Graduation Expectations

The State of Texas, The University of Texas System, and The University of Texas at San Antonio are concerned about the excessive number of years that today’s students spend in institutions of higher education pursuing undergraduate degrees. UTSA is seeking ways to encourage students to graduate in a timely manner by considering certain incentives and removing needless barriers.

UTSA expects students to graduate in a timely fashion and strongly encourages its undergraduates to set their goals to complete their baccalaureate degrees in four years, or if that is not feasible, in no more than six years. Students who make small sacrifices now to devote as much attention as possible to their academic endeavors in order to achieve timely graduation will realize significant benefits in the future. Students should contact their assigned academic advisor to discuss the benefits of timely graduation (http://utsa.edu/moneymatters/cost/graduating.html).

Academic Advising

UTSA views sound academic advising as a significant responsibility in educating its students. Employing developmental advising principles, UTSA academic advisors offer academic advising and guidance to empower students to realize their full potential. For this reason, each student is assigned to a particular professional academic advisor so the student can establish a strong mentoring relationship with her or his advisor, whom he or she may consult on all academic and curricular issues. Each advisor has a caseload of students which allows the advisor to be knowledgeable about their students’ strengths, weaknesses, and preferences. Students should be comfortable and confident in the advice given them by their advisors, and know the advice they receive will be consistent and accurate. Students are encouraged to develop mentoring relationships with faculty for additional information and support.

Students are ultimately responsible for knowing and meeting degree requirements, for enrolling in appropriate courses to ensure orderly and timely completion of their degree programs, and for following the rules and policies of UTSA as found in the catalog, the current UTSA Information Bulletin, and the online schedule of classes. Each professional advisor sees students concerning all matters related to their academic status, such as progress toward degree completion, graduation status, academic warning, academic probation, academic dismissal, and changing majors. Students who are on academic warning or academic probation for the first time or who are reinstated after academic dismissal or with a Texas Success Initiative (TSI) deficiency are required to be advised, and holds are placed on their registration records to ensure that the student meets with the advisor. Students may also be required to meet with an advisor to obtain approval to register for restricted courses.

Frequent advisor contact provides students with current academic information and promotes progress toward educational goals. All students, regardless of classification or major, accepted into the Honors College (http://honors.utsa.edu) are advised through the Honors College. In some cases, a student may be advised by more than one advising component.

All academic advising is organized into the following components:

- Academic Major Advising: Downtown, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences, Interdisciplinary Education, Business Studies, Engineering, Life and Health Sciences, Mathematical and Physical Sciences
- Student Placement Advising (includes students without declared majors; CAP students)
- Pre-Professional Advising: Health Professions, Pre-Law
- Honors
- Athletics
- Teacher Certification

Students may need to consult with advisors in the Athletics program, secondary teacher certification, or Health Professions Office if they are student-athletes, are seeking teacher certification at the secondary level, or are pursuing a career in the health professions.

All UTSA undergraduates are required to meet with their assigned academic advisors no later than the first semester of their sophomore year and develop a filed degree plan, utilizing the planner component of Degree Works, showing semester-by-semester course selections and expected graduation dates. A registration hold will be placed on the records of each undergraduate who has earned 45 or more semester credit hours and has not met with their assigned advisor and filed a degree plan with an anticipated graduation date. Undergraduates are
expected to follow this filed degree plan in Degree Works and meet with their advisor regularly when they deviate from the plan or have a change in academic standing, to ensure they stay on track for timely progress toward graduation.

In addition, students are required to meet with their academic advisors to complete a **pre-graduation degree audit** before they meet 90 semester credit hours toward their degree. The pre-graduation audit is intended to inform the student about which courses are still needed to graduate, ensure that all courses needed for graduation are included in the student’s filed degree plan, and identify required prerequisites which are missing and whether scheduling accommodations are necessary. Holds may be placed on the records of each undergraduate who has earned 90 or more semester credit hours but has not completed a pre-graduation degree audit.

Undergraduates are urged to monitor their progress toward their degrees by using the online degree evaluation system, Degree Works, available through ASAP (Automated Student Access Program) (https://asap.utsa.edu). Degree Works is the degree auditing/checking system within Banner. Students are able to run a degree evaluation in the Student Services area of ASAP.

