

BIOL 4470 - Developmental Biology: Developmental Biology-WIN

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 102, CRN 16981

Instructor Information

Giasuddin Ahmed

Assistant Professor

Email: giasuddin.ahmed@tamiu.edu

Office: 385D

Office Hours:

Monday: 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM; Wednesday: 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM; Thursday: 3:00 PM – 5:00PM or by appointment.

Office Phone: 956-326-2586

Do not use Blackboard for contacting me rather email me directly. Responses within 24-48 hrs (between M-F; 9am-4pm)

Times and Location

TR 6pm-7:20pm in Bullock Hall 223

Course Description

A study of the molecular and cellular events that lead to the generation of a multicellular organism from a fertilized egg. Emphasis on cell differentiation, development of an entire organism from a single cell involving several stages of differentiation and cell interaction. The course will investigate the cellular and molecular processes involved in generating an embryo, in creating various tissues and organs. Laboratory fee applicable.

Must be taken concurrently with BIOL 4070. Prerequisite: BIOL 3413.

Biology&Chemistry 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

COURSE FORMAT& POLICY (Keys to Success)

LECTURE: This course will be offered as an in-person class. Active reading of the course materials is essential for success. A tentative schedule is provided here, and I recommend that you check Blackboard (BB) frequently for course updates. You are required to bring an electronic device with internet access (preferably a laptop or iPad) to connect to BB for class activities.

As a TAMIU student, you are bound by the TAMIU Honor Code. The emphasis on 'professionalism' in this course is intended to help you view classroom experiences as preparation for the "real" world. Disruptive behavior, including talking during lectures, will not be tolerated.

Academic dishonesty, including giving, receiving, or using unauthorized aid on any academic work, will not be tolerated. This includes discussing the content of a test with someone who has not yet taken it. Any student found guilty of cheating or plagiarism will receive a grade of F for that exam.

Please refer to your current graduate catalog for information, definitions, and codes related to non-academic misconduct, academic misconduct, academic dishonesty, and sexual misconduct.

ATTENDANCE, QUIZZES, AND USE OF AI TOOL:

Attendance at all lectures is mandatory due to the weight of attendance in the overall score and the direct relevance of class material to exam questions. Additionally, if an in-class task is assigned on a day when you are absent, you will receive no credit for that assignment or quiz.



I also expect you to review the chapters specified in the syllabus, preferably before or shortly after attending lectures. Based on my experience, a deeper understanding of biological concepts is achieved by gathering information from credible sources. While I allow limited use of AI tools for knowledge enhancement, it is crucial to verify the information with accredited sources. However, **the use of AI tools is strictly prohibited in quizzes, assignments, and exams.**

It is evident that students who are not regular in their studies or do not follow lectures often face challenges in comprehending the content of this course.

CELL PHONE USE: Please MUTE cell phones or keep silent mode during lectures. If the occasion should arise where an individual must use their cell phone as a courtesy to their fellow students and the instructor, please excuse yourself from the classroom. Under no circumstances should a cell phone be used during an examination.

SYLLABUS: Any changes to the syllabus or course information, or schedule will be updated on Blackboard promptly.

LECTURE SLIDES / EMAIL ACCESS:

Be sure to check your TAMIU dusty email regularly (i.e., at least once per day during the semester, except holidays). When you email, please follow email etiquette and write the detail subject matter. I will upload the Power point slides in your course before the lecture. These slides are numbered in the lower right corner, so that you can align your notes with the slides during and after lecture. In addition, I will email announcements about important news of the course via blackboard.

