BIOL 3051 - Biochemistry I Lab

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 1L4, CRN 18280

Instructor Information

Dr. Melissa G. Carrizales
Email: melissa.carrizales@tamiu.edu
Office: LBV 259
Office Hours:
Monday 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Tuesday 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
or by appointment
Office Phone: 9563263121

Times and Location

F 1:10pm-4:10pm in Academic Innovation Center 207

Course Description

Biology&Chemistry Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Biochemistry studies the structure, organization, function, synthesis, and degradation of biomolecules in living cells. Biochemistry aims to describe the structure and function of the different biomolecules. It also seeks to present a molecular focus on life processes. This upper-level biology course is intended to help the student learn, understand, and apply the fundamental principles of biochemistry. BIOL/CHEM 3051, Biochemistry Laboratory, is taken concurrently with BIOL/CHEM 3451, lecture. BIOL/CHEM 3051 will cover buffers, protein assays, lipid tests, and other biochemical techniques. The laboratory exercises are designed to support concepts learned in the lecture and to give students hands-on experience with commonly used tools of biochemistry.

Attendance: Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. You are expected to be on-time and ready to perform the scheduled experiment during your designated lab time. Being ready means that you have read the experiment before coming to class, watched any videos instructed by the professor, you have your lab manual, laboratory notebook, ink-pens, and safety goggles, and that you are dressed properly to do the experiment. There will be NO laboratory make-ups. Students who are more than 10 minutes late will recieve a ZERO for their Lab Report Notebook and Post-Lab Homework grades. Students that are late three times will fail the laboratory portion of this course.

Technology: All cell phones and computers are to be put away unless otherwise instructed in lab. These devices create unwanted distractions in the laboratory where we need to be attentive and aware of our surroundings. Students who have cell phones or other electronics out will have points deducted from the day's lab and may be asked to leave the lab. If a student is dismissed three times from lab, the student will fail the laboratory portion of this course.

Make-up Work: If you miss an exam or a quiz due an unexcused absence it will be graded a ZERO. NO MAKE-UP exam or quiz will be given for UNEXCUSED absence. A student will be permitted to take a missed exam or quiz due to an excused absence only. An excused absence is one that is verifiable, such as sickness with doctor's certification or sponsored university activity (http://www.tamiu.edu/documents/absence_rules.pdf). A written request with attached excused absence verification must be submitted in order to request a make-up exam or a quiz. Send these 2 via email to your lab instructor. The make-up will have to be taken within one week after the missed exam or quiz. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the professor or the lab instructor for a make-up exam or quiz. There will be NO laboratory make-ups.

Safety: Students are expected to follow all safety requirements, which will be discussed during our first lab meeting. Violations will result in the student being dismissed from the lab. If a student is dismissed from lab three times, the student will fail the laboratory portion of this course. Students will be required to sign a safety contract to participate in lab activities.

NOTE: THE SYLLABUS (and details) IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Student Learning Outcomes

- At the end of the course, the student will gain a fundamental knowledge of biochemistry, which will give the student an appreciation for this vast field and a solid background for graduate-level/advanced biochemistry courses.
- The student will learn some commonly used biochemical techniques and their applications.
- The student should be able to explain the principles of these techniques and thus apply these techniques in research studies.
- The student will be able to use and develop critical thinking skills through examinations and in class discussions.
- The student should be able to interpret and analyze laboratory experimental results, write laboratory reports, and present oral reports competently.
- The student will develop the ability to work independently and cooperatively with others.

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
	Biochemistry I Laboratory Manual (available at TAMIU Bookstore)	Prepared by: Ruby A. Ynalvez	ISBN-13: 978-1-323-96265-7

Other Course Materials

Computer/Laptop

Safety Goggles

Proper Lab Attire

Ink pen (black or dark blue ink)

Non-programmable scientific calculator

Internet access

Respondus LockDown Browser (Free) Requirement:

This course requires the use of LockDown Browser for online quizzes and exams. Watch this short video (http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser.

Download Instructions

Click the *Assist* navigation link in Blackboard or visit TAMIU's Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor web page (https://www.tamiu.edu/distance/technology/respondus-ldb-and-monitor.shtml). Scroll down to the section on the *Respondus LockDown Browser*. Click the link to access the webpage for the software and additional information.

To Access Your Test

1. First, be sure the Respondus LockDown Browser software is full installed on your computer.
2. Open a regular web browser (Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, MS Edge, Safari)
3. Log into Blackboard Learn.
4. Navigate to the course and test.
5. Start your attempt.

