu. Career Development offers many free services for students including:

- Resume and cover letter consultation
- Mock interviews
- Career assessment
- Job search
- Job Shadow Day
- Job Fairs
- Business etiquette dinners
- Networking workshops

Scholarships: Students may contact the Scholarship office with any questions related to scholarships. To apply for scholarships students will need to complete the online General Scholarship Application at www.tamuc.edu/scholarship or through their university myLEO account.

Lion Card (Campus ID Card)

Mane Card Office

Rayburn Student Center Room 110

(903) 468-6022

Mane Card Office produces the official identification card for Texas A&M University-Commerce. The card is referred to as a Lion Card and the account associated with the card is called Lion Cash. All students are required to obtain and carry their Lion Card with them at all times. Lion Cards are available to registered students, faculty and staff. Lion Cards ensure a student's rights to use university facilities and to identify oneself when requested by university authorities or officials. It provides students with the ability to utilize campus food services, and gives card holders Lion Cash spending options. It is also used to gain admission to certain events sponsored by the university or student organizations and to academic resources such as James Gee Library and Campus Recreation Center. The Lion Card program establishes security for the card holder as there is only one valid card per person. Participating off campus merchants accept Lion Cash which can be used to purchase food, gas and other merchandise. For more information please review the Lion Card brochure with your orientation packet.

Lion Card Accounts

Lion Cash is an optional prepaid account automatically established that functions much like a debit card account. Your Lion Card allows for this functionality. To participate, simply make a deposit to your Lion Cash account. Lion Cash can be used to make purchases at University bookstores, all food service retail locations and the Student Center Dining Room, library fines, recreation checkouts, drink and snack vending machines, campus print labs, copy machines, Student Health Services and off campus locations where merchants accept Lion Cash.

Adding Lion Cash to your Lion Card Account

Web Deposits can be made online through credit card and allows parents, spouses, or others to add Lion Cash to accounts. The Mane Card Office accepts cash, check and credit cards. There are two Account Management Centers (AMC's) and at both locations you can add value with cash, credit card and verify your Lion Cash account balance. You will find AMC's in James Gee Library and the Rayburn Student Center. Additionally, the Cashier's at Financial Services also have the ability to accept deposits in the form of cash, check and credit card.

Missing or Stolen Cards

Report missing or stolen Lion Cards immediately by:

- *Calling Mane Card Office 903-468-6022
- *Freeze Access to your account
- *Report in person to replace your card
- *Stolen cards should be reported to UPD 903-886-5868

Cards are not free. Students are assessed a \$5 fee each semester to enable them access to a card, if needed. If a card is stolen, the individual must provide official documentation of the theft (police report or Public Safety report) to receive a replacement card at no cost; otherwise, the card will be considered lost. There is a \$10 replacement fee for each lost card reported.

Student Account and Fee Payment

www.tamuc.edu/admissions/tuitionCosts/bursar/default.aspx

Payment Windows are located in the lobby of McDowell Administration Building and at the One Stop Shop

Office hours:

McDowell Administration Building or Student Access and Success Center
Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

To pay by phone: 903-886-5050 or 903-886-5501

How do I view my bill? You can view and pay your bill online through their myLEO under the LeoPay section. This information is real-time, reflecting charges and payments as they are posted to our student accounting system.

What if there is an error with my bill? Students who have any incorrect information on their bill may contact the Student Account Office at the phone number(s) above.

I have a scholarship but it has not been applied to my student account, who do I need to contact? If you have been awarded a scholarship you will need to contact the Scholarship Office and the Student Account Office to ensure both departments have the correct information for your scholarship. You may go to <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/tuitionCosts/financialAidandScholarships/scholarships/default.aspx> for more information and the contact information for the Scholarship Office. The beginning of the semester is very busy for these offices so it may take anywhere from 2-10 business days for the offices to process your information.

What are the payment deadlines? Students may review the academic calendar for the payment deadlines at <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/academicCalendars/default.aspx> or go to <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/tuitionCosts/bursar/criticalDates.aspx>.

How can I pay my tuition? Students may pay their tuition online through their myLEO with a credit card, in person at the Student Account office (see above), by wire transfer, or by phone (see above). Go to <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/tuitionCosts/bursar/default.aspx> for more information.

Can I sign up for a payment plan to pay my tuition and fees? During the fall and spring semesters (not available during summer or mini-semesters), tuition/fees and housing may be paid in full or through installments. A \$100 down payment is due at sign-up along with the \$35 installment fee. Remaining charges (tuition/fees, housing, and meal plan) are then divided into four equal payments due through the semester. Please go to <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/tuitionCosts/bursar/criticalDates.aspx> for more information. A \$25 late fee is assessed on past due balances after each payment date.

Does the Student Account Office offer any loans to students? Students who cannot make payments as described above may apply for assistance through the University Loan Office. Short-term tuition loans are available to pay tuition/fees only. These loans are due before the end of the term.. Contact the Loan Office if you have further questions. All loan applications are subject to eligibility requirements and availability of funds.

