



OFFICE OF THE
**Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs**

EAST TEXAS A&M

Good morning, Academic Affairs!

It's amazing we're already in December and winter break is just around the corner. Below are a few updates to share:

- As you most likely know, in early November the Board of Regents voted to change our university's name to East Texas A&M University. Rebranding efforts are underway, but there's no doubt that the transition will take up to six months or more. For now, please make sure to update the signature line on your email. In February we should have the updated email addresses with our current tamuc.edu working up to a year. Deans and department heads will be working to order new business cards with the change, as well as marketing materials. More information to come as we continue to move forward. Go ET!
- Congratulations, Lion Family! I am pleased to announce that during the SACSCOC Annual Meeting, our university's accreditation was reaffirmed. As many of you know, this has been an intensive two-year process, including an onsite visit this past March. Thanks to everyone who helped us achieve this milestone; a special thank you to Dr. Ricky Dobbs who led the effort. The University will next be up for reaffirmation in 2034.
- Make sure to watch next semester for the many opportunities to become involved with our work towards being a student-ready university. Although each college is charged with determining what student-ready means for them, there will definitely be campus-wide discussions and work groups. Much of our work will go across divisions, but also within the Division of Academic Affairs. We will eventually want to address all the many areas of a university, such as research (what does student-ready university research look like at ETAMU?) Other examples include athletics, student success, and policing. The list, in many ways, could be endless, with consistently asking the question, *What does student-ready (fill in the blank) look like at ETAMU?* We can't address everything all at once, but together we can have meaningful discussions about what student-ready is (and is not) for us.
- I am pleased to share that a target working group has been identified to review the faculty workload policy. My appreciation to Dean Ray Green and Dr. Alex Williams who have agreed to co-chair, as well as to Drs. Stephen Starnes and Zach Palmer who will represent the Faculty Senate.

- In addition to the two committees above, early next year there will be a small workgroup exploring user-friendly options for tracking class attendance, chaired by Dr. Asli Ogunc and a university-wide workgroup, chaired by Dr. Carrie Klypchak, reviewing learning platforms such as Adobe, LinkedIn, and Coursera. Although they each have various purposes, with unique strengths and weaknesses, and no doubt are all valuable, we must make some difficult decisions given the funding available. Thus, the goal of this working group will be to provide a thorough review of the various options, with final recommendations presented to the Deans Council and the Executive Team. There is currently an identified February deadline for recommendations.
- I am pleased to share that the work of establishing a learning and teaching center for faculty has begun— tentatively called the “Faculty Success Center.” I thank Provost Fellows Drs. Flavia Belpoliti and Brian Zator, who have been working with the Deans Council and Lanee Dunlap in envisioning this center and reimagining the Office of Academic Technology. Much more information to come!
- I am thrilled to welcome two new deans with the start of the new year! Dr. April Sanders (CID) and Dr. Bryan Rank (CASNR) will each take the lead of their respective colleges on January 1, 2025. I hope to share an update about the new dean of the College of Business before the end of this week.
- This winter mini I am the instructor of record for a course on grant development and administration, alongside the Vice President for Research and Economic Development, Dr. Brent Donham, and the Director of Research Integrity and Compliance, Dr. Lucy Pickering. This course is structured to serve faculty and staff as well as graduate students. Please use [this Quick App](#) for admission to the Graduate School if no previous grad course has been completed at East Texas. Further course information is below. I hope to see you in class!

PSY 697.01W (3 SCH)

Title: Grant Development and Administration

Semester: Winter Mini 2025

Instructor of Record: Tammi Vacha-Haase

Co-Instructors: Brent Donham and Lucy Pickering

Description: This course will provide students with the skills and knowledge to prepare grant proposals (pre-award) and manage awarded grants (post-award). Topics covered include, but are not limited to identifying funding sources, proposal development, budget development, project administration, research compliance, regulatory committees (IRB, IBC, IACUC), and ethics in research practices.

Grading Method: Pass/Fail

Delivery Method: Eleven (11) 2-hour synchronous sessions (2:00 – 4:00), which will be recorded for students who cannot attend

As we count down to the holidays, I hope you know that my door continues to be open. I always appreciate hearing from you; please do not hesitate to contact Cynthia at Cynthia.Rhodes@tamuc.edu to set up some time to connect.

And with that, I would like to wish happy holidays to each one of you! As the year draws to a close, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for your dedication, hard work, and the unwavering commitment you bring to our ET community. Together, we've navigated challenges, celebrated achievements, and continued to make a lasting impact on the lives of our students and each other. This holiday season, I hope you find time to relax, recharge, and enjoy the company of loved ones. May your days be filled with peace, joy, and moments that bring you happiness. Thank you for all you do to make ET such a special place. Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and a bright, successful start to the new year!

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