Program Learning Outcomes

The course will introduce various aspects of developmental biology, exploring key questions and concepts in the field. Through this course, we will explore diverse aspects and events of developmental biology, such as: growth and development of full blown mature organism from a fertilized egg which is a product of fusion of egg and sperm, cells specification, commitment and communication during their transformation from undifferentiated

Student Learning Outcomes

[Enter Student Learning Outcomes here. **Please don't forget to remove these instructions.**]

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

1. Understand the critical steps involved in the transformation of a fertilized egg into a mature organism.
2. Gain substantial knowledge of cell specification and commitment, specifically how undifferentiated cells transition into a differentiated state.
3. Comprehend how and when differential gene expression occurs to organize undifferentiated cells in space and time to form specific organs, and broadly, the growth and development of an organism. Additionally, understand the connection between these processes and disease etiology.
4. Acquire significant insight into the role of major cell signaling pathways involved in the growth and development of tissues, organs, and the entire organism, using cutting-edge molecular biology tools.
5. Develop a thorough understanding of stem cells, the regeneration process, and brain development.

By the end of the course, we expect students to not only have a substantial understanding of the developmental mechanisms conserved across species but also be familiar with many strategies used to unravel these processes.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Developmental Biology	Barresi and Gilbert	9780197574591

Other Course Materials

Please bring your laptop/any device that will allow you to write notes or take exam/quizzes via Blackboard.

Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100



B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Open Boilerplate

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

WIN CREDIT: This is a writing-intensive course. Students are required to write a term paper on a topic relevant to developmental biology, which must be approved by the professor. The paper should be written in the style of a peer-reviewed article and must be of publication quality, emphasizing novelty and synthesis.

Students are expected to submit an outline and a draft version of the paper to allow sufficient time for feedback and improvement. The final paper will constitute a significant component (15%) of your final grade. Please note that 10% of the earned points will be deducted for late submissions.

QUIZZES: There will be seven quizzes throughout the course, each consisting of 10-20 multiple-choice questions. These quizzes are designed to help you develop a consistent study habit and prevent you from feeling overwhelmed with too much information just before an exam. Each quiz is worth 20 points.

Only the five highest quiz scores will count towards your final grade, with the lowest quiz score being dropped. **There will be no make-up quizzes, and a grade of zero will be assigned for any missed quiz.**

EXAMS: There will be three examinations, including a final comprehensive exam. While Exam 1 and Exam 2 are worth 75 points each, the final exam is worth 100 points.

• All exams will be taken in person. However, we will use Blackboard (BB) as a platform for quizzes and exams via the Respondus LockDown Browser. Therefore, you must bring your laptop or iPad to the exam.

• Students will be informed in advance about which chapters or topics will be covered in each exam.

• The examination format may include one or more of the following question types: multiple-choice questions, short written answers, and explanatory responses to open-ended questions. Students who arrive late to an examination will not be given extra time to complete the test.

• Absences from an exam will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances, and TAMIU-approved excuses must be provided. Excused absences may include university-sanctioned activities, extreme illness, or other extenuating circumstances. If an absence is anticipated before the examination, arrangements for a make-up exam must be made in advance. In the event of an unexpected absence, the student must notify me as soon as possible to arrange for a make-up examination. If a student does not contact me within a week of the missed exam, **a grade of zero will be recorded for that exam.** Please refer to the Student Handbook for further details <https://www.tamtu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamtu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>))

• Everything in the textbook is fair game for exams, regardless of whether it is presented in class. You are responsible for using all the information in the assigned chapters to prepare for exams, even if certain material is not covered during class lectures.

Since lab (BIOL 4070/5070) is one of the major components of this course, 25% of your total point will be derived from lab activities. The points breakdown for this course is explained below.

	VALUE
Attendance	7.5%
Quizzes	15%
Term or Review paper	15%
Midterm Exam-1	11.25%
Midterm Exam-2	11.25%
Final Exam	15%
Final lab	25%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Tue	8/26	The making of a body	Chapter 1 (Part 1) page 1-12	
Thu	8/28	The making of a body	Chapter 1 (Part 2) page 14-21	Quiz 1 on lecture 1
Tue	9/2	Specifying Identity	Chapter 2 page 36-41, 43-46	Quiz 2 on lecture 1 and 2 WIN topic selection



