



SOCI 4375 - Special Studies in Sociology: Sociology of Sports (SSI- June 01 to July 02)

Summer 2026 Syllabus, Section 380, CRN 52793

Instructor Information

Kyle Breen

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Email: kyle.breen@tamiu.edu

Office: AIC 384

Office Hours:

By Appointment

Times and Location

Does Not Meet Face-to-Face

Course Description

Additional Course Information

Communication

The best way to get in touch with me is via email or by stopping by my office for a chat. For email communication, please include a subject line for the email with the course/course number. For example: Subject: Question about midterms-Sociology of Sport. I will do my very best to respond to all emails in a timely fashion. If you send an email Monday-Friday, I will do my best to respond within 24 hours. If it is the weekend, I will have a response by Monday at the latest. ***If you need immediate assistance regarding the course, please email me directly at kyle.breen@tamiu.edu rather than using Blackboard email message.**

Please use and check your TAMIU Email regularly!

Class Set Up

This course is fully online and mostly asynchronous. The **only** portions of the class that must be completed within a specific window are the midterm exam and the final exam. For discussion board assignments, please be aware that if you submit your post early, you may need to check back on the discussion post in order to respond to your classmates for full credit. Otherwise, students will be able to move through the course at their own pace, but must complete all of the course material by the final class day on July 2, 2026 at 11:59 PM. **No** assignments will be accepted after this date.

If you are undergoing a personal emergency or a hardship that impacts your ability to complete coursework, I strongly encourage active communication with me so we can work together to ensure your success in the class.

Extensions on Assignments

Because this course is asynchronous, there will not be extensions on assignments. Please contact me immediately if something happens that directly impacts your ability to complete the work. This will allow for us to develop a proper way forward to ensure you still complete the course to the best of your ability.

If a student receives an extension, it is the responsibility of the student to submit the assignment on the agreed upon extension date. If the submission is late, the assignment will be subject to the late work policy.



Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Students should not have another person or AI do the writing of any assignment for them, including AI tools like ChatGPT, Caktus.ai, Claude.ai, or others. While AI can be a useful tool to help with brainstorming, framing, or structure, it should not be used to complete the assignments for you.

If there is any suspicion of the use of AI to complete an assignment, I will contact the student and offer the option to redo the assignment at a maximum grade of 75% for the first offense. Any AI use to complete assignments or activities after the first offense will receive an automatic 0 and the assignment will be subject to reporting for academic dishonesty.

****If at any time, a student feels as though they need to use AI to complete an assignment, please come talk to me, judgment-free. This allows us to work together to come up with a plan to complete the assignment with academic honesty and integrity.**

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Discuss how sport influences and is influenced by social institutions, social structures, social inequality, and social change.
2. Compare how the different sociological theoretical perspectives would examine sport.
3. Describe how sociological principles of race, class, gender, etc. can explain issues related to inequalities in sport.
4. Examine the current issues facing youth and collegiate sport using sociological theories, concepts, and data.
5. Develop communication skills through analyzing and reflecting on the readings and course materials.
6. Create a podcast that explores a sociological issue in a sport using research, data, theory, and sociological concepts.

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.

Other Course Materials

All course materials will be made available on Blackboard.

Grading Criteria

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

Assignments and Assignment Descriptions

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE
Module Activities	80 Total Points
Reading Reflections/Discussion Boards	40 Total Points
Midterm Exam	50 Points
Final Exam	50 Points
Podcast Project	80 Points
TOTAL	300 Points

Assignment Descriptions

Module Activities

Module activities consist of a combination of different modes of participation. Each activity will be labeled as an "Activity" on the Course Blackboard Page. Students will be asked to engage with the presented material in a module by completing knowledge check activities (ungraded) and respond to



different prompts that may ask students to answer critical response questions, analyze an article of their choosing, analyze a video, or simply watch and analyze a sport and write your thoughts. These activities will be graded using rubrics that center on students' knowledge of material, correct application of theories and concepts, writing depth, research considerations, and writing proficiency.

