



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO

College of Arts and Sciences
Health and Behavioral Sciences

COURSE SYLLABUS

HLTH3390

Special Topics in Health: Public Health Communication
Spring 2024, Tu/Th 12:30 to 1:45am
SciTech Bldg 166

Instructor: Monica Schoch-Spana, PhD, CPH

Office: CAB 351E

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Phone: 210-784-2668

Office Hours: Weds, 1:00-3:00pm, and by appointment

Course Description: This course will introduce students to the theory and practice of providing communities with relevant, timely, trustworthy, meaningful, and practical communications in both everyday and emergency contexts, aiming to improve public health outcomes and promote community wellbeing. We will study communication approaches for addressing various public health issues (e.g., chronic illness, infectious disease outbreaks, environmental health, vaccine efficacy and safety), effectively reaching target audiences, promoting health behavior changes at individual and societal levels, eliciting prosocial and protective behaviors in emergencies, and countering misinformation that threatens people's health and wellbeing.

Learning Objectives: Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Define "public health communication," noting impacts of health promotion and education, environmental risk communication, disaster management, crisis communication, and media and communication studies
- Explain how communication fits into the social ecological model of public health and supports other public health objectives
- Defend the importance of planning – beginning with an audience and situation analysis – to the design, implementation, and evaluation of public health communication programs
- Identify data communication challenges related to numeracy, health literacy, and cognitive biases
- Illustrate public health communication interventions (e.g., persuasion, nudging) designed to address individual-level health behavior change (e.g., reduced obesity, smoking cessation)
- Give examples of different domestic public health topics (e.g., vaccine hesitancy, cancer prevention) covered via inter-personal level health communication (e.g., patient-provider, peer-to-peer)
- Juxtapose group-level communication strategies – including community-engaged, advocacy-based, and policy-directed approaches – intended to promote social changes that improve the public's health
- Discuss challenges for delivering public health and safety warning in the context of disasters and epidemics
- Outline best practices for applying traditional mass media (e.g., print, radio, TV) in public health communication campaigns
- Think critically about the benefits, limits, and risks of social media use in public health communication
- Implement basic public health and safety communication tactics including the development of a single overriding communication objective (SOCO), a message map, and a disaster e-alert

Course Texts:

- **Required:**
 - Parvanta CF, Nelson DE, Harner RN. *Public Health Communication: Critical Tools and Strategies*. Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning; 2018.
- **Recommended:**
 - Sood S, Riley AH. *Health Communication Fundamentals: Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation in Public Health*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing; 2024.
- **Note:** Additional articles and reports from diverse sources will be made available on Blackboard.

Course Work and Grading Criteria:

Participation (20 points; 5%): Your attendance and advance preparation for discussion are essential to your learning and that of others. Assigned readings illustrate key concepts within the lecture material and will enable greater success in group exercises and your written work. Attending class will deepen understanding of course materials and better prepare you for written assignments. If you arrive on time and attend the class, you will receive full credit. You will be docked for a significant late arrival (>5 mins), and receive no credit for unexcused absences.

Trainings (60 points; 5% each, 15% total): Over the course of the semester, you will participate in 3 on-line trainings:

The Public Health Communications Collaborative (PHCC) has learning opportunities to help communicators address public health issues, build public confidence, and identify and counter misinformation. Before accessing the course below, you must register for a PHCC Academy Account - <https://academy.publichealthcollaborative.org/register>. The course below is self-paced and takes about 2 hours to complete. To receive credit for the assignment, you must upload a certificate of completion AND a paragraph (4-5 sentences) describing the most important lesson(s) you learned and why. For the digital certificate of completion, you will need to watch all the module videos, submit your reflection question responses, and score at least 75% on each knowledge check.

- Communicating for Change: Strategic Communications for Public Health (due Sept 5, 5pm)
<https://academy.publichealthcollaborative.org/courses/communicating-for-change-strategic-communications-for-public-health/>

CDC TRAIN is a gateway into the TRAIN Learning Network, the most comprehensive catalog of public health trainings shared by organizations across the United States. Before accessing the courses below, you must create a CDC TRAIN account - <https://www.train.org/cdctrain/prompt/register> - Once you log in, you will be redirected to TRAIN Texas where you can find the following 2 courses. To receive credit for the assignment, you must upload a certificate of completion AND a paragraph (4-5 sentences) describing the most important lesson(s) you learned and why.

