

Syllabus for HONR 1300

First-Year Honors Seminar: Providing Healthcare in the United States

Fall 2026, Tu/Th 3:30-4:45pm

SciTech | Room 179

Instructor Information

Professor: Monica Schoch-Spana, PhD, CPH

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Phone: 210-784-2668

Office Hours: Weds, 10:00am-12:00pm; Thurs, 1:00-3:00pm; and by appointment

Professor: Bryan Bayles, PhD, MPH

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Phone: 210-784-2282

Office Hours: Mon and Weds, 9:00-11:00am, and by appointment

Course Catalog Description

The calling “to help people” draws many individuals into becoming healthcare professions, such as doctors, nurses, social workers, and therapists. What does it mean to be a healthcare professional and what is it like to become one? This course provides a critical examination of the pathways to becoming a healthcare provider, the systems that shape how both providers and patients experience healthcare, and how technological developments impact the experience of care. Whether you aspire to be a health professional, are a caregiver, or are navigating the healthcare system as a patient, this course provides insights into the factors shaping health outcomes and how we are all affected by healthcare systems, both locally and nationally.

Learning Objectives

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

- Define “profession” and contrast its institutional features to “occupation”
- Explain the institutional processes by which professions emerge and establish themselves
- Differentiate between historical phases of U.S. healthcare, including sources of authority, training approaches, financial structures, and ethics
- Describe the process of socialization and identity formation wherein a trainee incorporates the norms, values, and standards of their profession
- Compare and contrast institutional and individual aims and purposes that motivate diverse practitioners in fulfilling their professional obligations
- Describe the internal struggles that practitioners confront in the context of competing interests and ideas about healthcare’s purpose
- Evaluate the effects of both historical and contemporary technological developments on healthcare professionals’ experiences with their patients

- Critically examine the lived experiences of diverse practitioners amidst the social, economic, and technological forces that are shaping the aims and meanings of healthcare

Course Texts

- **Required:** Starr, Paul. 1982. *The Social Transformation of American Medicine*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Additional articles via embedded links and book chapters (i.e., Rosenthal, Chambliss, and Ofri) via library reserves.

Course Work and Grading Criteria

Participation – 40 points; 10%

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.

Readings (30 points): Please complete the readings for each section in advance of class. We will assess your command of the literature by way of 10 “free writes” over the course of the semester. At the beginning of class, you will write a brief response (over 5-10 min) to a short prompt based on the reading assignment. The purpose of this writing exercise is to focus your thinking and prepare you to share your ideas. You will receive 3 points for each satisfactory free-write you submit.

Attendance (10 points): We will circulate a sign-up sheet each day in class. You are responsible for the material presented during class whether you attend or not. Please work with another student to obtain missed notes and announcements. If you arrive on time and attend the class, you will receive full credit. You will be docked for a significant late arrival and receive no credit for unexcused absences.

Assignments

Important: Please also see the sections below regarding “writing expectations” (i.e., format, citations) and “artificial intelligence policy.”

The Health Professional Imagined – 40 points, 10%

Prepare a **2-page self-reflective essay** on one of two topics: what kind of health professional you hope to become, and if you do not intend that career path, then what kind of health professional would you want to treat you? You will identify a specific profession (e.g., nurse, physical therapist, doctor, physician) and address the following prompts: What practice setting for the patient encounters do you have in mind (e.g., hospital, clinic, home visit)? Which technical skills, social values, communication style, emotional demeanor, and other important attributes in that health professional would be desirable? If you plan to be a health professional, then what circumstances, if any, would make you want to leave the field? If you don’t plan to become a health professional, then what circumstances would cause you to leave that health professional’s care? **Due Weds, Sept 2**

