

**MCOM 4365.001 – Public Relations & Advertising Campaigns  
Syllabus – Spring 2021**

**I. Faculty Information**

- A. Dr. Marsha Little Matthews, Interim Department Chair and Associate Professor of Communication
1. CAS 225
  2. Office Hours: Wednesdays 10 a.m.-Noon, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m., by Zoom appointment
  3. Phone: 903-566-7099
  4. E-mail: [mmatthews@uttyler.edu](mailto:mmatthews@uttyler.edu)
  5. Twitter: @MCommProf

**II. Important Covid-19 Information for Classrooms and Laboratories**

- A. Students are required to wear face masks covering their nose and mouth, and follow social distancing guidelines, at all times in public settings (including classrooms and laboratories), as specified by Procedures for Fall 2020 Return to Normal Operations. The UT Tyler community of Patriots views adoption of these practices consistent with its Honor Code and a sign of good citizenship and respectful care of fellow classmates, faculty, and staff.
- B. Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher-than-normal temperature will be excused from class and should stay at home and may join the class remotely. Students who have difficulty adhering to the Covid-19 safety policies for health reasons are also encouraged to join the class remotely. Students needing additional accommodations may contact the Office of Student Accessibility and Resources at University Center 3150, or call (903) 566-7079 or email saroffice@uttyler.edu .

**III. Course Description**

- A.** Capstone Course. MCOM 4365 Public Relations and Advertising Campaigns focuses on planning, budgeting, and managing public relations and advertising campaigns in five primary areas: government, non-profit, corporate, political, and product. **Prerequisites: MCOM 2306, MCOM 2313, MCOM 2340 or MCOM 2375, MCOM 3395, and MCOM 4363 (all must be passed with a grade of “C” or higher).**

**IV. Student Learning Outcomes****A. Students will be able to:**

1. Write correctly and clearly using the formats and compelling storytelling styles appropriate for the audiences and purposes for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism. (Competency: Writing/Storytelling)
  - a) Produce appropriate tools, materials, and stories for various media, which includes writing public relations and advertising materials that adhere to the purpose of the campaign or strategic message, focus on target publics, diplomacy, organization, grammar, and style.
  - b) Add to his/her professional portfolio blog by offering opportunities to complete campaign proposals for real clients.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and roles of professionals and institutions in shaping the field of mass and mediated communication. (Competency: Diversity/Human Relations)
3. Students will be able to conduct research and evaluate information using methods appropriate to public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism professions. (Competency: Analysis & Systematic Inquiry)

- a) Demonstrate understanding of theories that inform and apply to public relations and advertising campaigns.
  - b) Display and strengthen critical and creative thinking abilities.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of and be able to apply the First Amendment and other legal principles for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism. (Competency: Analysis & Systematic Inquiry)
  5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and issues for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism. (Competency: Analysis & Systematic Inquiry)
  6. Students will understand and apply concepts and theories in the use and presentation of images and information using tools and technologies appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or mediated journalism. (Competency: Mediated Presentation)
  7. Students will be able to construct a persuasive message, adapted to the audience, purpose, and context of the situation. (Competency: Argument)
  8. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the role of communication within organizations. (Competency: Complex Organizations)

## V. Course Requirements

### A. Required Texts – You should already have all of these books.

1. Gilliland, R., & Hagley, T.R. (2018). *Writing Winning Proposals: PR Cases, 3rd Edition*. San Diego, CA: Cognella. (ISBN: 978-1-5165-1636-0)
2. Marsh, C., Guth, D.W., & Short, B.P. (2009). *Strategic Writing: Multimedia Writing for Public Relations, Advertising, Sales and Marketing, and Business Communication 2nd Edition*. Boston, MA: Pearson.
  - a) (First edition is okay if you already own it or the book you used in MCOM 3395 Writing for PR/Advertising)
3. Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual.
4. Recommended Texts
  - a) Strunk Jr., W., & White, E.B. (2000). *The Elements of Style 4th Edition*, New York: Longman.
5. A good dictionary

### B. Course Requirements

1. Assigned readings and in-class discussions will provide the backbone for your experiences in the class. This class will be conducted in a lecture/field work format, which means you are expected to come to class prepared to participate in and lead discussions that grow out of assigned readings and research.
2. **DUE DATES ARE FIRM. As you should know by now, the public relations/advertising industry is deadline driven.**
3. Your team will develop a campaign proposal for a real client that I will select. This client/portfolio project will go in your portfolio with any other real assignments for real clients from other courses or from internships.
4. There will a final presentation and portfolio review at the end of the course
5. Class participation and activities

C. **Course Withdrawal:** The last date to withdraw from one or more classes is **March 29, 2021**.

D. **State-Mandated Course Drop Policy**

1. Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).
2. Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

E. **Final Examination Date: Thursday, April 29, 2021, 11:00 am. – 1:00 p.m.** (subject to revision upon University publication of finals schedule).

