



DEPARTMENT OF
**AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
& COMMUNICATIONS**

TEXAS TECH
Davis College

Graduate Student Handbook

Updated 2025

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Introduction

Hello and welcome to the Department of Agricultural Education & Communications at Texas Tech University! We are glad you have made the important decision to pursue your graduate education in our department.

We hope this handbook is a useful resource for you as you work toward your degree. We have included a great deal of information regarding degree plans, working with an adviser, and completing research.

For students on assistantship, this handbook also contains details about the roles and responsibilities expected for those positions.

Our department prides itself on having a family-like atmosphere where we support and encourage each other. If you have additional questions beyond what we have in this handbook, please reach out to me, your adviser, our staff, other faculty members, or your fellow graduate students. We want to help you achieve your academic goals.

Once again, welcome to the department and the Texas Tech Red Raider Family!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Meyers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Courtney" and last name "Meyers" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Courtney Meyers
Professor & Graduate Studies Coordinator
Agricultural Education & Communications Department
Texas Tech University

Education

Our department is the #1 agricultural communications program in the country. As a national leader in the discipline, our faculty represent a wide variety of backgrounds, interests, and specialties. This ensures the degrees offered in our program meet the needs of the students, no matter their career interests. Learn more about the [Department of Agricultural Education & Communications](#), as well as our [faculty](#) and [staff](#).

Graduate Program Courses

Many of the classes taken as a graduate student are within the department. Descriptions of all graduate courses can be found by searching the Texas Tech [online course catalog](#).

Graduate coursework in the department is offered on a three-year rotation. You can find the course rotation for department courses [here](#).

Graduate Degrees Offered

Master's Degrees

Agricultural Education, M.S.

This degree is designed to prepare graduates for teaching, research, extension, leadership, and administrative positions in the public and private sectors.

The Master of Science in Agricultural Education requires a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate course work for the thesis option and 36 semester hours of graduate course work for the non-thesis option. Non-thesis option also requires the student to successfully complete an examination over their completed course work at the end of the degree program.

Please see the detailed curriculum plan [linked here](#).

Agricultural Communications, M.S.

This degree is designed to prepare graduates for entry into or advancement in a variety of mass media, marketing, and public relations positions.

The Master of Science in Agricultural Communications requires a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate course work for the thesis option and 36 semester hours of graduate course work for the non-thesis option. Non-thesis option also requires the student to successfully complete an examination over their completed course work at the end of the degree program.

Please see the detailed curriculum plan [linked here](#).

Thesis Option	Non-Thesis Option (Oral Comprehensive Exams)
Master's program students work closely with their academic adviser to determine the best course of action for completing the required thesis research and writing. Texas Tech Graduate School thesis requirements are linked here . Additional information for thesis-option master's students are provided by the Texas Tech Graduate School here .	The comprehensive evaluation is most often administered during the semester of intended graduation. The final evaluation requires a synthesis and application of knowledge acquired during the course of study and research leading to the master's degree. Additional information for non-thesis-option master's students are provided by the Texas Tech Graduate School here .

Doctoral Degrees

Agricultural Communications and Education, Ph.D.

The Doctor of Philosophy in agricultural communications and education is a resident degree designed to prepare students for a future career as a faculty member. The program provides an opportunity for advance study in the human dimensions of agriculture (agricultural communications, agricultural education, & agricultural leadership) to meet the growing demand for college and university faculty who can provide instruction in more than one dimension.

This degree program requires a minimum of 48 semester hours of graduate coursework along with the development of a dissertation (12 hours) beyond a master's degree (total of 60 hours post-master's degree).

Please see the detailed curriculum plan [linked here](#).

Each doctoral candidate is expected to demonstrate competency by satisfactorily completing (1) a comprehensive written examination, (2) a dissertation that demonstrates original, independent scholarship, (3) a final oral examination, and (4) a minimum of ten outside-of-course experiences in the various human dimensions of agriculture including, but not limited to, teaching, communications, extension, international, and research.

Please see the Experience Plan outline [linked here](#).

Agricultural Education, Ed.D.

The Doctor of Education in agricultural education degree program builds on previous undergraduate and graduate courses along with their life experiences (including three years of related work experiences). It is designed to develop independent and critical thinking. Emphasis is placed on selecting courses and experiences that lead to a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of agricultural education and/or agricultural communications, a supporting field, and methods of research and statistics.

