Intelligence and National Security Studies

The University of Texas at El Paso

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

August 2015

Website: http://academics.utep.edu/nssi
# Graduate Student Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the National Security Studies Institute—An Intelligence Community Center for Academic Excellence at the University of Texas at El Paso! The National Security Studies Institute is home to the Intelligence and National Security Studies (INSS) program and all of its degrees and certificates.

The following are general enrollment and advising guidelines for INSS graduate students. Detailed information on these topics, financing your graduate education, and assistantships can be found online in the Graduate Catalog, the Class Schedule, and in the Graduate Student Handbook under “Current Students” at the Graduate School Web site at www.utep.edu/graduate.

The INSS Graduate Student Handbook is subject to change and will be periodically updated. Changes that affect students will be announced, and it is the student’s responsibility to keep abreast of changes. Any suggestions regarding the Handbook or any concerns about the INSS program may be directed to the Director or Program Coordinator of the National Security Studies Institute.

NSSI FACULTY/STAFF

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The main administrative offices of the National Security Studies Institute are located in Kelly Hall, which is the second building on your right on Sun Bowl Drive after exiting I-10 at the Schuster exit, near the corner of Sun Bowl Drive and Schuster. The offices are on the second and fourth floors. You must enter the building from the Sun Bowl Drive floor entrance as the side and rear doors are locked.

Kelly Hall

**Equal Educational Opportunity**
To the extent provided by applicable law, no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored or conducted by the University of Texas at El Paso on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, disability, or sexual orientation. Complaints regarding discrimination should be reported to the University's Equal Opportunity Office.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**
The *Americans with Disabilities Act* requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need an accommodation, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu. The CASS office is located in Rm. 106, Union East Bldg. Students are responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.
As a student, it is your responsibility to read and be familiar with the content of this INSS Graduate Student Handbook. Additional information is available online in the Graduate Student Handbook and Graduate Catalog at www.utep.edu/graduate.

Set up and regularly monitor an active UTEP e-mail account to receive important information from the University, including, but not limited to, financial aid, billing, grades, and campus-wide information. This is your primary means of professional contact with College of Liberal Arts faculty and staff.

Obtain and maintain a UTEP Miner Gold Card. This Card is your official UTEP ID. Most offices will ask to see this ID when you are conducting business with them. It will also grant you access to the Library, numerous computer labs, study centers, the Swimming and Fitness Center, athletic events, and Miner Village.

Provide correct address, phone number, and e-mail to all necessary offices: the Graduate School, Registration and Records, Financial Aid, and your College of Liberal Arts program advising office. All contact information must be kept up-to-date.

Check the status of all your courses. Check that they have been given an appropriate letter grade and that all transfer courses have been processed by the Graduate School and added to your academic transcript. Resolve any conflicts as quickly as possible.

Make sure forms submitted to any office or program have been submitted properly and processed. This includes requests for funds, grade changes, TA/RA assistantship notification, financial aid authorization forms, etc. It is your responsibility to ensure that all materials have been submitted and included in your record in a timely manner.

Refer to the on-line Academic Calendar at www.utep.edu/calendar or to the Class Schedule to identify the dates during which adds, drops, withdrawals, and pass/fail registration changes may occur.

Courses are not always taught every semester. Check with your program advisor to see when courses you need to take will be taught so you can plan your semester schedules accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for completion of your degree plan.

Pay attention to sequencing and prerequisite requirements in planning your semester schedules so that you graduate in a timely manner. Some courses must be taken in sequence or are prerequisites for higher level courses.
Expectations of graduate students are different from those of undergraduate students. While each instructor will have specific expectations and objectives for his/her course, the following is a list of general expectations of graduate students.

- **Adhere to the academic integrity policy.** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, and any act that attempts or is designed to give unfair advantage to a student. Proper citation of others' work is required on all assignments. You can familiarize yourself with proper citation methods by purchasing a style manual or by visiting reputable web sites for *The Chicago Manual of Style* or the APA Citation Style. Refer to [http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/](http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/) for further discussion and the posted tutorial on plagiarism.

- **Attend class.** Students are expected to attend all class sessions. It is the responsibility of the student to inform each instructor of absences. When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his/her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor may drop the student from the class with a grade of “W” before the course drop deadline and with a grade of “F” after the course drop deadline.

- **Be prepared for class.** Active participation is an important part of the learning process. It is the responsibility of the student to ATTEND class prepared to discuss the course material and to complete assignments on time.

- **Submit assignments on time.** Late assignments, even with documented reasons, may be refused or graded lower at the discretion of the instructor.

- **Act in a professional manner.** Approach your graduate studies as you would your job. Occasionally, students must drop courses. If you find yourself in this situation, please inform your instructor as well as students who are on team projects with you of your intention to drop the course.

- **Be respectful of others.** Respect others and their ideas so that discussions can be conducted in a collegiate manner, where all ideas are valued as part of the learning process.
Detailed information on the following and other topics can be found in the *Graduate Catalog* and online at [www.utep.edu/graduate](http://www.utep.edu/graduate).

**Course Numbering System**
Each course offered by The University of Texas at El Paso is identified by a four-digit course number. The first number indicates the level, the second number indicates the semester hour value of the course, and the last two numbers identify the course within its particular department.

- **Lower-Division** courses are designated by a 1 or 2 as the first digit of the course number.
- **Upper-Division/Advanced** courses are designated by a 3 or 4 as the first digit of the course number.
- **Graduate** courses are designated by a 5 or 6 as the first digit of the course number.

