



COMM 1315 - Public Speaking: Public Speaking-ECHS

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 101, CRN 15977

Instructor Information

Stephanie Mancha

Email: stephanie.mancha@tamiu.edu

Office Hours:

By Appointment Only

Times and Location

MWF 10am-11am in Bullock Hall 207

Course Description

The course acquaints students with public speaking applications thereof in various social, professional, and educational settings. Psychology & Communication Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Blackboard: I will post all course materials on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to check this site daily for updates and read all materials I post. Please have your email and Blackboard apps on your personal devices. Also, please turn on notifications.

Participation: Because this is a communication course, students will be expected to contribute to class discussions and take part in in-class exercises. It is up to all of us to create an open and welcoming environment that will enable such participation. Please be respectful of your peers and your instructor.

COURSE STRUCTURE: This course is face-to-face, but I do use Blackboard to distribute course information (such as PowerPoints and assignment guidelines) and for some assignment submissions. It is imperative that you have a trustworthy Internet connection. Unless there is a verifiable blackout, I will not accept connectivity issues as a legitimate excuse for missing any deadline. Your success is determined by your completion of all coursework, from reading all chapters, submitting outlines (both rough drafts and final), participating in class activities, turning in your peer reviews, and presenting your speeches. You must complete all tasks by the due dates in the course schedule. I do not accept any late work. Please make sure you give yourself the appropriate time needed to complete all of the work. Chapter PowerPoint slideshows will be uploaded to Blackboard on the day we discuss them in class. These lectures highlight the most relevant information for each chapter. However, please make sure you read the entire chapter first in order to familiarize yourself with the material. This will assist you when attempting to complete all analytical assignments and as you participate in the in-class discussions and activities.

You will be placed into speech groups on the first day of class. You will remain in these small groups all semester long. These groups determine what days you give your speeches on and will be the group for your Final Project: the group speech as well as any class activities.

If there is any moment you do not understand the instructions, a concept or anything else covered in class, please schedule an appointment with me or send an email with your question or concern. I am here to help you. Don't forget that as the semester progresses.

COURSE PREPARATION You are responsible for keeping up with the readings in this course and being prepared to discuss in a thought-provoking manner. You are responsible for preparing and rehearsing your speeches, and while I will dedicate some in-class time for preparation, this will largely be done outside of class. You are responsible for ensuring you meet the minimum time requirement and stay within the maximum time limit for each speech. Practice outside of class will help you do so. As detailed in the course outline, you are responsible for completing assignments on time. Assignment guidelines will be discussed in class and available on Blackboard.



Program Learning Outcomes

Program Outcome: Students will craft and present organized, engaging speeches appropriate for social, professional, and educational settings, with an emphasis on content, organization, language, delivery, and critical evaluation of messages. Additional emphasis is placed on student performance, stressing original thinking, effective organization, and direct communication of ideas.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to craft and present well-organized and engaging presentations.
2. Students will be able to discuss the ethical dimensions of public speaking.
3. Students will increase their competency and ability to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of public speaking strategies.
4. Students will demonstrate a more in-depth knowledge of the theory and practice of public speaking.

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	The Essential Elements of Public Speaking.	Joseph A. Devito	

Other Course Materials

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

Grading Criteria

Speeches and Final Outlines: 50%

In Class Assignments and Group Work: 20%

Peer Reviews: 15%

Final (Group Speech): 15%

Total – 100%

A= 90-100%, B=80-89%, C= 70-79%, D= 60-69%, F= 59% and below

Speeches and Final Outlines: Students will prepare and present three major solo speeches in class: Informative, Persuasive, and Special Occasion. During the first week of class, students will be placed into speech groups, and those groups will determine what days students present their speeches. Students will also prepare and submit typed final outlines that will be submitted through Blackboard. More details will be made available in class and on Blackboard.

Assignments: These assignments include topic checks and outline rough drafts. All other assignments will be due IN CLASS. More details will be made available in class and on Blackboard.

