

SPECIAL TOPICS: SEMINAR ON NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

CRIJ 4340-101/PSCI 4321-101

FALL 2019



Instructor:	Jared R. Dmello, Ph.D.	Time:	MWF 3:00-4:00 PM
Email:	jared.dmello@tamiu.edu	Place:	Cowart 101 & 113
Office Phone:	956-326-2623	Office:	AIC 347

Course Meetings: Mondays/Wednesdays in Cowart Hall Rm. 101, Fridays in Cowart 113. Because we will use computers for our simulation this semester, on Fridays we will meet in the computer lab.

Course Description:

- For close to 70 years the United States has been the central node in the global security order, a truly unique role for such a young state that had previously eschewed a standing peacetime security structure. In 1940, U.S. War Department spending amounted to less than 2% of the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). By comparison, in the 2012 fiscal year, total security-related spending accounted for approximately 5.1% of the nation's GDP. With the passage of the National Security Act of 1947, the modern security apparatus was codified. Although this institutional legacy remains, the definition and provision of security in the republic has fluctuated with the demise of longstanding threats and the rise of new ones.
- This course examines how the nation defines and protects its interests in the face of symmetric and asymmetric threats. Given this comprehensive scope, the issues addressed include the underpinnings of strategic theory, domestic institutional processes, international relations and alliance structures, nuclear strategy and employment doctrine, the proliferation of CRBN (chemical, radiological, biological, and nuclear) weapons, national intelligence issues, and the persistence of violent non-state actors. The course also provides an overview of alternative concerns for security, such as geography, climate, and access to resources.

Office Hours: Academic Innovation Center, Room 347; Mondays/Wednesdays 12:30-2:30PM or by appointment. If you are unable to attend my scheduled hours, please feel free to send me a Course Message, and we can find a time that works for both of us.

Required Materials:

- Sarkesian, S., Williams, J., & Cimbala, S. (2013). *U.S. National Security: Policymakers, Processes, & Politics* (5th Edition). Boulder, CO: Lynn Rienner. ISBN: 9781588268563.
- Baylis, J., Wirtz, J., & Gray, C. (2019). *Strategy in the Contemporary World* (6th Edition). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198807100.

- We will also be using a software program that implements a simulation of international security. The semester subscription fee is \$30. You will need to sign up and pay at <http://www.statecraftsim.com/> before the first week of using the simulation (9/13). To sign up click “create account”, create student account, and then type in the simulation code “DmelloSpring2019” along with your username and password. From here you will take your foreign policy attitude test and be provided with payment options.
- Additional required readings will be made available throughout the semester on **Blackboard** at no cost to the student. In addition to required readings on Blackboard, the instructor will post supplemental reading for students to review for further exploration of the topics which interest them.

Objectives: National security has become a ‘hot-button’ topic. Every day, we are presented with information, statistics, and talking points related to various aspects of security. This course will enable students to become competent consumers of this information, capable of locating, understanding, and evaluating studies relevant to professional needs and to critically assess information they receive to determine its validity. Specifically, by the conclusion of the semester, students will be able to:

- evaluate the institutions of politics related to security
- assess the applicability of various theories to contemporary security studies
- evaluate the decision-making process for enacting national security policy
- analyze historical events to critically assess implications for security

Disclaimer: As the Instructor, I reserve the right to amend any of the material appearing in this syllabus throughout the semester as necessary. Students will be notified in class and on Blackboard of such changes.

COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Contacting the Instructor: I can be most easily reached via my the course message feature on Blackboard, and I will hold weekly office hours (see above). I *strongly* encourage students to attend my office hours. If you plan to attend my office hours, I recommend you make an appointment, so that I can better prepare for the meeting; however, you are more than welcome to stop by at any time. **Please do not wait until the end of the semester to contact me about any issues!** If you are unable to make it to my office hours, please contact me so we can set up an alternative time that is beneficial to us both; I can be pretty flexible for meetings with advanced notice.

