



**Course Information:**

**Course:** Introduction to Life Sciences II (Non-Majors)

**Course Number & Section:** BIOL 1309\_002 (3 credits)

**Instructor Information:**

**Instructor:** Danielle Rios, MSc.

**Office Location:** CAB 354

**Office Hours:** Mondays (11:00am-1:30pm), Tuesdays (9:00am-10:30am), Thursdays (9:00am-10:30am & 2:00pm-4:30pm); or by appointment (email me to schedule)

**Email:** [danielle.rios@tamus.edu](mailto:danielle.rios@tamus.edu); [drrios@tamus.edu](mailto:drrios@tamus.edu)

**Meeting Times:**

Mondays and Wednesdays 2:00pm-3:15pm

**Location:**

Face-to-Face in SciTech 269; occasional virtual meetings may occur, if needed, and will be posted through Blackboard Announcement and sent through Jagwire Email. Please check these daily!

**Required Course Prerequisite:**

None.

\*It is recommended that BIOL 1308 – Introduction to Life Sciences I be taken prior to BIOL 1309\*

**Course Description:**

This course is designed for non-science majors. Students examine the principles of organismal biology, biodiversity and ecology in the modern world and how these principles relate to issues in today's society and their broader meaning to the public. Topics in this second course include the study of life at the organismal level considering their morphology, life histories, physiology, and ecology. The nature and evolution of biological diversity and how that diversity is studied is included. Experimental hands-on exercises are included. This course meets the standards for the Life and Physical Sciences category of courses under the core curriculum. TSI Restriction(s): Reading

**Required Materials:**

• **Textbook (E-book):**

McGraw Hill; Biology: The Essentials, 4th Edition, Marielle Hoefnagels

- Book fee was assessed-you should have access on the first day of class through the online Connect system. *Do not* pay again if you hit a paywall!
- You may also purchase a loose-leaf copy at a special rate from the publisher. This is a great option if you know you will need a physical copy of the text. Order using the link within Connect.

• **Connect:**



Connect is the online learning platform that accompanies the textbook. You must register for it separately. Student registration can be found via the link provided on Blackboard under the Course Content tab. This is also the same location the ebook can be found.

- **Blackboard:**

Lecture notes, assignment submission links, grades, and weekly announcements are on blackboard. Power-point versions of lectures will be posted on Blackboard; Announcements regarding lectures or labs may be posted on Blackboard; Grades for individual assignments/labs etc... will be posted on Blackboard as the course progresses.

- **Recommended Material:**

An **882-E scantron** is required for each of your exams (4 total; see schedule) and **a pencil**. Scantrons are available for purchase at the bookstore.



←iNaturalist app (free!); see Methods  
of Assessments Section below

Working off a **computer or laptop with audio/microphone** is encouraged as a phone does not have the capacity to run some of the virtual material. If you need a computer or wi-fi, please contact IT directly for assistance. IT contact information can be found in the Table of Contents in Blackboard as well as the University website. Furthermore, computer labs on campus are open and available to you! Finally, it is up to the student to have a **stable internet/browser connection** when conducting any online coursework.

### Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, student will

1. Develop critical thinking skills, communication skills, and empirical and quantitative skills through working as a team.
2. Gain an appreciation for the diversity of life on Earth.
3. Describe modern evolutionary synthesis, natural selection, population genetics, micro and macroevolution, and speciation.
4. Describe phylogenetic relationships and classification schemes.
5. Identify the major phyla of life with an emphasis on plants and animals, including the basis for classification, structural and physiological adaptations, evolutionary history, and ecological significance.
6. Compare and contrast how different organisms carry out similar life functions.
7. Illustrate the relationship between major geologic change, extinctions, and evolutionary trends.
8. Understand the basic principles of population, community, and ecosystem ecology.
9. Evaluate if an ecological question is best answered via experiments at the population, community, or ecosystem level.
10. Apply scientific reasoning to investigate questions and utilize scientific tools such as microscopes and laboratory equipment to collect and analyze data.
11. Use critical thinking and scientific problem-solving to make informed decisions in the laboratory or field.
12. Critically assess content and illustrate its broader meaning to the public.