What happens if I miss a payment deadline, fail to pay my tuition, or my FG is not submitted on time to the university? Students who may have one of the above circumstances happen may have their names added to the university "Drop List" and/or may have their classes dropped for non-payment. Having your classes dropped is a serious issue and can jeopardize your ability to remain in the U.S. Students who are having difficulty with their tuition and fee payment may receive emails/phone calls from the Registrar's Office, Student Account Office, and/or the ISSS. If you are having difficulty with your tuition and fee payment it is very important to contact the ISSS to make us aware of your situation. The ISSS is not able to provide any funding/scholarships nor extend your payment deadline but we can help you be aware of any options you may have.

Keys to Maintaining Your Visa Status (FACT Sheet)

It is your responsibility to know and obey all F-1 or J-1 regulations so that you can maintain your legal immigration status. A summary of immigration and university regulations regarding your visa status is presented here.

Full course of study: All F-1 and J-1 students are **required** by USCIS to enroll in a full course of study each fall and spring semester. Students are not required to study during the summer unless the summer is their first semester at A&M-Commerce.

- A full course of study is as follows:
 - a) A minimum of twelve (12) credit hours for undergraduate students for fall/spring
 - b) A minimum of nine (9) credit hours for graduate students for fall/spring
 - c) A minimum of six (6) credit hours for new students starting the summer semester with a minimum of 3 hours face to face in Summer session 1
- Only one (1) online “W” course counts toward the full course of study requirement.
- There are very few exceptions to this requirement and all F-1 and J-1 students **must have the permission of the ISSS** before enrolling in less than a full course of study.

Visa Documents

- Passport- Keep your passport valid at all times. **DO NOT LET YOUR PASSPORT EXPIRE**. You may renew your passport within the U.S. or in your home country.
- Visa- Your visa is permission to enter the U.S. If your visa expires while you are in the U.S. and you have maintained legal F-1 visa status, you will not need to renew your visa unless you travel outside of the U.S. ***Your visa can expire while you are in the U.S. and you will continue to be in status. You do not have to renew your visa unless you travel outside the U.S. If you travel outside the U.S. and your visa has expired you must renew it before you can re-enter to the U.S.***
- I-20- **DO NOT let your I-20 expire while you are in the U.S.** (see #5 page 1 of the I-20). Keep all information- financial, academic major, program end date- current at all times during your academic program. Students need to keep the original copy of any I-20 they are issued. DO NOT attempt to travel with a copy of your I-20.
- I-94- Arrival/Departure card may be either paper copy or electronic record accessible at www.cbp.gov/I94. Paper copy I-94's are surrendered before departing U.S.

USCIS and ISSS Reporting Requirements

- All F-1 and J-1 international students are required to report any change of their physical address within 10 days of the change. Failure to do so may be considered a violation of your visa status.
- Students who travel outside the U.S. need to review all of their visa documents to ensure that they are all correct and current and that they have a travel signature that is dated within one year of when they plan to re-enter the U.S. A travel signature is valid for one year from the date of the signature for re-entry into the U.S. To request a travel signature please complete the Travel Signature Request form and submit it to the ISSS along with your I-20 at least 2 weeks prior to your departure date.
- If you travel outside the U.S. you will need to provide copies of any of your updated visa documents to the ISSS once you re-enter the U.S. Example...copy of new I-94, copy of visa/passport with new port of entry stamp.
- You must notify the ISSS before the end of the semester if you wish to transfer to another university. The ISSS will require an acceptance letter with the semester you are admitted on the letter. Many schools will also require the ISSS to complete a transfer release form. You may contact the school you are applying to for their transfer requirements.

- If you change your major, need an extension of your I-20, apply for or are approved for a change of visa status, or graduate you need to report this to the ISSS immediately.

Medical and Repatriation/Evacuation Insurance:

All F-1 and J-1 international students are automatically enrolled in the System Student Health Insurance Plan each fall, spring, summer semester. There are very limited exceptions from this mandatory enrollment in the SSHIP allowed by the A&M System. Students who meet one of the exemptions below must submit their waiver to the SSHIP by the deadline or they will be automatically enrolled in the SSHIP:

6. Student is sponsored by the U.S. government
7. Student is sponsored by a foreign government recognized by the U.S. or certain international, government-sponsored or non-governmental organizations, and student is covered under a health plan that is compliant with the Affordable Care Act (ACA). If the health plan does not include medical evacuation and repatriation, a rider must be purchased providing coverage at equal limits to the SSHIP
8. Student is enrolled in an employer-provided group health plan that is compliant with the ACA. If the health plan does not include medical evacuation and repatriation, a rider must be purchased providing coverage at equal limits to the SSHIP
9. Student is enrolled in only distance learning programs
10. Student is involved in intercollegiate athletics and coverage for all medical insurance is provided through a policy as part of the current sports accident medical policy approved by System Risk Management.

On Campus and Off Campus Employment:

- International students are permitted to work **on-campus** without prior authorization for up to 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters and up to 40 hours per week during the summer or the holiday break.
- Off-campus employment requires permission from the ISSS and/or USCIS. ***Working off-campus without permission from the ISSS and/or USCIS is a violation of your visa status and jeopardizes your ability to remain in the U.S.***
- Students *may* be eligible for Practical Training employment but only have they have been *enrolled at Texas A&M University-Commerce for an academic year* (fall, spring) at their current degree level. There are two basic types of practical training: Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training. \
- Students are required to attend an Optional Practical Training workshop within their final two semesters before they will be eligible to apply for OPT. The ISSS offers OPT workshops throughout the semester in person and online.

