



SOCI 5303 - Seminar in Sociological Theory

Fall 2025 Syllabus, Section 162, CRN 17450

Instructor Information

Dr. Pamela Neumann, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Sociology

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Office Hours:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30-1:30pm and by appointment

Times and Location

T 6pm-8:45pm in Bullock Hall 206

Course Description

Study of the process of formulation of theory. In-depth analysis of the work of classical, contemporary, multicultural and postmodern theorists.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

This class provides students with the knowledge and tools needed to analyze and apply social theories to real world social problems. We will examine recent research in critical areas of sociology, predominantly focused on racial, gender, and class inequality in different areas of society (schools, workplaces, housing markets, health care systems, legal institutions) that illustrates how social theories are applied, critiqued, and built. We will also have several faculty guest speakers who will talk about their research and how they use theory in their work. Towards the end of the semester, some of class time will be set aside for independent work/research on your capstone projects/papers. One week will be devoted to professional development/career preparation topics.

All required readings will be made available on Blackboard and/or through web links on the syllabus.

Class Format: This is a seminar, which means that lectures are NOT the main component of the class. Most classes will be interactive and discussion-based. Many class periods will be partially devoted to individual or group work. As such, I expect students to come to class having read the assigned reading and prepared to discuss it. You will get much more out of class time if you do - and show respect for your peers as well.

Attendance & Exam Policy: Attendance is expected. Participation points are not awarded simply for showing up – I expect verbal and written engagement in activities/ discussion during class time. I do not give make-up work or extensions except in cases of absences excused under university policy (e.g. religious holidays, death/illness in one's immediate family, athletic travel, legal proceedings, mandatory interviews for jobs/ internships). Absences due for COVID-19 related reasons will be excused (e.g. quarantine due to exposure). If there is a personal or family emergency that may affect your attendance, please inform me as soon as possible. More than 3 unexcused absences will mean that students are subject to earning a failing grade. Students who miss work due to excused absences should contact me to make alternative arrangements for making up assignments (such as in-class writing prompts). Powerpoints will be posted on Blackboard, but the posted version may not always match the final slides shown in class since I sometimes make changes after posting the slides. Moreover, there may not be slides for every single class depending on what we are doing that day. Thus, students who miss a class should also try to get notes on what they missed from a peer.

Mental health: If you find yourself in need of mental health support, there are a number of campus and community resources you can access. Here are a few links:



- TAMIU Counseling Services: <https://www.tamtu.edu/counseling/>
- SCAN: <https://www.scan-inc.org/>
- PILLAR: <https://www.pillarstrong.org/mental-health-services/>
- City of Laredo Health Dept: <https://mentalhealthtx.org/facilities/city-of-laredo-health-department-city-of-laredo-health-department/>

The most important thing is to communicate openly and honestly with me whenever there is something I should know about that might impact your ability to complete the work in this class.

Communication/Office Hours: My preferred method of communication is email (you may use my TAMIU or Blackboard email but if you use my TAMIU email please be sure to put the course number in the subject line of the message). Please be aware that I generally check email during business hours (8am-5pm), since like each of you, I have many other personal and professional responsibilities in addition to this course. If you do not receive a response after 24 hours, feel free to follow up to make sure I received your message. Messages that include the course name/number and a brief description of the question/concern in the subject line are likely to receive more prompt attention. If at any time you are having difficulty in this class, I encourage you to visit me during my office hours or set up a virtual appointment.

Food and Housing Security: When students face challenges securing adequate food or housing, learning can become more difficult. If you find yourself in this situation, please check out <https://www.tamtu.edu/foodpantry/> for assistance. You are not alone.

Kid-Friendly Classes: As a parent, I am well aware of the challenges of balancing family and educational opportunities and responsibilities. I never want any of my students to feel like they have to choose between the two. This classroom is open to students' children when you have difficulty securing childcare (If your child is ill, please do not bring them to class. Your absence will be excused). Please bring something age appropriate for your child to do during class, and if you can, notify me ahead of time that they will join us. In this situation, I ask that you also sit near the door to avoid potential disruptions should you need to leave the room to attend to any of your child's needs. I ask all other students to support their peers as we work together to develop a fully inclusive classroom.

