

Sex, Sexuality, and Society (SOCI 4354.600)

Texas A&M San Antonio, Fall 2024

Tuesdays and Thursdays (12:30-1:45pm), Online Synchronous

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

Our central concern in this course is to examine human sexuality in social historical context. We often consider sexuality to be a natural, core part of being human and think about sexuality in terms of the physical and reproductive aspects of sex. However, the sociological perspective views human sexuality as complex, dynamic, and fundamentally social. Sexuality is not just personal but is also shaped by external forces. We will address this dynamic complexity as we explore the social and cultural aspects of sexuality. The goal of this course is to broaden our perspective of human sexuality, as well as understand what it means to argue that gender, sex, and sexuality are social constructs. We will explore a range of topics such as human sexuality research, socialization, sex education, sexual identities, relationships, inequalities, and sexual health.

Pedagogical Approach

I am here to facilitate you getting the most out of our course. 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.

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). This means that you will be assigned to a team with which you will work throughout the semester on in-class activities and assignments. 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.

Course Catalogue Description

This course explores sexual behaviors, variations, and development; contested and changing understandings of sexuality and sexualities; and associated social and cultural phenomenon. Credit may not be obtained in both SOCI 4354 and SOCI 3369, or PSYC 3369. Prerequisite(s): Junior standing and SOCI 1301, SOCI 1306, or ENGL 1302. This is a prescribed elective course for students pursuing a Bachelor's of Science degree in sociology. TSI Restriction(s): Reading, Math, and Writing

Course Objectives

- Evaluate sociological theories (how do we explain) and epistemological (how do we know) approaches to studying sexuality
- Apply theories and concepts to analyze systems of domination, structural violence, the processes that maintain social inequalities, and the politics of identity/belonging
- Situate and sociologically analyze the ideas about and experiences of sexuality in various sociohistorical contexts
- Evaluate current social problems and inequalities related to sexuality and examine the strategies for ameliorating these social conditions
- Develop conclusions supported by empirical evidence and effectively communicate them orally and in writing
- Improve reading, research, and writing (synthesis, citation, and revising) skills appropriate to the discipline of Sociology

Required Readings and Materials

You do not need to purchase anything. All readings and course materials will be available on Blackboard.

Required Readings

Required readings and materials are indicated on Blackboard under the week they are due. You should plan to finish the assigned material (readings, videos, etc.) early in the week so that you are able to complete the assignments. Be prepared to critically discuss topics addressed in the material in relation to the lectures and be able to accurately explain the materials' main points. I recommend taking notes as you read/watch and have them available to help you participate in discussion and activities.

We will be reading both secondary sources as well as original works. Original works (such as research articles) often take more time and effort to read, so it is a good idea to plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time for reading. You can expect approximately 30-60 pages of reading per week.

Required Videos

Some lectures may be recorded and posted on Blackboard along with the PowerPoint slides from the lecture videos. Additional video links will be posted on Blackboard.

Class Notes

I post our class PowerPoint slides on Blackboard under the corresponding week. I recommend that you use a printed or electronic copy to facilitate your notetaking.

Guiding Questions

Guiding Questions are designed to help you focus on the “big ideas” covered in the thematic section of the course. Before we begin each section, I recommend reviewing the Guiding Questions and keeping them in mind as you read the chapters, watch the videos, and complete the assignments. By the end of each section of the course, your main goal should be to understand the material well enough to answer all the Guiding Questions with supporting evidence from the readings, videos, discussion, etc.

Teams

Team-based learning shifts the dynamic of the classroom from one where I lecture and you passively learn, to one where you all work together in teams to actively learn the materials. 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!).

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, although it may take me longer on the 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 course is a 3-credit course. Therefore, you should plan to dedicate at least 2.5 hours per week to class meetings 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 | Percentage | Letter Grade Calculation* |
|--|------------|---|
| Reaction Statements (Discussion Board) | 35 | A = 100 to 90 |
| Project Application Assignments (Discussion Board) | 25 | B = 89.9 to 80 |
| Project Final Report | 25 | C = 79.9 to 70 |
| Engagement (contributions to class discussion, discussion board responses, attendance, etc.) | 15 | D = 69.9 to 60 F = Below 60 |
| Total | 100 | <i>* I do not round up grades or negotiate grades at the end of the semester.</i> |

“How will I be assessed in this course?”*

This course focuses on qualitative rather than quantitative assessment. I will provide feedback on your assignments in the form of comments, questions, and suggestions to engage your work rather than simply evaluate it.

Some assignments will only be evaluated for completion. In the gradebook, I will mark your work as “complete,” “incomplete,” or “not submitted” instead of assigning a score, letter grade, or percentage to each assignment that you submit. “Complete” means that you have satisfied all of the assignment requirements. If you receive an “incomplete” you should review the instructions and any feedback and then make adjustments for the next assignment (do not resubmit your work).

