



COMM 4353 P01 – Communication Research
Spring 2024

Course Information

Description

Instructor: Dr. Dejun Liu
Section # and CRN: Section P01 CRN 20776
Office Location: Hilliard Hall 208
Office Phone: (936) 261-3733
Email Address: deliu@pvamu.edu
Office Hours: T & R 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.; 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Online: 3:00pm to 4:00pm
Mode of Instruction: Face to Face

Course Location: Hilliard Hall Conference Room
Class Days & Times: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.
Catalog Description: **(3-0) Credit 3 semester hours.**

This course focuses on the academic research process—from defining research questions to designing studies and reporting results. Students will learn about the most common data-gathering and measurement techniques in Communication research, including experiments, surveys, content analysis, historical analysis, and qualitative methods.

Prerequisites: COMM 2351 or COMM 2513

Co-requisites: None

Required Texts: Merrigan, G., & Huston, C. (2009). *Communication research methods* / Gerianne Merrigan and Carole L. Huston. – 2nd ed. ISBN 978-0-19-531482-3 New York: Oxford University Press

Recommended Texts: Reinard, J. C. (1997). *Introduction to communication research*. Boston: McGraw Hill

Student Learning Outcomes:

	Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Program Learning Outcome # Alignment	Core Curriculum Outcome Alignment
1	become more critical thinkers generally.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Communication Critical Thinking
2	become critical consumers of research findings published in various source material.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Critical Thinking Social Responsibility
3	become more skilled at presenting and developing arguments grounded in research based on knowledge.	1, 2, 3, 4	Communication Critical Thinking
4	begin the process of learning how to conduct and evaluate scientific research on human communication behavior.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Communication Critical Thinking Social

Major Course Requirements

Method of Determining Final Course Grade

Course Grade Requirement	Value	Total
1) Test One: Chapters 1-4	15	15
2) Test Two: Chapters 4-7	15	15
3) Test Three: Chapters 8-15	25	25
4) Critique of a research paper	15	15
5) Presentation of the Critique	5	5
6) Identify three papers for three paradigms	10	10
7) Class assignment	5	5
6) Attendance	10	10
Total:		100

Grading Criteria and Conversion:

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 70 - 79

D = 60 - 69

F = 59 or less

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, including the final exam, 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, including the final exam, 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
Test One: Chapters 1-4	Unit one test covers all the first four chapters. The test will be objective and short-answer essays in format. The test is worth 15% of your final grade.
Test Two: Chapters 4-7	Unit two test covers chapter 4 (overlap with test one) to 8. The test will be objective and short-answer essays in format. The test is worth 15% of your final grade.
Test Three: Chapters 8-15	This is considered the final exam. It covers chapter 8 (overlap with test two) to 15. The test will be objective and short-answer essays in format. The test is worth 25% of your final grade.
Identify Three Papers	<p>Explore some communication journals and select three published research papers to represent the three paradigms, one in discovery paradigm, one in interpretive and one in critical. Write three reasons for each paper as your criteria for selecting that paper to represent the claimed paradigm, such as:</p> <p>The paper "<i>Children's and Parents' Fright Reactions to Kidnapping Stories in the News</i>" is in the category of discovery paradigm.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The researchers conducted a random telephone survey of 182 parents to assess their reactions as well as their children's reactions to child kidnapping stories in the news. 2. The research has four hypotheses. 3. The research conducted ANOVA data analysis. <p>This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade.</p>
Critique of a research paper	You will be required to write and present orally an in-depth critique of a research article at the end of the semester. The requirement is at the end of this syllabus. The critique will be worth 15% of your grade.

Presentation of the Critique You will prepare and deliver a Power Point presentation of your critique to the class. Five to eight slides should be created to outline your presentation for your critique.

Late papers and make-up policy:

All assignments are due at class time. Assignments turned in after class on the due day will lose one letter grade immediately and an additional letter grade for each day thereafter. There will be no make-up for in-class exercises or examinations.

Attendance Policy:

I will take attendance each class period. It is your responsibility to make sure I have your name recorded as present each class period. If you must miss class, please let me know why and provide me with documentations.

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Excessive absences will result in lowered grades.

