ENGL 2307 - Intro to Creative Writing: Intro to Creative Writing-WIN

Spring 2026 Syllabus, Section 201, CRN 28620

Instructor Information

Jessica Walker, MFA
Professor
Email: jessica.walker@tamiu.edu
Office: Pellegrino 204G
Office Hours:
Tuesday: 4:15-6 PM (In-Person)
Thursday: 4:30-5:30 (Online)
OR by Appointment.

If you wish to meet during online office hours, email me and I will set up a meeting on Blackboard Collaborate.
Office Phone: 956 326 3303
Email is my preferred method of contact. Do not message me via Blackboard. I cannot reply directly to those messages and you will not receive a response.

Times and Location

MW 4:25pm-5:45pm in Pellegrino Hall 106

Course Description

This introductory course is designed to give students the opportunity to explore their abilities and interests in a variety of genres. The course will emphasize the aesthetic demands of different genres through formal study of required readings and especially through first-hand experience of writing exercises. Students will write in at least two of the following genres: poetry, short fiction, drama, screenwriting, and non-fiction. Prerequisite: ENGL 1301 with a grade of "C" or better.
Humanities Department, College of Arts & Sciences

WIN-Designation

This course is designated as a writing-intensive (WIN) course. In this course, writing will not only be the subject of study, but it will also serve as a method of learning. Students will learn how communication in written, oral, and visual forms change according to purpose and genre. Brainstorming, drafting, revising, and peer-workshopping are integrated into the course curriculum and are the required components of this writing-intensive course. The final Research Paper is the designated assignment for WIN assessment.

Additional Course Information

Course Description

In this class you will study creative writing as an art and yourself as an artist. While we will engage with literary terms and concepts you have likely encountered in your literature classes, this course is about the creation of art more than the academic study of published work. You--as a class--will be creating much of the course content.

Be prepared to write and to have your writing discussed in class. This process of submitting and critiquing is the foundation of the workshop model, the predominant method in creative writing programs. A goal of the course is to familiarize you with that model while building skills and community that will benefit you as on your writing journey.

We will primarily study the three literary genres found in traditional academic programs--fiction, nonfiction and poetry--though we may take up other forms, such as screenwriting and graphic novels, depending upon interest and time. You will be responsible for producing work in each major genre.

At the end of the semester, you will submit a portfolio of your work including a reflection on significance of your writing, your influences, your creative process, and plans for future growth.

About Me

I am a writer whose career spans many different genres and styles. I have worked in journalism, finance, corporate copywriting, marketing, music publishing and academia. My degree and most of my published work are in the field of creative writing but as an instructor I enjoy working with students of all levels with whatever type of writing advances their academic and life goals.

I teach writing because I enjoy teaching and writing. If you ever have any questions about writing in this class or beyond, do not hesitate to meet with me either during office hours or a scheduled meeting. I will be happy to hear from you!

Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will:

- Advance their understanding and practice of creative writing
- Gain greater understanding of why humans create art
- Develop their own creative writing process
- Explore their aesthetic and style
- Identify artistic influences in themselves and others
- Read and analyze creative writing from a writer's perspective
- Engage in analytical discussion of readings
- Engage in artistic inquiry
- Conceptualize writing as a recursive process of drafting, revising and editing

Learn the process of submitting for publication

- Cultivate and maintain a supportive artistic community
- Effectively and humanely supply criticism and feedback to peers

Effectively process criticism and feedback from peers and the instructor

Important Dates

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

Other Course Materials

Required Texts

All readings will be distributed via Blackboard

Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	91-100
B	80-90.9

C	70-79.9
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

Open Boilerplate

Grade Breakdown

Workshop 1 15 Percent

Workshop 2 15 Percent

Workshop 3 10 Percent

Final Portfolio 20 Percent

Weekly Assignments` 20Percent

Participation 20 Percent

Workshop

Workshop is the dominant model in academic creative writing environments. This is a model that has critics and we will discuss and acknowledge the pitfalls of the writing workshop as well as the benefits. However, workshopping works-in-progress will be a major feature of this course. Each student will be workshopped three times. You will sign up for a date and submit your writing prior to class. Before your workshop, your peers will read your work and generate feedback. During the workshop, you will remain silent and listen to the readers' experience with your work, though afterward you may comment and ask questions of the class. I will give more information on this process in the mock workshop class.

