



# SYLLABUS

## COMM 4350 Media Criticism Spring 2024

### Course Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Victoria L. Godwin  
**Section # and CRN:** Section: P01 CRN: 23552  
**Office Location:** Hilliard 207  
**Office Phone:** 936-261-3738  
**Email Address:** vlgodwin@pvamu.edu  
**Office Hours:** TR 12:20-1:50pm; 3:20-3:50pm (in office); W 9:00-11:00am (virtual)  
**Mode of Instruction:** Face to Face  
**Course Location:** MT Harrington Science Bldg 312  
**Class Days & Times:** TR 9:30 am - 10:50 am  
**Catalog Description:**

### Description

This course introduces students to the theories, concepts, and debates of media studies scholarship. Students will engage in intensive academic reading and writing. Topics include, but are not limited to media representation, social construction of reality, media activism, and globalization.

**Prerequisites:** COMM 2351 or COMM 2513  
**Co-requisites:** none  
**Required Text(s):** O'Shaughnessy, Michael and Jane Stadler. Media & Society. 6th Edition. Australia: Oxford University Press, 2016.  
**Recommended Text(s):**

### Course Learning Objectives:

	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Student Learning Outcome # Alignment	Core Curriculum Objective Alignment
1	Write clearly, precisely, and in a well-organized manner	1, 2, 3, 4	Communication
2	Demonstrate critical thinking, reading, and viewing skills on required projects	1, 2, 3, 4	Critical Thinking
3	Research, develop, evaluate, and present arguments grounded in research-based knowledge	1, 2, 3, 4	Critical Thinking
4	Apply analytical, precise, and elaborated terms and concepts for talking and writing about communication artifacts and the ways in which they communicate meaning	1, 2, 3, 4	Critical Thinking Communication Social Responsibility
5	Conduct, evaluate, and analyze research theories and findings published in various scholarly source materials in the preparation of assignments	1, 2, 3, 4	Critical Thinking Communication
6	Evaluate various communication artifacts and their effects on audiences and society	1, 2, 3, 4	Communication Critical Thinking Social Responsibility
7	Demonstrate how communication artifacts are constructed and how communication artifacts in turn construct meaning about national and global communities	1, 2, 3, 4	Communication Critical Thinking

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

1. Apply communication concepts and theories. (SLO 1)
2. Communicate ideas effectively and with sensitivity to a variety of audiences. (SLO 2)
3. Demonstrate effective use of a variety of communication tools and styles. (SLO 3)
4. Demonstrate communication proficiency appropriate for meeting personal and professional needs. (SLO 4)

**Major Course Requirements**

**Method of Determining Final Course Grade**

Course Grade Requirement		Value	Total
1)	Essay 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 20, 21	20%	200
2)	Essay 2: Chapters 22, 19, 18, 23	20%	200
3)	Essay 3: Chapters 24, 25, 13, 8, 9, 14, 16	20%	200
4)	Annotated Bibliography	10%	100
5)	Activities, including Attendance, Participation, and submitting Assessment Artifact	30%	300
<b>Total:</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>1,000 points</b>

**Grading Criteria and Conversion:**

- A = 90 – 100%
- B = 80 – 89%
- C = 70 – 79%
- D = 60 – 69%
- F = 59% and below

If a student has stopped attending the course (i.e. “stopped out”) at any point after the first day of class but did not officially withdraw from the course and has missed assignments and exams and performed below the grade level of a D, a grade of FN (failed-non attendance) will be assigned for the final course grade to ensure compliance with the federal Title IV financial aid regulations. In contrast, if the student has completed all assignments and exams, but performed below the grade level of a D, a grade of F will be assigned for the final course grade.

