# COMM 5302 - Quant Research Methods in Comm: Quant Research Methods in Comm (F13- Feb 05 to May 14)

### Spring 2026 Syllabus, Section 260, CRN 29066

## Instructor Information

**Di Mu**
Assistant Professor
Email: di.mu@tamiu.edu
Office: AIC 363
Office Hours:
MW 4-6 pm (in-person or virtual) AND by appointment
Office Phone: 956-326-2540

## Times and Location

T 6:10pm-9:20pm in Academic Innovation Center 313

## Course Description

This course introduces the sociological and behavioristic approaches to communication research It will examine the fundamental epistemologies, design, methods, and data analysis in quantitative communication research. Students will learn, demonstrate and apply course concepts by analyzing texts and conducting research.
Psychology & Communication Department, College of Arts & Sciences

## Additional Course Information

**EXPECTATIONS**

**My Commitment**
I aim to create a learning environment that supports a range of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences. I also understand that broader challenges, such as economic disparity, public health issues, or personal well-being concerns, may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. Please do not hesitate to come and talk with me if you have any questions or encounter any challenges.

I will generally respond to Blackboard messages and emails within 24 hours during the week, but please allow 48 hours for a reply. If the email is about an individual question, please include COMM 5302 in the subject line. If the email is about the group project, please include COMM 5302 and the group number in the subject line. You also need to copy all team members in your email or Blackboard messages. Additionally, you should check your Blackboard messages and emails regularly. I generally do not respond to messages or emails during the weekend, nor is it expected that you will respond over the weekend.

**Student Expectations**
This course maintains high expectations for academic performance and professional engagement. While grades are important, graduate study emphasizes intellectual development, methodological rigor, and scholarly independence. Focusing on deep engagement with course material, rather than grades alone, will support both your learning and your overall success in the program. Additionally, adherence to the following expectations for reading, writing, research, and technology use is essential for successful participation in this course.

***Reading Expectations***. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings prior to class and to engage with them critically. Lectures, class discussions and activities are designed to extend and apply the material. Active reading and participation are essential components of graduate-level learning.

***Writing Expectations***. Graduate-level writing should be clear, well-organized, and analytically rigorous. Assignments are expected to demonstrate careful argumentation, appropriate use of evidence, and adherence to scholarly writing conventions. Paying attention to spelling, grammar, and punctuation helps ensure your ideas are communicated accurately. Frequent errors in these areas can affect your grade, so please proofread your work carefully.

***Research Expectations***. Students are expected to engage primarily with peer-reviewed scholarly sources, including academic journals and books. While some websites may be useful, they should be used selectively and critically. Students are encouraged to make full use of library resources and research support services available through the university library: https://www.tamiu.edu/library/.

***Technology Expectations***. Technology should be used purposefully and professionally to support learning in class. During class meetings, students are expected to refrain from non-course-related activities such as browsing unrelated websites, texting, or using mobile devices in ways that distract from class participation.

**Attendance**
Attendance is required as this class relies on active discussions and hands-on lab practice. While I do not take formal attendance in graduate classes, your attendance in class is imperative to successfully mastering the various topics we will cover. You are expected to come to class on time and participate fully so you can benefit as much as possible from the course. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate for any material missed. Please do not expect the professor to review in detail the material covered during your absence.

**Late Work Policy**
As a graduate student, you are expected to manage your time effectively and meet all deadlines. All assignments must be submitted on time, and deadlines are firm. Late submissions will not be accepted. If you anticipate challenges that may affect your ability to remain engaged in class or complete work on time, you are strongly encouraged to communicate with the professor as early as possible. Extensions will be considered only in cases of health and family emergencies and must be requested prior to the assignment deadline.

**Academic Integrity and AI Use**
In this course, you are encouraged to explore the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT for brainstorming and research ideas, and Grammarly for grammar support. However, the use of these tools must follow principles of academic integrity and responsible scholarship.

Why this matters:

- AI-generated content may not be considered original work. Because AI models are trained on existing texts without citing their sources, turning in AI-generated work without acknowledgment is considered automated plagiarism.
- AI can be wrong, misleading, or incomplete. Students are responsible for fact-checking and ensuring their work meets academic standards.
- AI tools contain built-in biases that reflect the data they were trained on. Always use critical thinking and supplement AI-generated content with scholarly sources.

Ultimately, your assignments must demonstrate your own learning, analysis, and voice. AI should supplement—not replace—your original contributions.