Late workshop submissions are not accepted and will result in a zero for the assignment. These submissions should be drafts. They do not need to be perfect. You will not be graded based on the level of your expertise. But the writing does need to exist and must be distributed to your peers by the deadline to receive credit.

Final Portfolio

At the end of this class, you will produce portfolio of your work. The portfolio will contain one revised prose piece and a revision of your poetry submission. In order to receive credit for the final portfolio you must follow formatting guidelines I will provide later in the semester. The final portfolio will also include a 1-2 page single spaced reflection on your writing process and your portfolio. I will provide more information on the portfolio in the final week of class.

Weekly Assignments

Most weeks you will be required to respond to your reading and course topics in the discussion forum on Blackboard. These posts are graded based on completion. If you demonstrate that you are doing the reading, following instructions and putting forth a good-faith effort you will receive credit. As the semester goes on, I may give more or less of these assignments depending on class participation and engagement.

Art Talk

You will be responsible for leading a talk and discussion of a piece of non-textual art that inspires and influences you. This can be anything--a pop song, a fashion choice, a movie, a piece of visual art, a tattoo, your grandmother's cake recipe. What is important is that is speaks to you as an art form and influences you as a writer. You will share the art with us in class, speak about its importance to you and field questions from your classmates about the art.

Participation

Since you, the students (not me the teacher) are at the center of this class, participation is vital and I grade it accordingly. Student writers must come to class ready to discuss thoughts about assigned writing and peer work. Student contributions should also be respectful, thoughtful and aimed at a greater understanding of published and peer work. I will assess both the quality and quantity of your participation. I should hear your voice in class at least once per week, ideally once per class. In small groups, I will expect you to be an active participant with genuine contributions to the discussion. Respect of your classmates falls under participation. Failure to engage with classmates in a respectful manner will result in a greatly diminished participation grade.

Attendance will be a major factor in determining your participation grade so monitor that metric accordingly.

Content Warning

Throughout this class, we will be reading literature that contends with both the beauty and horror of life. This means you will be exposed to work that discusses sex, drugs, violence, racism, sexism, cruelty, psychological disorders, self-destructive behavior and other disturbing content. If you have a diagnosable condition that may be triggered by such content, please let me know so that we can work out an alternative assignment.

Your own writing and that of your peers may take up disturbing and or vulgar content but may not violate university policy on civil rights and respect. It is your job as a writer to critique the craft of writing rather than the content. If you fundamentally disagree with another students' perspective, remember to be respectful and to focus on the writing itself, not the content in your feedback.

First and foremost, we will always assume the best from one another, and critique based on that belief. We are here to support authentically writing about human experience with the aim of greater understanding and connection. To do so, we must maintain open minds and open hearts and we must bravely contend with all parts of life and the world—good and bad.

Mandatory Reporting

Art often takes up troubling personal content. You are free to write about whatever aspects of life feels vital to you. If you do choose to write about sexual discrimination, harassment or violence, be aware I am a mandatory reporter under university policy and I must report suspected abuse to the university.

TAMIU's policy on mandatory reporting states: "When alleged or suspected sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or related retaliation is experienced by, observed by, or made known to an employee or student, the employee or student is required to promptly report that information."

Class Technology

In this course, you will have online activities such as discussion boards, journaling, reviewing lectures, and peer-reviewing assignments outside of class in Blackboard. This class requires reliable access to a computer. Webcams are an option for office hour interactions but are not required.

Do not use your electronic devices while I am speaking or during full-class discussion. There will be times when use of electronic devices is encouraged--such as in class writing--and there will be times when it is acceptable to use the Internet to share information or images with the class. But use of electronic devices when anyone is addressing the full class will result in dismissal from class, an absence for the day and a decreased participation grade.

My Attendance Policy

In order to be successful in this class, your regular attendance is essential and it is the biggest factor in your participation grade, which is 20 percent of your total grade. Class meetings will be used to complete in-class writing assignments and group work, to participate in peer review activities, to receive information about assignments and expectations, and to discuss reading material.

