UNIV 1302 - Signature Course: SC- Clickbait
Fall 2024 Syllabus, Section 180, CRN 15579

Instructor Information

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Office Hours:
Online or in person
M 11:00-12:00
T 10:00-12:00
W 1:30-3:30
R 11:00-12:00
Or by appointment (online or in person)
Office Phone: 956-326-2805

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

This course builds on UNIV 1201 by expanding student focus from self-awareness to global awareness. Designed to introduce undergraduates to in-depth analysis from an interdisciplinary perspective, students will explore community issues through a problem-based approach. This course will foster community engagement by integrating University and other relevant resources. Prerequisite: Successful completion or concurrent enrollment in UNIV 1201.
University College Department, University College

Additional Course Information

What is the purpose of this course?

 Today's online environment provides a world of information at our fingertips; unfortunately, it is polluted with falsehoods, fake news, and misinformation: a "digital swamp" as described by some. Consequently, this presents a paradox since the Internet has the potential to make us "smarter and better informed" but also the potential to make us "more ignorant and narrow-minded." Fortunately, our course provides tools to help you responsibly evaluate web-based content and share online information. Our course also invites you to examine connections between the use of digital material and external factors, such as psychological and neuroscientific ones that influence our ability to act autonomously and think critically. Therefore, we will share what we learn with others in a Community Engagement Project so that we can all survive the "digital swamp."

What type of online course is this?

Our fully online course is asynchronous, meaning we (students and instructor) do not need to be logged in at the same time each week since students participate in learning activities on independent schedules. For our course, you will work at your own pace and on your own time to submit weekly assignments by due dates, which are on Sundays by 11:59 PM CT. Our class schedule, which lists required readings and assignments, is included further below.

How is this course structured?

UNIV 1302 is organized by modules, including a Start Here Module to help you get acquainted with our course and helpful resources. Since our course consists of seven modules and runs for 14 weeks, you will complete one module every two weeks, with each week starting on Monday morning and ending Sunday night at 11:59 PM CT. I will post weekly module assignments on Blackboard Course Announcements every Monday for you to complete by the due dates on Sundays at 11:59 PM CT. They include reading assigned textbook sections, viewing video content, submitting assignments, participating in discussions, and/or completing quizzes. Please plan accordingly.

How can you succeed in this course?

To be successful in this class, you will need to log in a minimum of 5 times per week (preferably daily) to access course materials and participate actively in class assignments, which must be submitted on Sundays by 11:59 PM CT. Communication is key, so reach out to me for guidance and support. I'm happy to help!

How will this course help you succeed beyond college?

UNIV courses help you develop learning skills as well as employable/marketable skills, which you can add to your résumé. In this class, you'll gain the marketable skills and knowledge listed below:

1. Communication skills: written, verbal, digital, and visual

2. Critical thinking skills: specifically in research and fact-checking

3. Teamwork skills: collaborating, adapting, and being tactful

4. Professional dispositions: (i.e., meeting deadlines, following through on teamwork, strategic planning, and organizational skills)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Use critical thinking skills to examine a community issue from an interdisciplinary perspective.

2. Articulate advocacy attributes (integrity, active communication, strategic planning, aim for positive outcome, pro-social impact, personal affirmation/value) in a community engagement plan proposal.

3. Compare proposed local and global solutions of a community issue.

4. Collaborate effectively on a community engagement project.

5. Communicate proposed solution through a presentation.

Core-curriculum Learning Outcomes:

1. Critical Thinking: includes creative thinking, innovation, inquiry and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information. (SLO: 1)

2. Communication: includes ability to communicate ideas effectively. (SLO: 5)

3. Teamwork: includes ability to work effectively with others to support a shared goal. (SLO: 4)

Course Objectives

1: Students will be able to examine issues through an interdisciplinary lens.

2: Students will be able to define issues in local, regional, or international communities and apply multiple perspectives in devising possible solutions.

3: Students will be able to define and engage in solution-oriented actions to help mitigate a local, regional, or global community issue.

4: Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking by conceptualizing similarities and differences between local or regional issues and a comparable international issue.

