



# ENGL 3307 - Creative Writing-WIN: Writing for Television-WIN

## Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 160, CRN 17375

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### Instructor Information

Jessica Walker, MFA  
Prof.  
Email: [jessica.walker@tamiu.edu](mailto:jessica.walker@tamiu.edu)  
Office: Pellegrino 204G  
Office Hours:  
Tues: 2:45-5:45 PM (In Person)  
Thurs: 3-4:00 PM (Online)

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### Times and Location

TR 6pm-7:20pm in Bullock Hall 207

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### Course Description

Exploration of and practicum in various genres of creative writing at the intermediate level. Guided by analysis of audience, technique, and style and critical reading of the work of established authors, as well as by craft essays, students will practice writing in genres including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, screenwriting, novel writing, writing for performance and illustrated texts as well as more specific genre classes, included but not limited to horror, mystery and long-form narrative journalism. Prerequisites: Three hours of sophomore literature or consent of instructor.  
Humanities Department, College of Arts & Sciences

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### 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.

### Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will:

- Deepen their understanding of television writing
- Gain greater understanding of why humans create art
- Develop their own creative writing process
- Deepen knowledge of their artistic aesthetic and style
- Identify artistic influences in themselves and others
- Read and analyze television shows from a writer's perspective
- Engage in analytical discussion of readings



- Conceptualize writing as a recursive process of drafting, revising and editing

Learn the process of taking writing from the page to video

- Cultivate and maintain a supportive artistic community

- Effectively and humanely supply criticism and feedback to peers

Effectively process criticism and feedback from peers and authority figures

Collaborate with peers in the production of a videoed scene

Direct and video-record their own scene

## Important Dates

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

## Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The TV Showrunner's Roadmap	Neil Landau	

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## Other Course Materials

*Breaking Bad*, Season 1 (Netflix or Killam Library)

Final Draft screenwriting software (free educational account provided)

All other readings will be distributed via Blackboard

## Grading Criteria

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

## Open Boilerplate

**COMMUNICATION POLICY:** Do not contact me using Blackboard's Course Messages platform. I will not see your message. My policy is to respond to student emails within two business days, though you will typically hear back from me much sooner.

If you opt for online office hours, email me and I will set up a meeting via Blackboard Collaborate.

### Course Description

In this class you will learn how to write for the television format by reading about the art form, watching and analyzing television shows, writing your own television pilot screenplay and producing a scene from your screenplay.

Be prepared to write and to have your writing discussed in class. This process of submitting and critiquing is the foundation of the creative writing workshop model. A goal of the course is to familiarize you with that model while building writing relationships and community that will benefit you as you continue your writing journey. However, unlike typical creative writing classes, major assignments in this class will also include an analytical essay and a video production.

### ASSIGNMENTS OVERVIEW AND GRADE BREAKDOWN



Analytical Essay	20 Percent
Pilot Screenplay	20 Percent
Video Production	20 Percent
Participation	15 Percent
Weekly Assignments	15 Percent

### ABOUT ME

I am a writer whose career spans many different genres and styles. I have worked in journalism, finance, corporate copywriting, marketing, music publishing and academia. My degree and most of my published work are in the field of creative writing but as an instructor I enjoy working with students of all levels with whatever type of writing advances their academic and life goals.

I teach writing because I enjoy teaching and writing. If you ever have any questions about writing in this class or beyond, do not hesitate to meet with me either during office hours or a scheduled meeting. I will be happy to hear from you!

### MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS FOR THIS CLASS:

**ANALYTICAL ESSAY:** You will be required to write and submit an essay analyzing the craft and artistic choices of a television show of your choosing. You will begin by watching an entire first season of any show you choose. You will then breakdown the components, craft and arc of the episodes to make cohesive observations about how the pilot and season function. You will also reflect on how you might apply tactics in the material to your own screenplay.

**SCREENPLAY:** You will write a screenplay (10-15 pages) for the pilot of a show of your own creation using elements and techniques we have discussed in the class.

### FINAL PROJECT/EXAM

Your final exam in this class will be in the form of a video. You will produce a scene (3-6 six minutes long) from your pilot screenplay. You will be assigned production groups and each student will be given one day of class time to work on any element of their scene with the group. We will watch the rough cuts of your scenes in the final "Film Festival" days of this class. The final cut will be due via Blackboard on the final exam date for this class, December 9 at 6 PM. Your participation during the production weeks will also play a major role in our final project grade. Failure to attend and participate during production weeks will result in a greatly diminished final project grade.

### WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

Most weeks you will be required to respond to the viewings, readings and course topics in the discussion forum on Blackboard. These posts are graded based on completion. If you demonstrate that you are doing the reading, following instructions and putting forth a good-faith effort you will receive credit.

### ABOUT WORKSHOP

Workshopping your works-in-progress will be a major feature of this course. Workshop is the dominant model in academic creative writing environments. This is a format that has its critics and we will discuss and acknowledge the pitfalls of workshop as well as the benefits.

You will be expected to engage in the workshop process both as a writer and a reader of peer writing. Each student will be workshopped at least two times. You will sign up for a date and submit a packet of poetry prior to class. Before your workshop, your peers will read your work and generate feedback. During the workshop, you will remain silent and listen to the readers' experience, though afterward you may comment and ask questions. I will provide more detailed information on this process in the Mock Workshop class.

**Late workshop submissions are not accepted and will result in a zero for the assignment.** These submissions should be drafts. They do not need to be perfect. You will not be graded based on the level of your expertise. But the poems do need to exist and must be distributed to your peers by the deadline to receive credit.

An unexcused absence the day of your workshop will result in a failing grade for that workshop.

### PARTICIPATION

Since you, the students (not me the teacher), are at the center of this class, participation is vital and I grade it accordingly. Student writers must come to class ready to discuss thoughts about the assigned content and peer work. Student contributions should also be respectful, thoughtful and aimed



at a greater understanding of published and peer work. I will assess both the quality and quantity of your participation. **Your attendance will be the largest factor in determining your participation grade since if you are not in class, you are not participating.**

I should hear your voice in class at least once per week, ideally once per class. In small groups, I will expect you to be an active participant with genuine contributions to the discussion. Respect of your classmates falls under participation. Failure to engage with classmates in a respectful manner will result in a greatly diminished participation grade.

In this class, you will also be assigned production groups to complete the scene that will serve as your final exam. You will be required to assist your peer on their assigned day and document that participation. Failure to adequately participate during your peer's production will result in a severe deduction on your own grade for the scene assignment.

#### CONTENT WARNING

Throughout this class, we will be watching television that contends with difficult and taboo parts of life. Specifically, we will be watching season 1 of *Breaking Bad*, a show about manufacturing methamphetamine and drug cartels. The show includes sex, drugs, profanity, violence, cruelty, and other disturbing content. If you have a diagnosed condition or disability that may be triggered by such content, please let me know and I will consult with disability services to accommodate you.

Your own writing and video production and that of your peers may take up disturbing and or vulgar content but may not violate university policy on civil rights and respect. Your videoed content should not be pornographic or require anyone in your production group to engage in behavior they find immoral or unethical. You may also choose to use outside actors and crew if you wish. If you find another student's writing disturbing, you may respectfully address that in critique and production group. If another student finds your writing disturbing, you will respectfully listen to their experience as a reader. When you are in your production group, you are not required as an actor to engage in behaviors or use language that you find uncomfortable. You may, however, be required to assist in non-acting duties, such as filming, prop work, set design, script-managing, etc.

First and foremost, we will always assume the best from one another, and critique based on that belief. We are here to support authentically writing about human experience with the aim of greater understanding and connection. To do so, we must maintain open minds and open hearts and we must bravely contend with all parts of life and the world—good and bad.

#### MANDATORY REPORTING

Art often takes up troubling personal content. You are free to write about whatever aspects of life feels vital to you. If you do choose to write about sexual discrimination, harassment or violence, be aware I am a mandatory reporter under university policy and I must report suspected abuse to the university.

TAMU's policy on mandatory reporting states: "When alleged or suspected sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or related retaliation is experienced by, observed by, or made known to an employee or student, the employee or student is required to promptly report that information."

#### CLASS TECHNOLOGY

In this course, you will have online activities such as discussion boards, journaling, reviewing lectures, and peer-reviewing assignments outside of class in Blackboard. This class requires reliable access to a computer. Webcams are an option for office hour interactions but are not required.

You will also be required to watch a season of the television show *Breaking Bad* as well as a season of your own choosing outside of class. You are responsible for arranging your own viewing technology and content, though you may consult with Killam Library or me if you are lacking resources.

Do not use your electronic devices while I am speaking or during full-class discussion. There will be many times when use of electronic devices is encouraged—such as for class writing and producing videos—and there will be times when it is acceptable to use the Internet to share information or images with the class. But use of electronic devices anytime anyone is addressing the full class will result in dismissal from class, an absence for the day and a decreased participation grade.

