

# COMM 1315: Fundamentals of Public Speaking

Communication Program  
Department of Sociology & Communication  
College of Arts & Sciences  
Texas A&M University-San Antonio  
Spring 2024 Semester ~ January 16, 2024, to May 7, 2024

## Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Megan G. Pope, M.A.

**Office:** CAB 318D

**Telephone:** (210) 784-2269

**Email:** [megan.pope@tamusa.edu](mailto:megan.pope@tamusa.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 5–7 PM, Thursday 2–3 PM

**Teaching Philosophy**

Hello Scholars,

Welcome to COMM 1315: Fundamentals of Public Speaking.

I used to have a long teaching philosophy written out. It was all about helping you lean into the discomfort, believe in yourself, and become a better writer over the semester. I wrote about why I wanted you to become a better writer and how I'd help you do it.

While I'll still help you grow in these areas, my priorities have shifted since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, my teaching philosophy is simply this: I may not always have the answers or be able to solve any of your struggles, but I believe you are valuable. I will sit with you if you are struggling. I will listen and help you find resources when you need them. I will respond with compassion and kindness.

And I will always show you respect, as is your due as a human being.

Sincerely,

Prof. Pope

## Course Information

**Pre-Requisites:** None

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Section Number, Course Time/Date, & Location**

COMM 1315-005 TR 12:30 PM - 1:45 PM CAB 424

## Course Description

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This course teaches students to apply the principles of communication theory in the presentational speaking context with an emphasis on audience/communication analysis, adapting to diverse audiences, and self-awareness. This course meets the standards for the Component Area Option category under the core curriculum.

## Learning Objectives

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By the end of this course, every student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate self-perception through recognizing diverse perspectives and understanding the ethical implications of communication.
2. Cultivate active listening skills.
3. Design intentional messages by practicing audience analysis.
4. Research, develop, and deliver extemporaneous informative and persuasive speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal messages.
5. Develop critical thinking skills through practicing effective group communication.

## Required Materials

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- WW Norton eBook Contemporary Public Speaking by Pat Gehrke & Megan Foley (ISBN: 9781265812928). Please buy the code from the bookstore or directly through Blackboard. If you buy a paper copy of the textbook, you will still need to purchase access to the eBook. Contact Tech Support: <https://wnorton.com/tech-support> for trouble logging in or submitting an assignment.
- Students will need access to Microsoft Suite or Google Drive and the Internet (which may be accessed on campus in various computer labs). If required, students may receive a free download of Microsoft Suite or check out a laptop for free from the IT department.
- A free account with Zoom & YouTube
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## Learning Management System

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For this course, Blackboard is used.

All course materials, the syllabus, and the e-book can be accessed through the [TAMUSA Blackboard site](#) or by visiting [JagWire](#). Please check the announcements often, as pertinent information will be posted there.

## Course Policies

### Attendance Policy

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Students are required to attend every class.

Attendance means being no more than 10 minutes late and staying until the end of class. Leaving class early, for whatever reason, will earn an absence. Absences may not be made up.

Attendance is essential, and being late, leaving early, or being absent will impact the student's final course grade. **If you are absent for over three weeks of class, the instructor will take 20% off your final grade.**

Please email the professor with adequate proof to request an excused absence.

### Dropping the Course

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If, for some reason, the student wishes to withdraw from this course, they must initiate the drop process.

### Participation Policy

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Students are expected to come to class prepared, whether online or face-to-face.

Completing the e-book assignments and reviewing the materials posted on Blackboard before arriving to class will ensure students are ready to discuss these materials. Check announcements frequently.

### Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

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#### *No Use of Generative AI Permitted*

COMM 1315 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 write 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.

### Technology Policy

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#### Face-to-face Classes

Silence cell phones before entering the classroom, and refrain from texting.

Laptops are welcome, but please confine laptop work to taking notes or accessing relevant course materials. Internet surfing, shopping, video games, homework for other classes, updating social media, etc., is prohibited. Please keep laptops three-quarters closed to signify listening during peer speeches.

Students whose technology distracts their classmates or the instructor will be asked to leave. **It is required that you put away all headphones upon entering class (unless they are medically needed) and put all cell phones in your backpack.**

#### Online Classes

All students should be muted unless speaking.

