

COMM 3312 - Methods of Inquiry:Qual Rsch: Methods of Inquiry-Qual WIN

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 161, CRN 16228

Instructor Information

Tano Trevino

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Office Hours:

By appointment only.

Office Phone: 9563264604

Times and Location

MW 6pm-7:20pm in Bullock Hall 220

Course Description

This course introduces students to qualitative research and prepares them in the approaches, skills, and techniques necessary to conduct research using this methodology.

Psychology & Communication 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 Policies:

Readings: Read the assigned readings before attending class as it equips with the necessary background knowledge and context, enabling you to actively engage in discussions, participate in activities, and comprehend complex topics more effectively.

1. Required Readings: The course syllabus will include a list of required readings for each class session. These readings may consist of textbooks, academic articles, research papers, case studies, or other relevant materials.
2. Note-taking and Annotations: Students are encouraged to take notes and make annotations while reading. This practice can help reinforce understanding, identify key points, and facilitate active participation during class discussions.
3. Accountability for Unpreparedness: Consistent lack of preparedness may have consequences on a student's overall class performance and participation grade. It is essential to recognize that not completing the assigned readings may hinder academic progress.

Attendance: Regular attendance is vital for successful learning and academic achievement.

1. Attendance Expectations: Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions, including lectures, discussions, and any mandatory activities related to the course.
2. Absences: While unforeseen circumstances may arise, students are encouraged to prioritize attending classes. However, if an absence is necessary, students should inform the instructor in advance, whenever possible.
3. Excused Absences: Excused absences are generally granted for valid reasons, such as illness, family emergencies, or other significant personal situations.

4. **Unexcused Absences:** Unexcused absences are those not supported by valid reasons or documented evidence. Frequent unexcused absences may adversely affect a student's final grade and academic standing in the course.
5. **Tardiness:** Punctuality is essential for maintaining a respectful and conducive learning environment. Students should make every effort to arrive on time for each class session.
6. **Leaving Class Early:** Students are expected to stay for the entire duration of the class unless prior approval is obtained from the instructor due to exceptional circumstances.
7. **Changes to the Attendance Policy:** The instructor reserves the right to modify the attendance policy in exceptional circumstances or as deemed necessary. Any changes will be communicated to the students in a timely and transparent manner.

Deadlines: Meeting deadlines demonstrates responsibility, time management skills, and respect for the academic process.

1. **Deadline Information:** The course syllabus will clearly outline all assignment deadlines, including due dates for individual tasks, projects, papers, quizzes, and exams. Additionally, any changes to deadlines will be communicated to students well in advance.
2. **Responsibility for Time Management:** Students are responsible for managing their time effectively to meet all deadlines. It is essential to plan and prioritize tasks to ensure timely completion of assignments and avoid last-minute stress.
3. **Late Submissions:** No late submission will be accepted.
4. **Communicating Extensions:** If a student anticipates difficulty meeting a deadline due to exceptional circumstances, they should contact me as soon as possible before the deadline. Instructors may grant extensions on a case-by-case basis, but only when valid reasons and supporting documentation are provided.
5. **Digital Submission and Technical Issues:** Students must familiarize themselves with the submission process and ensure they have access to the required technological tools. In the event of technical difficulties, students should contact the instructor promptly for guidance.
6. **Academic Integrity and Deadlines:** Students are expected to submit their own work and meet deadlines honestly. Plagiarism, including the use of artificial intelligence, copying, or any other form of academic dishonesty is strictly prohibited and may result in severe academic consequences.

Contact: I am available via email should you ever need to reach out to me for anything related to the course.

1. **Check Course Announcements:** Students should regularly check the course announcements or communication platform for updates, clarifications, or additional information related to the course.
2. **Use of Official Email:** When contacting me via email, students are encouraged to use their official educational email addresses (@dusty.tamiu.edu) to ensure proper identification and security.
3. **Timely Responses:** I will make reasonable efforts to respond to student inquiries promptly. However, students are also expected to be patient and understanding, especially during busy periods, such as before exams or when assignments are due.
4. **Professional and Respectful Communication:** All communication with the instructor should be conducted in a professional and respectful manner. Students should use appropriate language and tone when addressing the instructor, classmates, or any other members of the course.
5. **Appointments:** I am available for scheduled appointments to address more in-depth questions or concerns. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities for one-on-one discussions.
6. **After-Hours Communication:** While instructors may occasionally be available outside regular office hours, students should respect their personal time and consider the urgency of the matter before contacting them during non-business hours.

