



PSCI 2305 - American National Government

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 161, CRN 16751

Instructor Information

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Assistant Professor

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Office Hours:

Mondays 9:30am - 10:30am

Tuesdays 4:30pm - 5:30pm

Wednesdays 9:30am - 10:30am

Additional hours available by appointment.

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** The contents in this syllabus are subject to change. If a change is made, there will be an announcement on Blackboard.

Times and Location

MW 4:25pm-5:45pm in Pellegrino Hall 112

Course Description

A survey of national government in the United States with emphasis upon the Constitution, government structure, and processes. European background; federal, state, and interstate relations; rights and obligations of citizens; political parties; group organization; the legislative process; and the executive, judicial, and administrative functions in federal government. Prerequisites: Completion of Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Reading requirements, ENGL 1301, or appropriate level developmental course sequence.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Student Learning Outcomes

By course completion, you should demonstrate a deeper understanding of the following through exams and assignments:

- The interaction between politics and government.
- The structure and institutions of American government.
- The political process in the United States and other democratic societies.
- The role of individuals and civil society groups (such as political parties and interest groups) in influencing government behavior.
- Key events that shaped the rights and liberties of all American citizens.



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	American Government, 3rd edition	Krutz & Walskiewicz	13: 9781938168178

Other Course Materials

If additional readings are assigned, they will be provided in hard copy or online by the professor.

You are required to purchase Respondus Monitor, a proctoring service that helps ensure fair testing for your three exams. It may also be used for your journal assignments (TBD).

For more information: <https://www.tamtu.edu/distance/technology/respondus-ldb-and-monitor.shtml> (<https://www.tamtu.edu/distance/technology/respondus-ldb-and-monitor.shtml/>)

Grading Criteria

Evaluation

Weekly Assignments	200 points
Exam # 1 (Oct. 1)	175 points
Exam # 2 (Nov. 5)	250 points
Final (Dec. 3)	375 point

Student Engagement & Participation

In Class Polling	Loss of points possible (see polling policy for more details)
Final Reflection (optional)	Grade Boost if applicable
Critical Response(s) (optional)	Grade Boost if applicable

(TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS)	1000 points
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Additional Information

Exam Preparation.

Exams may include a variety of question types (multiple choice, true/false, essay, etc.) and will evaluate your knowledge of both the readings assigned as well as the material covered in class lectures, including video & audio clips presented in class. It is therefore imperative to pay attention not only to class lectures, but also to the audio and visual supplements used in class.

The class lectures are not meant to replace your own reading of the textbook, but to supplement it. Success in the course requires reading the assigned materials and regularly attending class. Information about the exams will be discussed in class. If you are absent from class, ask one of your classmates and/or visit the instructor at his office hours. (Please note that make-up exams will be given only in the case of family emergencies and serious illness, and I will require you to document your illness or emergency. In order to make up an exam, you must contact me in advance of the exam.)

Weekly Journal Assignments.



There will be weekly out-of-class assignments (due every Sunday by midnight) during the semester. The assignments can be completed in your Blackboard journal. Do not upload a document. Doing so, will result in a loss of 10 pts. Instead, copy and paste your text into the text box. See the Journal tab on Blackboard for a complete set of requirements, including the use of LLMs (e.g. ChatGPT & Google Gemini).

In your posts you will balance responding to the prompt, engaging with the reading(s) and highlighting "the personal and the particular" throughout. See Blackboard and attend class for more details.

Late Policy

Extensions will not be granted for forgetting. However, late work submitted within one week of the original deadline will be accepted, with a maximum of half-credit awarded. If more than a week has passed, students must meet with the instructor to discuss their circumstances before arrangements for makeup work can be considered.

I do not discuss grades over email. If you would like to discuss your progress in class, attend office hours or set up another time to meet.

Grade Boost Opportunities.

There are three extra assignments you can complete to set yourself up for a possible grade boost. You are not required to complete these.

First, you have the option to submit a critical response to a week's reading (1-2 pages) before midnight on the Friday of the week's reading. Submit your paper on blackboard in the "Grade Boost" folder under "Content." You are only permitted to submit two critical responses—one before and after week 8. See the PDF document, "How to write a critical response" under Content on Blackboard.

Second, you have the option to submit a reflection on what you learned in this class throughout the semester (1-2 pages). This assignment is due on Blackboard before midnight on the night you take the final exam. For tips on writing a reflective essay, see the pdf document "How To Write a Reflective Essay" under Content on Blackboard. Submit your paper on blackboard in the "Grade Boost" folder under "Content."

These assignments may boost your grade if you are a point, or a few points, away from a higher grade. For example, if you have a 79 as your final grade, the grade boost assignment will be used to justify boosting your grade to an 80. On the other hand, if your final grade is a 72, the grade boost assignment will not help boosting your grade. Whether it helps at any other grade point will depend on the overall class grade distribution. Consequently, your eligibility for a grade boost will be assessed once the final grades for the class have been calculated.

