

SOCI 3336 - Criminology

Fall 2024 Syllabus, Section 182, CRN 14681

Instructor Information

Florence Ferguson, Ph.D.

Adjunct Professor

Email: florence.ferguson@tamiu.edu

Office: Virtual

Office Hours:

10:00A- 11:00A M-R or by Appointment

Cell Phone: 404 245 5374

Please contact me via TAMIU email in classroom. I will respond to your email within 48 hours.

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

The development of criminological thought; critical evaluation of theories of criminality, the study of criminal organization and socialization; and the extent, type, and sources of crime.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Participation/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 for 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 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 diverse, 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.

Academic Honesty

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 2010, sixth edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

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 (pp. 15-16). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Writing 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 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.

Course Structure

Students will log into Blackboard on a daily/weekly basis to interact with the course/course materials. Students will initially visit the “**Start Here**” and complete the “**Meet and Greet**” Discussion forum. Students are responsible for reading through the modules, which are accessed by clicking on Content from the Blackboard Course Menu, then completing assignments for each module.

Students can use the Course Q & A located on the Blackboard Course Menu to ask any questions (for the whole class to see) or can email/Blackboard Course Mail the professor for individual questions or support. See About Your Instructor for Office Hours and Contact Information.

Minimum Technical Skills Expected

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

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. For more information, contact the online at Office of Disability (<http://www.tamiau.edu/disability/index.shtml/>) Services (<http://www.tamiau.edu/disability/index.shtml/>) for (<http://www.tamiau.edu/disability/index.shtml/>) Students (<http://www.tamiau.edu/disability/index.shtml/>) (DSS) (<http://www.tamiau.edu/disability/index.shtml/>), (<http://www.tamiau.edu/disability/index.shtml/>) or via phone at 956.326.2230, or by visiting the staff at the Senator Judith Zaffirini Student Success Center, room 138. A link to the Disabilities Services for Students site has also been included under the “Resources” tab inside the course.

Student Support Resources

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

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

Course Messages/Emails

Student should expect the instructor to answer all Blackboard course messages within 48 hours.

Assignments and Assessments

Examination grades are usually available after you take them. Discussion board grades may take additional time. For these assignments, the instructor will inform students regarding the expected response time.

Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

There are course expectations concerning etiquette or how we should treat each other online. It is vital that we consider these values as we communicate with one another. Visit Instructional (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) Technology (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) and (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) Distance (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) Education (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) Services' (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) web (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) page (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) on (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) Netiquette (<http://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) for further instruction.

TAMIU E-Mail and Dusty Alert

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU E-mail (tamiau.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 sign-up for Dusty Alert (see www.tamiau.edu). Dusty Alert is an instant cell phone text-messaging system allowing the university to communicate immediately with you if there is an on-campus emergency, something of immediate danger to you, or a campus closing.

E-mail and Online Material

Students are required to check their TAMIU e-mail/Blackboard on a regular basis. This method of communication will allow you to receive notifications of changes or updates on course material.

Syllabus Subject to Change

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

SafeAssign Policy (Required)

All written work must be submitted using SafeAssign, with the exception of Quiz responses.

Accessibility and Privacy Statements on Course Technologies

At Texas A&M International University, we believe that all students have equal technology opportunities in the classroom. These technologies/sites may also require user data, such as the creation of username and password. In this class we will utilize Blackboard Ultra, Echo360, SoftChalk, VoiceThread, and Turnitin. you may find the accessibility and privacy policies of these technologies on the following pages: Accessibility Statements and Privacy Statements plan.

Texas A&M International University Course Policies (Revised 12/20/21)

COVID

Students are strongly encouraged to get fully vaccinated and to get booster shots after an appropriate number of months. Students are also strongly encouraged to wear masks when entering buildings or when congregating with other students in close proximity outdoors. Maintaining at least 3 feet of social distance with others is also highly recommended. TAMIU offers free COVID testing.

Student Learning Outcomes

During this time, students will:

CO1: Define crime and the criminal justice process.

CO2: Identify the strengths and weaknesses of different types of crime data.

CO3: Assess the role victims play in criminal justice systems.

CO4: Interpret the role rationality plays in criminal justice policy.

CO5: Assess the correlations between traits and crime.

CO6: Differentiate the impact of social structures on crime.

CO7: Explain how social processes interact with crime and crime policy.

CO8: Distinguish how critical theories of crime interact with principles of restorative justice.

CO9: Identify the ways in which criminal propensity changes over the life course according to developmental theories.

CO10: Contrast and compare the motivations of different kinds of violent crime.

CO11: Distinguish between different types of political crime and criminals.

CO12: Outline the history and methods of economic crime.

CO13: Classify the causes of sex work and drug use.

CO14: Categorize types of cybercrime and organized crime.

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	Criminology: The Core, 7th Edition. Stamford, CT. Cengage Learning	Larry Siegel	13: 978-1337557719

Grading Criteria

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

Course Assignments

ASSIGNMENTS	VALUE
Quizzes (10)	300 Points
Discussion Forum (5)	200 Points
Reaction Papers (2)	100 Points
Examinations (4)	400 Points
Total	1000 Points

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/26	Week 1 Crime and Criminology Complete MindTap Assignments Quiz 1 (30 points)	Chapter 1	9/1



