

= Texas A & M University =

Texas A & M University (Texas A & M , TAMU / ?tæmu? / , or A & M) is a coeducational public research university located in College Station , Texas , United States . It is the flagship institution of the Texas A & M University System , the fourth @-@ largest university in the United States and the largest university in Texas . The university enjoys a strong athletic program and fan following , known as the twelfth man , and is a member of the Southeastern Conference . It is consistently ranked among the top 20 public universities in the United States ; most notably , its engineering school ranks in the top 10 of public schools . Texas A & M 's designation as a land , sea , and space grant institution reflects a range of research with ongoing projects funded by agencies such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) , the National Institutes of Health , the National Science Foundation , and the Office of Naval Research . The school ranks in the top 20 American research institutes in funding and has made contributions to such fields as animal cloning and petroleum engineering .

The first public institution of higher education in Texas , the school opened on October 4 , 1876 as the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas under the provisions of the Morrill Land @-@ Grant Acts . Originally , the college taught no classes in agriculture , instead concentrating on classical studies , languages , literature , and applied mathematics . After four years , students could attain degrees in scientific agriculture , civil and mechanical engineering , and language and literature . Under the leadership of President James Earl Rudder in the 1960s , A & M desegregated , became coeducational , and dropped the requirement for participation in the Corps of Cadets . To reflect the institution 's expanded roles and academic offerings , the Texas Legislature renamed the school to Texas A & M University in 1963 . The letters " A & M " , originally short for " Agricultural and Mechanical " , are retained only as a link to the university 's past . The school 's students , alumni , and sports teams are known as Aggies .

The main campus is one of the largest in the United States , spanning 5 @,@ 200 acres (21 km2) , and includes the George Bush Presidential Library . About one @-@ fifth of the student body lives on campus . Texas A & M has approximately 1 @,@ 000 officially recognized student organizations . Many students also observe the traditions of Texas A & M University , which govern daily life , as well as special occasions , including sports events . On July 1 , 2012 , the school joined the Southeastern Conference . A & M operates two branches : Texas A & M at Qatar and Texas A & M University at Galveston . Working with agencies such as the Texas AgriLife Research and Texas AgriLife Extension Service , Texas A & M has a direct presence in each of the 254 counties in Texas . The university offers degrees in over 150 courses of study through ten colleges and houses 18 research institutes . Texas A & M has awarded over 320 @,@ 000 degrees , including 70 @,@ 000 graduate and professional degrees .

As a Senior Military College , Texas A & M is one of six American public universities with a full @-@ time , volunteer Corps of Cadets who study alongside civilian undergraduate students .

= = History = =

= = = Beginning years = = =

The U.S. Congress laid the groundwork for the establishment of Texas A & M in 1862 with the adoption of the Morrill Act . The act auctioned land grants of public lands to establish endowments for colleges where the " leading object shall be , without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactics , to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanical arts ... to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life " . In 1871 , the Texas Legislature used these funds to establish the state 's first public institution of higher education , the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas , then known as Texas A.M.C. Brazos County donated 2 @,@ 416 acres (10 km2) near Bryan , Texas , for the school 's campus .

Enrollment began on October 2 , 1876 . Six students enrolled on the first day , and classes officially began on October 4 , 1876 , with six faculty members . During the first semester , enrollment increased to 48 students , and by the end of the spring 1877 semester , 106 students had enrolled . Admission was limited to white males , and all students were required to participate in the Corps of Cadets and receive military training . Although traditional Texas A & M University Corps of Cadets " campusologies " indicate 40 students began classes on October 4 , 1876 , the exact number of students enrolled on that day is unknown . Enrollment climbed to 258 students before declining to 108 students in 1883 , the year the University of Texas opened in Austin , Texas . Though originally envisioned and annotated in the Texas Constitution as a branch of the University of Texas , Texas A.M.C. had a separate Board of Directors from the University of Texas from the first day of classes and was never enveloped into the University of Texas System .

In the late 1880s , many Texas residents saw no need for two colleges in Texas and clamored for an end of Texas A.M.C. In 1891 , Texas A & M was saved from potential closure by its new president Lawrence Sullivan Ross , former governor of Texas , and well @-@ respected Confederate Brigadier General . Ross made many improvements to the school and enrollment doubled to 467 cadets as parents sent their sons to Texas A & M " to learn to be like Ross " . During his tenure , many enduring Aggie traditions were born , including the creation of the first Aggie Ring . After his death in 1898 , a statue was erected in front of what is now Academic Plaza to honor Ross and his achievements in the history of the school .

Under pressure from the legislature , in 1911 the school began allowing women to attend classes during the summer semester . At the same time , A & M began expanding its academic pursuits with the establishment of the School of Veterinary Medicine in 1915 .

= = = World Wars era = = =

Many Texas A & M graduates served during World War I. By 1918 , 49 % of all graduates of the college were in military service , more than any other school . In early September 1918 , the entire senior class enlisted , with plans to send the younger students at staggered dates throughout the next year . Many of the seniors were fighting in France when the war ended two months later . Over 1 @,@ 200 alumni served as commissioned officers . After the war , Texas A & M grew rapidly and became nationally recognized for its programs in agriculture , engineering , and military science . The first graduate school was organized in 1924 and the school awarded its first PhD in 1940 . In 1925 , Mary Evelyn Crawford Locke became the first female to receive a diploma from Texas A & M , although she was not allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony . The following month the Board of Directors officially prohibited all women from enrolling .

