

SOCI 3304 - Sociological Theory: Sociological Theory-WIN (F13- Feb 05 to May 14) Spring 2026 Syllabus, Section 261, CRN 27783

Instructor Information

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Professor

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Office Hours:

Monday and Wednesday 3:30-5:00pm

Tuesday 10:30-11:30am

also by appointment

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Times and Location

MW 6:15pm-7:50pm in Bullock Hall 207

Course Description

The study of how theories are formulated in social science. Overview of classical and contemporary sociological theories including functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and postmodern theory. Prerequisites: SOCI 1301, and three hours of any Sociology course for a total of six credit hours in Sociology.

Social Sciences 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

Sociological theory provides the tools to understand **why societies work the way they do**, how power and inequality are structured, and how individuals both shape and are shaped by social forces. These theories remain essential for understanding contemporary issues such as inequality, globalization, identity, and social change.

The text is online and interactive. I urge you to read each chapter before the class addresses the topic so that you may participate in all discussions and in-class assignments.

Program Learning Outcomes

[Enter Program Learning Outcomes here. If there are none, you can REMOVE this section by clicking on the eyeball. **Please don't forget to remove these instructions.**]

Student Learning Outcomes

[Enter Student Learning Outcomes here. **Please don't forget to remove these instructions.**]

Important Dates

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

Other Course Materials

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

[Any additional course materials can be added here. If there aren't any additional materials, you may REMOVE this section by clicking on the eyeball. **Please don't forget to remove these instructions.**]

Grading Criteria

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- **To edit the table**, double click on it.
- **To remove the table**, click on it and press **DELETE**.

Please don't forget to remove these instructions.

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	91-100
B	80-90.9
C	70-79.9
D	60-69.9
F	Below 60

Open Boilerplate

Attendance and Participation -- 15%

Quizzes -- 10%

Short Response Papers (5 x 10 points) – 50%

Final Group Presentation – 35%

Attendance

Students are expected to attend class regularly. Each student is allowed three absences without penalty. Additional absences will result in a reduction of the attendance grade. Attendance is recorded through in-class activities.

Participation (15%)

Participation is evaluated weekly based on preparation, engagement in discussions, contributions to group work, and completion of in-class activities. Participation includes listening respectfully and contributing in ways that support collective learning.

QUIZZES (TOTAL 10%)

Read the assigned readings and answer the questions from the work.

Short Response Paper: Sociological Theory in Modern Life (5x10% - total 50%)

Purpose

This assignment is designed to help you demonstrate your understanding of a **sociological theorist** by explaining and critically evaluating one or more key theoretical concepts and applying them to **modern social life**.

Assignment Description

Write a **short response paper (approximately 250 words)** that critically examines **one major concept or a closely related set of concepts** from the **assigned sociological theorist**. Your paper should demonstrate that you understand the theory as presented in the assigned reading and can thoughtfully apply it to a current social issue, institution, or everyday experience.

Paper Requirements

Your paper should include the following elements:

1. Identify the Theorist and Concept(s)

- Clearly name the sociological theorist assigned.
- Briefly describe the key concept(s) you are focusing on (e.g., alienation, anomie, rationalization, habitus, symbolic interaction, social conflict, etc.).
- Use correct sociological terminology from the assigned reading.

2. Explain the Theory

- Explain the concept(s) in your own words.
- Demonstrate understanding of how the concept fits within the theorist's broader perspective on society.

3. Apply the Concept to Modern Life

- Apply the theory to a **contemporary example**, such as social media, work, education, politics, family life, inequality, crime, or technology.
- Be specific and concrete—avoid vague generalizations.

4. Critical Reflection

- Briefly critique the theory by discussing its strengths, limitations, or relevance today.
- Consider whether the theory fully explains the modern example or leaves important questions unanswered.

Formatting Guidelines

- Length: **~250 words**
- Double-spaced
- Use course readings; no outside sources required unless specified
- Use complete sentences and clear academic writing

Evaluation Criteria

Your paper will be graded on:

- Accuracy of theoretical explanation
- Effective use of concepts from the assigned reading
- Quality of application to modern life
- Depth of critical thinking
- Clarity and organization of writing

Short Response Paper 1: Karl Marx

Length: ~250 words

Prompt

In this paper, analyze **one or more key concepts from Marx's theory** (such as *class conflict, exploitation, alienation, surplus value, or ideology*).