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	Web literacy for student fact-checkers	Caulfield, M.	https://pressbooks.pub/webliteracy/

Other Course Materials

The required book is an OER (Open Educational Resource). You will access the text (https://pressbooks.pub/webliteracy/) online.

Grading Criteria

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

Evaluation

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Discussions	20%
Assignments/Quizzes	20%
Community Engagement Plan & Faculty Meeting	10%
Community Engagement Project	20%
Annotated Bibliography	15%
Final Exam: Recorded Reflective Essay	15%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/26	Module 1: Introduction to Course Read from online text https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/: • Section 1 "Four Moves & A Habit" Review: Module 1 Lecture Materials • Online Lecture • Videos: Online Verification: Introductory, Investigate the Source, Find the Original Source, and Look for Trusted Work Read (from Assignment 1) • Can You Spot the Deceptive Facebook Posts? View (from Discussion) • Video: The Miseducation of Dylann Roof • Video: The Dangerous Global Flood of… Review: Community Engagement Project Information folder Please begin generating ideas for your Community Engagement Project during Week 2	Syllabus, Four Moves and A Habit	1. Assignment: How Can SIFT Help? 2. *Discussion: Why is Truth Decay a Problem? 3. *Module 2 Quiz IMPORTANT: Review the Community Engagement Project Folder & book your Instructor Meeting. NOTE: Modules will be completed in 2-week periods. *Indicates assignments are due during the second week. Also, Discussions require 2 posts: your initial response and your reply to a classmate.
9/2	See Above		

9/9	Module 2 Read from online text https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/: • Section 1 "Four Moves and a Habit" • Section 2 "Look for Previous Work" Review: Module 2 Lecture Materials • Online Lecture • Website: SIFT (The Four Moves) • Videos: Check the Claim, Find Better Coverage, Verification Move, and How to Fact Check Images with Google Read (from Assignment 1) • Science Says Fake News Is Winning, Here's How Emotional Intelligence Can Help You Fight Back Read (from Assignment 2) • https://hapgood.us/2019/06/19/siftthe-four-moves/ View (from Discussion) • Video: Truth Decay: A Narrated Video Review: Community Engagement Project Information folder Please begin working with your partner or group on your Community Engagement Project during Weeks 3 and 4.	Four Moves and a Habit Look for Previous Work	1. Assignment: How Can SIFT Help? 2. *Discussion: Why is Truth Decay a Problem? 3. *Module 2 Quiz IMPORTANT: Review the Community Engagement Project Folder & book your Instructor Meeting. NOTE: Modules will be completed in 2-week periods. *Indicates assignments are due during the second week. Also, Discussions require 2 posts: your initial response and your reply to a classmate.
9/16	See Above		
9/23	Module 3 Read from online text https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/: • Section 3 "Go Upstream" 1. Go Upstream to find the source 2. Identifying Sponsored Content 3. Understanding Syndication 4. Tracking the source of viral content Review: Module 3 Lecture Materials • Online Lecture • Website: SIFT (The Four Moves) • Videos: Online Verification: Find the Original Source, Click Through & Find, Check the Date, Search the History of an Image, and How False News Can Spread Read (from discussion) • How Does Clickbait Work? • YouTube's dark side could be affecting your child's mental health Review: Community Engagement Project Information folder Please begin seeking three sources for your Community Engagement Project.	Going Upstream	1. Assignment: Using SIFT to "Go Upstream" to Trace Info to Its Original Context 2. Assignment 2-Community Engagement Topic & Sources 3. *Discussion: How Clickbait and YouTube Hijack Our Brains 4. *Module 3 Quiz IMPORTANT: Review the Community Engagement Project Folder & book your Instructor Meeting. NOTE: Modules will be completed in 2-week periods. *Indicates assignments are due during the second week. Also, Discussions require 2 posts: your initial response and your reply to a classmate.
9/30	See Above		