Many Aggies again served in the military during World War II , with the college producing 20 @,@ 229 combat troops . Of those , 14 @,@ 123 Aggies served as officers , more than any other school and more than the combined total of the United States Naval Academy and the United States Military Academy . During the war , 29 A & M graduates reached the rank of general .

At the start of World War II , Texas A & M was selected as one of six engineering colleges to participate in the Electronics Training Program , a ten @-@ month activity of 12 @-@ hour study days to train Navy personnel who were urgently needed to maintain the then @-@ new , highly complex electronic equipment such as radar . These colleges provided the Primary School , wherein the key topics of the first two years of a college electrical engineering curriculum were condensed into three months . The instructional effort at College Station was developed and led by Frank Bolton , EE department head and future Texas A & M president . At a given time , some 500 Navy students were on the campus , a significant fraction of the then @-@ years enrollment . Students graduating from the Primary Schools then went to a secondary school , one of which was at Ward Island , Texas (the future location of Texas A & M University @-@ Corpus Christi) .

Enrollment soared after the war as many former soldiers used the G.I. Bill to further their education . In 1948 , the state legislature formally recognized Texas A & M as a separate university system from the University of Texas System , codifying the de facto arrangement between the schools .

= = = University era = = =

On March 26 , 1960 , Major General James Earl Rudder , class of 1932 , became the 16th president of the college . Rudder 's tenure (1959 ? 1970) marked a critical turning point in the school 's history . Under his leadership , Texas A & M underwent a dramatic expansion in its physical plant construction , but more importantly , it diversified and expanded its student body by admitting women and minorities . The Corps of Cadets became voluntary . In the face of growing student activism during the 1960s , Rudder worked diligently to ensure that the school continue to fulfill its mission of providing a quality education for all Aggies . By his death in 1970 , Rudder had overseen the growth of the school from 7 @, @ 500 to 14 @, @ 000 students from all 50 states and 75 nations .

In 1963 , the 58th Legislature of Texas approved of Rudder 's changes , and officially renamed the school " Texas A & M University " , specifying that the " A " and the " M " were purely symbolic , reflecting the school 's past , and no longer stood for " Agricultural and Mechanical " . In the following 35 years , Texas A & M more than tripled its enrollment from 14 @, @ 000 students to over 45 @, @ 000 .

Much of the legislative work allowing the expansion of Texas A & M and the admission of women was pushed by State Senator William T. " Bill " Moore , who served from 1949 to 1981 . Known as " the Bull of the Brazos " and " the father of the modern Texas A & M University " , Moore was a Bryan attorney and businessman originally from Wheelock in Robertson County . He also taught economics at TAMU before his entry into World War II .

Texas A & M became one of the first four universities given the designation sea @-@ grant for its achievements in oceanography and marine resources development in 1971 . In 1989 , the university earned the title space @-@ grant by NASA , to recognize its commitment to space research and participation in the Texas Space Grant Consortium .

In 1997 , the school became the home of the George Bush Presidential Library . Operated by the National Archives and Records Administration , it is one of thirteen American presidential libraries . Former President George Bush remains actively involved with the university , frequently visiting the campus and participating in special events .

In 1998 , activists on campus (including Professor Patrick Slattery) suggested the statue of Lawrence Sullivan Ross should be removed on the basis that he was a member of the Ku Klux Klan . Instead , Slattery and others wanted to create a " diversity plaza " , with a statue of Matthew Gaines , an African @-@ American politician . The project was abandoned in the wake of the Aggie Bonfire tragedy , in 1999 .

Texas A & M received national media attention on November 18 , 1999 , when Aggie Bonfire , a ninety @-@ year @-@ old student tradition , collapsed during construction . Twelve enrolled students and alumni died and twenty @-@ seven others were injured . The accident was later attributed to improper design and poor construction practices . The victims ' family members filed six lawsuits against Texas A & M officials , the Aggie Bonfire officials and the university . Half of the defendants settled their portion of the case in 2005 , and a federal appeals court dismissed the remaining lawsuits against the university in 2007 .

With strong support from Rice University and the University of Texas at Austin , the Association of American Universities inducted Texas A & M in May 2001 , on the basis of the depth of the university 's research and academic programs .

Texas A & M left the Big 12 Conference for the Southeastern Conference on July 1 , 2012 . This ended Texas A & M 's scheduled NCAA athletic competitions with three former Southwest Conference rivals ? UT Austin , Baylor , and Texas Tech ? for the foreseeable future .

The university underwent several large expansions in 2013 . On July 12 , 2013 , Texas A & M Health Science Center was formally merged into the university . On August 12 , 2013 the university purchased the Texas Wesleyan University School of Law and renamed it the Texas A & M School of Law . Texas A & M on October 23 , 2013 announced plans to build a new branch campus , Texas A & M University at Nazareth - Peace Campus , in Israel .

= = Academics = =

= = = Student body = = =

In the fall 2013 semester , Texas A & M was the fourth largest American university with an enrollment of 56 @, @ 255 students pursuing degrees in 10 academic colleges . The student body represents all 50 US states and 124 foreign countries . Texas residents account for 85 @. @ 9 % of the student population , and 33 @. @ 3 % are either of international origin or members of ethnic minority groups . The student body consists of 47 @. @ 3 % women and 52 @. @ 7 % men .

