

PSCI 3350 - Intro: Analysis of Publ Policy: Intro:Analysis of Publ Pol-WIN

Fall 2024 Syllabus, Section 102, CRN 15302

Instructor Information

Dr. Varaidzo Zvobgo

Assistant Professor of Public Administration

Email: varaidzo.zvobgo@tamiu.edu

Office: AIC 359

Office Hours:

T and R, 9:00 am-11 am

Office Phone: 956 326 2652

Times and Location

TR 11:40am-1 pm in Bullock Hall 103

Course Description

Systematic analysis of factors affecting policy-making and implementation at various stages. Theories of decision-making, organizational behavior of bureaucracies, and regulatory alternatives.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

WIN-Designation

This course is designated as a writing-intensive (WIN) course. In this course, writing will not only be the subject of study, but it will also serve as a method of learning. Students will learn how communication in written, oral, and visual forms change according to purpose and genre. Brainstorming, drafting, revising, and peer-workshopping are integrated into the course curriculum and are the required components of this writing-intensive course. The final Research Paper is the designated assignment for WIN assessment.

Additional Course Information

The general format of this course includes reviews of class material, short lectures, and class discussion. Students should come prepared to participate in class discussions. Please refer to the course calendar in Blackboard often. Appropriate teaching technology will be used to promote learning, including power point slides, video, electronic submissions of assignments, grading, and feedback, etc. All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard Ultra. Please familiarize yourself with Blackboard technology.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Describe the various policymaking models.
2. Recognize and distinguish between the different stages of the policy process
3. Discuss current public policy issues from various perspectives
4. Conduct basic policy analysis using critical thinking and analysis of policy alternatives
5. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of policy legislation.
6. Explain the complexity of issues, problems and challenges associated with public policy development and implementation.

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	Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives	Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2020)	9781071858394

Grading Criteria

In determining the final course grade, the following scale is used:

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Assignments

Attendance and Participation

Attendance, punctuality, and participation are expected for all class sessions and have a significant impact on your final grade. All students are expected to actively participate in the course and engage in critical thinking and the learning process. I value a good attitude, passion, and process in the learning environment. I will consider these aspects in all assignments. I am fully aware that speaking among a group of strangers is often an anxiety-producing experience. However, each student will be asked to contribute to the learning process through discussion. No one will be allowed the luxury of passive anonymity. I want to assure you, therefore, that your thoughts and opinions will always be treated with respect. If an absence is essential, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor, as well as for ensuring the timely submission of any assignments that are due during their absence. Excused absences include TAMU -approved events, signed medical excuses, familial deaths, and others at the instructor's discretion.

Chapter Quizzes

There will be a quiz on every chapter we cover to ensure students are reading the textbook as well as assessing your knowledge of the basic concepts. There are 12 graded chapter/module quizzes in the course (each quiz will cover the chapters of the week). However, the final grade will drop two least grades. Quizzes will be open for 7 days (Tuesday 8.00 am through Monday 11.59 pm). You will have 40 minutes to complete a 20-question quiz. DO NOT wait until the last minute to take the quiz. The quizzes will allow one attempt, so you will need to complete them in one sitting. The quiz submission dates are outlined in the course schedule, located at the end of this document, so you will know when each quiz is due. If you do not have access to a computer at home, you can go to one of the computer labs on campus or the library. There is NO make-up for the quizzes, unless the inability to take a quiz is due to a university approved student absence (see list of qualifying reasons in the COAS Policies).

Reviewing Completed Quizzes: After the quiz closes you will be able to review your answers, which includes the correct answers to all the questions through "My Grades."

News Analyses

This assignment is a discussion board assignment, that applies concepts from the readings to an article in the newspaper or other form of mainstream media (e.g. policy news websites). You are required to select news articles related to public policy. Students may seek news articles identifying policy problems, policy proposals, policy adoption, policy implementation, and policy evaluation. You may follow the steps below.

1. Give a summary of the news article, listing key points and conclusions
2. Analyze the issue in the news article you selected, applying concepts and frameworks from the readings. Use the following questions in your analysis

a) What stage of the policy process (e.g., agenda-setting, policymaking, implementation, or evaluation) the policy topic is in and why? Who are key actors involved in the topic? What position are some of the key actors standing for?

b) Which evaluative criteria should be considered when you attempt to analyze the problem posted? Why?

