

PHLT 3364 - Biostats for Public Health

Fall 2024 Syllabus, Section 180, CRN 14561

Instructor Information

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Office Hours:

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Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

This course will cover application of statistical methodologies, probability, probability distributions, graphical analysis, table construction, and numerical data summary measures, study of rates, life tables, hypothesis testing, correlation and regression and regression analysis, to health data, clinical and biological. Prerequisites: MATH 1342 and admission into the BSPH program.

Health Sciences Department, College of Nursing&Health Sci

Additional Course Information

Course Outline and Expectations

Participation/Attendance

- The electronic week begins on Monday at 12 am CST and ends on Sunday at 11:59 pm CST.
- Students are expected to participate in weekly discussions on at least three separate days out of seven in the electronic week. Students must post a Main post to the Discussion board each week on or before Thursday at 11:59 pm CST and respond to one/two posts by Sunday at 11: 59 pm.
- Students must complete all assignments independently unless instructed otherwise.
- Active participation in class workbooks, quizzes, exams and exercises is required of all students. Allocation of any points for class participation will be based on attendance, punctuality, and active participation in class discussions and exercises. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings prior to class meetings.
- Make-up exams are only allowed in cases of serious emergencies or illness, or in case of a special situation for which the instructor has given prior approval. Provide verifiable evidence such as medical records from the physician, clinic or hospital.
- All written assignments must be typed, proofread for misspelled words, typos, incorrect grammar, and wrong punctuation. Poorly edited papers with obvious grammatical errors will be returned to the student(s) without a grade. For all assessments materials please follow APA style formatting, cite and reference your work and submit to the instructor by due date. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior consent from the instructor.

- Take good notes. The instructor may not make available to the class PowerPoint presentations or lecture notes. In public health it is essential to develop a good listening ear when developing programming. Listening is essential especially in working in community settings where the targeted population contributes to developing programming. Your ability to analyze and digest information in the classroom setting will be invaluable to you in health promotion and disease prevention outreach services.

Academic Honesty

Article 7, Academic Conduct from Student Handbook

As a member in an academic community, students at TAMIU are expected to act with honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education, be mature, be self-directed and be able to manage their own affairs. Students who are unwilling to abide by these basic expectations will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Students are expected to share in the responsibility and authority with faculty and staff to challenge and make known acts that violate the TAMIU Honor Code. For more information on the Honor Code, please visit the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement website at <https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/>.

TAMIU Faculty has the discretion to impose grade penalties as deemed necessary. For more information, visit the TAMIU Faculty Handbook available at <http://www.tamiau.edu/senate/handbook.shtml> (<http://www.tamiau.edu/senate/handbook.shtml/>).

Course Structure

This is a 14-week course which is totally online. Teaching methods will include lectures, guest presentations, workbooks, quizzes and exams. Content will be delivered on-line and experiential learning activities will be incorporated into those on-line components per the course schedule. Important class announcements are generated from within the Blackboard online Learning Management System (LMS) and go directly to the student's email address entered in the system. For policies governing all web-enhanced and online courses, please refer to Online Education.

All papers become the property of the School of Nursing and Public Health. They will be turned into electronic TurnItIn dropboxes in Blackboard. Students are encouraged to check the annotations and comments on their paper once graded in addition to the score on the grading rubric.

Students are expected to observe the policies regarding student conduct published in the T Texas A&M International University Catalog for undergraduate students. **Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited.** In cases of academic dishonesty, the instructor has the right to assign a zero for the particular exercise/exam or an "F" for the course in question.

Minimum Technical Skills Expected

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Students in distance education should have knowledge of basic computer and Internet skills, as mentioned on the [Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage](http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/knowledge-and-skills.shtml/) (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/knowledge-and-skills.shtml/>).

Additional skills required for this course include knowing how to use TurnItIn.

Required Basic Skills

- Getting online.
- Using an Internet browser.
- Downloading, saving, opening, and printing material found online.
- Conducting Internet searches.
- Composing e-mail/course messages and attaching documents.
- Posting to a discussion forum.
- Submitting to a drop box or assignment.
- Writing and editing with a word processor, such as Notepad, MS Word, etc.
- Take online examinations.

Required Digital Literacy Skills

- Using online libraries and databases to locate and gather appropriate information
- Using computer networks to locate and store files or data
- Using online search tools for specific academic purposes, including the ability to use search criteria, keywords, and filters
- Properly citing information sources
- Preparing a presentation of research findings

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

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 Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. For more information, contact the online at Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) (<http://www.tamui.edu/disability/index.shtml/>), or via phone at 956.326.2230, or by visiting the staff at the Senator Judith Zaffirini Student Success Center, room 138. A link to the Disabilities Services for Students site has also been included under the "Resources" tab inside the course.