Please Do:

- Be transparent about how you used AI tools, clearly indicating what work is your original contribution.
- Appropriately acknowledge and cite any use of generative AI tools following APA Style guidelines (https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt), including specifying the version of the tool used. For example: OpenAI. (2025). "[insert your prompt]" ChatGPT (GPT-5) [Large language model]. https://chat.openai.com/ (See the example at the bottom of this section.)
- Failure to provide proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism.

Please DON'T:

- Use AI-based tools for exams.
- Use AI-based tools to cheat on assessments.
- Submit AI-generated work as your own without acknowledgment (this is considered plagiarism).
- Share AI-generated work in ways that misrepresent authorship or violate copyright and intellectual property rights.

*Please also note*: Overreliance on AI tools may limit your own independent thinking and creativity. Use them thoughtfully, and always ensure your work reflects your academic voice.

OpenAI. (2025, August 22). " Please write a syllabus policy regarding the academic integrity of students using generative AI-based tools." ChatGPT (GPT-5) [Large language model]. https://chat.openai.com/

*Note*: This part of the syllabus was generated by ChatGPT using the prompt above, modified by the instructor to improve structure and include course-specific details (dos and don'ts), and checked for grammar using ChatGPT.

**Grade Discussion**
I do not discuss grades or any student record issues via email or Blackboard messages. Please schedule a meeting with me to discuss these matters. If necessary, I may ask you to submit a written petition along with your work in question. The classroom is typically not an appropriate place for these discussions.

**Important Dates**
First Class Day: Thursday, Feb 5 (Feb 10 for this course)
Census Day: Wednesday, Feb 18
Spring Break: Mar 9 – 15
Exam 1: Tuesday, Mar 17
Last day to drop or withdraw: Thursday, Apr 23
Course Evaluation: Apr 20 - 26
Last Class Day: Saturday, May 2 (Apr 28 for this course)
Exam 2: Tuesday, May 5

# Program Learning Outcomes

1. Quantitative Fluency: Graduates of the program will be able to utilize multiple quantitative methodological strategies for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, including surveys, content analysis, and field experiments that focus on issues/research topics in binational and international contexts.
2. Use of Information Resources: Graduates of the program will be able to utilize multiple qualitative methodological strategies for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data including participant observation that focus on issues/research topics in binational and international contexts.
3. Communicative Fluency: Graduate students will be able to present original research (focusing on issues/topics in binational and international contexts) in communication graduate courses as well as local, regional, national, and/or international conferences/meetings.
4. Analytic Inquiry: Graduates of the program will be able to apply concepts and models from communication theories to the analysis and evaluation of issues related to organizational communication focusing on border/international issues or Latin American and border media studies.

# Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain and critically evaluate core concepts and approaches in quantitative communication research.
- Conduct a theory-driven literature review that synthesizes relevant scholarship and justifies original research questions or hypotheses related to communication phenomena.
- Develop rigorous quantitative research designs appropriate for addressing theoretically grounded research questions.
- Identify and apply appropriate statistical techniques to analyze quantitative data and draw meaningful conclusions.
- Communicate quantitative research proposals and findings effectively at a professional level, through written and oral presentations using appropriate visual aids.

# 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 | Quantitative Research Methods for Communication: A Hands-On Approach | Jason S. Wrench, Candice Thomas-Maddox, & Virginia Peck Richmond | (eBook) 9780190861940; (ISBN-10) 019086106; (ISBN-13) 9780190861063 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Optional | Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics<br>Older versions are acceptable. | Andy Field | (eBook) 9781529668728; (Paperback) 9781529630008 |

## Other Course Materials

Additional readings will be provided on Blackboard.

## Grading Criteria

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

## Assignments and Points

**Class Participation & Discussion (8% of final grade)**
Students are expected to arrive in class having completed the readings assigned for that class day. These readings are essential for understanding and meaningfully engaging in discussions of key concepts and issues. Active participation from each class member is critical to the success of this course and accounts for 8% (80 points) of the final course grade. Accordingly, students should come prepared with questions, comments, and examples related to the topic under consideration and be ready to respond to questions posed by the professor and fellow students.

In addition, students are required to post a minimum of two discussion questions on Blackboard at least two hours prior to class during lecture weeks (see course schedule for details). Missing one required post will result in a 10-point deduction.

Please keep in mind that Blackboard questions are intended to support preparation and inform, but not replace, in-class discussion. Students who post discussion questions on Blackboard but do not engage in class discussions will earn only partial credit for this category. During class discussions, your participation is as important, valid, and necessary as that of every other class member.

**CITI Training (2% of final grade)**
This is a training program regarding social responsibility and ethics regarding human subjects research. Students need to complete the training and submit the certificate to Blackboard.