Messages should be written using a professional tone, beginning with a salutation of some form (e.g., Dr. or Professor Dmello...) and should conclude with your name, so that I can easily identify who the message is coming from. I will answer most of your message within 24 hours, if not sooner (may have longer response times on weekends). **If I have not responded to your message after 24 hours, please feel free to message me again.**

Respectful Interaction: In the classroom environment, there are no bad people but maybe some questionable ideas here and there. In the course of the semester, we should be able to disagree and debate important issues without resorting to ridicule, insults, or harassment – this goes for students’ interactions with each other as well as my interactions with you. As this is a class on national security studies, we may delve into some sensitive issues so please be polite and constructive.

Attendance Policy: Attendance in the course is factored into your grade, so if you would like to get the highest grade possible, attendance is essentially mandatory (see attendance policy below). Attendance may

be excused in a very limited number of circumstances, as governed by the policies of the College of Arts & Sciences. **Please give me advanced notice with any issues that may arise.** I will do my best to accommodate any problems, and if you let me know about an issue as it is happening or before it happens, there is much more that I can do to help you. If you tell me afterwards (e.g., if you miss a large portion of the class without letting me know), there is little I can do to help.

Writing Expectations: This course will require you to write multiple assignments. I expect your writing to be reflective of a 4000-level course. This means that your writing should be polished, with proper spelling, grammar, and citations when necessary. This will be factored into your grade for each of the writing assignments. TAMIU's Writing Center (Cowart Hall, 2013) offers free writing support to all writers in the TAMIU community. Tutors are available to work one-on-one with you on any stage of a writing assignment, for any writing project. If you need help brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, or editing, visit The Writing Center to work with a tutor. Visit <https://www.tamtu.edu/uc/writingcenter/FAQS.shtml> for more information. In addition, I will be happy to sit with you and review your writing; please stop by my office if you wish to avail of this opportunity.

Technology Use: Technology can be useful in enhancing educational outcomes. We *may* use certain applications to integrate technology use into our classroom, such as using devices to answer anonymous polls. These opportunities can help ensure all class participants are understanding key concepts. That being said, **if your technology use becomes disruptive and/or noticeably unrelated to the class session, I reserve the right to mark you as absent for the class.**

Academic Integrity: Each student's work should be his or her own. Instances of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will be met with penalties in accordance with TAMIU's Academic Honesty guidelines. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Self-plagiarism is still considered cheating! Additionally, students may not use pre-made papers or assignments from the Internet or any other source to submit as their own work. **I will be checking all of your written assignments using TurnItIn software, which will compare your papers to Internet sources and the TAMIU database of papers submitted by other professors. Save your money and submit your own writing!**

It is expected that citations will be offered where citations are needed. If you are unclear on proper citation practices, please consult me. We will also discuss proper citation throughout the course. **Students who violate these rules may receive a penalty grade, including, but not limited to, a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.** Contact me if you have any questions or if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your work. For more information on plagiarism, please refer to the College of Arts & Sciences policies listed at the end of this syllabus.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you are a student who qualifies as having a disability as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 § 504, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or the Rehabilitation Act of 1998 § 508, please let me know as early in the semester as possible. Please visit the website for Student Disability Services (below) to obtain the appropriate documentation so that I can best accommodate your learning in this course. See also: <https://www.tamtu.edu/disability/>.

Student Services: The University has many great resources if you are struggling with anything academically or emotionally during the semester. Counseling Services at Texas A&M International University provide mental health counseling, consultation, and referrals to help students achieve personal and academic success. They also assist students in better understanding and coping with their feelings, relationships, and choices surrounding their academic success. Please see <https://www.tamtu.edu/counseling/>.

Feel free to reach out to the Instructor for information on any student support services you may need!

Missed Work: All assignments are due by the specified date and time. Students should plan to have work submitted before the deadline. In the event you miss a deadline due to an emergency, please contact me with documentation within one week of returning to class, so we can identify how to make-up the missed assignment. The instructor reserves the right to modify assignments as needed for make-up work.