Peer Reviews: Students will be responsible for submitting one peer review per speech day, except for the days they present their speeches. Students will receive a peer review form each speech day, and they will turn in their review at the end of class each speech day. More details will be made available in class and on Blackboard.

Final (Group Speech): You will present a demonstrative speech with your speech group (the group that's determined on the first day of class.) Each member must participate in the demonstration. While it is a group project, you will be graded individually based on participation, teamwork, and



presentation. If your group members express that you are not participating appropriately, you will be removed from the group and assigned to write a final paper instead. More details will be made available in class and on Blackboard.

Late Work:

All assignments are due on the days specified on the syllabus. Assignments submitted after the deadline will incur a 5-point deduction per day late. The deduction will be applied to the grade earned upon grading. For example, an assignment graded at 80 but submitted three days late will receive a final grade of 65. If you are absent, submitting assignments on time is still your responsibility. I have scheduled two Make-up Days to allow for make-up speeches WITH PROPER DOCUMENTATION. If there are no speeches to be made up on Make-Up Day, the class will still meet, and we will work on other assignments.

Open Boilerplate

MINIMUM TECHNICAL SKILLS EXPECTED OF ALL STUDENTS Because we use Blackboard in this course, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Students should have knowledge of basic computer and Internet skills, as mentioned on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage. You can also watch the Atomic Learning videos if you feel you lack any technical skills. You can find this information here: <https://www.tamui.edu/distance/technology/atomic-learning.shtml>.

MINIMUM TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS (Including information on how to obtain technology) Because we use Blackboard in this course, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. 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 Software. You will need the following additional software: Microsoft PowerPoint for viewing lesson presentations and Microsoft Word for viewing course files and submitting assignments. TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamui.edu/>. This site also allows students 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 and 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 to find solutions and guide you appropriately. Most of the required materials can be found free at TAMIU's library, computer labs, and classrooms. In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES Because we use Blackboard in this course, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) computing and information services are vital to students' success. This webpage covers contact information for Distance Education Services, the OIT Help Desk, and E-mail support: Technical Support Services. <https://www.tamui.edu/oit/students/index.shtml> (<https://www.tamui.edu/oit/students/index.shtml/>)

ACCESSIBILITY AND PRIVACY STATEMENTS ON COURSE TECHNOLOGIES

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

Accessibility Statements: <https://www.tamui.edu/distance/technology/accessibility-statements.shtml> (<https://www.tamui.edu/distance/technology/accessibility-statements.shtml/>)

Privacy Statements: <https://www.tamui.edu/distance/technology/privacy-statements.shtml> (<https://www.tamui.edu/distance/technology/privacy-statements.shtml/>)

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 to provide reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunities. 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 Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS) via phone at 956.326.2230, online at <http://www.tamui.edu/wellness/disability.shtml>, or by visiting the staff at the Senator Judith Zaffirini Student Success Center, room 138.

STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES The University wishes to have all students succeed in their courses. To support 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. <https://www.tamui.edu/oit/students/index.shtml> (<https://www.tamui.edu/oit/students/index.shtml/>) (<https://www.tamui.edu/oit/students/index.shtml/>)

AI and Generative Tools Policy:

While artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT and similar platforms can be helpful for inspiration—such as brainstorming topics or discovering interesting points to include in your projects—they may not be used to write assignments, speeches, or scripts, nor to create entire presentations.



You may use spell check, grammar check, and synonym identification tools like Grammarly. These grammar tools allow you to make rephrasing recommendations or reorganize paragraphs, which is also allowed. You must create all written and creative work submitted for this class.

AI software DOES NOT count as a valid source for your speeches. You must do your research and cite appropriately. AI tools may help you in citing the source.

Misusing AI tools to complete assignments or presentations will be considered academic misconduct and subject to disciplinary action. If you are unsure about appropriate usage, please consult the instructor.

