ASTR 1110 - Principles of Astronomy Lab: Principles of Astronomy Lab (SSI- June 01 to July 02)

Summer 2026 Syllabus, Section 3L8, CRN 52613

Instructor Information

Orlando Patricio, PhD
Adjunct Professor of Astronomy, Mathematics and Physics
Email: orlando.patricio@tamiu.edu
Office Hours:
ONLINE (Does NOT Meet Face-to-Face)
Office Phone: (956) 326-2440
NOTES: Responses to all email messages will be provided within 24 to 48 hours. Response times may be extended on weekends and holidays.

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

Laboratory course to accompany ASTR 1310. Practical exercises reinforce ASTR 1310 lecture material. Topics include astronomical measurements, Kepler's laws of planetary motion, Newton's law of universal gravitation, stellar spectra, parallax, and the Hertzsprung#Russell diagram. Must be taken concurrently with ASTR 1310.
Mathematics & Physics Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Additional Course Information

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES AND METHODS

This laboratory course is designed as an online course. In some ways, online courses may be more demanding than face-to-face courses in the sense that students must work independently and must manage their time carefully so as not to fall behind. The course consists of module activities/quizzes and UNIT quizzes to be completed online on Blackboard, TAMIU's Learning Management System (LMS) using Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (webcam). The module activities will be aligned, to the extent possible, with the material presented in the lecture course ASTR 1310.

The course is arranged in modules--—**THREE modules per week**—with one (1) graded activity per module. The module activities/quizzes, as well as the UNIT quizzes and final exam, will **all be open book**—students will be able to use the lab manual, lecture textbooks (Bennett et al.'s *The Essential Cosmic Perspective* and OpenStax *Astronomy as supplemental material*), notes, and scientific calculator. If students have an electronic version of the lecture textbooks, students may use *only* the electronic version of those textbooks on their smartphones, iPads, tablets, etc., but ***no other app or website (except STELLARIUM), while working on the module activities, quizzes, and final exam***. Students should make certain, however, that the materials that will be used during the sessions are shown to the camera. The module activities will be due on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays by 11:59 pm** (Central Time) (refer to *Section IX* - Schedule of Topics and Assignments below the Grading Criteria). Therefore, by 11:59 pm on the due dates, all work that is still *in progress* (including the module activities/quizzes, UNIT quizzes, and final exam) will be automatically submitted regardless of the time shown on the timer, without exception. Students will have three (3) hours to complete the module activities, UNIT quizzes, and final exam in one sitting, i.e., students CANNOT close the module activity, UNIT quiz, or final exam and come back to it later because the timer continues to run whether they log out or not. The modules will each be open for at least one (1) week before the corresponding module activity is due. Students should, therefore, begin working on a module as close to the opening date as possible to avoid having to rush in the last remaining minutes on the due date. Students should also avoid time conflicts with work and other obligations by planning ahead. A typical request that I receive from students almost every semester is (and I am paraphrasing): "Professor, I get out of work at 10:00 pm so I won't have enough time to finish the assignment by the time that it is due. Can you extend

the time?" The only solution is to *not* wait until the very day that the assignment is due to prepare for the assignment—after all, the modules are all open for at least a week. The UNIT quizzes, which will cover material from the previous three (3) modules[1], will be due on **Fridays by 11:59 pm**.

This laboratory course includes a *large* amount of mathematics at the algebra level. Many of the questions in the module activities/quizzes, UNIT quizzes, and final exam require mathematical calculations. Examples of the types of questions requiring calculations are given in the PowerPoints. The PowerPoints in the modules are **intentionally *not* narrated** so that students will be able to pace themselves as they study the material in a given module. Nevertheless, some of the modules include a supplementary narrated PowerPoint video for additional explanation. In addition, the questions in the module activities are based on questions in the lab manual and on topics discussed in the readings and videos—some questions may be the same as in the lab manual, while others may be similar. Students should, therefore, read and study all of the relevant material associated with a module activity and answer the questions in the lab manual *before* attempting to complete the online activity. When preparing for the module activities, students should make certain to not only view the PowerPoints and the videos, but also read the corresponding material in *both* the lab manual *and* the OpenStax *Astronomy* textbook (supplemental material), as well as working out *all* of the examples given therein. The PowerPoints and videos are meant to supplement, not replace, the readings in the lab manual and the OpenStax *Astronomy* textbook (supplemental material). Students are encouraged to contact either the instructor or the Supplemental Instruction (SI) leader if they have specific questions or do not understand a given concept. Once the due date for a module activity has passed, the next module activity will be opened.

The grades for the module activities/quizzes and UNIT quizzes will be posted on Blackboard as soon as the student submits the assignment for grading. In some cases, I may need to MANUALLY verify the rounding of final answers in correct significant figures, and this will take time usually 5-7 days. The grades for the PowerPoint proposal, PowerPoint slides and presentation, and final exam will take longer to be posted (usually 7–12 days) because of the grading that has to be done manually.