Off Campus Housing Information

There are a number of different rental options for new international students. Below is a list of many of the local apartment complexes and rental companies. You may also find more information by searching Google, apartments, Commerce, TX or you may also go to http://www.commerce-chamber.com/real_estate.php.

Village Creek Apartments: 2231 Live Oak Street, Commerce, TX

www.villagecreektamu.com 903-246-3120

- One bedroom and one bath apartments
- Two bedroom and one and a half bath apartments
- Three bedroom and one and a half bath apartments

Churchill at Commerce: 731 Culver Street, Commerce, TX

www.churchillcommerce.com 903-886-4444

- One bedroom and one bath apartments
- Two bedroom and two bath apartments
- Three bedroom and two bath apartments

Bradford Place Apartments: 3301 FM 3218, Commerce, TX

www.bradfordplaceapartments.com 903-886-8855

GANT Apartments: 1814 Hunt Street, Commerce, TX

903-886-6863

- One bedroom and one bath with central air and heat- \$500
- One bedroom and one bath with window unit A/C- \$450
- Two bedroom and two bath with central air and hear- \$675

Maple Place Apartments: 2112 Monroe Street, Commerce, TX

www.commerceapartments.com 903-886-4050

- One Bedroom and one bath starting at \$650 plus electricity
- Two bedroom and one and a half bath studio starting at \$765 (and up) plus electricity
- Two bedroom and one bath flat \$765 plus electricity

Oak Meadow Townhomes: 150 Maple Street, Commerce, TX

www.oakmeadowtownhomes.com 903-886-8881

Regency Square Apartments: 220 Taylor Street, Commerce, TX

903-886-7038

American Eagle Properties: 1224 Main Street, Commerce, TX 903-886-4430

Valentine Properties: 1505 West Neal Street, Commerce, TX 903-886-8881

Single family homes, one, two, and three bedroom apartments

Definitions of Rental Terms

Application Fee:

A charge to check your credit and rental history. Your application may be binding! That is, once you have applied, you have committed yourself to rent an apartment, if your application is approved. If you change your mind, you will have to find someone else to take the apartment and pay the rent until you do!

Financial Guarantee:

Evidence of income (usually, three times the price of the rent) to qualify applicants. A copy of the financial information used to obtain your student or exchange visitor visa is the appropriate documentation to offer. If the financial information is that of a family member, your relative's signature may be required as a guarantor of the lease. Usually, faxes between your relative and the rental office meet this requirement in a timely fashion. If your income is from a graduate assistantship or fellowship or another sponsor, the assistantship offer or sponsor's letter clearly stating your financial support should be presented. Neither the I-20 nor the IAP-66 is a financial guarantee. Apartment managers have no business asking for them or copying them!

Deposit:

Money that is held by the management to guarantee occupancy of a room or apartment, payment of rent, repair of damages, and professional cleaning after you leave. If terms of a signed contract are met, the deposit is either refunded in full or reduced to pay for unusual wear and tear or damage to the apartment. Within thirty days of your returning the apartment key, the manager must bill you for any charges and refund the remainder of your security deposit. Failing to meet this deadline, the landlord forfeits his right to the deposit and must return it in full.

Lease:

A legal contract signed by both the manager and the renter. Violation of the lease agreement can result in a heavy financial penalty. Residents should understand all of the conditions of the lease before signing. Any negotiated variation should be set out in writing, initialed, and dated by both the tenant and the manager as an amendment to the lease.

Rent:

Payment made for living accommodations. Since the rental rate and the payment due date are part of the signed contract, failing to make this payment for ANY reason may result in expensive penalties and legal actions. Legal advice is recommended for any tenant who has difficulties with a landlord.

Commonly used abbreviations in rental housing advertisements

A/C or AIR	Air-conditioning
ABP	All bills paid. Your utilities (water, electricity, gas, sewage, garbage collection) has been included in your rent. You only have to arrange for telephone service.
ASAP	As soon as possible
BR or BDRM	Bedroom
C-FAN	Ceiling fan
EFF	An efficiency apartment: one room for living, eating, and sleeping. The bathroom is separate
FP	Fireplace
4-Plex	A rental unit comprised of two ground floor or "garden" apartments and two second floor

	apartments
IMMED	Ready for immediate occupancy
INCL	Included in the rent
MO	Month
2/2 or 3/2	The first number indicates the number of bedrooms in the apartment. The second number indicates the number of bathrooms. Bathroom facilities include bathtub and/or shower, toilet (WC), and wash basin.
W/D	Washing machine and clothes dryer are provided.
W/D CONN	Washer and clothes dryer connections are available for your own machines.

Questions to ask when looking for off-campus housing

1. What is the rental price for the apartment? _____
2. How many bedrooms____/bathrooms____ does the apartment have?
3. How many tenants may (legally) share the apartment? _____
4. Where is the apartment? How close to campus? _____
5. What utilities are included in the rent?
 - ____heat
 - ____a/c
 - ____electricity
 - ____cable hookup
 - ____waste/garbage collection
6. Is a roommate matching service offered? _____
7. Is the lease an individual lease or a joint and several lease? _____
8. What furniture and/or appliances are in the apartment? _____
9. What amenities are included in the rent?