Absenteeism, whether EXCUSED OR UNEXCUSED, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in a student's being assigned a grade of "F." Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class. The University undergraduate catalog provides more details. Accumulation of three (3) unexcused absences constitutes excessive absenteeism. However, in this class, **F will be assigned to anyone who has 6 or more absences for whatever reason.**

Semester Calendar

Week One: Jan 16-19

Topic Description

The What and Why of Communication Research

Readings:

M Introduction of the course

W Chapter 1

F The What and Why of Communication Research

Assignment (s):

M Memorizing the key terms on page 19

W Going over the discussion questions on page 19

F Doing "Try It" activities on page 19

Week Two: Jan 22-26

Topic Description

Ethics and Research

Readings:

M Chapter 2

W Chapter 2

F Chapter 2

Assignment (s):

M Going over the key terms on page 31

W Going over and think about the discussion questions on page 31

F Preparing the activities on page 32 for class discussion

Week Three: Jan 29-Feb 2

Topic Description

Three Paradigms of Knowing

Readings:

M Chapter 3

W Chapter 3

F Chapter 3

Assignment(s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 44

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 44

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 44

Week Four: Feb 5-9

Topic Description

Making Claims

Reading(s)

M Chapter 4

W Chapter 4

F Chapter 4

Assignment (s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 56

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 56

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 56

Week Five: Feb 12-16

Topic Description

What Counts as Communication Data

Reading(s)

M Chapter 5

W Chapter 5

F Chapter 5

Test One (Tuesday, Feb. 15) on Chapters 1-4

Assignment (s):

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 78

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 78

Week Six: Feb 19-23

Topic Description

Warrants for Research Arguments

Reading(s)

M Chapter 6

W Chapter 6

F Chapter 6

Assignment (s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 100

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 100

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 100

**Week Seven: Feb 26-
March 1**

Topic Description

Reading(s)

Part II The How of Communication Research: Survey Research

M Chapter 7

W Chapter 7

F Chapter 7

Assignment (s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 123

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 124

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 124

**Week Eight: March
4-8**

Topic Description

Reading(s)

Experimental Research

M Chapter 8

W Chapter 8

F Chapter 8

Assignments:

Test Two (Thursday, March 10) on Chapters 4-7

**Week Nine: March
11-15**

SPRING BREAK

**Week Ten: March 18-
22**

Topic Description

Reading(s)

Content Analysis

M Chapter 9

W Chapter 9

F Chapter 9

Assignment (s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 161

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 161

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 161-162

**Week Eleven: March
25-29**

Topic Description

Reading(s)

Descriptive Statistics and Hypothesis Testing

M Chapter 10

W Chapter 10

F Chapter 10

Assignment (s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 180

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 180

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 180

**Week Twelve: April
1-5**

Topic Description

Reading(s)

Inferential Statistics: Differences and Relationships

M Chapter 11

W Chapter 11

F Chapter 11

Assignment (s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 205

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 206

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 206-207

**Week Thirteen: April
8-12**

Topic Description

Reading(s)

Conversation and Discourse Analysis

M Chapter 12

W Chapter 12

Assignment (s): F Chapter 12
M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 230
W Preparing the questions and activities on page 231
F Preparing the questions and activities on page 231

Week Fourteen:

April 15-19

Topic Description

Reading(s)

Ethnographic Research

M Chapter 13

W Chapter 13

F Chapter 13

Assignment (s):

M Going over and memorizing the key terms on page 254

W Preparing the questions and activities on page 255

F Preparing the questions and activities on page 255

**Week Fifteen: April
22-26**

Critique Presentations

**Week Sixteen: April
29-May 3**

Test Three as Final Exam

Article Critique Assignment: Interpretive and Critical Paradigms

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is to apply course concepts to an in-depth critique of a research article appearing in the communication research literature. Becoming a good consumer of research is not something that comes easily to most people (as I am sure many of you have discovered). It is a set of skills we have been learning throughout the semester. Research really is a way to generate new knowledge about human communication. As a result, it is important to know how to carefully evaluate the merits and demerits of a work.

Article selection: The article must report a study using a form of analysis from the interpretive and critical paradigms that we have explored in some detail during this semester. These include conversational analysis, discourse analysis, rhetorical criticism methodologies from the two paradigms, ethnography, critical ethnography, and critical studies. **Please include a full citation of the article with the paper you turn in to me.** Do not use experimental studies, survey research, or content/interaction analyses using statistical analyses to test research questions or hypotheses. You may use any article that fits the requirements you used for previous homework assignments.