**Grades and Grade Point Averages**

- Graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA in both their major field and in any and all upper-division undergraduate and graduate-level work. Credit is given in the Graduate School for the grades “A,” “B,” and “C” only.
- In some courses, the standard grading system is not practical; such grades are not used to compute the GPA. These grades include “I” (incomplete), “P” (in progress), “W” (withdrawal), and “S” or “U” (pass/fail).
- Assignment of the grade “I” (Incomplete) is made only in exceptional circumstances. The time span allowed by the faculty member for the work's completion cannot exceed one calendar year, but may be significantly less depending on the circumstances. In no case may repetition of the course be assigned as work to be completed. If the work has not been completed at the end of the specified time, the “I” will be changed to an “F.” A student will not be cleared for graduation until all Incompletes, regardless of whether or not the courses are required for the degree, have been eliminated from the record.
- The grade of “P” (in progress) is limited to specific a course in which re-enrollment is required. This includes all thesis/dissertation courses (5398-5399, 6320-6321, 6398-6399), graduate internships, and a few specified graduate courses. In appropriate courses, a standard grade may be assigned in graduate internship courses instead of a “P”.

**Grade Changes**

- Graduate students must submit a written request for a grade change to the faculty of record as soon as possible after the receipt of the grade but not later than one year after the semester in which the course in question was taken.
- A graduating student must request a grade change within 3 months after the last day of final examinations of the last semester enrolled. After this time, all grades become part of the student’s official academic history and cannot be altered.
- A grade change must be approved by the faculty of record and the college Dean. Additional approval is required from the Graduate School for thesis/dissertation and project courses (5396-5397, 5398-5399, 6320-6321, and 6398-6399). Students will receive notification of approved changes.

**Time Limits and Catalog Changes**

- All requirements for a master's degree must be completed within one six-year period, including any transfer work or work completed prior to admission to the program.
• Work over six years old is lost and can be reinstated only by special permission of the Dean of
the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Graduate Advisor and College Dean.
• General and specific requirements for graduate degrees may change in successive catalogs.
• Provided the pre-requisite courses continue to be offered, the student is bound only by the course
requirements of the catalog in force at the time of admission or re-admission within a six-year
limit, unless, with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, he or she elects to follow the
course requirements of a subsequent catalog. This regulation applies to course requirements
only.

Courses Counted toward another Degree
No course used to fulfill other degree requirements may be counted toward a graduate degree, either
directly or by substitution.

Reserving Courses for Graduate Credit
➢ Undergraduate students are not normally eligible to enroll in graduate level courses, but under
certain conditions they may request permission from the Graduate School to do so.

• All requests for enrollment in graduate courses must be approved by the graduate program
advisor, college dean, and the Graduate School.
• The undergraduate must submit a Reservation for Graduate Credit form to the Graduate
School (available at the Graduate School Web site). If approved, registration is processed by
the Graduate School.
• This option is limited to one term.
• A student who has a baccalaureate degree is not eligible to reserve courses for graduate
credit unless enrolled at the undergraduate level working toward a second baccalaureate
degree.
• Credit for graduate courses cannot be counted toward a baccalaureate degree; it can only be
reserved for credit toward a graduate degree.
• The undergraduate must need no more than 12 semester hours (or 6 hours in summer
session) to complete all requirements for the baccalaureate degree and must have a grade
point average of at least 3.0 in junior and senior-level courses.
• These 12 hours (or less) must be completed in the same semester or summer session in
which the graduate course(s) are taken.
• Total enrollment for all work must not exceed 15 semester hours (or 9 hours in a summer
session).
• Graduate Research, Individual Studies or Seminar courses cannot be reserved for graduate
credit.
➢ Undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit are listed in the Graduate Catalog under
each respective program. Approval to reserve work for graduate credit neither constitutes nor
implies admission to any graduate program.

Conditional Admission
If a student is conditionally admitted into the Intelligence and National Security Studies program, they
must meet the requirements imposed at the time of admission. This may include preparatory course work
designated by the program advisor. These courses will be in addition to the 30 hours (or more) required
for the master's degree itself. Failure to meet the stated requirements may result in dismissal from the
program.
Transfer Credit
For a master’s degree, usually 6 semester hours of graduate work may be transferred from another accredited institution.

- Request for transfer of credit must be made by the Graduate Advisor to the Graduate School.
- The student must meet the residence requirements for two full semesters or the equivalent and the transfer courses must have been earned within the past six-years.
- Only graduate level courses may be transferred.
- Courses used to fulfill other equivalent degree requirements may not be transferred for credit.
- Only courses in which a grade of “C” or higher was earned may be transferred.
- Correspondence courses are not accepted for graduate credit.
- All documents submitted to the University as transfer work become part of the official records of the University and cannot be released or returned to the student or another institution.

Course Load
- The Graduate School discourages students from working toward more than one graduate degree at the same time.
- At least 30 semester hours of upper-division and/or graduate instruction are required for any master’s degree.
- Nine semester hours of upper-division undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit are the maximum allowable in any individual's program of study. Check with the individual program for final approval.
- Undergraduate courses taken for graduate credit will require additional work, the amount and nature of which to be determined by the instructor.

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>Maximum Load</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall and Spring</td>
<td>9 hrs or more/semester</td>
<td>8 hrs or less</td>
<td>15 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>May and Wintermester</td>
<td>3 hrs or more/term</td>
<td>2 hrs or less</td>
<td>6 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer Sessions</td>
<td>3 hrs or more/term</td>
<td>2 hrs or less</td>
<td>6 hrs</td>
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- Registration in excess of 15 hours during a long semester or 6 hours in a summer term requires the approval of the program, advisor, College Dean and the Graduate School.
- Check with the Graduate School, Financial Aid Office, or Veterans Affairs Office to make sure you meet enrollment eligibility requirements. Failure to do so may jeopardize eligibility.

Academic Standing
- **Students admitted into graduate programs must**
  - Remove all admissions conditions within one semester, unless otherwise stated.
  - Maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher in all courses, including any undergraduate courses used for leveling purposes. Individual programs may impose more rigorous grading standards.
  - Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.5 if enrolled in a non-degree or certificate program.

