PSYC 4309 - Foundations of Language

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 180, CRN 17953

Instructor Information

Anna Cieslicka
Regents Professor
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Office: AIC 342
Office Hours:
TR 4:30-5:45 PM
Office Phone: 9563262611
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Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

This course explores basic theoretical issues concerning the nature of human language. Topics include the intricate system that governs language acquisition, linguistic competence and performance, the similarities and differences among world languages, and the relationship between spoken and written language.
Psychology & Communication Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

Class Format:

The course is entirely online through Blackboard. It is very important that you have a reliable and stable internet connection. Success in this course is based on completing the assigned readings, writing assignments, quizzes, and exams. The course is divided into seven (7) modules that include PowerPoint lectures, writing assignments, quizzes, and exams. You must complete all tasks by the due date specified in the course schedule. However, since I will upload all the assignments at the beginning of the unit date, you can complete everything in the unit ahead of time if you choose to, except for the exam, which will be posted at the date specified.

Class Expectations:

During the first week of class, become familiar with the Blackboard format. All communication will be conducted in Blackboard through announcements and email. Content pertaining to the class will be uploaded under the content tab. Always check blackboard for any events or updates that are being done to the system. Usually, when there is blackboard maintenance, it is conducted on a Friday. It is your responsibility to know when these are being conducted, as blackboard maintenance should not be used as an excuse for missing assignments. If there is a change in the course schedule, you will be notified under announcements.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Differentiate between and compare major areas of study in the scientific analysis of the building blocks of language.

2. Analyze different theoretical perspectives on how humans acquire and use language.

3. Distinguish between various methods employed in language research.

4. Critically evaluate research findings in the area of language.

5. Identify practical, real-world implications of linguistic theories and become better language users.

6. Summarize and explain findings from theoretical and experimental reports that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human cognitive architecture.

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	An Introduction to Language (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning	Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., & Hyams, N.	ISBN-13: 978-1133310686

Grading Criteria

Exams: **(3 exams, each worth 80 points, for the total of 240 points)**. There will be **three exams** during the semester, each administered at the end of every second Module. Each exam will cover the chapters that were included in the most recent two modules. The exams will consist of 40 multiple choice questions. You will have 80 minutes to complete each exam. Exams will be administered online on the Blackboard using the **Respondus LockDown Browser Monitor with WEBCAM** so please make sure you have the required software as the semester starts. Missed exams must be made up within three days of the exam due date; any later attempts will incur a 5-point penalty per each day past the due date. All exams must be completed on the scheduled day by 11:59 PM.

Final Exam: **(120 points)** The final exam will be comprehensive and will cover all course material. The exam will include 60 (sixty) multiple-choice questions (90 points) and an essay writing component (30 points).

Please Note: Technical issues or computer problems are not considered valid reasons for missed deadlines or makeup requests. This includes checking any submissions to ensure they are properly submitted and/or uploaded.

Writing Assignments**: (9 writing assignments, each worth 15 points, for the total of 135 points).** These are designed to make your learning experience more interactive, help you understand the material you are reading about in the textbook and the power points, and apply it to everyday situations.The assignments include watching short YouTube videos illustrating the material discussed and answering the questions about the videos, as well as brain-storming and providing your own opinions about a topic. There are no wrong or right answers when asked about an opinion, so please do not shy from expressing your views. Please note that you must review the power point accompanying the textbook chapters in order to complete each assignment successfully. Writing Assignments are due by 11:59 PM of a specified date.

Quizzes: **(7 quizzes, each worth 5 points, for the total of 35 points)** There will be seven quizzes throughout the semester, one for each Module. Each quiz will consist of 5 questions. Quizzes are due by 11:59 PM of the specified date.

For all written assignments: One of the purposes of this class is to stimulate your mind and enhance your critical thinking skills. You will not develop these skills if you ask AI to do classroom assignments for you. Therefore, **usage of AI for any assignments is strictly forbidden**. Written assignments generated by ChatGPT or other AI platforms will be graded as zero points and considered **plagiarism.** You are allowed to use Grammarly only on the condition that you attach the original version that you prepared and the version edited by Grammarly.

Extra Credit: You are encouraged to engage as participants in the various research projects available at the University. 5 extra credit points will be offered for each research study completed. A maximum of 15 points (3 studies) may be earned this way, and you must provide proof of participation. For studies using the SONA system, you may sign up to participate in a study by using the following link: https://tamiu.sona-systems.com/Default.aspx?ReturnUrl=/.