The intent of this approach to evaluation is to center the learning process, the development of critical thinking and skills that are meaningful and useful to your career, and the practice of self-assessment, rather than on grades. Although you will get a final grade at the end of the term, it will be based on a combination of factors including your progress over the course of the semester, consistency and/or improvement in the quality of your work, responsiveness to feedback, and your self-assessments.

Note: If this process causes more anxiety than it alleviates, please feel free to set up a meeting with me to discuss your progress in the course to date. If you are worried about your grade, your best strategy should be to join the discussions, do the reading, and thoroughly complete all components of the assignments. I intend for this course to be a “busywork-free zone.” If an assignment does not feel productive, we can find ways to modify, remix, or repurpose the instructions.

*This description is modified from Stommel, Jesse. 2020. “How to Ungrade.” Pp. 25-41 in *UNgrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*, edited by Susan D. Blum. Morgantown: West Virginia University Press.

Reaction Statements

Purpose: Reaction Statements are an opportunity to demonstrate your critical engagement with the course material from the assigned weeks and reflect on your learning. They encourage you to hone communication skills and discuss applications of the course material.

Instructions: Over the course of the semester, you are responsible for writing Reaction Statements about the course material and the prompts below. You will post your Reaction Statements on our Blackboard Discussion Board. You can find further instructions on Blackboard.

For your Reaction Statement, choose *either* OPTION A *or* OPTION B (below) and post your work on the Blackboard Discussion Board.

OPTION A: Take notes on each of the required materials from the indicated weeks. You may use bullet points. Focus on key ideas and concepts. I encourage you to include your reactions to the concepts and ideas. To receive full credit, you must:

- Provide notes for each assigned reading/video/podcast, organized by source.
- Cite specific references to the required materials to demonstrate that you have completed all of them (use ASA citation style).

OPTION B: Write a statement applying at least one key term/concept from the required material from the weeks *either*: 1) to a specific current event described in a news article that you share *or* 2) to your selected research topic. To receive full credit, you must:

- Explain at least one key term/concept from the week's required materials and cite specific references in ASA citation style within your paragraphs.
- Discuss how the term/concept applies either to a current event in a news article or to your selected research topic.
- Write at least 250 words.
- Be prepared to present your example during our class meeting.

Tips:

- Reaction Statements should focus on key terms, concepts, and ideas. Therefore, they do not be exhaustive (you do not need to write in detail about everything), but they should demonstrate that you have read all of the required material.
- I strongly encourage you to copy the prompts and work on drafting your answers to them in a document that you can save on your computer. This allows you to: 1) edit and add to your responses over time and 2) provides you with a backup copy of your answers.
- For guidance with citing, see the "Research and ASA Citation Style Guide" section on Blackboard and/or <https://libguides.tamusa.edu/c.php?g=72465&p=467715> If you are paraphrasing, provide the author's last name and year in parenthesis at the end of the sentence like this: (Seidman 2015). If you are quoting, provide the author's last name, year of publication, and page number(s) at the end of the sentence like this: (Seidman 2015:21).

Project

Over the course of the semester, you will research and analyze a topic related to sexuality. I will provide a list of possible topics to choose from and there will be a Blackboard Team Discussion Board for each topic. Select one topic/Team Discussion Board to work on for the entire semester.

You will produce an analysis of the topic in small segments due throughout the semester (the Application Assignments described below) that will culminate in a Project Final Report (described below). One objective of the project is to apply the concepts and ideas we are learning about sexuality to make sense of things happening in the “real world.” A second objective of the project is to develop your research, analysis, and communication skills.

Use the Team Discussion Board as a collaborative space to share resources and information about the research topic, to ask and answer questions, and to provide and receive feedback. Although you will be working on the same (or a similar) topic as other students in your team, you will write your own Application Assignments and Project Final Report. Therefore, collaboration will benefit you, but the assessment of your work is independent.

Project Application Assignments

For each Application Assignment, I will post a Discussion Board with a set of prompts to which you will respond based on your analysis of data, scholarly journal articles, and other sources of information on your research topic. You will post Application Assignments on your Team Discussion Boards so that you and your teammates can share resources and information about your topic, even though your assignments will be submitted independently.

Your responses to the Application Assignment prompts should be thorough, supported by evidence from the course material (readings, videos, etc.) and by evidence from your own research on the topic you have selected to analyze for the semester. Edit your work to correct grammar, spelling, and clarity issues before posting.

Project Final Report

You will use your Application Assignments to compile a Project Final Report due at the end of the semester on your Team Discussion Board. Therefore, the more thorough your work is throughout the semester, the less you will have to do when revising and editing your Final Report at the end of the semester!

