Welcome!

Welcome to the MSHRM program at Texas State University! The faculty and staff of the McCoy College of Business are excited to have you and hope you find your time in the MSHRM program challenging, gratifying, and successful. Only about 50% of applicants are accepted into the MSHRM program at Texas State so while your graduate academic career is only beginning you have a lot to be proud of already.

This handbook is designed to provide you with essential information regarding policies, procedures, and expectations that will enable you to succeed as an MSHRM student. There is a tendency to skim through information contained in a handbook like this. We get it—this isn’t exactly edge-of-your-seat material. It is, however, very important to your success in the McCoy MSHRM program. **You are responsible for understanding and adhering to these policies.** If you are in doubt about how a policy or procedure applies to your specific situation, seek clarification from the appropriate McCoy faculty or staff member.

**This is your guidebook to the next few years of your graduate education at Texas State.**

Please take notes, highlight, flag pages, draw awesome pictures and make this book your own. We promise that the more familiar you are with applicable policies and procedures the more enjoyable—and smooth—your time at McCoy will be.

**About McCoy**

Texas State University’s college of business was originally established in 1970. In 2004 it was named in honor of Emmett and Miriam McCoy, whose transformational donation of $20 million marked the largest gift in the 105-year history of Texas State University. The gift was the impetus for establishing the McCoy College Development Foundation, which provides funding for endowed chairs and distinguished professorships, undergraduate and graduate scholarships, and faculty, student, and program development.

McCoy College provides a curriculum that focuses on developing skills in oral and written communication, critical thinking, and teamwork. This blending of content and application has been shaped by our faculty and endorsed by our colleagues in the business community as the best way to prepare a diverse student population for successful business careers as responsible global citizens.

All McCoy College degree programs are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the highest accreditation available to schools of business at colleges and universities. Fewer than 5 percent of business schools worldwide have earned this distinguished hallmark of excellence so you are among the best in business!
# Table of Contents

Tools and Resources—General Information, Policies, and Procedures ........................................... 2

- Administrative Issues .................................................................................................................... 2
- Graduate Financial Aid .................................................................................................................. 2
- Transfer Credits ............................................................................................................................ 3
- Policy on Taking a Semester Off .................................................................................................... 3
- Academic Status ........................................................................................................................... 4
  - Good Standing ............................................................................................................................. 4
  - Probation ...................................................................................................................................... 4
  - Suspension ..................................................................................................................................... 4
  - 3 C Policy ..................................................................................................................................... 4
  - Conditional Admittance ............................................................................................................... 4

- Course Load ................................................................................................................................... 5
  - Long Semesters (Fall and Spring) ................................................................................................. 5
  - Summer Courses .......................................................................................................................... 5
  - International Students ............................................................................................................... 5
  - Alternative Locations .................................................................................................................. 6

- Academic Advising ........................................................................................................................ 6
  - Degree Plans ............................................................................................................................... 6
  - Scheduling Electives .................................................................................................................... 7

- Career Advising .............................................................................................................................. 7

- Best Practices ................................................................................................................................. 8
  - Expectations ................................................................................................................................. 8
  - How to Excel ................................................................................................................................. 8
  - Professionalism ............................................................................................................................. 8

- McCoy Graduate Student Association ............................................................................................ 9

- Study Abroad .................................................................................................................................. 9

- MSHRM Internships ....................................................................................................................... 9

- Communication .............................................................................................................................. 10

- Exit Exam ....................................................................................................................................... 10

- Contact Information ..................................................................................................................... 11
Tools and Resources—General Information, Policies, and Procedures

As a Texas State student you have many resources at your fingertips. Below is information on where to find important dates, policies, and forms university-wide. Please refer to these and search the Texas State website before reaching out so you are familiar with processes and able to streamline solutions.

All students are subject to both university and McCoy College policies and procedures. This document is designed to give you information on some common issues but please familiarize yourself with all other university policies not covered here.