While students are not required to show their faces, it is encouraged. However, **students will be required to use the audio feature.** Students will be called on to speak occasionally and are expected to be prepared to answer.

Do not "listen" to class while driving a car; this is dangerous.

## Course Changes

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This syllabus is subject to change at any time. Students will be notified via email, Blackboard, and in class should it change.

## Civility Code

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### Face-to-face Classes

During this course, students will participate in discussions that occasionally touch on controversial issues. Therefore, it is essential that students show respect for each other in the tone and content of their comments.

Similarly, when peers are giving speeches, it is appropriate and respectful for students to give the speaker their full attention. When a student puts time and effort into a presentation, it can be disheartening to look out at the audience and see people talking, yawning, or using their cell phones.

Appropriate conduct is essential to the effective functioning of the University. University policy defines unacceptable academic and non-academic conduct and penalties for such behavior in The Student Handbook and The Student Code of Conduct.

### Online Classes

Online communication is a critical component of any online environment.

This semester, there will be both synchronous and asynchronous communication. Netiquette rules apply to both. In cyberspace, netiquette is an “acceptable way of communicating and behaving on the Internet.”

### Behavior

Appropriate adult behavior is expected.

Name-calling, inappropriate innuendos, rude/disrespectful comments, derogatory words, etc., are unprofessional and inappropriate, both on the job and in class. There is no tolerance for these actions in this course, regardless of format (in-person or online).

### Course Guidelines

- Students will cooperate, not compete.
- Students will treat everyone respectfully.
- Students will create a safe and respectful environment.
- Students will respect the confidentiality of their classmates.
- Students will report any unusual occurrences to the instructor immediately.
- Students will avoid any behavior that is unprofessional or disruptive to learning.
- Students will accept differences of opinion and try to learn from the views of others.
- Students will participate fully and act on the instructor’s direction during all activities.

### Netiquette

This course uses Blackboard Collaborate and Google Docs for discussions. Tone and meaning are open to interpretation when it comes to interacting. To foster a positive environment, please practice netiquette.

- Capitalize words only to highlight a point or for titles. Otherwise, it is generally viewed as SHOUTING.
- It is fine to use humor, but do so carefully. The absence of face-to-face cues can cause humor to be misinterpreted as criticism or flaming (the use of hostile, angry, or antagonistic language online).
- Use spellcheck and read messages to correct any grammar mistakes before posting. All postings are public and sometimes will be graded, so ensure others can read and understand each post.
- Offensive language will not be tolerated. Per the A&M-SA Student Code of Conduct, students should never engage in name-calling, personal insults (open or veiled), bullying, hate speech, or inappropriate language.
- The use of emojis is acceptable if they are appropriate for the setting.
- Think through the purpose and content of a post before posting, and write clearly and concisely.

### Academic Integrity

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Texas A&M University-San Antonio students are expected to adhere to the highest academic honesty and integrity standards.

Academic dishonesty for which a student is subject to penalty includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submissions, misrepresentation of academic records, facilitating academic dishonesty, unfair advantage, violating known safety requirements, and ethical misconduct. This includes holding other students to the same standards and reporting any incidents of alleged violation of the honesty policy to the instructor involved or, if necessary, to the appropriate academic department head.

All students are responsible for becoming familiar with the Academic Dishonesty Policy, which may be found in the [Texas A&M University-San Antonio Student Handbook](#).

University policy prescribes serious consequences for acts of academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, a grade of 'F' on one paper or assignment, a failing grade in the course, or possible expulsion from the University. Considering the potential consequences of academic misconduct, it is obviously in the student's best interests to avoid even the appearance of such behavior.

If a student needs clarification on whether a specific act might constitute academic misconduct, please contact the instructor for an assessment of the situation. All student term papers and other written assignments are subject to analysis by anti-plagiarism software. The instructor will report **ALL** instances of actual or perceived violations of Academic Integrity.

### Email Policy

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The instructor does not check emails between the hours of 5:00 PM on Friday and 8:00 AM on Monday.

Students who send an email during this time will receive a response during business hours on Monday. Students are encouraged to email the instructor if there are any questions or concerns, if they need help, or if they will be absent.

When writing an email, please put the course and section number in the subject line (e.g., COMM 1315.002), followed by the topic of the email. Then, follow the proper email protocol.

