

CRIJ 6302 - Advanced Research Methods CJ

Fall 2024 Syllabus, Section 160, CRN 14842

Instructor Information

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Office: AIC 352

Office Hours:

T/R from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Office Phone: 956-326-3365

Extra meetings are available by appointment. THIS CLASS MEETS AT AIC 382 ON THURSDAYS.

Times and Location

R 6pm-8:45pm in Bullock Hall 223

Course Description

Focus on the practical research design and implementation to prepare students for advanced study of scientific inquiry. Topics covered may include research design, program implementation, as well as methods of data collection.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

This course will be taught in person, and we will get together in the designated room at the specified times. Lectures, open discussions, and individual or group presentations will be utilized throughout our time together. The lectures will provide the subject's foundational knowledge, while the discussions will enable us to explore ideas in greater depth. You will be able to demonstrate your understanding of specific topics through participation, discussions, questions, and presentations.

We may utilize the **Microsoft Loop component** to enhance our collaborative efforts. It is highly recommended that you familiarize yourself with this tool before attending class. You can find an informative video on Microsoft Loop here (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjShmC6Y_is).

Bringing a laptop to class is advisable for optimal engagement with the tool. However, if a laptop is unavailable, a smartphone will suffice.

In addition to our in-person meetings, Blackboard will be used. There, I will share essential announcements, PowerPoints (if any), weekly readings, assignments (if any), and other pertinent materials. This online platform is intended to enhance your academic success and provide ongoing support outside the classroom. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to check for announcements and updates once every day.

Additionally, our Blackboard page may feature discussion forums I will create specifically for this course. You are encouraged to post your queries, comments, and ideas on these message boards. This will promote interaction with peers and a collaborative learning environment. Please feel free to actively engage with the material and one another, as this will enhance your understanding and positively impact our classroom community.

Furthermore, being at the doctoral level, this course entails a multifaceted approach to instruction. Beyond traditional methods, expect non-traditional techniques such as dialogue-driven lectures and active research proposal writing. Your active involvement and preparedness for each class are essential. You will be expected to participate, pose thoughtful questions, and engage with the material consistently. A thorough reading of the materials on Blackboard before each class is imperative to ensure this.

This course follows a learner-centered format, prioritizing interaction and student engagement. In-class activities, including group studies and roundtable discussions, are integral to your learning journey. These are complemented by visual aids, hand-outs, and real-life cases to illuminate each week's topic. Remember, the responsibility extends to these supplementary materials as well, in addition to the core material.

Class Rules

- This will be an in-person class. That means students are required to read and prepare themselves before each class to participate in class discussions.
- Some of the topics we will cover in this class will bring about different points of view. Some of those views might contradict yours. Students are expected to respect the opinions of their classmates and professor. Sexist, racist, discriminatory, etc. views will never be tolerated, and TAMIU's corresponding policies will be enforced.
- Students are expected to be in the classroom on time and stay there until the end of each class. Coming late to class and leaving early should be avoided as they may distract others.
- Reading outside materials, including material from other classes, is not allowed.
- Cell phone use in the classroom is not allowed. Please always keep your cell phones on silent mode.
- Students may use their laptops or tablets only to take notes or for other legitimate course-related activities.
- Food and beverages are allowed in the classroom if they do not distract other students or the professor.
- Engaging in personal conversations during lectures will distract the instructor and classmates; therefore, it should be done after or before the lecture.
- Students are expected to follow the netiquette and etiquette during the lectures and online activities.
- For more information, please read the Student Handbook at <https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>)

Communication with the instructor

- If you have any questions about the class and/or the topics we cover throughout the semester or have an issue you think the professor needs to be aware of, please email my TAMIU email address. I will do my best to answer your emails within 48 business hours of receipt. I may not answer emails on weekends and holidays.
- Emails are expected to be concise, clear, and respectful. Please ensure you include the course title (preferably in the subject line) and your full name, as it appears on our class roster, in your email.
- Please be advised that I use Blackboard to make general announcements. Thus, you must check our Blackboard page regularly (preferably every day).
- If you would like to meet about the course, please see me during office hours or click here to set up an appointment (<https://outlook.office.com/bookwithme/user/b1b31ecbd60a449eb02388383580e4d6%40tamiau.edu/meetingtype/f1f3b56f-2b93-4c85-8c4a-d2a1b56e3f61/?anonymous>) (face-to-face or virtual Microsoft Teams meeting).

