



EDSE 5309 - Special Ed Law Ethical Resp: Special Ed Law Ethical Resp (Sub I- May 18 to July 03)

Summer 2026 Syllabus, Section 680, CRN 52747

Instructor Information

Michelle Loveless

Email: michelle.loveless@tamiu.edu

Office: Virtual

Office Hours:

By appointment only

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

Additional Course Information

The study of the law and regulations will be used in studying legally mandated educational plans. individual Education Plans and Family Service Plans will be examined in response to legislative procedural requirements, and ethical guidelines for substantive requirements will be addressed.

Use of AI in this Course

AI use is welcome in this course when used transparently and thoughtfully. Always include an AI Use Statement describing what you used, how you used it, and how it contributed to your learning. Specific guidelines for noting and citing your use of AI are included below and in the first course module.

Purpose of AI in This Course

AI tools (ChatGPT, Claude, Bard, etc.) may be used to support your learning. Use AI to clarify concepts, brainstorm ideas, outline assignments, generate examples, and improve clarity. Your final work must reflect your own thinking and analysis.

AI Use Statement (Required When You Use AI)

Include at the end of your assignment:

1. Tool(s) used
2. How I used AI
3. How AI supported my learning
4. Which parts represent my own reasoning

Examples (Special Education Law)

Example A: "I used ChatGPT to explain Rowley and Endrew F. in simpler language, compared it to class readings, and rewrote the analysis myself. The explanation helped clarify differences between the cases, but the final analysis is my own."



Example B: "I used Claude.ai to brainstorm sample FAPE violation scenarios, rejected inaccurate ones, and rewrote one scenario using course materials. The final scenario reflects my legal reasoning."

This AI Use Rubric (8 Points) May be used to provide feedback on some assignments.

Transparency (0–2): Clear, complete description of AI use.

Purposeful Use (0–2): AI used appropriately to support—not replace—thinking.

Student Thinking (0–2): Work shows original analysis and judgment.

Critical Evaluation (0–2): Student shows how they revised or corrected AI output.

Program Learning Outcomes

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

At the completion of this course, students will have achieved these programs outcomes:

PL01: Examine core provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, and other federal and state laws affecting the education of students with disabilities.

PL02: Analyze the major principles of the IDEA (i.e., FAPE, Non-discriminatory evaluation, IEP, LRE, procedural safeguards) and litigation leading to the passage of the IDEA 2004.

PL03: Evaluate major court rulings in special education law, focusing on key provisions of the IDEA, including FAPE, LRE, and IEPs.

PL04: Explore current legal trends and issues in special education through participating in class discussion and debriefing case studies.

PL05: Identify schools' responsibilities in the process of making decision on special education related issues.

PL06: Demonstrate understanding of the roles and ethical responsibilities of special education professionals in serving students with disabilities and their families

Student Learning Outcomes

Special Education Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

SLO1. Examine historical, philosophical, and legal foundations of academic achievement assessment and special education evaluation.

Texas Standards: 3 (Content Expertise), 6 (Professional Practices)

SLO2. Investigate federal and state disability criteria and identification procedures to determine educational need.

Texas Standards: 2 (Knowledge of Students), 6 (Professional Practices)

SLO3. Select and administer appropriate formal and informal academic achievement assessments.

Texas Standards: 1 (Instructional Planning & Delivery), 5 (Data-Driven Practice)

SLO4. Develop a protocol integrating student assessment, evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision-making.

Texas Standards: 1 (Planning), 5 (Data-Driven Practice)

SLO5. Discuss ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity and its significance for evaluation, planning, and instruction.

Texas Standards: 2 (Knowledge of Students), 4 (Learning Environment), 6 (Professional Practices)

SLO6. Prepare a comprehensive evaluation report based on interpretation of formal and informal assessment results.

Texas Standards: 1 (Planning), 5 (Data-Driven Practice), 6 (Professional Practices)

SLO7. Describe the professional practices, roles, and ethical responsibilities of individuals conducting academic achievement assessments.



Texas Standards: 6 (Professional Practices and Responsibilities)

Important Dates

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

Textbooks

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Law and Special Education (5th Ed.) (2019) Pearson.	Yell, M.	•eText ISBN: 9780135178324, 0135178320. Print ISBN: 9780135175361, 0135175364

Other Course Materials

Required Materials

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

This course may require the use of LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (webcam) for online exams. The webcam can be built into your computer or can be the type that plugs in with a USB cable. Check with your instructor.

Articles: Electronic copies of case laws and related articles are included in each module within the course.

Web Resources:

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

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

Texas Education Agency - Special Education Rules and Regulations <https://tea.texas.gov/academics/special-student-populations/special-education/tea-special-education-guidance>

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

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

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

Grading Criteria

A = 90-100%	FN = Failure for Non-Attendance
B= 80-89%	S/CR/P = Satisfactory/Credit/Pass
C = 70-79%	U/NC = Unsatisfactory/Non-Credit
D = 60-69%	IP = In Progress
F = Below 60%	W = Dropped or Withdraw

Rubrics

Please refer to the Blackboard course website for all assignment descriptions, readings, rubrics, and supplementary course materials.