Although Texas A & M is a secular institution , its student body has a reputation for being religious and conservative . According to a 2005 student survey published in the Princeton Review , Texas A & M ranked 13th highest in the category " students pray on a regular basis " . Breakaway , a weekly , student @-@ organized , on @-@ campus prayer gathering , has attracted over 10 @, @ 000 students in 2012 , and is one of the largest of its kind in the United States . In 2009 , the Princeton Review ranked Texas A & M the eighth most socially conservative campus in the nation . The Princeton Review also ranked the university in 2012 as the " 10th least friendly " college in the United States for LGBT people , and the least friendly among public schools for LGBT people .

The university consistently ranks among the top ten public universities each year in enrollment of National Merit scholars . According to the College Board , the fall 2008 entering freshman class consisted of 54 % students in the top 10 % of their high school graduating class , 86 % in the top quarter , and 99 % in the top half . Seventy @-@ four percent of these students took the SAT . The middle 50 % of the freshmen had average scores as follows : in critical reading , 520 ? 630 , math , 560 ? 670 , and in writing 500 ? 610 . Twenty @-@ six percent of the incoming freshmen took the ACT , with the middle 50 % scoring between a 23 and 29 . About 80 percent of the student body receives about \$ 420 million in financial aid annually . The admission rate for students who applied as undergraduates in 2012 was 67 % . The school is rated as " selective " by US News & World Report .

In the fall 2008 semester , the Dwight Look College of Engineering had the largest enrollment of 20 @. @ 5 % . The College of Liberal Arts and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences followed , enrolling 15 % and 14 % of the student body , respectively . The College of Education and Human Development enrolls 12 % , and Mays Business School enrolled about 11 % . Colleges with less than 10 % enrollment included the College of Architecture , the College of Science , the George Bush School of Government and Public Service , the College of Geosciences , and the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences . Approximately 8 % of the student body had not declared a major .

In the fall 2011 semester , enrollment at Texas A & M surpassed 50 @, @ 000 for the first time . A record 50 @, @ 054 students were enrolled on the census day .

= = = Rankings = = =

In a comparison of educational quality , faculty quality , and research output , Shanghai Jiao Tong University ranked Texas A & M 51st nationally and 96th internationally in its 2014 rankings . In its 2014 @-@ 2015 rankings , The Times Higher Education Supplement listed Texas A & M 61st among North America 's universities , and 141st among world universities . The 2012 / 2013 QS World University Rankings ranked the university 165th overall in the world . In its 2013 edition , the Center for World University Rankings ranked Texas A & M as the 80th university globally and 50th university nationally .

In the 2014 edition of the U.S. News and World Report ranking of national universities , the school is 68th . In the U.S. News and World Report ranking , Texas A & M tied with Worcester Polytechnic Institute . According to The Washington Monthly criteria , which weigh research , community service , and social mobility , Texas A & M ranks third nationally in 2015 . The John Templeton Foundation listed Texas A & M as one of the thirty @-@ five American college programs that " communicate [s

] the values of honesty , trust , respect , responsibility , integrity , and fairness in the classroom " . The 2011 Kiplinger 's Personal Finance ranked the school as the 23rd best @-@ value public university on the basis of in @-@ state tuition , and the 35th best @-@ value public university on the basis of out @-@ of @-@ state tuition . After conducting a survey of leading employment recruiters , The Wall Street Journal ranked Texas A & M 2nd nationally , as " most likely to help students land a job in key careers and professions " . In 2009 the National Science Foundation has recognized Texas A & M as one of the top 20 research institutions .

= = = Endowment = = =

Texas A & M has an endowment valued at more than \$ 11 billion (system @-@ wide) , which ranks second among U.S. public universities and 7th overall . Apart from revenue received from tuition and research grants , the university , as part of the Texas A & M University System (TAMUS) , is partially funded from two endowments . The smaller endowment , totaling \$ 1 @. @ 17 billion in assets , is run by the private Texas A & M Foundation . A larger sum is distributed from the Texas Permanent University Fund (PUF) . TAMUS holds a minority stake (one @-@ third) in this fund ; the remaining two @-@ thirds belongs to the University of Texas System . As of 2006 , the PUF ending net asset value stood at \$ 10 @. @ 3 billion ; \$ 400 @. @ 7 million was distributed to the two university systems in fiscal year 2007 . Combined , the total endowment for the TAMUS stands at \$ 11 @. @ 1 billion , as of 2015 .

= = = Research = = =

The Texas A & M University system , in 2006 , was the first to explicitly state in its policy that technology commercialization was a criterion that could be used for tenure . Passage of this policy was intended to give faculty more academic freedom and strengthen the university 's industry partnerships . Texas A & M works with both state and university agencies on various local and international research projects to forge innovations in science and technology that can have commercial applications . This work is concentrated in two primary locations ? Research Valley and Research Park . Research Valley , an alliance of educational and business organizations , consists of 11 @, @ 400 acres (50 km²) with 2 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 square feet (232 @, @ 000 m²) of dedicated research space . An additional 350 acres (1 km²) , with 500 @, @ 000 square feet (46 @, @ 000 m²) of research space , is located in Research Park . Among the school 's research entities are the Texas Institute for Genomic Medicine , the Texas Transportation Institute , the Cyclotron Institute , the Institute of Biosciences and Technology , and the Institute for Plant Genomics and Biotechnology . Texas A & M University is a member of the SEC Academic Consortium .

In 2013 with \$ 955 million Texas A & M ranked in the top three universities for research expenditures ; third behind only MIT and UC Berkeley . In 2004 , Texas A & M System faculty and research submitted 121 new inventions and established 78 new royalty @-@ bearing licensing agreements ; the innovations resulted in income of \$ 8 million . The Texas A & M Technology Licensing Office filed for 88 patents for protection of intellectual property in 2004 .