Student Support Resources

The University wishes to have all students succeed in their courses. To provide support to our students, an array of services in the areas of technology support, academic support, student support, and accessibility support may be found at the University. For more information, visit Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' page on University Resources and Support Services (<http://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/university-resources-and-services.shtml/>).

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

Office Hours

Office hours will be listed on blackboard; students can meet face to face or virtually during these hours. To contact the professor, send a course message to schedule an appointment for a phone conference.

General Communication Policy

Instructor will respond to general courses messages within 24 hours during the week. Messages sent on the weekend will be replied to on the next business day.

Students may text professor in cases of emergency on 346-409-6529. In text message, provide the following information: *Class name (number and section), student's full name, and a brief text message.*

Assignments and Assessments

Instructor will respond between 72 - 96 hours **for providing feedback to students on their submissions of an assignment or assessment.** Please note, I will check my emails once a day and will respond to your emails within 24 hours during weekdays.

Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

Online communication is a very critical component of any online environment. There could be asynchronous communication (which means you are involved in a communication that IS NOT coordinated in time; such as discussion forums, emails, blogs, wikis, etc.) or synchronous communication (which means you are involved in a communication that IS coordinated in time; such as a LIVE chat session, LIVE office hours, web-conferences, etc.) in an online environment.

What Is Netiquette?

By definition, etiquette is "the customary code of polite behavior in society or among members of a particular profession or group." In cyberspace, netiquette is "acceptable way of communicating and behaving on the Internet."

Netiquette Tips

- be respectful
- Regardless of the type of communication used, you should always keep in mind the

following:

- be considerate of others
- think through before responding
- write clearly and concisely
- respond in a timely manner
- use short paragraphs
- spell-check your responses

Avoid

- CAPITAL LETTERS may be used to EMPHASIZE, but avoid typing in only capital letters as it may “sound” AS THOUGH YOU'RE SHOUTING!
- Rambling writing style; get to the point quickly.
- Screens full of text.

There are course expectations concerning etiquette or how we should treat each other online. It is vital that we consider these values as we communicate with one another. Visit Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' web page on Netiquette for further instruction.

Other course Requirements:

Campus/Classroom Requirements (Fall 2021 COVID-19 Requirements)

In order to ensure your safety and that of others, for the fall 2021 semester you are required:

- To self-monitor each day before coming to campus and to stay at home if you have any of the symptoms of COVID-19 as enumerated in the required A&M System training that you took prior to coming back to campus;
- To wash your hands thoroughly and use personal hand-sanitizer frequently;
- To wipe down your work areas with provided sanitizer wipes; and, importantly,
- To maintain social distance (6' or more) at all times while on campus.

II. Technology Requirements

Computer/Technology Requirements

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Online students will need regular access to a personal computer that runs on a broadband Internet connection.

It is recommended that you meet the technical requirements listed on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' [webpage \(http://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/technology-requirements.shtml/\)](http://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/technology-requirements.shtml/) when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

Additional Hardware. For this class, you will need the following additional hardware: a webcam and microphone. Recently purchased laptops may have these built-in web cameras. If you do not have this equipment, it is recommended to purchase a stand-alone webcam, microphone or a webcam with a built-in microphone from your local electronic store or any online store.

Additional Software. You will need the following software: Microsoft PowerPoint for viewing lesson presentations and Microsoft Word for viewing course files and submitting assignments. TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamui.edu/>. This site also provides students access to download the Microsoft suite for educational use. See instructions for downloading the Microsoft Office suite (<http://www.tamui.edu/distance/documents/Microsoft-Office-2016-Download-Instructions.pdf>).

Note: Students, if you do not own the required hardware, software or do not have access to internet, it will be highly challenging for you to make any progress in this class. However, my goal is to assist you to find solutions and guide you appropriately most of the required materials can either be found free of charge at TAMIU's library, computer labs, and classrooms. In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

Below is information regarding orientation to Blackboard. Additionally, students can find assistance in Blackboard under the “Student Support” tab of Blackboard, information on technology support services, academic support services, student support services, and accessibility support services may be found there. Additionally, Hoonuit training videos may be beneficial if any students are lacking technology skills.

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

Students are provided with guides on how to use the Blackboard LMS. Guides may be available at Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' Student eLearning Tutorial Videos page (<http://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/elearning-orientation.shtml/>) or by contacting the eLearning team at elearning@tamui.edu.

Technical Support Services

Because of the nature of distance education courses, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) computing and information services are vital to the success of online students. This webpage covers contact information for Distance Education Services (Blackboard Support), the OIT Help Desk, and E-mail support: Technical Support Services (<http://www.tamui.edu/distance/technical-support-services.shtml/>).

Program Learning Outcomes

I. Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, each student will:

C01: Explain use of biostatistics and how it is used in public health.