Late Work: I will accept late work until the last day of class, but any work submitted more than 3 days late will be subject to a minimum one letter grade deduction. *No assignments will be accepted after the last day of class.*

A Note About AI: I am aware that there are now AI resources (like Chat GPT) that students sometimes turn to for assistance with writing assignments. **I consider the use of these resources to generate text for any written work submitted for a grade in this course to be academic dishonesty** (use of editing software like Grammarly should be cited; in such cases you may be asked to produce the pre-edited version of your work). If software detects a "likelihood of AI generated" score of over 50% on your work, you will receive a failing grade on the assignment and may be reported to the Honor Council.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Analyze current events and social problems using sociological concepts and theories and empirical data
- Demonstrate how sociological concepts can be used to enhance public understanding of social issues/problems using oral, written, and/or visual strategies
- Apply conceptual knowledge and data analysis skills to the study of a specific social issue/problem

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.

Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100
B	80-89.9
C	70-79.9
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

Assessment

Your grade in this class will be assessed as follows.

10 points Participation (this includes weekly attendance and Blackboard posts)



20 points Short papers analyzing news articles (2 total, each worth 10 points; see due dates and description below)

20 points Mid Term Essay Exam (take home)

10 points Oral presentation related to final project

20 points Final Project (Literature review, magazine article, grant proposal, podcast+annotated bibliography, or community based service/learning and reflection)

Participation: Participation points are earned not only by showing up to class, but by active engagement in class discussion, individual & group reflection activities. You'll get much more out of class if you come having already read the assigned materials, and you'll show respect for your peers as well.

Short Essays (2): Each student will complete 2 short papers (2 double spaced pages each) analyzing a news article or audio/video news story of their choice on the general topic of the weeks in which they are assigned. News articles must have been published/posted sometime in the last 3 years (no earlier than January 1, 2021). Each essay is worth 10 points. The rubric for each essay is as follows:

- Describe the main social problem discussed in the article (1 point)
- Identify if or how a sociological perspective is present in the way the article presents the issue or problem; if so, what is it? (1 point)
- Choose one sociological concept or theory that would improve the content or context provided about that issue or problem (this includes defining the concept) (3 points)
- Explain how the sociological concept you chose would improve the article's description or analysis of the problem and why (3 points).
- Writing quality and organization (2 points)

Midterm Exam: There will be a take-home essay exam for your midterm. The questions will be provided one week in advance.

Final Project: For your final project, You have 5 options: (1) a traditional literature review (minimum 12 pages, 15 peer reviewed sources), (2) a grant proposal (minimum 12 pages, 15 peer reviewed sources), (3) a magazine style article (minimum 12 pages, 15 peer reviewed sources), (4) a podcast 7-10 minutes in length + an annotated bibliography with at least 10 peer-reviewed scholarly sources, or (5) 15 hours of community service with a local organization + a minimum 8 page reflection/analysis paper that incorporates at least 10 peer reviewed scholarly sources. More details about each of these options will be provided in class. Each student will also give a 10-12 minute oral presentation about their project towards the end of the semester.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Tue	8/26	Intro to the Class / Syllabus Overview	"Karl Marx has never been more relevant" (VICE, 2018) https://www.vice.com/en/article/ne9amw/karl-marx-has-never-been-more-relevant "Searching for Consolation in Max Weber's Work Ethic" (The New Republic 2020) https://newrepublic.com/article/158349/searching-consolation-max-webers-work-ethic "Did Durkheim foresee today's chaos?" (Social Science Space, 2018) https://www.socialsciencespace.com/2018/11/did-emile-durkheim-foresee-todays-	8/26 Send me a message with a brief introduction to yourself, your favorite sociology class or topic, and your professional goals



