EDSE 5309 - Special Ed Law Ethical Resp: Special Ed Law Ethical Resp (Sub I- Jan 20 to Mar 07)

Spring 2026 Syllabus, Section 680, CRN 28247

Instructor Information

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Office Hours:
Wednesdays & Thursdays 3:00 - 6:00 p.m./ Live Chat or Virtual Meetings by appointment
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Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

This is an intermediate level course for candidates seeking a MS in Special Education. Course content includes the history of special education law, provisions of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act, Every Student Succeeds Act, legal trends and issues in special education, and special education professional ethical principles and practice standards guided by the Council for Exceptional Children Common Core Standards. Course activities include lectures, case analysis, and special education legal case briefs. Prerequisites: Graduate standing.
Educational Programs Department, College of Education

Additional Course Information

Use of AI Tools in this Course

Students are encouraged to explore and responsibly use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to enhance their learning, research, and professional development. AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or data analysis software, may be utilized for tasks such as brainstorming ideas, drafting content, refining writing, or analyzing data. However, students must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Transparency: Any use of AI must be disclosed in assignments, stating what tools were used and how they contributed to the final product.

- Academic Integrity: Students are responsible for ensuring that all work submitted reflects their own understanding and original thought. AI-generated content must be critically reviewed, edited, and appropriately cited if integrated into assignments.

- Limitations: AI tools should not replace essential learning processes, such as developing critical thinking skills, engaging in discussions, or conducting original research.

- Ethical Use: Students must use AI tools ethically and comply with academic policies, including avoiding plagiarism or misrepresentation of AI outputs as solely their own work.

The instructor reserves the right to request documentation of how AI tools were used in assignments. Misuse of AI in violation of these guidelines will result in appropriate academic consequences.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Mastery of Evidence-Based Practices: Graduates will be able to design, implement, and evaluate evidence-based instructional strategies and interventions tailored to meet the diverse needs of individuals with exceptionalities across various educational settings.
2. Exhibit Leadership and Advocacy Skills: Graduates will demonstrate the ability to lead special education initiatives, advocate for individuals with exceptionalities, and collaborate effectively with families, educators, and community stakeholders to promote inclusive practices and policies.
3. Apply Scholarly Inquiry to Professional Practice: Graduates will engage in scholarly research, critically analyze current issues in special education, and apply research findings to improve educational practices and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will explore the history of special education law, provisions of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and legal trends and issues in special education.

At the completion of this course, students are expected to:

§ CO1: Explain major provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), No Child left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, and other federal and state laws affecting the education of students with disabilities.

§ CO2: Discuss the major principles of the IDEA and litigation leading to the passage of the IDEA.

§ CO3: Analyze major court rulings associated with special education services as well as legal trends in special education.

§ CO4: Compare/contrast the major principles of the NCLB to those of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

§ CO5: Evaluate special education programs and related services in accordance with the legislation and litigation.

§ CO6: Analyze special education litigation using a case briefing form provided.

§ CO7: Demonstrate critical understanding of the roles and responsibilities of special education professionals in the context of special education law and procedures to advocate students with exceptionalities and their families.

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	The Law and Special Education (5th Ed.), Pearson.	Mitchell L. Yell (2019)	• Print ISBN: 9780135175361, 0135175364 • eText ISBN: 9780135178324, 0135178320

Other Course Materials

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

Electronic copies of articles, case laws, and relevant course materials are provided within each module of the course.

Web Resources:

- Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html

  OSERS guides and supports a comprehensive array of programs and projects that support individuals with disabilities.

- Texas Education Agency - Special Education Rules and Regulations

  https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special_Student_Populations/Special_Education/Programs_and_Services/Special_Education_Rules_and_Regulations

  This website provides in-service and pre-service educational professionals with state policies and guidelines to adequately serve students with special needs.

- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): http://www.cec.sped.org

  The Council for Exceptional Children is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of children and youth with exceptionalities. CEC is known as the source for information, resources, and professional development for special educators and school professionals.

