



EPSC 1370 - Survey of Earth Science: Survey of Earth Science (SSI- June 01 to July 02)

Summer 2026 Syllabus, Section 380, CRN 52526

Instructor Information

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Office: Remote
Office Hours:
TR: Zoom 1-3 pm or by appointment

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

A survey of the natural processes at work in the atmosphere, lithosphere, hydrosphere, and biosphere of the Earth, as well as Earth's place in the universe. Includes an introduction to astronomy, geology, oceanography, and meteorology. Designed to fulfill laboratory science core curriculum requirements. Must be taken concurrently with EPSC 1170.
Engineering Department, College of Arts & Sciences

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the process or scientific discover and the place of geological sciences is our lives.
2. Explain the current theories concerning the origin of the Universe and of the Solar System.
3. Explain the place of Earth in the Solar System and its relationships with other objects in the Solar System.
4. Relate the origin and evolution of Earth's internal structures to its resulting geologic systems, including Earth materials and plate tectonic activities.
5. Explain the operation of Earth's geologic systems and the interactions among the atmosphere, the geosphere, and the hydrosphere, including meteorology and oceanography.
6. Explain the history of the Earth including the evolution of earth systems and life forms.

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	An Introduction of Geology, 2nd Ed.	Nassar	OER



Grading Criteria

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

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
6/1	1. Intro to Science & Earth Sciences 2. Plate Tectonics & Earth's Interior 3. Minerals & Physical Properties Online Review Available In Exam I Module EXAM 1 (ALL ACADEMIC PROGRESS COVERED BY TOPICS 1-3)	OER Textbook Ch 1 Ch 2 Ch 3.1, 3.2, 3.5	6/4
6/8	4. Igneous Processes and Volcanoes 5. Weathering, Erosion, and Sedimentary Rocks 6. Geologic Time Online Review Available In Exam II Module EXAM 2 (ALL ACADEMIC PROGRESS COVERED BY TOPICS 4-6)	Ch 4.1, 4.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.2 Ch 5 Ch 7	6/15
6/15	7. Earth History 8. Crustal Deformation and Earthquakes 9. Water Online Review Available In Exam III Module EXAM 3 (ALL ACADEMIC PROGRESS COVERED BY TOPICS 7-9)	Ch 8 Ch 9.1 – 9.6, 9.7.1, 9.7.4 Ch 11.1, 11.2, 11.5, 11.6	6/22
6/22	10. Earth's Coastlines and Oceans 11. Deserts and Glaciers 12. Meteorology 13. Origin of the Universe and Our Solar System	Ch 12.1, 12.2.1, 12.2.2, 12.2.3, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5 Ch 13 Ch 14 Ch 17	
6/29	Online Review Available In Exam 4 Module EXAM 4 (ALL ACADEMIC PROGRESS COVERED BY TOPICS 10-13)		6/30-7/3 7/2-7/3

Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes

[REMOVE the Core-Curriculum Learning Outcomes which do NOT apply to this course. **Please don't forget to remove these instructions.**]

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
4. **Personal Responsibility (PR)** - ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

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>)).

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.

Distance Education Courses

Regular and Substantive Interactions:

- Participation in regularly scheduled learning sessions (where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the student and the qualified instructor).
- Provide personalized comments (in any medium) for an individual student’s assignment or exam.
- Instructor posts announcements, email, or social media check-ins about academic aspects of the class.
- Provide an overview video to accompany recorded lectures.

- Identify students struggling to reach mastery through observation of discussion activity, assessment completion, or even user activity and offer additional opportunities for interaction.

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):

- **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.**

Course Structure

Students should access the Module **Videos of How to Begin the Course** located on the class page

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

The preference for student/professor communication is through Blackboard Ultra messenger within each course. Messenger is set to provide instant messages through each course but will also send a copy of the message through each student's email. Messenger is the quickest medium of communication and the preferred by students and professor. Regular email may not be answered before the end of day.

In this course, grading of homework assignments is immediate with submittal. If necessary, comments will accompany a student's work.

1) Course mechanics and Course management

The mechanics and management of the course conform to ***Texas A&M University Student Rule 7.***

This is the A&M governing rule for all campuses. Rule #7 states that *the university considers it to be the responsibility of the individual student to complete all assignments within the allotted time below*. **Valid excuses** for being absent or being unable to complete assignments/exams (**those excuses recognized by the University**) are explained in Rule #7 – all valid excuses require documentation and **only** excused exercises/exams can be made-up.

