

Research Methods in Sociology (SOCI 3320.900)

Texas A&M San Antonio, Fall 2024
Mondays (5:30-6:45pm), In-person in CAB 218

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Pollock
spollock@tamusa.edu
Preferred pronouns: she/her

Office Hours: virtual, by appointment

This syllabus contains policies and expectations I have established for this course. Please read the entire syllabus carefully and refer to it regularly throughout the semester.

Course Description and Objectives

Research Methods in Sociology will provide you with the skills and tools to conduct research. Specifically, you will learn how to:

- Craft a strong research question and hypothesis;
- Do research ethically;
- Identify, conceptualize, and operationalize variables in your model;
- Complete an observational study, code your field notes, and write an integrative memo;
- Schedule and conduct an in-depth interview and report your findings;
- Locate a secondary data set and identify specific variables;
- Compile valid survey questions into a quality survey; and
- Write the literature review and methods sections of a manuscript.

You will also gain CITI certification, nationally recognized evidence that you understand the laws, policies, and ethics expected of researchers.

Pedagogical Approach & Collaboration

I am here to facilitate you getting the most out of our course and I want to see you succeed! I will prioritize supporting you compassionately as we navigate the semester while simultaneously maintaining high standards and expectations. In that light, please communicate with me regularly about any barriers you are facing and how we can work together to achieve what you want to accomplish. If you have any questions or concerns, contact me and we can set up a time to talk. Please let me know as soon as possible if you experience any problems in the course. By letting me know early, we can work out a plan to make sure you do not fall behind.

Let's build a community of learners! This class uses an **active, team-based learning approach**. Active learning shifts the dynamic of the classroom from one where I lecture and you passively learn, to one where you are expected to actively engage with the course material and focus on how it can be applied to enhance your sociological understanding of society and social issues. Team-based learning facilitates the development of skills such as collaboration, creativity,

critical thinking, and communication (these are 21st century skills that are necessary regardless of what you end up doing after college). Team-based learning enhances learning and accountability, enhances the quality of class discussion, and fosters student collaboration and integration. Students in team-based learning classes say they get a lot more out of the course and develop lasting friendships. In addition, they already have a strong support network when they start the Capstone course!

Research is never done individually. Even if only one researcher is working on a project, that researcher talks to friends and co-workers, getting their insights and inviting them to “poke holes” in their assumptions or conclusions. They ask theory experts and statisticians to double-check their work. When they come up with something they can’t figure out, they know it’s time to invite a pal out for coffee or take them to dinner to talk it through. We all work together – it’s the only way.

So, unlike many of your other classes, in this class you are encouraged to work together. I still want you to turn in your own work but listen to the ideas and critiques of your classmates. Do not rely on the ideas and critiques of friends or family. They may be brilliant, trustworthy people who you know are looking out for you, but that does not make them sociologists or methodology experts. Often what appears to be a simple explanation to people outside this field is quite complex or quite simply wrong. Trust me and trust your classmates. Ask us for feedback and listen.

To help with this process, we can set up group texts, GroupMe, discussion boards, or whatever arrangement works best for you. We will talk about this during class and come to some consensus about how to communicate.

Course Catalogue Description

The foundational concepts, assumptions, and approaches in qualitative and quantitative research; the scientific method; and research ethics. Students will apply knowledge gained in this class through application to a hands-on, semester-long research project. Required for all sociology BA and BS majors and for BAAS degrees with a sociology concentration.

- Prerequisite(s): SOCI 3310 Sociological Theory
- Corequisite(s): SOCI 3330. Credit may not be obtained in both SOCI 3320 and SOCI 4382.
- This course is a prerequisite for SOCI 4392: Sociology Capstone, SOCI 4391: Sociology Internship; and SOCI 4393 Directed Research in Sociology.
- TSI Restriction(s): Reading, and Writing

Required Materials

Required Textbook

The following required textbook is available on Blackboard:

Gray, Paul S., John B. Williamson, David A. Karp, and John R. Dalphin. 2007. *The Research Imagination: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Required Videos

Any required videos will be posted on Blackboard.

Recommended Materials

American Sociological Association. 2019. *ASA Style Guide*, 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.

Carr, Deborah, Elizabeth Heger Boyle, Benjamin Cornwell, Shelley Correll, Robert Crosnoe, Jeremy Freese, and Mary C. Waters. 2021. *The Art and Science of Social Research*. 2nd ed. New York: Norton.

