

SOCI 3304 - Sociological Theory: Sociological Theory-WIN

Fall 2024 Syllabus, Section 101, CRN 14415

Instructor Information

Dr. Kyle Breen

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Email: kyle.breen@tamiu.edu

Office: AIC 384

Office Hours:

Monday & Wednesday: 2:30-3:30 PM

Tuesday & Thursday: 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Times and Location

MW 4:25pm-5:45pm in Bullock Hall 201

Course Description

The study of how theories are formulated in social science. Overview of classical and contemporary sociological theories including functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and postmodern theory. Prerequisites: SOCI 1301, and three hours of any Sociology course for a total of six credit hours in Sociology.

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

Communication

The best way to get in touch with me is via email or by stopping by my student drop-in hours for a chat. For email communication, please include a subject line for the email with the course/course number. For example: Subject: Question about midterms-Sociological Theory. I will do my very best to respond to all emails in a timely fashion. If you send an email Monday-Friday, I will do my best to respond within 24 hours. If it is the weekend, I will have a response by Monday at the latest.

Please use and check your TAMIU Email regularly!

Attendance and Presence in Class

I will not be taking attendance for each class or assigning points based on attendance; however, regular attendance is a baseline expectation of this course.

Please do NOT attend class if you are sick, having a flare-up from a chronic illness, or experiencing a personal emergency.

If you are undergoing a personal emergency or a hardship that impacts your class attendance, I strongly encourage active communication with me so we can work together to ensure your success in the class.

If you miss class:

You are responsible for ALL missed work. Before asking Dr. Breen what you missed, please use the resources available to you:

- Ask a classmate about what you missed in class
- Check Blackboard for all materials and readings
- If you are still unclear, then email Dr. Breen any questions or stop by during drop-in hours

Late Work Policy

Submitting assignments late* will result in the assignment being marked down 50% where the maximum grade the student is eligible to earn will begin at 50% of the original point total. If students need an extension, students will be required to submit a request in writing via email at least 24 hours prior to the deadline. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

*as a general rule, I will not consider an assignment late if submitted within an hour of the deadline. This grace period allows for technological difficulties or connectivity issues. Beyond that grace period, an assignment will be subjected to the late work policy listed above.

Technology in the Classroom

You may use your laptop, iPad, tablet, or other device to take notes during class; however please leave class to take phone calls.

While in class, please refrain from distracting activities such as online shopping or social media scrolling during class time.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

Students should not have another person or AI do the writing of any assignment for them, including AI tools like ChatGPT, Caktus.ai, or others. While AI can be a useful tool to help with framing or structure, it should not be used to complete the assignments for you. We will go over an example in class of how you can use AI as a tool. Use of AI to complete assignments will result in a zero (0) on that assignment and will be subject to reporting for academic dishonesty.

**If at any time, a student feels as though they need to use AI to complete an assignment, please come talk to me, judgment-free. This allows us to work together to come up with a plan to complete the assignment with academic honesty and integrity.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Differentiate between sociological theoretical perspectives, applying their use in your own lives and work.
- Critically reflect on how theory can provide new information about topics like race, class, and gender.
- Connect theories to their larger historical and sociological impacts.
- Critically analyze sociological theory and critique the thought processes and perspectives.
- Develop critical thinking skills by constructing theoretical arguments in written assignments and in-class participation.
- Get excited about seeing how sociological theory can be present in your everyday life and connects to your interests beyond the classroom by bringing examples to class to use in discussion and by reflecting on your own experiences in your writing.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Sociological Theory	George Ritzer & Jeffrey Stepnisky	9781544354798, 1544354797, 9781544354804, 9781071832349, 9781071832349

Other Course Materials

To go to the bookstore, [click here \(https://www.bkstr.com/texasaminternationalstore/home/\)](https://www.bkstr.com/texasaminternationalstore/home/).

Additional course materials will be made available via Blackboard.

Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100
B	80-89.9
C	70-79.9
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

Assignment Overview

More detailed explanations of the assignments can be found below as well as on the Blackboard site. Rubrics for assignments will also be provided via Blackboard.

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Class Participation	16% (80 points)
Article Analysis/Critique	10% (50 points)
Midterm - Theory in Everyday Life	20% (100 Points)
Guided Journal	24% (120 Points)
Final - Theory in Everyday Life	25% (125 Points)
Final Presentation	5% (25 Points)

Detailed Assignment Descriptions

In Class Participation

In this course, there will frequently be class discussions to deepen their sociological knowledge by engaging within one another on the material. Therefore, it is imperative that students participate during in-class discussions, activities, reflections, and small group breakouts. To successfully participate, students are required to complete the readings, videos, podcasts, or other materials listed in the Syllabus or on the Blackboard Course Page **Before Class**.