[Click here for some examples of email templates.](#) **Emails that do not follow these guidelines will be returned to the sender and requested to be rewritten.**

### Communication Anxiety

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Many people cite a fear of public speaking. If you experience extreme nervousness during speeches, please alert the instructor and come during office hours to discuss how to approach it.

Practicing mindfulness has been shown to [benefit](#) generalized anxiety disorder and may help with communication anxiety. Feel free to discuss practicing mindfulness meditation with the instructor.

One option is to practice your speech in person with someone who will provide you with a safe environment to receive constructive feedback. Please contact the [Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center](#) for a Speech tutoring session. Before your session, tell the tutor, "I would like to gain confidence and perform my speech, but I would only like positive feedback or no feedback."

## Assignments, Assessments, & Evaluation

### Breakdown of Assignment Points

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Ebook InQuizitive Assignments (14 x 1 pt = 14 pts)	14
Week One Worksheet	2
Perception Short Essay	3
Listening Experiment	3
Communication Apprehension Short Essay	3
Practice Video	2
Intro Speech Video	5
Intro Speech Discussion Board	2
Group Persuasive Speech (Group Grade)	20
Topic Proposal (Group Grade)	1
Draft of Outline (Group Grade)	4
Final Outline (Group Grade)	10
Group Reflection (Solo Grade)	1
Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center Tutoring Appointment	5
Informative Speech Video	10
Informative Speech Discussion Board	2
Topic Proposal	1
Professor Review of Outline	2
Final Outline	10
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100*</b>
<b>*Note: final grades are added, not averaged.</b>	

## Calculation of Final Grades

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<b>Points</b>	<b>Final Grade</b>
90 to 100 points	A
80 to 89.9 points	B
70 to 79.9 points	C
60 to 69.9 points	D
0 to 59.9 points	F

## Assignment Descriptions

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The following are short descriptions of this course's assignments and assessments. Further instructions for each will be available on Blackboard.

### E-book InQuizitive Assignments

Students will complete graded assignments in the WW Norton e-book online called InQuizitive Assignments.

Students should complete these assignments every week and come prepared to discuss the material in class. Reading the chapters will help prepare the student with the knowledge of how to create and perform speeches. [Here](#) is a video that will help you get started.

These assignments are always due on Sunday.

### Tutoring Center

Students must attend a tutoring appointment at the [Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center](#) once per semester for course credit. Students may make in-person or virtual appointments for writing, speech, Spanish, or digital tutoring.

They must provide proof of the visit to the instructor. Log into Jagwire to make an appointment.

Here are the three ways the student can provide proof:

1. Students can request a Proof of Attendance slip from their tutor or the front desk worker at the end of their appointment.
2. Students can request that a copy of their appointment report be sent to their instructor. The student must request this in the appointment form they fill out before meeting with a tutor.
3. Students can provide a screenshot of the report that was sent to them. All students receive a copy of their appointment report in their student email after any tutoring appointment.

Feel free to visit more than once for extra credit.

## Presentations

Students will be required to do two solo presentations (Intro & Informative) and one group presentation (Persuasive).

Each presentation has different requirements, and instructions will be posted on Blackboard.

### *Intro Speech*

Students will be writing and performing an introduction speech. This speech will be 3-4 minutes. More information will be provided on Blackboard.

### *Informative Speech*

To prepare for a solo informative speech, students will select an informative speech topic.

While preparing, students will research and write an informative presentation outline with at least three different APA style in-text citations and a references page in APA format with the same three sources. They will then perform a 4-6 minute extemporaneous-style speech.

To prepare for the speech, students will complete a topic proposal, have the professor review their outline, and participate in a delivery critique. The final deliverables will be the speech and the outline.

After the speech, students will write a self-critique to assess their strengths and areas of improvement. This assignment fulfills learning objective 4: "Research, develop, and deliver extemporaneous informative and persuasive speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal messages."

### *Group Persuasive Speech*

Students will be put into groups of 2 to 3. Together, they will work toward presenting a group persuasive speech with multimedia (PowerPoint, Canva, etc.).

To prepare for this speech, research an issue or problem that impacts the audience. Pick a problem with gravitas that affects the audience at the local, state, or federal level. All topics must be approved by the instructor.

