SOCI 4375 - Special Studies in Sociology: Adv. Environmental Sociology

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 161, CRN 19249

Instructor Information

Kyle Breen
Assistant Professor of Sociology
Email: kyle.breen@tamiu.edu
Office: AIC 384
Office Hours:
M/W: 1-2 PM or by appointment
Office Phone: 9563262001

Times and Location

M 6pm-8:45pm in Bullock Hall 222

Course Description

Additional Course Information

Communication

The best way to get in touch with me is via email or by stopping by my student drop-in hours for a chat. For email communication, please include a subject line for the email with the course/course number. For example: Subject: Question about midterms-Sociology of Disasters. I will do my very best to respond to all emails in a timely fashion. If you send an email Monday-Friday, I will do my best to respond within 24 hours. If it is the weekend, I will have a response by Monday at the latest. ***If you need immediate assistance regarding the course, please email me directly at kyle.breen@tamiu.edu rather than using Blackboard email message.**

Please use and check your TAMIU Email regularly!

Attendance and Presence in Class

This course relies heavily on in-class discussion and participation in activities. Therefore, attendance in class is a baseline expectation and will account for part of the final grade. Each student will be entitled to **ONE (1)** unexcused absences during the semester. After those unexcused absences, every subsequent absence will result in a loss points for the participation grade based on the number of absences.

This class also relies on in-class activities to enhance student learning. It is essential for students to attend class **on time** to ensure that activities can begin and be as successful as possible. In-class activities also make up a portion of the final grade. If an absence is unexcused, students will not receive credit for in-class activities that are missed.

Please do NOT attend class if you are sick, having a flare-up from a chronic illness, or experiencing a personal emergency. If this is the case, please contact me as soon as possible so that I can excuse the absence and work with you to provide any missed course content.

If you are undergoing a personal emergency or a hardship that impacts your class attendance, I strongly encourage active communication with me so we can work together to ensure your success in the class.

If you do not communicate about absences in a timely manner, I will not provide excused absences for the course. This means providing 24 hours notice in advance of an absence, or in the case of emergency, no more than 72 hours after an absence.

If you miss class:

You are responsible for **ALL** missed work. Before asking Dr. Breen what you missed, please use the resources available to you:

- Ask a classmate about what you missed in class
- Check Blackboard for all materials and readings
- If you are still unclear, then email Dr. Breen any questions or stop by during drop-in hours

Late Work Policy

Submitting assignments late* will result in the assignment being marked down 50% where the maximum grade the student is eligible to earn will begin at 50% of the original point total. If students need an extension, students will be required to submit a request in writing via email at least 24 hours prior to the deadline. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of the instructor.

Late work can be submitted until the **FINAL CLASS DAY**. The final class day is the last day of class prior to final exams. **NO** late work will be accepted following the final class day. There are no exceptions.

*as a general rule, I will not consider an assignment late if submitted within an hour of the deadline. This grace period allows for technological difficulties or connectivity issues. Beyond that grace period, an assignment will be subjected to the late work policy listed above.

Extensions on Assignments

For some assignments, I will offer the opportunity for extensions if students need them. Extensions are available to every student if needed. With an extension, it is required to notify me in writing at least 24 hours prior to the due date that an extension is needed. Extensions on assignments will be up to the discretion of the instructor.

If a student receives an extension, it is the responsibility of the student to submit the assignment on the agreed upon exension date. If the submission is late, the assignment will be subject to the late work policy.

Technology in the Classroom

You may use your laptop, iPad, tablet, or other device to take notes during class; however please leave class to take phone calls.

While in class, please refrain from distracting activities such as online shopping or social media scrolling during class time.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Students should not have another person or AI do the writing of any assignment for them, including AI tools like ChatGPT, Caktus.ai, or others. While AI can be a useful tool to help with framing or structure, it should not be used to complete the assignments for you. We will go over an example in class of how you can use AI as a tool.

If there is any suspicion of the use of AI to complete an assignment, the assignment will automatically be graded at a 50% maximum grade, and the assignment will be subject to reporting for academic dishonesty.

**If at any time, a student feels as though they need to use AI to complete an assignment, please come talk to me, judgment-free. This allows us to work together to come up with a plan to complete the assignment with academic honesty and integrity.

Program Learning Outcomes

PLO 1: Graduates of the program will be able to identify and analyze the cultural, economic, environmental, political, and technological bases of social inequality.

PLO 2: Graduates of the program will be able to apply analytical tools to explain continuities and changes in social structures.

PLO 3: Graduates of the program will be able to identify, analyze, and evaluate social issues locally, nationally and globally using critical thinking skills.

PLO 4: Graduates of the program will be able to create and defend their own interdisciplinary perspective and strategy for evaluating social issues locally, nationally, and globally.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Evaluate the intersection of race, gender, class, and other stratifying factors in producing environmental inequalities in the United States and internationally. (PLO 1)
- Analyze the legal, political, and social dimensions of environmental injustice using sociological theory and empirical evidence. (PLO 2, PLO 3)

- Critique environmental policy frameworks for their effectiveness in addressing disproportionate environmental burdens on marginalized communities. (PLO 3)
- Construct and defend a sociologically informed strategy to address a specific case of environmental injustice locally, nationally, or globally. (PLO 3, PLO 4)

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	Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action	Leslie King & Deborah McCarthy Auriffeille	9781538116791

Other Course Materials

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

All additional materials are available on the course Blackboard page.