Spearheaded by the College of Veterinary Medicine , Texas A & M scientists created the first cloned pet , a cat named ' cc ' , on December 22 , 2001 . Texas A & M was also the first academic institution to clone each of six different species : cattle , a Boer goat , pigs , a cat , a deer and a horse .

In 2004 , Texas A & M joined a consortium of universities and countries to build the Giant Magellan Telescope in Chile ; the largest optical telescope ever constructed , the facility has seven mirrors , each with a diameter of 8 @. @ 4 meters (9 @. @ 2 yd) . This gives the telescope the equivalent of a 24 @. @ 5 meters (26 @. @ 8 yd) primary mirror and is ten times more powerful than the Hubble Space Telescope . Ground @-@ breaking for the construction of the telescope began in November 2015 .

As part of a collaboration with the U.S. Department of Energy 's National Nuclear Security

Administration , Texas A & M completed the first conversion of a nuclear research reactor from using highly enriched uranium fuel (70 %) to utilizing low @-@ enriched uranium (20 %) . The eighteen @-@ month project ended on October 13 , 2006 , after the first ever refueling of the reactor , thus fulfilling a portion of U.S. President George W. Bush 's Global Nuclear Threat Reduction Initiative .

TAMU researchers have named the largest volcano on Earth , Tamu Massif , after the university .

= = = Worldwide = = =

Texas A & M has participated in over 500 research projects in over 80 countries and leads the Southwestern United States in annual research expenditures . The university conducts research on every continent and has formal research and exchange agreements with 100 institutions in 40 countries . Texas A & M ranks 13th among U.S. research universities in exchange agreements with institutions abroad and student participation in study abroad programs , and has strong research collaborations with the National Natural Science Foundation of China and many leading universities in China .

Texas A & M owns three international facilities , a multipurpose center in Mexico City , Mexico , the Soltis Research and Education Center near the town of San Isidro , Costa Rica , and the Santa Chiara Study Abroad Center in Castiglion Fiorentino , Italy . In 2003 , over 1 @,@ 200 Aggie students , primarily undergraduates , studied abroad . Marine research occurs on the University 's branch campus , Texas A & M University at Galveston . It also has collaborations with international facilities such as the Hacienda Santa Clara in San Miguel de Allende , Guanajuato .

Texas A & M 's Center for International Business Studies is one of 28 supported by the U.S. Department of Education . The university is also one of only two American universities in partnership with CONACyT , Mexico 's equivalent of the National Science Foundation , to support research in areas including biotechnology , telecommunications , energy , and urban development . In addition , the university is the home of " Las Americas Digital Research Network " , an online architecture network for 26 universities in 12 nations , primarily in Central and South America .

Texas A & M has a campus in Education City , Doha , Qatar . The campus is part of Qatar ? s ? massive venture to import elite higher education from the United States ? . TAMUQ was set up through an agreement between Texas A & M and the Qatar Foundation for Education , Science , and Community Development , a foundation started in 1995 by then @-@ emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and his wife and mother of the current emir , Sheikha Moza bint Nasser . TAMUQ was opened in 2003 , and the current contract extends through 2023 . The campus offers undergraduate degrees in chemical , electrical , mechanical and petroleum engineering and a graduate degree in chemical engineering . TAMUQ has received numerous awards for its research . Texas A & M receives \$ 76 @.@ 2 million per year from the Qatar Foundation for the campus . In the agreement with the Qatar Foundation , TAMU agreed that 70 % of its undergraduate population at its Qatar campus would be Qatari citizens . The curriculum aims to ? duplicate as closely as possible ? the curriculum at College Station , but questions constantly arise over whether this is possible due to Qatar ? s strict stance on some of the freedoms granted to U.S. students . TAMU has also been the subject of criticism over its Qatari campus due to Qatar ? s support of global terrorism and appalling human rights record . Texas A & M Aggie Conservatives , a campus activism group , has spoken out against the campus and called for its immediate closure on the grounds that it violates a commitment to educating Texans , and diminishes the credibility of engineering degrees earned by students at College Station .

In late 2013 , Texas A & M signed an agreement to open a \$ 200 million campus in Nazareth , Israel as a ? peace campus ? for Arabs and Israelis . The agreement led to protests from students at the Qatari campus who claimed that it was ? an insult to [their] people ? . The campus was never opened . Instead , Texas A & M opened a \$ 6 million marine biology center in Haifa , Israel .

= = Campus = =

Texas A & M's College Station campus, one of the largest in America, spans 5,000 acres (21 km²) plus 350 acres (1 km²) for Research Park. The university is part of the Bryan-College Station metropolitan area located within Brazos County in the Brazos Valley (Southeast Central Texas) region, an area often referred to as "Aggieland". According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2008, the population of Brazos County is estimated at 175,000. Money Magazine, in 2006, named College Station the most educated city in Texas, and the 11th most educated American city, due largely to the presence of the university and the size and scope of its research. Aggieland is centrally located within 200 miles (320 km) of 3 of the 10 largest cities in the US and 75 % of the Texas and Louisiana populations (approximately 13 million people). The area's major roadway is State Highway 6, and several smaller state highways and Farm to Market Roads connect the area to larger highways such as Interstate 45.

