HOWDY!

Welcome to the Aggie family! The next few years promise to be exciting as you connect with students, faculty and staff from varied backgrounds, diverse cultures and unique experiences. Your time at Texas A&M will be spent in the pursuit of knowledge and the engagement of lifelong learning.

This New Student Conference Handbook was developed to help you make the most of your mandatory New Student Conference (NSC). Please take time to read through this and any other materials you receive from the university as these are valuable resources you can use throughout your first year at Texas A&M University.

Your NSC is a critical component of your future success as an Aggie. Through a virtual format, you’ll participate in sessions and programs designed to assist in your transition to Texas A&M.

Some of the topics we’ll cover at your NSC include:

- University academic requirements, policies and procedures — including course selection and registration.
- Personal safety and security on campus.
- Housing, dining, transportation, financial assistance, academic support and career guidance.

During your NSC, take advantage of the opportunity to gain valuable advice and get your questions answered as you start your journey at Texas A&M.
VIRTUAL NSC

OVERVIEW

Your Virtual NSC will consist of a series of mandatory video sessions providing important information about joining the Texas A&M community. You will also have access to supplemental handouts with more details regarding campus resources and services. Virtual NSC sessions and content will be provided to you about 3-5 days prior to your NSC Day 1 date through eCampus, which is Texas A&M’s Learning Management System, similar to Blackboard.

After you have completed the video series, you will participate in a live discussion group via Zoom with an Aggie Orientation Leader and other incoming students to go over any questions you still have.

We recommend using a laptop, tablet or desktop computer if available to complete your Virtual NSC. Tutorials and more information about using eCampus and Zoom will be sent in an email approximately 10 days prior to your scheduled NSC date.

TEXAS A&M GMAIL

As a confirmed new student, you now have a Texas A&M Gmail account. Your email address is NetID@tamu.edu. Your NetID is the same ID you use to log in to Howdy and the Applicant Information System (AIS).

You should start checking your Texas A&M Gmail account regularly because important information will be sent there prior to your NSC. To check your email, visit google.tamu.edu and log in with your NetID and password. You can also set up Texas A&M Gmail on your smartphone so you won't miss any important emails! To learn how, visit u.tamu.edu/emailmobile.

REGISTERING FAMILY/GUESTS

While the NSC is only mandatory for students, we invite family members and guests to participate in the Virtual NSC experience. There is no charge for family members/guests, but we do ask you register them for the Virtual NSC in the Applicant Information System (AIS).

Registered family members will receive an email with instructions for accessing the content by creating an account in the Aggie Parent & Family Connection Portal.

NSCs EN ESPAÑOL

Thanks to the generosity of The Association of Former Students, the Office of New Student & Family Programs offers Spanish translation for the virtual NSC experience. These services are provided free of charge, but we do request that family members indicate their interest in using this service on their family/guest registration form in AIS.

Registered family members will receive more information via email prior to the Virtual NSC.
ONLINE ORIENTATION

All new students are required to complete online orientation BEFORE they can access their Virtual NSC.

Online orientation is released mid-May and provides a basic overview of information, preparing you for more detailed content shared during the Virtual NSC.

Students attempting to complete the virtual NSC without completing online orientation will have a hold on their account and will not be able to register for courses until they have completed this requirement.

How to access online orientation
Online orientation is accessible through the “My Record” tab in the Howdy Portal at howdy.tamu.edu and will take about an hour to complete.

If you have any difficulties, visit newaggie.tamu.edu/online for support or contact the Office of New Student & Family Programs at (979) 845-5826.

LAB SAFETY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Many courses require students to submit a Lab Safety Acknowledgment (LSA) before course registration is permitted. All NSC attendees should submit the acknowledgment prior to their NSC to ensure registration access.

Submit your LSA via the Howdy portal at howdy.tamu.edu. Step-by-step instructions are available at tx.ag/LSAInstructions.

If you need assistance, please contact the Office of the Registrar at registration@tamu.edu or (979) 845-1003.

MATH PLACEMENT EXAM (FRESHMAN ONLY)

All freshmen are required to take the Math Placement Exam (MPE) and will not be permitted to register for any mathematics course until MPE test scores are on file.