All proof of participation will be provided as scanned document/picture (for example, a scanned THANK YOU screen that follows an on-line survey, a list of credits visible on SONA, etc.) in the respective Drop Box (Drop Box for Research Participation 1-3). All proof of research participation is due last class day, Dec 1, at 11:59pm.
*If you complete an anonymous online survey and do not have documentation, you may write 2-3 sentences describing the survey content as proof of participation.
*If you attend a lecture for extra credit and no sign-in sheet is distributed, you can briefly describe the content of the lecture and take a picture of the venue as proof of participation.

If you do not wish or cannot participate in research studies, you can instead write a 2-page, double-spaced paper summarizing a research article of your choice related to language issues.

GRADE	POINTS
A	477-530
B	424-476
C	371-423
D	318-370
F	< 318

Open Boilerplate

Grading Summary	VALUE
Exams (3)	240 pts
Final Exam	120 pts
Writing Assignments (9)	135 pts
Quizzes (7)	35 pts
Total	530 pts

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
8/24	MODULE 1: Introduction to Class, Animal and human language	Readings: The syllabus and Course Intro; Textbook Chapter 1 (pp. 1-22) Lecture ppts: Chapter 1 (Part 1), Chapter 1 (Part 2)	
8/31	MODULE 1: Language and thought	Readings: Textbook Ch 1 (pp. 23-30) Lecture ppt: Chapter 1 (Part 3)	9/05: Writing Assignment 1 9/06: Quiz 1
9/7	MODULE 2: Morphology	Readings: Textbook Ch 2 Lecture ppt: Chapter 2	9/12: Writing Assignment 2 9/13: Quiz 2
9/14	MODULE 2: Syntax	Readings: Textbook Ch 3 Lecture ppt: Chapter 3	9/19: Writing Assignment 3 9/21: EXAM 1 (Ch. 1-3)
9/21	MODULE 3: The meaning of language	Readings: Textbook Ch 4 Lecture ppt: Chapter 4 (Part 1), Chapter 4 (Part 2)	9/26: Writing Assignment 4 9/27: Quiz 3
9/28	MODULE 3: The sounds of language	Readings: Textbook Ch 5 Lecture ppt: Chapter 5	10/:03 Writing Assignment 5
10/5	MODULE 4: Language in society	Readings: Textbook Ch 7 (pp. 269-290) Lecture ppt: Chapter 7 (Part 1)	10/11: Quiz 4
10/12	MODULE 4: Language in use	Readings: Textbook Ch 7 (pp. 291-318) Lecture ppt: Chapter 7 (Part 2)	10/17: Writing Assignment 6 10/19: EXAM 2 (Ch. 4, 5, 7)
10/19	MODULE 5: Language change	Readings: Textbook Ch 8 (pp. 326-355) Lecture ppt: Chapter 8	10/25: Quiz 5
10/26	MODULE 5: History of writing	Readings: Textbook Ch 8 (pp. 355-373)	10/31: Writing Assignment 7
11/2	MODULE 6: Language acquisition	Readings: Textbook Ch 9 (pp. 383-413) Lecture ppt: Chapter 9 Part 1	11/08: Quiz 6

11/9	MODULE 6: Bilingualism	Readings: Textbook Ch 9 (pp. 413- 424) Lecture ppt: Chapter 9 Part 2	11/14: Writing Assignment 8 11/16: EXAM 3 (Ch. 8-9)
11/16	MODULE 7: Brain and language	Readings: Textbook Ch 10 (pp. 446- 459) Lecture ppt: Chapter 10 Part 1	11/29: Quiz 7
11/23	MODULE 7: Brain and language development	Readings: Textbook Ch 10 (pp. 459-471) Lecture ppt: Chapter 10 Part 2	11/30: Writing Assignment 9
11/30	FINAL WEEK	Review for the FINAL EXAM	12/7: Final Exam

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the Student Handbook, Appendix A (Attendance Rule) for instructions.

Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class in person (or virtually, if the class is online) and to complete all assignments. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to communicate absences with your professors. The faculty member will decide if your excuse is valid and thus may provide lecture materials of the class. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized University activity.
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
- Illness of a dependent family member.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to faculty members within seven calendar days of their absence and return to class. They must substantiate the reason for the absence. If the absence is excused, faculty members must either provide students with the opportunity to make up the exam or other work missed, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the exam or other work missed within 30 calendar days from the date of absence. Students who miss class due to a University-sponsored activity are responsible for identifying their absences to their instructors with as much advance notice as possible.