Administrative Issues

Catsweb is the most important aspect of the Texas State website (www.txstate.edu) for students. Please search Catsweb for an answer to your question before e-mailing questions to faculty and staff. It has information on:

- **Enrollment and Registration**: registration and class schedule, access periods, class offerings, course catalog, academic calendar, Registrar’s Office website
- **Financial Aid**: deadlines and applications, work study opportunities, financial aid website
- **Billing and Payments**: payment history, tuition and fee rates, student balance, direct deposit sign up, Student Business Services website, emergency and short term loan information
- **Academic Records**: official and unofficial transcripts, enrollment verification, degree audits, applying for graduation
- **Online Services**: activating net ID/e-mail, e-mail forwarding, password recovery, TRACS
- **General campus information**: parking, dining, faculty/staff directory, campus maps, bookstore
- **Help and tutorials** for topics listed above

Graduate Financial Aid

All graduate business students enrolled in a minimum of six hours that count toward their degree in the fall and spring semesters are eligible to apply for scholarships and fellowships. Students will be considered for available scholarships through both the McCoy College of Business and the Graduate College by submitting one application to the Graduate College.

Fellowship applications are separate from scholarship applications and can be found on the McCoy graduate website; these are turned in directly to the Dean’s Office. Applications for both scholarships and fellowships are due by February 1 of each year.

To expedite your financial aid processing, after you register for courses every semester, generate your degree audit in Catsweb. If you see any courses showing as “open electives” or otherwise not counting toward your degree, e-mail the MSHRM Academic Advisor immediately with the specific course, your student ID number, and a screen shot or PDF of your degree audit.

Students are encouraged to contact the Financial Aid and Scholarship Department at 512-245-2315 or financialaid@txstate.edu to check eligibility and apply for federal financial aid as well but should be aware that only courses that count toward their degree will be considered for financial aid.
Many companies offer tuition reimbursement. It is each student’s responsibility to provide their company with the appropriate documentation. Many companies require a grade report and/or verification of enrollment, which can be generated in Catsweb after semester grades are posted—typically a week after finals are over. The Academic Calendar, found on the Registrar’s website, gives specifics of the exact date official grades post each semester. If your company requires a specific type of documentation and you are having trouble obtaining it, please contact the McCoy Dean’s Office and we will be happy to assist you.

Students that participate in the study abroad program are eligible to apply for McCoy-specific study abroad funding through the Dean’s Office the fall prior to enrollment. This application is e-mailed out to all graduate students in November and typically due right after grades post for the fall semester.

**Transfer Credits**

It may be possible to transfer in up to six (6) hours of HR-focused elective classes from another academic department at Texas State. The proposed transfer elective must fall within the scope of the MSHRM degree.

Justification for the proposed transfer courses is required to be submitted via the McCoy website (search “McCoy graduate Course Substitution Request Form”); the class must be approved before the student enrolls in a course outside of the McCoy College of Business. Core courses, non-approved classes from other departments, and any course that has been or will be applied to a different completed degree will not be approved for transfer credit.

A more extensive approval process is required if a student wishes to complete classes at another AACSB-accredited university. This is reserved for unavoidable situations such as moving due to a work transfer or military service obligations. The 6-hour max and elective nature of the classes still applies.

**Policy on Taking a Semester Off**

While students are encouraged to enroll in classes each semester we understand that sometimes circumstances require that they must take time off. Students are able to sit out for less than one year with no penalty; however, they will need to fill out an “Update Application Form”, available by searching the Graduate College website, when returning to the program. It should be submitted to the Graduate College to reactivate their status before they are able to enroll in classes for the next term.

Because MSHRM courses are offered on a set rotation, it is strongly recommended that students reach out to their Graduate Academic Advisor to adjust their degree plan prior to withdrawing in a given term.