Your paper should include the following sections (and please make these clear by main and subheadings):

I. Paradigm: Identify the paradigm from which the study is generated. Discuss at least three underlying assumptions that seem to apply directly or indirectly to your study.

II. Claim: Identify at least one central claim of the study. It may be in the form of a research question or hypothesis, or it may appear as a central purpose or thesis statement. Watch for language such as, “I contend . . .” as a clue to a thesis statement. Be sure to cite the page number where it occurs.

III. Data: In this section, you should have the following subheadings:

1. Selection: Identify the sampling unit and the method of sampling or how the text(s) was selected (students, romantic partners, advertisements, speech, film scenes, etc.).

2. Setting: Identify the setting in which the data are collected.

3. Source: Explain whether the data are self-report, other-report, observations, or texts.

4. Data collection strategy: Identify whether the data were collected by interview, questionnaire, observational coding scheme, and/or a textual framework. In the case of a text, include any description the author(s) may make regarding why particular texts were selected.

5. Interpretive or critical framework: The framework will change depending on the type of study done. Here are some general guidelines:

a. Conversational analysis: Turns at talk are usually examined for some pattern or feature derived usually from a theoretic framework (like Tracy and Tracy’s use of speech

act theory to examine adjacency pairs).

b. Discourse analysis: General patterns of discourse are examined to show that various social roles and/or rules are enacted or constructed through discourse.

c. Rhetorical criticism: One or more general theoretic approaches are selected to be applied to the analysis of the text, e.g., using Burke's dramatisitic criticism in the analysis of a film.

d. Ethnography: Communicative practices of a culture are explored using a *grounded theory* approach where the researcher moves back and forth between the data and inferences drawn about the data to identify various patterns; examples of emergent patterns might be kinship rules for who may address and be addressed by various members of the group, what constitutes patterns of influence in a particular group, and so forth. Some external theoretic framework or concept may be applied (e.g., Eisenberg and Smith's interpretive "root metaphor" concept or feminist critical theory).

e. Critical studies: Texts of varied formats can serve as the basis for any critical studies analysis you wish to critique; among the easier to identify are structuralists' positions (e.g., feminist studies, cultural studies).

IV. Warrants: You should discuss how at least one value and one warrant are established for your study. These vary by paradigm:

1. Interpretive paradigm studies: Show how subjectivity or rich description is used as a value. For example, subjectivity is often implicit in the arguments for the observer's role in ethnographic studies. Rich description takes the place of quantitative analysis as researchers establish why it is important to explore more qualitative dimensions (rather than relying on reductive quantitative techniques). Then illustrate how the researchers use researcher credibility, plausibility of interpretations, or transferable findings as a warrant for their claims.

2. Critical paradigm studies: Show how the researchers value their claims by giving voice to and therefore liberating marginalized groups. Show how they warrant their claims by reflecting the positionality of the researchers. For this paradigm, also indicate how the form of argument is used by evaluating standard social policy or by moving beyond evaluation to advocating social reform.

V. Critique: Based on the approach of the particular study you chose to examine, identify the relative strengths and weaknesses of your particular study. These should include any limitations the authors note in discussing their research. Be sure to distinguish these from your own.

VI. Reference: At the end of your critique, include the study's cite according to APA format.

VII. Article copy: Be sure to attach a copy of the full article (including references and appendices) to your critique.

Format: Your paper should be typewritten and single- or double-spaced. You are to present your article critique to the class in April.

Your presentation should be six to ten minutes in length and cover only the most salient features of your critique. You must provide me with a copy of your outline on your speaking date. The final written paper should be **six to eight** pages. If you find it is getting much longer than that (or if it is much shorter), I encourage you to see me about it. The oral presentation is part of this assignment. The whole project is worth 20 percentage points.

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: <https://www.pvamu.edu/library/>; Phone: 936-261-1500

Academic Advising Services

Academic Advising Services offers students various services that contribute to student success and leads towards 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 www.pvamu.edu/advising. 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; [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, 2nd 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, 3rd Floor, Rm. 305; Phone: 936-261-3627; Email: 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.

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, 2nd 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) 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. 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. 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 or phone: (936) 261-3550 or Office for Student Conduct via email: 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.

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.
- Students will have access to COVID testing in the Student Health Clinic by appointment. Testing is for students who are symptomatic ONLY.