C02: Demonstrate an understanding and ability to apply statistical techniques most often used in public health.

C03: Use and understand principal numeric and graphical techniques used to display and summarize public health information.

C04: Interpret results of bio-statistical analysis most often used in public health.

C05: Demonstrate an ability to assess data sources and data quality for purposes of selecting appropriate data for specific situations.

C06: Identify the major study designs for obtaining quantitative information relevant to public health research.

C07: Describe the study designs applied in health services research.

C09: Explain the criteria commonly used to evaluate causal relationships.

Student Learning Outcomes

Description of Assessments

Quizzes (20%)

There will be **four scheduled quizzes** throughout the semester. Quizzes may contain multiple choice, fill in the blank, true/false, and short/long answer questions related to the assigned book readings for the relevant chapters.

Students are allowed to use all personal and class notes, as well as the textbook to assist with quiz completion. All quizzes will be taken online due dates as listed below in the tentative course calendar table.

Quizzes must be taken on the scheduled date and time, unless prior arrangements have been made and a documented reason for needing to complete the quiz at a different time has been presented.

Workbook (20%)

There will be **four scheduled workbooks**. Workbooks are designed to give students practical experience. The workbook consists of exercises that relate to material covered during lectures. Students will be given an opportunity to complete the exercises during class.

You will be provided with exercises during the semester, and all of these must be completed to obtain the 5% per workbook. Missed submission will receive a "0" grade.

Assignments (15%)

There will be **two scheduled assignments**. Each assignment is based on all material covered in the subject.

Assignment 1 will contribute 5% towards the assessment for this subject. Your assignment should be **typed** with adequate space left between questions. Please include your **name** and **student ID** at the top of each page, and ensure each page is properly numbered. Please show all work. No answers need to be longer than short paragraphs (maximum of 250 words). Where you are required to perform a calculation, you will be marked on the associated process, and not simply obtaining the correct numerical answer.

General tip for calculations: Take care in your calculations. The final answer should be reported and correct to 2 decimal places. Leave rounding until the very end to avoid compounding rounding errors. Again, please show all relevant formulas and working.

Assignment 2 will contribute to 10% towards the assessment for this subject. A group of students will be assigned to investigate a data base and plan, execute, and present a data analysis on a report like presentation. As a group you will each be responsible for giving a recorded informative group PowerPoint presentation this semester. This assignment will test your small group communication skills, your organizational proficiency, and your ability to incorporate any and all necessary information in order to give an in- depth understanding of the designated topic. Presentation requirements include the following:

1. You will be assigned a data set to investigate and analyze as a part of a group; data sets are as follow:
 - **Death Rates (Click here to access Death Data)**
Death rates (by state) from various causes, as well as information on related factors (such as age distribution and urbanization). From the Statistical Abstract of the United States.
 - **Poverty Statistics (Click here to access Poverty Data)**

Data for countries, on birth and death rates, infant mortality rates, life expectancies, and per capita GDP. Obtained from the Journal of Statistics Education online data archive. Original source was 1990 United Nations data.

- **Economic Data (Click here to access Economic Data)**

Unemployment rate and inflation rate, in February of post-WW2 election years. For an in-class activity on regression models. Source: Federal Reserve Economic Data ("FRED").

- **Pollution (Click here to access Pollution Data)**

Air quality measurements on 41 U.S. cities. Data obtained from A Handbook of Small Data Sets, edited by D.J. Hand, et al.

1. Communicate with your group as early and as often as possible via emails to develop a group contract, which lays out the role of each student, expectations for members. All items in the group contract are subject to my approval. Once completed, please send me your group names and a copy of the contract by the **10th week** of the course.
1. Your presentation should be 10-15 minutes in length and not longer. The following is a suggested outline for the analysis plan.
 - a. **Introduction:** Background on your data set and what (in your opinion) it entails.
 - b. **Research questions:** specify what question you will answer (think of a hypothesis)
 - c. **Methods:** what is the analysis you have conducted and why. As a statistical analysis plan, focus on the statistical aspects of similar studies, i.e., study design, patient population, analysis method, type of hypothesis test.
 - d. **Results/Analysis:** For each question that you have listed in the research question section, provide information on the following:
 - Study design
 - Study population, inclusion/exclusion criteria
 - Variables
 - Statistical methods
 - Output. In addition to the analysis, the power point presentation should integrate facts and data on the topic and should incorporate **effective visual aid** throughout the presentation (i.e., pictures, graphs) that summarize the results of the analyses.
 - Groups should use the textbook as a base for the presentation. Also, should use external materials found from an academic proper literature search. Please cite and reference **at least 2 separate, credible sources** in the body of the speech.
2. Presentation must be submitted on the scheduled date and time (please refer to the syllabus for date) and no late assignment will be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made and a documented reason for needing to complete the presentation at a different time has been presented.
3. Imbedded videos used within your presentation is not recommended. If you need to include a short video to bring movement, pictures and sound into your presentation then you need to elaborate and explain the use of such video and discuss in details the content and always make sure that the clip is directly relevant to your content and tied up with the rest of the presentation. Tell your audience what to look for. Avoid showing any more film than you need.
4. Please check the rubric for specific grading criteria and make sure that you submit your assignment on due dates as listed on the tentative course schedule.