Health System Comparison: The U.S. vs. Another Country – 60 points, 15%

Choose one country and write a **brief (2–3 page) comparative analysis** of its healthcare system versus the U.S., examining at least three key attributes: for example, financing and payment (single-payer vs. multi-payer, public vs. private insurance), workforce composition (demographics, primary care vs. specialist mix), and infrastructure (rural vs. urban coverage, technology adoption). You may add attributes like health outcomes, cost per capita, or patient satisfaction if they strengthen the comparison. For each attribute, explain how the two systems differ or align and why (historical, political, or economic factors). Use and properly cite at least three credible sources (peer-reviewed articles, government reports, or health policy organizations such as the WHO or Commonwealth Fund). Include a brief introduction stating your country and comparison focus, and a conclusion reflecting on how being a health professional might compare in each system. **Due Mon, Sept 28**

Profile the Profession – 60 points, 15%

Select a U.S. health profession (e.g., R.N., P.A., occupational therapist, respiratory therapist) and write a **2-page profile**, addressing 5 elements: scope of practice (what the profession is legally and practically authorized to do); training path (education, licensure/certification exams, and typical length of preparation); salary outlook (current earnings and projected job growth); demographic composition (who works in the field: gender, race/ethnicity, age, or geographic distribution, and any notable underrepresentation); and current challenges or controversies (workforce shortages, scope-of-practice disputes, burnout, regulatory debates). Use clear headings for each element and support your points with specific data and examples rather than generalizations. Draw on and properly cite at least 3 credible sources (e.g., professional associations, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, peer-reviewed journals, or reputable news outlets). Conclude with a brief reflection on what this profile reveals about the broader U.S. health workforce. **Due Weds, Oct 21**

Technologically Mediated Care – 60 points, 15%

Selecting one of 5 dates, a small team will each **lead the class in discussion** of the assigned reading. You will examine how a specific health technology has *mediated* the interaction between provider and patient – that is, how it has reshaped what happens between them rather than simply making care faster or more accurate. Provoke a conversation that challenges your classmates to think critically about this underlying question: *When this technology enters the clinical encounter/setting, what changes in the relationship between provider and patient – in power, attention, intimacy, trust, the body, and whose interests are served?* Use passages from the readings and prompts your classmates to generate genuine analysis and not just opinion-swapping. **Due Nov 5, 10, 12, 17 or 19 (Sign up)**

A Healthcare Worker's Career Story – 140 points, 35%

For this multi-part assignment, you will identify and **interview a healthcare worker** about their career journey, and then report your findings in verbal and written form. Your interview should explore 3 broad areas: their initial decision to enter a healthcare profession, their experience of relevant education and training, and their life as a more seasoned professional (both its ups and downs). Prepare thoughtful, open-ended interview questions in advance, and be sure to ask follow-up questions that draw out specific stories and concrete examples rather than general statements. Maintain your interviewee's confidentiality, if requested, in your reporting (described below):

- **10-minute oral presentation** (60 points): Highlight the most compelling aspects of your interviewee's story and connect their experiences to broader themes in the class. Develop a

few ppt slides (up to 5) to help capture and/or illustrate your main points. **Due Nov 24, Dec 1, or Dec 3 (sign up)**

- **Written report of 3-5 pages** (80 points): Address the 3 areas above in greater detail, weave in your learnings from the course, and included a brief reflection on what you personally gained from the conversation. **Due Thurs, Dec 10**

Grading

Breakdown

- Participation, 10%, 40 points
- Health Professional Imagined, 10%, 40 points
- Health System Comparison, 15%, 60 points
- Profile the Profession, 15%, 60 points
- Technologically Mediated Care, 15%, 60 points
- Health Care Worker's Career Story, 35%, 140 points

Scale

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

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

Artificial Intelligence Policy

No Use of Generative AI Permitted

HLTH 3320 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

Deadlines

Please hand over all assignments by 11:59pm on the scheduled due date. We 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

Introduction and syllabus overview (Tues, Aug 25)

Unit I: What Are Professions and Professionals?

Aim: Introduce the basic construct of a profession centered on health and caring

Themes: "Occupation" versus "profession"; social role and value; authoritative knowledge; scientific expertise; moral universe/ethics; emotional labor

What makes a "profession" a profession? (Thurs, Aug 27)

Harold L. Wilensky, "The Professionalization of Everyone?" *American Journal of Sociology* 70, no. 2 (1964): 137–158. <https://www-jstor-org.tamusa.idm.oclc.org/stable/2775206>

Who sets the standard of professionalism for a professional?