____swimming pool ____laundry room ____social room ____exercise room
 ____game room ____parking ____bicycle storage ____pest control service
 ____other_____
10. Where is the nearest laundry? _____
11. Is there a direct bus service to the nearest grocery store? _____
12. Who is responsible for maintenance and repairs of the apartment (landlord or tenant)?
13. Is a short term lease available (semester, six month, nine month, summer only)? _____
14. What is the price difference between a short term and a long term lease? _____
15. Are sublets allowed? How are sublets handled? _____
16. Is an application fee required? ____ What is the required security deposit? ____
 Is the application fee credited to the security deposit? _____
17. For Families: Is there a play area for children? ____ How near is a public park? ____
18. For families: Where one lives determines where your children will attend school.
 - What is the neighborhood school my child(ren) will attend? _____
 - How near is it? _____
19. Is there a written move out policy? May I have a look at it? A copy? _____
20. What is the pet policy? _____
21. Additional notes on the apartment

Rental Procedures

1. Apartment managers usually require current evidence of income three times the price of the rent to qualify applicants. Have an extra copy of the financial guarantee (bank or sponsorship statement or your assistantship offer) used to obtain your visa as evidence of your ability to afford a year's rent. Your visa authorization document, I-20 or DS-2019, is not a financial guarantee. You do not have to show your immigration documents to your landlord for any reason.
2. Some apartment complexes will also require a social security number from the person who the apartment will be rented under. International students are not eligible for a social security number until they have secured employment and new international students are only eligible for on-campus employment.
3. As a guideline to your rental price range, calculate between one third and one fourth of the living expenses required by the International Student Services Office (ISSS) for your first year.
4. Spend time finding (an) apartment mate(s) to help you share the cost of an apartment.
 - Consult the academic department you will be entering, the international student organizations representing your region of the world, and rental advertisements posted in the International Office and elsewhere on-campus.
 - Compare smoking habits, study habits, dietary customs, etc. with the strangers with whom you propose living.
 - Discuss and agree to arrangements for handling bills, ordering telephone service, maintaining the apartment, entertaining guests, buying groceries, cooking, watching TV, and listening to the radio.
5. Look for an apartment that suits your budget and your needs
 - Ask many questions (such as those recommended in the next section)
 - Read the contract carefully
 - Check that the number of apartment mates with whom you plan to live is within the legal occupancy limit for the apartment. (All apartments have a legal occupancy limit.)
6. Make an application for the apartment of your choice. Apply for only one apartment. Ask if your application involves an application fee.
 - Is your application binding? This means that you are making a commitment to sign a lease if your application is approved.
 - You will be asked for a financial guarantee to prove that you can pay for the rent. Use the financial information from your personal, family, or sponsor's support statement or your assistantship offer.
7. When your application is approved you will be asked to pay a security deposit and the first month's rental fee.
 - The security deposit will be held by the landlord during your rental of the apartment. When you terminate your lease, the landlord must send you an itemized bill for any unpaid charges due on the apartment and the remainder of your security deposit.
 - Your careful maintenance of the apartment and your timely payment of rent protect your chances of a refund from your security deposit.
8. Sign the lease contract with all your apartment mates.
9. Inspect the apartment and make a damage checklist within the first few days in the apartment.
 - Detail any damage and/or lack of cleanliness in the apartment.
 - Photographs of the apartment are a reasonable addition.
 - Deliver the damage check list, dated and signed by everyone living in the apartment, to the landlord or apartment manager as soon as possible to provide evidence of the condition in which you receive the apartment and for which your security deposit should not be charged when you terminate your lease.
10. Apply for electric and telephone service.
11. Give your new address to the University Registrar's Office, to assure that you will receive official University mailings, and the ISSS to ensure compliance with USCIS rules.
12. Ask the landlord or apartment manager to help you with any appliances unfamiliar to you.
13. Request maintenance and repairs in writing to your landlord or apartment manager. Keep a copy of your requests.
14. Pay your rent before the late penalty period each month. (Payment by registered mail, return receipt requested provides evidence of your timely payment.)
15. Renew or terminate your lease in writing before the renewal/termination date.

Social Security Number

The Social Security number keeps track of your earnings and withholdings and will allow you to receive a pension upon retirement or disability. A social security number will also allow you to establish a credit history here in the U.S. If you are working at Texas A&M University-Commerce you will need to obtain a social security number. This is given to you in the form of a card after you have made the appropriate request to the Social Security Administration. ***PLEASE NOTE that international students are not eligible for an SSN until they have been offered lawful employment. Generally this will be on campus employment unless the student has been granted permission to work off campus by the ISSS and in most cases USCIS.***

Once you have been offered a job on-campus you will need to bring an original letter of employment on the department letterhead to the ISSS to request an SSN letter. Once your letter is issued by the ISSS you will need to take the following documents to the local SSN office in Greenville:

- Original passport, visa, and I-94
- Original I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1)
- Letter from responsible officer at ISSS
- Letter from department confirming you are conducting research/teaching in the department (department will need to be sure to provide official start date of employment)

It will take the Social Security Office about 2-3 weeks to process your application and mail your social security card to you. Once you receive this card it is recommended you make a copy to for your records, provide a copy to the Human Resource department at A&M-Commerce, and place the card in a safe place. **DO NOT CARRY THE CARD WITH YOU!** If the card is lost then you will need to contact the Social Security Office immediately! Please go to <http://ssa.gov/> for more information.