Method submission Assignments should be submitted as a word document in the designated submission area.

Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval. Assignments for which an extension has not been sought prior to the due date will attract a penalty of 5% per day of the total marks available for the assignment, as per A&M international university policy.

Exams (45%)

There will be **two scheduled exams (mid-term and final)** Each exam is based on all material covered in the subject.

Midterm Exam (25%)

The exam will cover all the assigned readings for chapters 1-5, lecture material, and any material in the required textbook. Multiple choices, true/false, fill in the blank, and short/long answer questions can be expected. The exam must be taken on the scheduled date and time, unless prior arrangements have been made and a documented reason for needing to take the exam at a different time has been presented.

Final Exam (20%)

The exam will cover all the assigned readings for chapters 6-20, lecture material, and any material in the required textbook. Multiple choices, true/false, fill in the blank, and short/long answer questions can be expected. The exam must be taken on the scheduled date and time, unless prior arrangements have been made and a documented reason for needing to take the exam at a different time has been presented.

Note: Exams and quizzes will be available as indicated on the tentative course schedule from Assessments from 5:00am CST and will close on the following day following day at 11:59 pm.

Rubrics

You are graded based upon **subject mastery** and **skill set** achievement. To help you understand the grading structure I have put together the following grading rubric. The grading emphasis for the midterm and final exams is 45% (of your final course grade), allows these exams to be formative. The assignments & exams are designed to challenge you with material you haven't seen before.

All assessments will be graded as per the grade calculation. Refer to the course shell for copies of rubrics.

Late Work Policy

Late assignments will not be accepted.

I.Course Evaluation

At the end of this course, students are encouraged to complete a course evaluation that will be distributed to them via email and through a course link.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Basic Biostatistics: Statistics for Public Health Practice (2ND Edition). Jones & Bartlett Learning.	Gerstman,B.	ISBN: 978-1-284-03601-5
Required	Essentials of Biostatistics in Public Health, Third Edition. Jones & Barlett Learning.	Sullivan, Lisa.	ISBN 9781284108194
Required	Epidemiology, (4th Ed.) Philadelphia, PA: Saunders-Elsevier	Gordis L.	ISBN: 978-1-4160-4002-6.

Other Course Materials

Other Resources

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.)*. Washington, D.C. ISBN: 978-1433805615

The APA publication will provide student rules for preparation of manuscripts that should contribute to clear communication. Each document and citation will be graded using the APA publication manual.

Grading Criteria

In determining the final course grade, the following scale is used in percentages.

- 1.Students must achieve a grade of C or higher in the course in order to pass that course and progress in the program. A grade of F will constitute a course failure.
- 2.To pass the course and progress in the program, a student must attain an exam average (includes tests and the final) of 75% or higher.

Read the *CSON Grading and Grade Rounding Policy* found in the student handbook for additional information on examinations;

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	91-100
B	80-90.9
C	70-79.9



D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

Open Boilerplate

ASSESSMENT	VALUE
Syllabus Acknowledgement and participation	5%
Quizzes (Total of 4)	20%
Workbooks (Total of 4)	20%
Assignment (Total of 2)	15%
Mid-term Exams	20%
Final Exams	20%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/26	Introduction and Overview Organizing Data	1 Gerstman	Sunday 9/1
9/2	Study Design Data Interpretation issues	2 Gerstman Workbook 1	Sunday 9/8
9/9	Quiz 1 Measure of effect (Materials will be distributed)	Chapters 1-3 3 Sullivan	Sunday 9/15
9/16	Summary Statistic Screening (Materials will be distributed)	4 Gerstman 5 Sullivan	Sunday 9/22
9/23	Workbook 2 Quiz 2	Chapters 4-5	Sunday 9/29
9/30	The role of Probability Normal Distribution	5 Sullivan 7 Gerstman	Sunday 10/6
10/7	Study Break/Revision Mid-Term Exam	Assignment 1 Due Lectures 1-9	Sunday 10/13
10/14	Introduction to Statistical Inference Hypothesis Testing	8-9 Gerstman	Sunday 10/20
10/21	Workbook 3 Quiz 3	Chapters 8-9	Sunday 10/27
10/28	Causation (chapter materials will be distributed) Correlation	14, 18 Gordis 14 Gerstman	Sunday 11/3
11/4	Choosing statistics 1 Choosing statistics 2	12 Gerstman	Sunday 11/10
11/11	Workbook 4 Quiz 4	Chapters 12-15	Sunday 11/17
11/18	Life Table (Materials will be distributed)	11 Sullivan	Sunday 11/24
11/25	SPSS Introduction SPSS Calculation	Assignment 2 Due	Sunday 12/1
12/2	Study Break/Revision		
12/9	Final Exam		12/10

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).

TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

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

TAMIU 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 TAMIU 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.tamiau.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml>) (<http://www.tamiau.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@tamiau.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.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.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@tamiau.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.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>) (<https://www.tamiau.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@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt, at <https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.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.

- 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.

Distance Education Courses

I.Additional Course Information/Other Policies

Syllabus Subject to Change

While information and assurances are provided in this course syllabus, it should be understood that content may change in keeping with new research and literature and that events beyond the control of the instructor could occur. Students will be informed of any substantive occurrences that will produce syllabus changes.

Turnitin

TurnItIn is an award-winning, web-based solution that prevents plagiarism, saves instructors time and engages students with rich, multi-faceted feedback on written work.

Written assignments will be submitted through TurnItIn, please review TurnItIn Story from TurnItIn on Vimeo and guides: submitting a paper, originality reports, and user manual.

Digital Receipts

Once you submit your paper *successfully*, a digital receipt with a PaperID will be displayed for students on screen and emailed to the student's @dusty.tamui.edu email address. Be sure to locate this receipt. **If a receipt is not generated, go back and submit to the assignment again until a receipt is created.**

Accessibility and Privacy Statements

Students should view the statements of accessibility and privacy policies on all course technologies. We recommend instructors to provide links to this software's accessibility and privacy statements in their syllabi. Locate the updated statement links for *TurnItIn* on the following pages:

- Accessibility Statements of Course Technologies
- Privacy Policy Statements of Course Technologies

Proctoring

Respondus LockDown Browser (Free) and Monitor (\$15 fee) Requirement

All online exams must use respondus lockdown browser and if off campus without direct faculty proctoring the student must also use the respondus webcam; there is a once a semester fee for this (only pay one fee once a semester regardless of how many courses require this product).

Watch this [short video](http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml/) (<http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml/>) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (the webcam feature). A student [Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](http://www.respondus.com/products/monitor/guides.shtml/) (<http://www.respondus.com/products/monitor/guides.shtml/>) is also available.

Download Instructions

Click the **Student Support** top-middle tab located in Blackboard. Scroll down to the *Instructional Technologies* section, and click on the *Respondus LockDown Browser* icon. Download is **free**.

Once Installed

- Open LockDown Browser
- Log into Blackboard Learn
- Navigate to the test and begin

Note: You won't be able to access tests with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the test requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Cost for Respondus Monitor

There is a **\$15 fee** for the webcam feature that's used with LockDown Browser (sometimes referred to as Respondus Monitor). This is a one-time fee, valid for 12 months (365 days) for all courses or exams that use Respondus Monitor. You will be prompted to make the purchase the first time an exam requires the use of LockDown Browser's webcam feature. Payment can be made with PayPal, Visa or Mastercard.

To pay for Respondus Monitor:

- Start Respondus LockDown Browser (http://www.jsu.edu/online/current-students/resp_lock_browser_students.html).
- Navigate to your test.
- Complete the set-up process, which includes a payment screen for entering credit card information.
- Payment and entering credit card information is only necessary one-time per course.

Guidelines

When taking an online exam that requires LockDown Browser and a webcam, remember the following guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Turn off all other devices (e.g. tablets, phones, second computers)
- Clear your area of all external materials – books, papers, other devices
- Remain at your computer for the duration of the test
- To produce a good webcam video, do the following:
 - Avoid wearing baseball caps or hats with brims
 - Ensure your computer or tablet is on a firm surface (a desk or table) – not on your lap, a bed, or other surface that might move

- If using a built-in webcam, avoid tilting the screen after the webcam setup is complete
 - Take the exam in a well-lit room and avoid backlighting, such as sitting with your back to a window
- LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted.

Getting Help

Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser:

- The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues.
- If you have problems downloading, installing, or taking a test with Respondus LockDown Browser, email the TAMIU eLearning Team at elearning@tamiu.edu.

Webcam Checkout for Personal Computer

If students are unable to use personal or borrowed computers and equipment, students may stop by the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services office to check out webcams (with built-in microphones). The office is located at **Killam Library 259** (down the hall from the HelpDesk) and is open **Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.** Checkout for a webcam is on a first-come, first-service basis. Speak with an eLearning staff member to checkout a camera. Students will sign an Equipment Loaner Agreement, making them responsible for the care of the camera. Webcams checked out must be returned within five business days of the checkout date.

