



# GEOG 3310 - Human Impact on the Envrmt: Human Impact on the Envrmt-WIN

## Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 101, CRN 16924

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### Instructor Information

Andrew Hilburn, PhD  
Associate Professor of Geography  
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Office: AIC 340  
Office Hours:  
MW 9-930am  
T 9-11am

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### Times and Location

MWF 1:10pm-2:05pm in Bullock Hall 201

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### Course Description

This class is an assessment of human impacts on the environment. This class will examine the impacts of human society on landscapes, the atmosphere, hydrology, and plants and animals. General themes include population and scarcity, the commons, risks and hazards, markets and commodities, and environmental ethics, among others while specific climate change, the social construction of nature, trees, bottled water, wolves, waste, and meat, to name a few.

Social Sciences 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.

### Additional Course Information

**INTRODUCTION** - This class will examine the interrelations of human society and the environment. Each week we will engage a new theme related to the nature-society interplay through readings beforehand and discussion during class. Besides providing an interesting and lively forum for discussion, the overall goals of this class are to both provide a broad survey of human-environmental geography as well as lead the participants toward a particular interest within this broad sub-discipline of geography and allied social sciences. We will situate the reading for this reading and **writing intensive class** within the textbook. You must have (buy or rent) this book for this class but as it is a paperback and widely published, you should not spend more than \$25-50 bucks, depending on the seller. It's the only book you'll need too. Additionally, supplemental content we'll cover will come in digital form, pdf or html, and will be posted to the course BlackBoard site. Stay posted for announcements regarding these readings. **I do not give out my notes, online or otherwise.**

**EXAMS** - I will give two (2) exams (mid-term and final) throughout the course of this semester. They will reflect the class notes, lecture material, readings, and any other material given to you. The format will be an online, open-book, take home set of essays that you will have one week to draft and submit. The final exam will be given one week prior to its due date/time, which is on **December 3rd at 330pm**, which is the closing time for the exam session listed by the College in the same room in which we have class. It will serve as the 2nd exam and you will have the entire week and exam



session to complete it. If you have any special needs or accommodation, please consult the section regarding ADA compliance below. **The exam portion of your final grade is worth 20% of your final grade.**

**WRITING/READING/ATTENDANCE ASSIGNMENTS** - This is a WIN (writing intensive) class, and thus reading, discussion, and writing will comprise a large part of what we do in class. There will be weekly reading and writing assignments that students will be required to do. Success in this class will be contingent on doing the readings and writing the associated writing assignments. Most of the readings will be excerpts from your textbook or a particular reading downloaded from Blackboard or both. You will submit your writing/reading assignments through Blackboard. Attendance and assignments that record it will be turned in too. A schedule will be provided. Stayed tuned for updates regarding the schedule. **The writing/reading assignments portion of your grade is worth 60% of your final grade.**

**RESEARCH PAPER ASSIGNMENT** - As a capstone to this class, you will write a final paper on a topic related to the theme of the class. It will be anywhere eight (8) quality pages in length. The writing process for this paper will have four stages. First, you will need to have submitted a short, paragraph-length prospectus (topic description and approach) for your paper by the end of Week 3. Secondly, you will provide me with an outline of your paper and a list of 6-10 sources by the end of Week 5. Thirdly, you will have a rough draft of the paper due to me by Week 10. Lastly, your final draft will be due to me no later than the end of Week 12. I will provide feedback on all stages of your paper. These papers will be turned in via a Turnitin-enabled digital drop box on BlackBoard. Also, you will have to visit the TAMU Writing Center at least once OR submit your paper to them for perusal. Schedule an appointment and provide me with evidence. **The research paper portion of your grade is worth 20% of your final grade.**

#### AI POLICY – PLEASE READ!!!

**No artificial intelligence resources may be used to produce WRITTEN content for this class.** I want YOUR take on these things. Providing that involves reading, thinking, and writing. This will involve some effort but it will be worthwhile. Will your writing be perfect? No. Is that okay? Yes. Is my writing even good? Not really. Do I try to write better? Yes. That's what I want out of you.

Again, just read the stuff and answer the questions using your intellect. It doesn't have to be perfect but I want your thoughts and opinions. Don't sacrifice your brain to the billionaire-run, resource-devouring, planet-killing brainrot generators that are here to delete our economic futures through labor "efficiencies". No AI slop will be accepted for credit. I hate reading it. It's awful. You are here to work out your mind.

I will check for AI. I know the checkers can be defeated. I know they can deliver false positives. Use your own mind. I don't mind mistakes or even bad writing. I mainly want you all to PRACTICE. That's what we are here to do. Practice.

## Student Learning Outcomes

The goals of this class are:

1. Understand what constitutes the field of political and cultural ecology.
2. Analyze the various paradigms for understanding the nature-society dialectic.
3. Evaluate objects of concern with the conceptual tools developed from objectives 1 and 2.

## Important Dates

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

## Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Environment and Society: A Critical Introduction. 3rd Ed	Robbins, P., J. Hintz, and S. Moore	

## Other Course Materials

Additional readings and content will be made available via Blackboard.

## Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100



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

## Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/25	Week 1 - Course Intro and Fundamentals	Skim Chapter 1 in reader	No assignment due this week Take poll by 8/31 @ 1159pm
9/1	Week 2 - Population and Scarcity	Read Chapter 2 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Population and Scarcity	Reading Assignment: Population and Scarcity due 9/7 @ 1159pm
9/8	Week 3 - Markets and Commodities	Read Chapter 3 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Markets and Commodities	Reading Assignment: Markets and Commodities due 9/14 @ 1159pm
9/15	Week 4 - Institutions and the "Commons"	Read Chapter 4 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Institutions and the "Commons"	Reading Assignment: Institutions and the "Commons" due 9/21 @ 1159pm Paper Topic due 9/21 @ 1159pm
9/22	Week 5 - Risks and Technology	Read Chapter 6 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Risks and Technologies	Reading Assignment: Risks and Technologies due 9/28 @ 1159pm
9/29	Week 6 - Political Economy	Read Chapter 7 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Political Economy	Reading Assignment: Political Economy due 10/5 @ 1159pm.
10/6	Week 7 - Social Construction of Nature	Read Chapter 8 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Social Construction of Nature	Reading Assignment: Social Construction of Nature due 10/12 @ 1159pm Exam 1 Due 10/12 @ 1159pm
10/13	Week 8 - Wolves	Read Chapter 13 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Wolves	Reading Assignment: Wolves due 10/19 @ 1159pm
10/20	Week 9 - Lawns	Read Chapter 16 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Lawns	Reading Assignment: Lawns due 10/26 @ 1159pm
10/27	Week 10 - Trees	Read Chapter 12 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Trees	Reading Assignment: Trees due 11/2 @ 1159pm Paper Outline due 10/26 @ 1159pm
11/3	Week 11 - Bottled Water	Read Chapter 17 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Bottled Water	Reading Assignment: Bottled Water due 11/9 @ 1159pm
11/10	Week 12 - Trash	Read excerpt given to you and do Reading Assignment: Trash	Reading Assignment: Trash due 11/16 @ 1159pm Final Paper Due 11/16 @ 1159pm
11/17	Week 13 - Carbon Dioxide	Read Chapter 11 in reader and do Reading Assignment: Carbon Dioxide	Reading Assignment: Carbon Dioxide due 11/23 @ 1159pm
11/24	Week 14 - Recap and Thanksgiving		
12/1	Week 15 - Final Exam Due		Final Exam Due at 330pm on 12/3

## 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.