Late Work Policy



Late or missing assignments/tasks will not be accepted unless extenuating circumstances are present. In these cases, students must discuss the situation as soon as possible with the instructor. Any homework sets submitted late without the approval of the instructor will receive zero credit. The due date for each assignment has been published in the Tentative Course Schedule. Work turned in by 11:59 PM Central Standard Time on the due date will be considered on time.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
5/18	Module 1: Why Law Matters in Special Education (Foundations of Special Education Law) (Week 1)	- Course syllabus - Textbook Ch 1-3 Additional Resources: Comparing State and Federal Courts Video Brown v. Board of Education	- Syllabus Acknowledgment & Virtual Hello — Due Day 3 - Discussion Forum #1: Initial Post Thu 11:59 PM; Replies Sun 11:59 PM - Assignment #1: Due Sun 11:59 PM - Module 1 Quiz — Due Sun 11:59 PM
5/25	Module 2: Understanding the IDEA Framework	Read Chapter 4 of the textbook Additional Resources Learn the Law Handout Video: IDEA Basics IDEA	- Discussion Forum #2: Initial Post Thu 11:59 PM; Replies Sun 11:59 PM - Assignment #2: Due Sun 11:59 PM - Module 2 Quiz — Due Sun 11:59 PM
6/1	Module 3: Section 504, ADA, and ESSA	Chapters 5-7 of the textbook Fry v Napoleon Additional Resources Video: IDEA Basics: Section 504 Plan Video: Understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A Comprehensive Overview LDA's ESSA Summary of Key Provisions	- Discussion Forum #3: Initial Post Thu 11:59 PM; Replies Sun 11:59 PM - Assignment 3 Due Sun 11:59 PM - Module 3 Quiz — Due Sun 11:59 PM
6/8	Module 4: IDEA Provisions: FAPE and Discriminatory Evaluations	Read Chapters 8 and 9 of the textbook Video: Mitchell Yell, Ph.D. presents "Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District" Article: Least restrictive environment: Understanding the direction of the courts Article: FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION AFTER ENDREW F. V. DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT (2017) Resource: TEA: Technical Assistance: Child Find and Evaluation Additional Resources: Twenty-five years after Larry P	- Discussion Forum #4: Initial Post Thu 11:59 PM; Replies Sun 11:59 PM - Assignment #4 Due Sun 11:59 PM - Module 4 Quiz — Due Sun 11:59 PM
6/15	Module 5: IDEA Provisions: IEP and LRE	Chapters 10-11 Video: Case Law and LRE Video: The Key to Reasonably Calculated IEPs Video: IDEA Basics: LRE Additional Resources TEA: Determining LRE TEA- IEP Development	Discussion Forum #5: Initial Post Thu 11:59 PM; Replies Sun 11:59 PM - Assignment #5: Due Sun 11:59 PM - Module 5 Quiz Due Sun 11:59 PM
6/22	Module 6: IEP Provisions: Procedural Safeguards and Disciplining Students with Special Needs	Chapters 12-13 TEA Procedural Safeguards	Discussion Forum #6: Initial Post Thu 11:59 PM; Replies Sun 11:59 PM - Assignment #6: Due Sun 11:59 PM - Module 6 Quiz Due Sun 11:59 PM
6/29	Module 7: Special Education Ethical Principals, FERPA, and Final Exam	CEC Code of Ethics FERPA Video Chapter 14	Final Discussion — Initial and Peer Response Due Thursday Final Exam Due Friday 11:59 PM

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.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 \(https://www.tamiu.edu/handbook/index.shtml\)](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 (tamui.edu) (<https://www.tamui.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Distance Education Courses

Course Expectations

Participation

To actively engage in this course, please review the designated learning materials. Utilizing a discussion forum as a collaborative platform, this course aims to ensure that candidates actively interact with the instructional content. To bolster participation in group discussions—encompassing the articulation of opinions, sharing experiences, highlighting key topics, and posing questions—it's imperative to stay current with readings and assignments.

Discussion Forum Participation.

Discussion Forums are used to show student insights and opinions on a topic and to better understand other's perspectives and experiences. Any use of language that demeans or is seen as harmful will result in a 0 and removal from the forum. Please be kind to each other. Additionally, to show engagement with the reading materials and other resources per module, students must cite resources per discussion post (see Discussion Forum in the Assignment Section for more details).



Virtual Class Meeting Participation

Additionally, at various times throughout the term, there may be optional virtual class meetings scheduled and/or videos available on certain topics being covered in the class materials. These are not required; however, you are highly encouraged as you will have the opportunity to ask questions and gain additional understanding of the course readings. Additionally, students will be accountable for the information presented and discussed in the meetings/recordings.

APA Format

APA format is required to be used for all assignments in which work needs to be cited. A title page is not necessary unless you are submitting a paper of 5 pages or more, but a References page is required for each assignment as it is necessary to cite at least two sources from the textbook and module reading materials or outside academic journals. Additionally, APA style formatting should be applied throughout the assignment.