Grading Criteria

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

Course Structure

To help you plan your time effectively, each course week runs from Monday to Sunday. Modules open on Monday (Day 1) at 12:00 a.m., giving you the full week to review materials and complete your work. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due by 11:00 p.m. (Central Time) on their designated due dates.

- Discussion forums are designed to support meaningful engagement with course content and your peers. Your initial post is due by Thursday (Day 4), and your two substantive responses to classmates are due by Sunday (Day 7).
- Throughout the course, you will complete six assignments, all of which are due by Sunday (Day 7) of the corresponding module.
- Each module also includes a quiz to help you check your understanding of the key concepts. These quizzes are due by Day 7 and are intended to support your learning and reflection.
- The final exam will take place on the last class day, as scheduled in the University Academic Calendar, between 6:00 and 10:00 p.m.
- All assignment instructions, lecture materials, rubrics, and additional resources are conveniently embedded within each module to support your success.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
1/19	(a) American legal system (b) Law and special education (c) History of the law and children with disabilities (d) Case laws: Brown v. Board of Ed.; PARC v. Pennsylvania; Mills v. Board of Ed. (e) History of special education law	The Course syllabus; Chapter 1. Introduction to the American Legal System; Chapter 3. The History of the Law and Children with Disabilities; Article - Supreme Court 's Interpretation of the EAHCA; Case Law - Mills v. Board of Education D.C. (1972)	** The submission for all assigned works is due by at 11:00 p.m. on the designated day in Central time. (1) Syllabus Acknowledgement and Meet & Greet Forum - Day 3; (2) Discussion Forum #1: Initial post - Day 4; Substantive Responses to colleagues' posts - Day 7; (3) Assignment #1 - Day 7; (4) Module I Quiz - Day 7

1/26	(a) The IDEA Development (b) Purpose and structure if the IDEA (c) Amendments to the IDEA (d) The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (e) Funding, monitoring, and reinforcing of the IDEA	Chapter 4. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; Article - IDEA Reauthorization: Accountability & Personal Responsibility; Case Law - Perez v. Sturgis Public Schools (2023)	(1) Discussion Forum #2: Initial post - Day 4; Substantive Responses to colleagues' posts - Day 7; (2) Assignment #2 - Day 7; (3) Module 2 Quiz - Day 7
2/2	(a) Purpose and structure of Section 504 and ADA (b) Major principles of Section 504 (c) Comparison of the IDEA to Section 504 (d) School district responsibilities for ADA compliance (e) Development of ESEA and its structure (f) NCLB & ESSA	Chapters 5. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Chapter 6. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); Chapter 7. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015; Article - Pathways to New Accountability through New ESSA; Case Law - Fry v. Napoleon Community School District (2016)	(1) Discussion Forum #3: Initial post - Day 4; Substantive Responses to colleagues' posts - Day 7; (2) Assignment #3 - Day 7; (3) Module 3 Quiz - Day 7
2/9	(a) FAPE mandate (b) Components and related services of FAPE (c) Litigation and FAPE (d) The assessment and evaluation process (e) Protection in evaluation procedures (f) Independent educational evaluation	Chapters 8. Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE); Chapter 9. Identification, Assessment, & Evaluation; Article - FAPE & Endrew F. v. Douglas County School System (2017): Implications for Personnel Preparation	(1) Discussion Forum #4: Initial post - Day 4; Substantive Responses to colleagues' posts - Day 7; (2) Assignment #4 - Day 7; (3) Module 4 Quiz - Day 7
2/16	(a) The IEP mandate and its development (b) Substantive requirements (c) LRE, mainstreaming, and inclusion (d) Educational placements (e) Judicial standards of review (f) Determining LRE	Chapter 10. The Individualized Education Program (IEP); Chapter 11. Placing Students in the Least Restrictive Environment; Article - LRE-Understanding the Direction of the Court, (b) IEP – Procedural and Substantive Requirements	(1) Discussion Forum #5: Initial post - Day 4; Substantive Responses to colleagues' posts - Day 7; (2) Assignment #5 - Day 7; (3) Module 5 Quiz - Day 7
2/23	(1) Discussion Forum #5: Initial post - Day 4; Substantive Responses to colleagues' posts - Day 7; (2) Assignment #5 - Day 7; (3) Module 5 Quiz - Day 7	Chapter 12. Procedural Safeguards; Chapter 13. Discipline Students with Disabilities; Article - (a) Notice of Procedural Safeguards , (b) A Special Education Due Process Hearing Case Study, and (c) Discipline Procedures for Students with Disabilities	(1) Discussion Forum #6: Initial post - Day 4; Substantive Responses to colleagues' posts - Day 7; (2) Assignment #6 - Day 7; (3) Module 6 Quiz - Day 7
3/2	(a) Review of special education Laws, including IDEA, Section 504, ADA, ESSA and their provisions; (b) Special education ethical standards; (c) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	Review of special education key terms and concepts covered; Articles - (a) Special education ethical standards, (b) Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	Assignment #7 - Reflection Paper (Day 4); Final Exam on the Last Class Day (3/7) at 6:00-10:00 PM in Central Time