10/7	Module 4 Read from online text https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/: • Section 3 "Go Upstream" • Tracking the source of viral photos • Using Google Reverse Image Search • Filtering by Time and Place to Find the Original Review: Module 4 Lecture Materials • Online Lecture • Website: SIFT (The Four Moves) • Videos: Photo Fact-Checking in the Digital Age, How to Use Google Reverse Image Search to Fact-Check, How to find an Eagle Attack, and Evaluating Photos & Videos View (from Assignment) • Video: Photo fact-checking in the digital age View (from Assignment 2) • Video: Library Instruction Review: Community Engagement Project Information folder Please finalize your Annotated Bibliography for your Community Engagement Project.	Going Upstream	1. Assignment: Community Engagement ProjectAnnotated Bibliography 2. *Discussion: The Problem w/ Altered Images and Deep Fakes 3. *Module 4 Quiz NOTE: Modules will be completed in 2-week periods. *Indicates assignments are due during the second week. Also, Discussions require 2 posts: your initial response and your reply to a classmate. IMPORTANT: If you have not done so, please book your Instructor Meeting.
10/14	See Above		
10/21	Module 5 Read from online text https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/: • Section 4 "Reading Laterally" Review: Module 5 Lecture Materials • Online Lecture View (from Discussion) • Video: Assessing students' ability to engage with online evidence Consult: Community Engagement Project Information folder Please work with your partner or group to finalize your Community Engagement Project Plan.	Reading Laterally	1. Assignment: Community Engagement Project & Plan 2. *Discussion: A Solution: Investigate the Source by Reading Laterally 3. *Module 5 Quiz NOTE: Modules will be completed in 2-week periods. *Indicates assignments are due during the second week. Also, Discussions require 2 posts: your initial response and your reply to a classmate.
10/28	See Above		
11/4	Module 6 Read from online text https://webliteracy.pressbooks.com/: • Section 5 "Field Guide" Review: Module 6 Lecture Materials • Online Lecture • Video: Checking a Verification Badge in Twitter Finalize Community Engagement PSA Video Consult: Community Engagement Project Information folder Please finalize and submit your Community Engagement Project.	Field Guide	1. Module 6 Quiz 2. *Assignment: Community Engagement Project DUE
11/11	See Above		
11/18	Module 7 Community Engagement Course Wrap-up and Reflection	Team Projects	1. Assignment: Final ExamRecorded Reflective Essay
11/25	See Above Thanksgiving Week		
12/2	December 3: Last Class Day		

Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes

Core-Curriculum Learning Outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking Skills (CT)** - creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
2. **Communication Skills (COM)** - effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
3. **Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS)** - manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions
4. **Teamwork (TW)** - ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
5. **Social Responsibility (SR)** - intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
6. **Personal Responsibility (PR)** - ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the Student Handbook, Appendix A (Attendance Rule) for instructions.

Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class in person (or virtually, if the class is online) and to complete all assignments. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to communicate absences with your professors. The faculty member will decide if your excuse is valid and thus may provide lecture materials of the class. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized University activity.
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
- Illness of a dependent family member.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to faculty members within seven calendar days of their absence and return to class. They must substantiate the reason for the absence. If the absence is excused, faculty members must either provide students with the opportunity to make up the exam or other work missed, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the exam or other work missed within 30 calendar days from the date of absence. Students who miss class due to a University-sponsored activity are responsible for identifying their absences to their instructors with as much advance notice as possible.

Classroom Behavior (applies to online or Face-to-Face Classes)

TAMIU encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The University will always tolerate different, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4).

TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMIU student, you are bound by the TAMIU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMIU student and to report violations of the Honor Code. Please read carefully the Student Handbook Article 7 and Article 10 available at https://www.tamiu.edu/scce/ studenthandbook.shtml (https://www.tamiu.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, 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) 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, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt, at https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit (https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit/), and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

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

This course requires regular and substantive interaction between students and the instructor. We will use the following to achieve this goal:

1. Synchronous online (or in person) facutly meeting.

2. Instructor feedback on discussion posts and assignments.

3. Regularly scheduled office hours which may be in person or online. If you cannot attend scheduled office hours, we will make an appointment at a time that works for you.

