

**Introduction to Life Sciences II (Non-Majors)
BIOL 1309 (3 credits)**

**Texas A&M University San Antonio, College of Arts and Sciences
Lecture Syllabus and Schedule Spring 2026**

Instructor: Mr. James Rogers, M.S.

Email: jrogers1@tamusa.edu

Student Conference Hours: Mondays 3:30-6:00 P.M. via Zoom and by appointment

Class Meeting Times and Location:

Meeting Times: Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:30-1:45 P.M.

Location: STEM 269

Section: 003

CRN: 24169

REQUIRED COURSE PREREQUISITE: None.

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

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

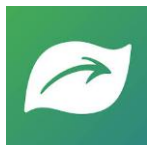
Textbook (E-book): McGraw Hill; Biology: The Essentials, 4th Edition, Marielle Hoefnagels

- 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 your 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 your eBook can be found.

Blackboard: This is where you will go for lecture notes, assignment submission links, grades, and weekly announcements. 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 we go along.

Recommended (HIGHLY) Material: You will be required to bring an **882-E scantron** for each of your exams (4 total; see schedule) and **a pencil**. You can purchase a scantron packet from the bookstore.



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

You are also **HIGHLY** encouraged to work off of a **computer or laptop with audio/microphone** 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.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students examine the principles of organismal biology, biodiversity and ecology in the modern world and how these principles relate to issue in today's society and their broader meaning to the public. Topics in this 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. Laboratory-based exercises are included. This course meets the standards for the Life and Physical Sciences category of courses under the core curriculum.

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

Grading and Methods of Assessment:

The student will be able to answer correctly at least 70% of the questions on scheduled exams, homeworks, and quizzes. Lecture exams, homeworks, and quizzes can consist of true or false, multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching, and short essay questions. All assessments are based on 100 points scale.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

Four Lecture Exams	2 at 100 Pts, 2 at 80 Pts = 360 Pts
Tour of Texas Ecology Portfolio (Part 1 and 2)	50 Points
Comparative Anatomy Activities	30 Points
Chapter Homeworks	<u>10</u> out of <u>12</u> at 20 Pts each = 200 Pts
Connect Quizzes	<u>5</u> out of <u>6</u> at 10 Pts each = 50 Pts
The Environment and You Assignments	<u>11</u> out of <u>12</u> at 10 Pts each = 110 Pts
	800 Total Points

**** HINTS FOR SUCCESS.** Complete assignments and submit them in on time. Do not wait until the night before to study for an exam or complete an assignment. **

Grades will be posted in Blackboard. For the final letter grade, **I will consider bumping you to the next letter grade based on great attendance, participation, and if you are within 0.3 points to the next letter grade.** Otherwise, your grade is based on the scale shown below:

Grading Scale:

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = below 60

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**. **I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE WORK.**
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.

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. Exams 3 and 4 are 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. Exams must be taken/conducted when scheduled.
 - You may make up an exam **only if**
 - you contact me within **one day (24-hours)** of the scheduled exam
 - your absence is one approved by college policies (illness, death in the family, other immediate-family emergencies). Documentation will be required.
 - Again – **if I do not hear from you within 24 hours of the scheduled exam, you have forfeited the right to make up the exam.**

Chapter Homeworks (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.

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

- During the semester, you will research an invasive species in a local Texas Ecoregion (biome) and an animal phylum (group) that 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 - 4. *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.*

Comparative Anatomy Activities (30 Points)

- At the end of the semester, a number of virtual labs and a discussion assignment will be due covering comparative anatomy concepts. There will be no lecture exam for the final lecture unit.

The Environment and You Assignments (11 out of 12):

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. SEEK by 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 Community Science that biologists can use to help gather various types of data.
- There will be three (3) small assignments that will use the SEEK by iNaturalist tool that you will work on throughout 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!**

Makeup Policies:

In case you have an extenuating circumstance and a University Excused Absence, make-up opportunities may be allowed for:

- a. Hospitalization,
- b. Hospitalization of an immediate family for which you are the primary caretaker, or
- c. Other extreme circumstances.