Course Grades Breakdown:

Self-Assessed Quizzes

Self-assessed quizzes are a form of assessment where students take responsibility for evaluating their own understanding and knowledge of course material. These quizzes differ from traditional quizzes where an instructor grades the answers. Instead, self-assessed quizzes provide an opportunity for students to assess their comprehension and gauge their learning progress independently. These quizzes will include multiple choice questions and one open ended question. The content of these quizzes will be derived from the readings.

Assignments: 25%

There will be assignments throughout the semester that will guide you through the qualitative research process and prepare you for your final research proposal. Missing any assignments will be detrimental to your success in this course.

- Article Summary (2.5%)
- CITI Training (2.5%)
- Annotated Bibliography (10%)
- Fieldwork Assignment (5%)
- Interview Protocol (5%)

Midterm: 20%

The midterm exam for this course will serve as a comprehensive assessment of the material covered during the first half of the semester. The exam will include a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended questions to evaluate students' understanding, application, and critical thinking skills. Engaging with course materials, participating in class activities, and thorough preparation are crucial for a successful performance in the midterm exam in-class.

Final Research Proposal: 30%

For the final research proposal assignment, students are required to create a research proposal on the communicative topic of your choice. The proposal should include an introduction outlining the research problem and objectives, a literature review summarizing relevant studies, a description of the research methodology, data collection instruments, ethical considerations, data analysis approach, and expected results.

Additionally, students should highlight the implications and significance of the study and provide a timeline for the research process. The proposal should be well-structured, supported by academic sources, and demonstrate a clear understanding of the research topic. (8 to 10 pages).

- Proposal paper (15%)
- Draft Proposal (5%)
- Proposal Presentation (5%)
- Research Questions & Revisions (2.5%)
- Poster (2.5%)

Final Exam: 25%

The final exam for this course will consist of a comprehensive assessment of the topics covered throughout the semester. The exam will include both multiple-choice and open-ended questions to evaluate students' knowledge, critical thinking, and application of course concepts. The final exam aims to assess students' overall mastery of the course content, critical thinking abilities, and application of knowledge to real-world scenarios. Adequate preparation, engagement in course materials, and thoughtful responses are essential to achieve successful outcomes in the final exam.

Extra Credit: Extra credit opportunities may be offered in this course to provide you with the chance to earn additional points or improve their grades. These opportunities can come in various forms, such as optional assignments, participation in extra-curricular academic events, or in-depth exploration of related topics. It is not a substitute for completing required coursework and should be viewed as a supplementary option for motivated students seeking to further their understanding and academic achievements.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successfully completing this course, students will achieve the following learning outcomes

1. Grasp the significance of qualitative methods in research.
2. Comprehend the philosophical underpinnings that shape qualitative research approaches.
3. Articulate the primary objectives of various types of qualitative research.
4. Analyze the ethical considerations associated with each phase of the research process.
5. Strategize and implement a communication research project utilizing qualitative methods.
6. Produce a qualitative research proposal & poster presentation.

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	Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact	Sarah J. Tracy	9781119390800

Other Course Materials

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

Other journals provided through Blackboard Ultra

Grading Criteria

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

Open Boilerplate

ASSIGNMENTS	VALUE
Article Summary	2.5%
CITI Training	2.5%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Fieldwork Assignment	5%
Interview Protocol	5%
FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL	VALUE
Proposal Paper	15%
Draft Proposal	5%
Proposal Presentation	5%
Research Questions & Revisions	2.5%
Poster	2.5%
EXAMS	VALUE
Midterm	20%
Final	25%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Mon	8/25	Course introduction, goals, expectations	Syllabus	
Wed	8/27	Paradigmatic reflections and theoretical foundations	Chapter 3 – SJ Tracy	Self-assessed Quiz 1 Due 8/30
Mon	9/1	Developing contextual research that matters	Chapter 1 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	9/3	APA 7 & Finding Journal Articles	Hutchinson 2019	Upload Journal Article in topic of interest & Self-assessed Quiz 2 Due 9/6
Mon	9/8	Entering the conversation of qualitative research	Chapter 2 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	9/10	Analyzing an article	Sandel 2014	Article Summary Assignment & Self-assessed Quiz 3 Due 9/13
Mon	9/15	Quality: creating a credible, ethical, significant study	Chapter 11 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	9/17	Critiquing a journal article	Boeri & Giustini 2023	CITI Training Online: citiprogram.org/ & Self-assessed Quiz 4 Due 9/20
Mon	9/22	Fieldwork and Fieldplay: Negotiating access and exploring the scene	Chapter 5 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	9/24	Developing a Research Question(s)	Kevoe-Feldman & Pomerantz 2018	Upload RQs & Self-assessed Quiz 5 Due 9/27

