



CRIJ 5355 - Cybercrime: Cybercrime (Sub I- Aug 25 to Oct 10)

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 680, CRN 17437

Instructor Information

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Office: NA

Office Hours:

No physical office.

Available via email, text, and phone: Monday – Thursday, 10 am -4 pm, EST. If I'm not readily available, please leave a message.

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Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

Students will analyze various forms of cybercrime and discern how various theories of crime relate to the various modalities of cybercrime and victimization.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Welcome to CRIJ 5355!

This course offers an advanced and detailed overview of the study of cybercrime.

As technology has evolved and become more prolific, opportunities for crime have expanded and a new category of crime has emerged – cybercrime. We will take a look at the role of technology in our lives and how it has dramatically altered the frequency and scope of communication. We will also explore the role of online communities in promoting, mobilizing, and sustaining illicit online activities, such as hacking. Along with this, we will explore the hacking ethic and hacking (sub)culture. We will compare and contrast different types of cybercrime, such as malware, online fraud, phishing, cyber-stalking & harassment, and revenge-based activities. Lastly, we will consider the unique legal challenges of trying to control and sanction cybercrime.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to identify and describe how technology has altered human behavior, including expanding opportunities for crime.

Students will be able to discuss the tension – both legal and philosophical – between privacy and security.

Students will be able to differentiate between cyber-deviance, cybercrime, and cyberterrorism.

Students will be able to discuss and describe the role of subcultures in mobilizing, promoting, and sustaining cybercrime offenders, especially hackers.

Students will be able to identify and define the different forms of malware.

Students will discuss the challenges of regulating online revenge activities, such as "revenge porn."



Students will be able to define and discuss the crime of online child sexual exploitation (CSE), and explain how this is distinct from pornography and why it is no longer referred to as "child porn."

Students will discuss the role of law enforcement in policing cybercrime activity, including the many unique challenges, such as acquiring (and using) digital evidence.

Students will describe examples of extremism online and be able to discuss the rise of cyber-terror and cyberwarfare.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Cybercrime and Digital Forensics	Holt	9781000553406

Other Course Materials

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

There may be additional course readings and resources, such as video clips. In such instances, I will provide you with the resource.

Grading Criteria

Course Requirements

Intro Discussion: During Week 1, you will complete a simple introductory discussion. Tell us a little about yourself! This is **worth 25 points**. Share whatever you like ... your name, where you live, where you're from, your career interests, personal interests, academic plans, favorite movie, bucket list, etc.!

Weekly Discussions (7): We will have seven weekly discussions. I will provide you with a question or a set of questions to which you will respond. In most instances, you have two question sets to answer. In addition to your initial posting (your answer), you are required to reply in a meaningful way to a minimum of two classmates.

For all discussion postings, please keep in mind the following:

Respond to the prompt! No need to go off on a tangent or answer something that I have not asked. Stick to the script.

Proofread your post to ensure that it is clear, well organized, and coherent. Double check your grammar! Excessive grammatical errors will result in points being deducted.

Cite, cite, cite! Always cite, even if you are only using our textbook as the reference. Provide your references after the initial post. Use APA format. If you make reference to certain resources in your replies, you must cite those references also (following your reply postings). Below is an **example** of a properly formatted reference for a scholarly article and for a book:

Article:

Gringlas, M., & Weinraub, M. (2005). The more things change... single parenting revisited. *Journal of Family Issues*, 16(1), 29-52.

Book:

Halstead, T., & Lind, M. (2002). *The radical center: The future of American politics*. New York, NY: Anchor Publishing.

In addition to providing the entire reference at the end of your post, include in-text citations in the body of the post. Example below:

Children raised in single-parent homes are at slightly higher risk for academic challenges (Gringlas & Weinraub, 2005).

Use the replies to move the discussion forward. Consider how you can *extend* it in some way. Offering a compliment to your colleague or a simple statement of agreement will not suffice. Jumping off points for the replies may involve:



- * Ask a probing question
- * Offer constructive criticism or a challenge; use evidence to back up your claim
- * Link the discussion to a current case, policy issue, or debate
- * Consider the sociology or social psychology of the issue; is there any relevant connection to socio-economic status (social class), for example? To gender?
- * Consider future implications or directions of the issue. What challenges may emerge as technology continues to advance? What questions may we need to anticipate?
- * Tie in legislative questions or challenges.

