

# Academic Information

## Course Numbering

Each course has an alphanumeric code (e.g., ENGL 1301). The alpha portion is an abbreviation of the subject area, while the numeric portion provides specific information about the course. The first digit of the numeric portion indicates the level of the course (1=freshman level, 2=sophomore level, 3=junior level, 4=senior level, and 5 and 6=graduate level). The second digit indicates the number of semester credit hours earned by satisfactorily completing the course. The third digit is a sequencing number, or, if it is a 7, the third digit indicates the course is not in the Texas Common Course Numbering System. The fourth digit is a sequencing number. Master's level courses are numbered 5000. Doctoral level courses are numbered 5000 and 6000. Students are responsible for registering in the correct level of courses.

In this bulletin, three digits separated by colons, such as (3:3:1), will follow each course title. This code provides the following information: the first number is the semester hours of credit for the course; the second number is the class hours to be met per week; and the third number is the required laboratory hours per week. The letter "A" indicates that the hours are arranged, usually with the instructor of the course.

## Dropping Courses

Students may drop a course and receive a grade of "Q" during the first six weeks of the semester (two weeks in the summer session). For drops after this penalty-free period, grades are recorded as "Q" or "F" indicating that the student was passing or failing at the time of the drop. A grade of "Q" may not be assigned unless an official drop has been processed through the Records Office. Students may drop a course online or by obtaining and processing a drop form from their major department. A student may not drop a course within 15 class days of the beginning of the final examinations or five class days before the end of a summer term. Students should check the Academic Calendar for specific dates.

## Withdrawal from the University

Students wishing to withdraw from the university during a regular semester or summer term should fill out a Withdrawal Petition (available in the Records Office). Students must clear all financial obligations and return all University property. However, if the student is unable at the time of withdrawal to clear financial obligations to the University and files with the Records Office an affidavit of inability to pay, the student will be permitted to withdraw with the acknowledgement that transcripts will be withheld and reentry to Lamar University will not be permitted until all financial obligations are cleared. Copies of the withdrawal form signed by the student and by the department chair must be presented to the Records Office by the student. The student will receive a receipt.

The Finance Office, on application before the end of the regular semester or summer session, will return such fees as are returnable according to the schedule shown under the "Fees" section of this catalog. If a withdrawal is made before the end of the sixth week (second week of a summer term) or if the student is passing at the time of withdrawal after the sixth week, a grade of "W" will be issued for each course affected. A grade of "F" may be issued for all courses not being passed at the time of withdrawal after the penalty-free period.

A student may not withdraw within 15 class days of the beginning of final examinations during a regular semester or five class days before the end of a summer term. A student who leaves without withdrawing officially will receive a grade of “F” in all courses and forfeit all returnable fees. Students should check the Academic Calendar for specific dates. Students wishing to withdraw after the official withdrawal date may submit a written petition to their Dean.

## **Enforced Withdrawal Due to Health Reasons**

The Director of the Health Center and the Vice President for Student Affairs, on the advice of competent medical personnel, may require withdrawal of or deny admission to a student for health reasons (mental or physical).

## **Change of Address or Name**

Students are responsible for all communications addressed to them at the address on file in the Office of Student Development, in the Office of the College of Graduate Studies and in the Records Office. Any student who moves during a semester must immediately register the change of address in the above offices. Change of address forms are available in the Records Office.

Change of name due to marriage, or correction of name because of spelling errors, should be made by completing a name change card at the Records Office. All name changes must be accompanied by a copy of the legal document making the name change official. This document will be kept on file in the student’s official folder. Students are advised that former names will be carried on all official transcripts.

## **Academic Records**

Academic records are in the permanent custody of the Records Office. Transcripts of academic records may be secured by an individual student personally or will be released on the student’s written authorization. College transcripts on file from other colleges will not be duplicated by Lamar University’s Records Office.

Students who owe debts to the University or who have not met entrance requirements may have their official transcripts withheld until the debt is paid or credentials are furnished.