Late Assignments: Because assignments in this class primarily contribute to group-based learning (i.e. the simulation), no assignments will be accepted after the posted deadlines. Submitting assignments on time will ensure group-level decisions are being made for the simulation in a timely manner. The only exceptions to this rule are those listed in the College of Arts & Sciences Policies located at the end of this syllabus.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Exams (40%): There will be two exams given during the semester. The midterm exam is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 9, 2019**, and will be worth 20% of the final course grade. It will be administered in person, and students will have the full course period for the midterm examination. No notes or reference material may be used on the exam.

The final examination is cumulative, though it will focus primarily on materials covered after the midterm exam; the final will be worth 20% of the overall course grade. The final exam will be administered in person on **Monday, December 9, 2019, 3-6PM**.

Each exam will consist of multiple choice and open-response questions, and focus on the application of materials from class. My goal for you here is not memorization but understanding and application of concepts.

Semester Paper (30%): Winston Churchill once said that, “history is written by the victors.” Many scholars have devoted their careers to the opposite. Oftentimes, you will hear or study about how major powers promote or defend their security. However, as we will cover this semester, history provides countless narratives where a minority was suppressed by a majority. For your semester paper, select any country on the planet, either modern day or historical, and analyze the negative consequences moves taken by one nation or people to promote its security has on another entity. For example, the United States overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy, which resulted in long-term negative consequences for the Hawaiian people. Papers should be between 10-12 pages in length, not including title page or references, and conform to the APA Manual of Style. A rubric for grading and additional guidance on the assignment will be made available via Blackboard early in the semester. I encourage you to choose a country and/or topic that you are interested in – if you need assistance in brainstorming potential topics, please feel free to come to my office hours!

In lieu of class on Wednesday, November 13th, you will have that time period to work on the draft of your paper. This would be a great opportunity to go to the library or to schedule help with the writing center. The draft of your paper is due on **November 13th at 11:59PM**. I will go through all drafts and provide detailed comments to help you refine your paper. The final papers will be due on **December 2nd at 11:59PM**, the last day of class.

Simulation (20%): This semester, we will be using the Statecraft platform to conduct a simulation of international security. Statecraft is a great platform, because it always your teams to have complete control of your country’s governance and relations with other teams (states). You will be graded in two categories for the simulation: 1) submission of simulation memos for each turn (weekly) [15% overall grade] and 2) team participation [5% overall grade].

You must post a simulation memo on Statecraft BEFORE each simulation turn ends. These memos must be 300 words in length and the simulation will count them for you. In a sense, these memos will become your ongoing ‘journal’ for the simulation experience. They are intended to help insure that students are actively participating in, and thinking about, the simulation each week. Late memos and memos shorter than the

required length will not be counted. If you complete all memos satisfactorily, you will receive all 40 points. More details will be provided in class when we begin the simulation. Memos will be graded based on details provided – the goal is to demonstrate *how* you and your team arrived at the decisions made during the game.

For team participation, please come to class days dedicated to the simulation. These are opportunities for you to work with your team on policy issues facing your nation, to conduct international relations with other teams, and to ask me for assistance on various issues related to the simulation. For this section of your grade, please come to class *and* participate in team discussions and planning for country governance. Your grade in this category will be a combination of my observations throughout the semester and team peer-reviews submitted via Blackboard toward the end of semester, where each student will have the opportunity to rate each member of their team.

Extra Credit Opportunity: Statecraft provides teams full decision-making over their countries, ranging from the purchasing of hospitals to declaration of war. While balancing between physical, resource, and national security can be challenging, it is important to remember that the role of a government should be that of a shepherd of its constituents. The extent to which the people in your country are benefiting from your reign in the simulation is measured by Statecraft as a “Quality of Life Index.” As an incentive to maximize the self-interests of your nation and its people, teams who achieve a certain threshold on the QOL Index will be rewarded with extra credit:

QOL Index	Extra Credit
700 or above	3% added to overall grade
400-699	2% added to overall grade
200-399	1% added to overall grade
Less than 200	0% added to overall grade

While this may seem like a small amount, remember that this could be the slight difference between an ‘A’ or a ‘B’.