Students will research and write a persuasive presentation outline that follows the rules of logic and persuasion (6 pages double-spaced, plus a references page) with several APA style citations (a minimum of 8 unique sources). This outline must have a references page in APA format with eight different sources total, 4 of which must be print sources.

Speech length is 3 minutes minimum per student, and each student must speak using an extemporaneous style of speaking.

For example, if students have three people in their group, the minimum speech length needs to be 9 minutes. Each group must dress professionally and give eight different oral citations. The speech and the outline are group grades.



Groups will create an outline and a presentation video using Zoom and multimedia (such as PowerPoint). Groups will turn in all three. Only one person needs to turn in the video and multimedia for the entire group, but everyone must turn in the outline.

This speech will be recorded using Zoom. When recording, everyone MUST show their face during the entire presentation and the multimedia.

This assignment fulfills the following learning objectives:

- Learning objective 3: Design intentional messages by practicing audience analysis
- Learning objective 4: Research, develop, and deliver extemporaneous informative and persuasive speeches with effective verbal and nonverbal messages
- Learning objective 5: Develop critical thinking skills through practicing effective group communication

## Other Written Assignments

### *Week One Worksheet*

In this short assignment, students will learn the functions of Blackboard, read the syllabus for understanding, and practice turning in an assignment.

### *Perception Short Essay*

In this short essay, students will explore perception and communication, how perception impacts their communication with others, how their culture and co-cultures impact their perception and communication with others, and their ethical communication compass.

This assignment fulfills learning objective 1: Demonstrate self-perception through recognizing diverse perspectives and understanding the ethical implications of communication.

### *Listening Experiment*

This assignment encourages students to learn the steps to active listening and understand their listening barriers.

To do so, they will interview a peer or family member about their listening skills. They'll then reflect on how they could improve and practice active listening in their lives and with their peers in the group project.

This assignment fulfills the following:

- Learning outcome 1: Cultivate active listening skills
- Learning outcome 5: Develop critical thinking skills through practicing effective group communication

### *Communication Apprehension Short Essay*

This short essay helps students analyze and understand their relationship with communication apprehension.

## Written Work

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All written work must be typed following APA format. Non-typed assignments will not be accepted, thus resulting in a failing grade.

Written assignments must use 12 pt. font in Times New Roman, Cambria, or Calibri typeface. Please use one-inch margins.

All papers, outlines, and written assignments in this class will be written using APA format, including in-text citations and reference pages.

Assignments are only accepted in .doc, .pdf, or .docx format. If using pages software, save as .doc or .docx. Do not turn in a .pages document.

When using Google Docs or One Drive, please **DO NOT** turn in the URL link to the paper. **DO NOT** click "Share" and turn in the URL or share with the instructor's email address. Instead, log into Blackboard and find the appropriate assignment area to turn in the paper. From inside Blackboard, log into Google Drive to turn in the document.

**Edit all papers, outlines, and discussion board posts thoroughly for proper grammar, smooth flow, clear organization, proper spelling, and appropriate punctuation.**

If the student needs any help with APA format, they may visit [the Writing Center](#) or [APA OWL Purdue Website](#).

## Late Work & Makeup Policies

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### E-book InQuizitive Reading & Assignments

These assignments will not be accepted late, and no exceptions will be made.

Blackboard Assignments (Papers, Reflections, Essays, Drafts, Outlines, Speeches, Videos, etc.)

If a student discovers they cannot turn in a Blackboard assignment by its deadline, they should email the instructor before the deadline and request an extension. Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

**Late assignments accepted will be given a penalty of 25% off per day late. Late assignments will be accepted up to three days late. On the 4<sup>th</sup> day, the assignment will be considered a zero.**

## Extra Credit

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There are several ways to earn extra credit.

- Extra Credit Video: Students may create a 2- to 4-minute multimedia video discussing "Lessons in Public Speaking."
- Visit the Writing Center at the Academic Learning Center: Each visit (online or face-to-face) is worth two points. Students must provide the instructor with proof of attendance. These may be repeated.
- Attend any Writing Center or Academic Learning Center workshop: Students may attend up to three for extra credit. Each workshop is worth two points. Students must provide proof of attendance by taking a selfie with the presenter and emailing it, along with three takeaways, to the instructor. Ask the instructor for workshop

- approval.
- Visit the TAMU-SA librarians (online or face-to-face) for help with research for informative and persuasive presentations. This is worth 2 points per visit and may be repeated three times. To earn credit, students should have the librarian who helped them with research sign the back of their business card, which they'll bring to the instructor before finals. Students may also get credit by asking the librarian to email the instructor to prove they utilized the librarian's help.