The ISSS provides a FREE shuttle to the closest Social Security Administration Office and Driver's License Office in Greenville, TX usually on the 3rd to 4th Friday after the start of the fall and spring semesters.

Banking

The city of Commerce has a few different banking facilities and some provide more services for our international students and scholars. You may review the local Yellow Pages to find the banks in the area and/or consult other international students and scholars.

There are different kinds of banks accounts to choose from. The three most common are:

1. **Savings Accounts**- This type of account allows your money to earn interest over time. Some savings accounts charge a fee for frequent withdrawals and keeping a balance below a designated amount. This type of account is best if you need to deposit money for safekeeping over an extended period of time.
2. **Checking Accounts**- This type of account is designed to hold your money but also allows you to access it whenever needed through checks and check cards. Some of these accounts earn interest and some have restrictions on the number of checks you can write. Most have minimum balances and penalties for going below the minimum balance. Also, some checking accounts may have fees while other accounts may be free. Be sure to ask questions about the different checking account benefits before you open an account.
3. **Certificate of Deposits (CD's)**- These are savings certificates that earn higher interest rates than savings and checking accounts. They also require you to keep money in the CD for a specific length of time.

Most banks will provide the following basic services as well as several other special services for a fee. Before opening an account, ask the bank about these additional services:

- Bank Statements (online or paper based)
- Online Services
- Safety Deposit Boxes
- ATM's, fees, and locations
- Foreign Currency Exchange
- Cancelled Checks
- Money Orders
- International Wiring Transfer
- Traveler's Checks
- Cashier's Checks
- Loans
- Notary Public
- Check Cashing

Local Banks in Commerce, TX:

- Alliance Bank- www.alliancebank.com , 1633 State Highway 50, 903-886-3244
- Chase Bank- www.chase.com, 1305 Washington Street, 903-886-2112
- Guaranty Bank & Trust- www.gnty.com, 1108 Park Street, 903-886-2274
- Cypress Bank- www.cypressbanktx.com, 1702 Live Oak Street, 903-886-7425
- Inwood National Bank- www.inwoodbank.com, 1312 Washington Street, 903-886-2126
- State Farm, 1500 Live Oak, 903-886-7774
- HigherOne- utilized by university for refunds (tuition and fees) and students may open an account online. Go to www.HigherOne.com/Higher101 for more information.

How to open a bank account? Please note that the ISSS provides a FREE shuttle around Commerce to local banks and Walmart on different days the week prior to the fall and spring semesters. Below is the general information and documentation required to open a bank account. Please note that each bank may require different documentation:

- Original Passport
- Original I-20 from Texas A&M University-Commerce

Some banks may also require the following. Please contact the bank before visiting to verify:

- Proof of address (utility bill, rental or lease contract, other bill)
- Secondary form of identification such as your university Lion Card or drivers license/state ID
- Minimum deposit amount or minimum cash deposit (for example...a bank may require a minimum \$25 deposit to open the account)

Cell Phones

Most cell phone providers in the U.S. require either a Social Security Number (SSN) or a high security deposit for setting up a contract for your cell phone service. These contracts usually last from one to two years and you are required to stay with the provider or you will have to pay a fee to cancel your contract. Many providers also have a pre-paid options in which you pay on a monthly basis for the service. There is no contract and you may cancel service or switch to another provider at any time. Below are more details about each type of service:

Contracts

- Most cell phone companies charge for all calls, outgoing AND incoming, though many have free calling within their network.
- Some plans give you a set number of minutes per month. Overage minutes are charged at a much higher rate. Check your plan to see if weekend and nighttime minutes are free.
- If you don't have a US Social Security Number, expect to pay a deposit (the deposit should be returned at the end of the contract). Some providers have become more friendly toward international customers recently. T-Mobile, for example, allows F-1
- Text messaging (SMS) typically carries an additional charge if not included in a plan. Ask about adding texting to your plan.
- For most companies, you must have a compatible phone. Ask specifically if you want to use one you currently have.

PLEASE NOTE: Once a contract has been signed, you will be obligated to pay the entire contract period. If you decide to break the contract providers will usually charge a high fee to cancel the contract. Contracts generally last from one to two years.

Pre-Paid

- If you intend to make calls to your home country, ensure this is possible with your specific plan.
- May be month-to-month subscriptions or "add minutes as you go."
- No deposit required.
- Cheaper phones– generally basic features such as SMS and calling.
- Cost ranges from minimal to comparable to contract services.

Local Providers

1. AT&T
 - 1611 State Highway 50 # A, Commerce, TX inside Shell Gas Station
 - 6006 Wesley Street, Greenville, TX (local authorized AT&T retailer)
2. Sprint
 - 3130 Interstate Hwy 30 West Suite B, Greenville, TX
 - 151 Industrial Drive E #300. Sulphur Springs, TX
3. Verizon
 - 380 Shannon Road E, Sulphur Springs, TX
4. T-Mobile, Metro PCS, AT&T, Sprint, Verizon
 - 2701 State Highway 50, Commerce, TX (inside Walmart)
 - 1710 Live Oak Street, Commerce, TX (Metro PCS and other providers)

Campus Services

Academic Success Center – ASC

Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction

ASC@tamuc.edu

www.tamuc.edu/ASC

Gee Library - walk in tutoring on first floor

The Academic Success Center – ASC – offers general tutoring in core subjects and supplemental instruction in select courses to assist students in reaching their academic goals. All services available through the ASC are provided at no charge. ASC offers one-on-one tutoring by appointment and walk-in tutoring (hours vary) in core subjects at Gee Library. Supplemental instruction in traditionally difficult courses provides additional support by a peer tutor who works closely with the instructor, attends lectures, and facilitates regular study sessions. JAMP room (STC 110) tutoring in the Science building supports lower level biology, chemistry and physics. Mobile tutoring (MASC) is available in Whitley Hall and Pride Rock on Tuesday evenings. Workshops on Study Skills, Time Management, and Presentation Skills are offered each semester.