Julia Evetts, "The Sociological Analysis of Professionalism: Occupational Change in the Modern World." *International Sociology* 18, no. 2 (2003): 395–415.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0268580903018002005>

What distinguishes the "health expert" in the room? (Tues, Sept 1)

Illich, Ivan. 1977. "Disabling Professions." In *Disabling Professions*, 11–39. London: Marion Boyars. <https://link-springer-com.tamusa.idm.oclc.org/article/10.1007/BF00729109>

****ASSIGNMENT DUE: Weds, Sept 2, The Health Professional Imagined****

What is the work of a "helping professional"? (Thurs, Sept 3)

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2012. *The Managed Heart : Commercialization of Human Feeling, Updated with a New Preface*. 3rd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press. Preface to the 2012 Edition and Chapter 1, "Exploring the Managed Heart."
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tamsa/detail.action?docID=870020>

Exercise: How do different health professionals' codes of conduct compare? (Tues, Sept 8)

[Code of Ethics for Nurses](#)

[Code of Medical Ethics](#)

[Ethical Guidelines for the PA Profession](#)

[Health Education Code of Ethics](#)

[Public Health Code of Ethics](#)

Unit II: What Makes the American Healthcare System Distinct?

Aim: Describe the larger cultural, political, and economic systems that have shaped the lived experiences of U.S. health professionals

Themes: Alternative medical traditions (e.g., allopathy, homeopathy, osteopathy); medical autonomy; scientific authority; Flexner Report; hospital as charitable refuges vs. capital-intensive business; preventive vs. curative care; healthcare corporatization; occupational segregation

Medicine's Ascendancy in U.S. Society

Thurs, Sept 10

Starr, Book 1, Introduction, "The Social Origins of Professional Sovereignty"

Tues, Sept 15

Starr, Book 1, Chapter 1, "Medicine in a Democratic Culture, 1760–1850"

Thurs, Sept 17

Starr, Book 1, Chapter 3, "The Consolidation of Professional Authority, 1850–1930"

The Evolving Role of Hospitals in America

Tues, Sept 22

Starr, Book 1, Chapter 4, "The Reconstitution of the Hospital"

Thurs, Sept 24

Reverby, Susan. "A Caring Dilemma: Womanhood and Nursing in Historical Perspective," *Nursing Research* 36, no. 1 (1987): 5–11. (handed out)

****ASSIGNMENT DUE: Mon, Sept 28, Health System Comparison****

The "For-Profit" Business Model's Influence on U.S. Healthcare

Tues, Sept 29

Rosenthal, E. 2017. *An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take It Back*. Penguin Press. Chapter 3, "The Age of Physicians"

Thurs, Oct 1

Rosenthal, Chapter 1, "The Age of Insurance"

The Healthcare Workforce as a Mirror to American Society

Tues, Oct 6

Janette Dill and Mignon Duffy, "Structural Racism and Black Women's Employment in the US Health Care Sector." *Health Affairs* 41, no. 2 (2022): 265–272.

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/2627195105/fulltextPDF/F863AC744EFC48CDPQ/1?accountid=130967&sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals>

Thurs, Oct 8

Elle Lett, Whitney U. Orji, and Ronnie Sebro, "Declining Racial and Ethnic Representation in Clinical Academic Medicine: A Longitudinal Study of 16 US Medical Specialties." *PLOS ONE* 13, no. 11 (2018): e0207274.

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0207274>

Unit III: How Does a Trainee Become a Professional? Stay One or Leave?

