TIPS ON PREPARING REQUESTS TO CONTINUE IN THE GEST AND TEAM MAJORS AND TIPS FOR PREPARING AN ACADEMIC APPEAL

Requests to move into or continue in the GEST and TEAM majors (only for students whose cumulative TAMU GPA is 2.0 or higher): (Note: If your cumulative TAMU GPA is below 2.0, see below)

Grade Issues:
Your request to move into or remain in the GEST major will not be approved if you list a major that will require more than a 1 point jump in your cumulative TAMU GPA. If you have completed two or more semesters at TAMU, you won’t be approved if you list a major that will require more than a 0.5 jump in your cumulative TAMU GPA. We are not saying you cannot keep hoping for that big jump. We just want to make sure that you take courses that might work for two majors and keep the door open for the back-up major with a lower GPA requirement. Tell us your backup major rather than just listing the major that is a long shot, or explain both somewhere in the form you submit to us.

If a student makes a 2.0 on 15 hours the first semester, the student will have to post at least a 3.5+ the next two semesters to get to Mays or similarly competitive majors that require 3.3+. Sophomore business classes are not easy A’s. Because -a 3.3 GPA is also required in the critical classes for these majors, a student needs at least one A for each two B’s. If a student has a C in one of the critical classes, it takes two A’s to make up for the one C.

There are no engineering majors that accept students who only have a 2.0 in the critical classes for engineering or 2.0 cumulative TAMU GPA’s. Even 2.25’s may not work for any engineering major.

The administration does not want us to facilitate a student retaking or moving to the next level class if they had trouble in a class required for freshmen in the major. Students do not make higher grades in the sophomore and junior classes in science and engineering majors than they did in the freshman classes. The university wants students to graduate in four or four-and-a-half years.

If a student is allowed to enroll in GEST, the student’s official midterm grades must be on target for moving to the major listed as the desired major on the form. Yes, the midterm grade may only reflect the first exam. That is exactly our point. Start strong and stay strong.

Choice of Major Issues:
When you are moving toward stiff competition, ALWAYS think about other good options. Sometimes backup plans turn out to be even better than the first plan.

Professional health schools DO NOT care what major a student completes. They will look at the cumulative GPA, the science GPA or the GPA in the required pre-requisite courses. They then will balance that with any required test scores. If you are pursing health schools such as med/dental/vet/PT/OT/PA, you can explain away one weak semester or maybe one weak science grade (less than a B). The students they select will all have 3.5+ GPA’s overall, likewise in science classes and test scores significantly above the mean for applicants. (Even nursing schools fill their seats with 3.0+ students.) You WILL NOT be competitive for med/dental/vet/PT/OT/PA schools if you made a 2.0 on your freshman year even if you have 3.5’s in every subsequent semester. There are 10,000+ seniors in Texas who graduate each year with 3.75 GPA’s, and more than double that graduate with 3.5’s. You always should think about what career paths will open up with your major if you are not admitted to a professional health school.

You don’t need a business major to help run a family business. You also can land corporate jobs for which they want an undergraduate with a business minor who will match well with the corporation and will have several months of corporate training. Other good options for majors include ECON, AGBU, AGEC and Human Resource degrees with business minors. Specific industries such as recreation/tourism, sports management and facilities management may prefer those majors with business minors rather than general business majors.

If you made a D or F in a freshman science or math class, we won’t agree that you should repeat that class, take a similar class or take a subsequent class in the series during the first GEST semester.
Request for an academic appeal for students whose GPA is less than 2.0:

Many but not all appeals may be based upon extenuating circumstances. These MUST be documented to be considered. If you are claiming that extenuating circumstances caused you to not meet your academic requirements, you must explain the following:

- The circumstances were beyond your control even though you tried to address them.
- The circumstances were directly related to why you had continuing difficulties.
- The circumstances were the SOLE reason you had academic difficulties.
- The circumstances are now resolved, and/or will not be a factor next semester.
- The reason you did not manage things by using Q-drops, requesting a drop after the Q-drop deadline or withdrawing from the semester.

Documentation can be a letter from your doctor with dates of treatment and the diagnosis. It can be copies of your medical records. Supporting documentation that is provided will be kept confidential and does not go into a student’s academic file. We cannot access your medical records from Health Center. You have to arrange to provide us copies. If something is extremely sensitive, we can return the documentation after seeing it or it can be provided privately to the Executive Director.

In cases of family problems it means that a parent, grandparent, or guardian must address in general the type of problems experienced, but with more detailed explanation of how, why, and when the general circumstances affected you. It may be useful to explain why other family members could not solve the problem without pulling you away from school for a significant amount of time.

In cases of roommate problems, the circumstances must have been reported and documented through the chain of command beginning with your RA and RD. There are usually two sides of the story, so it is rare these circumstances can be considered.

In cases of financial difficulties, you must provide a record of your date of hire, date of termination, and hours worked per week. You will also have to present a strong case that financial problems were unexpected, and could not be solved with financial aid. If you worked too much because you were maintaining a lifestyle that included amenities such as a car, a room by yourself, and/or electronics, it will be difficult to make your case.

If you are claiming emotional stresses they must be documented by providing a letter from a counselor, or some other professional with equivalent credentials, who was treating you during the past semester. It must be clear that it has been verified you are completely stable in regards to medications, and the professional understands the impact academically of any possible shifts in treatment and/or reoccurrence of the circumstances.

Things that won’t be considered:

- Extenuating circumstances that have not been documented
- Health issues that were not addressed until after the semester was over (such as depression)
- Disabilities for which accommodation could have been arranged through Support Services
- Spending too much time with voluntary extracurricular activities
- Excessive workhours to pay for non-necessity items such as a vehicle or an apartment in a nice complex rather than something cheaper such as an older duplex
- Having financial problems without also having a part-time job with 15-20 hours each week
- Traveling home to work
- Taking classes contrary to those that were advised

Taking classes contrary to those that were advised:choosing not to Q-drop when you should have