Communication Plan

- I will post announcements and updates on Blackboard. Check these multiples times a week.
- Email is the best way to get in touch with me (spollock@tamusa.edu). I try to reply within 48 hours of receiving email, except on weekends and holidays.
- Please use your university email address and specify which course and section you are taking with me.
- Reach out with questions or concerns: communication is key!

Pace of Course

- This is a 3-credit course. Therefore, you should plan to dedicate at least 2.5 hours per week to class meetings and workshops and at least 4 hours per week to reading and working on assignments. You may need to set aside additional time for coursework.
- What does that mean for you? The following tips can help you be successful:
 - If possible, try to organize your schedule and other obligations so that you have dedicated blocks of time reserved to work on our coursework.
 - Use a reliable system for keeping track of course responsibilities (both suggested and required due dates) such as a planner/calendar, reminders on your phone, to do lists, etc.
 - Plan your time so that you can complete readings and assignments before the deadlines and ask questions well ahead of due dates.
 - Spread your work out over multiple days so that you aren't doing everything last minute; this strategy is helpful for managing stress and will improve the quality of your work.
 - Communicate with me immediately if you are having trouble with the pace of

the course so that we can work together to figure out a solution.

Graded Components

Components	Percent	Graded	Completion
Attendance	6		✓
Possible Topics and Research Articles Assignment	5	✓	
Research Question and Hypothesis Assignment	5	✓	
Model and Variables Assignment	3		✓
First Set of Annotations of Research Articles	5		✓
Survey Variables Assignment	3		✓
Survey Questions Assignment	5	✓	
Identifying Variables in a Secondary Data Set Assignment	5	✓	
Field Notes Assignment	3		✓
Integrative Memo Assignment	5	✓	
Interview Schedule Assignment	5		✓
Interview Transcript, Notes, and Reaction Assignment	5	✓	
Second Set of Annotations of Research Articles	5		✓
Detailed Outline of Research Proposal	12		✓
One-on-One Meeting with Dr. Sarah	3		✓
Final Version of Research Proposal	25	✓	
Total	100		

Letter Grade Calculation*

A = 100 to 90

B = 89.9 to 80

C = 79.9 to 70

D = 69.9 to 60

F = Below 60

** I do not round up grades or negotiate grades at the end of the semester.*

Submission Policy

Submit all your work on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to ensure that your work is submitted successfully before the due date. I value the skill of timely communication and prioritize flexibility in response to what life throws at us: therefore, please get in touch with me if you need an extension. I do not provide credit for late assignments unless you receive email permission from me before the due date or within 24 hours following it. If you receive written permission from me to submit late work, I may deduct 10% per day or mark your work as incomplete (partial credit). If late work becomes a pattern, extensions will no longer be

provided.

Format and Citation Style

All work must meet the standards of the ASA Style Guide, 6th edition.

Grading

As indicated in above and in the instructions for each assignment, some assignments will be graded (using a rubric) and other assignments will earn completion points. The idea behind completion points is that I want you to experience the method/process without having to worry about getting everything exactly right as you are learning. Mistakes are part of the learning process!

Completion Grades: Assignments with completion grades will get full points if the work is complete and submitted on time. All other work will receive a zero. Late work will not be accepted. I may provide feedback on your completion grade work, especially if you did an exceptionally good job or if you kind of started off on the wrong foot, but in most cases, you will not receive individual feedback. Instead, we will discuss the process as a class and I will note some mistakes that I saw frequently and discuss how those errors will affect the rest of the research project.

Graded Assignments: The instructions for graded assignments will include either a grading rubric or a list of grading criteria. If you see a grading rubric, then I am looking for very specific levels of performance on a finite list of criteria. In this case, it is your responsibility to look at the rubric and ensure that each of those criteria are met. In other cases, there are multiple, equally valid ways to approach an assignment or a severely limited list of criteria. In these cases, I will list the criteria that I will be checking for, but I will also award points for work that demonstrates mastery of class content and skills but is not included in my list of criteria. This provides a more individualized grading scheme for assignments where that is really more appropriate.

Attendance and Engagement

I know that for many of you, there's never enough time. In addition to school, you have jobs and families and other responsibilities. I know that you might have missed classes so you could meet all the demands and still passed the classes. **Warning:** This isn't one of those classes. This is an important, required class that focuses on hands-on skills development. Instead of relying on lecture, you're going to be expected to do required reading on your own time. We will use much of our class time to practice skills. There will be some lecture, but I will assume that you have a basic understanding from your reading. All of this means that you will not be able to keep up with class unless you do all the class readings by the deadlines assigned and attend all the class meetings.