Reading Responses

Throughout the summer, students will be required to submit reading responses/reflections for some of the modules. These response/reflection assignments should be approximately 500 words. Students should use these response assignments to critically engage with, evaluate, and draw connections between the material that we have discussed in class. Students may also use these assignments as a way to ask questions about the material. For each response, students should:

- Critique the readings (and media sources if applicable for that week) by providing strengths and weaknesses, finding similarities and differences, question the key ideas or concepts, relate the readings to your own personal experiences, examine their underlying values and assumptions, compare them to other readings, etc. The key point is to critically and thoughtfully engage with and respond/react to the ideas in the required readings. The reading response should NOT be a summary or reiteration of the author's key points.
- Using quotes from the readings, and/or references to specific sections or passages, scenes (if a video), or quotes from a podcast (with page numbers or timestamps) will be necessary to show evidence of a student's engagement with the material and to provide support for your arguments. Quotes and the corresponding page number must be present in every reading response. Students should not include more than 3 direct quotes, and quotes should not be longer than 5 typed lines. If a block quote is necessary to provide insight to an argument, it will be expected that students make up for the block quote with an additional word count corresponding to the quote length.
- The reading response should also consider the overarching topic for the particular week they are writing on. For example, if the week is "How Sports Media has Changed," your response should focus on a number of the different aspects related to Sports media.

Discussion Boards

For some modules instead of doing the reading reflection, students will instead be required to respond to a discussion board prompt to facilitate interaction between students as well as students and myself as the instructor. To receive full credit for the discussion board posting, students will each be required to post a full response to the prompt along with interacting with the posts from their classmates. You may comment on posts, or pose additional questions that either your classmates or I as the instructor can answer. Discussion board posts will be worth the same number of points as the reading reflections.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will take place following the second week of material and will cover topics that have been discussed thus far. **REMEMBER:** the midterm exam MUST be completed in the specified window that it is open. I have constructed it this way for a couple of reasons. First, it provides the ability to dive deeper into what we have covered to that point. Second, and most importantly, it ensures every student stays on track during the summer term. It protects against students trying to complete the entire course in the final week of the summer. The Midterm Exam will include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer questions. Students will be given a total of 2.5 hours to complete the exam. Students will be required to use the Lockdown Browser software when taking the exam. Students are **NOT** permitted to use course notes, PowerPoint slides, or other materials during the exam. All materials must be removed prior to the examination. If students are found to be academically dishonest during the exam period, a grade of "0" will be recorded and a report will be made with the University on academic dishonesty.

Final Exam

The Final Exam will be comprehensive, covering all of the topics we covered over the term. The exam will open once all other coursework has been completed during the final week of class. The final exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions, as well as short essay questions. Students will be given a total of 3 hours to complete the exam. Students will be required to use the Lockdown Browser software when taking the exam. Similar to the midterm, students are **NOT** permitted to use course notes, PowerPoint slides, or other materials during the final exam. All materials must be removed prior to the examination. If students are found to be academically dishonest during the exam period, a grade of "0" will be recorded and a report will be made with the University on academic dishonesty.

Final Podcast Project

Aside from the final exam, students will complete a final project that allows them to explore a sport of their choosing through a sociological lens. The topic is completely up to you, all I ask is that students share their topic choice with me during the Midterm Exam Week, as well as a brief outline of what ideas they have for their podcast structure. This will be part of the overall grade for the project.

You will also submit a written script, which serves as the formal academic record of your podcast. Think of the script as a long-form essay written in a conversational register. It should be substantive, well-organized, and sociologically rigorous, even if the recording itself is relaxed and natural. Therefore you will have two components: the recorded podcast and the essay-style script.

There are several required components for this podcast/script:

- An application of one theoretical perspective discussed in class to your topic.
- Course concepts included in your analysis of your topic.
- An analysis of social inequalities and how they shape your topic.
- Examining how macro-level structures and institutions interact with your topic.
- Identification and analysis of one social problem related to your topic.
- An incorporation of outside research.