Briefly explain the concept(s) using ideas from the assigned reading.

Describe how Marx understood power, inequality, and social conflict within capitalist societies.

Apply the concept(s) to a **modern example**, such as gig work, corporate power, income inequality, automation, or consumer culture.

Critically evaluate Marx's theory by discussing either:

- its continued relevance today, **or**
- a limitation in explaining modern society.

This paper should demonstrate deeper engagement with sociological theory and independent analytical thinking.

Be sure your paper demonstrates accurate use of the theorist's concepts.

Short Response Paper 2: Émile Durkheim

Length: ~250 words

Prompt

This paper focuses on **Durkheim's analysis of social order and cohesion**.

- Explain one or more core concepts such as *social facts, collective conscience, mechanical vs. organic solidarity, anomie, or moral regulation*.
- Discuss how Durkheim believed society maintains stability and what happens when regulation breaks down.
- Apply the concept(s) to a **current social issue**, such as social media, suicide, mental health, education, crime, or social isolation.
- Offer a brief critique by addressing whether Durkheim's framework adequately explains modern social problems.

Short Response Paper 3: Max Weber

Length: ~250 words

Prompt

This paper examines **Weber's approach to modern society and social action**.

Use proper sociological terminology and demonstrate understanding of Marx's broader critique of capitalism.

Short Response Paper 4 & 5: Student's Choice of Theorist

Length: ~250 words

Prompt

Choose **any sociological theorist** covered in the course (past or contemporary).

- Explain one or more Weberian concepts such as *rationalization, bureaucracy, the iron cage, types of authority, or the Protestant ethic*.
- Describe how Weber understood power, authority, and meaning in social life.
- Apply the concept(s) to a **modern setting**, such as government agencies, corporations, universities, healthcare systems, or technology platforms.
- Critically assess whether Weber's ideas help us understand efficiency, control, or loss of meaning in contemporary society.

Short Response Papers 4&5: Student's Choice of Theorist (Comparative or Creative Application Encouraged)



Length: ~250 words

Prompt

For this final short response, select **any sociological theorist** discussed in the course. You may choose a theorist not used in previous assignments.

Use examples that clearly demonstrate Weber's theoretical insights.

-
- Explain a central concept or set of ideas from the theorist.
 - Apply the theory to a **different modern context** than previously used (e.g., digital life, identity, globalization, gender, race, work, or culture).
 - Reflect critically on whether the theory:
 - still explains social life effectively, or
 - needs revision to address modern conditions.
 - Identify the theorist and explain one or more major theoretical concepts from the assigned reading.
 - Describe how the theorist understands society, social interaction, or inequality.
 - Apply the theory to a **modern social issue or everyday experience**.
 - Provide a brief critique discussing the strengths or weaknesses of the theory in today's world.

Group Project Overview (35%)

Each group of four students will select **one major social theorist** and **one contemporary social problem**. The group will:

Clearly explain the theorist's core ideas

Apply the theory to explain a specific social problem

Critically evaluate the **strengths and weaknesses** of the theory

Demonstrate how well the theory explains sociological phenomena

SAMPLE 12-MINUTE GROUP PRESENTATION

(10–12 Slides)

Slide 1 – Title Slide

Cultural Capital and Educational Inequality

Group Members

Slide 2 – Social Problem

- What is educational inequality?
 - Why it matters sociologically
-

Overall Assessment

Bourdieu's theory offers one of the most powerful explanations of educational inequality by showing how schools privilege certain forms of knowledge and behavior. While the theory may understate agency and change, it remains highly effective in explaining why inequality persists despite reforms.

To fully understand educational inequality, Bourdieu's framework is best used alongside theories that emphasize resistance, intersectionality, and institutional reform.

