

# POLS-2361-003: INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Spring 2025

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<b>Instructor:</b>	Hoan La	<b>Lecture Time:</b>	M/W/F 02:00 PM - 02:50 PM
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:hla@ttu.edu">hla@ttu.edu</a>	<b>Lecture Room:</b>	Classical & Modern Lang & Lit 112
<b>Office:</b>	Holden Hall 36	<b>Office Hours:</b>	M & W 12:00–1:30 PM or by appointment

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## 1 Course Overview and Objectives

### 1.1 General Overview

This course introduces students to the field of International Relations, exploring enduring questions and challenges in global affairs. Grounded in foundational theories, it integrates historical context, analytical tools, and contemporary issues to provide a strong foundation in the study of the international politics. Students will examine key topics such as statecraft, international security, international organizations, international economics, and emerging global challenges. The course aims to engage students with the key questions and foundational theories of world politics while providing analytical frameworks and tools that they can apply to understand and analyze international relations, thereby preparing them for advanced coursework and practical engagement with the pressing issues that shape our world today.

### 1.2 Learning Objectives and Assessment

At the end of the semester, students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Understand why international relations matter and how they affect us in our daily lives.
- Identify key historical periods that have most influenced the development of international relations.
- Define and explain the central tenets of major international relations theories, including realism, liberalism, and social constructivism.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the major actor in international relations and analyze the various tools of statecraft.
- Define war and analyze its causes through theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis.
- Explain why international organizations form and analyze their roles in global politics.
- Understand the core concepts, theories, and institutional dynamics that shape the international political economy.
- Identify major issues shaping contemporary international relations.

These learning objectives will be evaluated through class discussions, quizzes, exams, and a final project.

## 2 Course Materials

### 2.1 Required Textbook

The majority of the course readings will come from the following book (referred to as Grieco in the lecture schedule and assigned readings):

Grieco, Joseph M., Ikenberry, G. John, and Mastanduno, Michael. (2022). *Introduction to International Relations: Perspectives, Connections, and Enduring Questions (3rd Edition)*. Bloomsbury Academic.

The book is available in the TTU bookstore or on Amazon.com and other online retailers. You are welcome to purchase it from any source where you can find it at a lower cost.

### 2.2 Other Readings

We will also read selected chapters from various books and articles. You are not required to purchase these materials, as they will be made available on Blackboard.

## 3 Course Requirements

### 3.1 Readings

Students are expected to complete all reading assignments as outlined in the lecture schedule prior to attending class. Reading is essential for active participation in class discussions, completing quizzes, and preparing for exams. Although there will be overlap between the readings and lecture material, some content in the readings may not be covered in class, and vice versa. Students are responsible for all material from both the assigned readings and class lectures for quizzes and exams. Keeping up with the readings is crucial for success in this course.

### 3.2 Exams (50% Total)

There are two exams, accounting for 50% of the final grade (25% each). Exams will be administered during the regular semester through Blackboard. Exam questions will come from both lectures and the required readings. The second exam is cumulative but will focus primarily on material covered since the most recent exam. Exam questions may include a mixture of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and long answer questions. The first exam will be on **March 5**, and the second exam will be on **April 25**. Exam dates are subject to change if events dictate the need. Exams will be made available at 9 a.m. and will remain available until midnight on the day they are assigned. You can take the exam at any time during this period, as long as it is completed by midnight on that date. After this window closes, the exam will no longer be accessible. All exams are timed. You will have 60 minutes to complete them once you begin.

Exams are open book and open note, but you are not allowed to work with anyone else when taking the exams or quizzes. You are not allowed to use AI tools or any homework or assignment helper services/tools for your exams. You may only use your class notes and textbooks to complete the exams. Any signs of using unauthorized tools will result in a grade of 0 for the exam and may lead to a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. You will not attend the face-to-face lecture on the days when exams are held.

As exams are administered through Blackboard, you must have a consistent, functioning internet connection to take this course. It is your responsibility to ensure that your computer and connection are working properly. Technical problems will not be accepted as an excuse for

failed or incomplete work. If you are uncertain about your home internet connection, I suggest going to an on-campus location, such as the library, where you can be sure of a stable internet connection.