* Note that you will not receive grades throughout the semester for these submissions. Instead, after calculating all your grades at the end of the semester, I will evaluate the quality of your submission(s) to determine if your grade merits a boost or no effect at all. If you'd like to know how you are doing on this assignment during the semester, feel free to meet with me during my office hours or by appointment.

In-Class Polling Questions.

In-class polling questions will be presented through Echo360. Instructions will be provided in class. Full credit will be earned through participation, not for providing the correct answer. There are no makeup opportunities for this assignment. If you fail to complete this assignment nine times, you will lose 100 points off your total score. Each additional class thereafter will result in a 20 point loss per class. If you are in class but have technical difficulties, send me a course message on Blackboard letting me know. On days when no poll is conducted, all students will automatically receive participation credit.

Attendance.

Success in this course requires that you attend class. Attending class means arriving on time and attentively remaining in class to completion.

A student's absence from class is interpreted as disregard for his or her success in the course, unless the student explains otherwise. If you are a high school student, your school's attendance policy will be followed. If your absence is due to participation in TAMU athletics, you are required to submit your schedule as a Blackboard course message at the beginning of the semester. Make certain to highlight the days you will miss.

If you are in search of notes from a class you did not attend, ask your classmates for assistance. The instructor is happy to meet with you during office hours to discuss any material.

Electronic Devices.

There are many benefits offered by electronic devices, as was highlighted during the pandemic. One of the downsides is their propensity to distract. Challenge yourself to use your technology to facilitate your education. The alternative is to allow technology—or more precisely those behind certain technologies—to exploit you. For example, not attempting to resist distraction allows wealthy companies (Meta, IG, Snapchat, TikTok etc.) to profit from your (dis)engagement. Meanwhile, as you scroll through feeds, the opportunity to receive an education passes you by.

As a general rule, no one in class should hear sounds coming from any electronic device during class. I ask that you be respectful of your fellow classmates and the instructor when using electronic devices. For example, you should not be staring into your device (e.g., phone, laptop, or tablet)



for extended periods of time. I reserve the right to interpret inappropriate use, and to ban individuals, or the class as a whole, if this privilege is abused. Earbuds should not be used during class time.

*Recording audio or video from class is prohibited. Sharing class video or audio can result in academic penalties and consequences. If you require class audio for an accommodation, visit the Student Counseling and Disability Services office (see below).

AI Policy.

On weekly journal assignments students are required to use an LLM (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini) to complete that assignment. Refer to the blackboard for detailed instructions and an example to guide you in completing your assignment.

On exams you are not permitted to use LLMs or any other type of AI assistance.

Be mindful that academic dishonesty, in any form, is never permitted. Carefully read the plagiarism section below.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/25	Introduction & Chapter 1	Begin Chapter 1 - American Government & Civic Engagement	
9/1	Chapter 1	Chapter 1: American Government & Civic Engagement	Journal Due on Sunday (09/07) before midnight
9/8	Chapter 2	Chapter 2: The Constitution and Its Origins	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
9/15	Chapters 4 & 5	Chapter 4: Civil Liberties & Chapter 5: Civil Rights	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
9/22	Chapter 3	Chapter 3: American Federalism	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
9/29	Exam Week	Exam Review - Chapters 1 - 5	Exam on W - No Journals Due on Exam Week
10/6	Chapter 6	Chapter 6: The Politics of Public Opinion	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
10/13	Chapter 8	Chapter 8: The Media	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
10/20	Chapter 7	Chapter 7: Voting and Elections	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
10/27	Chapter 9 - 10	Chapter 9: Political Parties & Chapter 10: Interest Groups and Lobbying	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
11/3	Exam Week	Exam Review Chapters 6 - 10	Exam on W - No Journals Due on Exam Week
11/10	Chapter 13	Chapter 13: The Courts	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
11/17	Chapter 12	Chapter 12 The Presidency & Begin Chapter 11 Congress	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
11/24	Chapter 11	Chapter 11 Congress No Class - Wednesday, November 27th	Journal Due on Sunday before midnight
12/1	Final Exam Review & Final Exam	Final Exam Review - Monday, December 1st Final Exam - Wednesday December 3rd at 4:25 pm	

Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes

[REMOVE the Core-Curriculum Learning Outcomes which do NOT apply to this course. ***Please don't forget to remove these instructions.***]

Core-Curriculum Learning Outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking Skills (CT)** - creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
2. **Communication Skills (COM)** - effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
3. **Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS)** - manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions



4. **Teamwork (TW)** - ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
5. **Social Responsibility (SR)** - intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
6. **Personal Responsibility (PR)** - ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

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.tamui.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.tamui.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml> (<http://www.tamui.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@tamui.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.tamui.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamui.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@tamui.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.tamui.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamui.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@tamui.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt, at <https://www.tamui.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamui.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.