Campus Recreation Center

(903) 468-3171

Morris Recreation Center

Mission Statement: The mission of Campus Rec is to provide students, faculty, staff and community members opportunities

that promote health, fitness, and wellness through participation in a variety of structured and informal recreational activities, services, and educational programs emphasizing lifelong wellness. The department of Campus Recreation is designed to enrich campus life and advance the university's educational mission.

Campus Rec:: The \$12 million facility includes a 45-foot climbing wall, a brand new bouldering wall, 3-lane jogging track, 4 racquetball courts, 2 basketball courts, large fitness room with cardiovascular and weight equipment, aerobics room, classroom, snack area, and locker rooms. The outdoor area includes: heated leisure pool (beach-type entry, fountains, water tunnel, current channel, bubble jet benches, 3-lap lanes), 2-tier hot tub with water fall, 2 sand volleyball courts, 2 basketball courts, picnic tables, BBQ pits, and a sunbathing area.

Cain Sports Complex: The facility includes lighted NCAA softball and baseball field, two lighted Intramural Sports fields, brand new soccer fields, picnic area, horseshoe pits and an open area.

Adventure Base Experience: Our facility includes an excellent challenge course with over 25 high and low elements, a new 9 hole disc golf course, campgrounds and a gear rental center.

Career Development

Tina Boitnott, Director

(903) 468-3223

Tina.Boitnott@tamuc.edu

Student Access & Success One Stop Shop 159

What is your major? What are you going to do when you graduate? These are big decisions a college student will need to make. Career Development is here to help you along the way from freshmen to graduate. We are here for you! Take advantage of these opportunities to “Make the Connection” with Career Development: Career Assessment with MyPlan.com a web based system that is easy to use. Whether you are deciding/changing a major or narrowing your major career options, MyPlan should be in your plans. Call our office today and ask for the FREE code. Career Counseling offers a one-on-one opportunity for you to have your MyPlan interpreted by a career professional and obtain direction with clear and practical decision making tools. Call to schedule an appointment. Job Search programs and events provide professional development opportunities such as resume/cover letter critique, mock interview, job fairs, business etiquette dinner, groundhog job shadow day, on-campus interview and job search workshops. These are offered throughout each semester. Lion Tracks is an online system that connects you to potential employers, please visit www.tamuc.edu/liontracks. You may search updated full-time, part-time, internship and co-op job opportunities. You may upload your resumes and cover letters. Employers may view your resumes and post their job announcements. Lion Tracks also features our upcoming calendar of events and job fair employer participant lists.

Children's Learning Center

Lisa Rhoades, Director

(903) 886-5769

Lisa.Rhoades@tamuc.edu

Sikes Hall

The Children's Learning Center (CLC) offers parents who are students or faculty/ staff members the luxury of worry-free, on-campus child care, in an academic setting while they concentrate on their work or classes. The licensed facility provides care and instruction for children ages six weeks through five years of age. We also offer after-school program and in the summer we feature KID CAMP for children ages six to ten years of age. Full curriculum, meals and snacks are included in the monthly tuition.

Counseling Center

Dr. Linda Clinton, Director

(903) 886-5145

Linda.Clinton@tamuc.edu

Halladay Student Services 204

Life as a college student can be difficult. You may find that you need a person to talk with, someone who will listen, provide support, and help you meet the daily challenges of college life. A counselor can be that person. The Counseling Center offers services and programs to help students be successful. Our counselors can assist you in maximizing your potential for personal growth and academic success. Confidentiality is respected and

counseling records are not included as part of a student's academic record. Counseling services are free to currently enrolled students, so we encourage you to take full advantage of all the Counseling Center has to offer.

Services and Resources

- **Individual Counseling** – a process of self-exploration and discovery that can help you to achieve your personal and academic goals
- **Couples Counseling** – involves two people coming together to learn new ways of communicating that may help relieve relationship issues
- **Group Counseling** – allows you to meet with other students in a safe, supportive environment to discuss similar issues and share feedback
- **Crisis Intervention** – counselors are available 24 hours a day to respond to a mental health emergency or crisis situation
- **Relaxation Room** – offers a quiet, private place to de-stress, listen to soothing music, watch a peaceful video, and enjoy two massage chairs
- **Medication Consult** – a psychiatrist is available by appointment to advise and consult regarding medications
- **Biofeedback** – helps you in a mind over matter fashion to learn to use thoughts and will to control mind and body
- **Consultation and Referral** – counselors can provide feedback on how to help others and/or make appropriate referrals
- **Educational Outreach** – screenings and outreach programs are offered to educate and increase campus awareness of mental health issues
- **Legal Assistance** – an attorney is available by appointment to offer advice regarding legal rights and options. To schedule an appointment, contact us at 903-886-5145, or come by the office. Sometimes a little help can make a big difference!