Aim: Trace the developmental trajectory of different practitioners including how institutions of education and employment shape a care provider's options, outlooks, experiences, and emotions

Themes: Professional socialization; hidden curriculum; health care specializations; authority structures; social hierarchies; status and prestige; professional scope of work; boundary keeping; personal agency; ethical dilemmas; moral injury and burnout

Learning and Practicing a Profession

Tues, Oct 13 – Surgeon

Cassell, Joan. 1991. *Expected miracles: Surgeons at work*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Chapter 2, "The Temperament of Surgeons" <https://www-jstor-org.tamusa.idm.oclc.org/stable/j.ctt14bt4w2>

Gawande, Atul. 2002. "The Learning Curve." *New Yorker* Jan 28; 2002: 52-61.
<https://www.proquest.com/docview/233147728/452E4CF09D164CE7PQ/1?accountid=130967&sourcetype=Magazines>

Thurs, Oct 15 – Physician

Ofri, Danielle. 2013. *What Doctors Feel: How Emotions Affect the Practice of Medicine*. Boston: Beacon Press. Chapter 1, "The Doctor Can't See You Now" and Chapter 2, "Can We Build a Better Doctor?"

Tues, Oct 20 – Nurse

Chambliss, Daniel F. 1996. *Beyond Caring: Hospitals, Nurses, and the Social Organization of Ethics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3, "What It Means to Be a Nurse," and Chapter 4, "How the Organization Creates Ethical Problems"

****ASSIGNMENT DUE: Mon, Oct 19, Profile the Profession****

Thurs, Oct 22 – Physician Assistant

Cawley, James F et al. 2012. "Origins of the physician assistant movement in the United States." *JAAPA : Official Journal of the American Academy of Physician Assistants* vol. 25,12: 36-40, 42. <https://www.ovid.com/jnls/jaapa/abstract/01720610-201212000-00008~origins-of-the-physician-assistant-movement-in-the-united?redirectionsource=fulltextview>

Tues, Oct 27 – Community Health Worker

Jacobi, John V. 2024. "Community Health Workers and the Dilemma of Integrated Care," *Houston Journal of Health Law & Policy* 23(1).
<https://houstonhealthlaw.scholasticahq.com/article/94072-community-health-workers-and-the-dilemma-of-integrated-care>

Working Across Disciplines

Thurs, Oct 29

Pippa Hall, "Interprofessional Teamwork: Professional Cultures as Barriers." *Journal of Interprofessional Care* 19, Suppl. 1 (2005): 188–196. <https://www.tandfonline-com.tamusa.idm.oclc.org/doi/abs/10.1080/13561820500081745>

Leaving the Field: Burnout and Moral Injury

Tues, Nov 3

Dean, Wendy et al. "Reframing Clinician Distress: Moral Injury Not Burnout." *Federal Practitioner : for the Health Care Professionals of the VA, DoD, and PHS* vol. 36,9 (2019): 400-402. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6752815/pdf/fp-36-09-400.pdf>

Rushton, Cynda Hylton. McKenna, E. 2025. "Moral resilience." *Aeon*. January 13.
<https://aeon.co/essays/how-moral-resilience-helps-nurses-work-through-ethical-strife>

Unit IV: How Has Technology Shaped the Provider-Patient Encounter?

Aim: Examine how various technologies have *mediated* the interaction between provider and patient – that is, how material and digital culture have reshaped what happens between the professional and the layperson

Themes: Visibility and invisibility; power and agency; social hierarchies; the human relationship; dehumanization; objectification; interests served; technology as tool, extension, or actor

Themes:

Thurs, Nov 5

Al-Rubaie, Ali. 2024. "From Cadavers to Codes: The Evolution of Anatomy Education Through Digital Technologies." *Medical Science Educator*. 35(2)2:1101-1109.
https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12058626/pdf/40670_2024_Article_2268.pdf

Tues, Nov 10

Sandelowski, Margarete. 2000. "'This Most Dangerous Instrument': Propriety, Power, and the Vaginal Speculum." *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, & Neonatal Nursing* 29, no. 1: 73–82. [https://www.jognn.org/article/S0884-2175\(15\)33792-8/fulltext](https://www.jognn.org/article/S0884-2175(15)33792-8/fulltext)

