



CRIJ 6101 - Proseminar in Criminal Justice

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 1H1, CRN 18495

Instructor Information

Brittany Hood

Email: brittany.hood@tamiu.edu

Office Hours:

Tues 1230-2 (in-person), Wednesday 10-12 (in-person), Saturday 12-1 (virtual), and by appointment

Times and Location

Sa 1pm-1:55pm in Bullock Hall 204

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the American criminal justice system and how it functions in theory and practice. It will also introduce students to online doctoral education with an emphasis on practical information to help them be successful as a PhD students and at the job market. In particular, this class facilitates interactions between students and faculty to identify potential research interests.

Social Sciences Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Contacting the Instructor: I can be most easily reached via e-mail. Due to FERPA and to protect your confidentiality, you should only contact me through your university email address. If I receive an email from a different email address, I will respond asking you to resend your email through the university email address instead which might cause delays in my communication.

I strongly encourage students to take advantage of my office hours throughout the week. If you plan to attend my office hours, I recommend you make an appointment, so that I can better prepare for the meeting; however, you are more than welcome to attend at any time. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to contact me about any issues. I can only help you if you communicate in a timely fashion, if you are unable to make it to my office hours, please contact me so we can set up an alternative time that is beneficial to us both; I can be flexible for meetings with advanced notice.

Messages should be written using a professional tone and should conclude with your name and course, so that I can easily identify who the message is coming from. I will answer most of your messages within 24 hours, if not sooner (may have longer response times on weekends). If I have not responded to your message after 48 hours, please feel free to message me again.

Maintaining a Supportive Learning Environment: The role of all employees and students is to create and maintain supportive and harassment-free working and learning environments for all members of the campus community. At the doctoral level, interaction amongst your peers and respectful discourse is not only expected but required. Since students learn the most when they are actively engaged in learning, classroom discussions will be a major part of the class, and I will expect everyone to engage in these discussions from an intellectual standpoint. If at any time you feel threatened or uneasy, please bring it to my attention via email, during my office hours, or by appointment.

Writing Expectations: This course requires you to engage as an emerging scholar. You will participate in weekly discussions surrounding the book, assigned readings and peer-reviewed scholarship from your own research. You will also participate in a series of informational interviews along with a reflection that will prepare you for your own career path.

I expect your writing to reflect:



1. Critical engagement: Move beyond summary to analyze, question, and synthesize ideas across the book, assigned readings, and relevant peer-reviewed scholarship.
2. Scholarly voice: Write with clarity, precision, and an appropriately academic tone, positioning yourself as an emerging scholar.
3. Evidence-based argumentation: Support claims with relevant evidence and engage thoughtfully with scholarly sources.
4. Connection to research: Where appropriate, connect course concepts and readings to your own research interests, developing ideas that contribute to ongoing scholarly conversations.

TAMIU's Writing Center (Cowart Hall, 2013) offers free writing support to all writers in the TAMIU community. Tutors are available to work one-on-one with you on any stage of a writing project. If you need help brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, or editing, visit The Writing Center to work with a tutor.

In addition, I welcome the opportunity to review your writing (in person or virtually). Please visit during office hours or schedule an appointment.

Technology Use: Technology can support learning and enhance the educational experience when used appropriately. We may use various applications and digital tools to support course activities and learning outcomes. Students are expected to use technology in accordance with university policies and course expectations. If you need access to a laptop, or a laptop that better meets your academic needs, please contact TAMIU OIT to inquire about available laptop loan programs.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to produce original work that reflects their own scholarly thinking, writing, and analysis. Academic dishonesty, plagiarism, submitting work completed for another course (self-plagiarism), or submitting pre-existing papers or assignments as original work will be addressed in accordance with TAMIU's Academic Honesty policies. Students are also expected to appropriately acknowledge and cite the ideas, words, data, and other intellectual contributions of others; APA 7th edition is the required citation style for this course. Students who are uncertain about appropriate citation practices should consult the Purdue OWL or contact me.

AI use must also comply with the course's AI Use in Coursework policy and the PhD Student Handbook (26-27 Academic Year Edition). Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, citations, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions presented in their work. Failure to disclose required AI use may constitute academic dishonesty.

Academic integrity violations may result in penalties consistent with university and program policies, including a failing grade on an assignment or, where warranted, a failing grade in the course or additional disciplinary action. When in doubt about whether a particular use of material, technology, or AI is appropriate, ask before submitting the work.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

In this course, you are being trained as an independent scholar capable of conducting original, rigorous research. While AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Bing Chat, Claude, Grammarly, etc.) are widely available, their use in this class is restricted to ensure that you develop the academic, methodological, and writing skills necessary for doctoral-level work.

