

Texas A&M International University

Chemistry 3400- 201
Environmental Chemistry
Spring 2020

Instructor: Dr. Carolyn Hutchinson
Office: LBVSC 325
Phone: (956) 326-2597
E-mail: carolyn.hutchinson@tamiu.edu
Office Hours: M 3:00-4:30pm, W 12:30-1:30pm, R 11:00am-12:30pm
Tuesday & Friday by appointment
Class Schedule: MWF 1:50-2:50pm
T 9am-12pm
Classroom: BLK 207 (lecture)
LBV 288 (lab)

Tentative Lecture Schedule

| Week | Day | Date | Chapter | Title | Assignment |
|------|----------------------------------|---|-----------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | W F | Jan 22 Jan 24 | | Introduction: A Global Perspective of Environmental Chemistry | SR #1 |
| 2 | M W F | Jan 27 Jan 29 Jan 31 | 1 | Stratospheric Chemistry | |
| 3 | M W F | Feb 3 Feb 5 Feb 7 | 2 | The Ozone Holes | Current Issues |
| 4 | M W F | Feb 10 Feb 12 Feb 14 | 3 | The Chemistry of Ground-Level Air Pollution | Annotated Bibliography |
| 5 | M W F | Feb 17 Feb 19 Feb 21 | 4 | Consequences of Air Pollution | Exam #1 |
| 6 | M W F | Feb 24 Feb 26 Feb 28 | 10 | The Chemistry of Natural Waters | Project Proposal |
| 7 | M W F | Mar 2 Mar 4 Mar 6 | 11 | The Pollution and Purification of Water | Methods |
| 8 | M W F | Mar 9 Mar 11 Mar 13 | 12 | Toxic Heavy Metals | Exam #2 SR #2 |
| 9 | M W F | Mar 16 Mar 18 Mar 20 | | SPRING BREAK (WOO!) | |
| 10 | M W F | Mar 23 Mar 25 Mar 27 | 13 | Toxic Organic Compounds: Pesticides | Intro & Refs |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---|--|
| 11 | M W F | Mar 30 Apr 1 Apr 3 | 14, 15 | Toxic Organic Compounds: Dioxins, Furans, PCBs, and PAHs | Exam #3 |
| 12 | M W F | Apr 6 Apr 8 Apr 10 | 16 | Wastes, Soils and Sediments Easter Holiday, no class | Results & Discussion |
| 13 | M W F | Apr 13 Apr 15 Apr 17 | 5 | Energy and Climatic Change | |
| 14 | M W | Apr 20 Apr 22 Apr 24 | 6 | Energy use, Fossil Fuels, CO ₂ Emissions and Global Climate Change | |
| 15 | M | Apr 27 | 7 | Alternative Fuels | Final Paper; lab notebook; presentation |
| | M | May 1 | | Final Exam (1:50 pm) | SR #3 |

Tentative Laboratory Schedule

| Week | Date | Subject |
|------|---------------|---|
| 1 | Jan 21 | Safety Training/Expectations/Scientific Writing |
| 2 | Jan 28 | Data Analysis using Excel |
| 3 | Feb 4 | Turbidity, solids: water and soils |
| 4 | Feb 11 | pH/Alkalinity/DO |
| 5 | Feb 18 | Conductivity/Anions /Phosphates/nitrates |
| 6 | Feb 25 | Conductivity/Anions /Phosphates/nitrates |
| 7 | Mar 03 | BOD/COD and soil organic matter |
| 8 | Mar 10 | QA/QC EPA Sampling Techniques (preparation of equipment for sampling) |
| 9 | Mar 17 | Spring Break |
| 10 | Mar 24 | Outdoor sampling/ on site analysis |
| 11 | Mar 31 | Laboratory analysis of samples |
| 12 | Apr 7 | Laboratory analysis of samples |
| 13 | Apr 14 | Laboratory analysis of samples/Data interpretation |
| 14 | Apr 21 | Writing comprehensive report |
| 15 | Apr 28 | Presentation |
| | May (TBD) | Departmental symposium |

For matters not covered in this syllabus, please consult the professor, or the college catalog/student handbook. This syllabus is not intended to be all inclusive of classroom and college policies and procedures.

Course Description: This course introduces the principles and chemical processes that control chemical reactions in natural systems. Precipitation, complexation, redox, and absorption will be applied to aquatic, marine, terrestrial, and atmospheric systems. There will be outdoor soil, air, and water sampling and analysis using the appropriate sampling analysis procedures. Examples will cover wastewater treatment, pollutant fates, and assessment of environmental outcomes.

Required Textbook: Environmental Chemistry, 5th edition, by Baird and Cann, (W.H. Freeman and Co, New York, 2012)

Suggested Textbooks: The ACS Style Guide (Free PDF <https://pubs.acs.org/isbn/9780841239999>)
Applications of Microsoft Excel in Analytical Chemistry by Crouch & Holler (ISBN 9781285087955)
Writing Science in Plain English by Greene (ISBN 9780226026374)

Course Content: This is a lecture/lab course that seeks to equip students with theoretical and practical knowledge to work in an environmental engineering management company. The cradle to grave approach of environmental analysis will be utilized. Students will be taught EPA methods of sampling, analysis, quality control and quality assurance and writing scientific reporting.

