



PHLT 4415 - Community Immersion

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 180, CRN 18459

Instructor Information

Jessica Peña , DrPH

Instructional Assistant Professor

Email: jessica.pena@tamiu.edu

Office: CHS 210D

Office Hours:

In-person: Tuesday 10 am – 1 pm

Virtual Meeting Space: Wednesday 10 am – 1 pm

Office Phone: 956-326-3142

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

A community Immersion course designed to provide students the opportunity to synthesize knowledge from other course work to address public/community health problem related to health promotion/disease prevention. Supervised/preceptor clinical in a private or public health-related agencies. This course is a two hour lecture and two hour practicum component (total of 56 hours of practicum). Prerequisites: Senior standing, PHLT 3301, PHLT 3304, and PHLT 3310.

Health Sciences Department, College of Nursing&Health Sci

Additional Course Information

You will also be required to complete a 56-hour practicum experience. Please refer to Blackboard for information on possible practicum sites, practicum hour scheduling, and COVID-19 protocols for each site. **You must complete all practicum hours before the end of the semester. You will not be allowed to pass the class without the completion of these hours.**

Practicum Etiquette

Scheduling of Clinical Hours

The lead supervising faculty will approve when you are cleared to start clinical. This will be a written confirmation via email. Practicum hours are to be scheduled at the convenience and availability of the preceptor. Students are not to ask preceptors to conform to a schedule that meets their personal or employment needs. The student's personal and work schedules are expected to accommodate participation in the required number of clinical hours prescribed in the course requirements. Students and preceptors need to agree on the days and times that the student will be in the agency at the beginning of the clinical experience. These hours must be approved with the faculty. Faculty must be available to student by phone during practicum hours. A schedule of practicum hours must be given to the faculty for approval at the beginning of the semester. Unless otherwise stated in the syllabus, students are expected to begin the practicum component of a course when the course starts to ensure adequate time to complete assignments. However, students must update their immunization information and conduct their background check BEFORE engaging in any clinical experiences, using Verified Credentials.

Professional dress and behavior

Students are representatives of TAMIU College of Nursing and Health Sciences and must present themselves as ambassadors of this program. They are expected to be respectful to preceptors, faculty, staff, patients and their families. Reports of unprofessional behavior will result in the student being



counseled and possibly subject to review by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Admission and Progression and/or the University Office of Student Affairs.

Students should be professionally dressed in black slacks, a TAMIU polo (if polo is not available, a conservative blouse), and wear an ID badge that identifies them as a TAMIU College of Nursing and Health Sciences student. These badges should be worn only by the student in the practicum setting. The appropriate use of uniforms or lab coats should be determined during the preceptor/student interview. Students are expected to conform to the dress code of the clinical site where the coursework is completed.

Students should individually express their appreciation to their preceptors for their dedication, mentoring and teaching at the end of the preceptored experience. They should also give them a summary of the total preceptor hours for their records.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, each student will:

- Examine key components of public health in practice.
- Gain experience in a setting that provides community health services.
- Synthesize and use knowledge from previous coursework to develop and implement a plan of care for individuals, patients, families, or vulnerable populations in the community.
- Critically analyze the roles of the interdisciplinary public/community health team.
- Apply the principles and methods of epidemiology to select public health care situations.
- Examine evidence related to public health practice and apply in a systematic manner best practices to address public health issues.
- Demonstrate ability to formulate an assessment and intervention addressing a public health problem, including epidemiological, social, psychological, biological, political, economic, and cultural components that affect the problem.
- Analyze relevant health promotion and/or illness and injury prevention strategies/interventions at the individual, family, community, and system level.
- Display leadership in creating and implementing a written plan to address a select public health problem affecting the community.
- Examine referral, follow-up, case management, and delegation as public health interventions.
- Evaluate the outcome of interventions in the public health setting.
- Demonstrate responsibility and accountability for independent learning and self-evaluation.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	An Introduction to Community and Public Health	McKenzie, J.F., Pinger, R.R. & Kotecki, J.E.	9781284202694
Required	Evaluating Public and Community Health Programs	Harris, M. J.	9781119151081

Other Course Materials

- Scott, K., Beckham, S. W., Gross, M., Pariyo, G., Rao, K. D., Cometto, G., & Perry, H. B. (2018). What do we know about community-based health worker programs? A systematic review of existing reviews on community health workers. *Human resources for health*, 16(1), 1-17.
 - This is a required reading for this course. Article provides a systematic review examining the impact of utilizing community health workers (promotoras) in health education programming. Community health workers are very commonly used with minority, underserved populations.
- Public Health (2021). Public Health Careers Guide. Retrieved from: <https://www.publichealth.org/careers/#Careers>
 - Resource will be utilized to aide students in their exploration of potential jobs and careers in the field of public health. Resource provides
- Price, J. H., Khubchandani, J., & Webb, F. J. (2018). Poverty and health disparities: what can public health professionals do?. *Health promotion practice*, 19(2), 170-174.