All formatting instructions, such as word count, recording requirement, and cited sources, are included on Blackboard in the assignment description.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Agenda/Topic	Reading(s)	Due
6/1	Introductory Module & Syllabus Module 1 Introduction to Sociology and The Sociology of Sport Sport and Social Problems	Module 1 - Part 1 Background Information Module 1 - Part 2 Background Information What if? The Len Bias Story Ryan Garcia News Articles	Module 1 - Part 1 Discussion Module 1 - Part 2 Activity
6/8	Module 2 Sport and Inequality Race, Gender, and Sport	Module 2 Background Information Readings Assigned on Blackboard	Module 2 Discussion/Reflection Module 2 Activity Term Project Topic and Outline
6/15	Module 3 Youth Sports Industrial Complex Collegiate Sports and NIL Midterm Exam	Module 3 Background Information Youth Sports NYT Article College Sports Article Midterm Review	Term Project Topic and Outline Module 3 Discussion Module 3 Activity Midterm Exam (Covers Module 1 and 2)
6/22	Module 4 Institutions and Sports Economy, Politics, Religion, and Media	Module 4 - Part 1 Background Information Module 4 - Part 2 Background Information Assigned Readings on Blackboard	Review Term Project Instructions Module 4 - Part 1 Discussion/Reflection Module 4 - Part 2 Activity
6/29	Final Exam Review Finalize Term Project Catch Up On All Modules	Final Exam Review	TERM PROJECT DUE JUNE 30 Final Exam All Course Work Due

University/College Policies

Please see the University Policies below.

COVID-19 Related Policies

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please refer to the Student Handbook, Appendix A (Attendance Rule) for instructions.

Required Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class in person (or virtually, if the class is online) and to complete all assignments. If you cannot attend class, it is your responsibility to communicate absences with your professors. The faculty member will decide if your excuse is valid and thus may provide lecture materials of the class. According to University policy, acceptable reasons for an absence, which cannot affect a student's grade, include:

- Participation in an authorized University activity.
- Death or major illness in a student's immediate family.
- Illness of a dependent family member.
- Participation in legal proceedings or administrative procedures that require a student's presence.
- Religious holy day.
- Illness that is too severe or contagious for the student to attend class.
- Required participation in military duties.
- Mandatory admission interviews for professional or graduate school which cannot be rescheduled.

Students are responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to faculty members within seven calendar days of their absence and return to class. They must substantiate the reason for the absence. If the absence is excused, faculty members must either provide students with the opportunity to make up the exam or other work missed, or provide a satisfactory alternative to complete the exam or other work missed within 30 calendar days from the date of absence. Students who miss class due to a University-sponsored activity are responsible for identifying their absences to their instructors with as much advance notice as possible.

Classroom Behavior (applies to online or Face-to-Face Classes)

In the classroom, students are expected to listen attentively, participate respectfully, and adhere to established rules. Behavior that interferes with the class lecture may result in disciplinary action, ensuring a productive and respectful learning environment for everyone. Any disputes over academic matters should be addressed calmly and constructively, ideally during designated times such as office hours or after class. If a student does not agree with a decision, they can request a meeting with the instructor to discuss their concerns in more detail. Should further resolution be needed, the student may escalate the matter to the department head or use formal grievance procedures as outlined in the sections below. (please refer to Student Handbook Article 4 (<https://www.tamui.edu/handbook/article-04.shtml>)).

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.tamui.edu/handbook/index.shtml>).

We are committed to strict enforcement of the Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code tend to involve claiming work that is not one's own, most commonly plagiarism in written assignments and any form of cheating on exams and other types of assignments.

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. It occurs when you:

1. Borrow someone else's facts, ideas, or opinions and put them entirely in your own words. You must acknowledge that these thoughts are not your own by immediately citing the source in your paper. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
2. Borrow someone else's words (short phrases, clauses, or sentences), you must enclose the copied words in quotation marks as well as citing the source. Failure to do this is plagiarism.
3. Present someone else's paper or exam (stolen, borrowed, or bought) as your own. You have committed a clearly intentional form of intellectual theft and have put your academic future in jeopardy. This is the worst form of plagiarism.

Here is another explanation from the 2020, seventh edition of the Manual of The American Psychological Association (APA):

"Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, idea, or images of another as your own; it denies authors or creators of content the credit they are due. Whether deliberate or unintentional, plagiarism violates ethical standards in scholarship" (p. 254). This same principle applies to the illicit use of AI.

Plagiarism: Researchers do not claim the words and ideas of another as their own; they give credit where credit is due. Quotations marks should be used to indicate the exact words of another. Each time you paraphrase another author (i.e., summarize a passage or rearrange the order of a sentence and change some of the words), you need to credit the source in the text. The key element of this principle is that authors do not present the work of another as if it were their own words. This can extend to ideas as well as written words. If authors model a study after one done by someone else, the originating author should be given credit. If the rationale for a study was suggested in the discussion section of someone else's article, the person should be given credit. Given the free exchange of ideas, which is very important for the health of intellectual discourse, authors may not know where an idea for a study originated. If authors do know, however, they should acknowledge the source; this includes personal communications (p. 11). For guidance on proper documentation, consult the Academic Success Center or a recommended guide to documentation and research such as the Manual of the APA or the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

TAMU 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.tamiau.edu/handbook/index.shtml>)).