Prerequisites: CHEM 1311, CHEM 1111, CHEM 2423

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The overall goal of this course is to gain an understanding of the fundamental chemical processes that are central to a range of important environmental problems and to utilize this knowledge in making critical evaluations of these problems. By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Describe the principles and chemical processes that control chemical reactions in natural systems.
2. Be equipped to prepare adequately to sample environmental sites using approved SAP's and SOP's.
3. Assess a chemical incident and determine the environmental markers to monitor.
4. Assess the viability of a chosen analytical method for a particular analysis be it quantitative or qualitative
5. Recognize potential interference in analyses in accounting for it in data analysis
6. Be familiar with current good laboratory practice-professional ethics including keeping a legally defensible notebook.
7. An understanding of the nature, reactivity, and environmental fates of toxic organic chemicals.
8. An understanding of the basic physics of the greenhouse effect, the sources and sinks of the family of greenhouse gases, and the implication for climate change.
9. An understanding of the chemistry of natural waters and of their pollution and purification
10. An understanding of the chemistry of the stratospheric ozone layer and of the important ozone depletion processes.
11. An understanding of the chemistry of important tropospheric processes, including photochemical smog and acid precipitation.
12. The ability to research an important environmental chemistry problem and prepare a formal presentation and white paper on that problem.

Keys to Success:

- 1) Attend all lectures. No make-ups of exams will be allowed except in the case of verifiable serious illness.
- 2) Plan ahead for your writing assignments. Late assignments will **NOT** be accepted
- 3) Keep up with reading and assigned problem sets.
- 4) Participate! Ask questions both in and out of class. Remember that I am a resource for you to use and that I want you to succeed in my class.
- 5) Blackboard is a class resource. Lectures, readings, lab assignments will be posted on Blackboard. We will be using TurnItIn for all of the writing assignments. Course announcements will be through Email, so make sure that you have a TAMIU Email account and that you check it regularly. It is the responsibility of every student to **VERIFY** that the instructor can open any assignment submitted electronically.

Course Grading Policy:

| Assignment | Points |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Self-reflection #1 | 20 |
| Self-reflection #2 | 20 |
| Self-reflection #3 | 20 |
| Current Environmental Issue | 20 |
| Annotated Bibliography | 25 |
| Project Proposal | 25 |
| Methods | 50 |
| Introduction & References | 50 |
| Results & Discussion | 50 |
| Final Project Paper | 150 |
| Presentation | 50 |
| Exam #1 | 40 |
| Exam #2 | 40 |
| Exam #3 | 40 |
| Final Exam | 200 |
| Homework | 50 |
| Group Work | 50 |
| Lab Notebook | 100 |

Letter grade assignment:

A 900 – 1000 points

B 800 – 899 points

C 700 – 799 points

D 600 – 699 points

F 0 – 600 points

To be graded on the grading scale defined above, you must pass the final exam (> 130 points). Failing to meet this requirement will result in a student not to be graded by the grading scale described in the previous section. Grades in these cases are determined on an individual basis and are at the instructor's discretion. Thus, failing the final, skipping an excessive number of homework assignments or class assignments may result in a grade lower than the number of points you have accumulated would otherwise indicate.

If you feel that an error was made in the grading of homework or exams, you may request a re-grade by notifying the instructor within one week of receiving it.

Late Work Policy

Late work will receive a penalty of 25% per day, and will not be accepted after 4 days. This DOES include weekends for anything submitted via Blackboard.

Contacting Your Instructor

The best way to reach your instructor outside of office hours is via the email on the top of this syllabus. You can expect a response within 24 hours. Outside of emergencies, emails will only be answered between 7am and 9pm M-F. Emails sent through Blackboard may take up to 1 week to respond. Students are strongly encouraged to attend office hours if they have any questions.

Problem Sets

Weekly Problem Sets (Due every Monday): These assignments will be a series of short answer questions reviewing the topics from lecture that week and also current environmental issues. These are intended to be done in groups and count toward the Group Work grade.

Writing Assignments:

All writing assignments should be 12-point font and double-spaced with one inch margins. The font should be a standard serif or sans serif font (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, Tahoma) and the same throughout the paper. If you have questions regarding fonts, please contact the professor. Papers are due by 11:59pm on the date listed through TurnItIn on Blackboard.

1. Self-reflections (Due 01/24/20, 03/13/20, 05/01/20): Scientists often have to write documents that explain and reflect on topics that are decidedly unscientific—our philosophy on teaching, a personal statement, an account of a meaningful experience. These documents often create a lot of unease and discomfort because we have moved away from the usual scientific communication that is full of concrete, “real” ideas and results. However, this type of writing is crucial for scientific success. As such, we will be writing self-reflections at three times during the semester. The requirements will be the same for each assignment. This assignment should be short (1-2 pages; no more than 750 words).