Conclusion

Educational inequality is not simply the result of individual failure but a consequence of structural advantages embedded within educational institutions. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital and social reproduction provides a compelling explanation of how inequality is maintained across generations. Despite its limitations, the theory remains essential for understanding the sociology of education and social stratification.

SAMPLE 12-MINUTE GROUP PRESENTATION

(10–12 Slides)

Slide 1 – Title Slide

Cultural Capital and Educational Inequality
Group Members

Slide 2 – Social Problem

Weaknesses and Criticisms

Through these mechanisms, education reproduces class inequality rather than eliminating it.

Strengths of Bourdieu's Theory

Students lacking this cultural capital may be labeled as less capable, even when they are equally intelligent. This leads to:

Working-class students may internalize a habitus that discourages academic risk-taking or long-term educational planning.

Social Reproduction

Social reproduction refers to the process by which social inequalities are passed from one generation to the next. According to Bourdieu, schools reward students who already possess cultural capital, thereby legitimizing inequality as "merit."

Applying Bourdieu to Educational Inequality

Schools often appear neutral but are structured around middle-class norms:

Students from middle- and upper-class families enter school already possessing the cultural capital valued by teachers and institutions.

Habitus

Habitus is the internalized set of dispositions, beliefs, and expectations shaped by one's social background. It influences how individuals:

While education is often portrayed as a meritocratic system, sociological research consistently shows that family background strongly shapes academic success.

Overview of the Theorist: Pierre Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu was a French sociologist whose work focused on power, inequality, and social reproduction. He rejected explanations that relied solely on individual talent or motivation, instead emphasizing how **social structures shape life chances**.

Bourdieu argued that institutions such as schools function to **reproduce existing class hierarchies**, even while appearing neutral and fair.

Key Concepts in Bourdieu's Theory

Cultural Capital

Cultural capital refers to non-economic resources that provide social advantage, including:

SAMPLE GROUP PROJECT PAPER

Title

**Cultural Capital and Educational Inequality:
A Critical Assessment of Pierre Bourdieu's Theory**

Group Members

Student A
Student B
Student C
Student D

Introduction

Educational inequality remains one of the most persistent social problems in modern societies. Despite policies aimed at equal opportunity, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds continue to experience lower academic achievement, higher dropout rates, and limited access to elite institutions. This project uses the social theory of **Pierre Bourdieu** to examine how inequality is reproduced through education.

Bourdieu's concepts of **cultural capital**, **habitus**, and **social reproduction** provide a powerful framework for understanding how schools reward middle- and upper-class norms while disadvantaging working-class students. This paper explains Bourdieu's theory, applies it to educational inequality, and critically evaluates its strengths and limitations in explaining this sociological phenomenon.

Overview of the Social Problem: Educational Inequality

Educational inequality refers to systematic differences in educational outcomes based on social class, race, ethnicity, and family background. These inequalities manifest in...

Deliverables:

- Theory explanation: **10 points**
- Application to social problem: **10 points**
- Critical evaluation (strengths/weaknesses): **10 points**
- Organization, clarity, presentation quality: **5 points**
- Key takeaway
- Why theory matters

- How effective is the theory?
- What it explains well
- Determinism
- Limited focus on change
- Explains persistent inequality
- Supported by research
- Classroom expectations
- Tracking and testing
- How schools reproduce inequality
- Meritocracy myth
- Internalized expectations
- Class-based worldviews
- Definition
- Examples in schools
- Background
- Why his work matters
- What is educational inequality?
- Why it matters sociologically
- **Overly Deterministic**
Critics argue that Bourdieu underestimates individual agency and resistance.
- **Limited Attention to Change**
The theory focuses more on reproduction than social mobility.
- **Less Attention to Race and Gender**
While class is central, race and gender require additional theoretical tools.
- **Difficult to Measure**
Concepts like habitus can be abstract and hard to operationalize.
- **Reveals Hidden Inequality**
Bourdieu explains why formal equality does not produce equal outcomes.
- **Connects Structure and Agency**
Habitus shows how individual behavior is shaped by social conditions.
- **Supported by Empirical Research**
Numerous studies confirm that cultural capital affects academic success.
- **Challenges Meritocracy Myths**
The theory exposes how “success” often reflects privilege rather than talent.
- Lower teacher expectations
- Placement in remedial tracks
- Reduced access to college preparatory resources
- Emphasis on abstract reasoning

