

# COMM 3132 - Digital Filmmaking II Lab

## Spring 2025 Syllabus, Section 201, CRN 26866

---

### Instructor Information

**Marcela Moran, MFA**

Associate Professor of Communication

Email: amoran@tamiu.edu

Office: AIC 346

Office Hours:

M 4:30-5:45 pm, W 2:35 pm-4:25 pm, TR 4:30-5:30 pm (Virtual)

Office Phone: AIC 346

Office hours on Wed. will be in CNS 201, KLRN studio.

---

### Times and Location

W 1:15pm-2:35pm in Canseco Hall 201

---

### Course Description

Laboratory course to accompany COMM 3232. Corequisites: COMM 3232.

Psychology &amp; Communication Department, College of Arts &amp; Sciences

---

### Additional Course Information

**Course Overview:** Through exercises and demonstrations, this course will emphasize the craft, aesthetics, and production content as practiced in emerging and traditional formats. Students will continue to explore the classical narrative style and take command of experimental and documentary approaches. Specific topics may include the invisible line of action as it applies to three or more players, disrupting continuity, the music video, avant-garde techniques, recording behavior, and recreating past events. Screenings and individual projects will be an integral part of this course.

### Program Learning Outcomes

SLO 1: Application of knowledge and skills: Students will apply and integrate the knowledge and skills acquired in the program in professional settings.

SLO 2: Communicative competence: Students will demonstrate communicative competence in public and social contexts.

SLO 3: Knowledge, research, and writing: Students will demonstrate their theoretical knowledge, research, and writing skills while analyzing a communication phenomenon or professional problem.

### Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to discuss and evaluate moving images and their communication potential.
2. Students will be able to recognize the possibilities when working with film and video.
3. Students will be able to apply learned techniques with a public audience.

## Important Dates

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

## Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Avant Garde Film	Michael O'Pray	9781903364567
Required	Writing, Directing, and Producing Documentary Films	Alan Rosenthal	9780809334582

## Other Course Materials

To go to the bookstore, [click here \(https://www.bkstr.com/texasaminternationalstore/home\)](https://www.bkstr.com/texasaminternationalstore/home).

**Technology:** Easy and regular access to the Internet is needed for this course. All course content will be available on Blackboard for the class. Students may use their cameras, computers, and editing software or plan to use the editing equipment in CNS 201, the TAMIU\_KLRN Studio. Students will be given ONECARD access to the KLRN studio editing facility outside class time.

**Equipment:** Equipment (cameras, sound recorders, mics, lights) checkout is located in the TAMIU\_KLRN Studio, CNS 201. All equipment will be checked out after class or during the lab in CNS 201 and is to be returned the following class time/lab time unless the professor has given the student special permission. Equipment checked out on Wednesday during lab may be returned the following Monday. To reserve equipment and/or studio space, please notify the professor at least 48 hours in advance. If any student should be delinquent with the rules of checkout more than twice, checkout privileges will be forfeited for the delinquent student. Failure to turn in all equipment to CNS 201 before the day and time of the final exam will result in a failing grade.

## Grading Criteria

**Methods and Criteria for Evaluation:** Students will work on three projects: a classical video that breaks two paradigm rules, an experimental film, and a final experimental or documentary film project. The final project can combine film styles (i.e., a narrative with experimental techniques). Each student will be responsible for turning in a complete pre-production packet for their documentary or experimental film, including treatment, script, storyboards, shot list, release forms, and schedule. The length of the short film is not to exceed 15 minutes; documentaries and experimental films of shorter lengths are encouraged (10 minutes). Students are encouraged to collaborate on projects but may also work independently. All projects and work turned in should demonstrate an understanding of the material covered in class.

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

## Open Boilerplate

**No Use of Generative AI Tools Permitted:** The student must fully prepare every element of class assignments in this course. Using generative AI tools for any part of your work will be treated as plagiarism. If you have questions about AI or plagiarism, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Exception: Some camera and editing technologies come with AI tools. Please ask your professor for guidance before using these to determine whether or not their use is necessary. However, do not use AI tools to write treatments, scripts, or other writing assignments.

**Screenings:** Project screenings will be held the day projects are due, and students should be prepared to discuss and answer questions about their work. All projects must be turned in on their due date. In addition, students are required to view several experimental and documentary movies in class and on Blackboard.

**Attendance:** Students enrolled in this course must attend the screening of their projects on the due date. Students must be present for feedback and must also participate in the critique of other student work. Students must participate in critique to receive a grade for their project. Deadlines are

especially crucial in mass communications fields. Projects/ assignments will be due on the dates shown in this syllabus. No assignments will be accepted after the deadline. PLEASE BE ON TIME!