If any of the above prevents you from turning in an assignment by the due date, you must contact me within 24 hours of the due date and provide documentation. Any makeups are based on instructor discretion as needed. Connect Quizzes, Chapter Homeworks, and most other online assignments may not be made up as they can be submitted online, ahead of time, and as some are already dropped. Due dates for anything assigned will be strictly enforced.

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 for potential extra credit for the next lecture exam, 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 extra credit for towards the next lecture exam for that day unless you provide a university-excused absence with 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.*

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 who have not withdrawn themselves or requested withdrawal by the Withdrawal date and stop attending class after this date will receive a performance grade (A/B/C/D/F).
3. 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.
4. **Email Etiquette:** Professional email etiquette is a requirement when communicating with me online. A proper greeting (e.g., Mr. Rogers, Hello Mr. Rogers, etc.) with a coherent message needs to be included with every email sent to me. **Emails that do not satisfy these conditions will be ignored.**
5. **Assignments:** All chapter homework and other assignments are due on the Blackboard website by their respective due dates. You are encouraged to get ahead on the homework assignments and quizzes. 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 quizzes 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.
6. **Grades:** All grades are final at the end of the semester. If there is an issue at any point during the semester, please make an appointment with me and be prepared to defend your case (i.e., bring ALL assignments, documentation, etc.). Grades may be reviewed within one week of receiving them.
7. **Cheating:** Students are expected to not utilize outside sources (e.g., notes, peers, and/or websites) when taking quizzes and lecture exams. Students that are caught cheating on lecture exams will be given a zero for the assessment. Students that cheat a second time on a lecture exam will be given an F in the course.
8. **Studying Tips:** In College, it is expected that for every credit hour you spend in class, you spend 3 hours working on that material at home. Thus, in the class, it is expected that in addition to coming to class, you also spend 9 hours a week on outside work pertaining to this class. This of course takes time-management skills. Please take this into consideration when planning your semester activities.
9. **Laptops and Cell Phones:** If you are going to use your laptop for taking notes, please sit in the back row as research has shown computers disrupt others around and behind you. If I catch you 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 you are caught 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.**
10. **Questions:** Biology is an exciting discipline in the sciences, and one that I really enjoy teaching. If you have any questions over the content, email me, and I will do my best to guide you.

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Unit	Date	Lecture Topic	Pre-Reading and Homework Activities	Assignments Due Date
1	W 1/21	Introductions, Syllabus, and Course Expectations		
	M 1/26	Chapter 12: Introduction to Evolution	1. Chapter 12 and 13 Homework 2. Connect Quiz 1	Sun, 2/1 @11:59PM
	W 1/28	Chapter 13: Evidence of Evolution		
	M 2/2	Chapter 13: Evidence of Evolution	1. Modeling Evolution Activity Homework	Sun, 2/8 @11:59PM
	W 2/4	Modeling Evolution Activity		
	M 2/9	Chapter 14: Taxonomy and Phylogeny	1. Chapter 14 Homework 2. Connect Quiz 2	Sun, 2/15 @11:59PM
	W 2/11	Chapter 14: Taxonomy and Phylogeny and Review		
	M 2/16	EXAM 1 In-class	1. Discussion #1 Evolution	Sun, 2/22 @11:59PM
2	W 2/18	Chapter 18: Population Ecology		
	M 2/23	Chapter 18: Population Ecology and Introduction into SEEK app; Kickoff Tour of TX Project	1. Chapter 18 Homework 2. Chapter 19 Homework	Sun, 3/1 @11:59PM
	W 2/25	Chapter 19 Community Ecology		
	M 3/2	Chapter 20: Ecosystem Ecology	1. Chapter 20 Homework 2. Connect Quiz 3	Tue, 3/3 @11:59PM
	W 3/4	EXAM 2 In-class	1. Discussion #2 Ecology 2. Ecological Footprint	Sun, 3/8 @11:59PM
3	M 3/16	Chapter 15: Diversity of Microbial Life	1. Chapter 15.1 Homework 2. SEEK Round #1 3. Tour of Texas Portfolio Part 1	Sun, 3/22 @11:59PM
	W 3/18	Chapter 15: Diversity of Microbial Life and SEEK Discussion		
	M 3/23	Chapter 15: Protists		
	W 3/25	Chapter 15: Fungi	1. Chapter 15.2 Homework 2. Tour of Texas Peer Reviews (3)	Sun, 3/29 @11:59PM
	M 3/30	Review and Microscopes Activity	1. Connect Quiz 4	Tue, 3/31 @11:59PM
	W 4/1	Exam 3 In-class	1. Discussion #3 Microbial World	Sun, 4/5 @11:59PM