**Course Content:**

**List of Topics:**

1. Evolution
  - a. Trace the history of evolutionary thought
  - b. Describe the Darwinian Theory
  - c. Modern Synthesis Theory
  - d. Models of speciation
2. Taxonomy
  - a. Compare the reproductive and morphological concepts
  - b. Binomial names
  - c. Five kingdoms and the characteristics of each
  - d. Use of dichotomous keys
3. Biodiversity
  - a. Plants: Colonization of Land, Evolution of Seed Plants, Plant Form & Function
  - b. Invertebrates: Basic survey of organisms within the various invertebrate phyla
  - c. Vertebrates: Survey of the main vertebrate groups focusing on homologous characters.
  - d. Comparative survey of how different organisms from invertebrates to vertebrates carry out life functions: nutrition, circulation and gas exchange, osmoregulation and excretion, hormones and endocrine system, reproduction, development, nervous system, sensory and motor mechanisms.
4. Ecology and the Biosphere: basic principles of
  - a. Population & Community ecology
  - b. Ecosystems
  - c. Conservation biology and restoration ecology

| Category                        | No. of Assignments | Point Subtotal |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Lecture Exams                   | 2                  | 100            |
| Lecture Exam                    | 1                  | 80             |
| Lecture Exam                    | 1                  | 70             |
| iNaturalist Project Portfolio   | 1                  | 50             |
| Connect Homework                | 10 out of 12       | 200            |
| Connect Quizzes                 | 5 out of 6         | 100            |
| Environment and You Assignments | 10 out of 11       | 100            |
|                                 | Total              | 800            |

1. Competencies will be demonstrated on homework, quizzes, activities/projects, and exams. Exams may have a combination of essay, listing, matching, multiple choice, and true/false questions. All types may not be included on each exam.
2. A student must master 70% of the competencies in order to receive credit for the course. A student demonstrating 90% or more knowledge of all competencies will receive an A in the course.
3. All Connect homework and quiz submissions will be online. There will be several activities that are conducted during class time and/or outside with either in-class and/or online submissions.
4. All exams will be face-to-face during scheduled class time.
5. All exams and assignments will be graded on a point system.
6. All exams and assignments are scheduled on the tentative syllabus schedule and Blackboard Calendar.



7. You may turn assignments in ahead of the deadline, but if you miss the deadline, your assignment will be assigned a zero. Late work is not accepted.
8. There is the potential for extra credit opportunities for this class. These will be announced during class time so be sure to attend class regular because not all can be made up.

**\*\*HINTS FOR SUCCESS.** Complete assignments and submit them in on time. Do not wait until the night before to study for exam or complete assignment. All assessments are provided with plenty of completion time.

**Lecture Exams (Face-to-Face):**

1. You will be given **four (4) Lecture Exams**.
2. Your Lecture Exams will consist of approximately 40-50 questions in the format stated in Grading Scheme #1 above. Exams 1 & 2 are worth 100 points each. Exam 3 is worth 70 points & Exam 4 is worth 80 points each (mini-exams).
  - Exams will be given during the scheduled class time; Feedback will be limited and provided during office hours or by appointment.
  - Exams must be taken on the scheduled class date/time in syllabus & Blackboard.

**3. iNaturalist Tour of Texas Ecology Portfolio (worth 50 points total; Part 1 = 25 pts & Part 2 = 25 pts)**

- During the semester, you will contribute to our class iNaturalist Project by documenting biodiversity in your local environment. You will complete three rounds of iNat observations. From your observations, you will select one focal species (plant or animal) to showcase in a portfolio that connects your field observations to course concepts. This will be *showcased virtually and peer reviewed midway (Part 1) and on the last day of class* (Part 2) (see schedule below). Worksheets will be provided throughout the semester to 'kick-start' the research process as well as use for lecture exam reviews. These worksheets *may be* graded and included as part of The Environment and You Assignments category or extra credit (see below section).
- A grading rubric and more details will be provided during Units 2 and 3. *The goal of this portfolio activity is to begin applying these general biology concepts that you are learning about to your own personal environment as well as showcasing students' creativity skills.*
- Note: The iNaturalist Assignments are different from the project and fall under the environment and you category. Your iNaturalist project will be based on an organism observed while conducting your iNat assignments.