The length of each News Analysis (summary and analysis) should be between **250-300** words. Please provide the link to the post at the end of your summary.

In addition to your initial News post, you will be required to **reply to two** of the news stories that were posted by your classmates. Please respond to their description of the story and add substantive comments. The comments/replies are due on the same day and time as the News Posts. The initial post is worth 30 points and replies are worth 20 points. See the course schedule for due dates and times.

Mid Term Exam

The mid-term exam will require students to respond to broad-based questions on public policy. Students are responsible for all subject matter covered during the lectures and in the assigned readings up to the point of the mid-term exam. Make-up will not be permitted. The exam will consist of short answer type questions and multiple-choice questions and will require the use of Respondus Lockdown Browser. The mid-term exam counts for 25% of your final grade. See course calendar for exam dates. E-mail notices of illness without appropriate documentation of such illness will not constitute an acceptable excuse

Final Policy Paper

The final paper will be in the form of a Policy paper. In Kraft and Furlong, Part III, there are 6 chapters that cover different policy topics. Students will be assigned to a policy topic in the early week of the semester. Even if the chapter covering your chosen policy topic is scheduled in mid-semester, read it ahead of time. During the semester, you will decide which issues you want to research and analyze for your final project. Choose a **state** or **local** issue within the policy area assigned to your group. For example, if your group is assigned to welfare and social security policy, then pick an issue related to that policy area. The final paper must include key components of a policy analysis as described below:

1. Defining a Problem: Policy analysts have learned that it is extremely challenging to define a policy problem in an agreeable format. Discuss the following questions:

- What is a problem that the policy you chose aims to address?
- Why is it a problem and from whose perspective?
- What is the history of the problem and past policy attempts to solve it? – Policy problem referring to a community or society problem, not a problem of the existing policy. Almost every formulated policy may have some problems, but here you must focus on the problems that a state or local policy aimed to address in communities or states (i.e. homeless, energy saving, school accountability).

2. Identifying Evaluative Criteria: Based on readings and class discussion regarding evaluative criteria (or analytical criteria), you will identify a good set of criteria to make a judgment on potential policy alternatives. In this subsection, you may discuss what criteria you will use to compare policy alternatives. In this subsection, you may discuss what criteria you will use to compare policy alternatives and why. Note that it is not necessary to list every criterion in the readings. You may want to discuss the limitations of your selected criteria at the end of the paper

3. Generating Policy Alternatives: Your group may think about a couple of policy alternatives to address your local policy problem in addition to a 'do nothing' option. Evaluate the alternatives based on the policy criteria you selected. Be critical and clear about explaining the trade-offs. Your final paper may include a Criteria and Alternative Matrix (CAM), if you choose to do so. You can add qualitative or quantitative evaluations of the alternatives.

4. Policy Recommendations should be reasonable and persuasive

Here is the list of tasks to be completed for the final project and due dates:

- Submit your final *project proposal* on September 16, 11:59 pm **(5%)**
- Submit your *final project component drafts* **(10%)**
 - Defining a Public Policy Problem (by September 30, 11:59 pm)
 - Identifying Evaluative Criteria (by October 21, 11:59 pm)
 - Generating and Assessing Policy Alternatives (by November 11, 11:59 pm)
 - Policy Recommendations (by November 18, 11:59 pm)
- The *final project paper* will culminate in the integration and revision of all the project components drafts. I will evaluate how well the previous components are integrated and communicated in the final paper (by December 6, 11:59 pm) **(10%)**
- *Final project presentation:* At the end of the semester, each group will present their policy paper in class. Each group should prepare approximately 10 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes for questions. Please limit your PowerPoint to no more than 10 slides. The presentation will be evaluated by students (December 3- class time). **(10%)**

Submission: Submit your final project paper by **December 6, 2024, 1 pm** via the Turnitin Dropbox: The final paper will be graded for Content, Clarity, Comprehensiveness, Creativity, and Evidence.

