

**UNIV 1301: First-Year Seminar (FYS)  
Course Syllabus**



**A&M-San Antonio email:**  
jdeleon@tamusa.edu  
**Meetings though Face-toFace upon  
request, TEAMS, or Zoom**



**Instructor's Name:**  
Jennifer De Leon, M.Ed. in Special Education

**Meeting Times:**  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30 – 1:45  
**Room:** Hall 303

**Peer Leader:**  
Ingrid Moncivaez  
imoncivaez@tamusa.edu

- ✚ I am always happy to assist students, so please do not hesitate to send an email to set up a convenient and agreed-upon appointment time for a phone call, virtual session, or face-to-face meeting. Generally, I will respond to emails within 24 hours of receiving them.

## Program Policies

### ✚ **Course Description (from the A&M-SA Course Catalog):**

This course is designed to assist first-year students in adjusting to university expectations through enhancing quantitative reasoning skills and acquiring essential skills for academic success.

### ✚ **Course Overview:**

This course is designed to assist first-year students in adjusting to university expectations, acquiring essential academic success skills, and exploring different career paths. The course focuses on accessing university resources, and developing self-awareness, agency, and personal responsibility. Students will also become active members of the campus community.

### ✚ **Text (provided by A&M-SA):**

*My First Vote* by the Brennan Center for Justice:

<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/my-first-vote>

### ✚ **Course Promises:**

This course makes a set of promises to you (assuming you fulfill the expectations below). By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Exhibit growth in self-awareness, agency, and personal responsibility.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills in quantitative reasoning.
- Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to courses and learning experiences.
- Identify and apply strategies to effectively manage time and priorities.
- Identify relevant academic policies, processes, and resources relevant to your academic success.
- Develop goal-setting strategies to enhance academic and career readiness.

## Course Expectations


### ✚ **Attend classes!** This course will rely largely on class content and discussion.

- For this format to succeed:
  - Be present and on time.
    - You will receive points for attendance.
    - Many in and out of class assignments will be contingent on information from class.
- To earn full participation points:
  - Attend class.
  - Actively participate.

✚ You may miss up to 4 classes without penalty (see next bullet), however, this can affect your participation grade (see above).

- The 4 absences may include quarantine and/or isolation for COVID-19. If you need to miss more than 4 days due to extracurricular activities, communication **must be provided** by your organization's coach or advisor/sponsor.
- **Five absences** may result in you being dropped from the course.
- Arriving more than 15 minutes late or leaving more than 10 minutes early before class is dismissed, will be counted as an absence, even if you attended a portion of our class.

Please communicate with the instructor in extreme circumstances.

 **To be attentive and participate in class.** Active participation during class, both verbally and nonverbally, is a must. Some examples of this are:

- Speaking
- Listening
- Following directions
- Asking questions
- Sharing with others
- Reading
- Writing
- Individual reflections
- Presenting
- Collaboration

I encourage you to contribute thoughtful comments and questions, as well as to listen carefully to your peers' contributions and respectfully respond to others' comments. The success of our mutual learning from each other depends upon preparation and active participation in all aspects of the course.

 **To complete required assignments in a timely manner.**

- Assignments provide you with both informal and formal opportunities to articulate your responses to the issues and topics we will discuss.
- You will get the most out of the course if you:
  - Turn in your work on time!
  - It is vital that you follow basic grammar rules in order to get full credit for assignments.
  - No matter how short or long the response, make sure you check for grammar and standards of academic writing.
  - All responses reflect who you are and are intended to prepare you for academic and professional writing.

 **Late Work Policy:**

- Apart from the final project, you can request an extension on all assignments. I will give extensions based on individual needs at the time of request. Assignments are closed on Blackboard after the due date and will need to be reopened for any late work. This will only happen upon a request made by you, the student.

## **Assignments and Evaluations**

- To be successful in this course you are expected to complete all assignments on time.
- Assignments must be submitted to the correct location to be considered on time.
- Assignments will be graded based on quantity and quality with rubrics for each assignment provided on Blackboard.

## **Grade Breakdown**

### **Assignments: 200 points = 20%**

- Clifton Strengths Reflection: **20 points**
- Motivation & Growth Mindset: **20 points**
- GPA Reflection: **20 points**
- Focus 2 Completion + Reflection: **20 points**
- Academic Investment Reflection: **20 points**
- Living Wage Analysis: **20 points**
- Resume Draft: **20 points**
- Three assignments to be announced: **(20 points each = 60 points)**
  - These assignments will be discussed with you and noted when they are available.

### **Projects: 600 points = 60%**

- My Story Digication Page and Presentation: **50 points**
- Time Management project: **100 points**
- Financial literacy project: **100 points**
- Passport to Success: **150 points**
- Career Awareness and Development Project: **200 points**

### **Participation: 200 points = 20%**

- Attendance and In-Class Engagement: **100 points**
- Peer Leader Meeting and Summary: **50 points**
- Faculty contact meeting: **50 points**

**Total points = 1000**

### **Extra Credit Opportunities**

Throughout the semester, there will be many ways to earn extra credit. The instructor will go over these and provide details and due dates.

