

# PSYC 3302 - Research Methods in Psyc: Research Methods in Psyc-WIN

## Fall 2024 Syllabus, Section 102, CRN 14071

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### Instructor Information

**Kate Houston, PhD**

Associate Professor of Psychology and Criminal Justice

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Office: AIC 338

Office Hours:

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: 12pm - 2pm

Tuesday and Thursday: 9am - 10am

Or by appointment.

Office Phone: 2630

Email is the best way to reach me.

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### Times and Location

TR 10:05am-11:25am in Bullock Hall 205

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### Course Description

Reviews the principles and methodologies of psychological inquiry. Course emphasizes critical thinking, designing and conducting experimental, survey, and observational research, analyzing and interpreting scientific data, and writing professional research reports. Prerequisite: PSYC 2317 and PSYC 2117 (or a statistics course) with a grade of "C" or better. Corequisites: concurrent enrollment in PSYC 3102 or permission of instructor. This course is required for admittance in the Master of Counseling Psychology Program with a grade of "B" or higher.

Psychology & Communication Department, College of Arts & Sciences

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### 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

This course is designed to introduce students to basic issues of research design, methodology, and statistical applications, as they relate to the study of psychology. Course topics include ethical considerations in research, sampling, research designs, survey construction, interviewing and report writing. The approach used in the course emphasizes the logical, cumulative nature of the research process and attempts to guide students through steps to ensure the proper conceptualization, operationalization, execution, and presentation of research endeavors. This is a tools course. In other words, when you leave this class you should have the basic tools necessary to conduct your own research.

### Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, a student should be able to:

1. Understand how research methodology is useful, and critical, to the field of psychology.
2. Explore the ethics of scientific research.
3. Understand the steps of the research process.
4. Develop into critical consumers of science, including the ability to evaluate published research.
5. Defend your own research questions and create a plan for empirical evaluation of those questions.
6. Create a written report of a research project and understand how research methods and statistics are related.

## 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	Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences (5th Edition).	Charles Stangor	9781305178113

## Other Course Materials

Any additional course materials will be provided to students via Blackboard

## Grading Criteria

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

## Class Structure and Expectations

**Class Format and Requirements:** This class will consist of the following components; projects, lectures, and exams. As this is a Research Methods course, a large proportion of your final grade will be based upon a research project completed through the semester as both individual and group written projects. Outline information is below regarding these elements but they will also be covered in detail in Week 1 of our course.

1. **Weekly Readings:** The course schedule indicates which readings and topics are to be covered each week. *This schedule is subject to change.* **Prior** to reviewing the course materials online, you are required to complete all reading assignments listed for that week so that you are prepared to participate in the coursework. Do not expect lectures/discussions to necessarily coincide with the textbook. You are responsible for knowing **both** the reading **and** the lecture material. Supplementary readings that do not appear on the course schedule may also be assigned from time to time and you will be required to know the material in these readings as well.
2. **Lectures:** Lectures on the sections and readings will follow the tentative course schedule below.
3. **Exams:** There will be four non-cumulative exams in the course. Exams will be given on the week of class indicated on the syllabus and assess only the material indicated on the syllabus. Failure to take an exam will result in a score of "0" for that exam. Each exam will comprise 10.5% of your final grade. Exam questions can take any of the following formats: matching, true/false, multiple choice. Make-up exams will only be offered in the case of documented medical emergency or other extenuating circumstances. You must contact me within 24 hours of the exam (where possible) to inform me of the reason why you will miss the exam. If you are unable to contact me yourself, please have a friend/family member/classmate email me on your behalf. There will be no exceptions to these rules.
4. **Projects:** There will be four projects in this course. The purpose of these projects is to teach you how to conduct a research study and write a research paper in APA style. You will receive feedback on Projects 1 - 3, which can be used to create Project 4. Project 1 will be completed individually; the remaining projects will be completed in groups. You will be assigned to groups by your course instructor and will be expected to work together virtually outside of class to complete each project. The projects will focus on the following: Project 1 - Ethical Considerations,



Project 2 – Introduction (split into 3 smaller projects), Project 3 – Method and Results, Project 4 – Complete Research Paper (in order to receive credit for Project 4, you must turn in your graded copies of Projects 2 & 3 with Project 4). Combined, the projects comprise **50%** of your final grade. You may **not** work with anyone on the projects other than your assigned group members. **This means you should not even read another group's work.** If you want someone to proofread your paper, you should find someone who has never taken research methods with me. . If you do not turn in your project on time to the Dropbox, you will not receive credit (you will receive a grade of 0). You may NOT submit assignments over email.