Undocumented absences are rarely excused. The list of "valid excuses" does not make reference to internet outages unless that outage affects TAMU's campus operations. Nor does the list make reference to "running out of time", "my computer died", "I forgot", etc.

2) Attendance/Participation

The University views Asynchronous (remote online) class "attendance" as class participation and a student responsibility. Students of an Asynchronous class are asked to do everything expected of students of Synchronous classes with exception of attending a physical classroom. **In the case of EPSC 1170 this means that students are responsible for the following:**

1. **visiting the class pages on Ultra at least once a day** to check messages from the professor related to class matters (there are always the possibilities of updates, new videos, changes due to current happenings in the geosciences like major earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and weather phenomena),
2. **visiting the class pages on Ultra at least once a day to check for assignments or changes to assignments, and**
3. **visiting the class pages on Ultra at least once a day to make certain that homework, assignments, and exams are complete and submitted by the assigned deadline date and time**. Students can check, through gradebook, if an assignment is complete and submitted. This is the student's responsibility.
4. The presence and willingness of students to continue in the course is demonstrated by completion of item #3 under the learning module **Welcome Students! – Start Here**. Item #3 is the **TAMU required "Acknowledgment of the Syllabus and University Policies"** and requires completion before Census Day (see syllabus).
5. Students are expected to complete all assignments before a deadline. If a student cannot attend class, it is the student's responsibility to communicate absences to professors as soon as possible. The professor will decide if the student's excuse is valid. Excused absences cannot affect a student's grade but such excuses require written documentation. See the Student Handbook and Rule #7 for the list of recognized excused absences.
6. If you miss an exam because of a documented illness, contact me as soon as possible by BB Ultra message or at Rex.Crick@tamiu.edu. If need-be, have a friend, spouse, partner, or parent contact me by email; immediate communication is essential.

3) Non-Participation before and after the Census Date of June 4th



1. Each semester, one or more students will enroll and never take part or participate in the class. For remote/online courses, **participation** is defined as completing one or more of the assignments listed in the course schedule before the EOD (end of day) June 4th.
2. Failure to meet participation requirements by EOD June 4th causes a student to be administratively dropped from the course on June 5th.
3. It is not uncommon for a student to meet participation requirements of June 4th but have no participation in a course after the census date. Students in this category are *strongly encouraged* to drop a class before the final date to drop a course with the grade of "W" (June 25th). Students who do not initiate a drop will remain in a course for the remainder of a semester. The grade that goes onto a student's transcript for non-participation is an "FN" to indicate that it is a grade based on non-participation rather than participation.
1. **Textbook Readings** - The goal of the readings is to prepare for the assigned subject. The reading assignments in the textbook will parallel the preview material. Students that remain current with the readings will absorb more of the course content and have an easier time preparing for the exams. To do well in this course requires reading all assigned material, taking good notes, and completing the assignments on time. It is always an advantage to reread the material before exams. **Exams will be based on the assigned readings, homework, questions presented at the end of sections and summaries at the end of chapters, and videos embedded in the textbook.**
2. **Homework Assessments:** In this short course, there are almost daily online homework exercises assigned over the five-week semester. The percentage assigned to homework is high (**50%**) to give students a greater control over course grades. Most of the homework questions are already present in the assigned readings; therefore, it is very possible to achieve 100% on homework, however it does require an adequate knowledge of the book material. This should be everyone's goal. **All** homework assignments for the 5-week semester are available beginning June 1 with deadlines at ~weekly intervals (check the course schedule).
 - a. While students are welcome to work ahead as schedules allow, assessments will not be accepted after a deadline is passed; that is, you can submit ahead of all deadlines but never after a deadline.
 - b. The University/Rule 7 considers that the meeting of deadlines to be solely the responsibility of the student. Students are encouraged to manage time accordingly.
 - c. **Homework exercises are 50% of the course grade.**
 - d. **Internet Problems & Homework:** Unless the connectivity is a problem with the TAMIU system, missing assignments due to personal internet problems is not an excuse for extensions or make-ups. Although assignment **deadlines are 11:59 pm**, students are encouraged to begin work well in advance of the deadline in case of personal connectivity and scheduling problems. The IT/eLearning Helpdesk is staffed until 6 pm on weekdays and can only offer assistance until that time. Students suspecting or experiencing connectivity issues not of TAMIU's making, may always use the campus computer labs to complete to submit work.
 - i. **Please remember the following:** It is to your advantage to always contact the **OIT/eLearning Helpdesk** regarding any problems with BB Ultra, internet connectivity, etc. While I want to know of problems, the **OIT/eLearning Helpdesk** should be your first contact unless it is a question of the class page, class assignments, and class exams.
3. **FOUR (4) HOUR EXAMS** will be given utilizing Blackboard (see attached course schedule). While the exams will not be explicitly comprehensive, the material in this course builds upon previously studied concepts. Once a concept has been introduced in lecture, that concept always finds a way into subsequent subjects. Specific exam questions are randomly chosen from a set of review questions
 - a. Students will need an internet device (laptop or iPad) using operating systems of Windows, Apple MacOS, Chromebook, or iPad capable of running the most recent student version of Respondus Lockdown Browser, Respondus Monitor, and the internet device must have a functioning webcam. *Respondus is not compatible with any tablets except iPads* (it is a question of security) nor is Respondus compatible with any make of cellphone.
 - b. The **Module Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor** (immediately after the Welcome Folder) contains three items:
 - i. **Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor Instructions.**
 - ii. **Link** for Download Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor (No Cost) from TAMIU
 - iii. **Demo Test** – once students have installed Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor, please take the Demo Test to make certain Respondus is working on the chosen internet device. The score of the Demo Test is passed to the Grade Book so there is a record of your success. Please do this before taking the Syllabus Quiz which requires
 - c. Authorized make-up exams will not be the same as the original exam. Quizzes and Exams are available for 2 days (48 hours) until 11:59 pm of the deadline date and will be automatically submitted by BB Ultra at that time. The University considers that the meeting of deadlines is solely the responsibility of the student. Students are encouraged to manage time accordingly.
 - i. Exams will account for a total of **40%** of your grade in the course.
 - ii. Internet Problem: See 2a above.
 - iii. **Please note:** *Exams will not count for a grade unless Respondus browser, Respondus monitor, and the webcam are utilized properly.* Proper use of Respondus browser, Respondus monitor, and webcam are the sole responsibility of each student. Please make certain these are working properly before attempting an exam.
 - iv. **It has been observed by TAMIU OIT and eLearning** that many students slowly disappear from the webcam video during the course of an online proctored exam. Respondus Monitor is set to remind students of this problem during the exam, but many students ignore these warnings. Because this behavior is in violation of A&M's Code of Honor, professors have been asked to counsel students engaging in this activity and to invalidate exams for individuals that do not modify the behavior.