### Registration for Classes

Students who attend classes at UTSA must be officially registered or approved to audit a course. Registration instructions are online each semester in ASAP (https://asap.utsa.edu). Questions regarding registration should be directed to the One Stop Enrollment Center or the Office of the Registrar (http://utsa.edu/registrar).

UTSA does not guarantee the availability of particular courses or sections, and admission to classes is permitted only until the maximum number of students allowable in any section has been reached. UTSA reserves the right to cancel any course or section in which the number of registrants does not warrant its continuation.

A student is not permitted to register for classes offered in two consecutive time periods on different campuses, one at the Main Campus and the other at the Downtown Campus, unless there is at least a 40-minute period of time between the end of the first class and the beginning of the second class or the student has received special permission from the Dean of the college of his or her major to register for the two consecutive classes.

### Late Registration

Late registration permits students who have been admitted to UTSA to register for classes during an allotted time just prior to and at the beginning of the semester as indicated in the online registration calendar (https://asap.utsa.edu/terms.htm) each semester. Since many courses will have been closed at capacity, late registrants may need to select their courses from a reduced schedule. **Students are not permitted to register after the close of the late registration period, except in extenuating circumstances. See the section “Adding Courses After Online Registration is Closed.”**

### Adding Courses After Online Registration is Closed

Adding a course after the Online Registration period requires the approval of the course instructor and the chair of the department offering the course. After the Census Date in any semester, students may not add courses except in extremely rare and extenuating circumstances as approved by the Dean of the college offering the course and by the Dean of University College for undergraduate courses.

### Enrollment in Graduate Courses

#### For Undergraduate Credit

An undergraduate student with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher may enroll in a graduate course and apply the credits earned to an undergraduate degree after obtaining approval from the student’s academic advisor, the instructor of the course, and the chair of the department offering the course. Approval forms are available on the Office of the Registrar website (http://utsa.edu/registrar/forms.html#registration). All approvals must be obtained and the form filed by the time of registration. Students are encouraged to begin collecting the appropriate authorizations before the start of the registration period.

#### For Graduate Credit

An undergraduate student with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher and lacking no more than 12 semester credit hours for graduation may enroll in a graduate course and earn graduate credit under the following conditions:

1. All hours required for the student’s undergraduate degree must be completed in the term in which the graduate course is being taken.
2. In order to earn graduate credit, the student must graduate at the end of the semester in which the course(s) is taken; otherwise, the course counts as undergraduate credit.
3. If graduate credit is earned, the semester credit hours are not considered part of the baccalaureate degree program.
4. The student must obtain permission from the student’s academic advisor, the instructor of the course, and the chair of the department offering the course. Approval forms are available on the Office of the Registrar website (http://utsa.edu/registrar/forms.html#registration). The form must be filed by the time of registration. Students are encouraged to begin seeking appropriate authorizations before the registration period.

An undergraduate student with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher and lacking no more than 30 semester credit hours for graduation may enroll in a graduate course and earn graduate credit under the following conditions:

1. The student is in good academic standing in an accelerated bachelor/master’s degree program or is in good academic standing in the Honors College.
2. If graduate credit is earned, the semester credit hours are not considered part of the baccalaureate degree program.
3. The student must obtain permission from the student’s academic advisor, the instructor of the course, and the chair of the department offering the course. Approval forms are available on the Office of the Registrar website (http://utsa.edu/registrar/forms.html#registration). The form must be filed by the time of registration. Students are encouraged to begin seeking appropriate authorizations before the registration period.

### Maximum Hours of Enrollment in Summer Terms

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board sets limits on the number of semester credit hours in which a student may enroll during a
A student may enroll in no more than 15 semester credit hours during an entire Summer Semester, regardless of the combination of terms.

**Undergraduate Credit Limitation**

Section 54.014 ([http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.54.htm#54014](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.54.htm#54014)) of the Texas Education Code was amended during the 76th legislative session to allow institutions of higher education to charge a higher tuition rate to resident students for semester credit hours attempted in excess of 45 semester credit hours above those required for completion of a degree program. The law applies only to new undergraduate resident students beginning in Fall 1999 or later. The 79th legislative session reduced the semester-credit-hour limitation to 30 semester credit hours for all new undergraduate resident students who enroll for the first time in Fall 2006 or thereafter.