Tue	9/2	Economic Inequality	Harvey, M. H. (2011). Welfare reform and household survival: The interaction of structure and network strength in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas. <i>Journal of Poverty</i>, 15(1), 43-64. Matthew Desmond, 2012. "Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty." <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>. 118 (1): 88-133. Neely, M. T. (2018). Fit to be king: how patrimonialism on wall street leads to inequality. <i>Socio-Economic Review</i>, 16(2), 365-385. Melamed, Jodi. (2015). "Racial Capitalism." <i>Critical Ethnic Studies</i> 1(1):76-85.	9/2 Blackboard discussion post reflecting on at least two readings and how they relate to each other 9/2 In class: be able to identify and explain at least one theoretical concept from the reading
Tue	9/9	Race and Racial Inequality	Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. (1997). "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 62(3):465-80. Bowen, S., Elliott, S., & Hardison#Moody, A. (2021). The structural roots of food insecurity: How racism is a fundamental cause of food insecurity. <i>Sociology Compass</i>, 15(7), e12846. Korver-Glenn, E. (2018). Compounding Inequalities: How Racial Stereotypes and Discrimination Accumulate across the Stages of Housing Exchange. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 83(4), 627-656	9/9 Blackboard post reflecting on at least two readings and how they relate to each other 9/9 In class: be able to identify and explain at least one theoretical concept from the reading
Tue	9/16	Theorizing about Masculinities	Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. <i>Gender & society</i>, 19(6), 829-859. Carlson, J. (2015). Mourning Mayberry: Guns, Masculinity, and Socioeconomic Decline. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 29(3), 386-409. Carian, E. K., & Abromaviciute, J. (2023). "It's Certainly Fair for Me": Hybrid Masculinities and the Gendered Division of Labor during COVID-19. <i>Men and Masculinities</i>, 26(4), 544-565. Duckworth, K. D., & Trautner, M. N. (2019). Gender Goals: Defining Masculinity and Navigating Peer Pressure to Engage in Sexual Activity. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 33(5), 795-817.	9/16 Blackboard post reflecting on at least two readings and how they relate to each other 9/16 In class: be able to identify and explain at least one theoretical concept from the reading



Tue	9/23	Theorizing about Gender and Sexualities	Denissen, A. M., & Saguy, A. C. (2013). Gendered Homophobia and the Contradictions of Workplace Discrimination for Women in the Building Trades. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 28(3), 381-403. Lennox, R. (2024). "The Only Self-Defense I Have is My Wedding Band": Doing Heterosexuality, Evading Gender Harassment, and Becoming Respectable in the Street. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 38(6), 965-991. Connell, Cati. 2024. "Queer Social Control and the Homonormative Bargain: Sexual Harassment in the Era of Open LGBT Military Service." <i>Social Problems</i> (71): 3, 683–699 Mann, Emily S. and Andrea M. Bertotti. 2024. "The biomedicalization of pregnancy prevention, neoliberal feminism, and college women's experiences of the contraceptive paradox" <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, Volume 348.	9/23 Blackboard post reflecting on at least two readings and how they relate to each other 9/23 In class: be able to identify and explain at least one theoretical concept from the reading 9/23 Short Media Analysis Essay #1 due
Tue	9/30	Theorizing about Education and Educational Systems	Ray, R. (2022). School as a Hostile Institution: How Black and Immigrant Girls of Color Experience the Classroom. <i>Gender & Society</i>, 36(1), 88–111. Calarco, J. M. (2011). "I Need Help!" Social Class and Children's Help-Seeking in Elementary School. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 76(6), 862-882. Bedelia Nicola Richards, Help-Seeking Behaviors as Cultural Capital: Cultural Guides and the Transition from High School to College among Low-Income First Generation Students, <i>Social Problems</i>, Volume 69, Issue 1, February 2022, Pages 241–260 Hamilton, L., Roksa, J., & Nielsen, K. (2018). Providing a "Leg Up": Parental Involvement and Opportunity Hoarding in College. <i>Sociology of Education</i>, 91(2), 111-131.	9/30 Blackboard post explaining two concepts from the readings and how they apply to the study of education systems