Chapter 675, Acts of the 61st Legislature, 1969 Regular Session, provides that “no person may buy, sell, create, duplicate, alter, give or obtain a diploma, certificate, academic record, certificate of enrollment or other instrument which purports to signify merit or achievement conferred by an institution of education in this state with the intent to use fraudulently such document or to allow the fraudulent use of such document.”

“A person who violates this Act or who aids another in violating this Act is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction, is punishable by a fine of not more than \$1,000 and/or confinement in the county jail for a period not to exceed one year.”

## Educational Records and Student Rights

The following information concerning student records maintained by Lamar University is published in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended (PL93-380).

Access to educational records directly related to a student will be granted to him or her unless the type of record is exempt from the provision of the law.

The types, locations and names of custodians of educational records maintained by the University are available from the registrar.

Access to records by persons other than the student will be limited to those persons and agencies specified in the statute. records will be maintained of persons granted such access and the legitimate interest in each case.

The release of information to the public without the consent of the student will be limited to the categories of information which have been designated by the University as directory information and which will be routinely released. The student may request this information be withheld from the public by making written request to the Records Office. Directory information includes name, current and permanent address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major and minor, semester hour load, classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, with dates, and the last educational agency or institution attended.

A student has the right to challenge records and information directly related to him or her if it is considered to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate. Issues may be resolved either through an informal hearing with the official immediately responsible or by requesting a formal hearing. The procedure to be followed in a formal hearing is available in the Records Office.

Prior consent is not required from a student to disclose information to the Comptroller General of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the Secretary of State and local educational authorities.

A reasonable attempt will be made by Lamar University to notify a student of a records request to comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena.

The right of parental access to student records may be established by either of two methods: first, by the student filing a written consent statement and, second, by the parent validating the student's dependence as defined by the internal Revenue Service.

A student has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Lamar University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

### To Withhold Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act of 1974, as Amended, allows a college or university to release certain pieces of information if that college or university has published that it will release information. Lamar University will make the following information available to the public: name, current and permanent address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major, semester hour load, classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received with dates and the last educational agency or institution attended.

If a student does not want this information published or given out, the student must sign a Directory Hold form before the 12th class day of each term. If the student signs a directory hold form during the last term before graduation and does not revoke it in writing, the student's records remain sealed, including information sought by future employers confirming a degree. A student should be aware that a directory hold prevents anyone from receiving information about himself or herself.

## **Summons**

An official summons takes precedence over other university activities of the student and should be answered promptly on the day and hour designated. Failure to heed an official summons may subject the student to serious disciplinary action.

## **Falsification of Records**

A student who makes a false statement to any university official or office or on any official form submitted to the University is subject to immediate dismissal.

## **Student Debts**

The University is not responsible for debts contracted by individual students or student organizations and will not act as a collection agency for organizations, firms or individuals to whom students may owe bills.

Students and student organizations are expected to honor contractual obligations promptly, but, in case of flagrant disregard of such obligations, the Vice President for Student Affairs or his designated representative will take appropriate action.

Failure to pay all University fees by the specified date will result in suspension through the 12th week in the long semester and the fourth week of each summer term. After the 12th week in the long semester and the fourth week of each summer term failure to pay all fees by the specified date will result in suspension at the end of the current semester and may include: a) denial of readmission, b) withholding of grades and transcripts, c) withholding of degree.

## **Parking**

All faculty, staff and students are required to purchase a current parking permit and display it if they park a vehicle on campus. A copy of the parking and traffic regulations is issued at the time of permit purchase. Strict observance of traffic and parking regulations is necessary for the safe, orderly flow of vehicles in the campus area. Parking and traffic regulations are in effect 24 hours a day.

## **Class Attendance**

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Instructors will formulate an attendance policy consistent with departmental policies and suited to the needs of the particular course. The instructor's policy will be explained in detail to the class at the beginning of the semester and appear in the course syllabus.