Financial Aid & Scholarships

Maria Ramos, Director

(903) 886-5091

Maria.Ramos@tamuc.edu

Student Access & Success One Stop Shop 101

Scholarships for new students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are also offered through our office. First-time freshman students fully admitted to the University will be considered for scholarships based on their ACT or SAT scores. Transfer students will be considered for transfer and PTK scholarships based on number of transferable hours and cumulative transfer grade point average. Continuing students can contact the department in which they are majoring to determine availability of scholarships based on intended majors. All students apply for scholarships through their MyLeo. For more information, please visit: www.tamuc.edu/Scholarships

Rayburn Student Center

Wendy Morgan, Director

(903) 886-5806

Wendy.Morgan@tamuc.edu

Rayburn Student Center, 246

The Rayburn Student Center features 92,000 square feet of space dedicated to your needs as a student. The Rayburn Student Center (RSC) is the center of many campus events

and activities that help to enhance your experience at Texas A&M University-Commerce. It is home to approximately 100 student organizations and clubs, the Mane Card ID office, the Pride Shop, and the Campus Bookstore. Dining options include the Dining Hall and Food Court, featuring Starbucks. The Club is a multifunctional space with seating for guests looking for a place to grab a bite, watch a late night movie, Dining Hall and Food Court, featuring Starbucks.

Registrar's Office

Paige Bussell, Registrar

(903) 886-5071

Paige.Bussell@tamuc.edu

Student Access & Success One Stop Shop 120

The University Registrar provides leadership for planning, organizing, and managing all activities related to student registration and records. Students may request their official transcript by contacting the Registrar's Office or go to <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/transcript/>.

Student Disability Resources & Services

Rebecca Tuerk, Director

(903) 886-5150

studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

James G. Gee Library 130

Texas A&M University-Commerce encourages all students with disabilities to become involved in all aspects of campus life. The office of Student Disability Resources and Services (SDRS) provides services to students with disabilities to ensure accessibility to university programs. In order to receive accommodations students must complete and submit an application along with current documentation, which will be reviewed by the office of SDRS to determine if a student qualifies for services. If a student qualifies for services, they will receive individualized academic advice and reasonable accommodations. SDRS also offers evaluation referral, disability-related information, assistive technology counseling, various assistive devices and equipment, and interpreter services for academically related events. Although SDRS does not offer disability evaluations, tutoring, personal expenses, attendants or scholarships, we can provide referral information. The SDRS office also works closely with the Division of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). To schedule an appointment with the SDRS office, please call (903) 886-5150.

Student Activities and Leadership

2nd floor SRC

(903) 886-5811

The Student Activities and Leadership Suite provides an array of involvement and leadership opportunities. Come visit us to get involved with student organizations, apply to be a student center employee, and learn about available leadership training and activities. Our suite is home to the Campus Activities Board (CAB), Greek Life, the Student Government Association, and the Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) office. We have space for your meetings and events! The student center has six meeting

rooms equipped with state of the art technology, flat screen televisions and mounted projectors.

Student Health Services

*Located at Henderson Hall across from Prairie Crossing
903-886-5853*

Medical services are available at the Student Health Service Office, located in Henderson Hall, to students who are currently attending classes at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Services include diagnosis and treatment of minor illnesses, minor injuries, minor surgery, x-ray and lab procedures. Students are seen Monday thru Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM; after hour illnesses, car accidents and other emergencies may be seen at the local hospital at the expense of the student. Walk-in appointments are available; however, students are encouraged to call 903-886-5853 to call and schedule an appointment.

Success Coaches

(903) 468-5174 SuccessCoaches@tamuc.edu

Student Access & Success One Stop Shop Room 136
University College's Success Coaches provide course selection and registration assistance for entering first-time, full-time freshman students until they have completed all of the following: 1) their first academic year at the University; 2) twenty-four non-remedial credit hours; 3) declared a major; 4.) met Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requirements. The Success Coaches, in conjunction with college/departamental advisors, offer the same service to transfer students who have fewer than thirty non-remedial credit hours and have not met the requirements for the Texas Success Initiative (TSI). Success Coaches help students transition into college life at Texas A&M University-Commerce by assisting students with academic advising, career exploration, and making students aware of university policies and available university resources. They receive training in student development theory, University procedures and policies, and are knowledgeable resources for help on a variety of student issues. If they cannot solve a problem, they will help a student find someone who can. The Success Coaches be reached by e-mail at SuccessCoaches@tamuc.edu.

Technology Services

*McDowell Administration Building Room 156
(903) 468-6000*

Technology Services provides support for academic and administrative computing, academic research, computer hardware and software, and the voice, video, data networks. It is responsible for the integrity, security, and reliability of all administrative information that supports and enhances A&M University-Commerce. Technology Services, located on the first level of the Business Administration Building, Room 156, is staffed to provide a help desk, computer and network support, systems analysis, programming, data preparation, and computer processing for all divisions. Students can activate their e-mail, wireless access and dialup Internet accounts online at <http://leo.tamuc.edu>. To review the e-mail for University Communication procedure, see: [http://www.tamuc.edu/administration/Rules%26Procedures rule 25.99.08.R1](http://www.tamuc.edu/administration/Rules%26Procedures%20rule%2025.99.08.R1), For more information, contact the Technology Services help desk by phone at 903-468-6000 or email HelpDesk@tamuc.edu.