Other Rules to Live By:

1. Please always follow the "Golden Rule" and treat others how you want to be treated. I will not tolerate harassment or hate speech of any kind based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, group membership, political affiliations, etc.
2. Communication is imperative, and all concerns should be communicated to me in person or through e-mail in a timely manner. If you do not communicate with me then I cannot address your needs or complications.
3. Discussions and speeches might focus on controversial or taboo issues. As a member of this class, please be **respectful** of me and your fellow classmates.

Things to consider...

CAUTION! Please make sure all papers and discussions are saved on Dropbox, Google Docs, flash drive, external hard drive, or any other saving format or device. Please be aware that I do not accept ANY late work, so all assignments must be done on time, regardless of computer problems. If you have trouble submitting an assignment, e-mail your assignments through the mail tool via Blackboard. Please be proactive in matters such as these.

IMPORTANT! All papers should be in APA or MLA format: double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, abstract, and references page. If you need format assistance, here is a link to the Purdue citation website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Please make sure you edit all of your papers and discussions. Grammar and spelling errors should be corrected prior to submitting each assignment.

Course Outline

The instructor maintains the right to change this schedule. It may be changed to accommodate student and/or instructor needs. It is the student's responsibility to follow the provided schedule in terms of assignment due dates and reading assignments. The schedule provided in this syllabus will inform students of when those dates are, and it is their responsibility to keep up with approaching deadlines. These dates may not always be announced in class, but it does not excuse the student from completing the required reading and assignments.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/25	Intro to course	READ: Syllabus Chapters 1 (pg. 1 – 13) and Chapter 2	DUE: Syllabus Quiz: Due Monday, Aug. 25th by 11:59 PM (on Blackboard)
9/1	The Audience and Preparing to Speak	READ: Chapters 1 (pg. 14-18) and Chapter 4	DUE: Audience Analysis Exercise (In Class)
9/8	How to Build a Speech	READ: Chapters 9 (pg. 185 - 193), 3, and 7	DUE: Informative Topic Check: Due IN CLASS, Friday, Sept. 12
9/15	The Informative Speech	READ: Chapter 5, 6, and 8 Review Chapter 9	DUE: Informative Outline (Rough Draft) Check: Due IN CLASS, Friday, Sept. 19
9/22	Informative Speech Week 1 Group 1 – Sept. 22 Group 2 – Sept. 24 Group 3 – Sept. 26	READ: NONE	DUE: • Informative Speeches: Groups 1, 2, 3 (full schedule available on Blackboard) • Informative Final Draft Outlines (Groups 1, 2, 3) due by Friday, Sept. 26th by 11:59 PM (Blackboard) • Peer Reviews (one per day; due on the days of presentation) Deadline Friday, Sept. 26th by 11:59 PM
9/29	Informative Speech Week 2 Group 4 – Sept. 29 Group 5 – Oct. 1 Group 6 – Oct. 3	READ: NONE	DUE: • Informative Speeches: Groups 4, 5, 6 • Informative Final Draft Outlines (Groups 4, 5, 6) due by Friday, Oct. 3rd by 11:59 PM (Blackboard) • Peer Reviews (one per day; due on the days of presentation) Deadline Friday, Oct. 3rd by 11:59 PM