Accessibility and Privacy Statements on Course Technologies

At Texas A&M International University, we believe that all students should have equal technology opportunities in the classroom. These technologies/sites may also require user data, such as the creation of a username and password. In this class, we will utilize Blackboard (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/students/elearning-orientation.shtml>) and Turnitin (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/technology/turnitin.shtml>). You may find the accessibility and privacy policies of these technologies on the following pages: Accessibility Statements (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/technology/accessibility-statements.shtml>) and Privacy Statements (<http://www.tamiu.edu/distance/technology/privacy-statements.shtml>).

Other Policy/Information

Students and faculty share the burden of carefully protecting the privacy of all persons in the client role. **Never identify clients by name** in any written work and do not discuss any client information outside of the assigned seminar or class times.

II. University/College/Department Policies

I. Class Attendance

Except for asynchronous online courses, students are expected to attend every class in person and to complete all assignments. If a student cannot attend class, it is his/her responsibility to communicate absences with professors. The professor will decide if the student's excuse is valid. According to university policy, as listed in the Student Handbook, excused absences, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized university activity at the request of university authorities.
- 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 days/days of obligation.
- A pregnant/parenting student must be granted a leave of absence (LOA) for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary.
- Illness/injury that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military assignment and duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school, which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to professors within seven calendar days of their absence and are expected to return to class. If the absence is excused, the professor will either allow access to lecture recordings (if available), provide students with the opportunity to make up missed work, including exams, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the work 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 faculty with as much advance notice as possible. Students are responsible for all work assigned during their absence. Whenever possible, students should complete the work either before the absence or immediately afterward.

If an off-campus licensed physician provides evidence of a student's illness, the written excuse, orders, or documentation must contain the date and time of the doctor's appointment, the prognosis of illness, doctor's opinion, and recommendations for the individual student. In addition, the notice should outline whether or not the student is able to attend class. If a physician determines that the student is not ill, the student will not receive an excused absence. If an absence is not an excused absence, the faculty member will decide whether makeup work will be allowed.

In some courses, attendance and in-class participation are ongoing requirements and an integral part of the coursework. In other courses, occasional in-class assessments may occur, sometimes without advance notice. It is the responsibility of the professor to inform each class at the beginning of the semester of the in-class participation expected and the effect absences will have on the student's evaluation of work in the course. It is the student's responsibility to abide by the professor's instructions and rules in the course.

II. Leave of absence (LOA) Rule

The Student Leave of Absence (LOA) Rule assists and encourages students to return and graduate after an absence of two or more consecutive long semesters from TAMIU. Absences during summer sessions are excluded, as continuous enrollment is not affected. Eligible students are encouraged to take advantage of the benefits provided by a LOA, e.g., no need to apply for readmission to university and may participate in their regularly scheduled registration/enrollment period upon return. Please note that re-admission to a college program may be required.

Eligibility Requirements: To be eligible for a LOA, a student must be eligible to register for classes and meet the following criteria:

1. Be a degree-seeking student.
2. Be registered during the semester immediately prior to the beginning of the LOA:
 1. A student who was admitted as a new first-time freshman, transfer student, or graduate student but did not attend will not be eligible for a LOA. Instead, the student should contact the Office of Admissions. Graduate students should contact the Graduate School.
 2. A student who was readmitted but did not attend will not be eligible for a LOA. Instead, the student should contact the Office of Admissions. Graduate students should contact the Graduate School.
1. Be in good academic standing or on academic probation with their college.
2. Have no holds (e.g., disciplinary, business, testing, etc.), which would restrict registration. Note: Students with Business Office holds may be given consideration for a LOA if authorized by the Bursar's Office.
3. Have submitted any outstanding high school and/or transfer transcripts if prior admission/readmission and continued enrollment was contingent upon receipt of those transcripts.

Rules and specific processes regarding LOA for undergraduate and graduate students can be found in the Student Handbook.

III. Classroom Behavior

TAMIU values academic freedom in the classroom and, thus, classroom discussion and academic debate are encouraged. 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 accept different or unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending, insulting, or discriminatory 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 the Student Handbook for more information) and professors may ask the student to leave the class.

IV. TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

The university is committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Students should conduct themselves ethically in all activities, in and out of the classroom. Ethical behavior also includes reporting violations of the Honor Code to the appropriate office. Please read the Student Handbook to review the university's Honor Code.

There are several violations of the Honor Code that involve plagiarism and cheating.

1. Plagiarism: The act of passing off some other person's ideas, words, or works as one's own. It includes, but is not limited to, the appropriating, buying, receiving as a "gift," or obtaining, by any other means, another's work for submission as one's own academic work. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Failing to credit sources used in a work product in an attempt to present the work as one's own.
 - b. Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without crediting the author or creator).
 - c. Copying test answers or the words or phrases of another without crediting the author or claim credit for the ideas of another.
 - d. Borrowing or lending a term paper, handing in as your own work a paper purchased from an individual or off the Internet, or submitting, as one's own any papers or work product from the files of any group, club, or organization.
 - e. Submitting the same paper in more than one class without the permission of the instructor.