### 3.3 Quizzes (25% Total)

There will be seven short quizzes administered throughout the semester to ensure comprehension of the assigned readings and lecture material. You will be able to drop the two quizzes with the lowest scores, meaning your overall quiz grade will be calculated based on your five highest quiz grades, which are collectively worth 25% of the final grade. Since you are allowed to drop two quizzes, there are no make-ups for quizzes. In terms of format, the quizzes may include multiple choice and short answer questions based on the reading materials and lectures. Quizzes will be taken in class after the lecture on assigned quiz dates. See the schedule on page 7 of this syllabus for quiz dates. You will have approximately 10 minutes to complete each quiz.

### 3.4 Final Project: Event at a Glance (15% Total)

You will complete a final project, which accounts for 15% of your final grade. For this assignment, you will select a significant international event from the list provided. You will create a concise yet comprehensive overview of the event by summarizing its key details, developing a timeline of major milestones, analyzing it through the three levels of analysis (individual, state, and system), and interpreting it from the perspective of at least two theoretical approaches (e.g., realism, liberalism, constructivism, feminism).

Your project should be presented as a visually engaging infographic or a well-structured document (2-3 pages). This assignment is designed to help you integrate and apply key concepts and theories from the course to real-world events, fostering critical thinking and creativity.

Detailed guidelines, grading criteria, and the list of topics will be provided during the semester. The final project is due by midnight on **May 6**, and late submissions will not be accepted.

### 3.5 Attendance and Participation (10% Total)

Regular attendance is essential for success in this course. You may miss up to two classes without penalty. However, each additional absence will result in a 1% deduction from your total attendance and participation grade (worth 10% of your final grade). For example, if you miss 10 additional classes, you will lose all 10% of your attendance points, meaning the highest grade you could earn in the course would be 90%, assuming perfect scores on all other assignments.

Attendance will be tracked using a unique code submitted through **Top Hat**. Follow the instructions on the course homepage on Blackboard to create your Top Hat account.

Missing class can impact your success because lectures offer insights not covered in the readings and help deepen your understanding of the material. I do not post lecture notes or slides, so attending class is essential to prepare for quizzes and exams.

Active and respectful participation is expected. As an introductory course, you may encounter materials that feel unfamiliar or overwhelming at times, this is completely normal, and I expect it. However, you should come prepared by completing the readings and ready to engage with the questions raised from the material. Keep in mind that people bring diverse perspectives shaped by different experiences, and since we will discuss controversial topics, it is important to respect others' opinions.

### 3.6 Grade Distribution

Assignment	% of Final Grade
Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	25%
Quizzes	25%
Final Project	15%
Attendance & Participation	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 4 Course Policies

### 4.1 Communication

The best way to contact me is via email, during office hours, or by appointment. No appointment is needed during scheduled office hours. However, if you cannot meet during those times, please email me to arrange an appointment.

I aim to respond to most emails within 48 hours, excluding weekends. If you have not heard back after 48 hours (excluding weekends), feel free to follow up. Before emailing, please check the syllabus and the course website on Blackboard, you might find the answer there. When writing an email, include your name and relevant course information, and use proper salutations, sentence structure, and grammar. Communicating professionally is a valuable skill that will serve you well as you enter the workforce.

If something arises that affects your performance in class or on exams, please communicate with me as soon as possible. I don't need details about your personal life, but a quick heads-up is always helpful. Don't wait until the end of the semester to explain why your grades are lower than expected - by then, it may be too late to make any changes. Remember, it is always better to ask for permission than forgiveness. If you wait until after the fact, I will generally be less flexible.

### 4.2 Late Work Policy

Work is considered late if it is submitted after the deadline specified in the syllabus and on Blackboard. Late work will not be accepted in this course. Work submitted as makeup for an excused absence is not considered late and is exempt from this policy.

### 4.3 Make-up Exams

Make-ups for exams will only be granted in cases of significant illness, serious emergencies, or university-documented activities that prevent you from completing the exam. All of the exam dates are listed on the syllabus. You will have a minimum of a 15 hour window within which to take the exams. If you have an excuse, but it does not prevent you from accessing a computer at any time during that window, it will not be accepted. If you do miss an exam, you must contact the instructor as soon as reasonably possible, or face a score of zero. If you have not completed arrangements to make up an exam within one week of the original exam date, you will not be allowed to make up the exam under any circumstances.

There are no make-ups for quizzes. However, more quizzes are assigned than are required for the final grade. Out of seven quizzes, only your top five scores will count, allowing you to miss up to two quizzes without penalty.