Additional instructions, a template, and the rubric will be posted on Blackboard.

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. Late work is not accepted for credit and there are no make-ups UNLESS you receive written 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 mark your work as incomplete (partial credit). If late work becomes a pattern, extensions will no longer be provided.

Attendance and Engagement

Attendance

We will be meeting **virtually** on Zoom twice per week on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30-1:45pm**. Links to the meetings will be posted on Blackboard. These meetings are required: I will be taking attendance.

Do not schedule work during our class meeting time. You are expected to participate in class (have your camera on, contribute to discussions, etc.) during the scheduled class time. If you are unresponsive during class meetings, you may be removed from the Zoom meeting and marked as absent. Failure to attend and/or participate in class meetings will have consequences on your course grade; missing more than half of the class meetings (either by lack of attendance or participation) will automatically result in failing the course.

If you are unable to attend a meeting (internet issues, family obligations, doctor's appointments, etc.), you do not need to show me documentation for your absence, but you do need to communicate with me beforehand or within 24 hours of the missed virtual meeting. I may require you to set up a virtual one-on-one meeting with me at another time. Although I do not excuse absences, one or two absences will not be detrimental to your grade.

Engagement

Engagement during our virtual class meetings means being attentive and engaged, respecting your peers and professor, and contributing substantively to class and team discussions. The more involvement and differing opinions raised in class, the better! If you feel that a perspective or position is not being adequately addressed, you are encouraged to introduce it as a topic for an academic discussion. Keep in mind that the purpose of this class is to learn about and apply a critical, academic, sociological perspective.

To receive full credit for engagement, you must join the virtual class meeting on time and stay for the entire meeting, regularly participate in discussion and activities, pay attention, and demonstrate your engagement with the readings and the subject matter. If, for any reason, you are hesitant to speak up or participate using the chat feature in meetings, please discuss this with me at the *beginning* of the semester. To strengthen the sense that we belong to a community of learners, have your video turned on and contribute to the class discussion through both your microphone as well as the chat.

Engagement on Team Discussion Boards means that you post by the due date and write substantive responses to other people's posts that address the prompts, demonstrate your familiarity with and understanding of the readings, and are edited for spelling/grammar/clarity. In other words, posts should consist of thoughtful comments, questions, and suggestions (do not just write, "I agree" or "This was interesting."). Your responses should be conversational (try to initiate a dialogue).

Course Outline

(subject to adjustment)

Theme 1: Introduction to the Sociological Study of Sexuality (Week 1 and Week 2)

Introduction to Theme:

- In this section, we are examining the social and biocultural construction of sexuality (in other words, what sexuality is and how is it shaped by social, biological, environmental factors), key concepts and terminology about sex and sexuality, how to study sexuality sociologically.

Guiding Questions:

- What is sexuality and what does it mean to learn how to think sociologically about sexuality?
- How do sociologists study sexuality?
- How do historical ideas and institutional arrangements related to sexuality continue to influence us today?

Week 1 Required Reading (complete by Wed 8/28):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman "Ch1: The Social Construction of Sexuality" *Sociology of Sexualities* p.1-8

Week 2 Required Reading (complete by Mon 9/2):

- Seidman "Introduction" *The Social Construction of Sexuality* p.vii-xv
- Seidman "Ch3 Social Constructionism: Sociology, History, and Philosophy" *The Social Construction of Sexuality* p.25-39

Optional Reading:

- Seidman "Ch2 Social Theories of Sexuality: Marxism and Feminism" *The Social Construction of Sexuality* p.13-24

Assignments:

- Discussion Board "About Me" Introduction post (due Fri 8/30 by 11:59pm) and response (due Tues 9/3 by 11:59pm)
- Reaction Statement 1 (due Mon 9/2 by 11:59pm) on Week 1 and Week 2 readings
- Sign up for one Team Discussion Board based on the topic which most interests you (by Tues 9/3 by 11:59pm)

Theme 2: The Social Construction of Sexuality (Week 3 and Week 4)

Introduction to Theme:

- In this section, we are examining social and biocultural construction, concepts and terminology, and how ideas about sexuality have changed over time.

Guiding Questions:

- What is sexuality and what does it mean to learn how to think sociologically about sexuality?
- How do sociologists study sexuality?
- How do historical ideas and institutional arrangements related to sexuality continue to influence us today?