Students must provide citations for facts, ideas, and opinions that are not their own. If students are unsure about providing proper documentation, they are encouraged to seek advice from professors or the Academic Center of Excellence (ACE). It is the professor's prerogative to ask students to submit work to one of TAMIU's Plagiarism detection tools: Turnitin or Blackboard's SafeAssign.

Professors must report incidents of plagiarism to the Honor Council. It is the professor's prerogative and/or discretion, to issue an "F" in the course should he/she discover that a student has committed plagiarism. The professor, however, *may* elect to give students, particularly freshmen and sophomore students, a "zero" for the assignment if he/she believes that the student plagiarized out of carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive the professor to earn an unmerited grade. Serious cases of plagiarism, especially those that involve flagrant incidents of plagiarism by graduate or doctoral students, may lead to suspension or expulsion from the university.

1. Cheating: An act of deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information related to an academic exercise. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Copying from another student's test, lab report, computer file, data listing, logs, or any other type of report or academic exercise.
 - b. Using unauthorized materials during a test. Consulting a cell phone, text messages, PDAs, programmable calculators with materials that give an advantage over other students during an exam.
 - c. Using crib sheets or other hidden notes in an examination or looking at another student's test paper to copy strategies or answers.
 - d. Having another person supply questions or answers from an examination to be given or in progress.
 - e. Having a person other than oneself (registered for the class) attempt to take or take an examination or any other graded activity. In these cases, all consenting parties to the attempt to gain unfair advantage may be charged with an Honor Pledge violation.
 - f. Deliberately falsifying laboratory results, or submission of samples or findings not legitimately derived in the situation and by the procedures prescribed or allowable.
 - g. Revising and resubmitting a quiz or exam for regrading, without the instructor's knowledge and consent.
 - h. Giving or receiving unauthorized aid on a take-home examination.
 - i. Facilitating academic violation: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate the Honor Pledge.
 - j. Signing in another student's name on attendance sheets, rosters, Scantrons.
 - k. Submitting in a paper, thesis, lab report, or other academic exercise falsified, invented, or fictitious data or evidence, or deliberate or knowingly concealing or distorting the true nature, origin, or function of such data or evidence.
 - l. Procuring and/or altering without permission from appropriate authority of examinations, papers, lab reports, or other academic exercises, whether discarded or used, and either before or after such materials have been handed in to the appropriate recipient.
 - m. Using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying or possessing, the contents of an un-administered test, a required assignment or a past test which has, by the professor, not been allowed to be kept by their students.
 - n. Using generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT. Unless allowed by each professor, students are expected to complete each assignment without assistance from others, including automated writing tools.

It is important to note that professors may ask students to work in groups. However, if someone in a group commits academic misconduct, the entire group could be held responsible for it as well. Members of groups must clearly document who contributes what parts of the joint project and to know what group members are doing and how they are getting the material they provide. Ignorance is no excuse.

It is also important to be aware of group texts or chats. If another student is attempting to violate the Honor Code, it is your ethical responsibility to report him/her to the Honor Council. Again, membership in a group that attempts or engages in cheating may lead to all members of the group being subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

Should professors discover that a student has cheated 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 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."

Appeals of Academic Dishonesty

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.

Exam Monitoring

For online courses, professors may require students to use a proctoring service such as Respondus Monitor, Proctorio, or Examity. Students are responsible for signing up and paying the required fees. This information will be stated under the "Course Materials" section of your syllabus.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

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

III. Disputes over Academic Matters

Faculty members are responsible for determining course curricula, for developing appropriate methods of evaluating student learning, for evaluating fairly, for upholding academic standards, and for enforcing procedures concerning academic honesty. Decisions made by faculty members regarding the quality or integrity of student work, including decisions about course grades, are presumed to be fair and final (unless the student files a successful grade appeal). In cases of academic violation students may be subject to both grade sanctions and disciplinary action (see Student Violations of Academic Integrity below).

Students who believe that they have grounds for challenging faculty decisions regarding academic issues—excepting those pertaining to matters of academic freedom—may appeal using the procedure outlined below. Faculty members are required to report acts of academic violation to their chair, their Dean, the Provost, the Honor Council (through the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement), and the Vice President for Student Success.

Grade sanctions may be imposed only by faculty members. Academic suspension or expulsion may be imposed only by the Provost. As with disputes about course grades, students may appeal grade sanctions imposed for academic violation only by following the procedure outlined below. Students should not attempt to persuade academic administrators to change a grade; they cannot and will not do it unless a student follows the grade appeal policy below and is successful in persuading either the faculty member for the course or an ad-hoc committee of faculty members that a change is warranted.