Classroom Behavior (applies to online or Face-to-Face Classes)

In the classroom, students are expected to listen attentively, participate respectfully, and adhere to established rules. Behavior that interferes with the class lecture may result in disciplinary action, ensuring a productive and respectful learning environment for everyone. Any disputes over academic matters should be addressed calmly and constructively, ideally during designated times such as office hours or after class. If a student does not agree with a decision, they can request a meeting with the instructor to discuss their concerns in more detail. Should further resolution be needed, the student may escalate the matter to the department head or use formal grievance procedures as outlined in the sections below. (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4 (https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml)).

TAMIU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

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

We are committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and any form of cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. It occurs when you:

1. Borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words. You must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism.

2. Borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
3. Present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own. You have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2020, seventh edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

"Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, idea, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship" (p. 254). This same principle applies to the illicit use of AI.

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications (p. 11). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Academic Success Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the Manual of the APA or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

TAMIU has penalties for plagiarism and cheating.

- **Penalties for Plagiarism**: Should a faculty member discover that a student has committed plagiarism, the student should receive a grade of 'F' in that course and the matter will be referred to the Honor Council for possible disciplinary action. The faculty member, however, may elect to give freshmen and sophomore students a "zero" for the assignment and to allow them to revise the assignment up to a grade of "F" (50%) if they believe that the student plagiarized out of ignorance or carelessness and not out of an attempt to deceive in order to earn an unmerited grade; the instructor must still report the offense to the Honor Council. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse. For repeat offenders in undergraduate courses or for an offender in any graduate course, the penalty for plagiarism is likely to include suspension or expulsion from the university.
    - *Caution*: Be very careful what you upload to Turnitin or send to your professor for evaluation. Whatever you upload for evaluation will be considered your final, approved draft. If it is plagiarized, you will be held responsible. The excuse that "it was only a draft" will not be accepted.
    - *Caution*: Also, do not share your electronic files with others. If you do, you are responsible for the possible consequences. If another student takes your file of a paper and changes the name to his or her name and submits it and you also submit the paper, we will hold both of you responsible for plagiarism. It is impossible for us to know with certainty who wrote the paper and who stole it. And, of course, we cannot know if there was collusion between you and the other student in the matter.
- **Penalties for Cheating**: Should a faculty member discover a student cheating on an exam or quiz or other class project, the student should receive a "zero" for the assignment and not be allowed to make the assignment up. The incident should be reported to the chair of the department and to the Honor Council. If the cheating is extensive, however, or if the assignment constitutes a major grade for the course (e.g., a final exam), or if the student has cheated in the past, the student should receive an "F" in the course, and the matter should be referred to the Honor Council. Additional penalties, including suspension or expulsion from the university may be imposed. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an "F" in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a "W."
    - *Caution*: Chat groups that start off as "study groups" can easily devolve into "cheating groups." Be very careful not to join or remain any chat group if it begins to discuss specific information about exams or assignments that are meant to require individual work. If you are a member of such a group and it begins to cheat, you will be held responsible along with all the other members of the group. The TAMIU Honor Code requires that you report any such instances of cheating.
- **Student Right of Appeal**: Faculty will notify students immediately via the student's TAMIU e- mail account that they have submitted plagiarized work. Students have the right to appeal a faculty member's charge of academic dishonesty by notifying the TAMIU Honor Council of their intent to appeal as long as the notification of appeal comes within 10 business days of the faculty member's e-mail message to the student and/or the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. The Student Handbook provides more details.

Use of Work in Two or More Courses

You may not submit work completed in one course for a grade in a second course unless you receive explicit permission to do so by the instructor of the second course. In general, you should get credit for a work product only once.

AI Policies

Your instructor will provide you with their personal policy on the use of AI in the classroom setting and associated coursework.

TAMIU E-Mail and SafeZone

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU E-mail (tamiu.edu or dusty email) are the official means of communicating course and university business with students and faculty –not the U.S. Mail and no other e-mail addresses. Students and faculty must check their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or message from a faculty member, chair, or dean is not accepted as an excuse for failure to take important action.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to download the SafeZone app, which is a free mobile app for all University faculty, staff, and students. SafeZone allows you to: report safety concerns (24/7), get connected with mental health professionals, activate location sharing with authorities, and anonymously report incidents. Go to SafeZone (https://www.tamiu.edu/adminis/police/safezone/index.shtml) for more information.

Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Act of 1976 grants to copyright owners the exclusive right to reproduce their works and distribute copies of their work. Works that receive copyright protection include published works such as a textbook. Copying a textbook without permission from the owner of the copyright may constitute copyright infringement. Civil and criminal penalties may be assessed for copyright infringement. Civil penalties include damages up to $100,000; criminal penalties include a fine up to $250,000 and imprisonment. Copyright laws do not allow students and professors to make photocopies of copyrighted materials, but you may copy a limited portion of a work, such as article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Services for Students located in Student Center 124. This office will contact the faculty member to recommend specific, reasonable accommodations. Faculty are prohibited from making accommodations based solely on communications from students. They may make accommodations only when provided documentation by the Office of Disability Services for Students.

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

Student Attendance and Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy

As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides
LOA's for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule (Section 3.07) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.08), which includes the "Leave of Absence Request" form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (URL: Student Handbook (https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml)).

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. Students who experience or observe alleged or suspected discrimination due to their pregnant/parenting status, should report to the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site, *Report It*, at https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit (https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit/index.shtml).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodation. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student needs a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.#As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOAs for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule.#Both rules can be found in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.

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

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

Anti-Discrimination/Title IX

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiu.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt (https://www.tamiu.edu/reportit) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a "W." To qualify for an "incomplete" and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a "W", and the student must be passing the course;
2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an "Incomplete Grade Contract" and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the "I" to automatically be converted to an "F"; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college. This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an "incomplete" may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

WIN Contracts

The Department of Biology and Chemistry does not permit WIN contracts. For other departments within the college, WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to graduating seniors. Only courses offered by full-time TAMIU faculty or TAMIU instructors are eligible to be contracted for the WIN requirement. However, a WIN contract for a course taught by an adjunct may be approved, with special permission from the department chair and dean. Students must seek approval before beginning any work for the WIN Contract. No student will contract more than one course per semester. Summer WIN Contracts must continue through both summer sessions.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Final Examination

All courses in all colleges must include a comprehensive exam or performance and be given on the date and time specified by the Academic Calendar and the Final Exam schedule published by the Registrar's Office. In the College of Arts & Sciences all final exams must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and

explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. The Telus app is available to download directly from TELUS (tamiu.edu) (https://www.tamiu.edu/counseling/telus/) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Distance Education Courses

Course Structure:

The course is entirely online through Blackboard. It is very important that you have a reliable and stable internet connection. Success in this course is based on completing the assigned readings, writing assignments, discussions, quizzes, and exams. The course is divided into seven (7) modules that include PowerPoint lectures, writing assignments, quizzes, and exams.There are also discussion boards scheduled every few modules. You must complete all tasks by the due date specified in the course schedule. However, since I will upload all the assignments at the beginning of the unit date, you can complete everything in the unit ahead of time if you choose to, except for the exam, which will be posted at the date specified.

Class Expectations:

During the first week of class, please familiarize yourself with the Blackboard format and make sure you have all the required software (Respondus Lockdown Browser and web camera) to take exams. All communication will be conducted on the Blackboard through announcements and email. Make sure to check for any events or updates that might affect online connectivity. Blackboard maintenance is typically conducted on Fridays and lasts throughout the weekend. It is your responsibility to know when these happen and so blackboard maintenance will not be considered a valid excuse for missing/late assignments. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced by the instructor.

Announcements/Course Messages/Emails

All electronic communication will take place via the TAMIU e-mail system (Blackboard). You should check your TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly and visit the course site to read important announcements concerning the class. The turnaround time for replying to student emails via BB will be 24 hours. For a quicker response, please email me at anna.cieslicka@tamiu.edu.

Assignments and Assessments

All assignments, quizzes, discussions, and exams will be graded within 48 business-day hours after the due date. It is expected that all students are familiar with the grading breakdown for this course to understand their overall standing.

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.tamiu.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 Hardware. For this class, you will need the following additional hardware: Recently purchased laptops may have built-in web cameras. If you do not have this equipment, it is recommended to purchase a stand-alone webcam, microphone, or a webcam with a built-in microphone from your local electronic store or any online store.

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, TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at **https://dusty.tamiu.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 TAMIU'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 **elearning@tamiu.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.

Turnitin Policy Or Other Types of Assignments in Other Systems

Turnitin policies for specific assignments in this course are found on the respective blackboard assignment dropboxes.

Proctoring

This course requires the use of LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (webcam) for online exams. The webcam can be built into your computer or can be the type that plugs in with a USB cable. Watch this short (http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml) video (http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml) to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (the webcam feature). A student Quick Start Guide (PDF) (http://www.respondus.com/products/monitor/guides.shtml) is also available.

Cost for Respondus Monitor: There is a one-time fee of $15 per student, per course, which covers the cost of all of the required exams in the course. Payment for Respondus Monitor is made during the set-up process in the first Respondus Monitor enabled quiz/test/exam in a course.

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**.

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.