**A Note on Group Projects:** All group members should be contributing equally to the project. On the day that Project 4 is due, you will be asked to turn in an assessment of each group member's contribution to the project, including your own. These assessments will be used to identify and address any problems in the group structure, as well as to adjust grades if a team member is not adequately contributing to the group work. This means that it is possible that not all individuals in a group will receive the same grade on a project. If you are having difficulty working in your group, please notify me as soon as possible so that we can rectify the situation. I reserve the right to split groups up if necessary.

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Exams 1 - 4	10.5% each, 42% total
Project 1: Ethics	7%
Project 2: Introduction	5% per smaller project, for a total of 15%
Project 3: Methods and Results	10%
Project 4: Final Draft	18%
Discussion Board Participation	8%
Total	100%

## Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/27	Introduction to the Course	Chapter 1	
9/3	Ethics in Research with Human Subjects	Chapter 3	Discussion Board: Is It Ethical? By Sunday September 8th at 11:59pm
9/10	How to Develop Research Ideas Note: Group assignments will be made this week.	Chapter 2 & Appendix A	Project 1. Completion certificates must be uploaded to the Dropboxes by 11:59pm on Sunday September 15th. Check course postings for more information.
9/17	Exam 1	Study guide will be uploaded on Monday.	Exam 1 will be open for 24 hours on Thursday September 19th. More details will be released in class. on Tuesday
9/24	How Do We Measure Human Behavior?	Chapter 4	Project 2A due: 11:59pm Sunday September 29th
10/1	Validity and Sampling	Pages 95 - 100 Chapter 6	Discussion Board: Validity, Surveys and Sampling. Closes Sunday October 6th at 11:59pm
10/8	Intro to Statistics: Descriptive Statistics and Naturalistic Methods	Pages 346-354 Chapter 7	Project 2B due: 11:59pm Sunday October 13th by 11:59pm
10/15	Exam 2	Study guide will be uploaded on Monday	Exam 2 will be open for 24 hours on Thursday October 17th. More details will be released in class on Tuesday
10/22	Hypothesis Testing, Inferential Statistics and One-Way Designs	Chapter 8 Chapter 10	Project 2C due: 11:59pm Sunday October 27th
10/29	Exam 3	Study guide will be uploaded on Monday	Exam 3 will be open for 24 hours on Friday November 1st. More details will be released in class.
11/5	Factorial Designs in Experimental Research	Chapter 11	Discussion Board: Factorial Designs Closes Sunday November 10th at 11:59pm
11/12	Experimental Control and Validity	Chapter 12	Project 3 Due: Submit to Dropbox by 11:59pm on Sunday November 17th

11/19	Exam 4	Study guide will be uploaded on Monday	Exam 4 will be open for 24 hours on Friday November 22nd.
11/26	Project 4 Overview and Thanksgiving Holiday	Project 4 Materials will be Uploaded to Blackboard	Time will be set aside for meetings with groups about Project 4 as needed.
12/3	Course Review and Close	Review ahead of finals week	
12/10	Final Exam Period	Final Exam Currently Scheduled for Thursday December 5th	More details to be released in class. Check Blackboard for Updates

## 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.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.tamiu.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml>) (<http://www.tamiu.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml/>).

## Pregnant and Parenting Students

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

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (Lorissa M. Cortez, [lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu](mailto:lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu)) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodations. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students at the University, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU Student Handbook. As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (<https://www.tamiu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>) (<https://www.tamiu.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@tamiu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@tamiu.edu), 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic

reporting website, ReportIt, at <https://www.tamtu.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamtu.edu/reportit/>), and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

## Incompletes

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

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

## WIN Contracts

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

## Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

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

## Independent Study Course

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

## Grade Changes & Appeals

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

## Final Examination

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

## Mental Health and Well-Being

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