Pregnant and Parenting Students

Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, harassment based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions, is prohibited. A pregnant/parenting student must be granted an absence for as long as the student's physician deems the absence medically necessary. It is a violation of Title IX to ask for documentation relative to the pregnant/parenting student's status beyond what would be required for other medical conditions. Students who experience or observe alleged or suspected discrimination due to their pregnant/parenting status, should report to the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, KLM 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office, U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600). You can also report it on TAMIU's anonymous electronic reporting site, *Report It*, at <https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit> (<https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit/index.shtml>).

TAMIU advises a pregnant/parenting student to notify their professor once the student is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is recommended that the student and professor develop a reasonable plan for the student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. The Office of Compliance (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiau.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodation. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student needs a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence (LOA) as outlined in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.#As part of our efforts to assist and encourage all students towards graduation, TAMIU provides LOAs for students, including pregnant/parenting students, in accordance with the Attendance Rule and the Student LOA Rule.#Both rules can be found in the TAMIU *Student Handbook*.

For parenting-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the Parenting Liaison, Mayra Hernandez, at mghernandez@tamiau.edu, call 956.326.2265, or visit Student Center 226.

For pregnancy-related rights, accommodations, and resources, contact the TIX Coordinator, Lorissa Cortez, at lorissam.cortez@tamiau.edu, call 956.326.2857, or visit Killam Library 159.

Anti-Discrimination/Title IX

TAMIU does not discriminate or permit harassment against any individual on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, educational programs, or employment. If you would like to file a complaint relative to Title IX or any civil rights violation, please contact the TAMIU Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity/Title IX Coordinator, Lorissa M. Cortez, 5201 University Boulevard, Killam Library 159B, Laredo, TX 78041, TitleIX@tamiau.edu, 956.326.2857, via the anonymous electronic reporting website, ReportIt (<https://www.tamiau.edu/reportit>) and/or the Office of Civil Rights (Dallas Office), U.S. Department of Education, 1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620, Dallas, TX 75201-6810, 214.661.9600.

Incompletes

Students who are unable to complete a course should withdraw from the course before the final date for withdrawal and receive a "W." To qualify for an "incomplete" and thus have the opportunity to complete the course at a later date, a student must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must have completed 90% of the course work assigned before the final date for withdrawing from a course with a "W", and the student must be passing the course;
2. The student cannot complete the course because an accident, an illness, or a traumatic personal or family event occurred after the final date for withdrawal from a course;
3. The student must sign an "Incomplete Grade Contract" and secure signatures of approval from the professor and the college dean.
4. The student must agree to complete the missing course work before the end of the next long semester; failure to meet this deadline will cause the "I" to automatically be converted to an "F"; extensions to this deadline may be granted by the dean of the college. This is the general policy regarding the circumstances under which an "incomplete" may be granted, but under exceptional circumstances, a student may receive an incomplete who does not meet all of the criteria above if the faculty member, department chair, and dean recommend it.

WIN Contracts

The Department of Biology and Chemistry does not permit WIN contracts. For other departments within the college, WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to graduating seniors. Only courses offered by full-time TAMIU faculty or TAMIU instructors are eligible to be contracted for the WIN requirement. However, a WIN contract for a course taught by an adjunct may be approved, with special permission from the department chair and dean. Students must seek approval before beginning any work for the WIN Contract. No student will contract more than one course per semester. Summer WIN Contracts must continue through both summer sessions.

Student Responsibility for Dropping a Course

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course before the final date for withdrawal from a course. Faculty members, in fact, may not drop a student from a course without getting the approval of their department chair and dean.

Independent Study Course

Independent Study (IS) courses are offered only under exceptional circumstances. Required courses intended to build academic skills may not be taken as IS (e.g., clinical supervision and internships). No student will take more than one IS course per semester. Moreover, IS courses are limited to seniors and graduate students. Summer IS course must continue through both summer sessions.