Freshmen enrolling in the College of Engineering and the College of Science (excluding Biology majors) will take a virtually proctored MPE before their NSC. Students in these two colleges will receive instructions for taking the proctored MPE via email, and information will be posted at newaggie.tamu.edu/virtual once it is available. Students may take up to five practice exams prior to their MPE and are encouraged to do so.

All other students should take the MPE online at least 24 hours before attending their NSC. Students will be able to see their MPE scores under the ‘My Test Scores’ in AIS and will want to make sure the MPE scores are posted prior to their NSC.

How to access the MPE & practice exam
Log into howdy.tamu.edu, go to the “Applicant” tab and follow the instructions for the MPE.

Use the online review material available at math.tamu.edu/placement to help you prepare for the 90-minute MPE. Be prepared to spend the full 90 minutes taking the exam. No calculators or help from other resources is permitted on the MPE.

If you experience technical difficulties, please contact the Department of Mathematics at mathassessment@math.tamu.edu.

For information about disability accommodations for the MPE, please see page 4.
BACTERIAL MENINGITIS DOCUMENTATION

All students under the age of 22 entering an institution of higher education are required to provide current proof of vaccination against bacterial meningitis (within five years of the date of intended enrollment) or meet certain requirements for declining such a vaccination. Texas A&M has partnered with Med+Proctor for the submission of bacterial meningitis vaccination records. Please go to medproctor.com/tamu-immunization to register and upload your proof of bacterial meningitis vaccination.

Students must receive the vaccination no later than 10 days before the first day of the semester in which the student enrolls. Therefore, all new students enrolling for the summer 2020 or fall 2020 semesters must receive the vaccination by August 14 and provide proof of immunization by August 15. Newly admitted students who have not provided documentation of vaccination will have a registration hold placed on their account on August 16. Students are highly encouraged to submit documentation earlier if possible. Students who do not provide required documentation will be dropped from fall classes.

To determine if you have satisfied the evidence of vaccination requirement, log into the Applicant Information System (AIS) at applicant.tamu.edu and ensure a check mark is present on the bacterial meningitis checklist item found under the “Additional documents required if admitted” section. Please allow a few days for Med+Proctor staff to complete processing on your immunization document.

For more information, visit admissions.tamu.edu/meningitis.

SUBMIT PHOTO FOR ID CARD

The Aggie Card is your official ID at Texas A&M University and allows you to access numerous campus services.

You must submit an ID photo online on myaggiecard.tamu.edu. Pick-up dates and locations will be communicated via text and email and posted online at sbs.tamu.edu.

TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability and require specific accommodations to complete any of the NSC placement exams or Texas Success Initiative requirements, please contact Disability Resources to discuss your needs. Reasonable testing accommodations are provided to allow students with documented disabilities an opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.

In order to coordinate testing accommodations for any of the tests offered through New Student Conferences, students must submit documentation of their disability at least two weeks prior to the scheduled testing date for review.

For more information, contact the Disability Resources office at (979) 845-1637 or visit disability.tamu.edu.
TEXAS SUCCESS INITIATIVE (TSI) REQUIREMENT

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a requirement by the state of Texas that all students enrolled at public institutions of higher education demonstrate college-readiness in reading, writing, and mathematics. To do so, students must either meet the TSI Exemption criteria or pass the TSI Assessment.

You can check to see if you have fulfilled the TSI requirements online using these steps:
• Go to applicant.tamu.edu and log in
• Find the “Tasks to Complete Prior to Enrollment” checklist
• Find “Fulfill the Texas Success Initiative requirements”

If a red X is present, you will be blocked from registering for certain classes during the NSC. Note that TSI information is not updated until at least 48 hours AFTER you register for your NSC.

The TSI Assessment is not required for all incoming students; many are exempt based on ACT and/or SAT scores. A list of possible exemptions can be found at tx.ag/TSIexemptions.

If you believe you are exempt but a red X is still present in your checklist 48 hours after you register for your NSC, further documentation is needed to verify your exemption. Please contact the Academic Success Center at successcenter@tamu.edu.