Unit	Date	Lecture Topic	Pre-Reading and Homework Activities	Assignments Due Date
4	M 4/6	Chapter 16: Plant Diversity	1. Chapter 16 Homework 2. Connect Quiz 5	Sun, 4/12 @11:59PM
	W 4/8	Chapter 16: Plants and Chapter 17: Animals Overview		
	M 4/13	Chapter 17: Animals	1. Chapter 17.1 Homework 2. SEEK Round #2 3. Animal Skulls CSI Homework	Sun, 4/19 @11:59PM
	W 4/15	Animal Skulls CSI		
	M 4/20	Chapter 17: Animals and Review	1. Chapter 17.2 Homework 2. Connect Quiz 6	Tue, 4/21 @11:59PM
	W 4/22	EXAM 4 In-class	1. Discussion #4 Plant and Animal	Sun, 4/26 @11:59PM
	M 4/27	Chapter 23: Form Fits Function	1. SEEK Round #3 2. Chapter 23 Homework 3. Tour of Texas Portfolio Part 2	Sun, 5/3 @11:59PM
	W 4/29	Chapter 23 and 25: Nervous and Endocrine Systems		
	M 5/4	Chapter 27: Circulatory and Respiratory Systems	1. Chapter 27 Homework 2. Connect Virtual Labs 3. Discussion #5 Comparative Anatomy	Sun, 5/10 @11:59PM
There is no Final Exam for this Course				
Census Date - Wednesday, February 4th				
Last Day to Drop a Course with an Automatic "W" – Friday, April 17th				
Last Day of Class – Monday, May 4th				

Texas A&M University San Antonio Important Policies and Resources



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SAN ANTONIO

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 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. 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 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:

Day of the Week	Appointments Available	Walk-in Tutoring (no appointment needed)
Monday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Tuesday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Wednesday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Thursday	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Friday	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	11:00 AM – 4:00 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 include 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 the [Jag E Alert System website](#). You can access more information about [Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan on our website](#). Download the [SafeZone App](#) 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, 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.

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 real time with a tutor can schedule an **Online Appointment**. Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an **e-Tutoring appointment**. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on the [Writing Center's website](#). The Writing Center can also be reached by emailing: 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. The [General's Store is a food pantry](#) that is available on campus as well.

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 with an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule

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

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual on our campus and within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees are to be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, based on 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. 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 reasonable accommodation for pregnant students as it would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that is 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. 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 students' rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

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

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 and Fee Payments deadline
January 19	Marting Luther King Jr. Day – No Classes
January 20	First Day of Class
February 4	Census Date
March 6-23	Midterm grading period
March 9-14	Spring Break
April 3	Study Day – No classes
April 17	Last day to drop with an automatic withdrawal
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 6-12	Final Exams
May 19	Commencement

The complete [Academic Calendar](#) as available on our website.

No Use of Generative AI Permitted for BIOL 1309

This 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.