This degree program requires a minimum of 64 semester hours of graduate coursework beyond the master's degree along with the development of a dissertation.

Please see the detailed curriculum plan [linked here](#).

Doctoral Comprehensive Exams and Dissertation

Doctoral students work closely with their academic adviser to determine the best course of action for completing the required comprehensive examination and dissertation.

In general, at or near the end of course work, the student will take a qualifying written examination consisting of eight hours for Agricultural Education or Agricultural Communications, four hours for Research, Evaluation, and Statistics; and four hours for the Supporting Field.

No more than two weeks after the written examination, the student will take an oral qualifying examination. Both examinations will be administered by the student's advisory committee. Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examinations, the student will be nominated to doctoral candidacy and will begin the work of their dissertation.

After completion of the written dissertation, the student will present and defend it orally. Texas Tech Graduate School dissertation formatting requirements are [linked here](#).

Graduate Certificates Offered

The department provides three graduate certificates. These are typically completed by students who are not pursuing a degree in the department. Adding one of these certificates requires a separate application.

Agricultural Communications Leadership

This certificate enables individuals working in agricultural communications profession to increase their understanding of the more complex and dynamic communication strategies such as crisis communications, knowledge management, and effective online media utilization. Increases students' understanding of leadership and the people with whom they interact on a daily basis, enabling them to perform their professional duties more effectively and efficiently. [Click here to learn more about this certificate.](#)

Agricultural Leadership

This certificate program allows students from a multitude of agricultural backgrounds to add value to their current expertise whether working in the industry or pursuing a graduate degree. This program allows students to get an in-depth understanding of the human interactions involved in leader-follower exchanges and learn to apply those theories to real-world situations. In addition to Leadership Theory, topics include barriers and suggestions for developing leadership in rural communities, working with volunteers, culture and climate of the workplace, measuring and evaluating leadership in organizations and current topics affecting leaders within the agriculture industry. [Click here to learn more about this certificate.](#)

Global Food Security

The 12-credit-hour certificate enables individuals working in a wide range of areas within the food industry to increase their understanding of the interdisciplinary issues related to the approaching global crisis of food security. This program follows recommendations for increased education within the four pillars of food security (Availability, Access, Stability, and Utilization) to build human capital as the world surges toward a population of more than 9 billion people by the year 2050. The certificate increases students' understanding of various aspects in food security while allowing the flexibility to focus instruction in one of the four defined pillars. [Click here to learn more about this certificate.](#)

Navigating the Graduate Program

Newly Admitted Student Task List

To help you begin your academic journey at Texas Tech, the Graduate School [has a list of steps](#) for you to establish your status as a student, enroll in courses and pay tuition and more.

Registering for Classes

Visit with a departmental faculty member to determine what courses to take each semester. You may search for classes and build schedules through [Raiderlink](#) > Registration > Schedule Builder.

Graduate students on assistantship are required to enroll in nine (9) credit hours per fall and spring semesters. During the summer semester, only six (6) credit hours are required.

Enroll in courses through [Raiderlink](#) > Registration > Add/Drop Classes.

Tuition & Fees Billing

The [student business services](#) page can help answer any questions you may have about tuition billing and [payment options](#). Before each semester begins, tuition and fees will be posted to the student eBill account.

Tuition and fee bills are located within [Raiderlink](#) under MyTech > Manage My Finances > Student Business Services > eBill. From this window, the enrollment in payment plans option is available.

If you wish to use the [Texas Tech Rec Center](#) or attend sporting events on campus, you can fill out the [elect to pay form](#). This will allow you to pay the student price for these services, and you will be able to simply swipe your student ID to get into games and the rec center.

[Payment plans](#) are available for managing tuition and fees billing each semester.

Texas Tech Student Business Services offers several [how-to guides](#) for utilizing the eBill system.

Choosing A Major Professor & Committee

Selection of a major professor, also known as your academic adviser, is an agreement between the student and a faculty member who will guide the student through the degree process, including typically serving as the chair of the student's thesis, dissertation, or oral comprehensive exams committee.

Selection of a major professor and committee should be an alignment of the specializations and interests of the student and the faculty members.

Master's degree committees must be composed of at least three faculty members, all of which may be within the department. Doctoral degree committees must be composed of at least four faculty members, one of which must be external to the department.

Committees are selected based on the best fit for the thesis, dissertation, or oral comprehensive exams topics. The student and the major professor should discuss who should be on the committee. Once the decision has been made, simply request a meeting with the desired faculty, pitch the topic idea, then request their presence on your committee.

