



Horticultural Options in Plant Sciences (HOPS)

The HOPS Program is a two semester (approximately 32 weeks) training program whose purpose is to provide instruction and support to individuals with disabilities to gain the necessary skills and experiences in work readiness in order to successfully transition into competitive integrated employment in the horticulture industry. Students take various horticulture courses in the fall semester. Industry professionals are invited as guest speakers during the fall semester to share experiences and insights working in the field. A certification course is delivered in the spring semester to prepare students for the well-recognized industry credential tests pertinent to their chosen career field. Student is required to attempt the credential tests. The program focuses primarily on four of the five core Pre-ETS areas, which include:

- Career Exploration – Students enrolled in the HOPS program engage in presentations from employees in the field, gain understanding of career and employment settings through coursework and volunteering at various industry employment settings connected to their career field interest.
- Work-Based Learning – Students participate in both volunteer activities and a semester-long practicum to offer assistance to local non-profit organizations and at job sites aligned to their career of choice.
- Job Readiness – Students are provided instruction to develop skills in the areas of employability, socialization and interpersonal, as well as independent living.
- Self-Advocacy – Students are provided direct instruction in self-advocacy, personal centered practices, and specific job/career related content as well as independent living skills. This instruction is facilitated through mentorships (program staff who are college aged Texas A&M University students).

Twenty (20) applicants will be selected to attend. Individuals enrolled in the program attend specifically designed classes on the campus of Texas A&M University System. During the fall semester, students take content-specific classes, field-based experience classes (to prepare for their practicum), a professionalism class, a study skills class, and an optional independent living skills. Independent living skills are taught in conjunction with the Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living. Additionally, students are required to join at least one student organization at Texas A&M University to develop social skills and skills for professional development.

Individuals applying for the HOPS program must be 18 as of the start date of the [WACO program](#), as attendance to WACO program is a PREREQUISITE REQUIREMENT. Complete applications must be submitted and received by application deadline. Contact **Ms. Shelbi Davenport** at shelbi.davenport@ag.tamu.edu or **Dr. Xuan (Jade) Wu** at jade.wu@ag.tamu.edu.

*Acceptance is not guaranteed. A panel of reviewers will score applications after the application deadline. You will be notified in April of the status of your application. Acceptance in this program is contingent on a successful completion of the W.A.C.O. Program (and a passing score in the Garden Science 101 class of W.A.C.O.).

For more information about the program and application, please visit:

<https://cdd.tamu.edu/education/hops-program/>

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Program Dates: FALL & SPRING

(Prerequisite Program: W.A.C.O. Program)

Industry recognized credentials in one of the three career fields below.

Career Fields (Areas of Concentration)

Choose One (1)



Floral Design

- Floral Designer
- Floral Clerk
- Floral Specialist
- Florist, Flower Shop Laborer
- Wedding Decorator



Landscape Management

- Grounds Maintenance Specialist
- Gardener
- Landscape Specialist
- Landscape Technician



Greenhouse/ Nursery

- Greenhouse Technician
- Harvester
- Plant Nursery Technician
- Orchard Worker
- Propagation Specialist
- Farm Laborer

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