## Travel Procedures

These travel procedures apply to faculty and staff who engage in transporting students off campus a distance of 25 miles or more from campus to an activity or event that is organized, sponsored or funded by the institution, using a vehicle owned or operated by the institution, or travel that is required by an organization registered at the institution. These travel procedures are considered to be minimum standard; departments may mandate additional procedures. These procedures reference Texas Education Code Section 51.949 and Senate Bill No. 263.

It is recommended that a designated staff member(s) and/or faculty accompany each student travel group. In the event an advisor cannot attend the function with the student/student group, the organization member/members should be advised on what should be the expected behavior from each student. All University rules and regulations must be followed.

Groups of 24 and more may be required to obtain commercial/chartered transportation. This will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the final decision for such an event will be given by the Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her designee after consultation with the student organization advisor. Chartered transportation must comply with all state and federal laws. Groups of fewer than 24 may travel by University owned, leased, rented, or privately owned motor vehicles.

For student/student organization travel, only employees of Lamar University are allowed to drive University-owned motor vehicles. Lamar University students are not covered under the University insurance policy unless they are employed by the University. Any employee who is to drive a University vehicle must first provide the Vice President for Finance and Operations and/or his/her designee with a copy of their driver's license and sign an "Application for Copy of Driver Record" form. A license check will be run that will reflect the status of the employee's driver's license and list any accidents and moving violations in the past three (3) years. Permission for an employee to drive a University-owned motor vehicle will depend on the results of their driving record. A copy of the employee's driver's license and the "Application for Copy of Driver Record" must be submitted to the Vice President for Finance and Operations office at least two (2) weeks prior to the date the employee is expected to drive the University-owned motor vehicle. A student/student organization that rents, leases or uses a privately owned motor vehicle for university-sponsored travel must obtain liability insurance.

Because personal automobile insurance will be considered first in the event of an accident, all persons who use their personal vehicles while conducting University business should be aware of the possibility of personal liability related to such use. No individual shall be required to use his/her personal vehicle to drive to official University-sponsored activities. No student shall be required to use his/her personal vehicle to perform University-related activities. Use of personal vehicles by students to drive to official University-sponsored activities is discouraged.

All state and federal laws will be followed when operating a vehicle for student/student organization official travel. Drivers will comply with all applicable traffic laws and regulations. All occupants must use seat belts and other safety devices when the vehicle is in motion. Manufacturer-suggested vehicle capacities will be followed when vehicles are used by students/student organizations.

The following activities are PROHIBITED for drivers while driving:

- Driving while under the influence of impairing drugs or alcohol
- Use of radar/laser detection devices
- Use of headphones or earphones

- Use of cell phone
- Eating, smoking or drinking

The fatigue of the vehicle operator should be considered at the time of travel, and only rested drivers should operate a vehicle.

Each student who travels by motor vehicle or any other form of transportation to participate in a University-related activity must execute a copy of the Release and Indemnification Agreement.

Each traveling student must have document proof of current medical insurance coverage.

Any traveling student less than 18 years of age must have a consent for treatment form on file. Organizations that travel frequently are encouraged to have consent for treatment forms on file for all travelers.

Departments that encourage or require one or more students to travel to events and activities covered under this policy are responsible for verifying that students are aware of this policy.

Faculty and staff employees who fail to comply with this policy are subject to disciplinary action in accordance with applicable provision of the faculty handbook and the staff personnel manual.

Individual students who violate this policy and the safe travel rules approved by the University are subject to disciplinary action, to include suspension. Student organizations that violate this policy and the safe travel rules are subject to disciplinary action to include suspension and loss of funding.

## **Student Absences on Religious Holy Days**

Under Texas Education Code, Section 51.911, Lamar University shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an exam or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable period of time after the absence.

Texas Education Code, Section 51.911, defines a religious holy day. If a student and an instructor disagree about the nature of the absence being for the observance of a religious holy day as defined therein, or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the Provost. The student and the instructor shall abide by the decision of the Provost.