To encourage this, here are some ground rules for the class:

- I am going to expect each of you to come to class on time and stay in class until it is

over. This is a face-to-face class in which interaction with your peers is crucial to the learning and collaboration process, so I do not offer virtual class attendance as an option.

- You do not have to tell me why you miss a class. I am going to trust your judgment. If you miss a class, I recommend that you get notes from at least two classmates.
- If there is a situation that might prevent you from keeping up, please let me know as quickly as possible. I am willing to consider making arrangements if your situation meets these criteria:
 - You notify me as quickly as is reasonably possible;
 - Your situation reasonably prevents you from completing work on time; and
 - The situation is unavoidable and was unforeseeable.
 - I reserve the right to require proof such as doctor's notes, funeral bulletins, etc.

Course Schedule
(subject to adjustment)

SECTION 1: GETTING STARTED

Week	Day	Month	Date	Event	Topic	Required Reading/Materials	Assignment	Due
Week 1	M	Aug	26		What Is Sociological Research? Syllabus Review	Syllabus Chapter 1: Research Process		
Week 2	M	Sept	2	No class (Labor Day)	Choosing a Topic, Research Questions, and Hypotheses	Chapter 3: Research Design Guidelines for Selecting a Research Topic Guidelines for Research Questions and Hypotheses Watch this video (available in Blackboard): "Picking a Research Topic" List of Journals in Sociology and Related Disciplines	Possible Topics and Research Articles	Sun 9/8 by 11:59pm
Week 3	M	Sept	9		The Role of Theory and Research Design	Chapter 2: Theory and Method Guidelines for Using Theory Research Questions and Hypotheses Example	Research Question and Hypothesis	Sun 9/15 by 11:59pm
Week 4	M	Sept	16		Models and Variables: Conceptualization and Operationalization	Chapter 4: Measurement Guidelines for Variables Guidelines for Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Models	Models and Variables	Sun 9/22 by 11:59pm
Week 5	M	Sept	23		Ethics	Chapter 5: Ethical and Political Issues CITI Training Module: Students in Research Sample Consent Form Guidelines for Confidentiality and Anonymity	First Set of Annotations of Research Articles	Sun 9/29 by 11:59pm

SECTION 2: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Week	Day	Month	Date	Event	Topic	Required Reading/Materials	Assignment	Due
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Week 6	M	Sept	30		Introduction to Quantitative Research Surveys and Variables	Chapter 7: Survey Research Guidelines for Survey Construction Handout from Pew Research Center Handout from Survey Monkey Survey Variables Assignment Instructions Methods 101: Survey Question Wording https://youtu.be/eFzGdQrr2K8?si=OqnGgPHZLiXlu8wj	Survey Variables Assignment	Sun 10/6 by 11:59pm
Week 7	M	Oct	7		Sampling and Creating a Survey	Chapter 6: Sampling Methods 101: Random Sampling: https://youtu.be/sonXfzE1hvo?si=6qkljJESISFSzAIC Survey Questions Assignment Instructions	Survey Questions Assignment	Sun 10/13 by 11:59pm
Week 8	M	Oct	14		Materials-Based Methods & Secondary Data	EITHER Chapter 14: Aggregate Data Analysis – OR – Chapter 13: Content Analysis	Identifying Variables in a Secondary Data Set Assignment	Sun 10/20 by 11:59pm

SECTION 3: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Week	Day	Month	Date	Event	Topic	Required Reading/Materials	Assignment	Due
Week 9	M	Oct	21	Research Proposal instructions distributed	Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods Ethnography	Chapter 9: Observational Field Research Guidelines for Ethnography Lareau (2021) Chapter 7: Writing High-Quality Field Notes Example of an Integrative Memo	Field Notes and Integrative Memo	Field Notes due Sun 10/27 by 11:59pm Integrative Memo due Tues 10/29 by 11:59pm
Week 10	M	Oct	28		In-Depth Interviews	Chapter 8: Intensive Interviewing	Interview Schedule	Sun 11/3 by 11:59pm
Week 11	M	Nov	4		Analyzing Qualitative Data	Gerson and Damaske (2021) Chapter 6: Analyzing Interviews Guidelines for Coding	Second Set of Annotations of Research Articles	Sun 11/10 by 11:59pm

