



PHIL 1301 - Introduction to Philosophy

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 181, CRN 18806

Instructor Information

Mike Corbett, PhD

Email: michael.corbett@tamui.edu

Office: Microsoft Teams via Blackboard

Office Hours:

Tuesday/Thursday, 10am - 12pm CT

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

An introduction to philosophy as the speculative attempt to present a systematic and complete view of all reality. Students will be introduced to the writings of seminal philosophers as well as to the role of logic and forms of argumentation.

Humanities Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Official course time zone: CT (Central Time)

Course Structure

Philosophy is hard work. To understand the material in this course, students will need to read the assigned texts carefully and actively. Often, students will need to review the text and spend time thinking through a specific argument, considering its implications, ambiguities, or possible objections. To a significant extent, this means that students will need to think like a philosopher. Much of this class is designed specifically to challenge students to *do* philosophy. The assignments—including a series of short essays, two rounds of peer review, a midterm and final paper, and discussion questions embedded in the lecture videos—ask students not just to tell me what they have learned about some philosopher's views, but to engage critically with those views and defend their own.

If this sounds daunting, don't worry! I will be there to guide the way. Please feel free to join my office hours if you have questions, or even if only to bounce some ideas off of me while preparing for assignments. We can also arrange a meeting outside of my usual office hours if necessary.

My goal in this class is mainly to help students become better philosophers. To this end, I will aim to give feedback on assignments in time for students to process and apply it before the next set of deadlines. If there are any follow-up questions about feedback, please join me during my regular office hours or reach out via e-mail. I will make a point to reply within 72 hours M-Th (Monday for e-mails received during the weekend).

I will also periodically send out announcements to the entire class addressing common questions, providing feedback, indicating amendments to the syllabus, etc. So please check announcements regularly to avoid missing important updates.

Note: Please review the weekly/module objectives for each week on Blackboard, as these will include the most up-to-date details about the week's schedule of topics and assignments.



AI policy

The use of AI-generated text in university coursework will be reported as plagiarism to the TAMU Honor Council, investigated as such and subject to grade penalty. This includes use of tools like Quillette, Grammarly, and other services that will write or rewrite your work. If your paper is flagged for AI-generated text, you will have to meet with me during office hours to discuss your writing process.

Although I will not treat it as an academic offense, I also strongly discourage the use of AI for brainstorming purposes. Regular practice is crucial to the cultivation of critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. This is the point of the reading and writing assignments in this class: namely, to give students the opportunity to practice and thus hone their critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. But by using AI to brainstorm, you forgo this opportunity. Further, if my feedback addresses AI-generated ideas, not ones you have developed yourself, it will not be able to identify areas where *you* excel and where *you* might improve, and therefore will not help you become a better critical thinker and philosopher. The use of AI for brainstorming is therefore counterproductive to the learning objectives of this (or any) philosophy class.

Turnitin: This is web-based anti-plagiarism software that all students must incorporate into their submission process for all essays. Work that is not submitted to Turnitin will not be accepted for grading. **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CONFIRM THAT THE ESSAY IS UPLOADED INTO TURNITIN PROPERLY AND ON TIME. SHOULD TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES ARISE DURING SUBMISSION IN A TIMELY MANNER, THE STUDENT MUST TAKE SCREEN SHOTS AS PROOF. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AS EXCUSABLE.** The instructor will evaluate the report generated by the software to determine if there are any plagiarism infractions or inappropriate use of automated writing software.

Note: Any part of this syllabus is subject to revision at the discretion of the instructor.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate awareness of scope and variety of theories spanning the history of philosophy.
2. Relate the influence of these theories on literature, art, politics, science, etc.
3. Engage philosophical theories personally and respond critically.
4. Articulate an informed personal reaction to said theories.
5. Identify types of philosophical theories.
6. Analyze arguments and deploy the process of philosophical argumentation.
7. Express one's own viewpoints and respect others'.
8. Develop self-awareness of one's reasoning process.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Great Conversation	Norman Melchert, David Morrow	9780190670689

Other Course Materials

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

The textbook for this course is available on Blackboard for all students with Books Included. Simply navigate to the home page and click on the link titled "Brytewave Course Materials" to access the textbook.

For this class, students will need access to a computer and the internet for writing essays, accessing Blackboard course materials and extra readings, viewing video lectures for the course, participating in class polls, surveys, and exercises, submitting assignments, retrieving notes and prompts, and taking exams electronically. It is the student's responsibility to ensure they have adequate access to the Internet and can access and understand the learning management system. Students are also required to have access to a word processor that can save files in formats readable by Microsoft Word (i.e., .doc, docx). Students will have to have (or gain) proficiency in the Blackboard Learning Management System. They will have to be able to submit assignments through turnitin.com.