- **Probation and Dismissal**
  - A student admitted into a graduate program whose cumulative grade point average drops below 3.0 or 2.5 will be placed on academic probation and must return the cumulative grade point average to at least 3.0 or 2.5 by the completion of the next nine semester hours of work.
  - Failure to meet the minimum grade point average requirement during the probationary period will result in dismissal from the Graduate School. Dismissed students must wait a full semester before appealing for reinstatement. Appeals for reinstatement must be submitted
by the Graduate Advisor and College Dean to the Dean of the Graduate School. If readmitted, the student must raise the cumulative grade point average to 3.0 or 2.5 by the end of the first semester of reinstatement or face permanent dismissal from the Graduate School.
RESOURCES

Library

- The University Library is a six story building located on the main campus and is open 107 hours per week. A staff of 64 full-time employees provides a wide range of library services, including reference, government documents, circulation services, cataloging and acquisitions, systems support, Interlibrary Loan, Special Collections, media and microforms, and administration.

- The Collaborative Learning Center, located centrally in the Library with access to the circulation, reference, and technology staff contains over 300 computer work stations equipped with multiple software packages, internet, and library catalog and database access. Wireless computing is available and 30 wireless laptops can be checked out for use within the Library. The Collaborative Learning Center is available for use by students, faculty, and staff.

- The Library provides an environment conducive for both quiet and group study. Seating is available for 1,178 patrons. 25 group study rooms, 174 study tables, and 74 individual study carrels are available. In addition, 187 graduate study carrels are available throughout the library.

- Subject Specialist librarians are available to provide faculty and student research support, integrate the library into the curriculum, develop a collection of resources to support the curricular and research needs, and to provide information literacy instruction. Instruction can be provided to classes, groups, or individuals. The library has access to three instructional classrooms with a combined total of 100 computers available. The classrooms are conducive to both hands-on and lecture style instruction. Instruction can include information and hands-on applications for searching the library catalog, databases, and Internet. Additional topics include the use of a bibliographic management software, citation style, and plagiarism. Additionally, online instructional tutorials are available 24 hours a day to provide basic and advanced library instruction to both local and distance education students.

- In addition to instruction, a reference staff of 10 librarians and 3 paraprofessionals provide reference services 92 hours/week. Reference services are available in person, by phone, or through the library WebPages.

- The library spends approximately $4.0 million each year to acquire library materials. The library maintains annual subscriptions to 3,028 periodicals and 449 databases. Over 25,000 electronic journals are available through these databases and approximately 4,000 monographs are purchased annually. An audiovisual collection is also available to support the curriculum.

- The library's catalog, databases, and electronic journals are available online for searching 24 hours/day. Databases available include EBSCO HOST, Science Direct, ISI Web of Science, Education Full-Text, Proquest Dissertations and Thesis, Blackwell Synergy, Wiley Interscience, SpringerLink Lexis Nexis Academic.
Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service is available to all students and faculty online through ILLIAD for resources that are not available in the library. The library’s membership in OCLC provides access to over 20,000 libraries around the world. The library’s membership in AMIGOS Bibliographic Council joins us with 140-plus member libraries in the Southwest who share resources. The New Mexico State University library extends borrowing privileges to UTEP students and the NMSU campus is only a 40 minute drive from UTEP. UTEP faculty and students also have borrowing privileges in all 55 public universities in Texas through a cooperative network, TexShare. UTEP faculty members also have borrowing privileges at Texas Tech Health Science Center library in El Paso.

Writing Center
The University Writing Center is a place where UTEP undergraduate and graduate students can get individualized writing tutoring to become better writers. Its goal is to help people become more effective, independent, and confident writers. Tutors help students communicate their ideas better and teach them how to correct their mistakes. The tutors can help students

- Analyze their audience
- Understand different types of writing
- Decide on the appropriate writing format
- Brainstorm ideas and organize their thoughts
- Find the right words to express themselves
- Decide the best way to revise drafts
- Learn how to correct grammatical errors
- Utilize and document sources

The Center’s tutors can help with many different kinds of writing projects, such as research reports, resumes, cover letters, essays, analyses, arguments, and lab reports.

The Center welcomes students whose first language is not English. To learn more about the Center, its hours and its services, see its Web site at www.academics.utep.edu/writingcenter
**Prerequisites**

- Every master's degree program is based on the assumption that the student participating in it already possesses a general college education through the baccalaureate level. Accordingly, the first prerequisite for the entering student is a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution (or, for international and special students, proof of equivalent training).

- Students must earn at least a 3.0 grade point average in any deficiency or leveling work is required.

**Degree Plans**

- Nine semester hours of upper-division undergraduate courses approved for graduate credit are the maximum allowable in any individual’s program. Undergraduate courses taken for graduate credit require additional work, the amount and nature of which to be determined by the instructor.

- Discuss your schedule with your advisor each semester and maintain an updated copy of your degree plan to follow your progress toward your degree.

**If a Thesis is Required**

- The candidate must be accepted into a graduate program prior to pursuing the thesis. The candidate for the master's degree writes a thesis under the direction of a supervising committee, consisting of at least two program representatives and one member from outside the program. All members of the supervising committee must be members of the Graduate Faculty. The thesis is subject to the approval of the committee and ultimately to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School.

- The researching and writing of the thesis involves 6 semester hours of credit. To earn the 6 credit hours of thesis, the student must register for course 5398 when work on the thesis is begun. Thereafter, the student must register for 5399 during each semester or term in which work on the thesis is being done. Students may not enroll in 5398 and 5399 simultaneously, nor may they enroll in more than three hours of thesis at any one time, and must be enrolled during the semester of graduation.

- A copy of the thesis, using any publication style appropriate to the given discipline, must be submitted to the Graduate School for format check prior to the scheduled defense date. The thesis must be prepared according to the Graduate School's thesis and dissertation manuscript guidelines available at the Graduate School Web site. The student will receive email confirmation from the Graduate school once the format has been approved.