F. **Electronic Devices:** Turn off all electronic devices including cell phones and MP3 players. Allowing a cell phone or other device to ring during class is rude and disrupts class. No text messaging or checking the time on your cell phone during class. Keep these devices in your back pack during class.

G. **Use of Computers in Class:** Do not use computers during class for reading/writing e-mail, surfing the Web, playing games, working on assignments for other classes, or writing letters. When class is held in the computer lab, keyboards must be placed to the right of each monitor and remain untouched during class unless otherwise instructed to use the computer as part of an in-class assignment.

H. **Assignment Policy:**

1. Assignments will be given throughout the semester. Students are responsible for all course materials, including, but not limited to, class lectures, handouts, and textbook reading assignments.
2. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.

**3. Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class and must be uploaded to the Assignment location on Canvas.**

4. All papers must be typed or word-processed using **AP style (unless another style is applicable)** and **error free**. All work **should be double-spaced unless the format required for the assignment requires single or other spacing**, i.e., letters, memos, newsletter, etc.

5. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and diction count. Deductions for each error are:

- a) -5 AP error
- b) -5 punctuation
- c) -5 grammar
- d) -5 misspelled word
- e) -10 factual error
- f) -50 misspelled names

## 6. Individual Assignments<sup>1</sup>:

- a) **Course Participation Assignments:** Several assignments will be completed during lecture meetings, while others will be completed as homework.
- b) **Copy Requirement:** You will write copy during the planning phase of the course. Examples of copy that will go toward the copy requirement include: news releases, newsletters, brochure copy, VNRs, PSAs, pitch letters, etc.
- c) **Dr. Matthews and the client prior to release must approve all copy that will go out to client/real world.** Pay attention to deadlines, to be sure you have time to make changes to the copy in the event Dr. Matthews or the client do not approve of the copy. You'll have to get the revised copy approved before the deadline, too (and there's always the chance Dr. Matthews or the client won't approve of the revised copy either).
- d) **DO NOT ACTIVATE OR MAKE PUBLIC ANY WEB OR SOCIAL MEDIA SITES OR POST ANY VIDEOS OR OTHER MEDIA ONLINE THAT YOU MAY DEVELOP FOR THE CLIENT PRESENTATION.**

## 7. Team/Group Assignments<sup>2</sup>:

- a) Dr. Matthews will divide the class into campaign teams of 4-6 members, which will function as the Patriots Public Relations & Advertising Agency. Dr. Matthews is president and team supervisor. Dr. Matthews will evaluate not only your work, but your work habits and professional demeanor. Each team will have an account executive, research director, creative director, production/communication director, and production/schedule & budget director. Each position has certain primary responsibilities, **ALL TEAM MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO WORK TOWARD THE COMPLETION OF EACH SECTION OF THE CAMPAIGN BOOK.**

### b) Job Descriptions<sup>3</sup>:

#### (1) Account Executive

- (a) Coordinates with client and primary target publics
- (b) Uses leadership skills to coordinate teamwork and resolve issues/problems among team members.
- (c) Consults with team and reviews team research and, using this information, determines the team's goals and objectives and the strategies and tactics to reach these goals.
- (d) Consults with professor as needed to make sure the team conducts its work within the guidelines set for the campaign project.

#### (2) Research Director:

- (a) Determines the basic research needs for the project.

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<sup>1</sup> Based upon the course syllabus developed by Dr. Lori McKinnon, University of Alabama, for her course in PR campaigns. I have revised and expanded the team assignments to align with my innovations and improvements in my approach to this course.

