1. **Does my student need a computer?**

Texas A&M has several open-access computer labs on campus—as do many apartment complexes and private dormitories off campus—that students can use for projects, checking email and surfing the Internet, printing, scanning and more. However, a computer that a student can call their own is more than just a convenience or a luxury. It is almost a necessity, and in cases with some majors, it is a requirement. If you are considering a new computer, the Software Store (http://software.tamu.edu/) offers considerable discounts on popular software like Windows 7 and Microsoft Office. Purchases can only be made after your student registers for classes. More information about computing hardware, software, and connections can be found at Texas A&M Information Technology’s web site (http://it.tamu.edu), through the department or student’s advisor, or during the New Student Conference sessions.

2. **Does my student need a car?**

This is a decision best made in consideration of your student’s living arrangements and need to commute from the city or within it. Texas A&M offers an off-campus transit system that provides service to and from campus free of charge. An intra-campus (on-campus) transit system is also provided within the university community. Bicycles, roller blades, scooters, and walking are also common modes of transportation in the community and on campus. For more information: transit.tamu.edu.

All members of the campus community must purchase parking permits if parking a car on campus, unless they opt to park in a pay visitor area. If your on-campus Aggie brings a car, he or she must purchase a permit and park in designated on-campus resident parking. Off-Campus students may purchase a day or night permit; night permits allow students to use the parking lots after business hours and on weekends.

3. **How does my student get involved on campus?**

Many students learn about involvement opportunities by attending MSC Open House held the first Sunday after each fall or spring semester begins. Organizations from across the campus are present to recruit new members. For more information on MSC Open House, please contact the Student Programs Office at 845-1515. The Department of Student Activities is the home to over 750 Recognized Student Clubs and Organizations. Involvement in these organizations allows each student to interact with peers who share a common interest, develop new skills and abilities, and contribute to the overall student experience at Texas A&M. Please refer to http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/ for more information. Other outlets include participating in Academic Organizations, the Corps of Cadets, or Greek Life or any number of other opportunities on and off campus. Recruitment periods for all of these experiences differ. Additionally, your Aggie can participate in residence hall activities or events sponsored by apartment communities.

4. **What is the recommended course load?**

Students as A&M generally take 15 hours per semester. Students should meet with an academic advisor regularly to determine appropriate course loads.

5. **When can my student move in the Residence Halls?**

Residence Halls open on Sunday, August 21*, 2011, at 8 a.m. This is also Welcome Day where volunteers will assist incoming students and parents in unloading and carrying possessions to the residence hall room. If you wish to avoid lines and parking concerns you may want to consider not coming on opening day since the majority of students do move in on first day of opening.

* The date may be subject to change.
6. Can my student change roommates or rooms?
Residence hall students may request roommates and room changes during the first two weeks of the semester, with their hall staff. However, the ability of the Department of Residence Life to accommodate these changes depends upon room availability and the willingness of other students to change as well. Off-campus students may have more difficulty changing roommates due to the mutual responsibility towards the lease contract. On-campus students may seek assistance with roommate conflicts through Residence Life. Off-campus students may seek assistance though the Offices of the Dean of Student Life’s Adult, Graduate and Off-Campus Student Services Office. Roommate mediation is also available at the Offices of the Dean of Student Life’s Student Conflict Resolution Services Office.

7. What are the rules about appliances or decorating Residence Hall rooms?
The Department of Residence Life provides guidelines for appliances, decorating, and all the details of on-campus living at its sessions during New Student Conferences and in the documents mailed with housing assignments. More information is available about this subject in the Residence Hall Handbook located on the Residence Life web page at http://reslife.tamu.edu.

8. Is it okay for my student to have a job?
Many Aggies work while going to school. Research suggests that students who work approximately 10-15 hours a week develop better time and financial management skills. However, students need to have a plenty of time to devote to their studies, campus involvement and relationships. Students seeking employment can find listings for both on and off-campus positions at the Student Employment Office, 2nd Floor Pavilion or via the web at http://jobsforaggies.tamu.edu. For more information you may call (979) 845-0686 or email jobsforaggies@tamu.edu.