6. This will launch the Respondus LockDown Browser software.
7. Begin your test.

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 exam that requires LockDown Browser and a webcam, remember the following guidelines:

- Ensure you're in a location where you won't be interrupted
- Turn off all other devices (e.g. tablets, phones, second computers) and place them outside of your reach
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Clear your desk or workspace of all external materials not permitted - books, papers, other devices
- Remain at your computer for the duration of the test
- If the computer, Wi-Fi, or location is different than what was used previously with the "Webcam Check" and "System & Network Check" in LockDown Browser, run the checks again prior to the exam
- To produce a good webcam video, do the following:
  - Avoid wearing baseball caps or hats with brims
  - Ensure your computer or device is on a firm surface (a desk or table). Do NOT have the computer on your lap, a bed, or another surface where the device (or you) are likely to move
  - If using a built-in webcam, avoid readjusting the tilt of the screen after the webcam setup is complete
  - Take the exam in a well-lit room, but avoid backlighting (such as sitting with your back to a window)
- Remember that 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

Getting Help

Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser.

- The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button 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. The office is located at **Dr. Billy F. Cowart Hall 208** and is open **Monday through Friday, from 8am to 6pm**.

Grading Criteria

Grading and Course Requirements: The lecture grade makes up 70% while the lab grade contributes 30% of the course grade. It is less likely that a student can pass the course without passing both the lecture and the laboratory. In both lecture and lab, most quizzes are announced. The professor or the lab instructor may give unannounced/surprised quizzes.

- Exams can consist of a combination of objective type questions e.g. multiple choices, identification and challenging questions e.g. problem solving and analysis, answering questions. Questions will be basic and applied.
- Quizzes can also consist of either or a combination of objective type questions e.g. multiple choices, identification and challenging questions e.g. problem solving and analysis, answering questions.
- Books, notes, cell phones, computers or any technical/electrical gadgets are NOT allowed to be on sight and in use 5 minutes before and during the quiz/exam and during the quiz/exam (whether a regular or make-up quiz/exam).

Below is the list of the laboratory requirements and their corresponding percentages.

PreLab Quizzes: 5%

- Expect lab quizzes every week (unless announced otherwise). It will be at the beginning of lab. If you come late you might miss the quiz or will not have enough time to complete the quiz. The length of the quiz will 10 minutes. The length of the lab quiz will vary depending on the lab exercises.
- No extra time can be given to late comers to be fair with students that come to class on time.

- Questions for the quiz will come from the reading assignment of lab exercise to be performed for that particular week. Thus, come to the laboratory class prepared by reading the exercise of the week. You need to study these resources.

Lab Reports Notebook: 10%

- The lab sheets will be submitted as part of the lab notebook. It will be graded whether it is complete and organized i.e. data inputted and questions answered. It will be announced if there will be lab sheets or a mini-report due at the end of the lab period or the beginning of lab of the following week.
- A template of the lab notebook organization will be uploaded to Blackboard to help guide students on proper format.

- Lab reports will be grade out of 100 points (detailed below).
- Lab reports are comprised of the following:
    - **Your name and Lab partner name (2 points)**
    - **Date Experiment was conducted (2 point)**
    - **Title of the experiment (2 points)**
    - **Objective (4 points) -** The purpose of the lab, what should be accomplished completing this expt. The purpose of the objective statement is to simply state the goal of the experiment. This statement should be one or two sentences. The objective aims to answer: "Why was this study performed?"
    - **Background (10 points)**- This is a short paragraph that will seek to introduce the reader to the topic under consideration. Provide any background information that is important to the experiment. Your goal in this section is to answer: "What knowledge already exists about this subject?", "What are the specific hypotheses and the experimental design for investigation?"
    - **Chemicals and Hazards (5 points) -** Students are expected to list the chemicals used during the experiment and associated hazards. Students should familiarize themselves with these hazards *BEFORE* beginning any experiment.
    - **Procedure (10 points)**- Type up the procedure in bullet point or number format. Note any cautions or changes that were made to the experiment in the lab. You are meant to list step by step instructions on how you did the experiment. Note any hazard you should be aware of.
    - **Raw Data (Lab Worksheet) (35 points)**- Pictures of the lab manual worksheets (COMPLETED) should be uploaded for this section as part of the report. Any graphs and/or tables associated with the experiment should also be included. Graphs are to be designed in Excel and properly labeled. Screenshots of these graphs will suffice. Completion, quality of data and accuracy will be graded. ALL tables and graphs should be properly labeled so that the reader knows what you are showing in that graph/table from first look.
    - **Calculations (10 points)** - Lab worksheets will include math problems and necessary calculations to complete the experiment/worksheet. YOU ARE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE FULL WORK for each problem in this section. You will use a scratch sheet of paper, number of the problem you worked on and the associated calculations for ALL parts of the experiment. Even if the worksheet does not specify to show calculations, you are required to show ALL of your work. This section will be graded based on completion and accuracy.
    - **Discussion (10 points) -** The discussion is the section where you explain and interpret your results. Do not simply repeat your data or describe what you did in the experiment. Instead, explain what your results mean and why you think you obtained those results. Connect your findings to the scientific concepts you learned and to what you expected to happen. If your results were different from what you expected, explain possible reasons why. You should also discuss any experimental errors or limitations that may have affected your results.
      When writing your Discussion, ask yourself: **What do my results show? Why did I get these results? Did my results match what I expected, and why or why not? What scientific concept explains my results? Were there any errors or limitations that could have affected my results? How might those errors have changed my results? Think of the Discussion as: "What happened, and why did it happen?"**
    - **Conclusions (10 points) -** The Conclusion is a brief summary of the most important findings from your experiment. It should directly address the objective of the experiment and explain what you learned from your results. The Conclusion should not introduce new data or provide a detailed explanation of every result. Instead, bring the experiment to a clear ending by stating the main finding and what the experiment demonstrated.When writing your Conclusion, ask yourself: **What was the main finding of my experiment? Did I accomplish the objective of the experiment? What did this experiment demonstrate or teach me? What is the most important thing I should take away from this experiment?** Think of the Conclusion as: "What did I learn from this experiment?" The easiest way to remember the difference is: The Discussion explains and interprets your results, while the Conclusion summarizes what you found and what you learned.