Week 3 Required Reading (complete by Mon 9/9):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman “Ch1: The Social Construction of Sexuality” *Sociology of Sexualities* p.8-10
- Seidman “Ch4 Heterosexuality: From Behavior to Identity” *The Social Construction of Sexuality* p.43-54

Week 4 Required Reading (complete by Mon 9/16):

- Seidman “Ch5 Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Politics in the United States” *The Social Construction of Sexuality* p.55-80

Assignments:

- Reaction Statement 2 (due Mon 9/9 by 11:59pm) on Week 3 readings
- Project Application Assignment 1: Introduction (due Mon 9/16 by 11:59pm)

Theme 3: Learning and Enculturation (Week 5, Week 6, and Week 7)

Introduction to Theme:

- In this section, we will discuss early socialization, sex education and school curriculum, and social scripts (cultural norms).

Guiding Questions:

- How and what do we learn about sexuality?
- What is sexual socialization and how do sexual scripts influence our behavior?
- What are the outcomes of these ideas, social norms, and social structures?

Week 5 Required Reading (complete by Mon 9/23):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman “Ch1: The Social Construction of Sexuality” *Sociology of Sexualities* p.10-22

Week 6 Required Reading (complete by Mon 9/30):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman “Ch7: Sexuality, Schools, and the Workplace” *Sociology of Sexualities* p.136-154

Week 7 Required Reading (complete by Mon 10/7):

- Carefully read and take notes on the two sociological research journal articles you found for your project (see Application Assignment instructions to guide your notetaking).

Assignments:

- Reaction Statement 3 (due Mon 9/30 by 11:59pm) on Week 5 and Week 6 readings
- Project Application Assignment 2: Findings (due Mon 10/14 by 11:59pm)

Theme 4: Relationships (Week 8 and Week 9)

Introduction to Theme:

- In this section, we will discuss hooking up, relationships, marriage, and children.

Guiding Questions:

- What are key trends in romantic and sexual relationships, marriage, childbearing, and family structures?
- In what ways have changes in social structures and norms influenced people's behaviors and expectations in relationships?

Week 8 Required Reading (complete by Mon 10/14):

- Seidman "Ch7 Changing Cultures of Intimacy" *The Social Construction of Sexuality* p.105-122

Week 9 Required Reading (complete by Mon 10/21):

- Aragao, Carolina, Kim Parker, Shannon Greenwood, Chris Baronavski, and John Carlo Mandapat. 2023. "The Modern American Family: Key Trends in Marriage and Family Life." Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2023/09/14/the-modern-american-family/>
- Gieger, A.W. and Gretchen Livingston. 2019. "8 Facts about Love and Marriage in America." <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/02/13/8-facts-about-love-and-marriage/>

Assignments:

- Reaction Statement 4 (due Mon 10/21 by 11:59pm) on Week 8 and Week 9 readings

Theme 5: Regulation, Rights, and Violence (Week 10, Week 11, and Week 12)

Introduction to Theme:

- In this section, we are examining how sexuality is controlled and regulated through social institutions. We will also explore power and violence. Topics include law, criminalization, politics, commodification, reproductive rights, hate crimes, workplace discrimination, and sexual violence.

Guiding Questions:

- How is sexuality socially controlled and regulated?
- What social institutions and cultural norms are involved?

Week 10 Required Reading (complete by Mon 10/28):

- Seidman Ch10 "Into Our Bedrooms: The State Takes Charge" *The Social Construction of Sexuality* p.169-190

Week 11 Required Reading (complete by Mon 11/4):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman "Ch4: Sexuality, Inequality, and Privilege" *Sociology of Sexualities* p.71-90

Week 12 Required Reading (complete by Mon 11/11):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman "Ch12: Sexual Violence" *Sociology of Sexualities* p.256-278

Assignments:

- Reaction Statement 5 (due Mon 11/4 by 11:59pm) on Week 10 and Week 11 readings
- Project Application Assignment 3: Scope and Local Organization (due Mon 11/18 by 11:59pm)

Theme 6: Sexual Health, Medicalization, and Bodies (Week 13, Week 14, and Week 15)

Introduction to Theme:

- In this section, we will focus on how ideas about health and our bodies shape our embodied experiences and health outcomes. Topics include sexual health, circumcision, sexual dysfunctions, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, disability, menstruation, reproduction, and birth.

Guiding Questions:

- How do our ideas about our bodies and sexual health affect what we do with our bodies?
- What is medicalization and how does this process shape our experiences and expectations around sexual health and sexuality?
- What people and institutions have authority over these bodily processes?
- What are issues of disparity and justice related to sexual health and what is being done to address existing inequalities?

Week 13 Required Reading (complete by Mon 11/18):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman "Ch10: Sexual Health" *Sociology of Sexuality* p.210-231

Week 14 Required Reading (complete by Mon 11/25):

- Fitzgerald and Grossman "Ch9: Sexuality and Reproduction" *Sociology of Sexuality* p.184-209

Assignments:

- Reaction Statement 6 (due Mon 11/25 by 11:59pm) on Week 13 and Week 14 readings
- Project Final Report (due Wed 12/11 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>