Grade Changes & Appeals

Faculty are authorized to change final grades only when they have committed a computational error or an error in recording a grade, and they must receive the approval of their department chairs and the dean to change the grade. As part of that approval, they must attach a detailed explanation of the reason for the mistake. Only in rare cases would another reason be entertained as legitimate for a grade change. A student who is unhappy with his or her grade on an assignment must discuss the situation with the faculty member teaching the course. If students believe that they have been graded unfairly, they have the right to appeal the grade using a grade appeal process in the Student Handbook and in the Faculty Handbook.

Final Examination

All courses in all colleges must include a comprehensive exam or performance and be given on the date and time specified by the Academic Calendar and the Final Exam schedule published by the Registrar's Office. In the College of Arts & Sciences all final exams must contain a written component. The written component should comprise at least 20% of the final exam grade. Exceptions to this policy must receive the approval of the department chair and the dean at the beginning of the semester.

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it. The Telus app is available to download directly from TELUS (tamui.edu) (<https://www.tamui.edu/counseling/telus/>) or from the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Distance Education Courses

Online Courses and On-Campus Meetings

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

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

In this online course, there are no required in-person meetings.

Course Structure

This course is 100% online and conducted mostly asynchronously, so students may take the course at a pace that is comfortable for them. The midterm and final exams are the only items that must be taken within a specific window of time. Students will be reminded of these timeframes throughout the course. Students must complete the course modules in order. Before moving to a new section, the entirety of the section a student is working on must be completed. A normal pace for this course is to complete one module per week over the five-week course period.

Students should begin the course by reading the course checklist, the entire course syllabus, the instructor introduction, and then watching the instructor's introductory video to the course.

Once students have read the introductory information, they may begin working on the course modules, beginning with Module 1. Each module will contain background information about the module topic, readings for the week and/or videos/podcasts, a reading reflection or discussion board, and a module activity. As mentioned, this course is sequential, so students will need to complete one course activity prior to moving to the next.

Some modules will also contain videos and documentaries that focus on sport and applying what we have learned in the course.



The midterm will take place after Module 2 and will contain information up until that point. The midterm will open following week two and remain open for one week. Students will need Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor to complete the exam.

Finally, the final exam will open once all course content has been completed, during the final week of the course. The final exam requires the use of the lockdown browser tool/online proctoring. This is to ensure that the final exam is taken with honesty and integrity. The final exam will have multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions, as well as short essay responses.

Student-Instructor Communication Policy and Response Time

Announcements/Course Messages/Emails

For this course, I as the instructor, will provide weekly announcements that discuss the module that should be completed on that particular week (remember, this is self-paced so you may work ahead, the announcements will just be there as a reminder to complete your day's work). These announcements will be posted each weekday by 9:00 AM.

For emails, if you email me directly at my TAMIU email (kyle.breen@tamiu.edu) I will do my best to get back in touch with you within a couple of hours (as long as it is during business hours (8-5). Outside of those times, there may be a delay, but no longer than 24 hours. If you utilize the Blackboard message function, I will also do my best to get back in touch with you within a couple of hours, though it may be a bit more delayed compared to direct email. Therefore, for immediate emergencies or help needs, please directly email me to ensure I get back to you as soon as possible.

Assignments and Assessments

Feedback on assignments will be provided weekly. Therefore, if students turn in 2 modules in a single week, they can expect feedback on both of the modules within 24-48 hours of their submission. For the final exam, feedback will be available by the July 3, the day following the last class day.

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

Accommodations/Accessibility Policy

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodation for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodation. For more information, contact the online at **Office of Disability Services for Students (DSS)**, via phone at 956.326.3086 or by visiting the staff at the Student Center, room 118. A link to the Disabilities Services for Students site has also been included under the "Resources" tab inside the course.

Student Support Resources

The University wishes to have all students succeed in their courses. To provide support to our students, an array of services in the areas of technology support, academic support, student support, and accessibility support may be found at the University. For more information, visit the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services page on **University Resources and Support Services**.

Computer/Technology Requirements

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Online students will need regular access to a personal computer that runs on a broadband Internet connection.

It is recommended that you meet the technical requirements listed on the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage (<https://www.tamiu.edu/distance/students/technology-requirements.shtml>) when using the learning management system (LMS) of the University.