Student Learning Outcomes

This course will provide students with tools to apply in their research and to understand better scholarly work produced by others.

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- CO1: Identify appropriate research designs for research questions.
- CO2: Choose the correct data collection for research questions.
- CO3: Apply research design to practical criminal justice policies.
- CO4: Design and complete a research study.
- CO5: Communicate results of research studies to different audiences.
- CO6: Analyze ethical considerations in research design and data collection within criminal justice.
- CO7: Evaluate the impact of research findings on shaping evidence-based policies in the field.
- CO8: Collaborate effectively within a research team to execute complex studies.
- CO9: Critique and interpret existing research studies in criminal justice for their methodological rigor.

These objectives contribute to the overall course goal of developing critical thinking skills. The discussions, readings, and assignments are designed to encourage you to develop and use higher-order thinking skills, including analytical, synthetic, and applied thinking.

Important Dates

Visit the Academic Calendar ([tamui.edu](https://www.tamui.edu)) (<https://www.tamui.edu/academiccalendar/>) page to view the term's important dates.

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Forty Studies that Changed Criminal Justice: Explorations into the History of Criminal Justice Research, (2nd edition).	Thistlethwaite, A. B. and Wooldredge, J. D.	ISBN-13: 9780133099119

Other Course Materials

Additional material (e.g., weekly readings, assignments, discussions, videos, etc.) will be posted on Blackboard throughout the semester.

Grading Criteria

GRADE	POINTS
A	603-670
B	536-602
C	469-535
D	402-468
F	401 or less

Open Boilerplate

GRADING WILL BE BASED ON BELOW ASSIGNMENTS

1. CITI Assignment (100 Points)

In this assignment, you will work on obtaining your certificate to engage in research with human subjects at TAMIU. You are required to share your certificate with the professor by its due date. This online training course will take about 3 and 5 hours to complete. For more information, please visit https://www.tamui.edu/irb/irb_training.shtml (https://www.tamui.edu/irb/irb_training.shtml/)

1. Attendance and class participation (in total 70 points, 5 points each for perfect daily participation)

This is a doctoral-level course. Attendance in each class session is essential. Attendance will be taken by the instructor each week. If you cannot attend a class due to a TAMIU-accepted documented excuse, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor.

While this might seem like an unnecessary caveat in a Ph.D. class, I believe it would not hurt to remind that students are required to be courteous to each other and respect others' opinions even if drastically opposing their own. Please avoid anything that might distract others, such as texting, talking on the phone, being tardy, sleeping, doing unrelated things, etc.

Some topics we will cover will build on the previous week's information. So, it is in your best interest to attend every class. Students are also encouraged to participate and actively engage in class discussions. Reading the assigned class material is the key to productive engagement and participation. The maximum number of points a student can accumulate depends on the quantity and quality of their engagement and participation in class discussions/activities.

1. In-Class Discussion Lead (100 points each)

Each student will lead one regular weekly class discussion/session. Typically, the professor will give a lecture on the key points of that week's topic. Then, the discussion leader for that week will be responsible for the remaining discussions of the day.

The discussion leader will be responsible for leading the discussions on all material assigned to that day. Weekly discussion leaders are required to prepare a PowerPoint presentation containing a summary of each reading. Discussion leaders should lead productive discussions by posing meaningful and educated questions and covering the main points of the material provided. Discussion leaders are welcome to use additional videos or audio to increase the quality of the discussion.