Article Analysis/Critique

As sociological thinkers, it is critical to understand how to read, comprehend, summarize, and critique writings in sociology. This assignment centers on being able to summarize and critique a sociological article. For this assignment, students will choose a peer-reviewed journal article from within sociology. This article can be from any subdiscipline of sociology (e.g., Race and Ethnicity, Gender, Latino/a/x Studies, Environmental Sociology). Students will then be required to write a summary and critique/analysis of the article using the knowledge gained from class on sociological theory. Here is what will be required:

1. 750 word paper including:

- (i) a summary of the article (no more than half of a page)

(ii) an analysis of the theory or theoretical perspective the author used (what is the theory explaining? What are the key concepts?)

(iii) a critique of the theoretical perspective. For the critique, students should determine if the theory was a valid choice for the research and why. Students should also compare the perspective used with one discussed in class. For example, if an author is using a theory on gender, a student's critique could include information about how Marx might view the same research.

Midterm - Theory in Everyday Life

It is important for us to recognize that sociological theory does not happen solely within the walls of the classroom. We can apply these theories to the world around us and our interests. For this assignment, students will write a research paper examining how one of the theoretical perspectives from the first half of the semester relates to an aspect of their everyday lives. Students can choose any of the theoretical perspectives and use that perspective to analyze their topic/medium of choice. Students can choose movies, television shows, music, news events, etc. Here is what will be required:

1. Papers must be a minimum of 1500 words.
2. Papers must include an Abstract, Introduction, Theoretical Perspective Section, Analysis, and Conclusion.
3. The Theoretical Perspective Section must detail the theory being used, including a summary of the perspective, what, how, and why the theorist is trying to explain their theoretical perspective, and the theory's key concepts and how those concepts relate to the larger theoretical framework

The Analysis Section will take the theory/theoretical perspective and concepts and analyze your chosen topic describing how the theory relates to that particular topic. This section should analyze quotes, scenes, lyrics, etc. examining how the theory helps explain those aspects of the topic. For example, I love basketball. Therefore, I may use Marxist theory to examine the player empowerment movement in the NBA.

Guided Journal

Beginning in Week 2, students will be assigned a "guided journal" to complete for each week to review key concepts and to reflect on what they have learned or what they would like to learn more about. In total, there will be 12 guided journals. In the guided journals there will be multiple choice questions, concept definitions, short answer questions, and a space for reflection on the topic. While the guided journals are graded for accuracy for the questions, the purpose of this weekly assignment, overall, is to reflect on the material of the week. Students are encouraged to use their text, class notes, and classmates to discuss their thoughts. My only ask is that you **answer the questions independently. If students copy answers to short answer questions they will not receive credit for that question.** Guided journals will also have space to reflect on the week and ask questions about topics or concepts that are confusing.

Guided Journals will be made available each Monday, and will be due **by 10:00 AM that Friday**. This allows me time to mark the short answer questions and plan for the following week if we need to spend additional time on a topic.

Final - Theory in Everyday Life

This assignment builds on the midterm assignment by incorporating an additional theory/theoretical perspective from the back half of the course into your analysis. For this assignment, students will be tasked with examining an additional theory, analyzing the theory in the context of their topic, and then comparing and contrasting the two theories in their examination of the topic.

There will be additional sections added for this paper compared to the midterm, and using the feedback from the midterm, students are expected to revise their papers to build on the strengths and correct any mistakes. The sections include: Abstract, Introduction, Theoretical Perspective 1, Analysis 1, Theoretical Perspective 2, Analysis 2, Synthesis (compare/contrast the theoretical perspectives) Conclusion. **For the Final, Students DO NOT need to completely rewrite the Abstract, Introduction, Theoretical Perspective 1 and Analysis 1. Students will only revise what is necessary and add context to include the additional perspective within the abstract and introduction.**

Final Presentation

Rather than having a traditional exam period, students will be asked to give a short presentation on their Theory in Everyday Life projects. These presentations will be done as "Lightning Talks" (6-7 minutes) to explain their theoretical perspectives, how it relates to their topic, and how the theories are similar or different. Students will be required to submit a PowerPoint presentation for their "Lightning Talk".

Schedule of Topics and Assignments - subject to change

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/26	Syllabus and Course Outline Early History of Sociological Theory	Read: Ritzer pg. 2-13 Listen: https://thesocietypages.org/theory/2020/05/18/jaclyn-wypler-on-learning-to-love-theory/	Read the Syllabus