- This is a required reading for students. Manuscript explains the role that public health leaders play in addressing health disparities in various communities.
- Seltzer, B. (2015). 101+ careers in public health. Springer Publishing Company.
 - This is a required reading for this course. Students will be allowed to choose two topic areas to read within Part II of the book. Reading will expose students to various careers in public health.
- Centers for Disease Control (2016). Gastroenteritis at the University of Texas. Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/epicasestudies/downloads/xfdz_gas_i.doc
 - This is a resource needed to complete a required assessment in the course. Students will read the epidemiological case study and will complete the questions posed in the activity.
- Aldrich, M. C., Hidalgo, B., Widome, R., Briss, P., Brownson, R. C., & Teutsch, S. M. (2015). The role of epidemiology in evidence-based policy making: a case study of tobacco use in youth. *Annals of epidemiology*, 25(5), 360-365.
 - This is a required reading for this course. Reading introduces students to the role epidemiology plays in public policy. Reading provides a case study pertaining to tobacco use in youth.
- Harris, M. J. (2016). *Evaluating public and community health programs*. John Wiley & Sons.
 - This is a required reading in this course. Students will read two chapters of this book which introduces students to process and outcome evaluation.
- Southeast PTTC (2020). Webinar: Innovative Strategies for Engaging Underserved Populations. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mutfdoDfvUk&t=558s>
 - This is a required resource for this course. Lecture discusses various approaches used to reach underserved, primarily minority, populations to implement public health programming.

Grading Criteria

NOTE: An incomplete cannot be given if the student does not have a passing grade at the time the incomplete is given. **Final grades will be rounded to the hundredth place. For example, 59.44% will be rounded will not be rounded to a 60%. A 59.45 will be rounded to a 60%.**

GRADE	POINTS
A	540-600
B	480-539
C	420-479
D	360-419
F	359 or less

Final Grade Breakdown

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Discussions (4)	100
Participation (4)	20
Module Papers (3)	150
Midpoint: Student Evaluation	25
Midpoint: Preceptor Evaluation	15
Final: Student Evaluation	35
Final: Preceptor Evaluation Practicum	25
Attendance Sheet	50
Practicum Experience Paper	60
Practicum Experience Poster	60
Journal Entries (4)	60



Course Topics/Course Calendar

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/24	Week 0 Module 1 (Weeks 1-4) Reaching Underserved Communities	WEEK 0 Watch Introduction Video WEEK 0 • Read the “About Your Instructor” page on Blackboard • Complete the “Meet and Greet Discussion” forum • Read the Syllabus and Overview for this course • Complete the Acknowledgement of Syllabus and Policies • View the Student Resources folders • Watch the “Blackboard Orientation Video” • Complete the Syllabus quiz for 5 points extra credit! Harris- Chapter 1-An Introduction to Public and Community Health Evaluation Harris- Chapter 2- The Community Assessment: An Overview Mckenzie- Chapter 5- Community Organizing/Building Health Promotion Programming Manuscript #1: What do we know about community-based health worker programs? A systematic review of existing reviews on community health workers.	SATURDAY, August 29th at 11:59pm (Only Week 0) SATURDAY, September 19th at 11:59pm
9/21	Module 2 (Weeks 5-8) Key Players in the Public Health Workforce	Harris- Chapter 3-Developing Initiatives: An Overview Public Health Careers Guide Poverty and health disparities: what can public health professionals do? o 101+ careers in public health	SATURDAY, October 17th at 11:59pm
10/19	Module 3 (Weeks 9-11) Epidemiological Applications to Public Health Initiatives	Harris- Chapter 8 Analyzing and Interpreting the Data: Quantitative Harris- Chapter 9 Collecting the Data: Qualitative Harris- Chapter 10 Analyzing and Interpreting the Data: Qualitative Epidemiological Case Study: Gastroenteritis at the University of Texas	SATURDAY, November 7th at 11:59 pm
11/9	Module 4 (Weeks 11- 15) Evaluation of Public Health Initiatives	McKenzie- Chapter 5: Community Organizing/Building and Health Promotion Programming Harris- Chapter 6 Designing the Evaluation Harris- Chapter 11 Reporting Evaluation Findings	SATURDAY, December 1st at 11:59 pm
11/16		Note: Course evaluations are 11/16 - 11/22!	
11/30	Last week of class	All 56 practicum hours should be completed by December 1st.	SATURDAY, December 1st at 11:59 pm
12/7		Grades due December 11th at noon.	

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 (tamui.edu) (<https://www.tamui.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Distance Education Courses

Online Courses and On-Campus Meetings

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 Structure

Students should first begin becoming acquainted with the course by visiting “Start Here” on Blackboard and completing all tasks in that section. **The class is structured to be completed across four modules. Each module has its respective readings and recorded lectures. All modules will require completion of a discussion board and module paper/project.** All module materials can be accessed by visiting “Content” on blackboard.

