



PSCI 3308 - Latin American Pol Systems

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 101, CRN 17421

Instructor Information

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Office Hours:

M & W 10:45 am - 11:45 am and 1:10 pm - 2:00 pm

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I very much prefer you use Blackboard Messages instead of email

Times and Location

MWF 12pm-12:55pm in Pellegrino Hall 115

Course Description

A comparative analysis of the major political systems of Latin America that emphasizes the role of political cultures, elites, and inter-systematic factors.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Course Objective

This course is an introductory and comparative survey of the major political systems of Latin America. We will start with a survey of Latin American political, economic, and social history to provide context, and then investigate the politics and political systems of several of the major countries of Latin America. We will examine political institutions such as political party systems and elections, while stressing the critical roles of functional groups and social forces such as the military, the Catholic Church, landowners, industrialists, and peasant-worker majorities. Furthermore, we will place special emphasis on the meaning of democracy in Latin American contexts.

Course Guidelines

Preparation:

Reading the Textbook: Students need to carefully read and analyze the assigned chapters. Please remember that for each hour in class, students are expected to spend 2-3 hours of study outside of class, and students need to read the assigned materials thoughtfully if they wish to do well in the course.

Reading at the college-level requires you to:

- Take notes (or highlight) the major points;
- write down questions or concerns;
- summarize important paragraphs or sections; and
- be sure to define all the key terms [these are highlighted in the text, defined in the textbook's margins, and listed at the end of each chapter, plus also defined in the end-of-book glossary].

Expectations:



1. You are expected to read the appropriate chapters in the textbook as you progress through the course. Read each chapter thoroughly and read each chapter a minimum of three times. Skim the chapter before you review each chapter's online presentation to get an idea about the subject matter about to be presented. Then after you have reviewed the online presentation read the chapter more seriously and thoroughly, taking notes or at least highlighting. Remember that you will be responsible on exams for all the material in the chapter, even if the Blackboard presentation does not cover all the chapter's material. Lastly, in preparation for the exam read the chapter(s) again.
2. Chapter/module quizzes. We will have an online Blackboard quiz for each chapter.
3. We will have four exams during the course: three mid-term exams and a final exam. You will take these online and must use Respondus Lockdown Browser for the exams.
4. The textbook contains a glossary of terms with definitions, please use it.

We Need Help! Discussion:

This is a special "side" discussion located in every learning module where you may publically ask questions about the course. This is public because it is likely that others who are, maybe, a bit more shy have the same question. However, if you have a private concern, use the Blackboard email function to ask your question. I will always try to respond within 36 hours [except most Sundays]. These are NOT graded.

Student Learning Outcomes

by the end of the semester students will demonstrate through examination:

1. an understanding of the evolution of Latin American political systems;
2. an awareness of the Historical, social, and economic context within which Latin American political systems are located (including political culture, class, race, and urban and rural cleavages);
3. upper-division level factual knowledge of the political processes in the specific countries covered in this course, focusing on their democratic content (or lack thereof);
4. the ability to examine Latin American governmental policies as they affect citizen rights and social and economic equality;
5. a reasonable ability to imagine and analyze likely future political scenarios in Latin America based on projections from current political trends.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Understanding Latin American Politics	Gregory Weeks	978-1-4696-5224-5

Other Course Materials

To go to the bookstore, **click here** (<https://www.bkstr.com/texasaminternationalstore/home/>). In this course use the free textbook I provide below, but if you wish you may buy a physical copy. A paperback version of this book is usually only about \$22. Try: [bigwords.com](https://www.bigwords.com)

Free online Edition of the Text Book is located in the Blackboard course. This program would not accept the URL as a link, but you can write it down and copy into your browser: <https://omp.charlotte.edu/library/catalog/book/7>

Grading Criteria

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



Additional Information and Grading

Quizzes:

There are 13 graded chapter/module quizzes in the course. These are a part of the grading/ evaluation process. Quizzes will be open for five [5] days. For each quiz you have two chances. That is to say, that you may take each quiz twice, if you wish, and the higher grade will apply.

Exams and Make-Ups.

Exams will be multiple choice. These will be opened in the Blackboard course for a limited time (three [3] days). You MUST take the exam sometime during the designated three [3] day period. If you miss the deadline you have missed the exam and will earn a ZERO (0). The online exams are multiple choice. They are timed. You have 1 hour for each mid-term exam and 2 hours for the final exam. The final exam will also include a take-home essay question that requires some informal citation [informal means I only need the author's name and year of publication]. Please remember the textbook is a likely reference.

Exam make-ups are generally NOT allowed since we are already dropping the low exam, but I will review each request for a make-up.

Writing Project Assignment/ Journal Article Review

Each student will write a two to three-page double-spaced article summary and evaluation to be turned in online by 5 November. Take one article or chapter on Latin American government, history, politics, or economics and summarize it, and then write an evaluation of the article or chapter. Textbook pages 340 through 348 list many articles from which you may choose. Not all in the author's bibliography are articles or chapters some are whole books. Choose only from the articles or chapters.