Students will access the web version of Stellarium, a free open-source planetarium software, at http://www.stellarium.org. Students are also encouraged to visit the website of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln at http://astro.unl.edu to access videos, tutorials, applets, simulations, and animations, all of which will enrich the students' learning experience in astronomy.

POWERPOINT PROJECT

Students will work *individually* on a narrated (i.e., with audio plus video recorded via Zoom or other recording software in.mp4 format) PowerPoint slides **AND** video presentation due on **Monday, 29 June 2026, by 11:59 pm**. In the PowerPoint slides and presentation, students should discuss an experiment or observational evidence, either historical or modern, that has helped to advance our understanding of astronomy. ***Topics in astrology or other pseudo-science will NOT be accepted.*** The PowerPoint slides and presentation must be divided into four sections: introduction, body, conclusion, and references. There should be a minimum of five (5) references. The **APA citation style** should be used. The PowerPoint slides and presentation should contain a minimum of ten (10) slides, not counting the title and references slides. The PowerPoint narration should be a minimum of ten (10) minutes in duration (about one minute per slide, on average). A **one-paragraph PowerPoint proposal** (description of the project in ONE PowerPoint Slide or in word doc) is due on **Monday, 8 June 2026, by 11:59 pm**. The PowerPoint proposal **AND** PowerPoint slides and video presentation will be uploaded as Assignments under the "Content" tab. **The FINAL PROJECT PowerPoint slides and video presentation should be uploaded as two (2) separate files: the *first one saved as a PowerPoint slides* file and the *second is the video narration* saved as an .mp4 (movie) file.** The primary purpose of the PowerPoint proposal is for students to have a topic well in advance of the PowerPoint slides and presentation due date to allow students sufficient time to complete the assignment. In addition, students may assume that their proposals are acceptable topics ***unless*** they hear from me otherwise. In other words, if students do not hear from me that they should change their topic, the proposed PowerPoint presentation topic is acceptable. Note that late submissions of the PowerPoint proposal or PowerPoint slides and presentation will have ten (10) points deducted for each day late. Also, ***please note that it is strictly unacceptable to submit the same PowerPoint slides and presentation or the same topic to both ASTR 1110 and ASTR 1310***.

FINAL EXAM

The final exam will also be administered online on the date and time given in the schedule below. Note that, unlike the module activities/quizzes and UNIT quizzes, which are open at most a week in advance, the final exam will be open for a period of 24 hours, opening at 11:59 pm on the first day and closing at 11:59 pm on the following day. Once students begin the final exam, they will have to **finish it in one sitting** in three (3) hours ***within*** the 24-hour period and **CANNOT** close it and come back to it later because the clock continues to run whether they log out or not. [Note that the ***latest*** that the final exam may be started is at 8:59 pm of the due date if students want to make full use of the three (3) hours that they have to complete the final exam. Also, note that all final exams started ***after*** 8:59 pm on the due date will be automatically submitted at 11:59 pm].

MODULE ACTIVITIES/QUIZZES and UNIT Quizzes (including FINAL EXAM)

The module activities/quizzes, UNIT quizzes, and final exam will be taken using the Respondus LockDown Browser and the Respondus Monitor (webcam). Students MUST have a computer with a webcam to be able to work on the module activities/quizzes, UNIT quizzes, and final exam, otherwise the system will not allow them to take it. Students may download the software to their computers. For assistance on downloading the Respondus LockDown Browser, login to Blackboard and go to the "Student Support" tab at the top of the Blackboard home page. Under the "Instructional Technology" bullet, you will see "Respondus LockDown Browser – Download". Click there for information on downloading the FREE software. For additional assistance, the Instructional Technology group may be contacted at elearning@tamiu.edu.

CONTACTING YOUR PROFESSOR

If students need to contact the instructor, please email the instructor after the start of the term to the regular TAMIU email address at <orlando.patricio@tamiu.edu>, *or* PREFERRED through Blackboard Messages. Please allow at least 24-48 hours for a reply during the week, and 48-72 hours during the weekend or holidays. Answers to questions received from students that would benefit the class as a whole will be sent to everyone.

Office hours will be held virtually using Blackboard (BB) Collaborate Ultra, Webex, and/or Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Students will need to set up an appointment ahead of time for the office hours indicating the specific topic that they would like to discuss with the instructor.

GRADEBOOK

Feedback on students' performance will be provided to the class on a regular basis via BB GRADEBOOK.

The Blackboard LMS will be used for syllabi, instructional materials, module activities, UNIT quizzes, web assignments, final exam, and grades.

Grade Distribution:

Module Activities: 40%

UNIT Quizzes: 30%

PowerPoint Proposal (Topic with ONE-paragraph description) [DUE Monday Jun 8]: 1%

PowerPoint Presentation with NARRATION [DUE Monday Jun 29]: 9%

Final Exam [Wednesday July 1]: 20%

TOTAL: 100%

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[1] UNIT Quiz 1 will cover material from Modules 1–3, UNIT Quiz 2 will cover material from Modules 4–6, UNIT Quiz 3 will cover material from Modules 7–9, and UNIT Quiz 4 will cover material from Modules 10–12.