- The candidate must submit a copy of the final Graduate school approved thesis in PDF electronic format on a CD in a case by the deadline as published in the Class Schedule of the intended semester of graduation. A hard copy of the signature page and defense form with original signatures of the members of the thesis committee must also be submitted to the Graduate School. The signature page must be included in the PDF file but should not be signed.

- Finally, the Graduate School approved thesis must be submitted at the University Microfilms International Web site for on-line publication (http://dissertations.umi.com/utep). Theses are regarded as publications and will be made public once they are approved and submitted to the Graduate School.
• If a student has not completed thesis work at the end of two years after the subject has been approved and recorded, the supervisor may require the choice of another subject. Credit in thesis courses will not be granted until the thesis is completed and approved.

If a Thesis is Not Required
Some programs require internship reports, professional reports or formal papers prepared in certain graduate seminar or conference-type courses in lieu of a thesis. Non-thesis should be comparable to a thesis in every respect except for the evidence of original research and are normally completed just as theses; they must be reviewed and accepted by the supervising committee and if required, submitted to the academic graduate program rather than to the Graduate School.

Capstone Course
The final requirement for most graduate programs is a capstone course. This course can include one or more of the following items: a major research paper, professional portfolio, starred paper, resume or other projects depending upon individual program requirements and faculty guidance. You must obtain permission from a faculty member willing to sponsor your Capstone prior to enrolling in the course. The Capstone should be completed during the semester in which you enrolled.

Degree Application Procedures
• Graduate degree candidates must submit an Application for Graduate Degree in the semester in which they expect to graduate and by the deadline stated in the Class Schedule. This form must be completed by the student and approved by the graduate advisor and college dean.
• The student must bring the approved form to the Graduate School two to three weeks before the published deadline to allow a complete review of the academic record.
• The diploma fee and if applicable, the thesis University Microfilms on-line publishing fee, is billed to the student’s Goldmine account upon approval of the Application for Graduate Degree.
• The Application for Graduate Degree is only valid for one semester. If the student does not graduate on the date specified in the application the student must resubmit an Application for Graduate Degree. Graduation fees are non-refundable.

Graduation Summary
1. All required course work as listed on the approved Degree Plan must be successfully completed.
2. The thesis or Completion/Defense Form must be submitted and accepted by the Graduate School.
3. Oral or written exam, or both, must be successfully completed.
4. The Application for Graduate Degree must be approved by the Graduate Advisor and College Dean and filed with the Graduate School.
5. All applicable fees must be paid.

Commencement Ceremonies
• Degrees are conferred at the end of each semester and at the end of the summer session.
• Formal commencement ceremonies are held in May for all candidates who complete degree requirements during the spring semester and in December for fall candidates and graduates of the previous summer.
• For summer graduates, regardless of the summer session of enrollment, the degree is conferred at the end of the last summer session.
Summer candidates may participate in the May commencement ceremony if no more than 6 hours are needed to complete the degree during the summer session. Summer candidates participating in May commencement must complete the application process by the published deadline for May graduation. Summer candidates’ names will appear in the December commencement program.
Use the following checklist to guide you through the graduation application process.

___ 1. The Graduate Advisor and College Dean approved Application for Graduate Degree must be submitted to the graduate School at the beginning of the final semester of study. Degree candidates must be enrolled in the Graduate School the semester of graduation. Upon approval of the Application for Graduate Degree, the application fee and, if applicable, the theses on-line publishing fee, is billed to the student’s Goldmine account. If the Application for Graduate Degree is submitted after the deadline as stated in the Class Schedule, a late fee will be assessed. Fees may be paid by accessing the Goldmine account on-line through My.UTEP.edu, or at the Bursar’s Office.

___ 2. A copy of the final degree plan must be submitted with the Application for Graduate Degree.

___ 3. All coursework as stated on the Degree Plan must be completed at the end of the final semester of study, demonstrating a 3.0 or higher cumulative GPA. Requests for changes to the Degree Plan (course substitutions, degree option changes, thesis committee changes, etc.) must be initiated by the Graduate Advisor and if applicable, the thesis supervisor, and forwarded to the College Dean and Graduate School for approval.

___ 4. Grades of I or N received in graduate courses must be changed to a standard grade (A, B, C, etc.) and posted on the transcript by the conclusion of the final semester of study. If required, the instructor of record will need to submit a Grade Change Authorization form for each grade change prior to the end of the final semester. Candidates will not be cleared for graduation until all Incomplete grades have been eliminated from the academic record regardless of whether or not the courses are required for the degree. Please note that Incomplete grades may alter the intended term of graduation. The degree will be awarded the semester the Incomplete grade is removed from the academic record, which may be different from the intended term of graduation as indicated on the Application for Graduate Degree.

___ 5. Contact the Registrar’s Office to have course levels reclassified if enrollment on a Reserved for Graduate Credit basis was approved by the Graduate School.

___ 6. Names of students with a “Confidential” indicator on the record will not be published in the official UTEP Commencement program nor released to the Prospector. Departments or colleges may not publish the names of these students in any pre-commencement materials. Contact the Registration and Records Office to release the “Confidential” indicator.

___ 7. Submit a draft of the completed thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School for formal check prior to the scheduled defense date. Thesis format guidelines may be found at the UTEP Graduate School Web site.

___ 8. A Defense/Completion form must be received by the Graduate School by the date stated in the Class Schedule.

___ 9. Submit one complete copy of the Graduate School approved thesis, in PDF electronic format on a rewriteable CD in a hard case, by the deadline stated in the Class Schedule of the final semester of study. The document must adhere to all formatting guidelines and should be accompanied by a hard copy of the signature page with the original signatures of committee members.

11. Confirm participation in commencement by completing the On-Line Student RSVP at www.commencementrsvp.utep.edu. Only students who have submitted an Application for Graduate Degree may participate in Commencement. Summer candidates may participate in Spring Commencement if they are within 6 hours of completing their degree, but names of summer candidates will only appear in the official UTEP Fall Commencement program.