The campus is bisected by a railroad track operated by Union Pacific. The area east of the tracks, known as Main Campus, includes buildings for the colleges of engineering, architecture, geosciences, science, education and liberal arts. Dormitories, as well as the main dining centers and many campus support facilities, are also on Main Campus. Notable buildings on Main Campus include Kyle Field, Sterling C. Evans Library, the Academic Building, Harrington Hall, the Memorial Student Center, the Administration Building, Rudder Tower, Albritton Bell Tower, and the Bonfire Memorial. To the west of the railroad tracks lies West Campus, which includes most of the sports facilities, the business school, agricultural programs, life sciences, the veterinary college, the political science and economics school, the George Bush School of Government and Public Service, the George Bush Presidential Library and two schools within the Texas A & M Health Science Center. Research Park, the area of West Campus along Kimbrough Boulevard, includes many research facilities.

Outside the main campus, the institution formally includes two additional branch campuses: Texas A & M at Qatar located in Education City in Doha, Qatar devoted to engineering disciplines and Texas A & M University at Galveston in Galveston, Texas, devoted to marine research and host to the Texas A & M Maritime Academy. All degrees at the Qatar campus are granted by the university's Dwight Look College of Engineering. On October 23, 2013, plans were announced for a third (second international) branch campus, Texas A & M University at Nazareth - Peace Campus, in Israel. The Texas A & M School of Law is located in Fort Worth, Texas.

Texas A & M also maintains Texas A & M Riverside Campus, an extension of the main campus, located 10 miles (16 km) to the northwest.

== Student life ==

=== Residential life ===

During the 2006 fall semester, 20% of the student body lived on campus in one of two distinct housing sections located on opposite ends of campus. Both the Northside and Southside areas contain student dormitories, also known as residence halls. While some halls are single-sex, others are co-educational. Usually students of different genders live on alternate floors, although some halls are segregated by room or suite. Residence hall styles vary. Many halls offer only indoor access to individual rooms, but other halls locate room entrances on an outdoor balcony. Room sizes vary by building. Halls with larger rooms include en-suite or private bathrooms, while halls with smaller rooms have a common bathroom on each floor. Several halls include a "substance-free" floor, where residents pledge to avoid bringing alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes into the hall.

Northside consists of 17 student residence halls, including the 3 university honors dorms. Two of the university honors dorms are freshman only. The halls are located near local entertainment district Northgate, and offer convenient access to campus dining establishments: Sbis Dining Hall, The Underground and Bernie's Cafe. The demolition of Moore Hall, Crocker Hall, and McInnis Hall is scheduled for August 2011. A \$58 million 600-bed residence hall will replace the

demolished halls that have accommodated roughly the same number . Some halls (particularly Walton) have unofficially claimed tables within the Sbis Dining Hall and many halls congregate for dinner at a specific time each weekday .

Several of the residence halls located on Southside are reserved for members of the Corps of Cadets . Non @-@ corps halls in this area center around the Commons , a hub for activities and dining . Southside has two Learning Living Communities , which allow freshmen to live in a cluster with other students who share common interests .

Facilities for the Corps of Cadets are located in the Quadrangle , or " The Quad " , an area consisting of dormitories , Duncan Dining Hall , and the Corps training fields . The Corps Arches , a series of 12 arches that " [symbolize] the spirit of the 12th Man of Texas A & M " , mark the entrance to the Quadrangle . All cadets , except those who are married or who have had previous military service , must live in the Quad with assigned roommates from the same unit and graduating class . Reveille , the Aggie mascot , lives with her handlers in the Quadrangle .

= = = Greek life = = =

At Texas A & M , about 10 % of the undergraduate population is affiliated with a Greek fraternity or sorority . Texas A & M is home to 58 nationally or internationally recognized Greek letter organizations . There are 19 IFC fraternities , including Sigma Alpha Epsilon , Phi Gamma Delta , Phi Delta Theta , Alpha Tau Omega , Beta Theta Pi , Delta Tau Delta , Sigma Phi Epsilon , Sigma Chi , Kappa Alpha Order , Kappa Sigma , and Sigma Nu . There are 13 Panhellenic Council Sororities , including Alpha Kappa Alpha , Delta Sigma Theta , Alpha Chi Omega , Chi Omega , Delta Delta Delta , Kappa Kappa Gamma , Zeta Tau Alpha , Pi Beta Phi , Gamma Phi Beta , and Delta Gamma . Major philanthropic events include Sigma Alpha Epsilon 's Paddy Murphy week @-@ long fundraiser , Zeta Tau Alpha 's Big Man on Campus competition , and Sigma Chi 's annual Fight Night .

= = = Corps of Cadets = = =

Texas A & M is one of six United States Senior Military Colleges . The schools ' Corps of Cadets (or the Corps) is one of the largest uniformed student bodies outside the service academies . Many members participate in ROTC programs and earn commissions in the United States Armed Forces upon graduation . Members of the Corps have served in every armed conflict fought by the United States since 1876 . There were 20 @,@ 229 Aggies who served in World War II , of these , 14 @,@ 123 served as officers , more than any other school , including the combined totals of the United States Military Academy and the United States Naval Academy . Since 1876 , 225 Aggies have served as generals or Flag Officers .

Until 1965 , Corps membership was mandatory . The Corps welcomed female members in the fall of 1974 , and as of spring 2012 , the co @-@ ed Corps boasts an enrollment of more than 2000 cadets .