Week 12	M	Nov	11		Analyzing Qualitative Data	Skim: Saldana (2016) Chapter 1: An Introduction to Codes and Coding and Chapter 2: Writing Analytic Memos about Narrative and Visual Data	Interview Transcript, Notes, and Reaction	Sun 11/24 by 11:59pm
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SECTION 4: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Week	Day	Month	Date	Event	Topic	Required Reading/Materials	Assignment	Due
Week 13	M	Nov	18		Research Proposal	Instructions for Research Proposal Denney and Tewksbury (2013) "How to Write a Literature Review" List of Journals in Sociology and Related Disciplines	Sign up for a one-on-one meeting	Sign up in class on Mon 11/18
Week 14	M	Nov	25		Research Proposal		Detailed Outline of Research Proposal	Mon 12/2 by 11:59pm
Week 15	M	Dec	2	Last day of class - and - One-on-one meetings	Research Proposal			
Exam Week	Th	Dec	12	Research Proposal due			Final Version of Research Proposal	Thurs 12/12 by 11:59pm

Class Policies

Controversial Subject Matter

Student participation and class discussion are highly valued and encouraged. We will be exploring several potentially sensitive topics such as prejudice, discrimination, stereotypes, violence, and so forth. Mutual respect is key in this class. **I will not tolerate disrespect** under any circumstance. I ask that everyone is respectful of other people's comments and questions even if you disagree. It is crucial for all of us to work together to create an environment in which we can discuss social issues in a non-judgmental way. If you find a comment that I or another student makes to be insensitive or disrespectful, please speak up and explain your thoughts or feelings in a civil manner or discuss the issue with me in private.

I expect everyone to come to class with an open mind. You are encouraged to raise alternative viewpoints. However, you will be asked to think critically about your (and your classmates') world view, beliefs, and biases in an academic manner. You will be evaluated on your ability to explain and analyze various perspectives regardless of whether or not you think they are accurate. Keep in mind that the goal of a college education is to learn about different perspectives, how to analyze them academically according to a particular discipline's approach, and how to make arguments supported by scholarly evidence. Rather than dictating what you should think, this course is aimed at enhancing your ability to think critically.

Active engagement is highly encouraged and rewarded. I will exercise my responsibility to manage the discussions so that ideas and argument can proceed in an orderly fashion. If you are having difficulty with participating or feel intimidated in any way, please come and see me early in the semester and we can work together to find a solution.

Other Expectations

I expect you to regularly check both Blackboard and your TAMUSA email. This is how I will get in touch with you, and it is the best way to get in touch with me.

I also expect that you will use Blackboard to access required readings, to submit your assignments, and to review feedback that I provide on your work. You are responsible for doing so and should contact me in a timely manner (and before assignments are due!) should you have any difficulty. Since this course focuses substantially on writing, failure to turn in writing assignments on time may result in failure of the course.

It is your responsibility to get in touch with me early in the semester if you are struggling in the course or have questions. I am more than happy to work with you, but I cannot do so unless you communicate with me. I expect students to take advantage of my office hours, especially if the material or assignments seem difficult or if you are facing barriers to your success.

The University policy on withdrawal allows students only a limited number of opportunities available to withdraw from courses. It is important for you to understand the financial and academic consequences that may result from course withdrawal.

Syllabus Adjustments

Any modifications to this syllabus will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard. Students are responsible for knowing all in-class announcements and Blackboard announcements/adjustments.

Religious Accommodation

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 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.

If you will be observing any religious holidays this semester which will prevent you from attending a regularly scheduled class or interfere with fulfilling any course requirement, please contact me to make appropriate arrangements within two weeks of the beginning of the semester (or three days before any holidays which fall within the first two weeks of class).

Grades

I maintain course grades on Blackboard and it is possible that I occasionally enter an incorrect grade (i.e., sometimes I make a mistake). Please check the feedback I provide on your assignments and your grades via Blackboard throughout the semester and address any concerns immediately: do not wait until the end of the semester.

University Policies & Resources

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Title II of the ADAAA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities be guaranteed equal access to the learning environment through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodation of their disability. If you have a diagnosed disability that may require an accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for the coordination of services. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335 and email is dss@tamusa.edu.

If you have a disability and need academic accommodations, please provide a letter of accommodation from Disability Support Services early in the semester. I am not able to provide accommodations without verification from DSS.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty for which a student is subject to penalty includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submissions, misrepresentation of academic records, facilitating academic dishonesty, unfair advantage, violating known safety requirements and ethical misconduct. This includes holding other students to the same standards and reporting any incidents of alleged violation of the honesty policy to the instructor involved or, if necessary, to the appropriate academic department head. All students are responsible for being familiar with the Academic Dishonesty Policy, which may be found in the Texas A&M University-San Antonio Student Handbook.