If a student does not enroll in classes for one year or more they will need to submit a new application through the Graduate College and pay the associated application fee to begin taking courses again. Depending on the recency of enrollment, the application itself may be sufficient—the student may not need to resubmit recommendations, essays, and other accompanying documents that were required for the original application.

**It is important to note that Graduate College policy requires that the entire program be completed within six years from the date a student first enrolls in the MSHRM program.**
**Academic Status**

**Good Standing**
All graduate students must maintain a cumulative graduate GPA of at least 3.0 to remain in good standing with the university.

**Probation**
If an individual’s GPA falls below 3.0 they will be placed on academic probation the following semester. They have one semester to increase their GPA to at least a 3.0. **Students who find themselves on probation should expect to be contacted by their Graduate Academic Advisor.** This is not because they are in trouble; rather, it is to touch base, make sure they are comfortable with their schedule and course load moving forward, and to create a solid plan and expectations for the following semester.

The safest way for a student to ensure that their GPA is raised sufficiently is to retake the class(es) for which they earned a poor grade. By retaking a class, the original grade is replaced by the new one, so they are much more likely to get back in good academic standing. It is important to note that due to the rotational nature of MSHRM course offerings, it will likely not be possible to retake the class the following semester in most cases.

A student may, depending on their exact situation, choose to forego repeating a class and continue on in the program with the goal of earning high grades in subsequent classes. The issue with this approach is that the original low grade that caused the probation status remains on your transcript, making it more difficult to raise the GPA.

**Suspension**
If a student fails to bring their GPA to a 3.0 or higher during the probationary semester they will be placed on academic suspension from the program and required to sit out for six months. A meeting with the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs will be required before they may enroll in classes again. This isn’t a “trip to the principal’s office”—we’re just concerned when a student struggles academically and if they are going to return after academic suspension we want to fully understand what happened and have a plan in place to increase their chances of success.

**3 C Policy**
Any student enrolled in a graduate degree program in the McCoy College of Business Administration can earn no more than two grades of C or lower. Even if the grade of C or lower was replaced with a higher grade as a result of repeating the course, the original grade counts as a “strike” under this policy. Upon earning the third C (or lower), the student is automatically placed on academic suspension and permanently dismissed from their degree program without any possibility of readmission to their program or another degree program in McCoy College.

The 3 C Policy takes precedent over probationary status. So, if a student earns a third C they are automatically dismissed from their program permanently, even if probation does not occur.

**Conditional Admittance**
If a student is admitted conditionally, it is a good idea to decrease external commitments as much as possible in order to focus on doing well in the first nine (9) hours of coursework. Please note that all nine
hours do **not** need to be taken in the first semester, so if a student prefers to start out slowly they can (provided there are no other conflicts such as financial aid eligibility or visa requirements for international students).

Conditional admittance requires that the student make an A or B in the first three classes, **not a B average**; an A and a C do **not** cancel each other out in this case. Example: If a student makes one A, one B, and one C in their first nine hours of coursework, the conditions are not met because a C was earned even though they have an overall 3.0. Students admitted to the program under conditional status who fail to make an A or a B in each of their first three (3) courses will not be allowed to continue in the program.

**The importance of starting out strong for conditionally admitted students cannot be overstated.** We highly encourage students in this situation to take either one or two classes per semester until they satisfy the requirements. After successfully completing the first nine (9) hours with either an A or a B in each class the conditional status/requirement drops off completely. There is also no lasting record or indication of initial conditional status on your transcript.

**Course Load**

It is important for every student to know that they must remain enrolled half time (at least six hours) in every fall and spring term to be considered for federal financial aid and McCoy scholarships.

**Long Semesters (Fall and Spring)**

Most MSHRM students who are working full-time find that a course load of six hours (two classes) in the long semesters is manageable. Students who are working part-time or not working at all usually take between nine hours (three classes) and twelve hours (four classes) in the long semesters. To be considered a full-time student for financial aid and visa purposes, an individual must take at least nine hours per long semester. To graduate within one year of starting the program students must take twelve (12) hours in each long semester and six (6) hours in the summer.