Grading Criteria

*Below are the grading criteria for this course. Grades will **not** be rounded and are considered final (e.g., an 79.9 is a C, and will not be rounded up).*

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

Assignments and Assignment Descriptions

In-class Participation and Activities

This course is centered on in-class discussion and activities that allow students to deepen their sociological knowledge by engaging within one another on the material. Therefore, it is imperative that students participate during in-class discussions, activities, reflections, and small group breakouts. To successfully participate, students are ***required*** to complete the readings, videos, podcasts, or other materials listed in the Syllabus or on the Blackboard Course Page **BEFORE CLASS**.

Reading Responses

Students will be required to submit reading responses/reflections for each module. These response/reflection assignments should be approximately 500 words. Students should use these response assignments to critically engage with, evaluate, and draw connections between the material that we have discussed in class. Students may also use these assignments as a way to ask questions about the material. For each response, students should:

Critique the readings (and media sources if applicable for that week) by providing strengths and weaknesses, finding similarities and differences, question the key ideas or concepts, relate the readings to your own personal experiences, examine their underlying values and assumptions, compare them to other readings, etc. The key point is to critically and thoughtfully engage with and respond/react to the ideas in the required readings. The reading response should NOT be a summary or reiteration of the author's key points.

Using quotes from the readings, and/or references to specific sections or passages, scenes (if a video), or quotes from a podcast (with page numbers or timestamps) will be necessary to show evidence of a student's engagement with the material and to provide support for your arguments. Quotes and the corresponding page number must be present in every reading response. Students should not include more than 3 direct quotes, and quotes should not be longer than 5 typed lines. If a block quote is necessary to provide insight to an argument, it will be expected that students make up for the block quote with an additional word count corresponding to the quote length.

The reading response should also consider the overarching topic for the particular week they are writing on. For example, if the week is "Hurricane Katrina," your response should focus on a number of the different aspects related to Hurricane Katrina.

Midterm Short Essay

For the midterm, students will be provided with 3 essay prompts based on the units covered to that point in the course. Students must answer 1 of the 3 prompts, critically thinking about the course material, connections to current research, and relationships to their social worlds. Full instructions and a grading rubric can be found on Blackboard.

Final Term Project

For the final term project, students will take the knowledge they have gained from the course and analyze a current environmental issue that is important to them. Examples include: border wall impacts on animal species, environmental impacts on humans in Houston's shipping channel and petrochemical corridor, etc. The final product for the term project will be a zine--a short, informative, and illustrative booklet that can be shared broadly to inform people about your issue. The final term project for this course has three distinct components: (1) The completed zine with all necessary components; (2) a short paper (approximately 3 pages) featuring further explanation of the ideas and concepts, connecting them to research and topics/concepts covered; (3) a reflection on the process of creating a zine.

We will practice what each portion of this looks like in class!

Assignments and Point Distribution

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
In-Class Participation & Activities	120 Points
Reading Reflections	180 Points (12 at 15 points each)
Midterm Essay	50 Points
Final Term Project	100 Points
TOTAL	450 Points

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Mon	8/24	Syllabus Overview, Introductions, AI Activity		
Mon	8/31	What is Environmental Sociology?	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Introduction	Reading Reflection #1 (Due Sunday, August 30 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	9/7	No Class		
Mon	9/14	No In-Person Class, Dr. B Out of Town Online Activity: Political Economy of Environment	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapter 2	Reading Reflection #2 (Due Sunday, September 13 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	9/21	Theories and the Environment	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapter 1	Reading Reflection #3 (Due Sunday, September 20 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	9/28	Midterm Essay Distributed Media and Corporations	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapters 11 & 12	Reading Reflection #4 (Due Sunday, September 27 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	10/5	Race, Class, Gender, and Environment	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapter 10	Reading Reflection #5 (Due Sunday, October 4 at 11:59 PM) Midterm Essay Due Friday, October 9, at 11:59 PM

Mon	10/12	Environmental Justice Part 1	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Additional Reading via Blackboard Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapter 9	Reading Reflection #6 (Due Sunday, October 11 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	10/19	Environmental Justice Part 2	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Additional Reading Via Blackboard	Reading Reflection #7 (Due Sunday, October 18 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	10/26	The Sociology of Disaster Part 1	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapter 13	Reading Reflection #8 (Due Sunday, October 25 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	11/2	The Sociology of Disaster Part 2	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapter 15	Reading Reflection #9 (Due Sunday, November 1 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	11/9	Health and the Environment	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Additional Reading Via Blackboard	Reading Reflection #10 (Due Sunday, November 8 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	11/16	Social Movements	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapters 16-18	Reading Reflection #11 (Due Sunday, November 15 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	11/23	Where do we go from here? The Future of our Environment	Reading on Blackboard Harmonize Link Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action - Chapters 20-22	Reading Reflection #12 (Due Sunday, November 22 at 11:59 PM)
Mon	11/30	Zine Project Presentations		Zine Project Presentations
Mon	12/7	No Class - Final Exam Period		Full Term Project Due Monday, December 7 at 11:59 PM

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.