The 45 (or 30) hours include courses which are repeated, duplicated, or courses for which the student received a grade of “W.” Although the law allows some exclusions, hours for courses passed, failed, withdrawn, and dropped are counted in the 45 (or 30) hours if the student took them while paying resident tuition at a public institution in Texas. Students are encouraged to seek academic advising and to follow the official degree plan in the approved catalog of graduation.

Resident undergraduate students who initially enrolled during or after the Fall 1999 Semester and who enroll in courses in excess of 45 semester credit hours above those required for completion of their degree program will be assessed an additional charge per semester credit hour (for amount, see Tuition, Fees, Charges and Deposits section of this Bulletin ([http://catalog.utsa.edu/informationbulletin/tuitionfees/additionalfees/#limit](http://catalog.utsa.edu/informationbulletin/tuitionfees/additionalfees/#limit))). Effective Fall 2006, all new undergraduate resident students will be assessed the higher tuition rate for semester credit hours attempted in excess of 30 semester credit hours above those required for completion of a degree. Students with questions or who wish to appeal this policy due to extenuating circumstances should contact their assigned academic advisor.

**Three-Attempt Rule**

The Texas Legislature enacted legislation that does not allow universities to receive state funding for courses containing the same content attempted by a student more than twice at the same Texas state-supported institution of higher education. This regulation not only includes completing a class more than twice, but also includes classes where grades of “W” were earned by withdrawing from classes or dropping a class after the official semester Census Date (see the online registration calendar ([https://asap.utsa.edu/terms.htm](https://asap.utsa.edu/terms.htm)) for specific Census Dates for each semester).

There is now a monetary benefit if students complete classes prior to the third attempt; therefore, it is imperative that students make every effort to complete courses successfully the first time. Upon the third or subsequent attempt to take the same course at UTSA, a surcharge per semester credit hour will be assessed by UTSA for courses that fall into this category. This surcharge will be in addition to the regular in-state per semester credit hour tuition rate. Current tuition, fees, and charges schedules can be accessed on the Fiscal Services website ([http://www.utsa.edu/fiscalservices](http://www.utsa.edu/fiscalservices)). The three-attempt rule applies to all undergraduate students; however, out-of-state students who pay the out-of-state rate would not be subject to the surcharge; out-of-state students with fee waivers or who are exempt from paying the out-of-state rate would be assessed the surcharge at the same rate as in-state students.

The Texas Legislature has mandated that students be held accountable for any courses they have taken beginning with the Fall 2002 Semester (this means that the “course count” begins with courses taken or dropped after Census Date beginning with the Fall 2002 Semester). However, certain classes will be exempt from this rule, such as independent study, special topics courses with differing content, and developmental and remedial courses up to the 18-semester-credit-hour limit established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (19 Texas Administrative Code, § 13.106 ([http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtacext.ViewTAC?fac_view=5&li=19&pt=1&ch=13&sch=F&rl=Y]). Students who, in their final semester or term prior to graduation, must repeat one or more previously completed courses for the third or more times in order to meet graduation requirements, will be exempt from paying higher tuition for the repeated course(s) only in the semester or term prior to graduation and shall be permitted the exemption from paying higher tuition for the repeated course(s) for only one semester. Those students wishing to apply for this exemption need to go through the appeal process described below.

An undergraduate student wishing to appeal a charge because of the three-attempt rule may complete an appeal form available in the office of the student’s assigned academic advisor.

**Limitation on Attempting Gateway Courses**

Many UTSA majors have designated certain courses as Gateway Courses. Gateway Courses are generally courses that are necessary for students to progress through their chosen major and are usually those courses which contain material in which a student needs a clear-cut comprehension in order to be successful in completing other course requirements for the major. That is, Gateway Courses often determine whether a student is a suitable candidate to pursue the indicated major.