AI Policy:

AI may be used as a possibly helpful research tool, but do take the time to check if the citations/ resources the AI tool lists actually exist, and that the resource really says what the AI tool claims. You may **NOT** merely copy and paste the AI output.

Final Exam Essay Rubric: Forty percent [40%] of the Final Exam grade is based upon this "take-home" essay, but it will be simply graded out of 100 possible points. We will let the Gradebook apply the designated value itself. You should note that it is possible based upon the professor's judgment to earn marks in between the rubric assigned point values.

100: The most perfectly developed essay of a minimum of three paragraphs without spelling or grammar errors and the essay directly and accurately answers the essay question and uses examples to explain.

90: A clearly superior and well developed essay response of three paragraphs with only minor spelling errors or grammar mistakes and the essay accurately answers the essay question and uses examples to explain, but with very minor weakness.

80: A good essay response of three paragraphs with some spelling errors or grammar mistakes and the essay answers the essay question and uses examples to explain, but with some problems. Or the essay is accurate, but a bit short.

70: An adequate essay response of at least two paragraphs with spelling errors or grammar mistakes and the essay answers the essay question with errors or omissions and without giving example(s).

60: An essay response that shows an honest effort but is too short or rife with spelling errors or grammar mistakes and the essay answers the essay question with many errors or omissions and without giving example(s).

50: An essay response that shows little effort and is too short and rife with spelling errors or grammar mistakes and the essay answers the essay question with many errors or omissions or is off subject and without giving example(s).

Respondus LockDown Browser Requirement

This course requires the use of Respondus LockDown Browser for online MC exams.

Watch this video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser: <https://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml>

Download Instructions

Click the Student Support top-middle tab located in Blackboard. Scroll down to the Instructional Technologies section and click on the Respondus LockDown Browser icon.

Once Installed



- Open LockDown Browser
- Log into Blackboard Learn
- Navigate to the test and begin

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

Guidelines

When taking an online test, follow these guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted
- Before starting the exam, know how much time is available for it, and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Turn off all mobile devices, phones, etc. and don't have them within reach
- Clear your area of all external materials - books, papers, other computers, or devices
- Remain at your desk or workstation for the duration of the test
- Respondus LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted.
- Several resources are available if you encounter problems with Respondus LockDown Browser.
- The Windows and Mac versions of Respondus LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues.
- If you have problems downloading, installing, or taking a test with Respondus LockDown Browser, email the TAMIU eLearning Team at elearning@tamiu.edu.

Course Grading:

There will be four exams, the first three will represent fifty percent (50%), and a comprehensive final exam that will represent thirty percent (30%) of your final grade, thirteen (13) end-of-chapter quizzes for ten percent (10%) and participation (in the online asynchronous discussion) which is ten percent (10%) of your grade.

Extra Credit? Selected outside lectures related to Political Science or Latin America or South Texas, but to earn any extra credit you will have to turn-in a writing assignment describing the extra credit event in a single paragraph via Blackboard message.

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	25%
Exam 3	25%
minus lowest exam	- 25%
Final Exam Essay	10%
Final Exam	15%
Writing Project	15%
Quizzes	12%
2 lowest quiz scores dropped	-2%
Total	100%

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Mon	8/25	Course Introduction and Syllabus	Syllabus & get familiar with Blackboard Chapter 1	Quiz 1 due by August 27 at 11:59 pm
Wed	8/27	Latin American History	Chapter 2	
Fri	8/29	Latin American History	Chapter 2	
Mon	9/1	Latin American History	Chapter 2	Quiz 2 due by September 3 at 11:59 pm
Wed	9/3	ESMOAS	https://esmoas.org/index.html	Explore the web site
Fri	9/5	Latin American Democracy	Chapter 3	
Mon	9/8	Latin American Democracy	Chapter 3	Quiz 3 due by September 9 at 11:59 pm
Wed	9/10	Latin American Culture	Chapter 4	
Fri	9/12	Exam 1 Latin American Culture	Chapters 1 - 4 and lectures Chapter 4	Quiz 4 due by September 14 at 11:59 pm