**Summer Courses**

Summers are optional for all MSHRM students but will make each student’s program duration shorter. Summer class format will differ from fall and spring.

Summer course options are primarily elective classes and have the potential to be offered at the Round Rock campus. Summer schedules will be sent out several weeks before registration opens.

The optional study abroad trip is automatically approved to count as six hours of electives for all MSHRM students, regardless of whether they are specifically listed on the degree audit, and is an excellent way to earn elective credits and experience a different culture.

**International Students**

Most international students are required by their visa constraints to maintain full-time status in the long semesters. It is critical that the terms of the visa be followed exactly to avoid any serious issues. To
ensure there are no problems, international students should contact Texas State University International Student and Scholar Services (512-245-7966; international@txstate.edu) with questions.

It is strongly suggested that international students register for classes at the earliest possible opportunity. If they are unable to register because a class is full, there are limited options and they may be stuck taking unnecessary classes to remain in good academic standing—a situation that is both time-intensive and costly.

**Alternative Locations**

Please be aware that students may be required or encouraged to attend various commitments at alternative locations such as their non-primary campus or off-site businesses. This includes but is not limited to professional development events, some classes, and client or project meetings. These alternative location requirements are not especially burdensome for most students but you do need to be aware of the requirement to attend some functions/meetings off campus.

**Academic Advising**

It is important that every student include their student ID number in the subject line of e-mails to allow staff to look up their file and provide relevant information. Even questions that may seem general in nature require this; differences in degree plans, catalog years, etc. can have a large impact on answers.

To schedule advising or request course overrides, visit [www.graduate.mccoy.txstate.edu](http://www.graduate.mccoy.txstate.edu) and search for “MSHRM academic advising.” You will receive a timely response but during high demand times, such as the beginning of registration and the beginning and end of every semester, allow at least two business days for responses.

**Degree Plans**

It is strongly recommended that students set up an advising appointment with the Graduate Academic Advisor halfway through their first semester to create a degree plan. It is critical for students to follow their degree plan and take the courses they need—especially core courses—as they are offered since they are on rotation and availability may be limited.

If for any reason a student needs to change their plan it is highly recommended that they contact the Graduate Academic Advisor to get the most accurate information available and ensure the plan will not alter future semesters. This will help avoid any class conflicts and graduation delays.

Please keep in mind that a variety of factors affect individual situations so what works for one person may not work for another, even if the situations seem very similar. Please do not rely on peers’ advice—contact the Graduate Academic Advisor with any advising or class scheduling questions to avoid confusion. Fellow students often have the best intentions in offering advice but it may not always be correct or applicable to your specific situation.

**Declaring a Graduate Minor**

Students may choose to add a graduate minor in addition to the required 30 hours of coursework of the MSHRM degree from the list here [http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/gminor.html](http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/gminor.html). To officially declare
the minor and have it added to their degree audit, a student needs to fill out the change of minor form (http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/docs/Change_Minor.pdf) and submit it to the Graduate College (gradcollege@txstate.edu).

**Scheduling Electives**

To see what electives may be offered, students can search the graduate course catalog on Catsweb and choose the one specific to the McCoy College of Business. There is no guarantee that any given course will be taught in a certain timeframe so please use that as a general guide, not a set list from which to choose electives you are firm on taking.

A list of all available classes within McCoy for the upcoming semester will be e-mailed to students a few weeks before registration begins to help with planning. This is a courtesy provided by the department and information is up to date at the time of creation of the document but subject to change without notice. Always check Catsweb for the most updated location, professor, and course details.

All elective courses outside of the McCoy College of Business require special approval both internally—via the course substitution request form on the McCoy graduate website—and from the department in which they are offered. Students may find a department’s contact information by searching the department name on the main Texas State website.

