

Course Syllabus
UNIV 1301.014
First Year Seminar (FYS)
Texas A&M University-San Antonio | Fall 2025

Instructor: Ms. Elizabeth Alanis

Office Location: MADLA 306

Drop-in Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30. You are also able to schedule an appointment - <https://bit.ly/47LVzQz>

Instructor Email: ealanis@tamusa.edu

FYS Section: UNIV 1301.014

Day/Time/Location: Tuesday and Thursday | 11:00AM – 12:15PM | STEM 267

Peer Leader: Rosalinda Martinez, rmartinez1@tamusa.edu



Course Description (from the A&M-SA Course Catalog)

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

Course Overview

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

Course Promises

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

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

Course Expectations

This course will only fulfill these promises if you promise the following in return:

Attend classes. This course will rely largely on class content and discussion. For this format to succeed, you must be present and on time. You will earn an absence if you arrive 15 or more minutes after class has started. Excessive tardiness will also be penalized. You will receive points for attendance and many in and out of class assignments will be contingent on information from class. To earn full participation points, you must attend class and actively participate. If circumstances make you miss more than **four** classes during the semester, you may be overextended, so please reach out to me. Excessive tardiness and absences will affect your grade, and ***note that I am able to drop a student from the course if I access your tardiness/absences interfere with your success in this course.***

Be attentive and participate in class. I expect all students to actively participate during class both verbally and nonverbally. Participation does not simply mean speaking, although that is essential. I realize there are a variety of ways students can participate (e.g., following discussions with your eyes and ears, asking questions, sharing, reading, writing, individual reflection, presenting, collaboration). I hope that you will strive to stretch yourselves beyond your preferred ways of learning and your comfort zone. I encourage you to contribute thoughtful comments and questions, as well as to listen carefully to your peers' contributions and respectfully respond to others' comments. The success of our mutual learning from each other depends upon preparation and active participation in all aspects of the course.

Complete required assignments in a timely manner. Assignments provide you with both informal and formal opportunities to articulate your responses to the issues and topics we will discuss. You will get the most out of the course if you turn in your work on time. Extensions require at least a full day's advance notice prior to due dates and approval from me. It is vital that you follow basic grammar rules in order to get full credit for assignments. No matter how short or long the response, make sure you check for grammar and standards of academic writing. All responses are a reflection of you and are intended to prepare you for academic and professional writing.

Late Work Policy: It is very important that you complete work on time. Employers will ask you to complete your projects and work tasks on time. It is best to start the practice of submitting work on time and by the deadline now. I will communicate when assignments are due (date and time). There is an automatic point deduction for late work:

- Work submitted beyond the stated deadline one day late to 15 days after the deadline: 25% reduction in points.
- Work that is more than 15 days late: 50% reduction in points
- Starting in November, there are instances where it might not be possible to submit work more than 15 days late. For instance, if an assignment is given in mid-November, the latest I can take the assignment is by our last week (classes end on Dec. 4,).
- Accepting work during the week of finals (Dec. 6-12) is at my discretion and might not be possible.
- No work can be accepted and grades will close after December 12th.
- Shortly after the deadline passes for an assignment, any students who do not submit the work will receive a no-credit grade (noted as a 0). This does not mean your final grade is a 0; it simply means I did not get anything from you. Please take action to complete and submit the assignment to get partial credit.

Assignments and Evaluations

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

The majority of assignments will be completed during class (and submitted on BB). If you miss an in-class assignment, meet with your Instructor, Peer Leader, or a classmate to catch up on any work you may have missed.

Grade Breakdown

- **Daily assignments, quizzes, and reflections: 200 points/20%**
 - Student Profile; 20 points
 - Knowing Your Course Knowledge Check; 20 points
 - Motivation & Growth Mindset; 20 points
 - Focus 2 Completion + Reflection; 20 points
 - Pre-Reg Party Reflection; 20 points
 - GPA Reflection; 20 points
 - Living Wage Analysis; 20 points
 - Resume Draft/Cover Letter Draft; 20 points
 - Mays Center Presentation Reflection; 20 points
 - Peer Leader Meeting Summary; 20 points
- **Projects: 600 points/60%**
 - My Story Presentation; 50 points
 - Passport to Success; 150 points
 - Part 1: Resource Activity Reflection
 - Part 2: Academic Centered Activity Reflection
 - Part 3: Major/Career Activity Reflection
 - Strengths Presentations; 100 points
 - Time Management Project; 100 points
 - Career Mini-Project; 100 points
 - Final Reflection Presentation; 100 points
- **Participation: 200 points/20%**
 - Attendance and In-Class Engagement; 100 points
 - Peer Leader Meeting; 50 points
 - Attend Faculty Meeting; 50 points