**Detailed Description of Major Assignments:**

Assignment Title or Grade Requirement	Description
Essays Essay 1: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 20, 21 Essay 2: Chapters 22, 19, 18, 23 Essay 3: Chapters 24, 25, 13, 8, 9, 14, 16	(2,500-3,750 words per essay) Apply your choice of relevant Communication theories and methodologies drawn from any of the listed course chapters to analyze media artifacts and/or phenomena relevant to a major in Communication. Your analysis must be adapted to a scholarly audience. It must include a References list and in-text citations for a minimum of 2 peer-reviewed sources, correctly using APA style for both. Assignments in this category, when combined, will be worth a total of 600 points.
Annotated Bibliography	(minimum 300 words) Use APA style to correctly format References entries and in-text citations for a minimum of 3 scholarly sources. You will summarize each source in your own words; Briefly compare and contrast each source to your other sources; Briefly contribute your own thoughts about the claims of each source. Assignments in this category, when combined, will be worth a total of 100 points.
Activities, including Attendance, Participation, and Assessment Artifact	(50 words minimum) You will complete different activities over the course which could include (but are not limited to) response papers, discussion boards on Canvas (both posting original comments and responding to other students' posts), interactive activities, homework, interviews, speeches, videos, quizzes, tests, attendance, participation, etc. (To receive full credit for any discussions on Canvas, you must interact with others, which means you must respond to other students' posts in the discussion board or other forum.) You also will upload a duplicate of one Essay to Assessment. Assignments in this category, when combined, will be worth a total of 300 points.

## Course Procedures or Additional Instructor Policies

**Syllabus course policies, rules, and procedures are posted in the eCourses shell for this course. Please refer to and follow the syllabus course policies, rules, and procedures posted on eCourses.**

**Assignment Submission:** Work must be submitted by the due date listed on eCourses and/or in the syllabus, using the formats, file types, research requirements, in-text citations, and reference lists required in assignment descriptions and in the syllabus course policies, rules, and procedures posted on eCourses. In case of technical difficulties, you can email assignments to me at [vlgodwin@pvamu.edu](mailto:vlgodwin@pvamu.edu), and you must notify CIITS of the problem at [CIITS@pvamu.edu](mailto:CIITS@pvamu.edu).

**Late Work and Make-up Work:** Late work and make-up work will not be accepted, and such submissions will receive a grade of zero. I do not offer or accept extra credit work. Time extensions only are offered for documented university-approved excused absences (one day extended for one day missed, with anything submitted after that extension classified as late work and not accepted). The Student Handbook has more details on PV-approved excused absences. You must contact the Office of Student Conduct directly at [studentconduct@pvamu.edu](mailto:studentconduct@pvamu.edu) or (936)-261-3524 to send them your documentation for university-approved excused absences. You must CC me when you do so. Student Conduct will start the verification process. You still must submit any work before the end of the time extension, even if the verification takes additional days or weeks beyond that extension.

Submit any impacted work immediately so you don't miss your modified deadline while you're getting your documentation or while your documentation is being verified. Original due dates typically are modified by the amount of time missed. For example, a three-day excused absence typically gets a three-day time extension during which you can submit any work impacted by an excused absence. If you haven't submitted the impacted work on or before that modified due date, then the grade will be an automatic zero for non-submission by the deadline. A documented excuse is not a free pass to wait until the end of the semester, weeks or months after the original due date, to submit work. Your classmates did not have that extra time to work on their assignment. If you don't submit any appropriate documentation for a university-approved excused absence during the required time frame, then the grade will be an automatic zero for non-submission by the deadline. The syllabus course policies posted on eCourses have more detailed information.

**Attendance, Classroom Etiquette, Participation, Active Learning, Preparedness, etc.:** You must follow the syllabus course policies posted on eCourses.

**Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools in the This Course:** Intellectual honesty is vital to an academic community and for my fair evaluation of your work. All work submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the University's academic regulations. You may not engage in unauthorized collaboration or make use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software. Using these tools without my permission puts your academic integrity at risk.

## Semester Calendar

<b>Week One: Jan. 15 – 19</b>	Defining the Media; Media Studies
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 1: Defining the Media Chapter 2: Media Studies
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Two: Jan. 22 - 26</b>	What Do the Media Do to Us? Media and Society; Language and the Social Construction of Reality
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 3: What Do the Media Do to Us? Media and Society Chapter 4: Language and the Social Construction of Reality
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Three: Jan. 29 - Feb. 2</b>	Mediation and Representation; Texts, Meanings, and Audiences
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 5: Mediation and Representation Chapter 6: Texts, Meanings, and Audiences
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Four: Feb. 5 – 9</b>	Discourse and Ideology
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 11: Discourse and Ideology
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	<b>Due: Annotated Bibliography</b> (Mon.)
<b>Week Five: Feb. 12 – 16</b>	Dominant Ideology and Hegemony; Feminism, Post-feminism, and Ideologies of Femininity
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 12: Dominant Ideology and Hegemony Chapter 20: Feminism, Post-feminism, and Ideologies of Femininity
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Six: Feb. 19 – 23</b>	Ideologies and Discourses of Masculinity
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 21: Ideologies and Discourses of Masculinity
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Seven: Feb. 26 - Mar. 1</b>	Ethnicity, Ideology, and the Media
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 22: Ethnicity, Ideology, and the Media
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	<b>Due: Essay 1</b> (Mon.)
<b>Week Eight: Mar. 4 – 8</b>	Why Stories? (Hero's Journey & Psychoanalysis)
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 19: Why Stories? (Hero's Journey & Psychoanalysis)
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Nine: Mar. 18 – 22</b>	Why Stories? (Hero's Journey & Psychoanalysis)
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Why Stories? (Hero's Journey & Psychoanalysis) (continued)
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Ten: Mar. 25 -29</b>	Documentary and Reality TV; Stars and Celebrities
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 18: Documentary and Reality TV Chapter 23: Stars and Celebrities
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	