The Corps is composed of three Air Force Wings , three Army Brigades , two Navy and Marine Regiments , as well as the Fightin ' Texas Aggie Band , whose members may be affiliated with any military branch . Parson 's Mounted Cavalry is the only mounted ROTC unit in the United States . The Ross Volunteer Company , the oldest student @-@ run organization in the state , is the official honor guard for the Governor of Texas . The Fish Drill Team , a precision , close @-@ order rifle drill team composed entirely of Corps freshmen , represents the school in local and national competitions . They have won the national championship almost every year since their creation in 1946 , and have appeared in several Hollywood productions , with prominent roles in the movies A Few Good Men and Courage Under Fire .

The Fightin ' Texas Aggie Band , the world 's largest precision military marching band , provides music for University functions and presents intricate halftime performances at football games . Some band drills are so complicated that they require band members to step between each other 's feet to complete the maneuvers . These drills must be drawn by hand as computer marching programs

have returned errors ; their calculations require two people to be in the same spot at the same time .

== = Activities == =

Texas A & M has over 1 @, @ 000 student organizations , including academic , service , religious , Greek and common interest organizations . Orientation programs encourage students to become involved in campus activities and organizations from the beginning . An April 2005 campus survey found that 74 % of the students were involved with at least one organization and that 88 % participated in a campus organization in the past .

One of the oldest student organizations is the Singing Cadets , founded in 1893 . Known as the " Voice of Aggieland " , the Singing Cadets are an all @-@ male choral group with about 70 members not affiliated with the Corps of Cadets . The group travels nationally and has completed several international tours ; most recently , China in 2013 .

Texas A & M Hillel , the oldest Hillel organization in the United States , was founded in 1920 at the original college . The organization occurred three years before the national Hillel Foundation was organized at the University of Illinois .

GLBT Aggies is the descendant organization of Gay Student Services (GSS) , the only student organization to ever successfully sue the institution for official recognition . In the decision Gay Student Services v. Texas A & M University , the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals held that the First Amendment required public universities to recognize student organizations aimed at gay students .

The Graduate Student Council , founded in 1995 , serves as the student government for Texas A & M University 's graduate and professional students . It is a council representing all TAMU graduate students with a purpose to improve graduate students ' academic , living and social experiences . The GSC represents students ' concerns and is their liaison with the University Administration .

Students exercise at the Student Rec Center , a three @-@ story facility encompassing 373 @, @ 000 square feet (34 @, @ 650 m2) , which includes exercise equipment , athletic courts , an indoor running track , a rock @-@ climbing tower , and one of the top competitive pools and diving wells in the country . The Rec Center also organizes intramural sports throughout the year .

Some national service organizations originated at A & M. Aggie students founded the largest one @-@ day student @-@ run service project in America known as The Big Event . The annual service project allows students to give back to their community by assisting local residents . The organization CARPOOL , a student @-@ run , safe ride program has provided over 250 @, @ 000 free rides (as of February 2016) to Aggies unable to transport themselves home . Its organizers also assist other universities in establishing similar programs . In addition , the Corporation for National and Community Service listed A & M among the 500 academic institutions in the 2005 ? 06 President 's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll .

The Student Government Association (SGA) , one of A & M 's largest organizations , consists of over 1 @, @ 300 student members in 3 branches , 15 committees , and 4 commissions . SGA has changed little since 1972 , except its relative position within the official framework of the university .

== = Media == =

The Princeton Review ranked The Battalion , founded in 1893 , as the 5th best college newspaper in America in 2010 . Students also publish a secondary school newspaper , the Maroon Weekly . The Aggieland , formerly known as The Olio and The Longhorn , is one of America 's largest college yearbooks in number of pages and copies sold . The university houses the public broadcasting stations : KAMU @-@ TV , a PBS member station since 1970 , KAMU @-@ FM an NPR affiliate since 1977 , and the student @-@ run KANM , " the college station of College Station " . W5AC broadcast the first live , play @-@ by @-@ play broadcast of a college football game , at Kyle Field , in November 1921 . The game , played in Dallas between the Aggies and the University of Texas , ended in a scoreless tie .

== Traditions ==

The Texas A & M culture is a product of the university's founding as a rural military and agricultural school. Although the school and surrounding community have grown, and military training is no longer required, the school's history has instilled in students "the idealized elements of a small town life: community, tradition, loyalty, optimism, and unabashed sentimentality." Texas Monthly posits that Texas A & M students' respect for school traditions and values is the university's greatest strength. Some of the school traditions date to the 1890s, while others have been introduced more recently. These traditions enable enrolled students and alumni to cultivate the Aggie Spirit, a sense of loyalty and respect for the school. They dictate many aspects of student life, including how to greet others (using the official school greeting "Howdy!"), how to act at an A & M sporting event, and often, what words a student may use in conversation.

A visible designation tradition among senior undergraduates and alumni is the wearing of the Aggie Ring, whose design has been relatively unchanged since its introduction in 1894. Students may order a ring after completing 90 credit hours of coursework, including at least 45 hours at A & M, or after graduation. Graduate students may receive a ring after 75% of their graduate coursework is completed or after the acceptance of their dissertation or thesis. Though unsanctioned by the University, many students "dunk" their newly acquired Aggie Rings into a pitcher of beer and quickly chug the entire pitcher to "earn" the ring. Some students dunk their rings in alternative substances, including ice cream or nonalcoholic beverages.

In keeping with the idea that all enrolled students and "former students" comprise a family (the term alumni is not generally used, as "former students" include those who could not complete their education, such as those who entered military service), Aggies have created two traditions to honor members of the Aggie family who have died. Aggie Muster is held annually on the anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto, April 21, to honor the death during the previous year of any enrolled student or alumni. Over 300 Musters are held around the world, with the largest taking place at Reed Arena on the Texas A & M University campus. All Muster ceremonies feature the Roll Call for the Absent. As the names of the deceased Aggies are called, a family member or friend answers "Here" and lights a candle, to symbolize that although their loved one is not present in body, his or her spirit will shine forever. The event received worldwide attention during World War II, when 25 Aggies "mustered" during the battle for the island of Corregidor.