Thu	9/4	Differential gene expression	Chapter 3 (Part 1) page 50-63	
Tue	9/9	Differential gene expression	Chapter 3 (Part 2) page 70-73	WIN Topic outline
Thu	9/11	Differential gene expression	Chapter 3 (Part 3) page 70-73	
Tue	9/16	Cell to Cell Communication	Chapter 4 (Part1)	Quiz 3 on lecture 3-6
Thu	9/18	Cell to Cell Communication	Chapter 4 (Part2)	
Tue	9/23	Cell to Cell Communication	Chapter 4 (Part3)	Quiz 4 on lecture 7-8
Thu	9/25	Midterm Exam-1 Review	Chapter 1-4 (part 1& 2) covered by Lecture 1-8)	
Tue	9/30	Midterm Exam-1	Based on Chapter 1-4 covering by lecture 1-8	
Thu	10/2	Stem Cells	Chapter 5 (Part 1)	
Tue	10/7	Stem Cells	Chapter 5 (Part 2)	WIN draft
Thu	10/9	Stem Cells	Chapter 5 (Part 3)	Quiz 5 Lecture 9-10
Tue	10/14	Regeneration	Chapter 24 (Part 1)	
Thu	10/16	Regeneration	Chapter 24 (Part 2)	Quiz 6 on lectures 11-13
Tue	10/21	Regeneration	Chapter 24 (Part 3)	
Thu	10/23	Neural Tube Formation and Patterning	Chapter 15 (Part1)	Quiz 7 on lectures 14-15
Tue	10/28	Neural Tube Formation and Patterning	Chapter 15 (Part2)	
Thu	10/30	Midterm 2 review	Lecture 9-16	
Tue	11/4	Midterm-2	Chapter 5, 24, 15 covered by lectures 9-16	
Thu	11/6	Fertilization	Chapter 7	
Tue	11/11	Brain Growth	Chapter 16	Final Paper
Thu	11/13	Brain Growth	Chapter 16	
Tue	11/18	Final Exam Review 1		
Thu	11/20	Final Exam Review 2		
Tue	11/25	Final Exam Review 3		
Thu	11/27	Thanksgiving break		
Tue	12/9	Final Exam		

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.

TAMU has penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

- **Penalties for Plagiarism:** Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade; the instructor must still report the offense to the Honor Council. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse. For repeat offenders in undergraduate courses or for an offender in any graduate course, the penalty for plagiarism is likely to include suspension or expulsion from the university.
 - **Caution:** Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it was only a draft" will not be accepted.
 - **Caution:** Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.

- **Penalties for Cheating:** Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a “zero” for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an “F” in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the university may be imposed. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an “F” in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a “W.”
 - **Caution:** Chat groups that start off as “study groups” can easily devolve into “cheating groups.” Be very careful not to join or remain any chat group if it begins to discuss specific information about exams or assignments that are meant to require individual work. If you are a member of such a group and it begins to cheat, you will be held responsible along with all the other members of the group. The TAMIU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.
- **Student Right of Appeal:** Faculty will notify students immediately via the student’s TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member’s charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member’s e-mail message to the student and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. The Student Handbook provides more details.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

You may not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless you receive explicit permission to do so by the instructor of the second course. In general, you should get credit for a work product only once.

AI Policies

Your instructor will provide you with their personal policy on the use of AI in the classroom setting and associated coursework.

TAMIU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU E-mail (tamiu.edu or dusty email) are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty –not the U.S. Mail and no other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to download the SafeZone app, which is a free mobile app for all University faculty, staff, and students. SafeZone allows you to: report safety concerns (24/7), get connected with mental health professionals, activate location sharing with authorities, and anonymously report incidents. Go to <https://www.tamiu.edu/adminis/police/safezone/index.shtml> for more information.

Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment. Copyright laws do not allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to register with the Office of Student Counseling and Disability Services located in Student Center 126. This office will contact the faculty member to recommend specific, reasonable accommodations. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodations only when provided documentation by the Student Counseling and Disability Services office.

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA’s for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule (Section 3.07) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.08), which includes the “Leave of Absence Request” form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (URL: <http://www.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, 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.