Once the committee is formed, the next step is to arrange a committee meeting to further propose your thesis, dissertation, and oral comprehensive exam topics and begin to set expectations and deadlines.

Tracking Progress Toward Degree

Progress toward your degree can be tracked using [DegreeWorks](#).

Completing Your Degree

The Texas Tech Graduate School provides steps and forms for progress toward completing your degree. Please note that we no longer require a Degree Plan to be submitted because we use DegreeWorks; however, it is helpful to have a degree plan to follow that your committee has approved.

[Required Steps for Master's Degree](#)

[Required Steps for Doctoral Degree](#)

You can find the necessary forms mentioned in the steps within the [Forms & Resources portion](#) of the Graduate School website.

During your final semester, you should be familiar with the deadlines set by the graduate school for graduation. Select the pertinent semester of graduation on the Texas Tech [Graduate School website](#) under the Academic Progress > Graduation Deadlines tab.

Other Helpful Information

Student Organization

The Agricultural Education and Communications Graduate Student Organization (AECCGO) provides leadership opportunities, research exchange, and educational and social activities for graduate students within the department.

The club meets for lunch once per month in the Agricultural Education & Communications building. Lunch is often provided by the club or by way of potluck. Events during the year include a student tailgate, alumni reception, and graduate reception. Please visit the [organization page on TechConnect](#) to learn more.

Parking

TTU students have multiple [parking options](#). Most graduate students do not live on campus and need information for [commuter parking](#) options.

Purchase a permit as soon as possible to ensure priority lot selection. Permit costs are listed [here](#). To purchase your permit, go to [My Parking Account](#).

Buses are available at all Texas Tech parking lots for pick up and drop off. [Learn more about campus buses](#).

During the fall and spring semesters, the most common option is a Commuter West permit. The least expensive option is the Commuter Satellite permit. During the summer months, graduate students may choose to purchase a [Surface Parking Lots permit](#) to park any residence hall or commuter surface (not garage) space weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., any park-and-pay area for free after 5:30 p.m., and rec Center parking for free (time limit of two hours).

Information about the bus system, maps, and routes can be found [here](#).

RaiderCanvas

[RaiderCanvas](#) is Texas Tech's learning management system. All courses will have an available course link in the student's Canvas dashboard.

[Log into RaiderCanvas here](#).

Additional resources for navigating RaiderCanvas as a student are [available here](#).

Research

Research may be a requirement of your degree program, depending on your assistantship position and major professor. Such work would include a thesis or dissertation but may also include studies for presentation at research conferences or to be published in an academic journal.

Research projects require approval by Texas Tech's Institutional Review Board (IRB) when the project meets the definition of human subject research. Should the study include intervention or interaction with individuals and uses the information in the study, the research must have approval from IRB before collecting data. To find out more about if your research requires IRB approval, see the Human Research Protection Program [webpage](#) regarding the question.

Responsible Academic Conduct Training

This training is required for all new and continuing degree-seeking graduate students. Separate training modules are available for different broad disciplines. We recommend you complete the "Social and Behavioral Responsible Scholarship Course."

New students must complete training within their first semester. You must complete this training or a hold will be placed on your account. Get started by [visiting this website](#) and following the instructions.

Cayuse IRB

Cayuse IRB is the web-based system Texas Tech researchers utilize to submit IRBs. As a TTU student, you will first need to request user access by [clicking here](#).

Once you have been granted access, you can go directly to the [Cayuse login](#) to gain access to your dashboard.

While the student may complete the IRB form, a faculty member (the primary investigator) must approve the IRB in order for the form to be submitted for review.

IRBs are assigned to reviewers every Monday based on the order the HRPP office receives the submission from the researcher. The reviewer then has 10 business days to complete each review. Most reviews will require two-to-three exchanges of revisions. TTU IRB faculty reviewers will NOT conduct reviews when faculty are off duty (Winter Break, May and Fall Intersessions).

CITI Training

Human subjects researchers are required to complete CITI Training Human Subjects TTU Social and Behavioral Investigators - Basic/Refresher. Direction for registering and completing the training are located on the Human Research Protection Program CITI Training webpage. Keep the certificate of completion handy to attach to IRB submissions.

Qualtrics

Qualtrics is the online platform utilized by the Davis College for delivering survey instruments to research participants. This tool is free to use as a graduate student in the department.