9/2	Marx, Marxism, and Conflict Theory bell hooks and Angela Y. Davis	Read: Ritzer Chapter 2 Read: Ritzer pg. 255-264 Read: bell hooks - "Theory as Liberatory Practice" on Blackboard Listen: https://thesocietypages.org/theory/2020/01/02/jeffrey-montez-de-oca-on-karl-marx/ Also interesting: https://platypus1917.org/2021/07/03/bridging-theory-and-practice-an-interview-with-angela-davis/ Watch: https://youtu.be/gR3igiwaeyc?si=KmXuyAQQ6ZgW2nH6	Guided Journal Week 2
9/9	Bourdieu and Capitals Michel Foucault	Read: Ritzer pg. 493-502 Read: Ritzer pg. 553-561 Read: Breen, K., Ru, S., Vandeweghe, L., Chiu, J., Heyland, L., & Wu, H. (2024). "If somebody needed help, I went over": Social capital and therapeutic communities of older adult farmers in British Columbia floods. <i>International Journal of Disaster Risk Science</i> , 1-12. Read: Bourdieu, P. (2018). The forms of capital. In <i>The sociology of economic life</i> (pp. 78-92). Routledge. Listen: https://thesocietypages.org/theory/2020/04/06/elliott-weininger-on-pierre-bourdieu/ and https://thesocietypages.org/theory/2020/04/21/richard-pringle-on-michel-foucault/	Guided Journal Week 3
9/16	Emile Durkheim Structural Functionalism *Content Warning for this Week*	Read: Ritzer Chapter 3 Read: Ritzer pg. 229-249 Watch: https://youtu.be/IZfGGF-YYzY?si=6LxmaYIPJJrTMLgP	Guided Journal Week 4
9/23	Max Weber	Read: Ritzer Chapter 4 Read: Ritzer, G. (2021). The McDonaldization of society. In <i>In the Mind's Eye</i> (pp. 143-152). Routledge. Listen: https://thesocietypages.org/theory/2024/05/21/jacqui-frost-on-max-weber/ Watch: https://youtu.be/69VF7mT4nRU?si=Qvq8EFMysalTyLld	Guided Journal Week 5
9/30	Georg Simmel, George Herbert Mead, and Erving Goffman	Read: Ritzer Biographical Sketch - Georg Simmel (pg. 155) Read: Ritzer Chapter 9 Listen: https://thesocietypages.org/theory/2020/01/02/jaime-kucinkas-on-george-herbert-mead/ Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjwCVZwYG7Y See also: Ritzer Chapter 6	Guided Journal Week 6



10/7	W.E.B. DuBois	Read: The Souls of Black Folk - Chapters 1 & 10 Read: The Souls of White Folk Read: Martinez, T. A. (2002). The double-consciousness of Du Bois & the "mestiza consciousness" of Anzaldúa. <i>Race, Gender & Class</i> , 158-176. Read: Ritzer 198-200	Guided Journal Week 7 Midterm Papers Due Monday October 7 by 11:59 PM
10/14	Fanon, Crenshaw, Omi & Winant	Read: Ritzer pg. 588-610 Read: Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1993). On the theoretical status of the concept of race. <i>Race, identity and representation in education</i> , 3-10. Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UUukBV82P9A&t=466s	Guided Journal Week 8
10/21	Feminist and Gender Theories	Read: Ritzer Chapter 12 Read: Questioning Gender - selected readings on Blackboard Watch: https://youtu.be/Wg9FWxpZeJ8?si=jbvqR6u7DBNyXIOF & https://youtu.be/CquRz_cceH8?si=8qtSxDFcKu6_js4k Read: West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. <i>Gender & society</i> , 1(2), 125-151 Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UD9IOIUR4k	Guided Journal Week 9
10/28	Chicana Theory, Black Feminism, Intersectionality, and Patricia Hill Collins	Guest Speaker: Dr. Maretta D. McDonald Read: Sociology of Cardi B - Introduction and Chapter 2 Read: Anzaldúa, G. (1987). How to tame a wild tongue (pp. 2947-2955). na. Read: Collins, P. H., da Silva, E. C. G., Ergun, E., Furseth, I., Bond, K. D., & Martínez-Palacios, J. (2021). Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory: Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory, Patricia Hill Collins, Duke University Press, 2019. <i>Contemporary Political Theory</i> , 20(3), 690–725. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41296-021-00490-0	Guided Journal Week 10
11/4	Disability Theory Queer Theory	Read: https://disstudies101.wordpress.com/perceptions/models-of-disability/ Read: Garland-Thomson, R. (2020). Integrating disability, transforming feminist theory. In <i>Feminist Theory Reader</i> (pp. 181-191). Routledge. Read: Seidman, S. (1994). Symposium: Queer theory/sociology: A dialogue. <i>Sociological theory</i> , 12, 166-166.	Guided Journal Week 11
11/11	Ethnomethodology Exchange, Network, and Rational Choice Theories	Read: Ritzer Chapters 10 and 11 Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6RFvROskM8	Guided Journal Week 12
11/18	Indigenous Theories & Theories of the Anthropocene	Read: Ritzer pg. 669-686 Read: Foundations of a Critical Theory for the Anthropocene Read: Ritzer 611-614	Guided Journal Week 13

11/25	Workshop Day No Class Wednesday	Any outstanding article analyses/critiques are due by 11:59 PM on November 24
12/2	Final Presentations and Beginning of Exam Period	Final Paper Due by 11:59 PM on 12/4

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.tamiau.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.