9/2	Week 2 The Nature and Extent of Crime Complete MindTap Assignments Quiz 2 (30 points) Discussion Forum 1 (40 Points) - Initial post due on Wednesday 9/4	Chapter 2	9/8
9/9	Week 3 Victims and Victimization Complete MindTap Assignments Examination 1 Chapters 1-3 (100 Points) Thursday 9/12	Chapter 3	9/15
9/16	Week 4 Rational Choice Theory Complete MindTap Assignments Discussion Forum 2 (40 Points) - Initial post due on Wednesday 9/25 Quiz 3 (30 Points)	Chapter 4	9/22
9/23	Week 5 Trait Theory Complete MindTap Assignments Quiz 4 (30 Points)	Chapter 5	9/29
9/30	Week 6 Social Structure Theory Complete MindTap Assignments Quiz 5 (30 Points) Reaction Paper 1 (50 Points)	Chapter 6	10/6
10/7	Week 7 Social Process Theory Complete MindTap Assignments Discussion Forum 3 (40 Points) Examination 2 Chapters 4- 7 Thursday 10/17	Chapter 7	10/13
10/14	Week 8 Social Conflict and Restorative Justice Complete MindTap Assignments Quiz 6 (30 Points)	Chapter 8	10/20
10/21	Week 9 Developmental Theories Complete MindTap Assignments Quiz 7 (30 Points)	Chapter 9	10/27
10/28	Week 10 Violent Crime Complete MindTap Assignments Discussion Forum 4- Initial post due on Wednesday 11/30 Quiz 8	Chapter 10	11/3
11/4	Week 11 Political Crime Complete MindTap Assignments	Chapter 11	11/10
11/11	Week 12 Economic Crime Complete MindTap Assignments Reaction Paper 2 (50 Points) Quiz 9 (30 Points)	Chapter 12	11/17
11/18	Week 13 Public Order Crime Complete MindTap Assignments Quiz 10 (30 Points) Discussion Forum 5 (40 Points)	Chapter 13	11/24
11/25	Week 14 Cybercrimes and Organized Crime Complete MindTap Assignments	Chapter 14	12/1
12/2	Class Ends 12/3/2024		12/3
12/9	Final Examination	Chapters	12/9

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

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- 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.
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TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

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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.

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 - *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.
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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.

Distance Education Courses

Grading Calculator

In determining the final course grade, the following scale is used in a point value system. The bottom line is that you lose a letter grade for every 50 points you lose.

900- 1000 = A

899- 800 = B

700- 799 = C

600- 699 = D

0 -599 = F

Borderline grades will not be adjusted or negotiated.

QUIZZES

There will be ten (10) quizzes over the course of the semester. Each quiz is worth 30 points and students can attain 300 points for the quizzes which is the equivalent of three letter grades.

EXAMINATIONS

There will be four (4) examinations over the course of the semester. Each examination is worth 100 points. The midterm will be administered during Week 4 and the final examination will be at the end of Week 14. Examinations count for 400 possible points which is the equivalent of four letter grades.

DISCUSSION BOARDS

The forum posts must be "substantive" and well-thought out comments. Simple responses such as "I agree" or "Good point, good post," will not result in earned points. Furthermore, students will be encouraged to ask questions of each other and of the professor about each of the topics at hand. When you complete the discussion forums, respond in the way you would if you were sitting in a classroom expressing your personal views or what you learned about the subject. It is a proxy for in-class participation, so your participation should be presented with enthusiasm. There will be five (5) discussion forums. Each one is worth 40 points which is a total of 200 points for this assignment and is the equivalent of 2 letter grades.

Students are expected to respond to two or more of your classmates posts with "substantive" comments. This does not include your "initial post" which is always due before midnight on Wednesdays or the third day of the week. If you do not submit your initial post on time, you will receive a 10% late grade penalty for not posting it on time.

Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

There are course expectations concerning etiquette or how we should treat each other online. We must consider these values as we communicate with one another. Visit **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' web page on Netiquette** (<http://www.tamtu.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml/>) for further instruction.

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodation for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodation. For more information, contact the online at **Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS)**, via phone at 956.326.3086 or by visiting the staff at the Student Center, room 118. A link to the Disabilities Services for Students site has also been included under the "Resources" tab inside the course.

Student Support Resources

The University wishes to have all students succeed in their courses. To provide support to our students, an array of services in the areas of technology support, academic support, student support, and accessibility support may be found at the University. For more information, visit the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services page on **University Resources and Support Services**.

Computer/Technology Requirements

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

It is recommended that you meet the technical requirements listed on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

NOTE: Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services may check out available webcams to students on a first-come, first-served basis. To check out a webcam, please stop by Killam Library, Room 259, and request an available webcam.

Additional Software. You will need the following additional software: Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamtu.edu/>. This site also provides students access to download the Microsoft suite for educational use. **See instructions for downloading the Microsoft Office suite.**

Note: Students, if you do not own the required hardware or software or do not have access to the Internet, it will be highly challenging for you to make any progress in this class. However, my goal is to assist you in finding solutions and guide you appropriately most of the required materials can either be found free of charge at TAMU's library, classrooms, and available computer labs. **Visit Media Services' web page on the availability of on-campus computer labs.** In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

Students are provided with an orientation (*eLearning (Blackboard) Student Orientation*) and access to guides on how to use the Blackboard LMS. Guides may be available at **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' Student eLearning Tutorial Videos page** or by contacting the eLearning team at elarning@tamiu.edu.

Minimum Technical Skills Expected

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Students in distance education should have knowledge of basic computer and Internet skills, as mentioned on the **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage**.

Technical Support Services

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

Course Evaluation

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

Accessibility and Privacy Statements on Course Technologies

At Texas A&M International University, we believe that all students should have equal technology opportunities in the classroom. These technologies/sites may also require user data, such as the creation of a username and password. You may find the accessibility and privacy policies of the technologies used in this class on the following pages: **Accessibility Statements and Privacy Statements**.