- Communicating Science Clearly (takes about 2 hours; due Sept 19, 5pm)
<https://www.train.org/texas/course/1112747/details>
- Emergency Risk Communication (takes 2.5 hours; due Oct 24, 5pm)
<https://www.train.org/texas/course/1004753/details>

CDC Clear Communication Index (Index) Application (40 points; 10%): The CDC's Index is a research-based tool to help public health professionals develop and assess public communication materials. Each item in the Index represents the most important characteristics that enhance and aid people's understanding of information. For this assignment, you will (1) acquire a communication product (e.g., issue [factsheet](#), [podcast transcript](#), issue [website](#)) on a public health topic of your choosing, (2) use the Index to rate the accessibility of the language used by the experts, and (3) prepare to turn in a 2-page summary report with your completed Index. In the summary report, you will identify the issue concerned, the format used (include the URL), the content addressed, the communicators, their intended audiences(s), the sponsoring organization, and reflections on your assessment (e.g., what lessons did you learn, what went well/poorly, what changes could improve the communication). (due Sept 26, 5pm)

Communication Plan: By completing a series of assignments, you will develop a communication plan that addresses a public health concern, engages priority audiences, and effects needed change(s). Deadlines exist over the course of the semester, so that you will be prepared to deliver an oral presentation on your full plan at the close of the course. Please refer to Parvanta et al's Chapter 3 and Table 3A-1 regarding the specific steps below. For assignments 1-3, you should produce a 2-page report for each following the "Expectations for Written Work" available below. (Note: You are not responsible for developing a logic model and SWOT analysis as part of this planning exercise.)

- Assignment #1 (40 points; 10%): Identify your key issue and what needs to change (Steps 1-1.2; due Oct 10, 5pm)
- Assignment #2 (40 points; 10%): Propose your intervention, explain communication's role, and identify your priority audiences (Steps 2-3; due Nov 5, 5pm)
- Assignment #3 (40 points; 10%): Establish your communication strategy including your method of influence, message(s), channels, and partners (Step 4-6; due Nov 19, 5pm)
- Assignment #4 (40 points; 10%) Deliver a class presentation with slides outlining your overall communication plan (due either Nov 25 or Dec 2 during class)

Group Readings Discussion (40 points; 10%): During "Unit V: Adapting to New Information and Communication Environments," students in either pairs or small groups will lead a class that reviews the day's readings. Students will foster dialogue and debate about applications of the Arts, AI, and TikTok in public health, drawing out potential benefits and risks. Turn in 1 page of personal notes with which you plan to lead discussion (due Nov 11, 13, and 18).

Mid-term Exam (40 points; 10%): Oct 16

Final Exam (40 points; 10%): TBD – sometime Dec 6-12

Grading: See the breakdown below.

Assignments	Percentage	Points Possible
Participation	5%	20
Trainings (3 @ 5% each)	15%	60
CDC Clear Communication Index	10%	40
Communication Plan – Part 1	10%	40
Communication Plan – Part 2	10%	40
Communication Plan – Part 3	10%	40
Communication Plan – Part 4	10%	40
Group Readings Discussion	10%	40
Midterm Exam	10%	40
Final Exam	10%	40
TOTAL	100%	400

Scale

A	400 – 361	C	320 – 281	F	240 – 0
B	360 – 321	D	280 – 241		

Expectations for Written Work: Please use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, as well as a mature writing style. Prior to submitting any written work, please use grammar/spell check software and a trusted person to look for any obvious errors for you to correct. Written assignments with numerous mistakes and/or poor writing style will lose points. If you need support for your writing, please alert me AND consult with the Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center - <https://www.tamusa.edu/student-resources/writing-center/index.html>. When preparing bibliographies, please use the American Psychological Association style guide found at <https://apastyle.apa.org>. In addition, all written assignments should follow the format below:

- 1-inch margins

- 11-point Arial font
- 1.5 spacing

Deadlines: Please hand over all assignments by 5:00pm on the scheduled due date. I will not accept late work, with the rare exception of an unanticipated, catastrophic event.

Courteous Conduct: Your individual behavior strongly influences the ability of the class to function as a scholarly community. Please read assignments in advance, come to class on time and stay until the end, be respectful when someone else is sharing an idea, and refrain from using any digital medium that distracts you or others from classroom activities.

NOTE: Syllabus potentially subject to change.