Discussion leaders will send their PowerPoint presentations (and any other handouts) to class through BB Messages at the latest two days before the lecture (Tuesdays by 11.59 pm CST).

The professor will grade the weekly discussion by evaluating the reading material's comprehension and the presentation's effectiveness.

The rubric and detailed instructions document is posted on Blackboard.

1. **Critique of Research Articles (20 points each and 100 points in total)**

This assignment aims to develop your ability to analyze a research article's methodology and findings critically.

Each student will select five research-based articles employing different research methods published in leading journals. Students are required to describe the research design, list research questions, talk about data analysis methods, and discuss the findings of those articles. Each perfect critique will be worth 20 points (a total of 100 points can be earned).

The critical analysis should be approximately four double-spaced pages (excluding the title page, bibliography, and other attachments) and formatted in APA style. You may use the book "Forty Studies that Changed Criminal Justice: Explorations into the History of Criminal Justice Research" by Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge (2nd edition, Pearson) to point you to a source.

You will submit your document through the Blackboard portal by the due date. Please also attach the original paper to your submission.

A document containing the rubric and detailed instructions is posted on Blackboard.

1. **Research Proposal Writing (300 points in total)**

Students will undertake a comprehensive research proposal tailored for an agency in criminal justice, homeland security, and emergency management. This assignment is designed to develop and enhance your research grant proposal writing skills through practical application.

The assignment is divided into three equally weighted parts, each worth 100 points, for a total of 300 points.

1. Part 1, **Proposal Development**, includes an introduction, a comprehensive literature review of at least ten scholarly sources, formulation of five testable hypotheses, and a list of specific, measurable research objectives (100 points).
2. In Part 2, **Research Design and Methodology**, students will describe their research design, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and data analysis plan in a detailed written document. (100 points).
3. Finally, Part 3, **Proposal Presentation, Ethical Considerations, and Peer Review**, requires students to create and present a PowerPoint presentation summarizing their research proposal (40 points), addressing potential ethical issues (30 points), and participating in peer reviews (30 points). Each student will provide constructive feedback on at least two classmates' proposals, focusing on strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement. (100 points).

Each student is required to present and video-record their project proposals using Microsoft PowerPoint by navigating to the 'Record tab' and selecting the 'From Beginning' option.

Each presentation will consist of at least 20 slides, excluding the title, table of contents, and bibliography slides. Students will then upload this video-recorded presentation to the assigned Dropbox on Blackboard. Each presentation should last up to 30 minutes.

The professor will make the necessary arrangements to facilitate each student in evaluating two different grant proposals, ensuring that they receive feedback from both their peers and the instructor before the semester ends.

Students are required to send the final version of their combined papers (Part 1 and Part 2) a week before the presentations are due.

This assignment prepares you for future grant proposal writings and ensures you can effectively communicate your research proposals and considerations professionally.

The rubric and detailed instructions are posted on Blackboard.

Make-up policy

Make-up assignments or time extensions will be offered only if a documented excuse is provided. Please read Texas A&M International University Course Policies carefully for more information.



GRADING SCHEME

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
CITI Certificate	100
Attendance and Participation (5 points per day)	70
Discussion Lead	100
Critique of Research Articles (5 @ 20 points each)	100
Research Proposal (RP) Part 1: Proposal Development	100
RP Part 2: Research Design and Methodology	100
RP Part 3: Proposal Presentation (40 points); Ethical Considerations (30 points); Peer Evaluation (2 @ 15 points, in total 30 points)	100
TOTAL	670