## Grading Policies

- ✚ Evaluations will be made with numbers. Final course grades of “A” through “F” will be awarded based on the TAMUSA grading Policy (see below):

Letter Grade	Range	Grade Points
A	900-1000 points	4.0
B	800-899 points	3.0
C	700-799 points	2.0
D	600-699 points	1.0
F	599 & below	0.0

## Calendar of Activities

- ✚ The complete academic calendar is available online:

[Texas A&M University-San Antonio Academic Calendar](#)

August 28 <sup>th</sup>	Class begins
September 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Labor Day Holiday
September 11 <sup>th</sup>	Census Date
November 11 <sup>th</sup>	Last day to drop with an automatic "W."
November 19 <sup>th</sup>	Last day to withdraw from the University
November 27 <sup>th</sup>	Study Day – No classes
November 28 <sup>th</sup> -30 <sup>th</sup>	Thanksgiving Holiday – University closed
December 5 <sup>th</sup>	Last day of classes
December 6 <sup>th</sup>	Study Day – No classes
December 7 <sup>th</sup> 13 <sup>th</sup>	Final Exams

## Important Policies and Resources

- ✚ **Technical Support**
  - ✓ Students needing assistance accessing student emails, Blackboard, resetting password, or any other technology issues may contact Campus IT helpdesk:
  - ✓ **ITS location:** Central Academic Building (CAB) Room 233
  - ✓ **Hours/Days of Operation:** Monday -Thursday 7:30 am -8pm; Fridays at 8am - 5pm
  - ✓ **ITS Helpdesk phone:** 210-784-4357
  - ✓ <https://www.tamusa.edu/information-technology-services/index.html>

### **Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:**

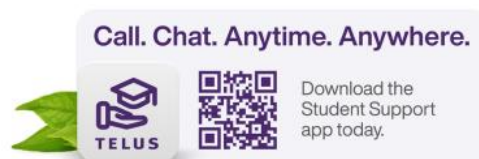
Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us <https://www.tamusa.edu/Disability-Support-Services/index.html> or email us at [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto:dss@tamusa.edu). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

### **Academic Learning Center:**

The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the Tools section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu), calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

### **Counseling/Mental Health Resources:**

- As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120.
- All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information on SCC services visit [tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://tamusa.edu/studentcounseling).
- *Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2').*
- Additionally, the TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including support for in the moment distress, an anonymous peer to peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.



#### ✚ **Emergency Preparedness:**

- **JagE Alert** is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.
- More information about **Emergency Operations Plan** and the **Emergency Action Plan** can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/emergency-management/>
- Download the **SafeZone App** (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

#### ✚ **Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance:**

- According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance.
- If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance.
- Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class.
- Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE.
- Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

#### ✚ **Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center:**

- The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff.
- Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments.
- Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment.
- Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects.
- Students can schedule appointments through **JagWire** under the **Student Services tab**. Click on "Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center" to make your appointment.
- The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments.
- More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/>

#### **Meeting Basic Needs:**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a **CARE referral** (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities/file-a-report.html>) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources.

#### **Military Affairs:**

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots' Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at [military.va@tamusa.edu](mailto:military.va@tamusa.edu) or (210)784-1397.

#### **Religious Observances:**

Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

#### **The Six-Drop Rule:**

Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

#### **Respect for Diversity:**

- We understand that our students represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives. When we are equity-minded, we are aware of differences and inequalities and are willing to discuss them so we can act to resolve them. The University is committed to building cultural competencies, or the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that enable individuals and organizations to acknowledge cultural differences and incorporate these differences in working with people from diverse cultures. Respecting and accepting people different than you is vital to your success in the class, on campus, and as a future professional in the global community.
- While working together to build this community we ask all members to:
  - Share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs.
  - Be open to the views of others.
  - Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
  - Value each other's opinions and communicate respectfully.
  - Keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature.



- Use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in this course and across the A&M-San Antonio community.

#### **Statement of Harassment and Discrimination:**

- Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.
- Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu), 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

#### **Pregnant/Parenting Students:**

- Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to
  - (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program;
  - (2) limit the student's studies;
  - (3) participate in an alternative program;

- (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or
  - (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University.
- The university will provide such reasonable accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child.
- These could include
  - maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child;
  - excused absences because of illness or medical appointments;
  - modified due dates for assignments;
  - rescheduled tests/exams;
  - taking a leave of absence; and
  - being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences,
  - **if** these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence.
- Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu); 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).
- Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

#### **Students' Rights and Responsibilities:**

The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

#### **Students' Rights**


1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment,


on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

### **Students' Responsibilities**

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

 We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

 Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions.

- Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct.
- For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the **Student Code of Conduct** (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/documents/Student-Handbook-2022-23.pdf>) or visit the resources available in the **OSRR website** (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/academic-integrity.html>).

 **No Use of Generative AI Permitted**

First-Year Seminar assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

*This syllabus was created to give students guidance on what may be covered during the semester and will be followed as closely as possible. Please note the instructor for this course reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus at any point during the semester.*