**Students may earn up to 10 extra credit points for the entire semester.**

## Student Support Services & Resources

### Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities

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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, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email at [dss@tamusa.edu](mailto: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 and their instructors as soon as possible.

### Academic Learning Center

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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](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu), calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

### Student Academic Success Center

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The Student Academic Success Center takes a developmental approach to help students complete their academic goals from orientation through graduation. The Center offers academic and skills workshops, one-on-one appointments, and online resources to help retention efforts at Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

The goal of the Center is to help students discover, self-reflect, and become independent learners. Student Academic Success is in Modular C. Their services are offered virtually or by phone. To contact the Center, please call (210) 784-1307 or email [Student.Success@tamusa.edu](mailto:Student.Success@tamusa.edu).

### Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center

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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 e-portfolios, 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://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

### Meeting Basic Needs

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Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students ([DOS@tamusa.edu](mailto:DOS@tamusa.edu)) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

### Counseling Resources

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As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you 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 Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance).

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 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2').** For more information and self-help resources, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

### Active Minds

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Active Minds is a student-led club that raises awareness and provides education about mental health for students. We aim to create a safe space where students are valued and can share their thoughts with others.

Active Minds is not counseling or group therapy, and we recommend that all students in crisis seek help from the TAMUSA Student Counseling Center.

Feel free to contact your professor for more information, as she serves as the club advisor, and follow [Active Minds on JagSync](#).

### Military Affairs

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

## LGBTQIA+ Students

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Please refer to the [Rainbow PAWS on JagSync](#) for more information about LGBTQIA+ support on campus.

## Technical Support

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Visit the [Help Desk website](#) for any help, call (210) 784-4357, or email [helpdesk@tamusa.tamusa.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamusa.tamusa.edu).

## Computer Labs

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Students may use the computers in the library or those in various rooms around the campus. Please refer to IT Services' [list of computer lab locations and hours](#).

## Checking Out Technology

Should the student need access to a camera or laptop, please reach out to Professor Pope or the [IT department](#) on campus.

## Library

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The [library](#) has many wonderful resources, including private study rooms and computers. Students may also check out cameras from the library for up to three days. If students need specific help with research, make an appointment to meet with the librarian.

## General's Store

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General's Store is an on-campus food pantry that serves members of the campus community who are in need. This service is in Patriot's Casa, room 110, and is available at set times by appointment only.

For more information, call (210) 784-1447 or email [experience@tamusa.edu](mailto:experience@tamusa.edu).

# University & State Policies

## University Email Policy and Course Communications

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All correspondence between instructors and students must occur via University email accounts. The instructor will distribute course materials via Blackboard, including announcements and updates. It is encouraged that students log in to that system at least twice per week.

## Students' Rights and Responsibilities:

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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 are 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 US 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, 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 the 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 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 an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

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. Behaviors that infringe 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 academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures, please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

#### [Religious Observances](#)

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Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to religious observance, provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

#### [Emergency Preparedness](#)

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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 or 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/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf>

Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900

### Statement of Harassment and Discrimination

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Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

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, 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 misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto: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

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Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The University will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to



pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns about their status ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto: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.

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### 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.

### Privacy

If students wish their personal information to be private, visit the [Texas A&M-San Antonio Registrar](#) to request a confidentiality hold.

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### Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance

According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 68.21: US 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 US DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

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### Key Dates

January 16, 2024	First day of class
March 11-17	Spring break – No classes
March 29, 2024	Study day – No classes
April 13, 2024	Last day to drop with an automatic "W"
April 20, 2024	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University
April 29, 2024	Last day of scheduled classes
April 30, 2024	Study day – No classes
May 1-7, 2024	Final exams

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



## COVID-19 Syllabus Addendum

The safety of the campus community is paramount to the ability to provide students, faculty, and staff with a productive and secure learning and working environment. For more information on current data, safety protocols, and reporting guidelines, please visit [the University's COVID-19 website](#).