**4. Exams must be taken/conducted when scheduled.**

- Exams can be made up given the following:
  - Contact me within **one day (24-hours)** of the scheduled exam
  - Absence is approved by college policies (illness, death in the family, other immediate-family emergencies). Documentation will be required.

**Connect Homework (online):**

- **Two (2)** out of the **twelve (12)** Connect homework assignments will be dropped and the remaining **ten (10)** will be included for this portion of your course grade.
- Each chapter(s) will have a set of Homework Questions. You will have 2 attempts to answer these questions and each attempt will have an unlimited time frame so you will have plenty of time to read the



textbook in order to find the answers. This is the only assessment in which I highly encourage you to find the answers to the questions in your textbook.

- All Connect Homework assignments will be available beginning the first day of the course unit so you may work ahead; however, each one has a Due Date corresponding with the exam schedule, so complete these first, and then use them to study for your quizzes and exams.
- Connect Homework assignments cannot be made up.

### Connect Quizzes (online):

- You will complete a series of **6** Connect Quizzes covering the material from the chapters you will study this semester. I will drop your lowest Connect Quiz grade.
- All Connect quizzes will be available beginning the first day of the course unit; however, each quiz is timed (20 minutes for 20 questions with 2 attempts); therefore, it is recommended to complete the corresponding homework(s) first then take the quiz for each exam.
- Quizzes will cover the main ideas for each exam.
- Connect Quizzes cannot be made up

### The Environment and You Assignments (10 out of 11):

#### 1. Class Assignments (varies online & face-to-face):

- Throughout the semester, you will complete a series of hands-on activities corresponding with course topics. Additional details will be provided on Blackboard and during class time.  
**Therefore, please come to class because each assignment type is different!**
- Class assignments have corresponding due dates & cannot be made up. Please see tentative schedule. **Therefore, please come to class! Not all assignments can be made up or may be conducted only during class time.**
- **\*\*Some activities are conducted outside with online submissions; therefore, please plan accordingly regarding weather and time management.\*\***

#### 2. iNaturalist (free app!)

- You will become familiar with a few tools/apps the public has access to learn about the organisms all around you. These tools are part of a field called Citizen Science that biologists can use to help gather various types of data.
- There will be three small assignments that utilize iNaturalist and will be started early in the semester. **Assignment details are provided on Blackboard and during class time and each has an associated due date! The goal of this activity is to begin applying the general biology concepts that you are learning about to your own personal environment.**

#### 3. Real-World Class Discussions

- You will be encouraged to apply the concepts we discuss during class and ‘think outside of the box’ as they pertain to real-world issues occurring today. Throughout the semester and corresponding with each course unit (time between exams), you will conduct an online class discussion on different environmental issues/topics that we discuss **during the current course unit.**
- There will be a total **five (5)** class discussions for this portion of your grade.
- You will submit via Blackboard a short response about the current environmental issue/topic



that is posted in the Discussion Board. **Each topic is associated with the current unit! For example, Discussion #1 will be relevant to evolution in our world today.**

- Part 1 consists of your response to the discussion topic in approximately 5-7 sentences. You can be as detailed and creative as you would like; I will provide some creative ideas for you in the discussion prompt to encourage this. *Part 1 will be worth 5 points.*
- Part 2 consists of you replying to at least one other student's response in approximately 3-5 sentences. I am hoping this is a fun assignment to encourage you to 'think outside of the box' on issues that natural resources scientists are currently studying and monitoring. I also hope this assignment allows everyone to communicate with each other outside of the classroom! *Part 2 will be worth 5 points.*
- **Remember to use good spelling, grammar, and be respectful!**

#### **Attendance / Participation:**

This is a face-to-face course; therefore, actually coming to class is important. I will randomly take attendance during some lecture days, which can consist of roll call, activity participation, question of the day submissions, etc. Therefore, if you miss class and attendance is taken, you have forfeited any potential attendance points for that day unless you provide a university-excused absence documentation (per the syllabus). If you also miss class, you will be responsible for obtaining missed information from your classmates and/or reading the textbook.