Group Oral Presentation: 5%

- A lab group will do an oral presentation on a topic of your choice. The topic should be submitted to your instructor by 10/8. Use subject heading: Group #; research topic. More details to follow soon.
- If you missed presenting on the designated date for an unexcused absence, the group or the student will get a zero. This is a group project; therefore, you will be graded as a group with a few exceptions. Make efforts to work cooperatively and collaboratively. Take this opportunity to lead your group towards a productive output. The details for the instructions with regard to this requirement, including the rubric for its evaluation, will

be posted by 10/12. *The instructions are posted ahead of time so you can read the instructions early and prepare accordingly. This will also allow you to ask questions to your lab instructor relatively early and prior to the presentation.*

Post-Lab Homework: 5%

- Students will complete an online post-laboratory assignment each week consisting of questions related to the laboratory experiment performed that week. These assignments are designed to reinforce the concepts, techniques, and laboratory practices introduced during the hands-on experiment. Students will use their observations and experimental results, along with their understanding of the laboratory procedures, to answer the questions. Post-laboratory assignments are intended to help students reflect on their experimental work and strengthen their understanding of how laboratory techniques are applied in biochemistry.

Laboratory Exam: 5%

- The lab exam will be comprehensive, comprising both theoretical and practical questions. Further details will be given in class as we come closer to the finals.

The following grading criteria are for the overall grade (lecture + lab).

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100
B	80-89.99
C	70-79.99
D	60-69.99
F	Below 60

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Fri	8/28	Lab Policies and Safety	Lab Manual pg 3 -12	
Fri	9/4	Exercise 1: Introduction to Micropipetting	Provided Reading Assingment (on Blackboard)	
Fri	9/11	Labor Day. No Lab.		
Fri	9/18	Exercise 2: Buffers and the Bicarbonate System	Lab Manual pg 19-26	
Fri	9/25	Exercise 3: Environmental Impacts on DNA	Provided Reading Assignment (on Blackboard)	
Fri	10/2	Exercise 4: You Got Milk - How much protein is in your milk? Peptide Condensation and Hydrolysis Protein Denaturation	Lab Manual pg 41-46 Lab Manual pg 47-49 Lab Manual pg 51-53	
Fri	10/9	Exercise 5: Factors Affecting Enzyme Activity; Enzyme Activity Assay	Lab Manual pg 55-60	Research Topic Submission
Fri	10/16	Exercise 6: Carbohydrate Tests	Lab Manual pg 61-65	
Fri	10/23	Exercise 7: Glycolysis, Anabolism, Catabolism, Carbohydrate Metabolism and ATP production	Lab Manual pg 67-79	
Fri	10/30	Exercise 8: Hydrocarbons and Fatty Acids Triglycerides and Dietary Fats Lipid Metabolism	Lab Manual pg 82-85 Lab Manual pg 87-94 Lab Manual pg 102-104	
Fri	11/6	Group Oral Presentations		
Fri	11/13	Lab Discussion and Review: Exercises 1-8		
Fri	11/20	Comprehensive Lab Final Exam		
Fri	11/27	Thanksgiving Holiday. No Lab.		
Fri	12/4	Final Exams. No Lab.		

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.tamiu.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml)).

TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMIU student, you are bound by the TAMIU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMIU 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.tamiu.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.

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 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, 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, 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) 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, 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, 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, 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.