Students who die while enrolled at Texas A & M are also honored at Silver Taps, a ceremony held, when necessary, on the first Tuesday of the month. This tradition began as a memorial for former Texas A & M president Lawrence Sullivan Ross. On the day of the ceremony, flags fly half-staff and notices are posted throughout campus. At 10:15 pm the lights around campus are extinguished and hymns chime from Albritton Tower while students and faculty collect in the Academic Plaza. Following a 21-gun salute by the Ross Volunteer Firing Squad, six buglers play an A & M version of the song Taps, Silver Taps, three times from the dome of the school's Academic Building: once to the north, the south and to the west. The song is not played to the east symbolizing that the sun will never rise on that Aggie again.

== Sports ==

=== 12th Man ===

Aggie football fans are called the 12th Man, meaning that they support the 11 players on the field and would be willing, if it were possible, to enter the game if necessary. To further symbolize their "readiness, desire, and enthusiasm," it is traditional for students in attendance to stand throughout the game. The tradition began on January 2, 1922, at the Dixie Classic where A & M played Centre College. A & M had so many injuries in the first half of the game that Coach Dana X. Bible feared he would not have enough men to finish the game. He called into the stands for E.

King Gill , a reserve who had left football after the regular season to play basketball . Although he did not actually play , his readiness symbolized the willingness of all Aggies to support their team to the point of actually entering the game . A & M won 22 ? 14 , but E. King Gill was the only man left standing on the sidelines for the Aggies . In recent decades , the 12th Man is represented on the field by a walk @-@ on player who wears the No. 12 jersey and participates in kick @-@ offs .

The 12th Man uses a variety of school yells , rather than cheers , to support Aggie teams . Each year the student body elects five students to serve as the Yell Leaders . At midnight before each home football game at Kyle Field or at a predesignated location at away games , the fans gather together to practice the yells for the next day 's game . Led by the Yell Leaders , and the Fightin ' Texas Aggie Band , the Twelfth Man files into the stadium to participate in Midnight Yell Practice to practice yells , sing the War Hymn , and joke about their opponents . At the conclusion of the yell practice , the stadium lights are extinguished and fans kiss their dates . This is also done as practice , because Aggies are expected to " mug down " , or kiss their dates , every time the football team scores on the field . Sports Illustrated named Midnight Yell as one of the " 100 Things You Gotta Do Before You Graduate . "

On November 12 , 2015 , Texas A & M sued the Indianapolis Colts for infringing on its trademark of the 12th Man .

= = = = Bonfire = = = =

Almost every year since 1909 , A & M students have built a large bonfire to celebrate their " burning desire to beat the hell outta " the University of Texas . Aggie Bonfire was traditionally lit around Thanksgiving in conjunction with the festivities surrounding the annual college football game between the schools . Though it began as a trash pile , Aggie Bonfire evolved into a massive six @-@ tiered structure , the world record being held at 109 feet (30 m) . The collapse of the 1999 structure , causing the deaths of 12 students and an alumnus , prompted the university to suspend the official sanction of the bonfire , and the tradition continues off @-@ campus .

= = Athletics = =

The Aggies are a member of the Southeastern Conference in all sports as of July 1 , 2012 . Previously a charter member of the Southwest Conference until its dissolution in 1996 , A & M competed in the Big 12 Conference until June 30 , 2012 . The school 's 20 sports teams are known as the Aggies , and the school 's colors are maroon and white . As of April 2011 , Aggies have earned 138 Southwest and Big 12 conference regular @-@ season and tournament titles and 11 team national championships . The women 's soccer team , formed in 1993 , earned 15 consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances from 1995 to 2009 , advancing at least as far as the round of 16 in seven of the last eight appearances . The women 's volleyball team earned 12 consecutive NCAA Tournament appearances from 1993 to 2004 , advancing past the first round each time . In 2004 Sports Illustrated on Campus ranked Olsen Field " the best college baseball venue " . Sports Illustrated ranked the university 46th , in a 2002 analysis of " America 's Best Sports College [s] " and College Station the 9th best college sports town .

A & M 's archrival was the University of Texas until joining the SEC . In 2004 , sporting events between the Aggies and Longhorns became known as the Lone Star Showdown . The most @-@ watched event in the rivalry was the annual football game held the day of Thanksgiving . Other rivalries have included Texas Tech , Baylor University , and the recently renewed rivalries with the University of Arkansas and Louisiana State University .

= = = Football = = =

Founded in 1894 , the football team has won 18 Southwest Conference championships , 3 Big 12 South Division championships , 1 Big 12 championship , and 3 national championships . The team has appeared in 30 bowl games , winning 13 , and has produced 41 first Team All @-@ Americans ,

5 Academic All-Americans, and 2 Heisman Trophy winners, John David Crow in 1957 and Johnny Manziel in 2012. Twenty-one Aggies play in the NFL, including reigning Super Bowl MVP Von Miller of the Denver Broncos. Current Broncos head coach Gary Kubiak also played college football at Texas A & M.

Since 1904, home football games have been played at Kyle Field, a stadium with a current capacity of 106,500. In 2004, CBS SportsLine.com ranked Kyle Field the top football stadium while Sporting News ranked it fourth. The same year Sports Illustrated on Campus ranked an A & M football weekend the third best college football experience.