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 Expectations

This course is organized into seven modules, each designed to help you meet specific learning objectives through activities such as readings, discussion forums, interactive tasks, assignments, and comprehension checks.

In each module, you will:

- Complete the assigned readings.
- Participate in discussion forums by sharing your own ideas and responding to classmates.
- Work through the assigned activities and tasks.
- Answer quiz questions to check your understanding.

To stay on track and up to date, log in to the course daily to review announcements and updates. Online learning offers flexibility and exciting opportunities to grow, but it also requires consistent effort. By staying engaged, contributing actively, and completing tasks on time, you'll set yourself up for success in this course.

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

Email is the best way to reach me: won.kim@tamiu.edu. To help me respond quickly and effectively, please follow these tips:

- Use your university email account — messages from personal accounts may not reach me.
- Start with a greeting (e.g., Dear Dr. Kim) and include your full name and course title so I know who you are right away.
- Write a clear subject line that reflects the topic or question.
- I usually respond within 24 hours on weekdays. Replies may take a bit longer on weekends or during holidays.

Your clear, detailed email helps me support you more effectively.

Assignments and Assessments

Assignments are due by Sunday at the end of each school week. The instructor will provide feedback within five days after the assignment deadlines. If the instructor is unable to do so, the instructor will provide an announcement or email to inform the students of the change for that week.

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: a webcam and microphone. Recently purchased laptops may have these 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: 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**.

Grading Scale/Schema (after Grade Breakdown section)

In determining the final course grade, the following scale is used in percentage or point value.

- *900-1,000 points= A*
- *800-899 points = B*
- *700-799 points = C*
- *600-699 points = D*
- *Below 600 points = F*

Rubrics

You can find all assignment instructions, readings, rubrics, and extra course materials on our Blackboard course site. Make sure to check there regularly so you have everything you need to stay on track.

Late Work Policy

Late or missing assignments will not be accepted unless extenuating circumstances, as outlined in University policy, apply. In such cases, students must promptly contact the instructor to discuss the situation. Any homework submitted late without the instructor's approval will receive no credit. Assignment due dates are listed in the Tentative Course Schedule, and to be considered on time, work must be submitted by 11:00 PM Central Standard Time on the due date.

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.

Proctoring

Respondus LockDown Browser (Free) and Monitor ($15 fee) Requirement

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 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.

Download Instructions are also available on the course Website under the final exam folder.

Webcam Checkout for Personal Computer

If students are unable to use personal or borrowed computers and equipment, students may stop by the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services office to check out webcams (with built-in microphones). The office is located at Killam Library 259 (down the hall from the HelpDesk) and is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Checkout for a webcam is on a first-come, first-service basis. Speak with an eLearning staff member to checkout a camera. Students will sign an Equipment Loaner Agreement, making them responsible for the care of the camera. Webcams checked out must be returned within five business days of the checkout date.

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.