<b>Week Eleven: Apr. 1 – 5</b>	Postmodernism
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 24: Postmodernism
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	<b>Due: Essay 2</b> (Mon.)
<b>Week Twelve: Apr. 8 – 12</b>	Globalization; Culture Jamming and Counter-Hegemony
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 25: Globalization Chapter 13: Culture Jamming and Counter-Hegemony
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	<b>Due: Assessment Artifact upload</b> (Mon.)
<b>Week Thirteen: Apr. 15 – 19</b>	Semiology; Reading Images and Advertisements
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 8: Semiology Chapter 9: Reading Images and Advertisements
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Fourteen: Apr. 22 – 26</b>	Genres, Codes, and Conventions; Narrative Structure and Binary Oppositions
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 14: Genres, Codes, and Conventions Chapter 16: Narrative Structure and Binary Oppositions
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	
<b>Week Fifteen: Apr. 29 – May 3</b>	The Language of Film: Sample Analysis; Model Essay
<b>Topic Description</b>	
<b>Readings:</b>	Chapter 15: The Language of Film: Sample Analysis Chapter 10: Model Essay
<b>Assignment (s):</b>	<b>Due: Essay 3</b> (Mon.)

**\*Please note that the above calendar is provisional. As instructor, I reserve the right to make changes, including the addition or deletion of materials.**

## Student Support and Success

### John B. Coleman Library

The John B. Coleman Library's mission is to enhance the scholarly pursuit of knowledge, to foster intellectual curiosity, and to promote life-long learning and research through our innovative services, resources, and cultural programs, which support the Prairie View A&M University's global mission of teaching, service, and research. It maintains library collections and access both on campus, online, and through local agreements to further the educational goals of students and faculty. [Library Website](#) Phone: 936-261-1500

### Academic Advising Services

Academic Advising Services offers students various services that contribute to student success and lead toward graduation. We assist students with understanding university policies and procedures that affect academic progress. We support the early alert program to help students connect to success early in the semester. We help refer students to the appropriate academic support services when they are unsure of the best resource for their needs. Faculty advisors support some students in their respective colleges. Your faculty advisor can be identified in PantherTracks. Advisors within Academic Advising Services are available to all students. We are located across campus. Find your advisor's location by academic major on the [advising website](#). Phone: 936-261-5911

### The University Tutoring Center

The University Tutoring Center (UTC) offers free tutoring and academic support to all registered PVAMU students. The mission of the UTC is to help provide a solid academic foundation that enables students to become confident, capable, independent learners. Competent and caring staff and peer tutors guide students in identifying, acquiring, and enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to reach their desired goals. Tutoring and academic support are offered face-to-face in the UTC and virtually in online sessions. Other support services available for students include Supplemental Instruction, Study Breaks, Academic Success Workshops, and Algebra Study Jam. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 307; Phone: 936-261-1561; Email: [pvtutoring@pvamu.edu](mailto:pvtutoring@pvamu.edu); [University Tutoring Website](#)

### Writing Center

The Writing Center provides well-trained peer tutors to assist students with writing assignments at any stage of the writing process. Tutors help students with various writing tasks from understanding assignments, brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, researching, and integrating sources. Students have free access to Grammarly online writing assistance. Grammarly is an automated proofreading and plagiarism detection tool. Students must register for Grammarly by using their student email address. In addition, students have access to face-to-face and virtual tutoring services either asynchronously via email or synchronously via Zoom. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 209; Phone: 936-261-3724; [Writing Center Website](#), [Grammarly Registration](#)