#### **Course changes**

Any changes to the syllabus or class schedule will be communicated to the students in a timely manner in class, on Blackboard and/or email.

#### **Grading**

Throughout the semester you will be informed of your grade standing. Grades will be posted on Blackboard.

#### **Grade Scheme:**

90 – 100 = A  
80 - 89 = B  
70 - 79 = C  
60 - 69 = D  
≤ 59.5 = F

I will consider scaling up from a B to an A if you have earned an **89.7 and** you have great attendance.  
I will *not* scale up from a B to an A (regardless of your attendance) if you have earned an 89.1%, that is a B through and through.

#### **Makeup Policies:**

Due to the nature of this course and the fact that exams, quizzes, and homework/assignments are given plenty notice and/or are open for more than one day, make-up opportunities will only be allowed for:

- Hospitalization (evidence required),
- Hospitalization of an immediate family for which you are the primary caretaker (evidence required), or
- Incapacitating illness, such as COVID (evidence required).

If any of the above have prevented you turning in exams, quizzes, or assignment by the due date, contact me within 24 hours of the due date. **Due dates for anything assigned will be strictly enforced.**

#### **Blackboard and Course Communication**

All grades and assignments will be posted and accessible through the course's Blackboard site. Students must log-in regularly to both the Blackboard site and to their TAMU-SA email account to keep updated on information related to the class. Each student MUST have an active TAMU-SA email account. This will be the



email address that is used for any communication between me and you. Students who e-mail me Monday-Thursday ordinarily can expect a response within 48 hours. Students who e-mail Friday-Sunday ordinarily can expect a response by 9:00 PM on Monday.

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

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

**NOTE:** Guidance for how to cite AI-generators, like ChatGPT, can be found here

<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

## **STUDENT OBLIGATIONS**

1. **Attendance:** Regular and punctual attendance in all classes and laboratories, day and evening, is required. Students who are absent for any reason should always consult with their instructors prior to absence (if possible). Both tardiness and early departure from class may be considered forms of absenteeism. A student may be dropped if there are excessive absences. Review the college policies on attendance and excessive absences as stated in the college catalog.
2. **Students will need to check their emails daily in case of changes or updates to the class.**
3. A student absent for the equivalence of **2 weeks** of classes may be automatically dropped from the course with a "W".
4. The instructor will only withdraw students for nonattendance until the official Withdrawal Date. Students who have not withdrawn themselves or requested withdrawal by the instructor, and stop attending class after this date will receive a performance grade (A/B/C/D/F).
5. It is not the instructor's responsibility to provide a student with any notes, assignments, or reviews missed due to student absence. All materials may be obtained by contacting the instructor during office hours, getting with a classmate, and/or downloaded from your Blackboard course. All material for the course is located on Blackboard.
6. **Email Etiquette:** Professional email etiquette is a requirement when communicating with me (or anyone) online. A proper greeting (e.g. Ms. Rios, Professor Rios, Hello Ms. Rios, etc.) with a coherent message needs to be included with every email sent to me.
7. **Assessments:** All homework, quizzes, and assignments are due Sunday by midnight on the Blackboard website. Getting ahead on assignments is encouraged. Once the deadline has passed, your score will be zero with no make-up opportunity if it has not been completed, unless your instructor states differently. Blackboard will have a calendar displaying when all assignments and exams are due. It is the student's responsibility to frequently check this calendar. Finally, it is up to the student to have a **stable internet/browser connection** when conducting online assignments. Feel free to utilize the campus or contact IT for assistance.