**Career Advising**

Every student is required to meet with the McCoy Graduate Career Specialist in their final semester. However, it is encouraged that students meet with her prior to the final semester if you need help with:

- Creating a customized cover letter
- Building and editing your resume
- Formal, informal, or virtual interview preparation
- Creating job and internship search strategies

You should expect to hear from the McCoy graduate team regarding scheduling that meeting in your final semester.

**Professional Development Seminars**

Professional development is a critical component of each student’s education and the format of our program puts students in charge of selecting events that are most relevant to their career and interests.

**Twelve (12) Professional Development Units (PDUs) are required in order to graduate.** These events will cover a wide variety of topics and provide students with skills not necessarily acquired in the classroom, but which have proven valuable in graduate-level careers. Each event will clearly state how many units it is worth.

Attendance will be taken at each event and it is the student’s responsibility to ensure they are checked in to receive credit. Credit for attendance will be entered into the MGSA TRACS gradebook within two days of each event; it is each student’s responsibility to keep track of how many units they have.
completed and how many they still need before the requirement is met. While students must meet the minimum professional development criteria to graduate, everyone is welcome to earn more than 12 units if they so choose.

As an ever-evolving part of the MSHRM program, we are always open to suggested professional development topics from students. If you have a topic you would love to see offered in a future semester or a presenter you know that you would like to introduce me to, please e-mail it to the Graduate Academic Advisor at mredepennning@txstate.edu.

Best Practices
The McCoy MSHRM program has less structure than students may have experienced during their time as an undergraduate. While this may take a little getting used to, it allows for more chances to explore issues, discuss with peers and faculty, and innovate.

Expectations
Each student is expected to 1) Communicate with faculty, peers, and staff about issues they may encounter as early as possible, 2) Come to class and meetings on time, prepared, and ready to discuss the topic(s) at hand, and 3) Participate fully in class, online forums or discussions, and group meetings.

How to Excel
In short: Do your best. Over the years we have encountered graduate students who dash into class at the last minute, do the bare minimum on homework and group projects, and don’t attend social or professional development events. While it may be technically possible to complete graduate school in this manner it is likely your knowledge, skill sets, and professional network will be subpar compared to an MSHRM student who always did their best, made an effort to attend professional development and networking activities, and prioritized their education. You will get out of this program what you put in.

Professionalism
Students should communicate with all faculty, staff, peers, and clients in a professional manner. This includes but is not limited to verbal, written, and electronic communication. We hope this goes without saying but every semester disrespectful communication is an issue with a handful of students. Please consider the tone, factual information, and format of every single email you send. A good rule of thumb is to not send email when you are upset or frustrated; save it as a draft and come back to it in an hour. You’ll be surprised what sounded appropriate at the time no longer seems like a message you want to be associated with.

Bear in mind that you represent not just yourself and your peers, but all McCoy MSHRM graduates (and for that matter, all Texas State graduates). Think about how hard you will work to earn your MSHRM. Now think about someone with “McCoy MSHRM” on their resume or business card acting immature and foolish in a professional setting. That person drags down the entire brand. Don’t be that person.

Students are not required to dress in professional clothing for regular class periods, but professional dress is highly encourage for presentations, client meetings, or professional development activities. When in doubt, dress up.
Pay attention to details in all communications. While the most common instance of this will be related to courses, it also applies to communication from university administration. The Registrar’s Office, Graduate College, Student Business Services, and Financial Aid departments all send out relevant information on various deadlines. If, for example, a student misses the deadline to apply for graduation in their final semester, they will not be allowed to graduate until the following term. That may sound a little extreme but it is surprising how often that exact situation occurs.

Be respectful of others. You may not agree with every opinion you hear in graduate school, but you should always be professional. Likewise, learn to appreciate criticism from peers, professors, and staff. Don’t take it personally when your work or opinions are critiqued.