#### MY ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order to be successful in this class, your regular attendance is essential. Class meetings will be used to complete in-class writing assignments and group work, to produce your pilot scene, to participate in peer review activities, to receive information about assignments and expectations, and to discuss reading material. Beyond the damage absences can have on your class participation grade, *missing more than 4 classes without full documentation of a university-excused absence will lower your final grade 5 points for each additional class absence. Your grade can be lowered even down to an "F" if the absences continue.* I will send you one written warning when your course grade begins to suffer due to missed classes. After you have been warned once, it is your responsibility to correct your course.

Attendance will be directly linked to your participation grade and to reports generated by your peers in the production phase of this class.



If you miss class due to an excused absence, email me documentation of the excuse. If you do not have an excused absence, there is no need to email me. I will not respond to every student who misses class and I don't need to know the specifics of an unexcused absence. I have dozens of student absences a week and cannot supply individualized email responses when you have an unexcused absence.

If you miss class, it is your responsibility to determine what relevant information you missed. You have three options for catching up on missed material: ask peers, review the learning module and/or come see me during office hours. Do not email me asking me to recount what you missed. Email is not an appropriate method of communication for this purpose.

Official University absences will be recognized. If you need to be absent for any reason, it is very important that you make me aware of your absence as soon as possible.

Failure to communicate and document the reason behind an excused absence within a reasonable time frame will result in the absence being marked as unexcused.

For further information on attendance, see TAMIU's official attendance policy below:

#### **TAMIU'S ATTENDANCE POLICY**

With the exception of online courses, students are expected to attend every class in person 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. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence (physical or virtual), 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 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. The right to view recorded class meetings depends upon receiving an excused absence from the faculty member teaching the class.

#### **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

##### Week 1 (August 26/28)

T: Introductions, Syllabus Review

R: How to Talk About Television

**WATCH:** The opening scene of the pilot of your choosing

**SUBMIT:** Assignment 1

##### Week 2 (Sept. 2/4)

T:

**WATCH:** *Breaking Bad*, Season 1, episode 1

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 1 & *Breaking Bad* pilot script

**SUBMIT:** Assignment 1



R:

**WATCH:** Breaking Bad, Season 1, Episode 2

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 3

Week 3 (Sept. 9/11)

T: **WATCH:** Breaking Bad, Season 1, Episode 3

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 4

R **WATCH:** Breaking Bad, Season 1, Episode 4

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 5 & 6

**Week 4: (Sept. 16/18)**

T: **WATCH:** Breaking Bad, Season 1, Episode 5

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 7

R: **WATCH:** *Breaking Bad*, Season 1, Episode 5

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 8

**Week 5 (Sept. 23/25)**

T **WATCH:** *Breaking Bad*, Season 1, Episode 6

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 9

**R Independent Study Day (NO CLASS, Drafting Day)**

**Week 6: (Sept. 30/Oct. 2)**

R: **WATCH:** *Breaking Bad*, Season 1, Episode 7

**READ:** *TV Showrunner's Roadmap*, Chapter 10

R: **Writing the Essay and Applying Concepts**

**SUBMIT:** Draft of Essay 1 Before Class

**Week 7 (Oct. 7/9)**

T: The Pilot

**WATCH:** Students' Choice

R: No Class: Independent Writing Day (tentative)

**Friday, Oct. 10, 5 PM Analytical Essay Due**

**Week 8 (Oct. 14/16)**

T Workshop 1

R Workshop 2

**Week 9 (Oct. 21/23)**

T: Workshop 3

R: Workshop 4

**Week 10 (Oct. 28/30)**



T Workshop 5

R Workshop 6

Week 11 (Nov. 4/6)

T Production Planning and Intro to Groups

R Production 1

Week 12 (Nov. 11/13)

T Production 2

R Production 3

Week 13 (Nov. 18/20)

T Production 4

R Production 5

Week 14 (Nov. 25)

T Film Festival (Rough Cuts)

Week 15 (Dec. 2)

T Film Festival (Rough Cuts)

## Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/26	Introduction to Television Writing		
9/2	Breaking Bad		
9/9	Breaking Bad		
9/16	Breaking Bad		
9/23	Breaking Bad		
9/30	Breaking Bad		
10/7	Writing the Essay & Analyzing TV Pilots		
10/14	Workshop		
10/21	Workshop		
10/28	Workshop		
11/4	Production		
11/11	Production		
11/18	Production		
11/25	Film Festival (Rough Cuts)		
12/2	Film Festival (Rough Cuts)		
12/9	Final Project Due		

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## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.