University policy prescribes serious consequences for acts of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, a grade of 'F' on the particular paper or assignment, a failing grade in the course, or possible expulsion from the University. Considering the potential consequences of academic misconduct, it is obviously in students' best interests to avoid even the appearance of such behavior. If you are ever unclear whether a specific act might constitute academic misconduct, please contact your instructor for an assessment of the situation.

All student written assignments are subject to analysis by anti-plagiarism software.

If you are unsure about what plagiarism is, please take the plagiarism course offered through the university library. Not understanding plagiarism rules will not be accepted as a justification for plagiarized work. Here are the basics:

- Any time you use ideas or information from any other source, you must add a complete citation (including situations in which you do not use the author’s words);
- A citation is made up of two parts: the internal citation (also called an in-text citation) at the point in your paper where the idea or information was used and an end citation (also called external citation) in your works cited or references section at the end of your paper. Both must be present to be considered a citation;
- If you use another person’s words, they must be cited, they must be in quotation marks, and the internal citation must include a page number if the source is a book or article; and
- A paper that is substantially composed of quotes does not qualify as independent student work and will be treated as plagiarism, even if properly cited.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

This is not a campus-wide policy and only applies to this course. This policy may change, with prior notice, to reflect developments in technology.

Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, may only be used in this course for preparatory activities such as brainstorming, editing text, outlining, etc. Students are responsible for providing proper attribution and full transparency about their use of AI, with the aim of becoming informed digital citizens.

Note that generative AI can produce questionable results, including misinformation, nonexistent references, and bias, and its responses are often bland. When using generative AI, students are responsible for revising its responses to meet the assignment prompts and to be accurate, authentic, and relevant to your unique perspectives and creative thoughts.

For each usage, documentation of the following process is required:

- Cite your prompts to any AI tool that informed your work.
- Cite the AI tool and provide its entire response in quotation marks.
- Edit the AI tool’s response to include your own original thoughts and style of writing and to meet the assignment requirements. In other words, you may not submit assignments generated entirely by artificial intelligence.
- Use quotations in your work to any text generated by AI and cite the tool.
- Validate any AI-generated content with reliable references and cite these.

Failure to follow these instructions will be considered academic misconduct and consequences will follow University policies.

When you use generative AI, you are also encouraged to review that tool’s “terms of use” with regard to data privacy and raise any concerns with your instructor.

Adapted from Kristopher Purzycki (University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, 18 Jan 2023) (CC BY 4.0) @ Medium.

Academic Learning Center

All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. The Academic Learning Center is an appointment-based center where appointments are made through the Navigate platform. Students access Navigate through Jagwire in the Student Services tab. The Center is active on campus outreaching to students to highlight services offered. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu or calling (210)-784-1332. Appointments can also be made through JagWire under the services tab.

Counseling Resources

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you or someone you know is experiencing life stressors, emotional difficulties, or mental health concerns at Texas A&M University – San Antonio, please contact the Student Counseling Center located in Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance) or call 210-784-1331 between the hours of 8:00AM and 5:00PM, Monday through Friday. After-hours crisis support is available by calling 210-784-1331 (select option “2”). Please contact UPD at 911 if harm to self or harm to others is imminent.

All mental health services provided by the Student Counseling Center are free, confidential (as the law allows), and are not part of a student’s academic or university record. The Student Counseling Center SCC provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

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 and/or phone call with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>

More information about Emergency Preparedness and the Emergency Response Guide can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/upd/index.html>

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.

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 contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots’ Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

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 reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and 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; 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.

Statement about Harassment and Discrimination

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of 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, diversity, pluralism 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, or gender expression.

If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone. TAMUSA has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that many A&M-San Antonio employees, including all faculty members, are required reporters. This means that if you tell me about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, I must report the information to the Title IX Coordinator. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331, Modular C. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. Additional information about your options is also available at <http://www.tamusa.edu/businessaffairs/titleix/index.html>

If you wish to receive information from a center that is not affiliated with the university, you may want to call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-4673 (<https://www.rainn.org/>).

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

All students are required to follow all policies and regulations as set forth by The Texas A&M University System. This includes the A&M-San Antonio Student Code of Conduct. For more information, please see the Texas A&M University-San Antonio Student Handbook.

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.

University Email Policy and Course Communications

All correspondence between professors and students must occur via University email accounts. You must have Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at sahelp@tamusa.tamus.edu or at 210-784-4357. If you don't hear back from them within 48 hours, contact them again. They have a lot of requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to check up on them. I will distribute course materials, including announcements and updates, via Blackboard, so I encourage you to log-in to that system at least twice per week.

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/student-resources/writing-center/index.html>