Formatting: The policy paper should be **double-spaced, 12-point font, and minimum 2000- maximum 2500 words** (excluding cover page, references, tables). A cover page should be included with your names, paper title, course number, date, and total word count. There should be a minimum of 4 references on the paper. Your references can include government documents, peer-reviewed articles, and books. A maximum of 3 websites will be counted as references. All in-text citations and references should follow APA citation format. At the end of the paper, you must add an acknowledgment which is signed by all the group members and explains each person's research and/or writing contribution (exclude the acknowledgment from the word count).

Your final grade in this course will be determined in the following manner:

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Attendance and Participation	10%
End-of-Chapter Quizzes	20%
News Analyses	10%
Mid Term Exam	25%
Final Project Portfolio	35%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Tue	8/27	Course Introductions and Syllabus Overview	Chapter 1-Kraft & Furlong (2020)	Acknowledgement of Syllabus and Policies of the course and University. Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
		Final Group Project Public Policy and Politics		
Thu	8/29	Public Policy and Politics	Chapter 1-Kraft & Furlong (2020)	Quiz #1 (Chapter 1) 9/2, 11:59 pm
Tue	9/3	Government Institutions and Policy Actors	Chapter 2- Kraft & Furlong (2020)	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	9/5	Government Institutions and Policy Actors	Chapter 2- Kraft & Furlong (2020)	Quiz #2 (Chapter 2) 9/9, 11:59 pm
Tue	9/10	Understanding Public Policy Making	Chapter 3- Kraft & Furlong (2020)	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	9/12	Understanding Public Policy Making	Chapter 3- Kraft & Furlong (2020)	Quiz #3 (Chapter 3) Final Paper Component: Group Project proposal Sept 16, by 11:59 pm
Tue	9/17	Policy Analysis: An Introduction	Chapter 4- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	9/19	Policy Analysis: An Introduction	Chapter 4- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #4 (Chapter 4) News Analysis #1 Sept 23, by 11:59 pm.
Tue	9/24	Public Problems and Policy Alternatives	Chapter 5- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	9/26	Public Problems and Policy Alternatives	Chapter 5- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #5 (Chapter 5) Final Paper Component: Defining a Public Policy Problem Sept 30, by 11:59 pm
Tue	10/1	Assessing Policy Alternatives	Chapter 6- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	10/3	Assessing Policy Alternatives	Chapter 6- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #6 (Chapter 6) Oct 7, by 11:59 pm
Tue	10/8	Economic and Budgetary Policy	Chapter 7- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	10/10	Economic and Budgetary Policy	Chapter 7- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Mid Term exam—Online 10/9-10/10, 11:59 pm
Tue	10/15	Health Care Policy	Chapter 8- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra

Thu	10/17	Health Care Policy	Chapter 8- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #7 (Chapter 8) Final Paper Component: Identifying Evaluative Criteria Oct 21, 11.59 pm
Tue	10/22	Welfare and Social Security Policy	Chapter 9- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	10/24	Welfare and Social Security Policy	Chapter 9- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #8 (Chapter 9) Oct 28, 11.59 pm
Tue	10/29	Education Policy	Chapter 10- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	10/31	Education Policy	Chapter 10- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #9 (Chapter 10) News Analysis #2 Nov 4, 11.59 pm
Tue	11/5	Environmental and Energy Policy	Chapter 11- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	11/7	Environmental and Energy Policy	Chapter 11- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #10 (Chapter 11) Final Paper Component: Generating and Assessing Policy Alternatives Nov 11, 11.59 pm
Tue	11/12	Foreign Policy and Homeland Security	Chapter 12- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	11/14	Foreign Policy and Homeland Security	Chapter 12- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #11 (Chapter 12) Final Paper Component: Policy Recommendations Nov 18, 11.59 pm
Tue	11/19	Politics, Analysis, and Policy choice	Chapter 13- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Class Activities: Blackboard Ultra
Thu	11/21	Politics, Analysis, and Policy choice	Chapter 13- Kraft & Furlong (2020).	Quiz #12 (Chapter 13) Nov 25, 11.59 pm
Tue	11/26	Work in your groups on the Final Presentation	Group Presentation Preparations	Group Presentations Preparations
Thu	11/28	No Class		
Tue	12/3	Last Day of Class: Final Group Presentations	Final Group Presentations	Final Group Presentations Final Policy Paper: 12/6, 1 pm
Thu	12/5	No Class		
Tue	12/10	No Class		
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)

TAMU 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 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.
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.