At the PhD level, your ability to design studies, critique methodologies, and produce original, publishable-quality writing is essential. AI tools cannot substitute for these skills. Requiring both pre- and post-AI drafts ensures transparency and emphasizes that AI can supplement but not replace your intellectual work. Misuse of AI will be treated as a violation of academic integrity and will be subject to university policy.

In accordance with the PhD Student Handbook, AI tools and large language models (LLMs) may be used to support scholarly work, but their use presents important ethical, methodological, legal, and environmental considerations; therefore, complete transparency is required. Students who use AI in assignments, research, or grant writing must explicitly disclose the tool(s) and prompt(s) used, the purpose of use, and the stage of the research or writing process in which AI was used. Basic spelling and grammar tools that do not generate substantive content do not require disclosure; however, failure to disclose substantive AI use will be treated as academic dishonesty, and students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, citations, analyses, conclusions, and intellectual property of their work.

1. Permitted Uses of AI

Students may use AI tools for limited, supportive purposes that do not replace their own scholarly thinking, writing, or analysis. Permitted uses include:

- Correcting grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Improving clarity, sentence structure, and organization.
- Generating or refining topic sentences, transition sentences, or outlines as scaffolding rather than final submitted content.



- Identifying potential structural improvements in a student-written draft.
- Limited brainstorming of research questions or ideas to explore, provided that AI-generated text is not submitted as the student's own work.

Documentation and Transparency: Any substantive use of AI must be disclosed in accordance with the PhD Student Handbook policy on AI. Students must identify the tool(s) and prompt(s) used, explain the purpose of the AI use, and indicate the stage of the writing or research process in which it was used. Students should retain their original work and, when requested, provide the original draft alongside the AI-assisted revision to demonstrate how AI contributed to the final product. If no AI tools were used, students should state: "No AI tools were used in the preparation of this assignment."

2. Prohibited Uses of AI

Students may not:

- Submit AI-generated text, analysis, or other substantive content as their own work.
- Use AI to draft, rewrite, or paraphrase substantial portions of an assignment or research proposal.
- Use AI to generate substantive portions of introductions, literature reviews, theoretical frameworks, methods, results, discussion, or conclusions.
- Use AI to complete assignments or conduct scholarly work in place of the student's own analysis, reasoning, and writing.
- Use AI in any manner that violates the university or PhD program's academic integrity, authorship, or research policies.

Students remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, citations, interpretations, analyses, and conclusions presented in their work. Failure to disclose required AI use may be treated as academic dishonesty in accordance with the PhD Student Handbook.

Missed & Late Assignments: It is important to keep up with the materials and assignments. Therefore, late assignments will only be accepted if accompanied by a university-approved absence. In the event you miss a deadline with a university-approved absence or emergency, please contact me with documentation within 48 hours of missing the exam or assignment, so we can identify how to make up the missed work. However, you should be working on materials well before our weekly meetings and, therefore, procrastination will be considered in the event that material is missing or late. If you know in advance that you will be gone when an assignment is due, please plan ahead and submit it early. The instructor reserves the right to modify assignments as needed for make-up work. The only exceptions to this rule are those listed in the College of Arts & Sciences Policies located at the end of this syllabus.

Student Learning Outcomes

CLO 1 - Navigate PhD education.

CLO 2 - Develop research interests and research agendas.

CLO 3 - Identify and engage with faculty mentors and collaborators.

CLO 4 - Prepare for success in the academic and professional job markets.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	A field guide to grad school: Uncovering the hidden curriculum.	Calarco, J. M.	0691201099

Grading Criteria

Course Structure and Grading

This course is organized around graded assignments and activities, supported by regular class participation and engagement. The course totals 500 points. The grading breakdown is as follows:

Reflective Journals — 125 points (25%)

Students will complete five reflective journal submissions throughout the semester, with each journal worth 25 points. Journals are designed to connect course readings, discussions, and professional development topics to students' experiences and goals as doctoral students. The final submission will include the complete journal with all five entries. Journal entries should demonstrate substantive reflection and engagement with course material rather than simply summarize readings.

Informational Interviews — 100 points (20%)

Students will complete three informational interviews designed to expose them to different professional pathways and perspectives. The interviews will include one TAMIU criminal justice faculty member, one faculty member outside TAMIU, and one PhD holder working in an alternative-academic (alt-ac) career. Interview preparation, completion, and associated activities will collectively account for 100 points.

Informational Interview Reflection Paper — 100 points (20%)

The culminating reflection paper will require students to synthesize what they learned from the three informational interviews and connect those insights to their own research interests, professional goals, and plans for navigating the remainder of the doctoral program. The paper should demonstrate synthesis, reflection, and professional planning rather than simply summarize the interviews.

Professional Development Activities — 100 points (20%)

Students will complete a series of practical professional development activities throughout the semester. These include the AI brainstorming activity, research-topic development, CITI human-subjects research training, conference travel/funding preparation, and other structured activities related to doctoral milestones, research, publishing, funding, professional identity, and the academic job market. Collectively, these activities are worth 100 points.