University Police Department

Henderson Hall (903) 886-5868

The University Police Department is a University community service and enforcement agency offering police, traffic, parking, crime prevention, and safety services. The University Police Department is deeply concerned about the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, staff and visitors. To help further a safe learning environment, the University Police Department conducts a number of safety programs such as Rape Awareness, Bicycle Safety, Alcohol Awareness, Crime Prevention, and Safety Inspection. In addition to these programs, the department publishes a weekly crime log in order to better inform the university community of current crime trends.

Writing Center

Hall of Languages Room 106 (903) 886-5280

The Writing Center offers students one-on-one assistance with their reading and writing needs. The tutors are not editors, but they are here to offer student feedback and strategies for improving writing projects and reading texts critically and thoughtfully. Several computers and a printer are available for student use. No appointment is necessary, and the Writing Center is open to all students—first year through graduate level. Hours vary each semester; however, they usually run from 9-4 Monday through Friday. The Writing Center also offers an Online WritingLab (OWL) at: Writing.Tamuc@gmail.com.

Off-campus Instructional Sites

Collin Higher Education Center - CHEC

972-599-3122 • www.tamuc.edu/chec •

CHEC@tamuc.edu

Texas A&M University-Commerce has partnered with Collin College and four area universities to provide undergraduate and graduate degrees at the Collin Higher Education Center (CHEC) in McKinney. A&M-Commerce offers the following degrees at the CHEC: BA/BS of Interdisciplinary Studies in Elementary Education, BS in Psychology, and BA and MA in Spanish, MS/MEd in Counseling and MEd in Curriculum and Instruction (Elementary and Secondary Education). Consider registering for classes offered at the CHEC. It is a great alternative for students that live in the Collin County area and want an A&M-Commerce education minutes from home.

Mesquite Metroplex Center

Russell Blanchett, Director • (972) 613-7591

www.tamuc.edu/academics/locations/mesquitemetro/default.aspx • mesquite.metroplex@tamuc.edu

Join us on Facebook- *A&M-Commerce Mesquite Metroplex Center*

The Mesquite Metroplex Center offers a variety of Texas A&M University – Commerce graduate degree programs. Students have the opportunity to earn their Master's degree in Curriculum & Instruction (Elementary Education & Secondary Education), Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Special Education, Social Work, and courses toward a MEd in Psychology. Additionally A&M-Commerce offers several online degree programs.

Navarro Partnership- Corsicana Campus

Jeanetta Groce, Director • (903)875-7617

www.tamuc.edu/academics/locations/navarroPartnership/default.aspx • Navarro.Corsicana@tamuc.edu

Bachelor's degree options through the Navarro Partnership in Corsicana include Applied Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Criminal Justice, Liberal Arts, and

Training and Development. Bachelor's degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies with concentrations in EC-6, 4-8 Math, 4-8 Science, and 4-8 Math and Science are available for students pursuing a career in teaching. A master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction is also available.

Navarro Partnership – Midlothian Campus

Stephanie Tinnard, Success Coach • (972) 775-7231

www.tamuc.edu/academics/locations/midlothian/default.aspx • Navarro.Midlothian@tamuc.edu

Bachelor's degree options through the Navarro Partnership include Applied Arts & Sciences, Business Administration, Training & Development, Liberal Studies, and Interdisciplinary Studies with EC6 Education, 4-8 English Language Arts, 4-8 Science, and ESL/Bilingual certification options. The Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction include Elementary, Early Childhood, and Special Education.

Rockwall

Dr. Sharon Johnson • 903-468-8707

Sharon.Johnson@tamuc.edu

1050 Williams Street • Rockwall, Texas 75087

New location beginning Spring 2013: 2610 Observation Trail, Rockwall

www.tamuc.edu/academics/locations/rockwall/default.aspx
Rockwall@tamuc.edu

Texas A&M University-Commerce, Rockwall location provides several graduate degrees. The College of Education & Human Services Department of Curriculum and Instruction offers the MEd degree for RISD educators. The College of Business and Entrepreneurship offers their full MBA program as well a number of classes in other business related programs. Individuals interested in furthering their education may consider taking classes on this campus based on their program of choice. Our Rockwall location is 45 minutes from A&M-Commerce's main campus.

Universities Center at Dallas

1901 Main Street, Suite 107

The Universities Center at Dallas is located at 1901 Main Street between St. Paul and Harwood. (214) 915-1900
www.ucddowntown.org success@ucddowntown.org
<http://web.tamuc.edu/academics/locations/dallas>

The Universities Center at Dallas offers a variety of Texas A&M University – Commerce undergraduate and graduate degree programs conveniently in downtown Dallas. The Universities Center at Dallas (UCD) was established in 1994 as the Dallas Education Center (DEC) and is located in the former Joske's Department Store building at 1901 Main Street in downtown Dallas. The UCD was the first multi-institutional teaching center (MITC) for higher education in Texas and was established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to provide access to public higher education at the upper division and graduate levels to citizens who live, work and find it convenient to take their education in downtown Dallas. The City of Dallas, the business community, and the Alliance for Higher Education partnered to provide opportunities for such access by establishing the DEC, which became the UCD.