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Thu	8/29	Welcome and introduction to class Triangulation in Research	1) Wilson 2) Fielding 3) Johnson et al.	
Thu	9/5	Experimental Research (Field Experiment & RCTs)	Field Research: 1) Blair et al Field Research: 2) Bowden R CTs: 3) Somers et al. CTs: 4) Angrist	
Thu	9/12	Survey Research (Cross Sectional & Longitudinal)	Cross Sectional: 1) Augsburger et al Cross Sectional: 2) Trotter II et al Longitudinal: 3) Fernandes Longitudinal: 4) McGlynn-Wright et al.	Critique of 1st Research Article due on September 18 by 11:59 PM.
Thu	9/19	Survey Research (Cross Sectional & Longitudinal)	Ethnography: 1) Friedman et al Focus Group: 2) Petrillo Interviews: 3) Ansems et al Interviews: 4) Finlay et al	CITI Certificates are due on Sept. 25 @ Midnight
Thu	9/26	Content Analysis (Discourse & Thematic Analyses)	Discourse Analysis: 1) Daly & Laskovsov Discourse Analysis: 2) Rasheed Thematic Analysis: 3) Anderson & Bedford Thematic Analysis: 4) Sandberg	Critique of 2nd Research Article due on Oct. 2 by 11:59 PM.
Thu	10/3	Observational Research (Participant & Non-Participant Observations)	Participant Observation: 1) Simons Participant Observation: 2) MacDonald Non-Participant Observations: 3) Putra & Sedana Non-Participant Observations: 4) Yusoff & Yusof	Critique of 3rd Research Article due on Oct 9 by 11:59 PM.
Thu	10/10	Secondary Data Analysis (Meta Analysis & Systematic Review)	Meta Analysis: 1) Pusch & Holtfreter Meta Analysis: 2) Eisenberg et al Systematic Review: 3) Troy et al Systematic Review: 4) King & Murphy	
Thu	10/17	Geospatial Analysis	1) Ristea & Leitner 2) Gigovic et al 3) Boyd et al 4) Bogern & Orchowski	Research Proposal Writing Part I: Proposal Development is due on Oct. 23 @ midnight.
Thu	10/24	Comparative Research	1) Dingemans & Henkens 2) Humprecht et al 3) Meuleman 4) Wayne & Castro	Critique of 4th Research Article due on Oct. 30 by 11:59 PM.

Thu	10/31	Mixed Methods	1) Dawadi et al 2) McParland & Johnston 3) Laufer et al 4) Liu et al	Critique of 5th Research Article due on November 6 by 11:59 PM.
Thu	11/7	Network Analysis (Simulation and modeling; Case Studies & Cost-benefit analyses)	Simulation and Modeling: 1) Gade et al Case Studies: 2) Loggen & Leukfeldt Case Studies: 3) Jofre Cost-Benefit Analysis: 4) Tredinnick et al	Research Proposal Writing Part II: Research Design and Methodology is due on Nov. 13 @ midnight.
Thu	11/14	Evaluation Research	1) Laoch et al 2) Mazerolle et al 3) Watts & Washington 4) Simmler et al	Finalized and compiled Research Proposal is due on Nov. 20 @ midnight.
Thu	11/21	Netnography (Digital Ethnography)	1) Kozinets & Gretzel 2) Caliendo 3) Fletcher 4) Liu et al	1) Proposal PowerPoint Presentation and its links are due on Nov. 27 @ midnight. 2) Ethical Considerations document is due on Nov. 27 @ midnight.
Thu	11/28	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY.	NO CLASS	UNIVERSITY CLOSED
Thu	12/5	Final Exam Day (NO FINAL EXAM FOR THIS PHD CLASS)	No CLASS	Peer Review Feedback due on Dec. 5 @ midnight.
Thu	12/12	No Class		

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the Student Handbook, Appendix A (Attendance Rule) for instructions.

Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class in person (or virtually, if the class is online) and to complete all assignments. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to communicate absences with your professors. The faculty member will decide if your excuse is valid and thus may provide lecture materials of the class. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized University activity.
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
- Illness of a dependent family member.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to faculty members within seven calendar days of their absence and return to class. They must substantiate the reason for the absence. If the absence is excused, faculty members must either provide students with the opportunity to make up the exam or other work missed, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the exam or other work missed within 30 calendar days from the date of absence. Students who miss class due to a University-sponsored activity are responsible for identifying their absences to their instructors with as much advance notice as possible.