STUDENTS WITH MORE THAN FOUR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL AUTOMATICALLY FAIL THE COURSE. An excused absence requires the student to notify the professor about the reason for the absence and to submit official documentation from a doctor, nurse, school administrator, or other official and/or professional personnel who can verify the reason for the absence. Notes and letters from parents/relatives will not be accepted. Please refer to the TAMU Course Policies for more information on acceptable excuses.

**Class Preparation:** Students must keep up with the required reading and movie viewings. You may be called to open discussion on readings and/or film screenings. Be prepared! All the necessary readings, films, and video clip samples will be fair game for Discussion Board Forums, even if we do not discuss them in class. All of the above will help you prepare for your productions.

**Assignments:**

Project 1: Shoot and edit a 3-minute video with edits and follow the rules of classical cinema (180-degree rule, cutting on action, variation of shots, and continuity) with the exception of two rules. Deliberately break two classical rules (ex. Include jump cuts, do not use the 180-degree rule, do not vary shots, break continuity of lighting, wardrobe or other). Must turn in a storyboard/shot list.

Project 2: Shoot and edit a 3 minute video that deliberately breaks many rules and is highly experimental. Must turn in storyboard/shot list.

Project 3: Produce, direct, and edit a 10-15 minute experimental or documentary short. Student is allowed to explore narrative concepts that have a high degree of formalism or realism (or both). Each student will be responsible for turning in a treatment, script, storyboards, shot list, release forms, and schedule.

Midterm Exam: The culmination of our discussions and our short film viewings will be your midterm exam, a formal 8-minute PowerPoint presentation on an experimental or documentary filmmaker of your choice. It is pivotal that you analyze the clips/scenes you include in the PowerPoint from the point of view of its experimentation or documentary approaches – its style and content and anything else that we have learned up until that point. The scene can be from a film of any length and genre. You will be expected to include links to scenes/clips in your presentation; at least one slide should be dedicated to realist or formalist technique. You are expected to conduct research for this assignment and to cite your sources during your presentation.

Discussion Board Forums: Throughout the semester, you must participate in discussion forums that deal with required screenings and readings. You must respond using at least 50 words and respond to two classmates with at least three sentences. A Discussion board rubric will be used to grade these assignments and will be available for you to view on Blackboard. All assignments will be graded based on a rubric. The grading rubric will be made available on Blackboard under Contents. There are five discussion board assignments; post your response on the forum and as a Word Document in a Blackboard drop box in the week's folder.

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Project 1: Classical video that breaks two rules	20 %
Project 2: = Experimental film	20%
Project 3: Final Documentary or Experimental Film	30 %
Midterm Exam: PPT Presentation on a Documentary or Experimental Filmmaker	20%
Discussion Board: discussion on week's reading and viewing	10%

## Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
1/22	Review Syllabus and course requirements		Week 1: Acknowledge reading syllabus and course policies by Wed. at 11:59 pm. Participate in Discussion Board 1 by Wed. at 11: 59 pm
1/29	Review of Classical Narrative Style. Screening and analysis of award-winning shorts. The camera body, iris, lenses, white balance, formats. (lab) Respond to Discussion Board 2		Week 2:



2/5	How to write a treatment/proposal for the documentary and experimental video. Watch: Un Chien Andalou, Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dali Un Chien Andalou <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cB7gd_t6WMQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cB7gd_t6WMQ</a> Review of 180 degree, and other rules that can be broken. Short camera exercise. (lab) Brainstorming ideas for film projects. (lab)	Rosenthal- Part one	Week 3: Discussion Board 2 due Wed. at 11:59 pm
2/12	Introduction to experimental and documentary approaches. Watch short videos TBA Respond to Discussion Board 3 Review Adobe Premiere and iMacs. (lab) Adobe tutorial (lab)		Week 4: Discussion Board 3 due Wed. at 11:59 pm
2/19	Three types of two column scripts: visual/idea, visual/audio and visual/narration. Watch: Meshes in the Afternoon by Maya Deren <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wywkGJhEyDI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wywkGJhEyDI</a> Watch short videos TBA Respond to Discussion Board 4 Work on Project 1- shoot/edit. (lab)	Rosenthal part two Avant-Garde Film Chapters 1&2	Week 5: Discussion Board 4 due Wed. at 11:59 pm
2/26	Student Project 1 Screenings! Recut if necessary your Project #1. (lab) Work on Treatment for Pitches. (lab)	Rosenthal part three Avant-Garde Film Chapters 5&6	Week 6: Project 1 due during scheduled class time!
3/5	Pitches and selection for final projects Turn in Treatments to Turnitin box on Blackboard Discussion and the documentary continued: From idea to first draft, pre-production. (lab) Watch: Dogstar Man (Prelude) by Stan Brackage <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5VasA0CRas">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5VasA0CRas</a> (lab) Respond Discussion Board 5	Rosenthal part four Avant-Garde Film Chapters 7,8,& 9	Week 7: Pitches for final projects. Respond to Discussion 5 by Wed. 11:59 pm
3/12	Spring Break		Week 8: Spring Break
3/19	Sound Design!!! Sample Clips with experimental sound design Watch: Sample Contemporary award-winning experimental film Big Bang ~ Laura Munoz Finalize scripts for final projects. (lab) Submit Scripts for final projects as Word Documents to Turnitin box in the week's folder	Avant-Garde Film Chapters 7,8,& 9	Week 9: Submit scripts for final projects by Wed. 11:59 pm.
3/26	Stock footage, animation, languages, experimental techniques. Watch: What's up Fatlip? (2003) Video documentary short directed by Spike Jonze <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L9qL-LMI8lo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L9qL-LMI8lo</a> Work on Storyboard and shot lists for final projects (lab)		Week 10: Submit Storyboards & Shot lists by Wed. 11:59 pm.



4/2	Screenings experimental film projects due. Back to the cutting room. Make corrections and adjustments to Project 2. (lab) Sound: sound effects, music, dialogue, voice over, recording, microphones, tracks, and mixing audio. (lab) Make sound design plan for final projects. (lab)	Week 11: Submit finalized project 2 by Wed. end of lab.
4/9	Midterm PowerPoint Presentations (f2f) Watch: 5 ~ Alie Jackson Call Your Mom ~ Julia Ham In Progress ~ Michaela Alessandra Shoot day (lab)	Week 12: Submit PPT slide show by Wed. end of lab time.
4/16	Dailes due! Shoot Day/edit (lab)	Week 13: Dailies due during the scheduled class time.
4/23	Roughcut due! Edit (lab)	Week 14: Roughcut due during the scheduled class time.
4/30	Fine cut due! (class) Edit! (lab)	Week 15: Fine Cut screening due during the scheduled class time.
5/7	Shoot to Kill Film Festival, Wed. May 7th at 1:15 pm	Week 16: Shoot to Kill Film Festival; final 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)

In the classroom, students are expected to listen attentively, participate respectfully, and adhere to established rules. Behavior that interferes with the class lecture may result in disciplinary action, ensuring a productive and respectful learning environment for everyone. Any disputes over academic matters should be addressed calmly and constructively, ideally during designated times such as office hours or after class. If a student does not agree with a decision, they can request a meeting with the instructor to discuss their concerns in more detail. Should further resolution be needed, the

student may escalate the matter to the department head or use formal grievance procedures as outlined in the sections below. (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4 (<https://www.tamui.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

## TAMUI Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMUI student, you are bound by the TAMUI Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMUI student and to report violations of the Honor Code. Please read carefully the Student Handbook Article 7 and Article 10 available at Student Handbook (<https://www.tamui.edu/handbook/index.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.

TAMUI 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 TAMUI 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 SafeZone (<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 Disability Services for Students located in Student Center 124. 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 Office of Disability Services for Students.

For accommodations or assistance with disabilities, contact the Disability Coordinator, Karla Pedraza, at [karla.pedraza@tamiu.edu](mailto:karla.pedraza@tamiu.edu), call 956.326.2763, or visit Student Center 124.

## 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: Student Handbook (<https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.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. Students who experience or observe alleged or suspected discrimination due to their pregnant/parenting status, should report to the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, [TitleIX@tamiu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@tamiu.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, *Report It*, at <https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit/index.shtml>).

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 Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, [lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu](mailto:lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu)) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodation. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student needs 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 LOAs 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*.

For parenting-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the Parenting Liaison, Mayra Hernandez, at [mghernandez@tamiu.edu](mailto:mghernandez@tamiu.edu), call 956.326.2265, or visit Student Center 226.

For pregnancy-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the TIX Coordinator, Lorissa Cortez, at [lorissaM.cortez@tamiu.edu](mailto:lorissaM.cortez@tamiu.edu), call 956.326.2857, or visit Killam Library 159.

## 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@tamiu.edu](mailto:TitleIX@tamiu.edu), 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt (<https://www.tamiu.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.