Frequent tardiness will be reflected in a lowered participation score.

Official University absences will be recognized. If you need to be absent for any official reason, it is very important that you make me aware of your absence and document the reason fully as soon as possible. If you are absent due to an unexcused reason, please do not contact me about the absence.

Failure to communicate and document the reason behind an excused absence within a reasonable time frame will result in the absence being marked as unexcused.

If you miss class, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with any missed material. I will not update you over email on material missed due to an unexcused absence. To find out what you may have missed in class you may check Blackboard, ask a peer or schedule an appointment with me during office hours.

For further information on attendance, see TAMIU's official attendance policy below:

TAMIU'S Attendance Policy

With the exception of online courses, students are expected to attend every class in person 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. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence (physical or virtual), 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 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. The right to view recorded class meetings depends upon receiving an excused absence from the faculty member teaching the class.

AI and Plagiarism Policy

All submitted work in this class must be composed by you alone without the aid of AI or assistive technologies unless otherwise indicated by the instructor.

If I suspect you are using AI or plagiarizing I will inform you of my suspicions via email. You will then have 24 business hours to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that you are not using AI or plagiarizing in the composition of your work. If I deem that you have not effectively proved your work is your own to my satisfaction, you will receive a zero for the assignment. You may also be reported for academic misconduct to the TAMIU Office of Student Affairs. By remaining in this class, you agreeing to abide by my final decision in determining you work's authenticity.

Week 1: Introductions

Introductions, Syllabus Review

Reading and Writing Like an Artist!

READ: Packet 1 & 2

Week 2: The Short Story and Fundamentals of Fiction

Character and Situation!

POV and Narration,

READ: Packet 3 & 4

Week 3 The Fundamentals of Fiction

Dialogue & Setting

Plot & Structure

READ: Packet 5 & 6

Week 4: The Fundamentals of Fiction

Voice, Language & Theme

Specificity, Time & Objects

READ: Packet 7 & 8

Week 5: Transition to Workshop

Mock Workshop

Workshop 1

READ: Packet 9

Week 6: Workshop

Workshop 2

Workshop 3

Week 7: Fundamentals of Poetry

How to Read a Poem

Sound and Turning the Line

READ: Packet 10 & 11

Week 8: Fundamentals of Poetry

Form v. Free Verse

Words & Images

READ: Packet 12 & 13

Week 9: Fundamentals of Poetry

Influences, Inspirations and Ekphrasis

READ: Packet 14 & 15

Week 10 Poetry Workshop

Poetry Workshop 1

Poetry Workshop 2

Week 11: The Fundamentals of Creative Nonfiction

Intro to Nonfiction

READ: Packet 16 & 17

Week 12: The Fundamentals of Creative Nonfiction

Writing Real Life: Tactics and Ethics

READ Packet 18 & 19

Week 13: Nonfiction Workshop

Week 14: Revision and Art Talks

Revision & Portfolio Instructions

READ Packet 20

Week 15: Art Talks

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
1/26	Introductions, Syllabus Review Reading and Writing Like an Artist!	Packet 1 & 2	
2/2	Character and Situation/POV and Narration	Packet 3 & 4	
2/9	Dialogue & Setting/Plot & Structure	Packet 5 & 6	

2/16	Voice, Language & Theme Specificity/Time & Objects	Packet 7 & 8
2/23	Mock Workshop/Workshop 1	Packet 9
3/2	Workshop 2 & 3	Workshop Materials
3/9	How to Read a Poem/Sound and Turning the Line	Packet 10 & 11
3/16	Form v. Free Verse Words & Images	Packet 12 & 13
3/23	Influences, Inspirations and Ekphrasis	Packet 14 & 15
3/30	Poetry Workshop 1 & 2	Poetry Workshop Materials
4/6	Fundamentals of Creative Nonfiction	Packet 16 & 17
4/13	Writing Real Life: Tactics and Ethics	Packet 18 & 19
4/20	Creative Nonfiction Workshop	Workshop Materials
4/27	Revision & Portfolio Instructions	Packet 20
5/4	Art Talks	

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.