9. How can I be sure that I can get any information I need about my student’s A&M records -- including grades, academic status, financial status, etc.?
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) states that students enrolled at an institution of higher education “own” their records. However, students may go to the My Record tab in Howdy to authorize parent/guardian access to Howdy to view certain information such as grades, class schedule, tax forms, and financial aid information. Students may also authorize their parent/guardian to access and pay their tuition and fees through the My Finances channel in Howdy.

University officials may disclose information contained in your student’s education records to you if you claim the student as your dependent for federal income tax purposes. A completed Certification of Dependency Form is required before any information will be disclosed under this provision. Please see http://registrar.tamu.edu/Current/FerpaDepCert.aspx for more information.

10. I’ve submitted the Certification of Dependency form so I can have access to my student’s records. Will I receive my student’s grade reports by mail?
No, Texas A&M University will not mail a student’s grades. Grades are available for viewing online via Howdy. Students may go to the My Record tab in Howdy to authorize parent/guardian access to Howdy their grades.

11. Will my student receive a grade report before the end of the semester?
Undergraduate students with fewer than 30 semester credit hours completed at Texas A&M University (not including transfer or credit-by-exam hours) and a selected group of other undergraduate students in the Blinn TEAM program will receive their full-time enrollment certification statement from Blinn College. Undergraduate students with fewer than 30 semester credit hours completed at Texas A&M University. Do you combine the hours from both schools to determine that he/she is full time?
No. Texas A&M University uses only those hours for which the student is enrolled at Texas A&M to determine enrollment status. Hours from other schools and hours for courses the student has dropped (Q-dropped courses) are not used in certifying enrollment status. (NOTE: Students participating in the Blinn TEAM program will receive their full-time enrollment certification statement from Blinn College.)

12. My insurance company needs proof that my student is a full-time student or they will cancel his/her coverage as my dependent. Who do I contact?
Beginning on about the tenth day of class, your student may access and print their “Verification of Enrollment” at https://howdy.tamu.edu. The “Verification of Enrollment” link is on the “My Record” tab in the “My Schedule” channel. The National Student Clearinghouse is Texas A&M’s authorized agent for providing enrollment and degree verifications. The Clearinghouse web site is available 24/7 for immediate access to enrollment information.

13. My student is taking courses at Blinn at the same time he/she is enrolled at Texas A&M University. Do you combine the hours from both schools to determine that he/she is full time?
No. Texas A&M University uses only those hours for which the student is enrolled at Texas A&M to determine enrollment status. Hours from other schools and hours for courses the student has dropped (Q-dropped courses) are not used in certifying enrollment status. (NOTE: Students participating in the Blinn TEAM program will receive their full-time enrollment certification statement from Blinn College.)

14. My student and I are concerned about being flooded with credit card offers, mass mailings, and marketing schemes targeted at college students. Can we limit this?
FERPA allows institutions to withhold directory information, including addresses and phone numbers, from disclosure to third parties. The student may come to the Records Section in the Office of the Registrar to sign a Hold Directory Information form or complete the form at https://howdy.tamu.edu. Once this form is on file, whatever directory information the student specifies is flagged so that it cannot be released outside the University without the student’s written authorization. The Hold Directory Information form remains in effect until the student revokes it in writing or is deceased. The Hold Directory Information form is not available to students who are no longer enrolled.

15. How do I set up a parent/guardian password?
Students can grant their parents access to their academic record, financial aid information, tax forms and billing information through the Howdy web portal.

Your student will need to:
- Log in to https://howdy.tamu.edu/.
- Click on “My Record” tab
- Click “Add or Edit Access” under the “Parent/Guardian Access” channel.

-The student will need to grant access to their billing information separately. Once the student submits the parent access form in Howdy, you will receive an email with a link to set up your own username (NetID) and password. You will use this NetID and password to log in to Howdy and access your student’ information.