<sup>2</sup> McKinnon

<sup>3</sup> McKinnon

- (b) Oversees completion of research.
  - (c) Develops and guides secondary research on source materials.
  - (d) Creates the research book for the team, which organizes the research findings so that information may be found quickly and the sources for the information are clearly identified. The research book is uploaded to Canvas by noon Monday, May 2, 2016.
  - (e) Supervises the team's research activities. Consults professor as needed.
- (3) Creative Director –  
*(Depending on number of students/teams, may be divided into Creative Director – Print/Graphics and Creative Director – Multimedia):*
- (a) Creative Director (Both Print/Graphics and Multimedia)
    - (i) Consults with team and professor to determine strategies and tactics to achieve campaign objectives – develops tone, themes/slogans, and overall approach for tactics.
    - (ii) Plans, prepares, and coordinates production of materials.
    - (iii) May assign jobs to other team members for assistance to complete print/graphics and multimedia tools.
  - (b) Creative Director – Print/Graphics:
    - (i) Consults with team and professor to determine strategies and tactics to achieve campaign objectives – develops tone, themes/slogans, and overall approach for tactics.
    - (ii) Plans, prepares, and coordinates production of materials.
    - (iii) May assign jobs to other team members for assistance to complete print/graphics tools.
  - (c) Creative Director – Multimedia:
    - (i) Consults with team and professor to determine strategies and tactics to achieve campaign objectives – develops tone, themes/slogans, and overall approach for tactics.
    - (ii) Plans, prepares, and coordinates production of materials.
    - (iii) May assign jobs to other team members for assistance to complete multimedia tools.
- (4) Production/Communication Director:
- (a) Responsible for all copy for final Plans Book and all communication tools within or accompanying the Plans Book.

- (b) Oversees all copy for oral presentation to client and judges.
- (c) Works closely with Creative Director on media planning.
- (d) Works closely with Creative Director to establish the production schedule and budget.
- (e) Maintains time and resource budgets – makes sure team is on schedule and within budget
- (f) Determines printer/production requirements for each print piece and communicates these requirements to team members.
- (g) Consults with professor as needed.

#### 8. Group Assignments<sup>4</sup>:

- a) Group Reports: Each team is responsible for preparing a weekly group report in advance of group meetings with Dr. Matthews. These reports are the foundations for the Plans Books.
- b) Campaign: Each team will create a communication plan and make an oral presentation of this plan to the client, professor, and judges. This plan must be easy for the client to understand and implement. The plan will include:
  - (1) Focus on the four parts of the communication process:
    - (a) Research
    - (b) Objectives
    - (c) Strategies/Tactics
    - (d) Evaluation
  - (2) The plan will also include:
    - (a) Cover page
    - (b) Letter to client
    - (c) Table of contents
    - (d) Research and Communication plans
    - (e) List of references
    - (f) Appendix items (samples of work to be produced)
  - (3) Evaluation criteria include: organization, layout, original thinking, creativity, grammar, and thoroughness
- c) **Two bound copies and one unbound copy (may be black & white) of the plan are due by noon Monday, April 26, 2021.** One copy and the unbound copy are for Dr. Matthews and the second is for the client. You should make bound copies of the plan for each team member. **Also, digital copy of plans book is uploaded to Canvas by noon Monday, April 26, 2021.**
- d) **Research Book is uploaded to Canvas by noon Monday, April 26, 2021.**
- e) Oral presentation of the plan is scheduled for the finals week of class **(Thursday, April 29, 2021, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.).**

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**9. Firing Team Members<sup>5</sup>:** This is the culmination course for mass communication majors with an emphasis in public relations/advertising. You will incorporate all of the skills and knowledge you have gained from this course and all of the other journalism courses you have taken as part of this major. **All students are expected to give their best efforts to this class. If a team member is not contributing his or her fair share to the project, the Account Executive and other team members should contact Dr. Matthews immediately. The team member may be fired from the agency at any point during the semester. The fired team member will receive 0% for course evaluation grades, and will most likely be asked to repeat the course.**

## VI. Evaluation and Grade Calculation<sup>6</sup>

<b>Overall Individual Grade</b>	<b>40%</b>
Peer Evaluation	10%
Course Participation	10%
Course Assignments	10%
Copy Assignments	10%
<b>Overall Group Grade</b>	<b>60%</b>
Group Reports	5%
Oral Presentation*	15%
Written Plan	<u>40%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*You must also be present for all final presentations or you will lose points from your final project grade.