Tue	10/7	Theorizing about Health Inequalities and Health Care Systems	Homan, Patricia. (2019). "Structural sexism and health in the United States: A new perspective on health inequality and the gender system." <i>American Sociological Review</i> 84(3): 486-516. Brantley, M. (2023). Black feminist theory in maternal health research: A review of concepts and future directions. <i>Sociology Compass</i>, 17(5), e13083. Whittle, H. J., Palar, K., Ranadive, N. A., Turan, J. M., Kushel, M., & Weiser, S. D. (2017). "The land of the sick and the land of the healthy": disability, bureaucracy, and stigma among people living with poverty and chronic illness in the United States. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 190, 181-189. Frieh, E. C. (2020). Stigma, trauma and sexuality: the experiences of women hospitalised with serious mental illness. <i>Sociology of Health & Illness</i>, 42(3), 526-543.	10/7 Blackboard post explaining two concepts from the readings and how they apply to the study of health inequalities and/or systems
Tue	10/14	Mid Term Exam Week	Class does not meet - Midterm exams due by midnight	
Tue	10/21	Law and Legal Systems Part 1 (Policing and Surveillance)	Samantha J Simon (2023). "Training for War: Academy Socialization and Warrior Policing". <i>Social Problems</i> 70 (4):1021- 1043 Haney, L. (2018). Incarcerated fatherhood: The entanglements of child support debt and mass imprisonment. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i>, 124(1), 1-48. Rios, V. M., Prieto, G., & Ibarra, J. M. (2020). Mano Suave—Mano Dura: Legitimacy Policing and Latino Stop-and-Frisk. <i>American Sociological Review</i>, 85(1), 58–75. Hughes, C. C. (2019). From the long arm of the state to eyes on the street: How poor African American mothers navigate surveillance in the social safety net. <i>Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</i>, 48(3), 339-376.	10/21 Blackboard post identifying two concepts from the reading and how they apply to the study of legal institutions or systems



Tue	10/28	Law and Legal Systems Part 2 (Immigration)	Menjívar, C., & Abrego, L. (2012). Legal violence: Immigration law and the lives of Central American immigrants. <i>American journal of sociology</i> , 117(5), 000-000. Asad, A. L. (2020). On the Radar: System Embeddedness and Latin American Immigrants' Perceived Risk of Deportation. <i>Law & Society Review</i> , 54(1), 133–167. Armenta, A. (2017). Racializing crimmigration: Structural racism, colorblindness, and the institutional production of immigrant criminality. <i>Sociology of race and ethnicity</i> , 3(1), 82-95. García, S. J. (2017). Racializing "illegality": An intersectional approach to understanding how Mexican-origin women navigate an anti-immigrant climate. <i>Sociology of Race and Ethnicity</i> , 3(4), 474-490.	10/28 Blackboard post explaining two concepts from the reading and how they apply to the study of immigration
Tue	11/4	Theorizing about Disasters and the Environment	Pellow, D. N. (2000). Environmental inequality formation: Toward a theory of environmental injustice. <i>American behavioral scientist</i> , 43(4), 581-601. Auyero, J., & Swistun, D. (2008). The Social Production of Toxic Uncertainty. <i>American Sociological Review</i> , 73(3), 357-379. Pietilainen, E. P., & Otero, G. (2018). Power and dispossession in the neoliberal food regime: oil palm expansion in Guatemala. <i>The Journal of Peasant Studies</i> , 46(6), 1142–1166. Breen, K. (2022). Disaster racism: using Black sociology, critical race theory and history to understand racial disparity to disaster in the United States. <i>Disaster Prevention and Management: An International Journal</i> , 31(3), 229-242.	11/4 Blackboard post explaining two concepts from the readings and how they apply to the study of environment and/or disasters 11/4 Short Media Analysis Essay #2 due
Tue	11/11		Building Resumes and Developing Interview Skills + Alumni Panel: So what can you do with a sociology degree anyway?	
Tue	11/18		Oral Presentations on Final Projects/Papers Part I	
Tue	11/25		Oral Presentations on Final Projects/Papers Part II	
Tue	12/2		Class does not meet - individual appointments with students regarding final projects/papers	
Tue	12/9		Final Papers/Projects Due	

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, 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.