Students will be held accountable for not properly citing work as direct quotes or as paraphrases of the referenced materials. In-text citations must follow APA style with author names, the year, and the page number. Example: (Yell & Bateman, 2017, p. 2) In addition, the in-text citations are required to be added to the APA style References page. Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL) is a good resource to learn and use APA style. Please review the criteria for citing sources and creating a references page as points will be deducted for citations and references that are insufficient.

Academic Honesty

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 following site: <https://www.tamtu.edu/studentaffairs/pdf/judicial/Honor%20Code.pdf>

Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and simple cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Course Structure

This course comprises seven distinct modules, each featuring specific learning objectives and tasks such as assigned readings, discussion forums, related activities, assignments, and comprehension checks. For each module, students must (a) complete designated readings, (b) actively engage in discussion forums by initiating posts and responding to peers, (c) fulfill assigned tasks, and (d) address quiz questions.

To remain informed of class updates and essential announcements, daily logins are expected. Engaging in an online class presents both challenges and opportunities. To excel in this course, dedication and active participation are crucial, ensuring tasks are completed punctually.

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' (<https://www.tamtu.edu/distance/>) webpage (<https://www.tamtu.edu/distance/>).

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

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 Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. For more information, contact the online at [Office of Disability Services for Students \(DSS\)](https://www.tamtu.edu/disability/) (<https://www.tamtu.edu/disability/>), or via phone at 956.326.2230, or by visiting the staff at the Senator Judith Zaffirini Student Success Center, room 138. 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 Instructional Technology and Distance. Education Services' page on [University Resources and Support Services](#).

Student-Instructor Communication Policy

Email is the main and preferred method of contact to communicate you're your instructor (michelle.loveless ((michelle.loveless@tamtu.edu)@tamtu.edu). To effectively communicate with the instructor via email, **you are required to:**

1. Use your university-issued email address. Emails sent from other addresses may not reach me.
2. Start your email by addressing "To whom" (I am Dr. Michelle Loveless) and ensure your full name appears in the "From" field. Failure to include this information may result in your email not being opened.
3. Include the course name and an informative title in the subject line.

4. Please allow up to 24 hours for a response during weekdays. Response times may be longer on weekends or holidays.

Assignments and Assessments

With the exception of the final week, assignments are due by Sunday at the end of each school week. The instructor will typically provide feedback within a week after the assignment/assessment deadlines. If the instructor is unable to do so, the instructor will provide an announcement or email to inform the students of the change for that week.

Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)

There are course expectations concerning etiquette or how we should treat each other online. It is vital that we consider these values as we communicate with one another. Visit Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' web page (<https://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml>) on Netiquette (<https://www.tamui.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml>) for further instruction.

Technology Requirements

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 (<https://www.tamui.edu/distance/>) when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

Additional Hardware. For this class, you will check with your instructor to determine the exact hardware needs.

-a webcam and microphone. Recently purchased laptops may have these built-in web cameras. If you do not have this equipment, it is recommended to purchase a stand-alone webcam, microphone or a webcam with a built-in microphone from your local electronic store or any online store.

NOTE: Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services may check out available webcams to students on a first-come, first-served basis. To check out a webcam, please stop by Killam Library, Room 259 and request an available webcam.

Additional Software. You will need the following additional software: Microsoft PowerPoint for viewing lesson presentations and Microsoft Word for viewing course files and submitting assignments. TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account. 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, software or do not have access to internet, it will be highly challenging for you to make any progress in this class. However, my goal is to assist you to find solutions and guide you appropriately most of the required materials can either be found free of charge at TAMIU's library, computer labs, and classrooms. In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

Students are provided with guides on how to use the Blackboard LMS. Guides may be available at Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' Student ([https://www.tamui.edu/distance/eLearning Tutorial Videos page](https://www.tamui.edu/distance/eLearning%20Tutorial%20Videos%20page)) or by contacting the eLearning team at elearning@tamui.edu.

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 (<https://it.tamu.edu/help/#%3A~%3Atext%3DGet%20answers%20to%20your%20questions%2Cand%20more%20with%20IT%20Chat!%26text%3DIT%20Chat%20is%20available%208%2Cemail%20helpdesk%40tamuedu>) [Support Services.](#)

Grading and Evaluation

In this course, the course week begins on Monday; therefore, Day 1 is Monday and Day 7 is Sunday. Each module opens on Monday (Day 1). **The submission for all assigned works is due by at 11:59 p.m. on the designated day in Central time.**

The due dates for Discussion Forum are on Thursday (Day 4) for the initial post and on Sunday (Day 7) for two substantive responses to colleagues' post.

The due date for assignments is Sunday (Day 7). Each module has a quiz that contains a set of questions to check for your understanding of topics covered in the module. Your completed quiz must be submitted by Sunday (Day 7).

The final comprehensive exam for the course is due by Friday of Week 7 and is open-book/open-note.

Grading Scale/Schema

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



In this class, we will utilize Blackboard websites, discussion threads in Blackboard, links to videos on the web, and, if needed, online class meetings requiring a camera and a microphone.

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.