Note: Your progress within each module is self-paced in that all your relevant module assignments are due by the date in which the module is scheduled to end. Although, this class is self-paced, do not take this as an opportunity to procrastinate. Please let me help you be successful! I cannot reasonably do this if you come to me last minute for help in understanding a concept or completing an assignment!

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

Announcements/Course Messages/Emails

Announcements will be posted for general announcements, such as upcoming events, changes to due dates, and the start of each module. All messages must be through “Course Messages.” Instructor will not respond through Outlook email. The instructor will log into the course at least 4 days each week, and responses to inquiries can be expected within 24-48 hours of receipt by the instructor. Please make sure to use proper grammar and professional language.

Assignments and Assessments

Grades for your assignments will be posted within 7-10 days from the due date. **Late submissions will not be graded.** Feedback will be available on Blackboard Ultra Assignment Feedback. If you cannot see feedback for an assignment, please reach out.

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 when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

Additional Software. You will need the following additional software: Microsoft Office. TAMIU 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 (<https://www.tamtu.edu/oit/students/office365.shtml>).

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 TAMIU’s library, classrooms, and available computer labs. Visit Media Services’ web page on the availability of on-campus computer labs. (<https://www.tamtu.edu/distance/mediaservices/index.shtml>) 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 (<http://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/elearning-orientation.shtml>) or by contacting the eLearning team at elearning@tamui.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 (<http://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/knowledge-and-skills.shtml>).

Required Basic Technical Knowledge and Skills

- Getting online.
- Using an Internet browser. (Recommended browsers: Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome. Avoid: Internet Explorer, since this is no longer supported by Blackboard.)
- Downloading, saving, opening, and printing material found online.
- Conducting Internet searches.
- Composing e-mail/course messages and attaching documents. (Blackboard Student Help Link: Course Messages)
- Posting to a discussion forum. (Blackboard Student Help Link: Threads)
- Submitting to a drop box or assignment. (Blackboard Student Help Link: Submit Assignments)
- Writing and editing with a word processor, such as Notepad, MS Word, etc.
- Take online examinations.
- Learning new computer skills.

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 (<http://www.tamui.edu/distance/technical-support-services.shtml>).

Web Conferences/Synchronous sessions

Students are not required to attend synchronous lecture sessions to successfully complete this course; however, students are required to review all recorded lectures. Moreover, students may request one-on-one web conference sessions with the course instructor to address any questions or concerns with the course. If you feel that you may benefit from such support, you are encouraged to attend my virtual office hours. For access to meeting links, please refer to "Virtual Meeting Space" on Blackboard.

See officer hours.

*Students will email faculty to schedule meetings outside office hours if needed.

Rubrics

Rubrics for each assignment can be found on Blackboard under "Content" and by then visiting the respective module page. Each rubric provides a breakdown of key features that will be assessed for each assignment. Students are highly encouraged to review the assignment's rubric before developing and submitting each assignment.

Late Work Policy

Course content (e.g., assignments, discussions, quizzes, projects, exams) submitted late without prior communication with **and** approval by the instructor **will receive a 0%**. Note that all approvals for late submissions and whether or not deductions apply for late submissions are completely at the discretion of the instructor. Medical excuses or funeral excuses will be required for any late work. If no documentation is provided, no extension will be approved. Please ask for clarification if you have any questions about when an assignment is due.



Course Evaluation

At the end of this course, students are encouraged to complete a course evaluation, which will be distributed via email and through a course link. **Course evaluations are 11/16 through 11/22.**

Turnitin Policy Or Other Types of Assignments in Other Systems

Students agree that by taking this course, all required papers, exams, class projects or other assignments submitted for credit may be submitted to turnitin.com or similar third parties to review and evaluate for originality and intellectual integrity. A description of the services, terms and conditions of use and privacy policy of turnitin.com is available on its website: <<http://www.turnitin.com/>>. Students understand all work submitted to turnitin.com will be added to its database of papers. Students further understand that if the results of such a review support an allegation of academic dishonesty, the course work in question as well as any supporting materials may be submitted to the Honor Council for investigation and further action.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

Students should not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless you receive explicit permission to do so by the professor of the second course. In general, students should get credit for a work product only once. Work submitted for a previous course for a second course will result in a "0%."

Proctoring

This course does not have a final exam.

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 (<http://www.tamtu.edu/distance/technology/accessibility-statements.shtml>).

In this class, we will utilize: Blackboard Ultra, Echo360, VoiceThread, Turnitin, and Microsoft Office.

Syllabus Subject to Change

While information and assurances are provided in this course syllabus, it should be understood that content may change in keeping with new research and literature and that events beyond the control of the instructor could occur. Students will be informed of any substantive occurrences that will produce syllabus changes.