### Panther Navigate

Panther Navigate is a proactive system of communication and collaboration between faculty, academic advisors, and students that is designed to support student success by promptly identifying issues and allowing for intervention. Panther Navigate helps students by providing a central location to schedule advising appointments, view campus resources, and request assistance. Students who recognize that they have a problem that negatively affects their academic performance or ability to continue school may self-refer an academic early alert. To do so, students will log in to Canvas and click on Student Alerts on the left sidebar within a course. Students also have the option to download the Navigate Student app. Phone: 936-261-5902; [Panther Navigate Website](#)

### Student Counseling Services

The Student Counseling Services offers a range of services and programs to assist students in maximizing their potential for success: short-term individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as crisis intervention, outreach, consultation, and referral services. The staff is licensed by the State of Texas and assists students who are dealing with academic skills concerns, situational crises, adjustment problems, and emotional difficulties. Information shared with the staff is treated confidentially and in accordance with Texas State Law. Location: Hobart Taylor, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; Phone: 936-261-3564; [Health & Counseling Center Website](#)

## Office of Testing Services

The Office of Testing Services serves to facilitate and protect the administration of educational and professional exams to aid students, faculty, staff, and the community in their academic and career goals. We provide proctoring services for individuals who need to take exams for distance or correspondence courses for another institution, exams for independent study courses, or make-up exams. In order for a proctored exam to be administered by our office, the instructor of the course must first submit the online PVAMU Testing Services – Test Proctoring Form (this form can only be completed by the instructor) to the Office of Testing Services 72 hours prior to the first exam being administered. Once the Test Proctoring Form has been submitted, the instructor will inform their testers so they can then register for an appointment with our office on one of the selected proctored exam test dates within the testing window for the exam and pay the applicable fees. To access the OTS – Test Proctoring Form, to schedule a proctored exam appointment, or to find more information about our proctoring services, please visit the [OTS – Proctoring Service website](#). Location: Wilhelmina Delco, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Rm. 305; Phone: 936-261-3627; Email: [aetesting@pvamu.edu](mailto:aetesting@pvamu.edu); [Testing Website](#)

## Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services. As a federally-mandated educational support unit, the Office of Disability Services serves as the repository for confidential disability files for faculty, staff, and students. For persons with a disability, the Office develops individualized ADA letters of request for accommodations. Other services include learning style inventories, awareness workshops, accessibility pathways, webinars, computer laboratory with adapted hard and software, adapted furniture, proctoring non-standardized test administrations, ASL interpreters, ALDs, digital recorders, Livescribe, and a comprehensive referral network across campus and the broader community. Location: Hobart Taylor, Rm. 1D128; Phone: 936-261-3583; [Disability Services Website](#)

## Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS)

Distance Learning, also referred to as Distance Education, is the employment of alternative instructional delivery methods to extend programs and services to persons unable to attend classes in the traditional manner. CIITS supports student learning through online, hybrid, web-assist, and 2-way video course delivery. For more details and contact information, visit [CIITS Student Website](#). Phone: 936-261-3283 or email: [ciits@pvamu.edu](mailto:ciits@pvamu.edu).

## Veteran Affairs

Veteran Services works with student veterans, current military, and military dependents to support their transition to the college environment and continued persistence to graduation. The Office coordinates and certifies benefits for both the G.I. Bill and the Texas Hazlewood Act. Location: Evans Hall, Rm. 102; Phone: 936-261-3563; [Veteran Affairs Website](#)

## Office for Student Engagement

The Office for Student Engagement delivers comprehensive programs and services designed to meet the co-curricular needs of students. The Office implements inclusive and accessible programs and services that enhance student development through exposure to and participation in diverse and relevant social, cultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, leadership development, and campus governance. Location: Memorial Student Center, Rm. 221; Phone: 936-261-1340; [Student Engagement Website](#)

## Center for Careers & Professional Development

This center supports students through professional development, career readiness, and placement and employment assistance. The center provides one-on-one career coaching, interview preparation, resume and letter writing, and career exploration workshops and seminars. Services are provided for students at the Northwest Houston Center and College of Nursing in the Medical Center twice a month or on a requested basis. Distance Learning students are encouraged to visit the center website for information regarding services provided. Location: Anderson Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor; Phone: 936-261-3570; [Center for Careers & Professional Development Website](#)

## University Rules and Procedures

## Academic Misconduct

Academic dishonesty is defined as any form of cheating or dishonesty that has the effect or intent of interfering with any academic exercise or fair evaluation of a student's performance. The college faculty can provide additional information, particularly related to a specific course, laboratory, or assignment.