To gain access, simply email Kathleen Stonum at Kathleen.Stonum@ttu.edu your request. The only information she needs is your email address. She will create your account and you will receive an email with additional instructions for logging in and tutorials.

Center for Communication Research & SONA

The Center for Communication Research is located in the basement of the Media & Communication Building. The CCR houses state-of-the-art technology for studying all facets of audience response to media messages—video, audio, online, commercial, informational and more. With more than 6,000 square feet of research labs, the CCR provides research services to those both within and beyond the Texas Tech community.

[SONA](#) is the College of Media & Communication's online study registration system. Students may sign up to participate in studies (sometimes receiving extra credit or financial gain) through the portal.

Use of the CCR and or Sona system may be requested to conduct research. To schedule a meeting to learn more, contact Kristina McCravey, CCR Lab Manager, at Kristina.McCravey@ttu.edu or 806-834-3590.

Professional Conference Research Submissions

Graduate students have the opportunity to attend professional research conferences throughout the country. The first step in preparing research for a conference is to discuss with the academic advisor about research opportunities available to develop a poster or paper. Conferences have different submission deadlines for posters and papers, and those dates can be found on individual conference websites.

Common conferences attended by students in our department include, but are not limited to:

- [Agricultural Media Summit](#) (AMS)
- [American Association for Agricultural Education](#) (AAAE)
- [Association for Communication Excellence](#) (ACE)
- [Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education](#) (AIAEE)
- [Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists](#) (SAAS)
- [Southern Region American Association for Agricultural Education](#) (SAAAE)
- [Western Region American Association for Agricultural Education](#) (WAAAE)

Conference Poster Printing

The avenue most commonly used by our department for poster printing is the [Texas Tech College of Architecture Print Bureau](#), located in room 902 of the College of Architecture at 1800 Flint Avenue.

To print in architecture, you can email a PDF of your poster to architecture.print@ttu.edu with instructions and dimensions.

If you are printing using funding from the department or a grant, check with the academic adviser or main office to ensure correct account or PO numbers.

Journal of Agricultural Education

From the website: *The Journal is to promote the profession of agricultural education by facilitating and expediting communication among members of the profession to the end that results of research, trends, developments, and innovations in agricultural education are widely shared. We possess a broad view of agricultural education that includes extension education, communications, leadership development, teacher education, and related areas that support the agricultural sciences.*

Find the policies and procedures for submission to the [journal linked here](#).

Journal of Applied Communications

From the website: *The Journal of Applied Communications* is a quarterly, refereed journal published by the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences (ACE). The *Journal of Applied Communications* focuses specifically on issues and topics relevant to agricultural and applied communication professionals and is peer-reviewed to ensure accuracy and quality.

Find the policies and procedures for submission to the [journal linked here](#).

Travel

When traveling on behalf of the department, a travel application must be completed at least two weeks before departure for domestic travel and 40 days in advance for international travel. Submit this form to the main office. Ensure the correct account numbers for the funds covering the departmental expenses are noted on the form. These can be obtained from the supervising faculty member or the main office. If funds are from AECGO, the club treasurer has the necessary paperwork to complete.

Upon return from travel, complete the travel reimbursement form to ensure funds not advanced for the trip are reimbursed to the traveler. Submit this form to the main office. You can find the required travel forms on the Department's [Toolbox webpage](#).

Regarding payment for conference registration – visit with the funding faculty member to identify the best way to pay for registration. Most often, use of a P-card is required.

AEC Department Graduate Student Travel Support – Guiding Principles

Graduate student travel to conferences is beneficial to both the students and the department. A goal for the graduate program is that every graduate assistant has an opportunity to attend and present in at least one academic conference during their graduate program experience.

- To help achieve this goal, the department will provide partial financial support for graduate assistants to attend one academic conference per year. (If faculty advisors would like for graduate students to attend additional conferences, they will need to secure other funds to cover travel expenses)
- The student must have a paper, poster, or professional development session accepted at the conference (or other designated function) to seek departmental support.
- If the department supports the travel for a graduate student, there is an expectation that the research will be improved and advanced for submission as a journal publication.
- In addition to the department travel support, students should be exhausting AECGO and Graduate School funding opportunities.
 - Learn about Graduate School funding here:
<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/financial/travel.php>
- Students may have to supplement travel costs with their own funds.

While we encourage students to participate in conferences to present their research and engage with the broader academic community, please note that not all travel-related expenses may be fully covered. Typical costs that may be eligible for support include registration fees, airfare, and accommodation, but the amount available is limited and will vary by location due to costs.