All students who are not exempt must first complete the mandatory TSI Pre-Assessment Activity (PAA) found in Howdy under the “My Record” tab under “Texas Success Initiative.” Once completed, they must then take the TSI Assessment at a local public Texas college where testing is available. Some colleges require students to obtain a voucher before testing by calling the A&M testing center at (979) 845-0532.

Visit newaggie.tamu.edu/requirements for more information about fulfilling the TSI requirement, exemptions and testing options.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE PLACEMENT TESTING

Students who intend to enroll for the first time in a college foreign language course, who have previous knowledge of the language, however acquired, and who have no college credit in the language MUST take a placement test to determine the appropriate course for their level of ability. The foreign language placement test also serves as a basis for credit by examination.

Second language learners who take the Advanced Placement (AP) test, the College Board Achievement test, the International Baccalaureate test (IB) or the SAT II Subject Test in their foreign language of choice do not have to take the required foreign language placement tests, as the results of these tests may be used for placement. However, it is highly recommended you complete the placement test. Heritage language learners must always take the placement test, regardless of their scores on high school tests or college level credit examinations, because these tests sometimes are not a good reflection of the language abilities of those students.

All exams will be conducted online and proctored remotely. Students can take them at any time throughout the summer but should do so no later than one week before their NSC to ensure they receive results prior to their registration time. Students who register will receive instructions via email on how to access the exam.

The Spanish Language Placement Test is administered by Hispanic Studies in the College of Liberal Arts. There is a $30.00 fee that is due at the time of registration. For more information, including accommodations, which of the two tests to register for, options for citizens from Spanish-speaking countries, and more, visit tx.ag/SpanishExam. For questions, call (979) 862-4258 or email hispexams@tamu.edu.

All other Language Placement Tests (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian) are administered by International Studies in the College of Liberal Arts. There is a $30.00 fee that is due at the time of registration. For more information, email intsadvising@tamu.edu.

Visit newaggie.tamu.edu/requirements for links to register for a foreign language placement exam.

Please note: Seats in language courses are limited; taking the Language Placement Exam does not guarantee the ability to register for a language course during your first semester.
**FAQ**

**How can I change my conference date?**
You can change your conference date as long as dates are available on the NSC registration website, accessible through the Applicant Information System (AIS) at [applicant.tamu.edu](http://applicant.tamu.edu). As conferences are filled, they are removed from the site and are no longer available due to capacity limits.

Appeals to change into a restricted or full conference are only granted for military orders, medical emergencies or extreme extenuating circumstances that students can substantiate with written documentation.

Appeals are submitted online via AIS by going to the “Contact Us” tab, clicking “Ask A Question,” selecting a subject type of “NSC Appeal” and completing the required fields.

**How can I change my major?**
Admitted students may request a change of major via the Howdy Portal at [howdy.tamu.edu](http://howdy.tamu.edu) by the deadlines posted on [newaggie.tamu.edu](http://newaggie.tamu.edu). Go to the “Applicant” tab and select “Manage Applications.” Some colleges and majors have enrollment limits and will not accept a change of major once filled.

Students may choose from only those colleges and majors with space available at the time of request, but a change of major is never guaranteed and majors can fill prior to processing your request.

Students are encouraged to meet virtually with a Transition Academic Programs (TAP) Advisor prior to requesting a change of major to make sure the new major aligns with your career goals. To find out more about how to register for a virtual advising appointment, visit [newaggie.tamu.edu](http://newaggie.tamu.edu).

**Now that my NSC is virtual, should I still register family members or guests?**
Yes. Access to Virtual NSC family sessions will be available to family members, so please ensure you provide their contact information in the Applicant Information System (AIS). Registered family members will receive an email with instructions for accessing the content by creating an account in the Aggie Parent & Family Connection Portal.

Due to the move to Virtual NSCs, there is no charge to register family members and guests.

**Who do I contact with questions about Advanced Placement (AP) scores?**
For questions regarding scoring or how courses will apply to your degree plan, please contact your academic advisor. If you took an Advanced Placement test in May, scores will not be received by Texas A&M University until mid-July. Students should only accept AP credit after consulting with their academic advisor, which you can do during your NSC.