**Exams (30% of final grade)**
Students will complete two in-class exams (3/17 & 5/5). Each exam will feature a mix of T/F, multiple choice, and short essay questions. Each exam is worth 150 points.

**Research Article Summary (10% of final grade)**
For this assignment, students will select a peer-reviewed journal article in the field of communication that uses a quantitative methodology. Students will summarize and analyze the article, using it as a case study to demonstrate how specific research methods are applied in communication research. Students must submit their chosen article to the professor for approval one week prior to their presentation. This assignment consists of two parts: a 10-minute in-class presentation and a 3-4 pages written component following APA 7th style.

**Survey Assignment (10% of final grade)**
This assignment consists of two parts. First, students will design a survey study using Qualtrics on a topic of their choice. Second, students will analyze a provided data set to practice their data analysis skills and report the results.

**Experiment Assignment (10% of final grade)**
This assignment consists of two parts. First, students will design an experimental study using Qualtrics on a topic of their choice. Second, students will analyze a provided data set to practice their data analysis skills and report the results.

**Research Proposal (30% of final grade)**

For the final project, students will develop a research proposal on a topic of their choice within the field of communication. The proposal should be well-organized, demonstrate a clear understanding of the chosen topic, and be supported by academic sources.

This final project entails both written and oral components.

The written component consists of a 1-2-page proposal idea and literature review outline (1.5% of your course grade) that provides a general direction of your proposed research project, and a 12-15-page research proposal (accounting for 17% of your course grade) that examines topic you have chosen to study. All written submissions must adhere to APA 7th edition style guidelines.

The oral component requires that you give a 10-minute presentation of your research idea in Week 6 (3/17, 1.5% of your course grade), and a 15-minute presentation of your final project on the last day of class (4/28, 10% of your course grade).

Your final project will be evaluated on its theoretical rigor, quality, and ability to improve future scholarship in understanding the communication phenomenon you have chosen. Details of this project will be discussed as the semester progresses. This final research proposal is worth 300 points in total, with the points distributed across the following four components:

- Proposal Idea Presentation (3/17, 15 pts)
- Written Proposal Idea (3/22, 15 pts)
- Research Proposal Presentation (4/28, 100 pts)
- Written Research Proposal (5/2, 170 pts)

| ASSIGNMENT | POINTS |
|---|---|
| Class Participation & Discussion | 80 |
| CITI Training | 20 |
| Research Article Summary | 100 |
| Survey Assignment | 100 |
| Experiment Assignment | 100 |
| Exam 1 | 150 |
| Exam 2 | 150 |
| Final Proposal | 300 |
| **TOTAL** | 1000 |

# Schedule of Topics and Assignments*

| Day | Date | Agenda/Topic | Reading(s) | Due |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tue | 2/10 | Course Overview; Intro to Research; Research Ethics | Chs 1-3 | CITI Training Certificate (2/15) |
| Tue | 2/17 | Conceptualization & Operationalization; Variables | Ch 6 & Additional readings | Blackboard Discussion Questions Begin (Week 2 through Week 11) |
| Tue | 2/24 | Measurement; Reliability & Validity | Ch7, Ch8 | Research Article Summary Begin (Week 3 through Week 11)<br>Blackboard Discussion Questions (2) |
| Tue | 3/3 | Sampling & Literature Review | Ch13, Chs 4-5, Additional readings | Blackboard Discussion Questions (3) |
| Tue | 3/10 | # Spring Break! # | | |
| Tue | 3/17 | In-Class Exam 1<br>Research Idea Presentation | | Exam 1 (3/17)<br>Research Idea & Literature Review Outline (3/22) |
| Tue | 3/24 | Survey Design & Hypothesis Testing | Ch9, Ch14 | Survey Assignment I (3/29)<br>Blackboard Discussion Questions (4) |
| Tue | 3/31 | Lab 1: Descriptive Statistics; Testing for Relationships (Correlations & Regression) | Ch15, Ch19, Ch20 | Survey Assignment II (4/5) |
| Tue | 4/7 | Experimental Design | Ch11 | Experiment Assignment I (4/12)<br>Blackboard Discussion Questions (5) |
| Tue | 4/14 | Lab 2: Testing for Differences (t-tests, ANOVAs) | Ch17, Ch18, Ch21 | Experiment Assignment II (4/19) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tue | 4/21 | Content Analysis | Ch10 | Blackboard Discussion Questions (6) |
| Tue | 4/28 | Final Proposal Presentation | | Final Proposal Paper (5/2) |
| Tue | 5/5 | In-Class Exam 2 | | Exam 2 (5/5) |
| Tue | 5/12 | Well-done!<br>*Course schedule subject to change | | |

# 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.