A. Description of Course Content

The focus of this course is on current advances in knowledge of the neurobiological underpinnings of human behavior and development, the interaction between those underpinnings and the social context and environment, the relevance to social work practice with individuals, families, groups, programs/organizations, and communities, and related assessment and intervention practice behaviors across several practice domains. The domains include human development, genetics, mental health and substance abuse, cognition, stress and trauma, and violence and aggression. The implications of neurobiological and environmental influences (including public health issues and health disparities) will be examined in terms of social justice, social work values, knowledge, and skills, as well as in terms of the structural and systematic arrangement and delivery of social welfare services at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Co-requisite: SOCW 5311.

B. Student Learning Outcomes

The Council on Social Work Education requires that accredited social work programs follow the CSWE Educational Policy and Standards that comprises nine competencies as follows:

1. Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
2. Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
3. Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
4. Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
5. Engage in Policy Practice
6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
8. Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
9. Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

This course addresses competencies 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8.

Specifically, while the course addresses all competencies, 1 through 9, it mainly focuses on Competencies 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aging</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate awareness of aging-related personal and professional values through self-reflection and self-regulation.</td>
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<td>Select and incorporate ethical decision-making frameworks that integrate social work values.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice in a culturally competent manner that demonstrates recognition of and ability to utilize the principles included in the NASW Code of Ethics, evidence-based knowledge, and relevant legal and policy-related information.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aging</strong></td>
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</table>
Appraise their own values related to diversity in aging.

Analyze how diversity and oppression impact older adults and families.

Address the cultural and spiritual histories, values, and beliefs of older adults and their families.

Defend the impact of structural inequalities and the value of diversity among older adults as part of their roles on interprofessional teams and in organizations and communities.

Understand and can apply the relevant cultural, class, gender, race, age, disability, and other diversity issues to enhance the well-being of children and families from a strengths perspective.

Can analyze, using cognitive processes, the relevant cultural, class, gender, race, age, disability, and other diversity issues that influence the prognosis and treatment of populations treated by mental health/substance abuse social workers.

Practice self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influences of personal bias and values, including, but not limited to, age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, gender identity, religion, and immigration status, in working with diverse populations in connection with the delivery of health care services.

Recognize and respect different values related to health and health care beliefs.

Promote diversity and equity in health and health care service delivery, particularly amongst diverse populations, persons who are vulnerable, oppressed, or living in poverty.

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

Aging  | Children & Families  | Mental Health & Substance Abuse  | Health
---|---|---|---
Understand and build knowledge central to maximizing the well-being of older adults and their caregivers.

Adopt, modify, and translate evidence-informed practices that are most appropriate to particular aging-focused practice settings and populations.

Use advanced strategies to search, appraise, and select for application the most up to date evidence and evolving practice guidelines in the assessment and interventions with children and families.

Develop effective models, programs, policies, and interventions and assess their effectiveness using valid and reliable assessments for identifying family problems, risks and protective factors, vulnerability and resilience factors and consequences for different family groups and family members.

Use advanced cognitive and affective processes to search, appraise, select for application the most up to date evidence and evolving practice guidelines in the assessment and interventions with mental health/substance abuse clients.

Develop effective models, programs, policies and interventions and assess their effectiveness.

Use valid and reliable assessments for identifying client problems, risk and protective factors, vulnerability and resilience factors, and consequences for various individuals and groups.

Demonstrate an understanding of the role of evidence-based practice and practice-informed research in promoting health equity and reducing health disparities.

Engage in critical analysis and apply it appropriately in health related settings to assess and intervene with individuals and families in health care settings. Have an understanding that their own personal beliefs or biases may influence interpretation of or translation of research.

Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Aging  | Children & Families  | Mental Health & Substance Abuse  | Health
---|---|---|---
Conduct assessments that incorporate a strengths-based perspective, person/family-centered focus, and resilience while recognizing aging-related risk.

Develop, select, and adapt assessment methods and tools that optimize practice with older adults, their families, caregivers, and communities.

Use and integrate multiple domains and sources of assessment information and communicate with other professionals to inform a comprehensive plan for intervention.

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<tr>
<th>Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aging</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use multidimensional bio-psycho-social-spiritual assessment tools.</td>
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<td>Compare and assess the various etiology and interventions relevant to children and families.</td>
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<td>Promote older adults’ social support systems and engagement in families, groups, and communities.</td>
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<td>Provide person-centered and family-directed interventions that take account of life course disparities and are targeted to diverse populations, groups, organizations, and communities.</td>
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<td>Assess for quality and access a range of services, supports, and care options, including groups and technology, for older adults and families to assure optimal interdependence.</td>
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<td>Monitor and modify interventions as needed to respond to individual, family, and environmental challenges.</td>
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<td>Describe empirically validated and theoretical causes, advanced assessment methods, and the most effective interventions for a variety of problems that affect children and families.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop intervention plans to accomplish systemic change that is sustainable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe empirically validated and theoretical causes, advanced assessment methods, and the most effective interventions treatments informed by cognitive and affective processes for a variety of disorders: mood, anxiety, cognitive, substance abuse, sexual, eating, psychotic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand theories of human behavior and the social environment and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies in health settings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deliver appropriate culturally relevant health specialty services, using inter-professional collaboration, through interaction of cultural systems between the identity of the social worker, client systems, setting, and immediate community, and practice competently with individuals, families and small groups.</td>
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**C. Required Textbooks and Other Course Materials**


*Clinical Evidence* and *Best Practice* e-databases: The developing evidentiary base on mental health interventions contained in the Central Library e-databases *Clinical Evidence* and *Best Practice* will serve as another set of required “texts” in this course.