Timeline for posting:

For one-week modules, post your initial comment by Thursday, 11:59 pm (CST), and your replies by Sunday, 11:59 pm (CST).

Discussions are worth 50 points each, for a **total of 350 points**. Discussions which are not properly cited will have up to 20 points deducted. Discussions without replies will have up to 20 points deducted. Discussions cannot be submitted late.

Quizzes (5): We will have five quizzes in this course. Quizzes are based on assigned chapter readings. Some quizzes may also cover supplemental readings or resources. In such instances, I will alert you to this. Unless otherwise noted, quiz questions are multiple choice and T/F. At times, there may be a few short answer questions. Quizzes are timed. Most quizzes have a 30 minute time limit. If the time limit is shorter or longer than this, I will make an announcement. Quizzes are single attempt only. You cannot start, stop, and go back. Once you begin a quiz or exam, the clock will run until time is up! Once the time runs out, the quiz/exam will automatically submit and this submission is final. No retakes or late submissions are permitted.

You may use your books, notes, or other written materials for the exams and quizzes. However, you may not talk to or work with others. No part of any exam or quiz may be copied, reproduced, or distributed in any format.

For answers to written questions, you should list your references.

Quizzes are worth 30 points each, for a **total of 150 points**.

Annotated Bibliography: You will select a specific sub-field (area of study) within cyber-crime, and you will prepare an annotated bibliography on this area. The bibliography must consist of a minimum of seven scholarly references. These can be all peer-reviewed articles or some combination of articles and books. You should not include *only* books. Use APA formatting to format your references.

Note: I will post a list of possible research paper topics in Blackboard by the end of the first week. You may select from this list or you may choose your own topic. If you select something not on the list, please run it by me first. Also, *you are NOT actually writing a research paper for this course*. You are only doing the annotated bibliography.

If you have not done an annotated bibliography before, it is simply a list of references that a prospective author or researcher (in this case, you) intends to use for a research project. In addition to the citation, you will provide a brief summary of the article, an evaluation of it (how solid is the research? how credible is it? how do you know?), and explain its relevance to your research topic. This is the annotation. Generally speaking, this portion of the assignment is 2-3 paragraphs (for each resource). You would first provide the full citation, in APA format. (Include the DOI as well). Then, below that, you provide the summary (the annotation). You will do this for all seven of your references.

No more than 3 of your references should be older than 10 years.

You will need to start your annotated bibliography by telling me what your intended research topic is. Place this at the top of the assignment. So, the ordering of the assignment would look like:

Title page

Page 1: At the top ... "My intended research paper topic is ... what effect does video game playing have on attitudes toward hacking?" Below is a list of references that will inform this topic.

Continuing on Page 1: Annotated Bibliography. Just under this, begin your list and the annotations.

As with all your work in this course, proofread for grammar, formatting, coherence, and clarity. Be sure you have included all 3 elements of the annotation: the summary, the evaluation, and the connection (relevance) that the resource has to your research topic. Specifically, *how would this piece of research help to inform the larger project?*



This assignment is due at the end of the 6th week (by March 2nd) and is **worth 125 points**.

Exams: We will have a mid-term and a final exam in this course. The mid-term exam is given during Week 4, and the final exam is given during the last week. Specific dates will be provided shortly. Exams are open for a minimum of 3 days, and you must take and submit the exam within that window. No late exams will be accepted.

Questions on the mid-term exam are multiple choice, T/F, matching, and short answer. The time limit is two hours.

Questions on the final exam are multiple choice, T/F, matching, short answer, and long essay. The time limit is 2.5 hours. The final exam is cumulative.

For answers to written questions, you should list your references.

You may use your books, notes, or other written materials for the exams and quizzes. However, you may not talk to or work with others. No part of any exam or quiz may be copied, reproduced, or distributed in any format.

Each exam is worth approximately 125 points, **for a total of 250 points**.

This course uses a points system to determine final grades. There is a total pool of 900 points. Your final grade is determined by dividing the number of points you earn by the total number of possible points. For example, if you earn 725 out of 900, then the calculation is $725/900 = 80.5\%$.

Assignments with Point Values

Intro Discussion: 25 points

Discussions: 350 points

Quizzes: 150 points

Annotated Bibliography: 125 points

Exams: 250 points

TOTAL: 900

Late Policy:

This is a graduate-level course. It is expected that you will submit your work by the due date. Late work is not accepted. In the event of an emergency, please reach out and I will work with you. Serious illness or injury, deployment, an accident, or a family death would constitute an emergency situation.