#### **4.4 Extra Credit Opportunities**

During the semester, there will be two opportunities to earn extra credit. Each opportunity allows you to earn up to 2.5 percentage points (for a total of 5 percentage points), which will be added to your final grade. If you earn the full 5%, your total grade percentage could increase accordingly. For example, if your total grade is 85% and you earn the full 5% extra credit, your adjusted total would be 90%, moving you from a B to an A. These opportunities will be announced in advance and will require active participation or the completion of specific tasks related to course content. The first opportunity will take place during week 12, and the second will be in week 17.

#### **4.5 Classroom Etiquette and Device Policy**

To help maintain a focused and respectful learning environment, please refrain from activities that may disrupt the class, such as arriving late, speaking while others are talking, or packing up before class ends. If you come to class, please plan to stay for the entire session. If you know in advance that you need to leave early, let me know before class begins.

Cell phones and similar devices should be silenced and put away during class to minimize distractions. If a student is visibly using their phone or texting during class, the instructor may ask them to put it away or leave the classroom.

Laptops are welcome for note-taking purposes, but please ensure they are used exclusively for class-related activities. Your cooperation in creating a positive classroom atmosphere is greatly appreciated!

#### **4.6 Lecture Slides and Notes**

Students are responsible for taking their own lecture notes. The instructor does not provide or post full slides online. However, brief notes for each of the seven parts of the course will be posted on Blackboard, containing content headings to guide your learning. Attending class is essential for filling in the details and staying up to date with the course material.

#### **4.7 Copyright Notice**

Course materials prepared by the instructor, along with the content of all lectures and/or review sessions presented by the instructor, are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and/or review sessions without the written consent of the instructor is prohibited. Course materials provided in this course must not be shared, transferred, or uploaded to any website without the instructor's permission.

#### **4.8 A Note Regarding the Use of AI Technology**

You may not use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT, Gemini) to assist or produce work for this class EXCEPT on assignments specified in class or on the syllabus. The instructor will provide more information as appropriate. You may not, however, construe this limited use as permission to use these technologies in any other facet of this course. Submission of AI-generated content as your own work is a violation of academic integrity and may result in

referral to the Office of Student Conduct. Please contact your instructor if you have questions regarding this course policy.

#### **4.9 Grading Scale**

The grading scale is as follows:

A = 100–90

B = 89–80

C = 79–70

D = 69–60

F = 59 and below

Please note that I do not give grades, I record them. As such, the grade that I record for your semester performance is non-negotiable. I will not make any changes to the final grade unless you can successfully prove that I have made a computational error.

**Dates When Class Will Not Be Held:**

Holiday ..... Janauray 20  
Spring Break ..... March 17 – 21  
Instructor at Conferences ..... April 2-4  
Holiday ..... April 21  
Days of Exams ..... March 5 & April 25

**Exam Dates** (Exams are online and class will not be held on exam days):

Exam #1 ..... Wednesday, March 5  
Exam #2 ..... Friday, April 25

**Quiz Dates** (Quizzes are in-class and class will be held on quiz days):

Quiz #1 ..... Friday, January 24  
Quiz #2 ..... Friday, January 31  
Quiz #3 ..... Friday, February 14  
Quiz #4 ..... Friday, February 21  
Quiz #5 ..... Friday, March 14  
Quiz #6 ..... Friday, March 28  
Quiz #7 ..... Friday, April 18