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with the *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*, which can be found on the [Academic Integrity webpage](#). Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures. As listed in the *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*, the University Online Catalog, and the Student Code of Conduct, the following are examples of prohibited conduct. This list is not designed to be all-inclusive or exhaustive. In addition to academic sanctions, any student found to have committed academic misconduct that is also a violation of criminal law may also be subject to disciplinary review and action by the Office of Student Conduct (as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct).

### Forms of Academic Dishonesty:

1. **Cheating:** Deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not learned, giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations. Examples: unauthorized use of notes for a test; using a "cheat sheet" on a quiz or exam; any alteration made on a graded test or exam which is then resubmitted to the teacher;
2. **Plagiarism:** Careless or deliberate use of the work or the ideas of another; representation of another's work, words, ideas, or data as your own without permission or appropriate acknowledgment. Examples: copying another's paper or answers, failure to identify information or essays from the internet and submitting or representing it as your own; submitting an assignment which has been partially or wholly done by another and claiming it as yours; not properly acknowledging a source which has been summarized or paraphrased in your work; failure to acknowledge the use of another's words with quotation marks;
3. **Collusion:** When more than one student or person contributes to a piece of work that is submitted as the work of an individual;
4. **Conspiracy:** Agreeing with one or more persons to commit an act of academic/scholastic dishonesty; and
5. **Multiple Submission:** Submission of work from one course to satisfy a requirement in another course without explicit permission. Example: using a paper prepared and graded for credit in one course to fulfill a requirement and receive credit in a different course.

## PVAMU's General Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence Tools in the Classroom

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI), specifically foundational models that can create writing, computer code, and/or images using minimal human prompting, are increasingly becoming pervasive. Even though ChatGPT is one of the most well-known GAIs currently available, this statement includes any and all past, current, and future generations of GAI software. Prairie View A&M University expects that all work produced for a grade in any course, be it face-to-face or virtual, will be the sole product of a student's endeavors to meet those academic goals. However, should an instructor permit their students to use artificial intelligence as a resource or tool, students must not substitute the substance of their original work with the results of using such GAI tools. This clearly violates the [University's Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity](#) and its underlying academic values.

## Nonacademic Misconduct

The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor's ability to conduct the class, (2) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or (3) campus behavior that interferes with the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. The Office of Student Conduct will adjudicate such incidents under nonacademic procedures.

## Sexual Misconduct

Sexual harassment of students and employees at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating the university's sexual harassment policy will be subject



to disciplinary action. In accordance with the Texas A&M University System guidelines, your instructor is obligated to report to the Office of Title IX Compliance ([titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu)) any instance of sexual misconduct involving a student, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which the instructor becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. The faculty and staff of PVAMU actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like assistance or have questions, they may contact the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Zakiya Brown, at 936-261-2144 or [titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu). More information can be found at [Title XI Website](#), including confidential resources available on campus.

#### Protections and Accommodations for Pregnant and Parenting Students

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces, among other statutes, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX protects people from discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. This protection includes those who may be pregnant and parenting. Title IX states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy or parenting should contact the Office of Title IX for information, resources, and support at [titleixteam@pvamu.edu](mailto:titleixteam@pvamu.edu). Additional information and/or support may be provided by the Office of Disability Services or the Office of the Dean of Students.

#### Non-Discrimination Statement

Prairie View A&M University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity in its programs and activities. The University is committed to supporting students and complying with The Texas A&M University System non-discrimination policy. It seeks to establish an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you experience an incident of discrimination or harassment, we encourage you to report it. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are individuals who can meet with you. The Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies and can be reached at Harrington Science Building, Suite 109, or by phone at 936-261-1744 or 1792.

#### Class Attendance Policy (See the University Online Catalog for Full Attendance Policy)

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Attending all classes supports the full academic development of each learner, whether classes are taught with the instructor physically present or via distance learning technologies such as interactive video and/or the Internet. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in the assignment of a grade of "F." Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class during regular semesters and summer terms. Each faculty member will include the University's attendance policy in each course syllabus.

#### Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences

Prairie View A&M University recognizes that there are a variety of legitimate circumstances in which students will miss coursework and that accommodations for makeup work will be made. If a student's absence is **excused**, the instructor must either provide the student an opportunity to make up any quiz, exam, or other work contributing to the final grade or provide a satisfactory alternative by a date agreed upon by the student and instructor. Students are encouraged to work with instructors to complete makeup work before known scheduled absences (University-sponsored events, administrative proceedings, etc.). Students are responsible for planning their schedules to avoid excessive conflicts with course requirements.