***Note:** This course is "paperless" which means that assignments will be submitted electronically through Blackboard.

Grading Criteria

Critical Question Essays: 40%

Students will write **at least four—but no more than six**—critical question essays throughout the semester in response to the assigned readings or lecture videos. **Only the four submissions with the highest scores will count toward the final grade.** This gives students the opportunity to improve their grade by submitting up to six total essays throughout the semester. So, students should write their critical question essays with an eye to identifying a topic and thesis for their midterm and final papers.

The critical question essays should consist of **roughly 300 words** and be formatted with 12-point font, double-spaced, and Times New Roman. **Students must submit their critical question essays via Blackboard by 11:59 pm CT on the day specified in the schedule of topics and assignments**, which can be found below.

Additional instructions for this assignment, along with a step-by-step walkthrough, a rubric, and a sample essay, will be provided on Blackboard. Please read these documents carefully, and do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Late policy: Late submissions will not be accepted. However, if a student misses the week's deadline, they will usually have the opportunity to submit their essay the following week. (One exception to this is if a student misses the week 4 deadline, since the post-midterm essays may not explore material from weeks 1-4.)

Peer-Review Assignment: 15%

For this assignment, students will be randomly assigned to groups and asked to provide written feedback on the critical question essays that each of their groupmates have selected to develop into their midterm and final papers. Peer reviews will be graded on a pass/fail basis, and must provide comments that are specific, constructive, and actionable. Additional instructions will be provided on Blackboard later in the semester.

Deadlines for this assignment are as follows:

Midterm peer-review session:

1. Select and submit essays to undergo peer review **by Sep. 22 at 11:59 pm.**
2. Peer reviews due **by Sep 28 by 11:59 pm.**

Final peer-review session:

1. Select and submit essays to undergo peer review **by Nov. 25 at 11:59 pm.**
2. Peer reviews due **by Nov 29 by 11:59 pm.**

Late policy: Because students depend on their groupmates to submit essays for review and provide written comments on a timely basis, late penalties for this assignment are relatively harsh. **Students who do not submit an essay for review will incur a 30% grade reduction applied to the total grade for all completed peer reviews.** However, **late essay submissions for review will be accepted** in accordance with the following schedule of penalties:

- Submitted within 12-24 hours after deadline: 5% grade reduction applied to total grade for completed peer reviews.
- Between 24-36 hours after deadline: 10% grade reduction applied to total grade for completed peer reviews.
- Between 36-48 hours after deadline: 20% grade reduction applied to total grade for completed peer reviews.
- Essay submissions for review will not be accepted beyond 48 hours and will incur a 30% grade reduction applied to the total grade for all completed peer reviews.

In addition to these penalties, students who do not submit an essay for review will miss out on the opportunity to improve their work for purposes of the midterm/final paper.

Finally, **peer reviews will not** be accepted late. So, students will only receive credit for peer reviews submitted by the deadline. This is to ensure that students have ample time to develop their midterm/final papers in light of their groupmates' feedback.

Midterm Paper: 15%

Students will write a midterm paper of **roughly 750 words** based on one of their critical question essays submitted during weeks 1-4. This means students will be responsible for identifying a topic and a thesis. The midterm paper must be submitted on Blackboard **by October 4 at 11:59 pm CT** in a Microsoft Word document and formatted as follows: double-spaced, Times New Roman font, and 12-point font size.

A step-by-step walkthrough, a rubric, a sample paper, and more detailed instructions will be provided on Blackboard. Please read these documents carefully, and do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Late policy: See final paper overview below.



Final Paper: 20%

Students will write a final paper of **roughly 750 words** based on one of the critical question essays submitted during weeks 7-13 (in other words, it must examine course material covered during weeks 5-13). As with the midterm, this means students will be responsible for identifying a topic and a thesis. The final paper must be submitted on Blackboard **by December 4 at 11:59 pm CT** in a Microsoft Word document and formatted as follows: double-spaced, Times New Roman font, and 12-point font size.

A step-by-step walkthrough, a rubric, a sample paper, and more detailed instructions will be provided on Blackboard. Please read these documents carefully, and do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Late policy: late midterm and final papers will be accepted in accordance with the following schedule of penalties:

- Submitted 12-24 hours after deadline: 5% grade reduction.
- Between 24-48 hours after deadline: 10% grade reduction.
- Between 48-72 hours after deadline: 15% grade reduction.
- Beyond 72 hours after deadline: 20% grade reduction (max reduction).
- Hard cutoff for both midterm and final papers: Dec. 8 at 12 pm noon.

Viewing Lectures and Responding to Embedded Questions: 10%

Students are required to view **all** lecture videos for each week. Reflection questions will be embedded in many of the lecture videos. To be eligible for the maximum number of points for this assignment, students must respond to **all** embedded question. Responses will be graded primarily for completion. However, they must demonstrate a good faith attempt to engage thoughtfully with each question. **Students have two weeks from the start date of each module to complete the embedded questions.** See the schedule of topics and assignments below for specific due dates.

