

# UNIV 4390 - Capstone Experience-WIN: MDS Capstone Experience - WIN (F13- Feb 05 to May 14)

Spring 2026 Syllabus, Section 280, CRN 28283

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## Instructor Information

**Daniela Rodriguez**

Faculty

Email: danielarodriguez@tamui.edu

Office: PLG 314B

Office Hours:

MW: 10:30-11:30am

TR: 1-2:50pm

Office Phone: 9563262907

Cell Phone: 9564890347

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## Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

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## Course Description

The Capstone Experience course is required for all students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies (MDS) and is designed to integrate student's three areas of concentration. This course reinforces professional writing and communication skills through presentations and relevant applications in a community engagement project. Additionally, students will develop career-oriented skills by creating a portfolio that contains a personal mission statement, objective, and narrative. A minimum of a 2.0 institutional GPA is required, as well as a minimum of a 2.0 cumulative GPA in each Area of Concentration for MDS students. Departmental approval is required.

University College Department, University College

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## 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

**Ethical Self-Assessment:** Establishes a baseline in preparation for assessing potential ethical issues in your future profession.

**Career Module:** Prepares you to attain a job in your field. You will locate a job listing and then write a cover letter (1 page) and resume (1-2 pages) appropriate for the job description. In addition, you will participate in a mock interview which will help assess the level of preparation and professionalism appropriate for the job market.

**Career Paper:** Focuses your three concentrations into a potential career field. The Career Presentation will consist of two parts: the case study (1-2 pages) and the research paper (3-5 pages). For the case study, you will create a scenario in which you explore and evaluate potential ethical issues in your future profession. For the research paper, you will show how your knowledge of material in your concentrations can meet a need based on the case study.

**Career Paper Presentation:** Allows you to hone your presentation skills

## AI Policy:

AI tools can be used to improve writing in our classroom. For instance, TAMIU has licenses for Grammarly and Microsoft also has its own version of writing-assistance. You may use AI to improve your grammar and overall readability of your work; however, you may not use AI to write the whole assignment or respond to a discussion. Your insight and perspective is important to our in-class discussion and overall course dynamics. Student work that has more than 20% of AI input will be considered plagiarized and will result in a “0” or “F” for the assignment or project. If in doubt, please ask the instructor for guidance.

## Program Learning Outcomes

CO1. Communication: Effectively convey information verbally, in writing, and/or visually.

CO2. Critical Thinking: Synthesize information across at least one area of concentration.

CO3. Interpersonal Skills: Evaluate interpersonal skills that prepare them for future professions.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Create an effective cover letter and resume as part of your Career Module.
2. Present relevant information about your career path in a Career Presentation, which consists of a Case Study and a Research Paper. The Research paper will focus on how your concentrations can meet a need based on the Case Study.
3. Prepare a Career Module, which will consist of a mock interview to assess professionalism, preparation, and self-awareness. The goal of this is to prepare you for your professional career.
4. Evaluate your ethical self-awareness skills by completing an Ethical Self-Assessment.
5. Create a Case Study relating your concentrations and potential ethical issues in your future professions.

## Important Dates

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

## Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	All course material will be provided		

## Grading Criteria

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

## Open Boilerplate

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Career Module (Cover Letter, Resume, Mock Interview)	40%
Career Paper (Case Study, Research Paper)	40%