In order to promote student success and to help ensure that students are choosing majors that are appropriate for their aptitudes and skills, a UTSA student may attempt a Gateway Course for his or her major at most twice. If the student does not successfully complete a Gateway course in two attempts, then the student is required to change his or her major to a different major. Successfully completing a Gateway Course means achieving a grade in the course required by the major. For instance, if the major requires that all of the courses required for the major must be completed with a grade of “C-” or above, then successful completion of a Gateway Course for that major means receiving a grade of “C-” or higher in the course. However, receiving a grade of “CR” through the “Challenging a UTSA Course” process or the “UTSA Competency Examination” process will be regarded as successfully completing a Gateway Course. For the purpose of this policy, dropping a course with a grade of “W” or taking an equivalent course at another institution of higher education counts as an attempt at taking the course.

A student should consult the UTSA Undergraduate Catalog or contact his or her assigned academic advisor for a list of the Gateway Courses designated for the major.
Dropping Courses

Undergraduate students may drop courses from their schedules for a limited time each semester. The online registration calendar for each semester indicates the deadlines for students to drop courses.

Courses officially dropped on or before the Census Date do not appear on a student’s transcript. See the online registration calendar (https://asap.utsa.edu/terms.htm) each semester for the Census Dates.

Students who drop courses between the Census Date and the Automatic “W” Date have a record of the courses on their transcripts with an automatic grade of “W.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Automatic “W” Date for Undergraduate Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall or Spring Semesters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The end of the ninth week of classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The end of the third week of classes for a five-week Summer term, and the end of the sixth week of classes for a ten-week Summer term. Appropriate adjustments are made for the Automatic “W” Date for shorter Summer terms (see the online registration calendar).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is the student’s responsibility to drop a course by the appropriate deadline. If a student fails to drop a course, even if the student does not attend the course, he or she will receive a grade of “F” in the class.

Faculty and staff will not drop a student from a course automatically for nonattendance (unless the faculty member is utilizing instructor-initiated drops; see below); the student must initiate the process and complete any necessary steps to ensure that the class is dropped.

Students may be administratively dropped from courses for failure to attend certain laboratory courses in the first class week, for failure to attend or participate in developmental courses, for failure to complete course prerequisites prior to the start of the semester, or when courses are canceled. Students cannot assume, however, that they will be automatically dropped from any class for failure to attend or failure to pay tuition and fees. Students are responsible for checking their schedules on ASAP and for checking their myUTSAmail e-mail accounts or their preferred e-mail accounts designated in ASAP to determine if they have been dropped from a class.

After the Automatic “W” Date, an undergraduate student may not drop a course except with the approval of the Dean of the college in which the course is offered and then only for urgent and substantiated, nonacademic reasons. Students who want to drop all classes after the semester begins should refer to the section “Withdrawal from the University” (http://catalog.utsa.edu/informationbulletin/generalacademicregulations/undergraduate/withdrawal/ in this chapter. Refer to the sections “Undergraduate Credit Limitation (p. 3)” and “Three-Attempt Rule (p. 3)” in this chapter for information about the financial consequences of receiving “W” grades.

Six-Drop Policy

Effective Fall 2007, the legislated and enacted six-drop policy limits each student to drop no more than six courses throughout his or her undergraduate college career at Texas public institutions of higher education. Under Section 51.907 (http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.51.htm#51907) of the Texas Education Code, “an institution of higher education may not permit a student to drop more than six courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education.”

The statute applies to students who enroll in a public institution of higher education as first-time undergraduates in Fall 2007 or later. Any course that a student drops is counted toward the six-course limit if:

1. the student was able to drop the course without receiving a grade or incurring an academic penalty (for courses taken at UTSA, this means the student was able to drop the course without receiving a grade of “A+,” “A,” “A-,” “B+,” “B,” “B-,” “C+,” “C,” “C-,” “D+,” “D,” “D-,” “F,” “CR,” “NC,” or “IN,” but did receive a grade of “W” for the course which results in no academic penalty);
2. the student’s transcript indicates or will indicate that the student was enrolled in the course; and
3. the student is not dropping the course in order to withdraw from the institution.

This would not include courses dropped before the semester begins or before the Census Date.

There are exemptions that may allow a student to drop a course without having it count against the six-drop limit, but it is the student’s responsibility to demonstrate good cause. A Student Petition for a Course Drop Exemption to the Six-Drop Policy form may be obtained from the student’s assigned academic advisor. Students who petition for an exemption are encouraged to do so as soon as possible after dropping the course for which the exemption is requested.