Grading Scale:

900 – 1000 points = A

800 – 899 points = B

700 – 799 points = C

600 – 699 points = D

0 – 599 points = F

Extra Credit Opportunities

Throughout the semester, there will be many ways to earn extra credit. These opportunities range from attending a campus event, meeting with a professor during office hours, or getting help from a tutor at the Academic Learning Center or the Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center (WLDCC). I will add 5 points to your Participation Grade if you take part in an extra credit opportunity + write a short reflection (1 paragraph) about your experience.

Student Support Services and Policies

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 <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.

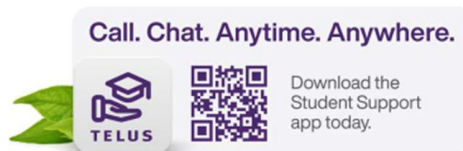
Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *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.

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



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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/academic-integrity.html>).

Guidelines for Use of AI

Use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including ChatGPT, is permitted in this course for students who wish to use them. To adhere to our scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work (this includes in-text citations and/or use of quotations, and in your reference list). Using an AI tool to generate content without proper



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attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

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.edu or at 210-784-4357.

Fall 2025 Regular 16-Week Session – Important Dates

August 25	Monday	First class day
September 1	Monday	Labor Day Holiday – No classes
September 11	Thursday	Drop for non-payment
November 14	Friday	Last day to drop with automatic grade of "W"
November 25	Tuesday	Last day to withdraw from the university
November 26	Wednesday	Study day – No classes
November 27 – November 29	Thursday – Saturday	Thanksgiving Holiday – No classes
December 4	Thursday	Last day of scheduled weekday classes
December 5	Friday	Study day – No classes
December 6 – December 12	Saturday – Friday	Final examinations

The complete academic calendar is available online:

<https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/index.html>.



Tentative Course Calendar

Week	Day 1	Day 2	Assignments/Projects Deadline
8/25 - 8/29	Introductions, Course Overview, Group Norms	Technology Presentation; My Story Assignment Intro, Knowing Your Course Knowledge Check	Knowing Your Course Knowledge Check (in-class) Student Profile Due: 8/31
9/1 - 9/5	Canva/PPT 101	Common Experience Overview; Introduce Passport to Success; Time to work on My Story Presentations	My Story Presentation Due: 9/7
9/8 - 9/12	My Story Mini Presentations (small groups); Start Strengths Project	Strengths Project Cont. + Presentations; Passport to Success Check-In	My Story Mini Presentations (in-class) Strengths Presentations (in-class) Due: 9/10
9/15 - 9/19	Remaining Strengths Presentations; Time Management Project	Time Management	Passport to Success (Resource) Due: 9/21
9/22 - 9/26	Resource Hunt	Motivation and Growth Mindset	Motivation and Growth Mindset Reflection Due: 9/28 Time Management Project Due: 9/28
9/29 - 10/3	Degree Works; Focus 2 Intro & Assessment	Focus 2 Cont; Handshake	
10/6 - 10/10	Pre-Registration Party	Review Focus 2 Results; Mini Career Project Intro	Pre-Registration Party Reflection Due: 10/12 Focus 2 Completion and Reflection Due: 10/12
10/13-10/17	Mays Center Presentations	Living Wage Analysis; Start Resume & Cover Letter Activity	Mays Center Presentation Reflection Due: 10/19 Living Wage Analysis (in-class) Due: 10/19
10/20 - 10/24	Resumes and Cover Letters	Career Mini Project Presentations	Career mini-projects (in-class) Due: 10/22 Passport to Success (Academic Centered) Due: 10/26
10/27 - 10/31	PROWL Introduction and GPA Lesson	Civic Engagement	GPA Reflection Due: 11/2
11/3 - 11/7	Final Project Introduction; PL Workshop	Notetaking Skills & AI	Resume/Cover Letter Drafts Due: 11/9
11/10 - 11/14	Mental Health and Mindfulness; Passport Check-In	PL Workshop	Passport to Success (Major/Career) Due: 11/16
11/17 - 11/21	Attend FYS Celebration	Time to Work on Final Projects	Peer Leader Meeting Summary Due: 11/23
11/24 - 11/28	FYS Fall Break - No Classes!		
12/1 - 12/5	Final Presentations	Final Presentations	Final Presentation Due: 11/30
12/8 - 12/12	FINALS		

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