10/6	The Persuasive Speech	READ: Chapter 10	DUE: MEET ON Wednesday WITH GROUPS TO START DISCUSSING YOUR FINAL PRESENTATION – Turn in group check on Blackboard Persuasive Topic Check: Due IN CLASS, Friday, Oct. 10th
10/13	Persuasive Speech Week 2	READ: NONE	Persuasive Outline (Rough Draft) Check: Due IN CLASS Oct. 17th
10/20	Persuasive Speech Week 1 Group 6 – Oct. 20 Group 5 – Oct. 22 Group 4 – Oct. 24	READ: NONE	DUE: • Persuasive Speeches: Groups 4, 5, 6 (full schedule available on Blackboard) • Persuasive Outlines (Groups 4, 5, 6) due by Friday, Oct. 24th by 11:59 PM (Blackboard) • Peer Reviews (one per day; due on the days of presentation) Deadline Friday, Oct. 24th by 11:59 PM
10/27	Week 10 Oct. 27, 29, & 31 Persuasive Speech Week 2 Group 3 – Oct. 27 Group 2 – Oct. 29 Group 1 – Oct. 31		DUE: • Persuasive Speeches: Groups 1, 2, 3 (full schedule available on Blackboard) • Persuasive Outlines (Groups 1, 2, 3) due by Friday, Oct. 27th by 11:59 PM (Blackboard) • Peer Reviews (one per day; due on the days of presentation) Deadline Friday, Oct. 27th by 11:59 PM
11/3	The Special Occasion Speech	READ: Chapter 11	DUE: MEET ON Wednesday WITH GROUPS TO START DISCUSSING YOUR PRESENTATION – Turn in group check on Blackboard Special Occasion Outline (Rough Draft) Check: Due IN CLASS, Friday, Nov. 7
11/10	Special Occasion Speech Group 1, 2, & 3 – Nov. 12 Group 4, 5 & 6 – Nov. 14		DUE: • Special Occasion Speeches: Groups 1, 2, 3, (Nov. 12) Groups 4, 5, 6 (Nov. 14) • Special Occasion Outlines (Groups 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6) due by Friday, Nov. 14 by 11:59 PM (Blackboard) • Peer Reviews (one per day; due on the days of presentation) Deadline Friday, Nov. 14 by 11:59 PM
11/17	Speaking in Groups/ Make Up Day (Nov. 19 & 21)	READ: Chapter 12	DUE: Make Up Day; Speech Challenge; Group Work Group Check: Due IN CLASS, Friday, Nov. 21
11/24	THANKSGIVING BREAK		TAMU has class on Monday Group Rough Draft Outline Due Nov. 24th in class
12/1	Group Speech (Final Project) Prep		DUE: Last Class Day, Monday, Dec. 1st; last prep day for final speech DUE: Final project presentations (Group Speeches) Wednesday, Dec. 3rd @ 10 AM *Please arrive for the Final Project at 10:00 AM. We may not use the entire 2-hour time slot but be prepared to stay the entire time, just in case.

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

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



Required Class Attendance

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

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

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

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

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

TAMU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMU student, you are bound by the TAMU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMU student and to report violations of the Honor Code. Please read carefully the Student Handbook Article 7 and Article 10 available at <https://www.tamtu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamtu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>).

We are committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and any form of cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. It occurs when you:

1. Borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words. You must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
2. Borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
3. Present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own. You have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2020, seventh edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

"Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, idea, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship" (p. 254). This same principle applies to the illicit use of AI.

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications (p. 11). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Academic Success Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the

Manual of the APA or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

TAMIU has penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

- **Penalties for Plagiarism:** Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade; the instructor must still report the offense to the Honor Council. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse. For repeat offenders in undergraduate courses or for an offender in any graduate course, the penalty for plagiarism is likely to include suspension or expulsion from the university.
 - *Caution:* Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it was only a draft" will not be accepted.
 - *Caution:* Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.
- **Penalties for Cheating:** Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a "zero" for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an "F" in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the university may be imposed. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an "F" in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a "W."
 - *Caution:* Chat groups that start off as "study groups" can easily devolve into "cheating groups." Be very careful not to join or remain any chat group if it begins to discuss specific information about exams or assignments that are meant to require individual work. If you are a member of such a group and it begins to cheat, you will be held responsible along with all the other members of the group. The TAMIU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.
- **Student Right of Appeal:** Faculty will notify students immediately via the student's TAMIU e-mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member's charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member's e-mail message to the student and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. The Student Handbook provides more details.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

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

AI Policies

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

TAMIU E-Mail and SafeZone

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

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

Copyright Restrictions

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



Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

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

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

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