This statute applies across Texas public institutions, and procedures for implementation may vary among institutions. A UTSA student affected by this statute that has attended or plans to attend another institution of higher education should become familiar with that institution’s policies on dropping courses.

Instructor-Initiated Drop Policy

The Instructor-Initiated Drop allows an instructor to drop a student from the instructor’s course if the student exceeds the noted attendance and/or missed assignment policy outlined in the course syllabus. The instructor may use Instructor-Initiated Drop only through the last day that a student may drop themselves.

The Instructor-Initiated Drop process is part of the revised HOP 5.09 Attendance and Participation Policy (http://www.utsa.edu/hop/chapter5/5-9.html). It is a voluntary activity—faculty may choose to drop a student who exceeds limits in any of their courses or choose not to implement instructor drops. However, if they choose to implement instructor drops, the instructor must:

- Inform students on the course syllabus that they will be dropped for exceeding the unexcused absence or missed assignment limit.
- Specify in the syllabus the exact number of unexcused absences and/or missed assignments that will result in a drop.
- NOT count officially excused absences as defined in HOP 5.09 (http://www.utsa.edu/hop/chapter5/5-9.html).
- Take disability accommodations directly related to attendance and/or turning in assignments into account as noted in an official letter from Student Disability Services and attempt to engage in an interactive process with the student before they initiate a drop.
• Take and record regular attendance.
• Specify in the syllabus the method of taking and recording attendance, and inform the student it is their responsibility to document their attendance using the specified method.
• Send at least one warning to the student using the official notification process in ASAP if the student is approaching the absence or missed assignment limit.
• Implement drops consistently for any student who exceeds the limit. In other words, all students in the class must be treated equally, since discrimination or differential treatment is a condition for upholding a student grade grievance.

Instructor-Initiated Drops or course drops by students on their own may impact progression toward degree completion and result in financial consequences and obligations. Students are advised to consult with appropriate university personnel to determine what areas of their enrollment may be impacted. These areas include but are not limited to: funding received through financial aid, scholarships, veteran affairs or other funding sources, immigration status, employment with the university, restrictions on repeating courses including gateway courses and legislation such as the Six-Drop Policy, Three Attempts Rule and Undergraduate Credit Limitation.

Instructor-Initiated Drops are enforced at the discretion of the instructor. In the event that a student no longer desires to be enrolled in the course, action must be taken by the student to drop the course via ASAP by the deadline.

Cancellation of Enrollment

Students who fail to fulfill admission, registration, or financial requirements or who otherwise fail to adhere to academic regulations may have their enrollment for the semester canceled. Students may apply for readmission for a subsequent semester provided they have resolved the cause of cancellation.

English Language Assessment Procedure

The English Language Assessment Procedure (ELAP) is a mandatory UTSA assessment for incoming international students whose Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores are between 500 and 600 (paper version) or 61 and 100 (Internet version). ELAP tests academic language skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The test is administered during orientation week at no charge to the student. A registration hold is placed on students until the test is successfully completed.

Students who are required to take English for International Students (EIS) classes and do not register for them or drop them before they are successfully completed will be withdrawn from the University and will jeopardize their visa status. Once students successfully complete the EIS classes, the registration hold is removed from their record.

Texas Success Initiative

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a program designed to ensure college readiness of students entering Texas public institutions of higher education. Entering undergraduate students, unless exempt, must take the Texas Success Initiative Assessment to determine their readiness to enroll in entry-level academic coursework at the university. For those students who are not yet ready to enroll in that coursework, the University must provide advising and educational support necessary to assist them in achieving college success.

The University offers developmental education courses in certain academic areas for students with deficiencies as identified by the Texas Success Initiative Assessment. Developmental education courses cannot be used as degree credit. All developmental education courses are graded on a credit/no-credit basis and will not be included in the student’s grade point average.

Students deemed college ready by the TSI may enroll in any UTSA entry-level course including those entry-level courses in mathematics, reading, and writing listed in the UTSA Developmental Education Plan. College ready students may enroll in non-entry level courses if they meet the prerequisites or satisfactorily complete placement tests.

More information regarding the Texas Success Initiative, including exemptions, may be found by visiting the student’s assigned academic advisor and on the Texas Success Initiative website (http://utsa.edu/success/tsi.html).