**McCoy Graduate Student Association**

The McCoy Graduate Student Association, or MGSA, is a group comprised of current business graduate students, faculty, administrators, and McCoy alumni across all business programs in the College of Business. The MGSA typically meet several times a semester for social events, community service activities, and professional development opportunities. Leadership opportunities within the MGSA (officers and committee chairs) are available at both the San Marcos and Round Rock campuses and are a great way to shape the organization while building solid resume material. Matt Painter, MBA Program Director, serves as the Faculty Advisor to the organization. Please contact him via e-mail, mpainter@txstate.edu, if you are interested in serving as an officer or committee member/chair.

**Study Abroad**

Every summer students and faculty have the opportunity to travel as part of a six hour study abroad program that allows students to experience first-hand the economy, politics, and culture of another country.

Applications and scholarships for the study abroad program are due online through the Study Abroad Office (not through McCoy) as early as November of the year prior to each trip. However, there is additional and entirely separate funding available through the McCoy College of Business. Students are welcome and encouraged to apply for study abroad scholarships through both McCoy and the Study Abroad Office; in that case, they will fill out two separate forms in addition to the study abroad application itself.

The process of getting forms signed and applying for any available scholarships may take some time so it is encouraged that students start the application process as early as possible.

**MSHRM Internships**

Students pursuing the MSHRM may choose to complete an internship for course credit to earn three hours of elective credit toward their degree as MGT 5395 if the job duties are very clearly related to human resources. Approval and inquiries should go to the MBA Program Director to determine eligibility to ensure graduate-level job duties. Students must have established a minimum 3.0 graduate GPA and completed 12 or more hours of course work to be considered for an internship.
Once enrolled in the internship class, students will be required to complete 200 hours of work and submit weekly reports describing any projects they are working on and what they are learning. At the end of the semester the student will receive an evaluation from their supervisor and submit a more in-depth final paper with insights on the final project and everything they have learned.

**Communication**

With a good understanding of these policies and excellent communication there are very few questions or issues that we cannot work through together. Where things typically go sideways, however, is when questions or issues are communicated poorly and/or at the last minute—or after the fact. We are here to help, and we pride ourselves on great customer service. But good communication is critical.

Please set up your Texas State e-mail account immediately. You MUST pay attention to your Texas State e-mail or you will miss critical pieces of communication from both the university and McCoy.

Newsletters are e-mailed to your Texas State e-mail account periodically. We include important academic and professional development dates, news about MGSA socials, program updates, and other news that is specific to McCoy graduate programs. Take a few minutes and read through the entire document.

In addition to e-mail, we communicate extensively through our Facebook group. The official McCoy Graduate Student Association Facebook group is [https://www.facebook.com/groups/McCoyGSA/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/McCoyGSA/). If you have not already, please request to join the group. While we won’t clutter your newsfeed, we will provide updates and event invitations that you might otherwise miss.

**E-mail signatures:** Each semester we encounter students who—unintentionally or otherwise—represent themselves as already holding an MSHRM degree when in fact they are a student. It is completely acceptable to represent yourself as an “MSHRM Student.” It is misleading to have your signature or LinkedIn profile say: “Your Name, MSHRM” as this indicates you already hold that degree. Beginning the first day of your final semester it is appropriate to change your signature to say “MSHRM Candidate” rather than MSHRM student.

Also, unless you are an employee of Texas State University, make sure your signature line clearly states your status as a student and not simply “Texas State University” as sometimes this can be misconstrued.

**Exit Exam**

All students are required to pass a comprehensive exit exam covering all major topics in the core curriculum during their final semester to graduate from the MSHRM program. When students are in their final semester, Dr. Kay Nicols will contact them to coordinate a date that works for everyone.

Students that do not pass will have another chance to take the exam in the same semester. All paperwork verifying passing grades will be submitted to the Graduate College by the Dean’s Office and noted in the student’s file.
Contact Information
Dean’s Office (McCoy Hall 530): 512-245-3591

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