Minimizing Costs

You should look for the most budget-friendly option that fits your travel schedule (e.g., airfare, rental vehicles, hotel room). If you want exceptions to these expectations (such as your own room, preferred airline seating, etc.), you will pay the difference with personal funds. As much as possible, students and

faculty members should minimize travel costs. For example, carpooling to the airport to reduce parking fees or getting rides to the airport to eliminate parking fees.

Overall, we expect all members of the department to be good stewards of travel resources.

Meals

The only meals eligible for reimbursement are those that ARE NOT provided by the conference registration and/or the hotel. Additionally, itemized receipts will be reimbursed UP TO the per diem GSA rate per meal. (Texas Tech University will not reimburse alcohol purchases.)

Lodging

While double-occupancy per room is a preferred arrangement, students should not expect this. In certain situations, students may be required to share rooms and/or beds with other students.

Transportation

Transportation arrangements are reliant upon the group plans. For example, it may be more cost effective to rent a vehicle and drive several people than to take individual flights.

Additional Travel Opportunities

For additional conference attendance or travel requests beyond the first supported event in a given year, students must seek alternative funding. This should include working with your assistantship supervisor to explore other financial options (such as grant funding).

Requesting Travel Support

Please plan ahead and coordinate with the department in advance to discuss available funding for your travel needs. All requests for travel support should be approved before incurring any expenses. Students traveling as representatives of the department must complete required travel paperwork and uphold the department's values while at the conference.

Travel Requests

- As soon as students have initial travel plans, they must complete a travel request form that outlines what funds they are requesting from each area (i.e., department, grant, grad school, AECGO, and personal).
- If traveling to present a research project, students must also describe their plans to advance their research (e.g., poster to a paper, paper to a journal article).

Employment

Graduate assistantship positions are part-time positions within the department that serve to support the functions and activities of the Department and provide an income while you complete your graduate degree. These 20 hour/week positions will provide a monthly salary and partial relief of tuition and fees (including a wavier of out-of-state tuition). In addition to a salary, graduate assistants are provided an office space and computer to complete their assistantship duties as well as their coursework.

Graduate students on assistantship are required to enroll in nine (9) credit hours per fall and spring semesters. During the summer semester, only six (6) credit hours are required.

Typically, the assistantship supervisor is also the student's major professor, also known as the academic advisor.

The Department has three types of assistantship positions. The yearly availability of these positions is dependent upon funding with the number of positions varying from year-to-year. In addition, the amount and difficulty of the tasks increase for doctoral-level assistantships.

Research Assistantship - A graduate student would be employed in support of the research faculty and funded projects that may include activities in a laboratory, in a field, computer work, or such other activities as may assist research effort.

Teaching Assistantship - A graduate student would be employed in support of the teaching mission of the department which include a variety of classroom and laboratory activities.

Administrative Assistantship - A graduate student would assist with internal departmental activities and/or work related to outside-the-department service functions (such as teacher workshops) which utilizes knowledge and skills beyond undergraduate academic studies.

Roles & Responsibilities of Graduate Assistants

First and foremost, it is important to remember each assistantship is unique. Roles and responsibilities should be defined between the supervising faculty member and the graduate student on assistantship. Regardless of such an agreement, there are certain expectations for each graduate assistant.

Complete tasks as assigned by your supervisor. An assistantship is a job, not a scholarship. Poor performance regarding work quality, quantity and attendance can lead to dismissal from the assistantship as other students waiting for the position.

Be present. Post your daily responsibilities schedule, including classes you attend, classes you teach and classes you assist, in the hallway outside of your office. Business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. You are expected to be in the office working 20 hours per week. (This does not count time you are taking graduate courses.) Please visit with your supervisor to set this schedule and give a copy to the main office.

Be responsible and helpful. Graduate assistants are representatives of the department. As such, if you see someone or something in need, act upon it. If someone is lost, assist them in finding the right room or building. If someone needs help, pitch in. If something needs to be done, do it. Please help keep the hallways, classrooms, offices, conference rooms and kitchen clean.

Dress for success. Proper dress for the office is dressy casual to business professional, depending on the day's responsibilities. Nice jeans and a collared shirt or blouse may be appropriate most days, but those

teaching should dress business casual or business professional. Hats, t-shirts, sweats, etc. are not appropriate office attire.