- **Discussion, Syllabus Quiz, and Academic Integrity Assessment** are integral parts of this and other TAMIU EPSC courses whether Remote or Face-to-Face. These three items are alone worth 10% of the course grade. In comparison, these 10 pts (10%) are equivalent to 20% of the Homework grade and 25% of the Exam grade. The Syllabus Quiz and Academic Integrity Assessment have unlimited attempts to allow reaching the minimum score of 90%.

The course operates under A&M Rule #7 where it is the responsibility of students to:

1. **visit the class pages on Ultra at least once a day** to check messages from the professor related to class matters (there are always the possibilities of updates, new videos, changes due to current happenings in the geosciences like major earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and weather phenomena),
2. **visit the class pages on Ultra at least once a day to check for assignments or changes to assignments**, and
3. **visit the class pages on Ultra at least once a day to make certain that homework, assignments, and exams are complete and submitted by the assigned deadline date and time.** Students can check, through gradebook, if an assignment is complete and submitted.

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.tamiau.edu/distance/students/netiquette.shtml>) for further instruction.

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

That of TAMIU

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 (<https://www.tamiau.edu/distance/students/technology-requirements.shtml>) when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

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 Killam Library, Room 259, and request an available webcam.

Additional Software. You will need the following additional software: **Respondus Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor**. TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamiau.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 elarning@tamiau.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**. And mastery of Microsoft Word and Adobe Reader



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**.

Grading Scale/Schema (TAMU standard)

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

- 91 – 100 = *A*
- 81 – 90 = *B*
- 71 – 80 = *C*
- 61 – 70 = *D*
- Below 61 = *F*

Late Work Policy

Each homework or exercise has an absolute deadline. Late work is not accepted beyond the deadline.

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.

Turnitin Policy Or Other Types of Assignments in Other Systems

Proctoring

Respondus Lockdown Browser, Respondus Monitor, and a functioning webcam are required for all Exams. TAMU does not provide this software and it must either be purchased from Respondus.com or students may opt to use TAMU computer labs containing this software.

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**.

This course requires the use of Microsoft Word and Adobe PDF Reader

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.