**Required materials:** One clicker (i>Clicker), available at the University Bookstore. Tests, test reviews, and some participation exercises will be given using clickers.

**D. Additional Recommended Textbooks and Other Course Materials**


Additional recommended readings will be assigned from professional journal sources and book chapters. They will be posted to the course’s online site.

E. Descriptions of Major Assignments and Examinations

Three major writing assignments will be given during the semester:

1. **The first** will be a critical analysis-response essay to the video at the end of Module 2. Respond to the following questions in **1-2 pages, no references due by 12:00pm on January 24th, 2020:**
   1. How does this video genre stimulate our thinking about neuroscience (the science of the brain)?
   2. What specific elements of the video raised questions about possible neuroscience knowledge and related intervention development in the future (list specific questions that occurred to you with reference to specific parts of the video)?
   3. What specific elements of the video addressed the interface between the human nervous system and forms of technology/chemistry designed to support or enhance human behavior and performance?
   4. How do the technological interfaces suggested in the video seem similar to brain-assistive technology/medication/chemistry currently available in your community?

   *Addresses competencies 1, 2, 7, and 8.*

2. **The second** will be an opportunity to apply up-to-date knowledge of neurobiological underpinnings associated with human brain development/change related to a specific environmental factor during a specific life stage or trajectory from the topics below. Search for and critically analyze recent peer-reviewed neuroscientific research on them (the number of sources will vary by topic), and summarize what you have learned about the neurobiological underpinnings of the factor, with implications for social work practice, in **5-10 pages (APA style) plus references due by 11:59pm on March 5th, 2020.**

   Select one of the following topics (environmental factor is italicized):
   1. Neurobiological underpinnings for the effects of prenatal *maternal nutrition and breastfeeding* on a selected domain of infant development (e.g., speech and language, cognitive, growth);
   2. Child neurobiological underpinnings of “best fit” *parental temperament and child-rearing practices* at specific brain development stages (e.g., neonatal, infancy, toddlerhood);
   3. Neurobiological effects on development of a *mild traumatic brain injury* experienced between the ages of 18-25 in a typically developing human;
   4. Implications of typical brain changes in aging for the effects of “best fit” *social support systems and environmental modifications* for the elderly.
   5. Neurobiological underpinnings for effects of *substance abuse* and process of addiction at a specific life stage/age.

   *Addresses competencies 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8.*

3. **The third** will be an opportunity to select appropriate neuroscientific information needed to do an assessment, make an intervention plan, design a program/delivery system, or develop a policy for a target population OR to carry out a critique and propose modifications to an existing assessment tool/protocol, intervention plan, policy, delivery system, or program (described in the social work literature) which does not currently utilize appropriate, up-to-date neuroscientific information as its foundation. What would a neuroscientifically-informed approach look like? **10-15 pages (APA style) plus references due by 11:59pm on April 16th, 2020.**

   Select one of these topics:
   1. Programs to address the needs of incarcerated adults with mental illness.
   2. The intervention options available in a public mental health delivery system in a particular state or county.
   3. Program models for children and adolescents with early onset mental conditions, early aggressiveness, or other neurological disorders in a public school system.
   5. Assessment and intervention plan for veterans with mild traumatic brain injury and their families.
   6. Policy/architecture-space use/program model promoting increased breastfeeding of infants.
   7. Assessment tools and policies to handle youth sports-related concussions.
optimally. 8) Home and community (e.g., day care, church nursery, public parks, supermarkets) environment assessment tools to guide developmentally optimal settings for infants.

Addresses competencies 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8.

Two Examinations will be given during the semester. They will be made up of a variety of objective questions from reading assignments and lectures/exercises (objectives 1-4).

Addresses competencies 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Test 2</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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F. Attendance

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Canvas. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients. As the instructor of this section.

As the instructor of this section, weekly attendance is mandatory. Since this is an on-line course it is critical that you are engaged with the material, the instructor, and your peers throughout the semester. Students are expected to log into the course at least once a week and maintain consistent and regular communication with their classmates and the instructor throughout the semester. Progress towards satisfactory completion of assignments, including participation in activities, discussion boards, and completion of readings is expected on a weekly basis.

G. Grading

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from the instructor if their performance drops below satisfactory levels. See additional "Student Support Services" below.

Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see “Student Support Services,” below.
H. Make-Up Exams

No make-up exams or discussion boards, either before or after the scheduled date, will be given without a documented excuse. Students who do not complete the exam or discussion board by the specified date and time, with no explanation, will receive a zero (0) for that assignment. Exceptions will be made in extraordinary circumstances and with proper documentation.

Late written assignments will be reduced by ten (10) points for each day they are late. Exceptions will be made in extraordinary circumstances and with proper documentation.

I. Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Required readings and Assignments</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction: What relevance does the study of advances in biology and neuroscience knowledge across the lifespan have for social workers? Ungraded knowledge pretest using clickers.</td>
<td>First chapters in both texts. Written Assignment 1 due posted online through SafeAssign by noon Friday, Jan 24th.</td>
<td>Written Assignment #1 due on Jan 24, 2020 by 12:00pm</td>
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<td>2-5</td>
<td>Review of current knowledge about the brain and associations with dimensions of human behavior. The behavioral geography of the brain: Executive functions of the brain and implications for human behavior, with discussion, as illustrations, of psychotropic medications and other sources of neurological changes which affect human behavior.</td>
<td>The second and third chapters in your neuroscience textbook (Johnson) and all the brain imaging textbook (Bremner) should be read by February 17th. <strong>Test 1 review will be posted the week of Feb 10th.</strong> <strong>Test 1 is due on Feb 20th.</strong></td>
<td>Test #1 due on Feb 20th, 2020 by 11:59pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>Advances in knowledge on neurological functions affecting human behavior across the life span and application to social work in various practice settings. Special emphasis will be given to particular social problems and domains such as human development, cognition, genetics, aggression and violence, stress and trauma, and substance abuse and addiction.</td>
<td>All but the final chapter in your neuroscience textbook (Johnson) should be completed by April 13th. <strong>Written Assignment 2 is due posted online through SafeAssign by March 5th.</strong> <strong>Written Assignment 3 is due posted online through SafeAssign by April 16th.</strong> <strong>Test 2 review will be posted the week of April 27th.</strong></td>
<td>Written Assignment #2 due on March 5th, 2020 by 11:59pm Written Assignment #3 due on April 16th, 2020 by 11:59pm</td>
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</table>
Implications of advances in neuroscience and integration with evidence-based theories of human behavior for service delivery, program design, and social policy. Methods for accessing and evaluating up-to-date neurobehavioral knowledge as a social work practitioner.

The chapters in your neuroscience textbook (Johnson) should be completed by April 21st. Test 2 is due on May 7th.

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

J. Expectations for Out-of-Class Study

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional three hours (for each hour of class or lecture per week) of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for assignments and exams, and reviewing online content, etc.

K. Grade Grievances


L. Student Support Services

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php.

The IDEAS Center (2nd Floor of Central Library) offers free tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. To schedule an appointment with a peer tutor or mentor email IDEAS@uta.edu or call (817) 272-6593.

The UT Arlington School of Social Work community is committed to and cares about all of our students. If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, hopeless, depressed, and/or is thinking about dying by suicide or harming oneself or someone else, supportive services are available. For immediate, 24-hour help call MAVS Talk at 817-272-TALK (817-272-8255). For campus resources, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (817-272-3671 or visit http://www.uta.edu/caps/index.php) or UT Arlington Psychiatric Services (817-272-2771 or visit https://www.uta.edu/caps/services/psychiatric.php) for more information or to schedule an appointment. You can be seen by a counselor on a walk-in basis every day, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM in Ransom Hall, Suite 303. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do - for yourself and for those who care about you.

M. Librarian to Contact

The Social Sciences/Social Work Resource Librarian is Brooke Troutman. Her office is in the campus Central
Library. She may also be contacted via E-mail: brooke.troutman@uta.edu or by phone: (817)272-5352 below are some commonly used resources needed by students in online or technology supported courses: http://www.uta.edu/library/services/distance.php

The following is a list, with links, of commonly used library resources:
Library Home Page........................ http://www.uta.edu/library
Subject Guides............................. http://libguides.uta.edu
Subject Librarians.......................... http://library.uta.edu/subject-librarians
Course Reserves............................ http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do
Library Tutorials .......................... http://library.uta.edu/how-to
Connecting from Off-Campus............. http://libguides.uta.edu/offcampus
Ask a Librarian............................ http://ask.uta.edu

N. Drop Policy

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student’s responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/).

O. Disability Accommodations

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364.
Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability.

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

P. Non-Discrimination Policy

The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.

Q. Title IX Policy

The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education...
Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Michelle Willbanks, Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-4585 or titleix@uta.edu

R. Academic Integrity

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at https://www.uta.edu/conduct/. Faculty are encouraged to discuss plagiarism and share the following library tutorials http://libguides.uta.edu/copyright/plagiarism and http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/

S. Electronic Communication

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

T. Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/

U. Student Feedback Survey

At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student’s feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit http://www.uta.edu/sfs.

V. Final Review Week
For semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.