Minor illness would not. Documentation may be required.

Honesty & Integrity

All work submitted is to be *your* work. Work that is plagiarized, borrowed, "lifted," purchased, or stolen will receive a score of "0." This includes discussion content. In addition to a grade of "0," the department or university may take additional, disciplinary action.

Proofread

Please proofread your work! With today's technology, there is no excuse for misspellings or poor grammar. Excessive grammatical errors will result in a lower score on assignments. For discussions, you may wish to compose your response in Word, proofread it, and then copy/paste it into the discussion board.

Online Submission Only

As this is a fully online course, all work must be submitted in Blackboard. Work cannot be sent via email or via any other mechanism. Work that is not submitted through Blackboard will not be graded.

APA

Use APA format for all work in this course.

Use of Books For Exams/Quizzes

You may use your books, notes, or other written materials for exams and quizzes. However, you may not work with others. This would include in-person communication or digital sharing of ideas and information, via phone, text, email, Group Me, chat, etc.

No Start & Stop on Exams or Quizzes



For exams and quizzes, you cannot start, stop, save your work, and go back. Once you begin, the clock will start ticking and it will run until time is up! Once the time limit has been reached, the quiz/exam will automatically submit and this submission is considered final.

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	91-100
B	80-90.9
C	70-79.9
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

Open Boilerplate

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Intro Disc	25
Weekly Discussions	350
Quizzes	150
Exams	250
Annotated Bibliography	125
TOTAL POINTS	900

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/25	Introduction to Cybercrime	Chapter 1: Technology & Cybercrime Chapter 2: Law Enforcement in Dealing with Cybercrime; Privacy and Security Concerns	Intro Discussion Discussion #1 Quiz #1: Chapters 1 and 2 Due 8/31, 11:59 PM
9/1	Hackers, Hacking, and Malware	Chapter 3: Computer Hackers and Hacking Chapter 4: Malware and Automated Computer Attacks	Discussion #2 Quiz #2: Chapters 3 and 4 Due 9/07, 11:59 PM
9/8	Digital Piracy, Intellectual Theft, Online Fraud	Chapter 5: Digital Piracy, Intellectual Property Theft Chapter 6: Online Fraud	Discussion #3 Due 9/14, 11:59 PM
9/15	Concerns Surrounding Pornography, Prostitution, & Trafficking Image-Based Online Abuse Online Child Sexual Exploitation	Chapter 7: Pornography, Image-Based Sexual Abuse, Prostitution Chapter 8: Child Sexual Exploitation Materials (CSEM)	Discussion #4 MID TERM EXAM: Ch 1 - 6. Opens on Wednesday. Due 9/21, 11:59 PM
9/22	Cyber-stalking, cyber-bullying, Online harassment Extremism online; Cyber-terrorism	Chapter 9: Cyber-bullying, online harassment, and cyber-stalking Chapter 10: Online extremism and Cyber-terrorism	Discussion #5 Quiz #3: Chapters 5 and 6 Due 9/28, 11:59 PM
9/29	Illicit market operations online Cybercrime, criminology, and theory Understanding cybercrime offending & victimization	Chapter 12: Illicit Market Operations Online Chapter 13: Cybercrime and Criminological Theories	Discussion #6 Quiz #4: Chapters 7 and 8 Due 10/05, 11:59 PM
10/6	Examination of Digital Forensic Evidence Legal Challenges ... Class ends on OCTOBER 10! Staggered due dates this week!!	Chapter 14: Evolution of Digital Forensics Chapter 15: Examination of Forensic Evidence Chapter 16: Legal Challenges in Digital Forensic Investigations	Discussion #7: Due by 10/08! Annotated Bibliography Due by Oct. 9. FINAL EXAM: Cumulative: Due by Oct. 10! CLASS ENDS ON FRIDAY, OCT. 10



University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

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

Required Class Attendance

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

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

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

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

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

TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

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

Distance Education Courses

This course is fully online. There are **no in-person meetings** and **no required synchronous activities**. All work will be submitted through Blackboard.

Online Courses and On-Campus Meetings

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

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

Course Structure



This section is fully online. All activities are asynchronous.

You do need the textbook! Required readings for each week are listed in the online modules. Other resources, such as supplemental resources and videos, are found in the modules as well. All course assessments, such as quizzes, exams, and discussions, will be submitted through Blackboard. Work cannot be submitted in hard copy and cannot be sent through email. You should expect to log into the course a minimum of 4 times each week. Regular participation in the weekly discussions is expected. All work must be turned in by the deadline.