#### Absence Verification Process

All non-athletic absences (e.g., Medical, Death/Funeral, Court/Legal-related, etc.) for which a student seeks to obtain a valid excuse must be submitted to the Dean of Students/Office of Student Conduct, with supporting documentation, for review and verification. Please use the [Online Reporting Forms](#) to access/complete/submit the *Request for a University Excused Absence* form for an excuse. Upon receipt, a staff member will verify the documentation and provide an official university excuse, if applicable. The student is responsible for providing the official university excuse issued by the Office for Student Conduct to the professor(s). Questions should be directed to the Dean of Students via email: [deanofstudents@pvamu.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@pvamu.edu) or phone: (936) 261-3550 or Office for Student Conduct via email: [studentconduct@pvamu.edu](mailto:studentconduct@pvamu.edu) or phone: (936) 261-3524.

## Student Academic Appeals Process

Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rest with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the University Online Catalog and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint.

## Technical Considerations

### **Minimum Recommended Hardware and Software:**

- Intel PC or laptop with Windows 10 or later version; Mac with OS Catalina
- Smartphone or iPad/tablet with wi-fi\*
- High-speed internet access
- 8 GB memory
- Hard drive with 320 GB storage space
- 15" monitor, 1024 x 768, color
- Speakers (internal or external)
- Microphone and recording software
- Keyboard & mouse
- Most current version of Google Chrome, Safari, or Firefox

**Note:** Be sure to enable Java & pop-ups in the web browser preferences

\* Some courses may require remote proctoring. At this time only Chromebooks, laptops, and desktops running Windows or Mac work with our proctoring solution, but iPads are not compatible. Most other applications will work with Android or Apple tablets and smartphones.

### **Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:**

- Sending and receiving email
- A working knowledge of the Internet
- Microsoft Word (or a program convertible to Word)
- Acrobat PDF Reader
- Windows or Mac OS
- Video conferencing software (Zoom)

### *Netiquette* (online etiquette)

Students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats as directed. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others on discussion boards. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated. Do not use ALL CAPS for communicating to others AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING. Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you." Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons. Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post, and the message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.

### Video Conferencing Etiquette

When using Zoom, WebEx, or other video conferencing tools, confirm the visible area is tidy, clear of background clutter, inappropriate or offensive posters, and other distractions. Ensure you dress appropriately and avoid using high traffic or noisy areas. Stay muted when you are not speaking and avoid eating/drinking during the session. Before the class session begins, test audio, video, and lighting to alleviate technology issues.

### Technical Support

Students should go to [Password Reset Tool](#) if they have password issues. The page will provide instructions for resetting passwords and contact information if login issues persist. For other technical questions regarding eCourses, call the Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services at 936-261-3283 or email [ciits@pvamu.edu](mailto:ciits@pvamu.edu).

### Communication Expectations and Standards

Emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor, usually in less than 48 hours. Urgent emails should be marked as such. Check regularly for responses.

## Discussion Requirement

Online courses often require minimal to no face-to-face meetings. However, conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course can occur in a seminar fashion. The use of the discussion board will accomplish this. The instructor will determine the exact use of discussion boards.

**It is strongly suggested** that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application such as Word and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized by the use of the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, copy and paste to the discussion board.

## COVID-19 Campus Safety Measures

In accordance with the latest guidelines from the PVAMU Health Services, the following measures are in effect until further notice.

- Students who are ill will be asked to adhere to best practices in public health, such as masking, handwashing, and social distancing, to help reduce the spread of illness across campus.
- Mandatory self-reporting will no longer be required by students. Students will be responsible for communicating with their professors regarding COVID, similarly to any other illness.
- There will be no mandatory isolation. Students who are too ill to engage in classroom activities will be responsible for securing the appropriate documentation to support the absence.
- Students who self-isolate will be responsible for communicating with their professors and securing an excuse from Student Conduct.
- All students will have access to [TimelyCare](#), a telehealth platform that provides virtual medical care 24/7 and by appointment in the Student Health Clinic. Students are encouraged to enroll with TimelyCare at the beginning of the semester, at [timelycare.com/pvamu](https://timelycare.com/pvamu).
- Students will have access to COVID testing in the Student Health Clinic by appointment. Testing is for students who are symptomatic ONLY.