8. **Grades:** All grades are final at the end of the semester. If there is an issue, please make an appointment with me and be prepared to defend your case (i.e. bring ALL assignments, etc.).
9. **Studying Tips:** In college, it is expected that for every credit hour spent in class, 3 hours are spent working on that material at home. Thus, it is expected that in addition to coming to class, 9 hours a week are spent on outside work pertaining to this class. This of course takes time-management skills. **Please take this into consideration when planning your semester activities.**
10. **Laptops and Cell Phones:** If using a laptop for taking notes, please sit in the back row as research has shown computers disrupt others around and behind. If doing something other than taking notes on your computer, you will be asked to leave. ALL cell phones must be placed on silent or off and put away during class time. If using a cell phone, then you will be marked absent and possibly asked to leave the class. Please inform me prior to class if you are expecting an emergency notification. **\*Since some assessments are online, you are HIGHLY encouraged to work off of a computer or laptop with audio/microphone. Please coordinate with IT and feel free to use the campus resources such as computer labs, as needed.**
11. **Questions:** Biology is an exciting discipline in the sciences! If you have any questions over the content, email me!

**Tentative Course Schedule**

All Exams will be given face-to-face during class time on the dates indicated below. Homework, quizzes, discussion, and other assignments will be due Sundays by midnight (11:59pm) through Blackboard or McGraw Connect on the date indicated below.

| Week of     | Monday   | Wednesday   | Assignment   | Due Date |
|-------------|--|---|--|----------|
| <b>1/19</b> | No Class - Martin Luther King, Jr.   | First Class Day: Syllabus Overview                          |  |          |
| <b>1/26</b> | Ch. 12 Intro to Evolution / HWE Activity   | Ch. 12/13 Evidence of Evolution / Fossils / HWE Activity    | Ch. 12/13 HW & Quiz 1  | 2/1      |
| <b>2/2</b>  | Ch. 14 Macroevolution / Modeling Process of Evolution Activity                   | Ch. 14 Macroevolution                                       | Modeling Processes in Evolution Activity HW                          | 2/8      |
| <b>2/9</b>  | Ch. 14 Taxonomy & Phylogeny / Review   | <b>Exam 1 (2/11)</b>  | Ch. 14 HW, Quiz 2, & Discussion #1                                   | 2/15     |
| <b>2/16</b> | Ch. 18 Population Ecology / Pop. Sampling Activity                               | Ch. 18 Population Ecology / Pop. Sampling Activity          | Ch. 18 HW  | 2/22     |
| <b>2/23</b> | Ch. 19 Community Ecology; Intro to iNaturalist app.; Kickoff iNaturalist Project | Ch. 19 / Activity & Human Pop. / Ecological Footprint       | Ch. 19 HW  | 3/1      |
| <b>3/2</b>  | Ch. 20 Ecosystem Ecology / Ecological Footprint                                  | Ch. 20 Conservation Biology / Review                        |  |          |
| <b>3/9</b>  | Spring Break – No Classes  |   | Ch. 20 HW, Quiz 3, Ecology Discussion, and iNaturalist Assignment #1 | 3/15     |
| <b>3/16</b> | <b>Exam 2 (3/16)</b>   | Ch. 15 Early Earth  | Tour of Texas Portfolio Part 1                                       | 3/22     |
| <b>3/23</b> | Ch. 15 Bacteria/Archaea / Microbe Review Sheet(s)                                | Ch. 15 Bacteria/Archaea / Microbe Review Sheet(s)           | Ch. 15.1 HW & iNaturalist Project Peer Reviews (3)                   | 3/29     |
| <b>3/30</b> | Ch. 15 Protist Diversity / Microbe Review Sheet(s)                               | Ch. 15 Protist Diversity / Small Things Microscope Activity |  |          |
| <b>4/6</b>  | Ch. 15 Fungi / Review  | <b>Mini-Exam 3 (4/8)</b>                                    | Ch. 15.2 HW, Quiz 4, & Microbial World Discussion #3                 | 4/12     |
| <b>4/13</b> | Ch. 16 Plants  | Ch. 16 Plants / Review                                      | Ch. 16 HW, Quiz 5  | 4/19     |