Classroom Behavior (applies to online or Face-to-Face Classes)

TAMIU encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The University will always tolerate different, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a

university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4).

TAMU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMU student, you are bound by the TAMU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMU student and to report violations of the Honor Code. Please read carefully the Student Handbook Article 7 and Article 10 available at <https://www.tamui.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamui.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml/>).

We are committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and any form of cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. It occurs when you:

1. Borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words. You must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
2. Borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
3. Present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own. You have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2020, seventh edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

"Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, idea, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship" (p. 254). This same principle applies to the illicit use of AI.

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications (p. 11). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Academic Success Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the Manual of the APA or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

TAMU has penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

- **Penalties for Plagiarism:** Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade; the instructor must still report the offense to the Honor Council. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse. For repeat offenders in undergraduate courses or for an offender in any graduate course, the penalty for plagiarism is likely to include suspension or expulsion from the university.
 - *Caution:* Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it was only a draft" will not be accepted.
 - *Caution:* Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.
- **Penalties for Cheating:** Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a "zero" for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an "F" in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the university may be imposed. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an "F" in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a "W."
 - *Caution:* Chat groups that start off as "study groups" can easily devolve into "cheating groups." Be very careful not to join or remain any chat group if it begins to discuss specific information about exams or assignments that are meant to require individual work. If you are a member of such a group and it begins to cheat, you will be held responsible along with all the other members of the group. The TAMU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.

- **Student Right of Appeal:** Faculty will notify students immediately via the student's TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member's charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member's e-mail message to the student and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. The Student Handbook provides more details.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

You may not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless you receive explicit permission to do so by the instructor of the second course. In general, you should get credit for a work product only once.

AI Policies

Your instructor will provide you with their personal policy on the use of AI in the classroom setting and associated coursework.

TAMIU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU E-mail (tamiu.edu or dusty email) are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty –not the U.S. Mail and no other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to download the SafeZone app, which is a free mobile app for all University faculty, staff, and students. SafeZone allows you to: report safety concerns (24/7), get connected with mental health professionals, activate location sharing with authorities, and anonymously report incidents. Go to <https://www.tamiu.edu/adminis/police/safezone/index.shtml> for more information.

Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment. Copyright laws do not allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Office of Student Counseling and Disability Services located in Student Center 126. This office will contact the faculty member to recommend specific, reasonable accommodations. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodations only when provided documentation by the Student Counseling and Disability Services office.

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule (Section 3.07) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.08), which includes the "Leave of Absence Request" form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (URL: <http://www.tamiu.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml>) (<http://www.tamiu.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml/>).

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. If a student would like to file a complaint for discrimination due to his or her pregnant/parenting status, please contact the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site: <https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit/>).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the

reasonable accommodations. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students at the University, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU Student Handbook. As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (<https://www.tamtu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>)).

Anti-Discrimination/Title IX

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity in admissions, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamtu.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt, at <https://www.tamtu.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamtu.edu/reportit/>), and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a "W." To qualify for an "incomplete" and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a "W", and the student must be passing the course;
2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an "Incomplete Grade Contract" and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the "I" to automatically be converted to an "F"; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college. This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an "incomplete" may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

WIN Contracts

The Department of Biology and Chemistry does not permit WIN contracts. For other departments within the college, WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to graduating seniors. Only courses offered by full-time TAMIU faculty or TAMIU instructors are eligible to be contracted for the WIN requirement. However, a WIN contract for a course taught by an adjunct may be approved, with special permission from the department chair and dean. Students must seek approval before beginning any work for the WIN Contract. No student will contract more than one course per semester. Summer WIN Contracts must continue through both summer sessions.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Final Examination

All courses in all colleges must include a comprehensive exam or performance and be given on the date and time specified by the Academic Calendar and the Final Exam schedule published by the Registrar's Office. In the College of Arts & Sciences all final exams must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. The Telus app is available to download directly from TELUS (tamiu.edu) (<https://www.tamiu.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.