Course Calendar and Assigned Readings

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READINGS/VIDEOS/PODCASTS
Unit I: Discerning the Field		
Aug 26, Tues	Intro & Syllabus Overview	
Aug 28, Thurs	Define “Public Health Communication”	Sood & Riley 2024, Chapter 1, Defining Public Health Communication
Sept 2, Tues	Know the Field’s History and Influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salmon CT, Poorisat T. The Rise and Development of Public Health Communication. <i>Health Commun.</i> 2020;35(13):1666-1677. • Kasza G, Csenki E, Szakos D, Izso T. The Evolution of Food Safety Risk Communication: Models and Trends in the Past and the Future. <i>Food Control.</i> 2022;138:109025.
Sept 4, Thurs	Apply Public Health’s Socio-Ecological Model to Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kruger DJ, Bone CC, Kruger JS. A Social-Ecological Model for Understanding Cannabis Risks and Promoting Harm Reduction. <i>Am J Public Health.</i> 2024;114(S8):S628-S630. • Podcast: Public Health Insight: #57 - Applying the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM) as a Cornerstone of Public Health Practice - https://thepublichealthinsight.com/podcasts/applying-the-socio-ecological-model-sem-as-a-cornerstone-of-public-health-practice/
Sept 5, Fri	ASSIGNMENT DUE – Training #1	
Sept 9, Tues	Envision PH Communication as a System	Sell TK et al. A Public Health Systems View of Risk Communication About Zika. <i>Public Health Reports</i> 2020;135(3):343-353
Unit II: Meeting Audiences Where They Are At		
Sept 11, Thurs	Plan a Health Communication Intervention	Parvanta et al 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3: A Public Health Communication Planning Framework • Appendix A: ATV Safety: You Make the Choice Case Analysis
Sept 16, Tues	Let the Data Talk	Parvanta et al 2018, Chapter 4: How to Communicate About Data

Sept 18, Thurs	Share the Science	Parvanta et al 2018, Chapter 5: Understanding and Reporting Science
Sept 19, Fri	ASSIGNMENT DUE – Training #2	
Sept 23, Tues	WORKSHOP – Prepare the Single Overriding Communication Objective	World Health Organization 2015, Effective Communications: Participant Handbook, pp. 10-17
Sept 25, Thurs	Make the Point Clearly	Parvanta et al 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7: Health Literacy and Clear Health Communication • Appendix 7A: CDC Clear Communication Index Before and After Example NVDRS
Sept 26, Fri	ASSIGNMENT DUE – CDC Clear Communication Index Case	
Sept 30, Tues	Deliver the Message	Parvanta et al 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10: Media Vehicles, Platforms, and Channels • Appendix 10B: Health Communication Strategies for Hispanic Enrollment into the Affordable Care Act Health Insurance Exchanges
Unit III: Achieving Change by Communicating at Different Levels		
Oct 2, Thurs	Focus on the Individual	Parvanta et al 2018, Chapter 8, Behavior Change Communication: Theories, Models, and Practice Strategies
Oct 7, Tues	Leverage Interpersonal Exchanges	Parvanta et al 2018, Chapter 13, Clinician-Patient Communication
Oct 9, Thurs	Mobilize the Collective	Sood & Riley 2024, Chapter 8, Group-Level Health Communication Strategies
Oct 10, Fri	ASSIGNMENT DUE – Communication Plan, Part 1	
Oct 14, Tues	Midterm Exam Review Session	
Oct 16, Thurs	MIDTERM EXAM	
Oct 21, Tues	Influence Policymakers	Parvanta et al 2018, Chapter 6, Communicating for Policy and Advocacy
Unit IV: Conveying Risks in Contexts of Apathy, Outrage, Uncertainty, and Crisis		
Oct 23, Thurs	Address Environmental Hazard Perceptions	World Health Organization 2021, Effective Risk Communication for Environment and Health, pp. 1-18
Oct 24, Fri	ASSIGNMENT DUE – Training #3	
Oct 28, Tues	WORKSHOP: Make a Message Map	Covello VT, Risk Communication and Message Mapping: A New Tool for Communicating Effectively in Public Health Emergencies and Disasters, <i>Journal of Emergency Management</i> . 2006;4(3):25-40.
Oct 30, Thurs	Communicate Risk in an Emergency	Parvanta et al 2018, Chapter 15, Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication: A Primer