**Final Project Due Date:** 11:59 PM, Tuesday, May 6

## Lecture Schedule and Assigned Readings

Dates	Topic	Readings
<b>PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</b>		
<b>Week 1 (Jan. 15 - Jan. 17)</b>		
Wed, Jan. 15	Course Introduction and Syllabus Overview	n/a
Fri, Jan. 17	An Introduction to International Relations	Grieco Chap. 1
<b>Week 2 (Jan. 20 - Jan. 24)</b>		
Mon, Jan. 20	HOLIDAY - NO CLASS	n/a
Wed, Jan. 22	Levels of Analysis	Grieco Chap. 1
Fri, Jan. 24	History of the International System (Quiz #1)	Grieco Chap. 2
<b>PART 2: THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>		
<b>Week 3 (Jan. 27 - Jan. 31)</b>		
Mon, Jan. 27	Realism	Grieco Chap. 3
Wed, Jan. 29	Liberalism	Grieco Chap. 3
Fri, Jan. 31	Constructivism (Quiz #2)	Grieco Chap. 3
<b>Week 4 (Feb. 3 - Feb. 7)</b>		
Mon, Feb. 3	Critical Theory, Marxism, and Feminism	Grieco Chap. 3
Wed, Feb. 5	Comparing Theories: Which One is Best?	Snyder 2004
Fri, Feb. 7	Theory Meets The Real World	Nau p.56-63
<b>PART 3: STATECRAFT AND FOREIGN POLICY</b>		
<b>Week 5 (Feb. 10 - Feb. 14)</b>		
Mon, Feb. 10	Tools of Statecraft	Mingst Chap. 5
Wed, Feb. 12	Models of Foreign Policy Decision Making	Mingst Chap. 5
Fri, Feb. 14	Sources of Foreign Policy (Quiz #3)	Grieco Chap. 4
<b>PART 4: WAR AND SECURITY</b>		
<b>Week 6 (Feb. 17 - Feb. 21)</b>		
Mon, Feb. 17	War and Security: Types, Concepts, and Theories	Pevehouse Chap.5
Wed, Feb. 19	Causes of War	Grieco Chap. 6
Fri, Feb. 21	The Bargaining Model of War (Quiz #4)	Frieden Chap. 3
<b>Week 7 (Feb. 24 - Feb. 28)</b>		
Mon, Feb. 24	Civil Wars and Their Causes	Grieco Chap. 6
Wed, Feb. 26	Pathways to Interstate Peace	Grieco Chap. 7
Fri, Feb. 28	Catchup & Review	n/a
<b>Week 8 (Mar. 3 - Mar. 7): REVIEW &amp; EXAM 1</b>		
Mon, Mar. 3	NO CLASS Instructor at ISA Conference	n/a
Wed, Mar. 5	<b>EXAM 1</b>	n/a
Fri, Mar. 7	Overview of Final Project	n/a



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**PART 5: INTERNATIONAL LAWS AND ORGANIZATIONS**


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**Week 9 (Mar. 10 - Mar. 14)**

Mon, Mar. 10	Basic Concepts and Domains	Grieco Chap. 5
Wed, Mar. 12	Why do International Law and Organizations Exist?	Grieco Chap. 5
Fri, Mar. 14	Do International Law and Organizations Matter? (Quiz #5)	Grieco Chap. 5

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**Week 10 (Mar. 17 - Mar. 21): SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS**


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**PART 6: INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY (IPE)**


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**Week 11 (Mar. 24 - Mar. 28)**

Mon, Mar. 24	Introduction to IPE and Major Theories	Grieco Chap. 9
Wed, Mar. 26	International Trade	Grieco Chap. 9
Fri, Mar. 28	International Money and Finance (Quiz #6)	Grieco Chap. 9

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**Week 12 (Mar. 31 - Apr. 4)**

Mon, Mar. 31	Multinational Enterprises	Grieco Chap. 9
Wed, Apr. 2	Globalization and the Global Political Economy	n/a
Fri, Apr. 4	NO CLASS Instructor at MPSA Conference	n/a

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**PART 7: KEY ISSUES IN GLOBAL POLITICS**


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**Week 13 (Apr. 7 - Apr. 11)**

Mon, Apr. 7	Human Rights & Humanitarian Intervention	Frieden Chap. 12
Wed, Apr. 9	Human Security: Migration & Health	Mingst Chap. 12
Fri, Apr. 11	Climate Change and Global Environment	Grieco Chap. 13

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**Week 14 (Apr. 14 - Apr. 18)**

Mon, Apr. 14	Dilemmas of Development	Grieco Chap. 11
Wed, Apr. 16	Gender and International Relations	Walters p.174-186
Fri, Apr. 18	Non-State Actors and Challenges to Sovereignty (Quiz #7)	Grieco Chap. 12

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**Week 15 (Apr. 21 - Apr. 25)**

Mon, Apr. 21	HOLIDAY - NO CLASS	n/a
Wed, Apr. 23	Catchup & Review	n/a
Fri, Apr. 25	<b>EXAM 2</b>	n/a

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**Week 16 (Apr. 28 - May. 2)**

Mon, Apr. 28	International Order	Grieco Chap. 14
Wed, Apr. 30	The futures of IR	Grieco Chap. 14
Fri, May. 2	Final Project Day	n/a

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**Week 17 (May. 5)**

Mon, May. 5	What Have We Learned?	n/a
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**FINAL PROJECT DUE AT 11:59PM ON MAY 6**


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**Note:** The readings and schedule in the syllabus are tentative and subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class or posted on Blackboard.