Student appeals of faculty academic decisions should be completed within 15 University business days after the student's first meeting with the faculty member to question the faculty member's decision.

1. The student must first meet with the faculty member and discuss the faculty member's decision. This meeting should occur as soon as possible after the decision has been made, normally within one week of the student being notified of the decision. The faculty member is expected to listen to the student, provide an explanation for the decision, and change the grade or decision if the student's argument is persuasive. To change final course grades, a faculty member must submit a "Grade Change Form" and attach an accompanying memorandum justifying the decision to change the grade. The faculty member's department chair and Dean must approve the change.
1. If the faculty member declines to change the decision or grade, the student may then discuss the matter with the faculty member's immediate academic supervisor (hereafter, "chair" will be used to mean either the department chair or the immediate academic supervisor). If the chair believes that the student's position has merit, the chair will discuss the matter with the faculty member.
1. If the student is not satisfied with the chair's assessment of the issue or if the faculty member declines to change the decision after discussing it with the chair, the student may then request that an ad hoc committee of faculty members review the matter. This committee consists of three tenured faculty members within the same discipline or department unless circumstances dictate otherwise. If the chair determines that a tenured faculty member cannot be selected from the same discipline or department, then the chair may add a tenured faculty member from a closely related discipline. From the pool of eligible tenured faculty members designated by the chair, the faculty member, the student, and the chair will each nominate one faculty member to serve on the committee.
1. The ad hoc committee will hear from the student, the faculty member, and the chair and examine relevant documents. If the committee sustains the faculty member's decision, the committee will provide the student with a written statement explaining the reasons for the committee's decision. The student may request in writing that the committee reconsiders its decision and provides reasons for so doing. If the committee refuses to reconsider or if it reaffirms its original recommendation, the faculty member's original decision is final. If the committee finds in favor of the student, the committee will provide the faculty member with a written recommendation explaining the committee's reasons. If the faculty member disagrees with the committee's recommendation, the faculty member may request that the committee reconsiders its recommendation and provides the committee with a rationale for revisiting the recommendation. If after considering the faculty member's rationale the ad hoc committee is still persuaded that the faculty member's original decision should be reversed, the committee will recommend in writing to the chair that the faculty member's decision be overturned. The committee may also make this recommendation to the chair if the faculty member fails to alter the original decision and also fails to respond to the committee's original recommendation. The faculty member will receive a copy of the recommendation to the chair, allowing a final opportunity to revise the original decision. If the faculty member fails to comply, the chair may override the faculty member's original decision, and, as appropriate, revise the student's course grade. In order to certify that the grade dispute process outlined above has been followed appropriately, the Dean of the College or the School and the Provost will review all decisions by chairs to change grades against the will of a faculty member.

IV.

V. Incomplete Grades

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:

- 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; 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;
- The student must sign an “Incomplete Grade Contract” and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
- 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

WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to 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 Withdrawing from 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.

VI.

VII. 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.

VIII. 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 the grade appeal process as described in the *Student Handbook* and in the *Faculty Handbook*.

IX. 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.

Extra-Credit Work

Professors may not give extra-credit opportunities to individual students. If they choose to give extra credit, professors must make it available to all students in a class. Professors are discouraged from giving extra credit for class attendance and/or attendance at university events. Professors should not give extra-credit opportunities after final grades for the semester are submitted.

X. UConnect, TAMIU E-Mail, and Dusty Alert

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU's Uconnect Portal, TAMIU E-mail, and Blackboard Course Messages, 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 UConnect and their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or UConnect 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 sign-up for Dusty Alert (see https://www.tamiau.edu/oit/students/dusty_alrt.shtml (https://www.tamiau.edu/oit/students/dusty_alrt.shtml)). Dusty Alert is an instant cell phone text-messaging system allowing the university to communicate immediately with you if there is an on-campus emergency, something of immediate danger to you, or a campus closing.

XI. Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants 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.

XII. Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodation 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. This office will contact the faculty members to recommend specific, reasonable accommodation. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodation only when provided documentation by the Student Counseling and Disability Services office.

XIII. 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 Office of Title IX & Civil Rights Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, TAMIU Director of Title IX & Civil Rights Compliance/Title IX Coordinator; 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: 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 Title IX & Civil Rights Compliance* (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 Director of Title IX & Civil Rights Compliance/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*.

XIV. 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 Office of Title IX & Civil Rights Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, TAMIU Director of Title IX & Civil Rights Compliance/Title IX Coordinator; 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041; TitleIX@tamiu.edu; 956.326.2857) or via the anonymous electronic reporting website, *ReportIt*, at www.tamiu.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.