**Tentative Course Schedule**

All Exams will be given face-to-face during class time on the dates indicated below. Homework, quizzes, discussion, and other assignments will be due Sundays by midnight (11:59pm) through Blackboard or McGraw Connect on the date indicated below.

|             |   |  |  |      |
|-------------|---|--|--|------|
| <b>4/20</b> | Ch. 17 Animal Overview / Kickoff Animal Diversity Dating Profile (Tour of Texas Part 2) | Animal Skulls CSI Activity / Ch. 17 / Human Evolution / Review                   | Ch. 17.1 HW, Ch. 17.2 HW, Quiz 6, Animal Skull CSI HW, & Plant & Animal Discussion #4                      | 4/26 |
| <b>4/27</b> | <b>Mini-Exam 4 (4/27)</b>   | Ch. 23 Form Fits Function <u>Virtual</u> Overview / T of T Part 2 <u>Workday</u> | Ch. 23 HW, Connect Virtual Labs, Comparative Anatomy Discussion #5, & iNaturalist Project Peer Reviews (3) | 5/3  |
| <b>5/4</b>  | <b>Study Day – No Class</b><br>Semester is Concluded!                                   |  |  |      |

Important Spring 2026 Dates:

| Dates            | Event   |
|------------------|---|
| January 13       | Tuition & Fee Payments deadline                           |
| January 19       | Martin Luther King, Jr. – No Classes                      |
| January 20       | First day of class  |
| February 4       | Census date   |
| March 23-March 6 | Midterm grading period                                    |
| March 9-March 14 | Spring Break  |
| April 3          | Study Day – No classes                                    |
| April 17         | Last day to drop with an automatic “W”                    |
| May 1            | Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University |
| May 4            | Last day of classes                                       |
| May 5            | Study Day – No classes                                    |
| May 6-May 12     | Final exams   |
| May 19           | Commencement  |

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

### IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

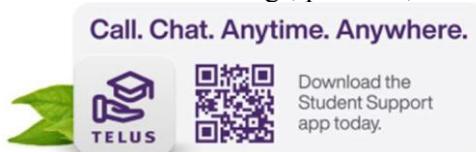
**University Email Policy and Course Communications:** All correspondence between professors and students must occur via University email accounts. You must have your Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at [helpdesk@tamusa.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamusa.edu) 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](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 academic accommodations 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](mailto: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 | 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 about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found [here](#). 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 Jaguar Writing Center provides writing 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 Writing Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. Students can schedule appointments with the Writing Center 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 Writing Center can also be reached by emailing [writingcenter@tamusa.edu](mailto:writingcenter@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](mailto: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](mailto: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](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:** 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](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. 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. For more information, please contact Young Jaguars at [youngjaguars@tamusa.edu](mailto: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***

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. 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.

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. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

***Students' Responsibilities***

A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration. 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. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning. 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 Spring 2026 Dates:**

| Dates            | Event   |
|------------------|---|
| January 13       | Tuition & Fee Payments deadline                           |
| January 19       | Martin Luther King, Jr. – No Classes                      |
| January 20       | First day of class  |
| February 4       | Census date   |
| March 23-March 6 | Midterm grading period                                    |
| March 9-March 14 | Spring Break  |
| April 3          | Study Day – No classes                                    |
| April 17         | Last day to drop with an automatic “W”                    |
| May 1            | Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University |
| May 4            | Last day of classes                                       |
| May 5            | Study Day – No classes                                    |
| May 6-May 12     | Final exams   |
| May 19           | Commencement  |

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

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

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

NOTE: Guidance for how to cite AI-generators, like ChatGPT, can be found here

<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>