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

I am available from 10 am on Monday, through noon, on Fridays, EST. Feel free to call, text, or email any time, of course. During this window (see above), response time is about 24 hours. If you reach out later on Fridays or over the weekend (or on holidays), response time is 48-72 hours.

Announcements/Course Messages/Emails

Please follow along with the Course Announcements each week! This is where I will issue reminders and/or changes or updates to the course schedule.

Email: susan.cody@tamiu.edu

Phone/Text: 678-939-7311

Assignments and Assessments

Feedback on quizzes is immediate (following submission).

Feedback on exams containing written questions is within 5 days of the due date.

Feedback on discussions is within 5 days of the due date.

Feedback on written assignments is within 7 days of the due date.

Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

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

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

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

Student Support Resources

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

Computer/Technology Requirements

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

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

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

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



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

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

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

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

Respondus Lockdown Browser

This course requires use of the Respondus Lockdown Browser for the mid-term exam and the final exam. The browser is not required for the quizzes.

Watch this short video (<http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml/>) to get a basic understanding of this unique browser.

Download Instructions

Click the *Assist* navigation link in Blackboard or visit TAMIU's Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor web page (<https://www.tamiau.edu/distance/technology/respondus-ldb-and-monitor.shtml>). Scroll down to the section on the *Respondus LockDown Browser*. Click the link to access the webpage for the software and additional information.

To Access Your Test

1. First, be sure the Respondus LockDown Browser software is full installed on your computer.
2. Open a regular web browser (Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, MS Edge, Safari)
3. Log into Blackboard Learn.
4. Navigate to the course and test.
5. Start your attempt.
6. This will launch the Respondus LockDown Browser software.
7. Begin your test.

Note: You won't be able to access tests with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the test requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Policy on AI

This course encourages students to explore the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools such as ChatGPT. Any such use must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. It is each student's responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GAI output that is submitted; you bear the final responsibility. Violations of this policy will be considered academic misconduct. Note, too, that different classes could implement different AI policies, and it is the student's responsibility to conform to expectations for each course.

Further, you should note that AI tools have a tendency to make up incorrect facts and fake citations, and/or to make highly flawed or offensive claims. In many ways, the use of AI is harder and places a heavier burden on the student, as you will have to verify the credibility of all information and the accuracy of claims. You cannot assume it to be true. **You will be responsible for any inaccurate, biased, offensive, or otherwise unethical content you submit regardless of whether it originally comes from you or a foundation model.** If you use a foundation model, its contribution must be acknowledged; you will be penalized for using a foundation model without acknowledgement.

The university's policy on plagiarism still applies. **All work must be properly cited.** Work that is plagiarized will receive a score of "0," and may be subject to disciplinary action by the department or the university.

Minimum Technical Skills Expected

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



Technical Support Services

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

Web Conferences/Synchronous sessions

There are no synchronous sessions in this class. There are no mandatory web conferences.

Grading Scale/Schema

All assignments are described in an above section.

Assignments with Point Values

Intro Discussion: 25 points

Discussions: 350 points

Quizzes: 150 points

Annotated Bibliography: 125 points

Exams: 250 points

TOTAL: 900

This course relies on a points system to determine final grades. There is a total pool of 900 possible points to be earned. To arrive at your grade, simply divide the number of points you earn by the total! For example, if you earn 800 out of 900, your grade is $800/900 = 88.8\%$.

Your final point total, and the letter grade associated with it, are final. I will not simply add a point or two to someone's final point total so he or she can get a passing grade or a score that will enable the student to graduate, maintain a scholarship, hold onto financial aid, etc. Students should not ask for preferential treatment as it is unfair to other students and challenges the integrity of the grading scale.

Late Work Policy

This is a graduate-level course. It is expected that you will submit your work by the due date. Late work is not accepted. In the event of an emergency, please reach out and I will work with you. Serious illness or injury, deployment, an accident, or a family death would constitute an emergency situation. Minor illness would not. Documentation may be required.

Course Evaluation

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

Turnitin Policy Or Other Types of Assignments in Other Systems

Written assignments must be submitted through Turnitin. For this section, the Annotated Bibliography assignment will be reviewed by Turnitin.

Proctoring

Accessibility and Privacy Statements on Course Technologies

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

Syllabus Subject to Change

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