Ethical Self-Assessment	10%
Career Presentation	10%

## Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
2/2	Week 1 Introductions; Syllabus Interview Tips; Optional Synchronous	Welcome to UNIV 4390! I hope you have a great semester on your road to graduation! This week you will read through the course overview, introduce yourself, and review the course syllabus. For your homework, you will submit the syllabus acknowledgement and an introductory discussion post.	Syllabus Acknowledgement; Discussion Discussion DUE: Ethical Self-Assessment Discussion
2/9	Week 2 Ethical Self-Assessment; Workplace Ethics	See Module This week, we will be discussing workplace ethics. From this unit, you will get a good idea of situations that may come up in your future employment. You will also complete an ethical self-assessment. We will come back to this discussion at the end of the semester as part of your research paper and case study.	DUE: Ethics Self-Assessment (next steps) and Discussion Question.
2/16	Week 3 Where Can I Look for a Job?: Writing Cover Letters and Resumes	See Module This week, we will discuss finding job listings related to your concentration and for which you are qualified.	Due: Job Listing
2/23	Week 4 Resumes and Cover Letters	See Module This week we will begin discussing cover letters and resumes. You should begin drafting your cover letter and resume tailored to the job description you submitted last week. You are not really applying for the job (unless you want to!); this is simply practice for when you begin applying for jobs.	DUE: Resume Assignment DUE: Cover Letter discussion
3/2	Week 5 Interview Preparation	See Module This week we will begin discussing interviews. This week and next week we will do work to prepare for the mock interview. For this week, you will answer two discussion questions and also submit a draft of your cover letter. You will be receiving an email from Ms. Michelle Rodriguez from Career Services with the Big Interview AI platform where you have a chance to be interviewed and receive feedback based on your performance in preparation for Week 6 module.	DUE: Preparing for Interviews Discussion DUE: Illegal Interview Questions Discussion DUE: Cover Letter Draft
3/9	Spring Break	No Classes	Spring Break



3/16	Week 6 Career Services Presentation Mock Interviews	See Module This week, we will continue to learn about the interview process. This week, please watch the Career Services presentation and answer the questions. Continue to polish your resume and cover letter. As per Ms. Michelle Rodriguez's email, the Big Interview AI platform will give you a chance to be interviewed and receive feedback based on your performance.	DUE: Mock Interview Form
3/23	Week 7 Career Module	See Module This week, please complete the Career Module: job description, cover letter, resume, mock interview rubric. In order to receive full credit, all FOUR documents must be submitted.	DUE: Complete Career Module
3/30	Week 8 Ethical Issues in the Workplace	See Module This week, we will begin looking at ethical issues in the workplace. We will be utilizing case studies to examine these issues. This assignment is leading up to the Career Research/Presentation assignment where you will be creating your own case study. I have included the assignment instructions, but it is NOT due this week.	DUE: Case Study Discussion Post
4/6	Week 9 What is a Case Study?; How to Write a Case Study;	See Module This week, you will complete a draft of your case study. The case study should be based on your potential career. It should be your original work-not copied or AI generated. You will submit your draft to the drop box. This should be a COMPLETE FIRST DRAFT. The final draft will be due as part of the Career Research/presentation assignment.	DUE: Case Study Draft
4/13	Week 10 Introduction to Research Paper	See Module This week, we will begin work on the Career Research/Presentation assignment. I have included the assignment and rubrics in this module. Begin working on Parts I and II this week. You do not need to submit anything.	
4/20	Week 11 Presentation Voice Threads/PPTS	See Module This week, we will continue to work on the Career Research/Presentation assignment. The assignment and rubrics are in this module. Begin working on working on Parts III, IV and Part V this week. You do not need to submit anything. I have also included instructions and sample for the PowerPoint. The entire assignment (paper, case study, powerpoint) is due together.	
4/27	Week 12 Career Research project	See Module The entire Career Research assignment is the last thing you will submit for this course. The assignment should include 1) research paper, 2) revised case study, and 3) PowerPoint. The research paper and case study should be in one file. The PowerPoint will have a separate drop box.	DUE: Career Research assignment DUE: Presentation

5/4	Week 13 Wrap Up	Wrap up and Evaluations	DUE: Course Evaluations
5/11	Final Exam Week	Finals Week	

## 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.tamtu.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

### TAMU Honor Code: Plagiarism and Cheating

As a TAMU student, you are bound by the TAMU Honor Code to conduct yourself ethically in all your activities as a TAMU 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.tamtu.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.tamiau.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 an 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@tamiau.edu](mailto:karla.pedraza@tamiau.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 \(https://www.tamiau.edu/handbook/index.shtml\)](https://www.tamiau.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@tamiau.edu](mailto:TitleIX@tamiau.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.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.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@tamiau.edu](mailto:lorissam.cortez@tamiau.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@tamiau.edu](mailto:mghernandez@tamiau.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@tamiau.edu](mailto:lorissaM.cortez@tamiau.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@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt (<https://www.tamiau.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 (tamiau.edu) (<https://www.tamiau.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