Class Participation and Engagement — 75 points (15%)

Participation is based on preparation for class, engagement in discussions, workshops, and activities, and meaningful contributions to the seminar environment. Students are expected to complete assigned readings and preparation before class and participate actively in both in-person and virtual sessions. Participation is evaluated based on the quality and consistency of engagement, not simply the amount of speaking. Attendance alone does not constitute participation.

Graded vs. Ungraded Course Components

Not every activity listed on the course itinerary is separately graded. Assigned readings, class discussions, workshops, peer activities, informal share-outs, and preparation activities are generally intended to support learning and professional development and will not receive a separate point value unless they are specifically identified as a graded assignment. Class participation and engagement are the exception and constitute a graded component of the course. Students are nevertheless expected to complete all assigned readings, preparation, and course activities because they provide the foundation for meaningful participation and successful completion of the graded assignments.

The 500-point course total is distributed as follows:

Reflective Journals - 125 pts

Informational Interviews - 100 pts

Informational Interview Reflection Paper - 100 pts

Professional Development Activities - 100 pts

Class Participation & Engagement - 75 pts

Total 500 pts

Because this is a PhD-level seminar, grading emphasizes substantive engagement, intellectual curiosity, reflection, professional development, and the ability to connect course concepts to students' emerging identities as scholars.



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

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Sat	8/29	Welcome & Orientation What This Course Is (and Isn't). Intro to the "hidden curriculum" concept; syllabus review	Calarco, Intro & Ch. 1–2 (Choosing a Program; Building Your Team)	
Sat	9/5	Reading Like a Scholar, Taking Notes, & Working with AI. Note-taking systems for seminars; how to prepare for/participate in doctoral classes; AI as a brainstorming partner vs. ghostwriter; Informational Interview assignment introduced.	Calarco Ch. 3–5 Hopkins (2024)	AI Brainstorming Activity
Sat	9/12	Doing Research, Finding Funding & Getting Published. Handling rejection and setbacks.	Calarco Ch. 6–8	Journal 1
Sat	9/19	Talking About Your Research, Conferences & the Job Market (book wrap-up/synthesis discussion).	Calarco Ch. 9–11	Informational Interview: all 3 question sets submitted for instructor feedback
Sat	9/26	The Hidden Curriculum, TAMIU Edition. Attending job talks, portfolio & dissertation defenses, service expectations, the "invisible" labor of research.		Journal 2
Sat	10/3	Belonging & Building Your Team. Imposter syndrome, first-gen experience, family expectations, near-peer mentorship, and building a support network.	Crumb (2022)	Journal 3
Sat	10/10	Picking a Research Topic — and Learning It. Workshop on literature searching and reading strategically in a new area.	Bring one article central to your area of interest	Informational Interview #1 (TAMIU CJ faculty) complete; brief share-out
Sat	10/17	Committees & Program Milestones. Portfolio Project and dissertation expectations; committee member roles; how/when to ask someone to serve; what "writing at a PhD level" actually means and how it differs from MS-level or practitioner writing.	MSCJ/PhD program handbook excerpts on portfolio & dissertation requirements (provided by Dr. Hood)	Journal 4
Sat	10/24	Research Ethics & the Responsible Conduct of Research. IRB basics, human-subjects protections, and the particular obligations of researching vulnerable or justice-involved populations.	CITI Human Subjects Research modules (assigned online) TAMIU IRB application materials	CITI training completion certificate
Sat	10/31	Preparing for, Funding & Attending Conferences. Finding the right conference, abstract submission, travel-funding workshop, conference etiquette & networking.	ASC Conference Schedule	Draft travel/funding request



Sat	11/7	Professional Identity Beyond the Dissertation. Building a CV, Google Scholar/ ORCID, academic vs. alt-ac pathways.	Informational Interview #2 (non-TAMIU faculty) complete
Sat	11/14	Synthesis & Planning Ahead. Integrating topic, committee, funding, and network into a first-year plan; workshop time on the reflection paper; closing reflection.	Full Journal due (all entries, complete) by 9:00 AM Journal 5
Sat	11/21	Conference Week	Informational Interview #3 (alt-ac PhD) complete
Sat	11/28	Thanksgiving	
Sat	12/5	Finals Week - No meeting	Informational Interview Reflection Paper due by 9:00 AM

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.tamtu.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

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 Student Handbook (<https://www.tamtu.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.

TAMU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMU E-mail (tamiu.edu or dusty email) are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty –not the U.S. Mail and no other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check their TAMU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMU 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, TAMU 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 TAMU Student Handbook (URL: [Student Handbook \(https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml\)](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 TAMU 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 TAMU's anonymous electronic reporting site, *Report It*, at <https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit/index.shtml>).

TAMU 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.