Be a role model for undergraduate students. These students look up to you as leaders in the department. Assist them when possible and support their interest and image of the department.

Be a recruiter. Spread the good word about the department and your experience as a graduate student in it. Do so at home, with other Texas Tech students, at conferences, etc.

Communicate. Sign in and out of the building using the board in the main office. Each semester, provide a copy of your daily schedule to the main office. If you will be out of the office due to illness, conference attendance, etc. you must inform your supervisor and the main office.

New Texas Tech Employee Requirements

As a graduate assistant in the department, you must complete the Texas Tech University New Employee I-9 Packet. If you have a teaching or teaching assistant component as a part of your position, you are highly encouraged to complete the packet prior to reporting for orientation. This will expedite onboarding into RaiderCanvas.

If you have questions while you are completing the packet, please call the departmental office for assistance.

To complete the packet, go to TTU Human Resources, [New Employee I-9 Packet website](#). Read and follow the steps provided on the webpage. You must complete, print and hand sign each document. Return all documents to the departmental office for processing. Don't forget to bring the required forms of identification with you. These materials must be originals – copies will not suffice.

Special notes concerning the I-9 packet steps. If you have issues with opening the linked documents, try switching to a different internet browser. Specifically, the I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification form in step one tends to cause issues. [You can find the linked document here instead](#), select the second PDF in the list. Once you have the document downloaded, complete every question and section on the first page. If you do not have "other last names", complete the box with "NA". Do not complete the second page of this document, it is for office use. Finally, review the third page to select which form(s) of identification you will bring to the office with your completed packet.

Monthly Salary

Graduate assistants are paid on the first business day of each month, beginning the month after their start date. Once onboarded as a Texas Tech employee, set up direct deposit through the Payroll & Tax tab within [Raiderlink](#).

Tuition & Fee Payment

Partial tuition and fee waivers are applied to graduate assistant accounts. However, these waivers will not be immediately applied to your account. Therefore, signing up for a tuition payment plan through Raiderlink prior to the billing deadline is advised for all new and continuing graduate assistants. Once the waivers are applied, plan payments will adjust.

Failing to pay your tuition and fees bill will have result in a drop from Texas Tech and the assistantship position.

Tuition and fee bills are located within [Raiderlink](#) under MyTech > Manage My Finances > Student Business Services > eBill. From this window, the enrollment in payment plans option is available.

FERPA Training

Lead instructors (doctoral students) and teaching assistants (doctoral and master's students) must complete FERPA training prior to the beginning of their first semester. This training allows you to be added as a teaching assistant to the course in RaiderCanvas.

[Click here](#) to register for FERPA Training. Complete the FERPA training as soon as you are onboarded as a Texas Tech employee to avoid delay in RaiderCanvas access to the course.

Navigating RaiderCanvas as a Teaching Assistant or Lead Instructor

Using RaiderCanvas as a teaching assistant or instructor is very different from using it as a student. RaiderCanvas training and additional resources are [available here](#).

Many times, a previous course can be copied over into the newest course section so there is not a need to start from scratch. Ask the instructor of record for the course for additional information.

Health Insurance

Graduate assistants are part-time employees, and therefore, are not offered an insurance plan. Texas Tech University undertook a competitive and open process in accordance with governing law and regulation to solicit bids from interested insurance carriers. Based on the competition, Academic Health Plans was awarded the contract. Visit [Academic HealthPlans](#) for more information about the TTU Academic HealthPlan.

Offices & Computers

Every graduate assistant with the department will be assigned a computer and a desk space. You are responsible for the proper care of your computer and the cleanliness of your desk. If you need technical assistance, please contact Michaela Crumpler and she will put you in touch with the correct person.

Keys

Graduate assistants have a key to the building, and a key to various offices in the building. A form will be completed by the main office and submitted to request keys. When keys are ready, an email notification is sent to the student and are available for pick up at the Physical Plant.

If keys are lost, the assigned student will be responsible for paying to replace those, and the entire building will have to have all locks replaced. You will be responsible for all costs.

Reserving Conference Rooms

The conference room (AGED 215) and the lab/meeting room (206A) must be reserved through the main office for use. Conference rooms may be scheduled for theses and dissertation defenses, meetings, comprehensive exams, research, and other departmental business. To reserve a room, contact the main office with the times you need the room(s) reserved.

Copying & Office Supplies

Paper is located in the copy room, along with the copier. The key to the copy room is in the main office. Your access code to the copier will be the last five digits of your eRaider number.