=== Basketball ===

Founded in 1912, the men's basketball team won 11 Southwest Conference championships and 2 Southwest Conference Tournament championships. The team has appeared in the National Invitation Tournament 6 times and in the NCAA Tournament 11 times, of which 3 resulted in Sweet Sixteen appearances, the highest round to which the Aggies have advanced. The women's basketball team has 1 Southwest Conference Tournament championship, 1 regular season Big 12 Conference championship and 2 Big 12 Tournament championships, most recently in 2011. The women have advanced to 8 NCAA Tournament appearances, winning the National Championship in 2011. They have also competed in the WNIT twice, winning that tournament in 1995.

The men's basketball team was coached by head coach Mark Turgeon for four years until he left for the head coaching position at the University of Maryland. The current head basketball coach is Billy Kennedy; he is entering his third season and leading the Aggies into the Southeastern Conference. The women's team has been coached by Gary Blair since 2003. Home games are played at the 12,989-seat Reed Arena. G. Rollie White Coliseum, formerly the home of the volleyball and basketball teams, hosted basketball games before Reed Arena opened in 1998.

== Notable alumni ==

With over 280,000 alumni, A & M has one of the largest and most active alumni groups in America. Many Aggies have attained local, national, and international prominence. Jorge Quiroga and Martin Torrijos have served as heads of state for Bolivia and Panama, respectively, and Rick Perry is the former Governor of Texas and 2012 US Presidential candidate. Robert Gates, United States Secretary of Defense in the George W. Bush and Obama administrations, is a past president of the university. Congressmen Joe Barton, Bill Flores, Jeb Hensarling, and Louie Gohmert, and former Austin, Texas, mayor Will Wynn are all graduates. William A. Piles, Michael E. Fossum, and Steven Swanson became NASA astronauts.

Aggies made their mark on the gridiron with former All Pro Green Bay Packer Lee Roy Caffey, 1 Pro Bowl, 4 World Championships, including 3 Super Bowls, title-winning coach Gene Stallings, Oakland Raiders head coach Dennis Allen, Houston Oilers defensive tackle Ray Childress, Heisman Trophy winners John David Crow and Johnny Manziel, Heisman runner-up, legislator, and actor John Kimbrough, punt returner Dante Hall, offensive tackle Richmond Webb, Detroit Lions defensive end and punter Yale Lary, former Dallas Cowboys assistant coach and former player Dat Nguyen, punter Shane Lechler, Denver Broncos linebacker Von Miller, and defensive end Ty Warren. Paul "Bear" Bryant coached at A & M where "survivors" of his grueling football practice camp at Junction, Texas were nicknamed named The Junction Boys. Other famous Aggie athletes include Randy Barnes, indoor / outdoor shotput world record holder, World Series champion player and manager Davey Johnson, baseball standouts Chuck Knoblauch and Wally Moon; along with Stacy Sykora, Libero for the USA national volleyball team.

Aggies have also made a mark on pop culture. Robert Earl Keen and Lyle Lovett, who often strummed their guitars on the porch of their Northgate home, have become popular country singers. Rip Torn is a veteran of the silver screen and Neal Boortz is a nationally syndicated talk show host with the sixth largest listening audience in the United States. Wen Ho Lee, a doctoral graduate of A & M, became the subject of a 1999 espionage investigation; though arrested, charges were

dropped in 2000 .

Aggies in business , particularly in the fields of energy , construction , communications , and chemistry , include Lowry Mays , chairman and CEO of Clear Channel Communications ; Jeffrey DeBruin , principal , Trammell Crow Company ; George P. Mitchell , chairman and CEO , Mitchell Energy and Development Corp. ; Khalid A. Al Falih , President and CEO of Saudi Aramco ; Eduardo Castro @-@ Wright , CEO of Wal @-@ Mart Stores USA . Alum Charles E. Toberman was known as the " Father of Hollywood " for his role in developing many of the city 's most recognizable landmarks , including the Hollywood Bowl , Grauman 's Chinese Theater , El Capitan Theatre , the Roosevelt Hotel , the Grauman 's Egyptian Theatre and the Hollywood Masonic Temple . Architect Greg Pappas , now @-@ deceased member and Vice President of the Pappas Restaurants family , is known for his design of the many different Pappas Family restaurants . J. William Harbour M.D. , is an ocular oncologist , cancer researcher and vice chairman at the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute in Miami .

Because of A & M 's military roots , many Aggies have become leaders in the armed forces , and were featured in the 1943 propaganda film We 've Never Been Licked . George H. Gay , Jr . , was the sole survivor of Torpedo Squadron 8 in the Battle of Midway . Lieutenant General Jay T. Robbins became a fighter ace in World War II with 22 aerial victories . Major General Robert B. Williams led World War II raid on the Schweinfurt ball bearing factories . General Bernard Adolph Schriever , known as " the architect of the Air Force 's ballistic missile and military space program " , became the namesake of Schriever Air Force Base , Colorado . General Michael Moseley is a former Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force .

Seven Aggies received the Medal of Honor in World War II .

Horace S. Carswell , Jr . , class of 1938

Thomas W. Fowler , class of 1943

William G. Harrell , class of 1943

Lloyd H. Hughes , class of 1943

George D. Keathley , class of 1937

Turney W. Leonard , class of 1942

Eli L. Whiteley , class of 1941

One Aggie received the Medal of Honor in the Vietnam War .

Clarence E. Sasser , class of 1973