Class Attendance and Participation (10%): Attending and participating in class (i.e., answering questions and asking questions) is an easy way to boost your grade. This portion of your grade will be split between attendance and participation. Thus, it is not enough to just come to class; you need to actively participate as well. Students will be allowed one unexcused absence over the course of the semester without affecting the grade in this category.

Grading Policy: Midterm Exam (20%), Final Exam (20%), Semester Paper (30%), Simulation (20%), Attendance and Participation (10%).

Letter Grade	Percentage (%)	Letter Grade	Percentage (%)
A	90.0-100	D	60.0-69.9
B	80.0-89.9	F	< 60.0
C	70.0-79.9	FN	Not Attending

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Topic	Items Due
W 8-28	Review Course Expectations & Deadlines	Recommended: Sarkesian, Chs. 2 & 5
F 8-30	What is national security and what constitutes a national security threat?	Baylis, Chs. 1 & 2; Sarkesian Ch. 3
M 9-2	National Security & International Relations	Baylis, Ch. 4
W 9-4	The U.S. Intelligence Community	Sarkesian, Ch. 9
F 9-6	Executive Institutions of National Security Policy	Sarkesian, Chs. 6 & 7
M 9-9	Legislative Interactions in National Security Policy	Sarkesian, Chs. 5 & 11
W 9-11	The Pentagon and Combined Arms	Sarkesian, Ch. 8
F 9-13	Simulation	Sarkesian, Chs. 10 & 12; Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 9-16	Geographic Implications: Border Politics	Sarkesian, Ch. 14
W 9-18	Food and Water Security	
F 9-20	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 9-23	Primer on Nuclear Weapons Employment	Sarkesian Ch. 4
W 9-25	Is Nuclear Deterrence Deterministic or Dead?	
F 9-27	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 9-30	The “Poor Man’s Nukes”	Pichtel book chapter - uploaded to BB
W 10-2	The “Democratization of Mass Destruction”	Baylis Ch. 13
F 10-4	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM

M 10-7	Old maps & New Terrain: The Second Nuclear Age	Baylis Ch. 12
W 10-9	New Battle Spaces	Baylis Chs. 17 & 21
F 10-11	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 10-14	MIDTERM EXAMINATION	
W 10-16	The Future? Revolution in Military Affairs	Baylis Chs. 3 & 8
F 10-18	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 10-21	Forecasting Security Threats	Sarkesian, Ch. 14
W 10-23	Alternative Types of Security	
F 10-25	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 10-28	Small Wars & Humanitarian Operations	Baylis Ch. 11 & 16
W 10-30	Why Does Early Warning Fail?	Baylis, Ch. 9
F 11-1	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 11-4	Beyond Nations	
W 11-6	Collective Action: The Case of Hawai'i	
F 11-8	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 11-11	From Theory to Practice: Grounding the Study of National Security	Sarkesian, Ch. 15
W 11-13	Open Day for Library Research	Draft Paper due, 11:59PM
F 11-15	Simulation	Simulation Journal Due, 6:00PM
M 11-18	Climate Security	
W 11-20	A Primer on Terrorism	(Dmello & Perliger, 2019) - uploaded to Blackboard
F 11-22	Simulation Debriefing Day	

M 11-25	The Tale of Two Terror Groups: Al-Qaida and ISIS	Forest chapter - uploaded to BB
W 11-27	NO CLASS: Reading Day	
F 11-29	NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Recess	
M 12-2	Class Review (Game Day!)	Final Paper due, 11:59PM
M 12-9	Final Examination: 3-6PM	
M 12-16	Grades available on UConnect for Student View	

POLICIES OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Classroom Behavior

The College of Arts and Sciences encourages classroom discussion and academic debate as an essential intellectual activity. It is essential that students learn to express and defend their beliefs, but it is also essential that they learn to listen and respond respectfully to others whose beliefs they may not share. The College will always tolerate diverse, unorthodox, and unpopular points of view, but it will not tolerate condescending or insulting remarks. When students verbally abuse or ridicule and intimidate others whose views they do not agree with, they subvert the free exchange of ideas that should characterize a university classroom. If their actions are deemed by the professor to be disruptive, they will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include being involuntarily withdrawn from the class.