Thurs, Nov 12

Lavine, Matthew. 2012. "The Early Clinical X-Ray in the United States: Patient Experiences and Public Perceptions." *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 67 (4): 587–625. <https://muse-jhu-edu.tamusa.idm.oclc.org/pub/8/article/487861/pdf>

Tues, Nov 17

Gawande, Atul. 2018. "The Upgrade: Why Doctors Hate Their Computers." *The New Yorker*, November 12, 2018. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2147593717/339C77DD1AC5455APQ/7?accountid=130967&sourcetype=Magazines>

Thurs, Nov 19

Opel, Douglas J. and Breakspear, Michael. 2025. "Transforming Mental Health Research and Care Through Artificial Intelligence." *Science*, 391(6782):249-258. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.adz9193>

Unit V: Student Presentations on the Career Stories of Healthcare Workers

Tues, Nov 24

Thurs, Nov 26 – THANKSGIVING

Tues, Dec 1

Thurs, Dec 3

****ASSIGNMENT DUE: Thurs, Dec 10, Healthcare Worker's Career Story (written report)**

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

University Email Policy and Course Communications

All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have your Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at helpdesk@tamusa.edu or at 210-784-HELP (4357). If you don't hear back within 48 hours, contact them again. They have many requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to follow up with them.

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 the [website](#) or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. All students are encouraged to discuss their academic accommodation with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

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 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. Online tutoring is also available for after hours and weekend assistance.

While tutoring hours may change based on tutor schedules and availability, the current tutoring hours for MATH in the ALC are as follows:

Appointments available MATH Walk in Tutoring – No appointment needed

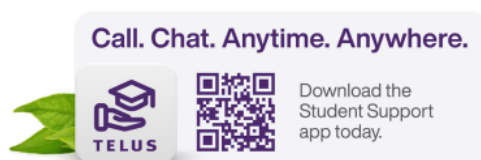
	Appointments available	Walk in Tutoring – No appointment needed
MONDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
TUESDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
WEDNESDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
THURSDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
FRIDAY	8 am – 5 pm	11 am – 4 pm

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, visit our website, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

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. *Crisis support is available 24/7/365 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 or through the TELUS student support App.*

The TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including 24/7/365 support for in the moment distress, crisis support, 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 system. 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 on emergency response may be found at: [Emergency Operations Plan](#) and the [Emergency Action Plan](#). 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.

Jaguar Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center (WLDCC)

The WLDCC provides support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Writing 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. The WLDCC offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. Students can schedule appointments with the WLDCC in JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. Students wanting to work in realtime with a tutor can schedule an “Online Appointment.” Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an “eTutoring” appointment. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our [website](#) . The WLDCC can also be reached by emailing wldcc@tamusa.edu.

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 report](#) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources. A food pantry is available on campus; click [here](#) for hours and contact information.

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

The Six-Drop Rule

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

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 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 accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 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 if students meet this criteria: (1) must be enrolled in classes at Texas A&M-San Antonio in the current semester, (2) must be Pell eligible or a single parent, (3) child(ren) must be aged 3 to 12-years-old, and (4) child(ren) must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. Hours of operation is Monday-Thursday 3:30pm-9:00pm. For more information, please contact Young Jaguars at youngjaguars@tamusa.edu or call (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, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

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

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, 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](#) or visit the resources available in the [OSRR website](#)

Important Fall 2026 Dates

Dates	Event
August 20	Tuition & Fee Payments deadline
August 24	First day of class
September 7	Labor Day Holiday – No Classes / University Closed
September 9	Census Date – Students not paid in full or enrolled in a payment plan by 4:59 pm may be dropped for non-payment
October 5 – October 16	Midterm grading period
November 13	Last day to drop with an automatic “W”
November 25	Study Day – No classes
November 26-November 28	Thanksgiving Holiday – No Classes / University Closed
November 30	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University
December 4	Last day of classes
December 5 – December 11	Final exams
December 15	Commencement

The complete [academic calendar](#) is available online.