## **Academic Integrity Statement**

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. [Texas Tech University ("University") Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010].

## **Plagiarism Statement**

Texas Tech University expects students to "understand the principles of academic integrity and abide by them in all class and/or course work at the University" (OP 34.12.5). Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that involves (1) the representation of words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, other expression, or media of another as one's own and/or failing to properly cite direct, paraphrased, or summarized materials; or (2) self-plagiarism, which involves the submission of the same academic work more than once without the prior permission of the instructor and/or failure to correctly cite previous work written by the same student. This video, retrieved from the University of Kansas Libraries website, provides an example of a plagiarism definition as well as examples of plagiarism and how to avoid it. Please review Section B of the TTU Student Handbook for more information related to other forms of academic misconduct, and contact your instructor if you have questions about plagiarism or other academic concerns in your courses. To learn more about the importance of academic integrity and practical tips for avoiding plagiarism, explore the resources provided by the TTU Library and the School of Law.

## **Classroom Civility**

Texas Tech University is a community of faculty, students, and staff that enjoys an expectation of cooperation, professionalism, and civility during the conduct of all forms of university business, including the conduct of student–student and student–faculty interactions in and out of the classroom. Further, the classroom is a setting in which an exchange of ideas and creative thinking should be encouraged and where intellectual growth and development are fostered. Students who disrupt this classroom mission by rude, sarcastic, threatening, abusive or obscene language and/or behavior will be subject to appropriate sanctions according to university policy. Likewise, faculty members are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism in all interactions with all constituents of the university ([www.depts.ttu.edu/ethics/matadorchallenge/ethicalprinciples.php](http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ethics/matadorchallenge/ethicalprinciples.php)).

## **ADA Statement**

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom

accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact Student Disability Services in Weeks Hall or call 806-742-2405.

### **TTU Resources for Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Violence**

Texas Tech University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from gender and/or sex discrimination of any kind. Sexual assault, discrimination, harassment, and other Title IX violations are not tolerated by the University. Report any incidents to the Office for Student Rights & Resolution, (806)-742-SAFE (7233) or file a report online at [titleix.ttu.edu/students](https://titleix.ttu.edu/students). Faculty and staff members at TTU are committed to connecting you to resources on campus. Some of these available resources are: TTU Student Counseling Center, 806- 742-3674, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/scc/> (Provides confidential support on campus.) TTU 24-hour Crisis Helpline, 806-742-5555, (Assists students who are experiencing a mental health or interpersonal violence crisis. If you call the helpline, you will speak with a mental health counselor.) Voice of Hope Lubbock Rape Crisis Center, 806-763-7273, [voiceofhopelubbock.org](https://voiceofhopelubbock.org) (24-hour hotline that provides support for survivors of sexual violence.) The Risk, Intervention, Safety and Education (RISE) Office, 806-742-2110, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/rise/> (Provides a range of resources and support options focused on prevention education and student wellness.) Texas Tech Police Department, 806-742-3931, <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttupd/> (To report criminal activity that occurs on or near Texas Tech campus.)

### **Religious Holy Day Statement**

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

### **Statement of Accommodation for Pregnant Students**

To support the academic success of pregnant and parenting students and students with pregnancy related conditions, the University offers reasonable modifications based on the student's particular needs. Any student who is pregnant or parenting a child up to age 18 or has conditions related to pregnancy may contact Alex Faris, the Texas Tech University designated Pregnancy and Parenting Liaison, to discuss support available through the University. The Liaison can be reached by emailing [alfaris@ttu.edu](mailto:alfaris@ttu.edu). Should a student communicate with the instructor that they are pregnant or have a pregnancy related condition or may need additional resources related to pregnancy or parenting, the instructor will communicate that student's information to the Title IX Coordinator, who will work with the student and others, as needed, to ensure equal access to the University's education program or activity.

For more information regarding supportive measures, please contact pregnancy & parenting liaison Alex Faris ([alfaris@ttu.edu](mailto:alfaris@ttu.edu) — 806.834.3420) or visit

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/titleix/PregnancyandParenting/>. You can also visit

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/titleix/PregnancyandParenting/> to submit a request to Alex Faris for assistance.