4. Announcements concerning course content and assignments will be posted on a weekly basis.

5. You may email me at any time with questions concerning course content or assignments.

Online Courses and On-Campus Meetings

Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter J, Section 2.202 (https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage/?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=2&rl=202), defines distance education as the formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50%) of instruction. Distance education includes hybrid and 100% online courses and programs as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB):

- **Hybrid Course** - A distance education course in which more than 50 percent but less than 100 percent of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations.
- **100-Percent Online Course** - A distance education course in which 100 percent of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations. **Requirements for on-campus or in-person orientation, testing, academic support services, internships/fieldwork, or other non-instructional activities do not exclude a course from this category.**

In this online course, be sure to confirm what in-person meetings may be required of you (if applicable).

Course Structure

UNIV 1302 is organized by modules, including a Start Here Module to help you get acquainted with our course and helpful resources. You will complete weekly modules, with each week starting on Monday morning and ending Sunday night at 11:59 PM CT. I will post weekly module assignments on Blackboard Course Announcements every Monday for you to complete by the due dates on Sundays at 11:59 PM CT. They include reading assigned textbook sections, viewing video content, submitting assignments, participating in discussions, and/or completing quizzes. Please plan accordingly. How can you succeed in this course? To be successful in this class, you will need to log in a minimum of 5 times per week (preferably daily) to access course materials and participate actively in class assignments, which must be submitted on Sundays by 11:59 PM CT. Communication is key, so reach out to me for guidance and support. I'm happy to help!

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

Announcements/Course Messages/Emails
• **Course Messages/Emails:** Communication is key! Therefore, please reach out to me whenever you have questions or need guidance with any course-related matters. I'm happy to answer your emails sent through Blackboard course messages within 24-36 hours, Monday-Friday. Although I strive to respond to all emails in a timely manner, I usually cannot answer emails instantly, and if you email me after 10:00 PM CT, you may not receive an answer until the next day. I will get back to you as soon as possible, though!

• **Assignments and Assessments:** I realize feedback is important to support your learning. Therefore, I will do my best to provide feedback in the form of comments and/or grades a week after the due date. Quizzes are scored automatically.

Assignments and Assessments

All assignments are due as noted unless otherwise announced. I encourage you to reach out to me if you have questions about how to complete any assignment. I'm here to support your learning!

Weekly **discussion questions** will help you connect to the content and develop deeper understanding of the concepts explored in class. Discussions will also allow you to share information with your classmates.

An **article review** will expand your understanding of issues related to your concentrations. In addition, the article review will focus on research methodology, how to properly cite and quote articles, and how to use scholarly sources to support your ideas.

Creating a **research question** will introduce you to the research process. You will learn to focus your topic and locate supporting scholarly articles.

A **public speaking** assignment (video) will focus on ethical issues in your area of concentration. In addition to exploring potential ethical issues, this assignment will allow you to practice professional presentation skills.

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.tamiu.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.

Additional Hardware

 Recently purchased laptops may have these built-in web cameras. If you do not have this equipment, it is recommended to purchase a stand-alone webcam, microphone, or a webcam with a built-in microphone from your local electronic store or any online store.

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.

TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at **https://dusty.tamiu.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 TAMIU'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 **elearning@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**.

Web Conferences/Synchronous sessions

Optional synchronous meetings will be held on the dates outlined in the syllabus calendar. These meetings will be held via Blackboard. I will poll the class as to the best time to host the session. These sessions are completely optional. If you cannot attend, you may meet with me at a more convenient time.

Grading Scale/Schema (after Grade Breakdown section)

In determining the final course grade, the following scale is used in percentage or point value.
- *90-100= A*
- *80-89.9= B*

- *70-79.9= C*
- *60-69.9= D*
- *Below 60= F*

Late Work Policy

You may submit work up to three days after an assignment is due for a maximum grade of 75. Because all of our assignments are due at 11:59 pm on Sunday, you will have until Wednesday at 11:59 pm to submit. You will not receive credit for anything submitted after the 3-day period.

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**.

Syllabus Subject to Change

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