Mon	9/15	Exam 1	Chapters 1 - 4	Exam open from 10 am - 8 pm, due by 8 pm; allow 60 minutes. This exam is online and requires Respondus Lockdown Browser.
Wed	9/17	Mexico	Chapter 5	
Fri	9/19	Mexico	Chapter 5	
Mon	9/22	Mexico	Chapter 5	Quiz 5 September 24 at 11:59 pm
Wed	9/24	Central America	Chapter 6	
Fri	9/26	Central America	Chapter 6	Quiz 6 September 28 at 11:59 pm
Mon	9/29	Central America	Chapter 6	Quiz 6 due by October 1 at 11:59 pm Graduate Applications and payment due on 30 September.
Wed	10/1	Cuba	Chapter 7	
Fri	10/3	Cuba	Chapter 7	
Mon	10/6	Bolivia, Ecuador, & Peru Cuba	Chapter 8 Chapter 7	Quiz 7 due by October 7 at 11:59 pm
Wed	10/8	Exam 2	Chapter 5 - 7	Exam open from 10 am - 8 pm, due by 8 pm; allow 60 minutes. This exam is online and requires Respondus Lockdown Browser.
Fri	10/10	Bolivia, Ecuador, & Peru	Chapter 8	
Mon	10/13	Bolivia, Ecuador, & Peru	Chapter 8	
Wed	10/15	Bolivia, Ecuador, & Peru	Chapter 8	Quiz 8 due by 19 October at 11:59 pm
Fri	10/17	Colombia	Chapter 9	
Mon	10/20	Colombia	Chapter 9	
Wed	10/22	Colombia	Chapter 9	Quiz 9 due by 22 October at 11:59 pm
Fri	10/24	Venezuela	Chapter 10	Quiz 10 October 26 at 11:59 pm
Mon	10/27	Venezuela	Chapter 10	
Wed	10/29	Venezuela	Chapter 10	Quiz 10 due by October 29 at 11:59 pm
Fri	10/31	Exam 3	Chapters 8 - 10	Exam open from 10 am - 8 pm, due by 8 pm; allow 60 minutes. This exam is online and requires Respondus Lockdown Browser.
Mon	11/3	Brazil	Chapter 11	Registration for Wintermester and Spring opens.
Wed	11/5	Brazil	Chapter 11	Writing Assignment due by 11:59 pm on November 5
Fri	11/7	Brazil	Chapter 11	Quiz 11 due by November 9 at 11:59 pm
Mon	11/10	Argentina	Chapter 12	Quiz 12 due by November 12 at 11:59 pm
Wed	11/12	Argentina	Chapter 12	
Fri	11/14	ESMOAS		ESMOAS in Houston
Mon	11/17	ESMOAS		Study day
Wed	11/19	Argentina	Chapter 12	Quiz 12 due by November 19 at 11:59 pm
Fri	11/21	Chile	Chapter 13	Quiz 13 due by 23 November at 11:59 pm
Mon	11/24	Chile	Chapter 13	
Wed	11/26	Thanksgiving		Off
Fri	11/28	Thanksgiving		Off
Mon	12/1	Chile	Chapter 13	Quiz 13 due by 2 December at 11:59 pm
Wed	12/3	Final Exam Week		
Fri	12/5	Final Exam Week		



Mon 12/8 Final Exam

1/2 is comprehensive and 1/2 is chapters 11 - 13

Exam open from 10 am - 8 pm, due by 8 pm; allow 120 minutes. This exam is online and requires Respondus Lockdown Browser. Final Exam take-home essay due by 11:59 pm on December 8

Wed 12/10 Final Exam Week

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.

TAMU 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 TAMU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.
- **Student Right of Appeal:** Faculty will notify students immediately via the student's TAMU 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 TAMU 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.

TAMU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMU 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 TAMU 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.tamiau.edu/adminis/police/safezone/index.shtml> for more information.

Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to \$100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to \$250,000 and imprisonment. Copyright laws do not allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Office of Student Counseling and Disability Services located in Student Center 126. This office will contact the faculty member to recommend specific, reasonable accommodations. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodations only when provided documentation by the Student Counseling and Disability Services office.

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule (Section 3.07) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.08), which includes the "Leave of Absence Request" form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (URL: <http://www.tamiau.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml> (<http://www.tamiau.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.shtml/>)).

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. If a student would like to file a complaint for discrimination due to his or her pregnant/parenting status, please contact the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site: <https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit/>).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiau.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodations. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students at the University, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU Student Handbook. As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (<https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml/>)).

Anti-Discrimination/Title IX

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt, at <https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit/>), and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.



Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a “W.” To qualify for an “incomplete” and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a “W”, and the student must be passing the course;
2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an “Incomplete Grade Contract” and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the “I” to automatically be converted to an “F”; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college. This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an “incomplete” may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

WIN Contracts

The Department of Biology and Chemistry does not permit WIN contracts. For other departments within the college, WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to graduating seniors. Only courses offered by full-time TAMIU faculty or TAMIU instructors are eligible to be contracted for the WIN requirement. However, a WIN contract for a course taught by an adjunct may be approved, with special permission from the department chair and dean. Students must seek approval before beginning any work for the WIN Contract. No student will contract more than one course per semester. Summer WIN Contracts must continue through both summer sessions.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Final Examination

All courses in all colleges must include a comprehensive exam or performance and be given on the date and time specified by the Academic Calendar and the Final Exam schedule published by the Registrar’s Office. In the College of Arts & Sciences all final exams must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. The Telus app is available to download directly from TELUS (tamiu.edu) (<https://www.tamiu.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.