12. Degrees are awarded and posted on the final transcript approximately 30 days after the official degree conferral date. E-mail notification is sent as soon as degrees are posted. Official transcripts with the posted degree can be ordered from the Registration and Records Office at www.academics.utep.edu/registrar.

13. Diplomas arrive approximately 90 days after the official degree conferral date. The Registration and Records Office sends notification upon arrival of diplomas. Diplomas must be picked up in person at the Registration and Records Office, unless alternate delivery arrangements have been made. All inquiries pertaining to transcripts and the order and delivery of diplomas should be made to the Registration and Records Office at www.academics.utep.edu/registrar.

14. Letters of Completion may be requested from the Graduate School:
   - Students must have an approved Application for Graduation on file at the Graduate School.
   - Request must be made via an e-mail and must include student name and ID number
   - Thesis students must have submitted a completed Defense Form.
   - Non-thesis students must submit proof of successful completion of final coursework.
It is critical that graduate students continue working on their professional development while in Graduate School.

Choose a Mentor
Developing a strong mentoring relationship with a faculty member in their field has been shown to have a positive influence on graduate students when it comes to meeting program expectations, completing their work, and successfully negotiating the job market. When choosing a mentor, formally or informally, it is important to consider someone who:

- Has shared research interests.
- Has time or interest in becoming a mentor and has a history of effectively mentoring other graduate students.
- Has a personality that is comfortable for your academic style and needs.
- Is current in the field and has an understanding of job opportunities for students in the field.

The chosen professor should be someone who is planning to be at UTEP during the time you will be pursuing your degree.

Prepare and Maintain a Résumé
Your résumé is one of the most important documents you will produce as a graduate student, because it represents all of your professional accomplishments. When formatting your résumé, it is important to note that there are different conventions for different academic fields. The University Career Center and your professors and can serve as resources for guidance and examples and may be able to provide insight into the appropriate format for your field, keeping in mind that program and course standards take precedence over the Career Center.

Apply for Internships
Internships allow students to gain work experience in the field. An internship is an excellent opportunity to apply the skills you are developing in the classroom. Start researching possible internships early in your academic career. There are many Web sites that post internships and provide information about how to apply. You can also talk to your graduate advisor or faculty members in your program.

Get Involved in Committees, Organizations and Activities
Although many graduate students work full-time and have little time left over for University involvement, participation in the University can provide valuable experience and the opportunity to network with people in your field. Venues for such involvement can include program, student, and administrative sessions, orientations, and committees, which should be included in your résumé, should you participate.

Become a Member of a Professional Organization
It is never too early to join the associations and organization of your future profession. Membership can help keep you aware of news and cutting-edge developments in your field at the national level through publications, listservs, and conferences, and well as provide you with information on employment, grant and fellowship opportunities, and the top researchers and programs in your field. Talk to your graduate advisor or mentor about the most prominent organizations in your field and how to gain membership.

If Writing a Thesis
- Choose Your Thesis Advisor and Committee
  - The person you ask to be your director or chair should not only be a faculty member whose research interests you share, but they should also have:
    - A commitment to helping you successfully complete the thesis process.
    - A reputable name as a scholar in the field.
- A willingness to assist you with your career goals by writing letters of recommendation, making career connections, etc.
  - If there is no single professor who is able to do all these things, consider having two professors co-chair. The rest of the committee should be selected with the goal of representing different viewpoints and methodologies. Your project will be stronger if these differences are addressed and negotiated.

- **Choose a Thesis Topic**
  There are many things to consider when choosing your thesis topic. Are you looking into practical or theoretical issues? What are the constraints of time, money for research, equipment, or faculty interest? Your graduate advisor or faculty mentor should be able to help you with these issues and help you narrow down your topics before settling on one. It is important to choose carefully, as this will be a project that you will be working on over the course of your graduate studies and may be developed into published work.

**Conference Presentations**
As you become more proficient at writing research papers and are producing original results, consider presenting your research work to a wider audience at a professional conference. This enables you to receive feedback from more people and allows specialists, and possible employers in your field, to begin recognizing your name and work. Participation can take many forms, including sitting on or proposing a panel, or answering a call for papers. Consult faculty members in your field concerning the conventions for submissions, expected levels of audience specialization, whether to expect more students, faculty, or other specialists in the audience, and the general conference procedures. In order to appropriately address the expected audience and meet time constraints, consider practicing aloud in front of faculty and peers.

**Travel Expenses**
Traveling to conferences, field locations, and other out of town events can be expensive. Financial assistance through your program, outside fellowships, and the Graduate School are available to students on a limited basis. Graduate students will need to pick up the “Request for Travel Authorization” form from their program and provide information about the conference/research site and his/her participation. Amounts of awards can vary according to availability, distance, and duration of the conference/research. As a condition of receiving your award, you may be asked to distribute recruitment material for your program or the Graduate School. A follow-up report describing your participation in the conference will also need to be submitted to the Graduate School. The “Request for Travel Authorization” form is available at www.utep.edu/graduate.

**Publishing**
If you plan to teach at the collegiate level or pursue a research career, you should publish your research or at least have an article submitted during the year which you will be graduating (consult with your advisor for specific program expectations). Consult with professors about the appropriate journals or venues in which to publish your work. Once you have selected the publication or venue, research the option in order to understand the submission, formatting, and printing requirements.

**Job Search**
At least a year before you graduate, begin preparing for the job search by researching employment types and sources of opportunities in your field. Speak to your advisors and committee members about your choices so that they can offer advice about activities to help you reach your goals. Information can also be found at the University Career Center, 103 Union West Building, (915) 747-5640, www.utep.edu/careers.
Letters of Recommendation
If you are planning to ask former employers or faculty to write letters on your behalf, select those with whom you've worked with and had a good rapport with during your graduate career. Choose those who will write about you in different contexts, such as writer, researcher, teacher, lab assistant, etc. Provide them with current information such as your C.V., sample cover letters, publications and submissions, a description of the job(s) of interest, and current materials.