Student Absences

Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments. It is the student's responsibility to communicate absences with his/her professor.

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.

The student is responsible for providing satisfactory evidence (i.e., physician note, medical release, etc.) to the faculty member within seven calendar days of his/her absence and return to class. He/she must substantiate the reason for absence. If the absence is excused, the faculty member must either provide the student 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 faculty member(s) with as much advance notice as possible. If an off-campus licensed physician provides evidence of a student's illness, the written excuse, orders or documentation must contain the date and time of the doctor's appointment, the prognosis of illness, doctor's opinion and recommendations for the individual student. In addition, the notice should outline whether or not the student is able to attend class. If a physician determines that the student is not ill, he or she will not receive an excused absence. If absence is not an excused absence, the faculty member will decide whether makeup work will be allowed. In some courses, attendance and in-class participation are ongoing requirements and an integral part of the work of the course. In other courses, occasional in-class assessments may occur, sometimes without advance notice. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to inform each class at the beginning of the semester

of the in-class participation expected and the effect that absences will have on the student's evaluation of work in the course.

Plagiarism and Cheating

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 2010, sixth edition of the *Manual of The American Psychological Association* (APA):

- 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. (pp. 15-16)

Consult the Writing 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* for guidance on proper documentation. If you still have doubts concerning proper documentation, seek advice from your instructor prior to submitting a final draft.

- **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. This option should not be available to juniors, seniors, or graduate students, who cannot reasonably claim ignorance of documentation rules as an excuse.
- **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. Under no circumstances should a student who deserves an “F” in the course be allowed to withdraw from the course with a “W.”
- **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. 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.

UConnect, TAMIU E-Mail, and Dusty Alert

Personal Announcements sent to students through TAMIU’s UConnect Portal and TAMIU E-mail 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 UConnect and their TAMIU e-mail accounts regularly, if not daily. Not having seen an important TAMIU e-mail or UConnect 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 sign-up for *Dusty Alert* (see www.tamiau.edu). *Dusty Alert* is an instant cell phone text-messaging system allowing the university to communicate immediately with you if there is an on-campus emergency, something of immediate danger to you, or a campus closing.

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 an article from a journal or a chapter from a book for your own personal academic use or, in the case of a professor, for personal, limited classroom use. In general, the extent of your copying should not suggest that the purpose or the effect of your copying is to avoid paying for the materials. And, of course, you may not sell these copies for a profit. Thus, students who copy textbooks to avoid buying them or professors who provide photocopies of textbooks to enable students to save money are violating the law.

Students with Disabilities

Texas A&M International University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified

persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal education opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with the Director of Student Counseling and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations.

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 3.24) and the Student LOA Rule (Section 3.25), which includes the "Leave of Absence Request" form. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (url: <http://www.tamiau.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook1.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. If a student would like to file a complaint for discrimination due to his or her pregnant or parenting status, please contact the TAMIU Title IX Coordinator (Lauren A. Jones, J.D., 5201 University Boulevard, KL 159B, Laredo, TX 78045, 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).

The University advises a pregnant or parenting student to notify his or her professor once he or she is aware that accommodations for such will be necessary. It is first recommended that the student and professor attempt to work out the reasonable accommodations with each other. The Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement (Mayra Hernandez, MGHernandez@tamiau.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodations. In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time from the University, the University urges the student to consider a Leave of Absence as outlined in the *Student Handbook*. 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 and the Student LOA Rule. Both rules can be found in the TAMIU Student Handbook (<http://www.tamiau.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>).

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

WIN Contracts are offered only under exceptional circumstances and are limited to 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

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 the *Faculty Handbook*.

Final Examination

Final Examination must be comprehensive and 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.