COURSE POLICIES

- It is the student's responsibility to be up to date on all of the course modules, including the readings, web assignments, and module activities/quizzes, as well as the UNIT quizzes and final exam.
- It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of any special needs that the student might have.
- The module activities/quizzes, UNIT quizzes, and final exam MUST be completed by the due date and time (refer to the schedule). The **module activities/quizzes and UNIT quizzes MAY all be done in two (2) attempts** on Blackboard. The ***final exam will be done in one (1) attempt on Blackboard, i.e., there will be no retake***. Missed module activities/quizzes and UNIT quizzes CANNOT be made up, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor at least seven (7) days in advance of the module activity or UNIT quiz in question, and only with a valid, written excuse. If these requirements are met, a maximum of two (2) missed module activities and one (1) UNIT quiz may be made up.
- Each student MUST submit a **PowerPoint proposal** (topic with one-paragraph description in word doc or one-slide in PowerPoint) and a **narrated PowerPoint slides AND presentation** by the due dates. Late submissions of the PowerPoint proposal or PowerPoint slides and presentation will have ten (10) points deducted for each day late.
- The final exam MUST be taken on the specified date and time (refer to the schedule). A missed final exam may be made up only in case of an emergency, and only with a valid, written excuse.
- If technical difficulties are encountered during a module activity/quiz, a UNIT quiz, or the final exam, it is the student's responsibility to *immediately* report the issue to the instructor ***and*** to the Instructional Technology group at <elearning@tamiu.edu> for technical assistance. Failure to immediately report the issue will result in the loss of the opportunity for a make-up.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain the use of basic astronomical tools, such as a telescope and a spectroscope;
2. Perform calculations, interpret results, and identify sources of error;
3. Compare experimental data with theoretical predictions;

4. Plot experimental data and determine physical parameters from a graph;
5. Use astronomical data from tables and graphs to explain concepts in astronomy;

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Essential Cosmic Perspective	Bennett, J.O., Donahue, M.O., Schneider, N., & Voit, M.	9780135794968
Required	Learning Astronomy by Doing Astronomy 2nd ed	Palen, S. & Larson, A.M.	9781324059660
Optional	Astronomy	Fraknoi, A., Morrison, D., & Wolf, S. C.	978-1-711470-57-3

Grading Criteria

GRADE	PERCENTAGE
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
6/1	Course Orientation Module Activity 1 Module Activity 2 Module Activity 3	READ Syllabus; KNOW the class policy and guidelines; Syllabus Acknowledgment ASTR 1110 Practice Test USING Lockdown Browser and Monitor Mathematical and Scientific Methods Astronomical Measurements Where on Earth are You? UNIT Quiz 1	Mon 06/01/2026 11:59 pm Mon 06/01/2026 11:59 pm Tue 06/02/2026 11:59 pm Wed 06/03/2026 11:59 pm Thu 06/04/2026 11:59 pm Fri 06/05/2026 11:59 pm
6/8	Project Proposal DUE Module Activity 4 Module Activity 5 Module Activity 6	PROJECT POWERPOINT PROPOSAL (Topic with ONE-paragraph description in word doc or one-slide in PowerPoint) Studying the Phases of the Moon Altitudes of Objects on the Meridian Working with Kepler's Laws UNIT Quiz 2	Mon 06/08/2026 11:59 pm Tue 06/09/2026 11:59 pm Wed 06/10/2026 11:59 pm Thu 06/11/2026 11:59 pm Fri 06/12/2026 11:59 pm
6/15	Module Activity 7 Module Activity 8 Module Activity 9	Extraterrestrial Tourism Light and Spectra Blackbody Curves UNIT Quiz 3	Tue 06/16/2026 11:59 pm Wed 06/17/2026 11:59 pm Thu 06/18/2026 11:59 pm Fri 06/19/2026 11:59 pm
6/22	Module Activity 10 Module Activity 11 Module Activity 12	Spectral Classification of Stars Finding Distances to Stars (Parallax) The Hertzsprung-Russell Diagram UNIT Quiz 4	Tue 06/23/2026 11:59 pm Wed 06/24/2026 11:59 pm Thu 06/25/2026 11:59 pm Fri 06/26/2026 11:59 pm

6/29	Project DUE Reading Day FINAL EXAM Week	POWERPOINT SLIDES/PRESENTATION with NARRATION (audio plus 10-12 minutes video recording in .mp4 movie file recorded via Zoom or other recording software) REVIEW for FINAL EXAM on your OWN FINAL EXAM	Mon 06/29/2026 11:59 pm Tue 06/30/2026 11:59 pm FROM Tue 06/30/2026 11:59 pm UNTIL Wed 07/01/2026 11:59 pm (24-hour window of opportunity)

Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes

Core-Curriculum Learning Outcomes:

1. **Critical Thinking Skills (CT)** - creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. **Communication Skills (COM)** - effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
3. **Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS)** - manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.

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.