Assembling Portfolios
Portfolios help you keep track of scholarly and professional achievements and may include items such as your thesis, research or conference papers, publications, teaching materials developed, committee work performed, etc. Organize them into categories for easy access and identification of your work. Courses and workshops are available through the University Career Center, 103 Union West Building, (915) 747-5640, and www.utep.edu/careers. Keep in mind that College of Liberal Arts and course requirements prevail over Career Center recommendations.

Interviewing Tips
Consider setting up a mock interview with the University Career Center and your program for practice in a risk-free environment. Preparation is extremely important. Learn about the job, company, and people you may be working with, research their interview processes, and review standards. Be prepared to answer questions concerning your education, research, background, awards, career goals, skills, and interests that may prove to be an asset to the job and be ready with your own questions for the interviewer.
Course Enrollment
- Students can attend only those classes for which they are officially enrolled.
- A student is not enrolled in a course and will not receive a grade for it unless the proper tuition and fees are paid by the deadlines published in the Class Schedule or unless arrangements have been made for deferral of payment with the Student Business Services Office. After registration, class enrollments are verified by the Registration and Records Office.

Registration
- Registration is a process every student must successfully complete each semester. Although every effort is made to advise students academically, final responsibility for registration rests with the student.
- Once admitted, advised, and cleared for enrollment, a student may register for courses.
- The Class Schedule lists all the courses being offered for a particular term and is maintained online at the Goldmine Web site.
- Any holds on a student’s account must be cleared with the department placing the hold before registration is allowed.
- Registration can be done online, by phone, or in person.
  - To register online from any computer, log onto my.utep.edu and access the Student Registration link on Goldmine.
  - To register by phone, use any of the phones located in the Enrollment Services Center, 101 Academic Services Building, or call from anywhere by dialing (915) 545-1145.
  - To register in person, go to the UTEP Records Office, 123 Academic Services Building, with a completed registration form and UTEP ID.

Late Registration
- Any student who, with proper permission, registers after the scheduled days for regular registration will be required to pay a special charge of $20.00 for the late telephone/Web registration process, $30.00 for in-person late registration, and $50.00 on or after the first official school day of class.
- A new student will have the late registration fee waived as long as registration is made prior to the first official school day of class.
- Late registrants are subject to the same regulations and course requirements as students who enroll on time.
- Classes missed because of late registration will be counted as an absence, and class or laboratory work missed will be counted as a zero unless the instructor grants permission to make up the work.
- Any student who has been withdrawn and has his schedule reinstated after census day will be assessed a $200 reinstatement fee.
Students may drop individual courses or completely withdraw from the University as described below. Financial information concerning drops and withdrawals can be found in the *Refund of Tuition and Fees* section of the *Graduate Catalog*.

- **Dropping Courses**
  - It is the student's responsibility to officially drop a course that s/he no longer wishes to take. Failure to do so may result in a grade of “F” on the student's academic record.
  - Courses dropped prior to the official census date of any semester will be deleted from the student's academic record.
  - Courses dropped after this period, but prior to the final drop deadline, will result in a grade notation of “W”.
  - Anyone dropped after the drop deadline will receive a grade of “F”.
  - Students appointed as teaching assistants (TA's) or research assistants (RA's) or who are receiving stipends are expected to maintain the approved course load. Any course drops resulting in a change to less than full-time enrollment (9 hours) will jeopardize a student's appointment.

- **Withdrawal from the University**
  Withdrawal from all University courses for the semester must be done through the Records Office, 123 Academic Services Building, (915) 747-5550, or at [www.utep.edu/register](http://www.utep.edu/register).
  - If the withdrawal is completed *before* the deadline for student-initiated course drops, the student will receive all “W's”.
  - If the withdrawal is completed *after* that deadline, instructors will determine grades of “W” or “F”.

![Image of University Building](image-url)
Tuition and fees are subject to change by Board of Regent or legislative action and become effective on the date enacted. Policies governing the payment or refund of tuition, fees and other charges are approved by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System and comply with applicable state statutes. Refer to the Class Schedule for the tuition and fees in effect for the semester for which you are registering.

Methods of Payment
Cash, Checks, Master Card, Visa, American Express, and Discover are accepted for payment of tuition and fees. The University offers the following two payment methods during long semesters (Fall and Spring) only:

1. Full payment of tuition, mandatory and incidental fees at the time of registration
2. A partial 20% payment of tuition, mandatory and incidental fees at the time of registration, with the remaining balance due in 4 equal installments by the 15th of each month

Refund of Tuition and Fees
Refund policies are established and are subject to change by the Legislature of the State of Texas and are applicable to withdrawals and dropped courses.

Debts Owed to the University
In the event of non-payment of debts owed to the University, one or more of the following actions may be taken by the University:

- bar against registration
- withhold the student's grades and official transcripts
- withhold a degree to which the student might otherwise be entitled
- delinquent accounts will be referred to a Collection Agency and Credit Bureau
- other penalties and actions authorized by law

For a detailed explanation of current tuition and fees, methods of payment, and refunds, visit the Student Business Services Web site at http://www.sbs.utep.edu/index.php/en/ or call 747-5116 to address any questions.

Residency for Tuition Purposes
- The Office of Admissions and Recruitment is responsible for determining residency status of students for tuition purposes. The Office is guided by the Texas Education Code, the Rules and Regulations for Determining Residence Status of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and University regulations. Under the state statutes and regulations, a student or prospective student is classified as a resident of Texas, non-resident, or foreign student.
- Waivers of non-resident tuition for non-residents and foreign students are available for recipients of competitive University scholarships of $1,000 or more, Mexican citizens with demonstrated financial need, military and NATO forces stationed in Texas and their dependents, teaching and research assistants and their dependents, holders of certain visa types, and other select student categories. For questions on residency or non-resident tuition waivers, contact the Office of Admissions and Recruitment at (915) 747-5890.
The Records Office verifies enrollment for financial aid, scholarships, and to loan agencies, insurance companies, and other entities as requested.