2. A current Environmental Chemistry Issue (Due 02/07/20): As scientists, we are often in the position of explaining our research/or current environmental issues to people unfamiliar with the complex scientific concepts or vocabulary. This assignment will be a 3 page summary of a current environmental chemistry issue (research, policy, etc.). Write this paper as if you are writing to a freshman student at TAMU.

3. Annotated Bibliography (Due 02/14/20): An annotated bibliography is a list of possible citations for a project or paper. Each citation is accompanied by a short (~100 words, no more than 150 words) description that summarizes the work, why it is relevant, and any problems with it. This provides the reader and the author with a summary and evaluation of each article. It is extremely useful to write one before beginning a research project or a paper. This must include at least five peer-reviewed references (references to websites are NOT acceptable).

4. Project Proposal (Due 02/28/20): Scientists spend a lot of time writing proposals. These are parts of finding jobs, applying for grants, applying for awards, and other “behind-the-scenes” parts of research. A research proposal of composed of the following sections:

1. Introduction

A short introduction to the research and its potential impact. This is where you sell your idea.

2. Research Question(s) and Working Hypothesis

What, specifically, do you want to investigate? What do you expect to discover? Be sure this fits in the scope of the class (e.g., don’t propose to discover cold fusion ☺).

3. Research Strategy

Where are you going to get samples? What methods do you plan to use? How long do you expect things to take?

4. Sources Cited

List the peer-reviewed publications you used and cited to in this proposal.

5. Introduction and References Sections for an Environmental Chemistry Project (Due 03/27/20):

The “introduction” section of a scientific paper should include the background information to justify your experiment and enough explanation of what is already known about the topic to ensure that the reader can correctly interpret your results. Length is 2-4 pages. Introduction to the Environmental Chemistry Project,

which must include a clearly state objective and hypothesis. Students must incorporate a minimum of three peer-reviewed references in the Introduction (references to websites are NOT acceptable). Citations and references will follow the format for an ACS Environmental Chemistry Journal: http://pubs.acs.org/paragonplus/submission/esthag/esthag_authguide.pdf

The reference section does not count toward the page limit.

6. Results and Discussion Section for an Environmental Chemistry Project (Due 04/10/20): The “results and discussion” section summarizes the results of an experiment and discusses them in the context of the objective from the introduction. This section can either be written as two separate sections (“Results” and “Discussion”) or as a single section. This section should include at least 3 figures or tables to summarize the experimental results. Length is 3-4 pages not including figures. Students must incorporate a minimum of three peer-reviewed references in the Results and Discussion (references to websites are NOT acceptable).

Citations and references will follow the format for an ACS Environmental Chemistry Journal: http://pubs.acs.org/paragonplus/submission/esthag/esthag_authguide.pdf

The reference section does not count toward the page limit.

7. Final Research Paper for the Environmental Chemistry Project (Due 04/29/20): This assignment will be the final report on the Environmental Chemistry Project performed in lab, which will take the form of a scientific paper. There is no page limit, however professional scientific papers are expected to be informative, direct and concise. The report must have an Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion section. Sections that have been part of previous writing assignments (Introduction, Methods, Results) must be expanded to include updated information (procedures and findings) and must incorporate the instructor’s feedback from the previous drafts. Students must incorporate a minimum of seven peer-reviewed references in your Introduction and Results/Discussion sections (references to websites are NOT acceptable).

Citations and references will follow the ACS style format (http://pubs.acs.org/paragonplus/submission/esthag/esthag_authguide.pdf)

8. Laboratory Notebook (Due 04/29/20): You must purchase a bound, laboratory notebook for use in this Course. This notebook will be checked at the beginning of each laboratory session and collected for a final grade at the end of the course. Your lab notebook should contain:

- 1) Numbered pages with a complete and well-organized Table of Contents.
- 2) Dated entries for each project/laboratory exercise, which will include the general procedures used, pictures of gels (or other representations of data), explanations of troubleshooting and all collected data organized into appropriate tables. Remember: When data is being shared between individuals within a group, then that data MUST BE copied into every member’s notebook.
- 3) Flow chart of procedures, including warnings when using hazardous materials, which must be completed PRIOR to each laboratory session.

Policies of the College of Arts and Sciences

(Required on all COAS Syllabi / Last Revised: December 13, 2019)

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.tamtu.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 as 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](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/parenting status, please contact 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: www.tamiau.edu/reportit.

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 Equal Opportunity and Diversity (Lorissa M. Cortez, lorissam.cortez@tamiu.edu) can assist the student and professor in working out the reasonable accommodations. For other questions or concerns regarding Title IX compliance related to pregnant/parenting students at the University, contact the Title IX Coordinator. In the event that a student will need a leave of absence for a substantial period of time, TAMIU University 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 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 (<https://www.tamiu.edu/scce/studenthandbook.shtml>).

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, sexual orientation or gender identity in admissions, 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, at 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

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

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 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.