Nov 4, Tues	Issue Disaster Warnings	Sutton J, Wood MK, Waugh NA. The Warning Lexicon: A Multiphased Study to Identify, Design, and Develop Content for Warning Messages. <i>Natural Hazards Review</i> 2024;25(1):04023055.
Nov 5, Weds	ASSIGNMENT DUE – Communication Plan, Part 2	
Nov 6, Thurs	Manage Misinformation in a Crisis	Jin SL, Kolis J, Parker J, et al. Social histories of public health misinformation and infodemics: case studies of four pandemics. <i>Lancet Infect Dis.</i> 2024;24(10):e638-e646.
Unit V: Adapting to New Information and Communication Environments		
Nov 11, Tues	Engage the Arts in Public Health Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golden TL, Sonke J, Rodriguez AK. An Evidence-Based Framework for the Use of Arts and Culture in Public Health. <i>Health Promotion Practice.</i> 2024;26(3):454-462. Cagle S, Olson C. Sugarland. WNYC. March 5, 2018. https://www.wnyc.org/story/sugarland-diabetes-epidemic
Nov 13, Thurs	Test AI Applications in Health Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wang H, Gupta S, Singhal A, et al. An Artificial Intelligence Chatbot for Young People’s Sexual and Reproductive Health in India (SnehAI): Instrumental Case Study. <i>J Med Internet Res</i> 2022;24(1):e29969 Spuur K, Currie G, Al-Mousa D, Pape R. Suitability of ChatGPT as a Source of Patient Information for Screening Mammography. <i>Health Promot Pract.</i> 2025;26(4):746-762.
Nov 18, Tues	Assess TikTok as a Public Health Ally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horvath A, Chaffin K, Ahmad S, et al. The Discourse Surrounding Polycystic Ovary Syndrome on TikTok: A Social Media Analysis. <i>Healthcare (Basel).</i> 2024;12(22):2253. Stimpson JP, Srivastava A, Tamirisa K, Kaholokula JK, Ortega AN. Crisis Communication About the Maui Wildfires on TikTok: Content Analysis of Engagement With Maui Wildfire-Related Posts Over 1 Year. <i>JMIR Form Res.</i> 2025;9:e67515.
Nov 19, Fri	ASSIGNMENT DUE – Communication Plan, Part 3	
Nov 20, Thurs	Regain Trust in What Public Health Has to Say	Blendon RJ, Benson JM. Trust in Medicine, the Health System and Public Health. <i>Daedulus</i> 2022;Fall:67-92
Unit VI: Wrap Up		
Nov 25, Tues	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS – Communication Plan, Part 4	
Nov 27, Thurs	THANKSGIVING	
Dec 2, Tues	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS – Communication Plan, Part 4	
Dec 4, Thurs	Final Exam Review Session	
Dec 11	FINAL	

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Individuals 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 at <https://www.tamusa.edu/Disability-Support-Services/index.html> or email us at 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 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, 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 <http://tamusa.edu/studentcounseling>. Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331. 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 by the published Census Date (the first week of class). Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend prior to the published Census Date (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.

Office Hours: All faculty with teaching assignments should include regularly scheduled office hours on each syllabus in addition to "by appointment." Regularly scheduled office hours should also be posted outside their office door (where applicable).

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 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 with 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.

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 on our campus and within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees are to 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, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the University's Civil Rights Officer at 210-784-2061 or titleix@tamusa.edu.

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 based on sex, 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 sex-based misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (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 modifications to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with 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; 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. Young Jaguars: can support parenting students with daycare who meet this criteria: Must be enrolled in classes at TAMUSA in the current semester. Must be Pell eligible or a single parent. They serve children ages 3 to 12-years-old. Children must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. youngjaguars@tamusa.edu (210) 784-2636

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 students' 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/academicintegrity.html>).

Use of Generative AI Permitted Under Some Circumstances or With Explicit Permission

There are situations and contexts within this course where you may be asked to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to explore how they can be used. Outside of those circumstances, you should not use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any student work (assignments, activities, discussion responses, etc.) that is part of your evaluation in this course. Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate with attribution what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, students should reach out to their instructor for clarification before submitting work for grading. Use of AI-generated content without the instructor's permission and/or proper attribution in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

NOTE: Guidance for how to cite AI-generators, like ChatGPT, can be found here <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

Important Dates: Fall 2025 Regular 16-Week Session

- August 25 First day of class
- September 1 Labor Day Holiday – No classes
- September 10 Census Date
- November 14 Last day to drop with an automatic "W"
- November 25 Last day to withdraw from the University
- November 26 Study Day – No classes
- November 27-29 Thanksgiving Holiday – No classes
- December 4 Last day of classes
- December 5 Study Day – No classes
- December 6-12 Final exams
- December 16 Commencement

The complete academic calendar is available online: <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/current-year/index.html>

****Any material on this syllabus is subject to change if a compelling situation arises. You will be notified via email and Bb announcement.****