- Students are encouraged to enroll in the appropriate number of credit hours as required by financial aid, loan agencies, insurance companies, scholarships, etc. It is recommended that Veterans Affairs (VA) students consult with the campus VA Office.
- Full-time classification is a criterion for employment as teaching and research assistants and for receipt of stipends and scholarships. It represents a minimum standard and individual programs may require students to enroll in more hours to qualify for support.
- Graduate students enrolled in 3 hours during one of the summer semesters are classified by the Graduate School as full-time for the entire summer.
- Students participating in the Career and Professional Development Services Cooperative Education Program and are only enrolled in a CO-OP course will be classified as full-time for the semester/term.
- Master’s degree students, who have completed all requirements for the degree except for the second semester of the final project or thesis, and who were full-time students in the immediately preceding semester are classified by the Graduate School as full-time if enrolled in 3 hours of the final project or thesis. This full-time classification applies to three final semesters of continual enrollment in final project or thesis only.
- The above full-time classification applies to non-thesis students based on degree requirements as stated in the Graduate Catalog on a case by case basis.
- Graduate students receiving financial aid must register for a minimum of 4 hours every semester to retain their financial aid eligibility even if they are in their final semester of thesis or coursework.
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a set of federal and state laws that provide students with the following rights with respect to their student educational records:

- To inspect and review the student’s education records
- To consent to disclosure of the student’s education records to third parties, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent
- To request an amendment of the student’s education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate or misleading
- To be notified of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA
- To file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

With few exceptions, under the Texas Government Code, students are also entitled at their request to receive, review, and correct the information UTEP collects about them. The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at El Paso have implemented a student records policy that adheres to these laws. The University will not disclose personally identifiable information from a student’s education records without prior written consent of the student, except as authorized by FERPA. For further information about Student Educational Records, refer to the Graduate Catalog.

Directory Information
FERPA’s authorization for release without consent includes directory information, which is information in a student’s education record that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. UTEP designates the following minimum information as directory information: student’s name; local and permanent address; e-mail address; telephone number; date and place of birth; field of study; dates of attendance; enrollment status; student classification; degrees, certificates and awards (including scholarships) received; photographs; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. Requests to withhold directory information will be honored by the University for the current enrollment period; a request to withhold Directory Information must be filed each semester or term in the Registration and Records Office.
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

UTEP’s graduate students can finance their education by working and/or by taking advantage of the University’s financial assistance awards and programs.

- Financial aid is divided into merit- and need-based awards.
- Students subject to selective service registration will be required to file a statement that the student has registered or is exempt from selective service registration in order to be eligible to receive financial assistance funded by State revenue.
- Limited financial support is also available through research fellowships to participants in sponsored research or other research projects. Fellowship support may qualify for a waiver of non-resident status for tuition purposes. For fellowship and assistantship eligibility, students should contact the academic programs.
- The publication Graduate Assistantships Guide, available from the Graduate School, provides additional information.

Merit-based Awards
Merit-based awards are based on a student’s previous academic performance and consist of scholarships and fellowships. Scholarships are awarded primarily on the basis of the student’s previous academic work but may consider any required test scores. For further information, students should contact the Graduate School.

Need-based Awards
The Financial Aid Office processes need-based awards according to the level of the student’s financial need, with some consideration of the student’s past academic performance. The amount and type of financial assistance provided will be by means of educational loans, grants, need-based scholarships, and student employment (Federal College Work-Study). Certain emergency loan funds or fee exemptions may also be available. Students admitted into graduate programs are eligible if they have documented need, meet academic eligibility criteria, enroll at least half-time basis, and meet the March 15th financial aid application priority date. Financial aid recipients must make satisfactory academic progress in order to maintain award eligibility. Information about financial aid application procedures and standards for academic progress may be obtained from the Financial Aid Office.

Graduate Assistantships
Teaching and Research Assistantships may be available based on merit qualifications. Teaching assistants perform assigned instructional duties under the supervision of a faculty member. Research assistantships are highly variable and usually involve assisting a faculty member in the accomplishment of certain research projects. The total of all on-campus student employment is limited to 20 hours per week or less. The application form is available at academic departments, colleges, and the Graduate School and should be completed by the student and submitted to the academic department of the student’s major. Students interested in College of Liberal Arts teaching assistantships should contact the Dean’s Office for the application form. The Graduate Assistantships Guide provides detailed information on eligibility, benefits, and procedures for appointments and is available at the Graduate School.

Military Financial Assistance
The following types of financial assistance are available to service members and their families:

- Military Tuition Assistance
  - Army Active Duty and Reserve (GoArmyEd)
  - Other Military Services
• Veterans’ Benefits
  o GI Bill
  o Hazelwood Act
  o Vocational/Rehabilitative Training Benefits
• Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MYCAA)
For further information, contact Military Student Success Center at mssc@utep.edu or 747-5342.

Additional Employment Opportunities
Information about other forms of employment which may include the Cooperative Education Program, Internships, summer employment, or part-time employment may be obtained from the University Career Center, 103 Union Building West.
STUDENT LIFE

General Regulations
Detailed policies and procedures affecting student life are printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) student section and are available on the Internet at http://hoop.utep.edu. The Handbook supplements the rules and regulations of the Board of Regents and covers student conduct and discipline, use of University facilities, student organizations, educational records, and student publications. The President has delegated responsibility for the administration of student discipline (academic dishonesty and general misconduct) to the Office of Student Life.

Student Conduct
While enrolled at the University, a student neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. Any student who engages in conduct that is prohibited by the Board of Regents’ Rules and Regulations, by University rules, or by federal, state, or local law is subject to discipline whether such conduct takes place on or off campus or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct. All students are expected and required to obey the law, to show respect for properly constituted authority, and to observe correct standards of conduct. Computer usage violations, use of alcoholic beverages, dishonesty, gambling, defacing of property, endangering the health or safety of others, use of obscene and threatening language, altering of records, possession or use of firearms, failure to respond promptly to official notices, etc. will subject the student to disciplinary action.

Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act
In compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Police and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998. The University of Texas at El Paso collects specified information on campus crime statistics, campus security policies, and institutional completion or graduation rates. Information concerning Student Right-To-Know and Campus Security can be found at the following Web site: www.campussafety.org and at www.admin.utep.edu/police.

Grade Appeals
A student may challenge his/her grade as determined by a member of the faculty of the University during or within one year after the end of any credit course, qualifying or comprehensive examination, for which the student has been enrolled or three months following the term the graduate degree was awarded. A challenge to a grade may be pursued only on the basis of malice, bias, arbitrary, or capricious grade determination, or impermissible discrimination. In no event shall a challenge be pursued on the basis of the standards employed in setting grades, so long as those standards are employed impartially.

The student should first attempt to resolve the question through consultation with the faculty member who assigned the grade. The student should then attempt to resolve the question through consultation with the administrator(s) to whom the faculty member reports. Having failed to resolve the matter after consultation with the faculty member and his/her supervisors, the student may consult with and/or file a challenge with the Chairperson of the Student Welfare and Grievance Committee.

The INSS program expects all students and faculty to follow the established and approved steps indicated above regarding a grade appeal. Therefore, students will be expected to:

1) Make all reasonable attempts (in person, via phone, e-mail, etc.) to contact and communicated with the faculty who assigned the grade in order to discuss the matter. If the issue cannot be resolved between the student and the faculty, then
2) Make all reasonable attempts shall be made to contact the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and/or her representative to attempt to address the issue. If attempts to resolve the issue with the faculty member and the Dean prove unsuccessful, the student should attempt to resolve the matter by contacting the Chairperson of the Student Welfare and Grievance Committee. Students should contact the Office of Student Life for specific information or download a copy of the grievance form and instructions on the Office of Student Life Web page at www.utep.edu/dos under “Tips for Student Success”.

Non-Academic Grievances
Non-academic grievances of policies and procedures of University departments related to matters other than discrimination, such as the application or interpretation of student policies, must be initiated by making an effort to resolve the matter with the individual involved in the interpretation or decision. If the matter is not resolved within the College of Liberal Arts administration, it must be submitted in writing to Provost or his/her designee within 10 working days of the questioned decision or interpretation.

INSS students shall bring all non-academic grievances directly to the person (faculty and/or staff) while also informing the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts about the matter. If the issue cannot be resolved directly with the person, students are to contact the Provost’s Office as indicated above.

Parking
For your parking convenience, UTEP serves all students, faculty, staff and visitors with:
- over 9,800 parking spaces
- 54 parking lots
- 1 multiple level parking garage
- 4 dedicated shuttle routes
- 125 carpool parking spaces

Visit www.parking.utep.edu for the necessary information and tools to learn about these parking and transportation services.

Student Services
The University of Texas at El Paso offers a wide array of academic, enrollment, and student services to ensure that student needs, concerns, and interests are addressed. Listed below are telephone numbers that may be helpful to College of Liberal Arts students.

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<tr>
<th>Student Services Telephone Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>College of Liberal Arts (Dean’s Office)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Deans</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Security Studies Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant (NSSI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registration and Records</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transcripts</td>
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<td>Financial Services (Cashier)</td>
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<td>Financial Aid</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<td>Scholarships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
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<td>Military Student Success Center</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Department</strong></th>
<th><strong>Number</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>747-5594</td>
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<tr>
<td>Career Center</td>
<td>747-5640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Center</td>
<td>747-5302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled Student Services</td>
<td>747-5148</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Center</td>
<td>747-5624</td>
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<tr>
<td>Housing Services</td>
<td>747-5352</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Programs</td>
<td>747-5664</td>
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<tr>
<td>IT Help Desk</td>
<td>747-5257</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police Department</td>
<td>747-5611</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming &amp; Fitness Center</td>
<td>747-8100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ticket Center</td>
<td>747-5264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Office</td>
<td>747-5724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Operator</td>
<td>747-5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost’s Office</td>
<td>747-5725</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
INSS Advocate
The INSS Advocate is a person of high professional, academic, and ethical standards that serves as a point of contact and mediator for faculty, staff, and students. The person will be selected from outside the faculty or staff assigned directly to the National Security Studies Institute to ensure independence of perspective and freedom of action.

Duties:

1. Serve as a point of contact for students who may have personal or program related concerns or difficulties with faculty, staff, or peers, ensuring proper guidance in accordance with the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* and the University of Texas System Regents’ Rules and Regulations, and in coordination with the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students.
2. As appropriate, serve as an advocate who speaks or writes in defense of an INSS student or pleads for their cause. This does not include grade disputes.
3. Maintain awareness of program mission, goals, structure, and faculty and staff duties through regular receipt of faculty committee meeting minutes and other program related materials.

Disclaimer
This *Handbook* is a general information publication only. It is not intended to nor does it contain all regulations that relate to students. The provisions of this *Handbook* do not constitute a contract, express or implied, between any applicant, student or faculty member and the University of Texas at El Paso or The University of Texas System. The University of Texas at El Paso reserves the right to withdraw courses at any time, to change fees or tuition, calendar, curriculum, degree requirements, graduation procedures, and any other requirements affecting students. Changes will become effective whenever the proper authorities so determine and will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled.
Sources
Information in the INSS Graduate Student Handbook has been prepared and approved by the NSSI Committee. Portions of the Handbook have also been taken from the UTEP Graduate Student Handbook and the UTEP Graduate Catalog, which can be found at www.utep.edu/graduate and at www.catalog.utep.edu/content.php?navoid=265&catoid=7. These resources should be consulted for more detailed information.