## Distance Education Courses

### Online Courses and On-Campus Meetings

Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 2, Subchapter J, Section 2.202 ([https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p\\_dir=&p\\_rloc=&p\\_tloc=&p\\_ploc=&pg=1&p\\_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=2&rl=202](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.TacPage?sl=R&app=9&p_dir=&p_rloc=&p_tloc=&p_ploc=&pg=1&p_tac=&ti=19&pt=1&ch=2&rl=202)), defines distance education as the formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50%) of instruction. Distance education includes hybrid and 100% online courses and programs as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB):

- **Hybrid Course** - A distance education course in which more than 50 percent but less than 100 percent of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations.
- **100-Percent Online Course** - A distance education course in which 100 percent of instructional activity takes place when the student(s) and instructor(s) are in separate physical locations. **Requirements for on-campus or in-person orientation, testing, academic support services, internships/fieldwork, or other non-instructional activities do not exclude a course from this category.**

In this online course, be sure to confirm what in-person meetings may be required of you (if applicable).

### Course Structure

UNIV 4390 is organized by modules, including a Start Here Module to help you get acquainted with our course and helpful resources. You will complete weekly modules, with each week starting on Monday morning and ending Sunday night. I will post weekly module reminders on Blackboard Course Announcements every Monday for you to complete by the due dates, central time. They include readings, viewing video content, submitting assignments, participating in discussions, and/or completing quizzes. Please plan accordingly. How can you succeed in this course? To be successful in this class, you will need to log in a minimum of 5 times per week (preferably daily) to access course materials and participate actively in class assignments, which must be submitted by due date, central time. Communication is key, so reach out to me for guidance and support. I'm happy to help!

### Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

#### Announcements/Course Messages/Emails

- **Course Messages/Emails:** Communication is key. Therefore, please reach out to me whenever you have questions or need guidance with any course-related matters. I'm happy to answer your emails sent through Blackboard course messages within 24-36 hours, Monday-Friday. Although I strive to respond to all emails in a timely manner, I usually cannot answer emails instantly, and if you email me after 10:00 PM CT, you may not receive an answer until the next day. I will get back to you as soon as possible, though!
- **Assignments and Assessments:** I realize feedback is important to support your learning. Therefore, I will do my best to provide feedback in the form of comments and/or grades a week after the due date. Quizzes are scored automatically.

#### Assignments and Assessments

All assignments are due as noted unless otherwise announced. I encourage you to reach out to me if you have questions about how to complete any assignment. Our Blackboard course shell has all the information of assignment breakdown and grading rubrics. I'm here to support your learning!

### 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.tamui.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: 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 the eLearning department in **Cowart Hall, Room 208**, 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](mailto: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**.

## Web Conferences/Synchronous sessions

Optional synchronous meetings will be held on the dates outlined in the syllabus calendar. These meetings will be held via Blackboard. These sessions are completely optional. If you cannot attend, you may meet with me at a more convenient time.

## Grading Scale/Schema (after Grade Breakdown section)

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

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

## Late Work Policy

You may submit work up to three days after an assignment is due for a maximum grade of 75. You will NOT receive credit for anything submitted after the 3-day period and will be noted as a "0".

## 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.

## AI Policy

AI tools can be used to improve writing in our classroom. For instance, TAMIU has licenses for Grammarly and Microsoft also has its own version of writing-assistance. You may use AI to improve your grammar and overall readability of your work; however, you may not use AI to write the whole assignment or respond to a discussion. Your insight and perspective is important to our in-class discussion and overall course dynamics. Student work that has more than 20% of AI input will be considered plagiarized and will result in a "0" or "F" for the assignment or project. If in doubt, please ask the instructor for guidance.

## 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.