- Standardized testing formats
- Teacher expectations aligned with dominant culture
- View education
- Respond to authority
- Perceive their own abilities
- Language style and vocabulary
- Knowledge of dominant cultural norms
- Educational credentials
- Tastes, manners, and dispositions
- Unequal school funding
- Tracking and ability grouping
- Differential access to advanced coursework
- College admissions disparities
- **8–10 page paper (double-spaced)**
- **12-minute group presentation**

SAMPLE 12-MINUTE GROUP PRESENTATION

(10–12 Slides)

Slide 1 – Title Slide

Cultural Capital and Educational Inequality

Group Members

Slide 2 – Social Problem

What is educational inequality?

Why it matters sociologically

Slide 3 – Who Was Pierre Bourdieu?

- Background
- Why his work matters

Slide 4 – Cultural Capital

- Definition
- Examples in schools

Slide 5 – Habitus

- Internalized expectations
- Class-based worldview

Slide 6 – Social Reproduction

- How schools reproduce inequality
- Meritocracy myth

Slide 7 – Applying the Theory

- Classroom expectations
- Tracking and testing

Slide 8 – Strengths of the Theory

- Explains persistent inequality
- Supported by research

Slide 9 – Weaknesses

- Determinism
- Limited focus on change

Slide 10 – Overall Evaluation

- How effective is the theory?

Slide 11 – Conclusion

Slide 12 – Discussion Question

Can schools reduce inequality, or are they designed to reproduce it?

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- Key takeaway
 - Why theory matters
 - What it explains well

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
Mon	2/9	Introduction to the Course		
Wed	2/11	Origins of Social Theory The History of Human Life on Earth		
Mon	2/16	How did Social Theory Develop? The Enlightenment and the Rise of Modernity	Chapter 1	
Wed	2/18	Industrialization, Capitalism and Social Change		
Mon	2/23	Karl Marx Historical Materialism Class Conflict	Chapter 2	
Wed	2/25	Capitalism, Alienation, and Ideology Inequality		Response Paper # 1 due
Mon	3/2	Emile Durkheim Social Facts Mechanical and Organic Solidarity	Chapter 3	



Wed	3/4	Anomie and Social Integration The study of Suicide		Response paper # 2 due
Mon	3/9	Max Weber Verstehen and Interpretive Sociology Rationalization and Bureaucracy	Chapter 4	
Wed	3/11	Class, Status, and Party The Protestant Ethic and Capitalism		Response paper # 3 due
Mon	3/16	Spring Break		
Wed	3/18	Spring Break		
Mon	3/23	Georg Simmel	Chapter 5	
Wed	3/25	Money and the Stranger		
Mon	3/30	Functionalism	Chapter 6	
Wed	4/1	Structural Functionalism, Systems and Conflict		
Mon	4/6	Power, Inequality, and Social Change	Chapter 7	
Wed	4/8	Applications of Theory Check up on Final Project		
Mon	4/13	Neo-Marxian Theories Antonio Gramsci and Hegemony Frankfurt School and Critical Theory	Chapter 8	Response Paper #4 due
Wed	4/15	Media and Late Capitalism Ideology, Culture, and Domination		
Mon	4/20	Symbolic Interactionism Mead and the Social Self Blumer and Meaning	Chapter 9	
Wed	4/22	Goffman's Identity, Roles and Interaction Everyday Life as Social Construction		
Mon	4/27	Exchange, Networks, and Rational Choice Social Exchange Theory Rational Choice	Chapter 11	Response paper #5 due
Wed	4/29	Last Class Day Summary of the Class		
Mon	5/4	No Class		
Wed	5/6	No Class		
Mon	5/11	Final Presentations Due Present in Class		Give Group Presentation
Wed	5/13	No Class		

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.tamui.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

TAMUI Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMUI student, you are bound by the TAMUI Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMUI 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.tamui.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.

TAMUI 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.