Additional Hardware. For this class, you will need the following additional hardware: **web camera for the final exam proctoring/lockdown browser**. 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: **Lockdown Browser/Proctoring**. TAMIU Students may access online versions of this software through their Dusty Office 365 account at <https://dusty.tamiu.edu/>. This site also provides students access to download the Microsoft suite for educational use. **See instructions for downloading the Microsoft Office suite.**

Note: Students, if you do not own the required hardware or software or do not have access to the Internet, it will be highly challenging for you to make any progress in this class. However, my goal is to assist you in finding solutions and guide you appropriately most of the required materials can either



be found free of charge at TAMIU's library, classrooms, and available computer labs. **Visit Media Services' web page on the availability of on-campus computer labs.** In addition, you may also purchase any of these items at any electronic store.

Learning Management System (Blackboard)

Students are provided with an orientation (*eLearning (Blackboard) Student Orientation*) and access to guides on how to use the Blackboard LMS. Guides may be available at **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' Student eLearning Tutorial Videos page** or by contacting the eLearning team at elarning@tamiu.edu.

Minimum Technical Skills Expected

When participating in distance education courses, it is vital to consider the technology involved in order to have a successful course. Students in distance education should have knowledge of basic computer and Internet skills, as mentioned on the **Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services' webpage**.

Technical Support Services

Because of the nature of distance education courses, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) computing and information services are vital to the success of online students. This webpage covers contact information for Distance Education Services (Blackboard Support), the OIT Help Desk, and E-mail support: **Technical Support Services**.

Rubrics (may be included here and in the Syllabus and Overview in the course)

Reading responses/discussion boards will be graded using a rubric, which can be found in each reading response/discussion assignment. This rubric will identify how each student is graded on each reading response/discussion board.

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

[Instructor's policy on assignments held within the Turnitin system.]

Proctoring

Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor Requirement

This course requires 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.

Watch this short video (<http://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml>) to get a basic understanding of what LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor (the webcam feature) are. A student Quick Start Guide (PDF) (<https://web.respondus.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/RLDB-Quick-Start-Guide-BbUltra-Student.pdf>) is also available.

Download Instructions

Visit TAMIU's Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor web page (<https://www.tamiu.edu/distance/technology/respondus-ldb-and-monitor.shtml>). Scroll down to the section titled 'Installing the Respondus LockDown Browser on Your Device.' Click the appropriate link to download the software needed.

To Access Your Test

1. First, be sure the Respondus LockDown Browser software is fully installed on your computer.
2. Open a regular web browser (Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, MS Edge, Safari)
3. Log into Blackboard Learn.
4. Navigate to the course and test.
5. Start your attempt.
6. This will launch the Respondus LockDown Browser software.
7. Complete the Respondus Monitor wizard and begin your test.

Note: You won't be able to access tests with a standard web browser. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the test requires the use of LockDown Browser. Start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

Guidelines

When taking an online exam that requires LockDown Browser and a webcam, remember the following guidelines:



- Ensure you're in a location where you won't be interrupted.
- Turn off all other devices (e.g., tablets, phones, and second computers) and place them outside of your reach.
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it.
- Clear your desk or workspace of all external materials not permitted - books, papers, other devices.
- Remain at your computer for the duration of the test.
- If the computer, Wi-Fi, or location is different than what was used previously with the "Webcam Check" and "System & Network Check" in LockDown Browser, rerun the checks before the exam.
- To produce a good webcam video, do the following:
 - Avoid wearing baseball caps or hats with brims.
 - Ensure your computer or device is on a firm surface (a desk or table). Do NOT have the computer on your lap, a bed, or another surface where the device (or you) is likely to move.
 - If using a built-in webcam, avoid readjusting the tilt of the screen after the webcam setup is complete.
 - Take the exam in a well-lit room but avoid backlighting (such as sitting with your back to a window).
- Remember that LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted.

Getting Help

Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser.

- The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues.
- If you have problems downloading, installing, or taking a test with Respondus LockDown Browser, email the TAMIU eLearning Team at elearning@tamiu.edu.

Webcam Checkout for Personal Computer

If students cannot use a personal or borrowed computer with a webcam, they may stop by the Instructional Technology and Distance Education Services office to check out webcams (with built-in microphones). The office is located at **Dr. Billy F. Cowart Hall, Room 208, and is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Check-out for a webcam is available** on a first-come, first-served basis. Speak with an eLearning staff member to check out a camera. Students will sign an Equipment Loaner Agreement, making them responsible for the care of the camera. Webcams checked out must be returned within five business days of the checkout date.

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**.

In this class, we will utilize: Lockdown Browser and Respondus Monitor