Late policy: Late submissions will not be accepted late.

Extensions

Students may request an extension in the event of an emergency or other extenuating circumstances. If possible, please contact me via e-mail **at least 48 hours in advance** to make this request. Note: extensions are not guaranteed and will be granted based on the circumstances.

Final Grades

Students will be graded holistically in light of their overall progress. This means that the final grade is not necessarily equal to the sum of the assignments described above. It also means that poor performance on one major assignment will not necessarily result in a low final grade—there is still a chance to recover by demonstrating significant improvement over the course of the term.

Appeals

I encourage students to reach out if they feel that I have graded their work too harshly. I am open to adjusting a grade if a compelling case can be made that I have overlooked or misunderstood something. To make a compelling case for this, students must be able to argue that they deserve a better grade according to the rubric that I have provided for the relevant assignment.

Grading Policy

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60



Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/24	The Beginnings of Western Philosophy	Read: "A Word to Students" (pp. xv-xix) Ch. 1 Hesiod and Homer Ch. 2 Philosophy before Socrates (Sections: Heraclitus, Parmenides, and the Atomists [skip: "How to Live"]) Watch and Respond: Lecture videos - the Presocratics	Aug. 30 - Week 1 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm
8/31	The Sophists and the Socratic Method	Read: Ch. 4 The Sophists (pp. 55-67) Watch and Respond: Lecture video - the Sophists Read: Ch. 6 Socrates (pp. 91-98); Ch. 7 Euthyphro and Crito dialogues Watch and Respond: Lecture videos - Socrates and dialogues	Sep. 6 - Week 2 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm Sep. 6 - Week 1 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
9/7	Plato	Read: Ch. 8 Plato Watch and respond: Lecture videos - Plato	Sep. 13 - Week 3 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm. Sep. 13 - Week 2 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
9/14	Aristotle	Read: Ch. 9 Aristotle Watch and respond: Lecture videos - Aristotle	Sep. 18 - Week 4 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm. Sep. 20 - Week 3 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
9/21	Hellenistic Philosophy Part 1: Epicurus	Read: Ch. 11 Epicureanism, pp. 235-240 Read: "Epicurus," Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, sections 1-3 & 5. Watch: Lecture videos - Epicureanism	No week 5 Critical Question Essay Sep 22 - Select and submit essays for Midterm Peer Review by 11:59 pm Sep 27 - Week 4 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
9/28	Hellenistic Philosophy Part 2: Stoicism	Read: Ch. 11 Stoicism, pp. 241-246 Read: "Stoic Ethics" (entire entry) & "Stoicism" (section 4), Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy Watch and respond: Lecture videos - Stoicism	No week 6 Critical Question Essay. Sep 28 - Peer reviews due 11:59 pm Oct. 4 - Midterm Paper due 11:59 PM CT Oct. 4 - Week 5 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
10/5	Islamic and Medieval Philosophy	Read: Ch. 14 Avicenna (Intro pp. 292-294; pp. 300-304, excluding "The Soul and its Faculties") Watch and respond: Lecture video - Avicenna Read: Ch. 15 Anselm and Aquinas (pp. 311-324) Watch and respond: Lecture videos - Anselm and Aquinas	Oct.11 - Week 7 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm. Oct. 11 - Week 6 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
10/12	Descartes' Meditations	Read: Ch. 16 From Medieval to Modern Europe (pp. 348-358); Ch. 17 Descartes' Meditations I-III Watch and respond: Lecture videos - Meditations I-III	Oct. 18 - Week 8 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm Oct. 18 - Week 7 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
10/19	Descartes' Meditations Continued	Read: Ch. 17 Descartes' Meditations IV-VI Watch and respond: Lecture videos – Descartes' Meditations IV-VI	Oct. 25 - Week 9 Critical Question Essay due at 11:59 pm Oct. 25 - Week 8 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm



10/26	Hume, Kant, and the Possibility of Scientific Knowledge	Read: Ch. 19 Hume (pp. 438-453, 462-465) Watch and respond: Lecture video - Hume Read: Ch. 20 Kant (pp. 465-479; skip sketches: Spinoza and Leibniz) Watch and respond: Lecture video - Kant	Nov. 1 - Week 10 Critical Question Essay due at 11:59 pm Nov. 1 - Week 9 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
11/2	Hume, Kant, and the Possibility of Moral Knowledge	Read: "Good Minus God," by Louise Antony; Ch. 19 Hume (pp. 458-462) Watch and respond: Lecture video - Divine Command Theory, the Is-Out Gap, and Hume's Subjectivism. Read: Ch. 20 Kant (pp. 485-495). Watch and respond: Lecture video - Kant's Moral Objectivism: Rationality, the Good Will, and the Categorical Imperative.	Nov. 8 - Week 11 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm Nov. 8 - Week 10 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
11/9	Moral Theory and Social Reform	Read: Ch. 23 Moral and Political Reformers Watch and respond: Lecture videos – Utilitarianism and Moral Theory and Social Reform	Nov. 13 - Week 12 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm Nov. 15 Week 11 - Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
11/16	Existentialism and Postmodernism	Read: Ch. 28 Simone de Beauvoir Watch and respond: Lecture video - Simone de Beauvoir Read: Ch. 29 Postmodernism - Rorty (pp. 712-720) Watch and Respond: Lecture video – Rorty	Nov. 20 - Week 13 Critical Question Essay due 11:59 pm Nov. 22 - Week 12 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
11/23	Contemporary Metaphysics	Read: Ch. 30 The Matter of Minds (pp. 733-743) Watch and Respond: Lecture video – Materialism and Mind	No week 14 Critical Question Essays Nov. 25 - Select and submit essays for final peer review by 11:59 pm Nov. 29 Peer reviews due 11:59 pm Nov. 29 - Week 13 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm
11/30			Dec. 4 - Final Paper 11:59 PM CT Dec. 6 - Week 14 Embedded Questions due 11:59 pm

Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes

Core-Curriculum Learning Outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking Skills (CT)** - creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
2. **Communication Skills (COM)** - effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
3. **Social Responsibility (SR)** - intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
4. **Personal Responsibility (PR)** - ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

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.

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 \(https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml\)](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 TAMU faculty or TAMU 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.

Distance Education Courses

Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter J, Section 2.202 ([https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=2&rl=202](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=2&rl=202)), defines distance education as the formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50%) of instruction. Distance education includes hybrid and 100% online courses and programs as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB):

- **Hybrid Course** - A distance education course in which more than 50 percent but less than 100 percent of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations.
- **100-Percent Online Course** - A distance education course in which 100 percent of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations. **Requirements for on-campus or in-person orientation, testing, academic support services, internships/fieldwork, or other non-instructional activities do not exclude a course from this category.**

In this online course, be sure to confirm what in-person meetings may be required of you (if applicable).



Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

There are course expectations concerning etiquette or how we should treat each other online. We must consider these values as we communicate with one another. Visit **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' web page on Netiquette** (<http://www.tamtu.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml>) for further instruction.

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodation 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 educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodation. For more information, contact the online at **Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS)**, via phone at 956.326.3086 or by visiting the staff at the Student Center, room 118. A link to the Disabilities Services for Students site has also been included under the "Resources" tab inside the course.

Student Support Resources

The University wishes to have all students succeed in their courses. To provide support to our students, an array of services in the areas of technology support, academic support, student support, and accessibility support may be found at the University. For more information, visit the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services page on **University Resources and Support Services**.

Computer/Technology Requirements

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Online students will need regular access to a personal computer that runs on a broadband Internet connection.

It is recommended that you meet the technical requirements listed on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage (<https://www.tamtu.edu/distance/students/technology-requirements.shtml>) when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

NOTE: Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services may check out available webcams to students on a first-come, first-served basis. To check out a webcam, please stop by Killam Library, Room 259, and request an available webcam.

Additional Software. You will need the following additional software: Microsoft Word. TAMTU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamtu.edu/>. This site also provides students access to download the Microsoft suite for educational use. **See instructions for downloading the Microsoft Office suite.**

Note: Students, if you do not own the required hardware or software or do not have access to the Internet, it will be highly challenging for you to make any progress in this class. However, my goal is to assist you in finding solutions and guide you appropriately most of the required materials can either be found free of charge at TAMTU's library, classrooms, and available computer labs. **Visit Media Services' web page on the availability of on-campus computer labs.** In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

Students are provided with an orientation (*eLearning (Blackboard) Student Orientation*) and access to guides on how to use the Blackboard LMS. Guides may be available at **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' Student eLearning Tutorial Videos page** or by contacting the eLearning team at elarning@tamtu.edu.

Minimum Technical Skills Expected

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Students in distance education should have knowledge of basic computer and Internet skills, as mentioned on the **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage**.

Technical Support Services

Because of the nature of distance education courses, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) computing and information services are vital to the success of online students. This webpage covers contact information for Distance Education Services (Blackboard Support), the OIT Help Desk, and E-mail support: **Technical Support Services**.

Course Evaluation

At the end of this course, students are encouraged to complete a course evaluation that will be distributed to them via email and through a course link.



Accessibility and Privacy Statements on Course Technologies

At Texas A&M International University, we believe that all students should have equal technology opportunities in the classroom. These technologies/sites may also require user data, such as the creation of a username and password. You may find the accessibility and privacy policies of the technologies used in this class on the following pages: **Accessibility Statements and Privacy Statements**.