Mon	9/29	Field roles, fieldnotes, and field focus	Chapter 6 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	10/1	No class—Conduct field work through participant observation.		Upload Fieldwork Assignment & Self-assessed Quiz 6 Due 10/04
Mon	10/6	Midterm Review		
Wed	10/8	MIDTERM EXAM	In Class	
Mon	10/13	Data analysis basics: a pragmatic iterative	Chapter 9 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	10/15	Coding exercise in class	Pavlick 2019	Annotated Bib & Self-assessed Quiz 7 Due 10/18
Mon	10/20	Interview planning and design: Structuring, wording and questioning	Chapter 7 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	10/22	Interview protocol vs. interview questions	Lee 2006	Upload Interview Protocol & Self-assessed Quiz 8 Due 10/25
Mon	10/27	Research Design: Sampling, research proposals, ethics, and IRB	Chapter 4 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	10/29	Proposal Workshop Intro/lit review/methods	Gonzalez & Davis 2022	Upload Revised RQs & Self-assessed Quiz 9 Due 11/1
Mon	11/3	Interview practice: Embodied, mediated, and focus-groups	Chapter 8 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	11/5	Embodied writing	Bring Proposal draft to class	Upload Proposal Draft & Self-assessed Quiz 10 Due 11/08
Mon	11/10	Explaining, synthesizing, and crafting a tale	Chapter 12 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	11/12	Crafting a poster for presentations		Self-assessed Quiz 11 Due 11/15
Mon	11/17	Writing: Drafting, polishing, and publishing	Chapter 13 – SJ Tracy	
Wed	11/19	Proposal Presentations in class.		Upload Poster & Self-assessed Quiz 12 Due 11/22
Mon	11/24	Proposal Presentations in class.		
Wed	11/26	No Class Writing Your Proposal		
Mon	12/1	Final Exam Review		
Wed	12/3	FINAL EXAM	In-Class	Final Proposal Due: 12/6/2024 Midnight

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)

In the classroom, students are expected to listen attentively, participate respectfully, and adhere to established rules. Behavior that interferes with the class lecture may result in disciplinary action, ensuring a productive and respectful learning environment for everyone. Any disputes over academic matters should be addressed calmly and constructively, ideally during designated times such as office hours or after class. If a student does not agree with a decision, they can request a meeting with the instructor to discuss their concerns in more detail. Should further resolution be needed, the student may escalate the matter to the department head or use formal grievance procedures as outlined in the sections below. (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4 (<https://www.tamui.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

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 Student Handbook (<https://www.tamui.edu/handbook/index.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 SafeZone (<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 Disability Services for Students located in Student Center 124. 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 Office of Disability Services for Students.

For accommodations or assistance with disabilities, contact the Disability Coordinator, Karla Pedraza, at karla.pedraza@tamiu.edu, call 956.326.2763, or visit Student Center 124.

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: Student Handbook (<https://www.tamiau.edu/handbook/index.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. Students who experience or observe alleged or suspected discrimination due to their pregnant/parenting status, should report to 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, *Report It*, at <https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit/index.shtml>).

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 Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiau.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodation. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student needs 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 LOAs 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*.

For parenting-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the Parenting Liaison, Mayra Hernandez, at mghernandez@tamiau.edu, call 956.326.2265, or visit Student Center 226.

For pregnancy-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the TIX Coordinator, Lorissa Cortez, at lorissam.cortez@tamiau.edu, call 956.326.2857, or visit Killam Library 159.

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 (<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.