For the printers located in each office, the individuals in that office are responsible for keeping paper stocked. Office supplies are located in a closet in the main office. Anyone working in the main office can assist you, or check things out as needed.

Clickers for class or other presentations are available to be checked out from the main office.

Concluding the Assistantship Position

Before graduation and conclusion of an assistantship, complete the following checklist.

- Generate a letter of resignation to end your assistantship. If you don't do this, you will not receive your final paycheck. An example letter will be provided.
- Be sure all the files related to your assistantship (including thesis/dissertation) are organized in a manner on your departmental computer that will make sense to your faculty supervisor and/or the next graduate assistant.
 - Ask your faculty supervisor if they want a copy of all your files (CD, Dropbox.com folder, etc.)
 - Get the departmental back-up drive from Dr. Meyers and copy files to that drive into a folder labeled with your name.
- Organize hard copies of assistantship-related materials (books, paper files, etc.) for the next person to use. This includes any storage areas (closets, the shed behind our building, etc.).
- Return any departmental equipment (cameras laptop computers, etc.) or borrowed resources (thesis/dissertation copies, reference books, etc.) to the place/person you got it from and let the departmental office know these and any other adjustments to inventory locations.
- Remove any log-in passwords you may have created on your departmental computer.
- Clean desk and bookshelf so they are ready for the next person to use. You can get cleaning products from the departmental office.
- Clean any items out of the kitchen fridge.
- Turn in keys, credit cards, and any other departmental property to the office. Make sure a forwarding address is on file for you should there be a need to contact you after graduation.
- Order thesis/dissertation copies. Per university policy, you are required to provide your chair with a bound copy. It has been tradition that a second copy is provided for the department's library, but this is optional. Our graduates have used Thesis-on-Demand (<http://www.thesisondemand.com/>) or PhD Book Binding (<https://phdbookbinding.com>).

Texas Tech University

To get acquainted with campus, the [university map](#) is a great resource when searching for buildings. Texas Tech has a [campus calendar](#) that contains events on campus. The [Student Activities Board](#) plans free events on campus that are really fun and usually include giveaway items.

Keep an eye on the [TechAnnounce](#) emails that arrive in your email inbox daily for updates on campus events, scholarly opportunities, research participant opportunities and more.

A few good places to know about on campus:

- The [Graduate Student Center](#) is located in the West Basement of the Administration Building across the parking lot from the SUB. There is free coffee, working space, computers, and student support services including the [Graduate Writing Center](#). Texas Tech student ID is required for entry.
- The Student Union Building (SUB) has several food options and a coffee shop. You can also visit MailTech to send mail and buy stamps. The Student ID office is located in the SUB. You can also visit an ATM or the bank located inside.
- The [Family Therapy Clinic](#) offers caring, confidential therapeutic services and is located in the Human Sciences building, on Akron between Broadway and 15th Street.
- The library is located just across from the SUB. You will likely utilize the [online library services](#) as well as book stacks to retrieve scholarly resources for class and/or research.

Alcohol / Smoking / Drugs

Alcohol and drugs are never allowed on campus under any circumstance. Smoking is restricted to designated areas on campus.

Lubbock and Surrounding Areas

There are many places to find information about Lubbock. If you are a social media user, Lubbock in the Loop is a great page to follow on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for information about events and such around town. Another good resource is [Everything Lubbock](#).

Places of interest in Lubbock and surrounding areas:

- Museums
 - The Buddy Holly Center
 - National Ranching Heritage Center
 - Texas Tech Museum
 - Science Spectrum
- Outdoor Pursuits
 - Golf Suites
 - SUP LBK at Buffalo Springs Lake
 - At'l Do Farms corn maze
 - Palo Duro Canyon
 - Caprock Canyon State Park
- Coffee
 - J&B Coffee
 - Monomyth Coffee
 - Gold Stripe Coffee Roasters
 - Sugar Brown's
 - Ninety-Two Cafe
- Wineries and Breweries
 - Llano Estacado Winery
 - Caprock Winery
 - McPherson Cellars Winery
 - Two Docs
 - The Brewery
- Dining
 - Caprock Café
 - Orlando's
 - Spanky's
 - Blue Sky
 - Cook's Garage
 - Capital Pizza
- Nightlife
 - The Depot District / Blue Light Live
 - University & Broadway/ Chimy's
 - Charley B's
 - Little Woodrow's