**What if I am not able to watch the videos /or view the PDFs due to technology restrictions or access?**
If you have concerns about internet access during your NSC, please complete our form online at [tx.ag/NSCinternet](http://tx.ag/NSCinternet), and our staff will respond to assist you.

**When do I pay for tuition, fees and optional campus services?**
Visit [sbs.tamu.edu](http://sbs.tamu.edu) to find out when your tuition and fees payments are due. Payments may be submitted online through the Howdy portal or in person at the General Services Complex in Suite 2801.

**Online Payment**
Express Pay makes it easier for students and authorized users to submit a payment online. For detailed information, go to [sbs.tamu.edu](http://sbs.tamu.edu), open Aggie Answers and search “Bill Payment Instructions.”

**Installment Plan**
- Most required fees, room, board and parking can be divided into installment payments throughout the semester. This plan comes with a $15 charge per semester (not refundable).
- Students who wish to be under the installment plan must enroll at the beginning of each semester. There are penalties for failure to make payments under this plan by their specified due dates.

**Forms of Payments Accepted**
- Online credit cards (2.25% convenience fee)
- E-Check (Free)
- International & domestic wire transfer (Flywire)

**Texas Guaranteed Tuition Plan (TGTP)**
- Existing Texas Guaranteed Tuition Plan accounts are administered by Student Business Services
- The Texas Guaranteed Tuition Fund does not cover laboratory fees, course-specific fees, room, board, books, sport passes, enhancements fees, field trip fees, study abroad trip fees, optional fees, 3-peat fees, etc.
- Students will be responsible for paying additional tuition hours to the university not covered by their plan. Visit the SBS website to request or activate your TGTP.

More tuition and fees payment information can be found at [sbs.tamu.edu](http://sbs.tamu.edu). Students will be able to view fee statements and pay online as early as August. After a payment is made, the student will receive an email notification on the Texas A&M Gmail account with a link to the online statement.
At Texas A&M, we take great pride in our standing as a national leader in service to our veterans and other military-affiliated students. We are committed to serving well those who have served through a uniquely collaborative support network that provides personalized resources and services. The Veteran Resource and Support Center and the Veteran Services Office together have a unique and powerful relationship specifically designed to facilitate your transition and success.

The Veteran Resource and Support Center serves the needs of all veterans and military-affiliated students with uniquely tailored campus and community resources.

The Veteran Services Office (VSO), a part of Scholarships & Financial Aid, helps veterans and their eligible dependents maximize their funding at Texas A&M University. The VSO provides services and support for accessing Veteran Administration (VA) and state education benefits. In addition to certifying your benefit eligibility, they can assist with financial aid and scholarship questions.

Veterans are required to view the Virtual NSC session on getting the most out of their military educational benefits and getting connected with the Aggie veteran community and both campus veteran offices. This session is highly encouraged for military dependents.

**Veteran Resource and Support Center**  
(979) 845-3161  
aggievets@tamu.edu  
aggieveterans.tamu.edu

**Veteran Services Office**  
(979) 845-8075  
veterans@tamu.edu  
veterans.tamu.edu

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**NEW STUDENT & FAMILY PROGRAMS**

In support of Texas A&M University's mission, the goal of the Office of New Student & Family Programs (NSFP) is to facilitate your success as a new student through your first year at Texas A&M.

Through various programs and publications, including NSCs, our staff strive to provide you with the framework to adjust to the expectations, standards, academic rigors and social community at Texas A&M. Our office also facilitates collaboration between university services in order to provide a comprehensive new student experience.

To learn more about NSFP, visit [studentlife.tamu.edu/nsfp](http://studentlife.tamu.edu/nsfp).

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**ORIENTATION LEADERS**

Aggie Orientation Leaders (OLs) are passionate New Student & Family Programs student leaders who dedicate their time to welcome and assist new students and their families. Orientation Leaders can be identified by their distinctive maroon polos and welcoming smiles. These students are trained to help make the conference a memorable and fun experience and will be available virtually to assist you during your conference.

Have a question or a problem? Seek out an Orientation Leader — they're here for you! Visit [tx.ag/OrientationLeaders](http://tx.ag/OrientationLeaders) to learn more about them.