- A. **Peer Evaluation:** Team members will complete a short survey several times throughout the semester evaluating the other team members of their group. The survey will use a Likert scale. Students carrying their fair share of the workload and attending all group meetings should have no problems with peer evaluations.
- B. **Course Participation:** This is based on the professor's assessment of your performance in this course. Generally, this grade will be the same or lower than your peer evaluation score. Attendance, participation at lectures and group meetings make up a large part of this grade.
- C. **Course Assignments:** These assignments will be given throughout the semester. Examples include: speaker questions, research proposals, case studies, etc. Some work will be completed during class time and some will be completed as homework. You must be present to receive credit for in-class work.
- D. **Copy Assignments:** You must produce copy for the final Plans Book. This camera-ready copy will be completed during the programming phase of the class. Copy includes: news releases, pitch letters, storyboards, slide shows, scripts, PSAs, VNRs, brochures, newsletters, video/audio/photo productions, etc. Copy work may be revised and used in the final Plans Book.
- E. **Group Reports:** These reports will be prepared throughout the semester and turned in to Dr. Matthews on scheduled dates. All reports must be typed. Some reports will also be presented orally.

<sup>5</sup> McKinnon

<sup>6</sup> McKinnon

- F. **Oral Presentation:** Each group will make a 10-15 minute presentation to the client, professor, and judges at the end of the semester. There will be a five-minute Q&A after the presentation. All group members must participate in the oral presentation. This grade will be rank-ordered and based on the following criteria:
1. Adherence to time lime
  2. Organization and flow of presentation
  3. Style (eye contact, not overly relying on notes, etc.)
  4. Knowledge of content
  5. Maintaining audience attention
  6. Use of AV support
  7. Response to questions
- G. **Written Plan:** Two bound copies and one unbound copy of the final plan should be given to the professor by noon Monday, April 26, 2021. The digital plan book is uploaded to Canvas and is also due by noon Monday, April 26, 2021. Your group will receive an automatic "F" for the plan if it is turned in late. No excuses. See the information set forth in the syllabus for plan content requirements.

**Each assignment will be graded on**

1. **Content:** Does the message and its execution clearly, gracefully and diplomatically fulfill the purpose? Does the message address the values of the client as well as those of the target audience? Is it factually correct?
2. **Organization:** Does organization enhance content? Does each part of the message lead logically and gracefully to the next?
3. **Grammar:** Is the message free, for the most part, of unintended grammatical, spelling, punctuation and style errors?
4. **Format:** Does the execution of the message look the way it should? Are unique requirements, such as headings in a business letter, correct and correctly placed?
5. **In addition to 1-4 above, see IV.F (6) above for additional error deductions.**

**A = Outstanding.** This grade is for work of clearly professional quality (publishable or broadcast ready). The writing is clear and well-organized; it requires virtually no editing. The reporting is complete and leaves no significant questions unanswered. The work is turned in by or before deadline, needing no changes before submission to clients or editors. These strategic messages get results, win awards and, when appropriate, feature creative concepts; they are executed with comprehensive research, interesting presentation and nearly flawless writing.

**B = Good.** This grade is for work that could be raised to professional standards without extensive editing. Writing is grammatically correct but may lack the sparkle and fine organization of "A" work. The reporting answers the main questions but may miss the proper emphasis or the best sources. The work is turned in by deadline with little or no prompting and needs only minor revisions in such areas as reorganizing, rewriting, reformatting or providing more or better sources. "B" work doesn't necessarily have any errors, but it could be better, often with a stronger topic or subject, a more artistic presentation, better information or improved writing. "B" work demonstrates basic broadcast or print style.

**C = Adequate.** This grade is for work that indicates a problem in at least one area, such as grammar, diplomacy or strategy. It does not measure up to professional quality but could be saved by revision. Work is incomplete by deadline and/or needs more than minor revision before submission to a client or supervisor. These messages have weak ideas, concepts or presentation.



They draw attention because they don't quite do the job. In summary, the work is an adequate first draft but isn't yet ready to show a client or supervisor.

**D = Unacceptable performance.** This grade is for work that is clearly unacceptable even in a classroom setting. The writing is confused and/or ungrammatical. The reporting is flawed and may contain major factual errors and/or omissions or may show little concept of basic strategic judgment. Work may miss the deadline.

**F = Failing.** This grade is for work that is not completed in a professional, timely way. For whatever reason, it suggests that the student did not take the assignment seriously. Such performance is often the result of personal or time-management problems that extend beyond a lack of skills or understanding of the research, writing or production processes.

### Grading Assumptions

1. The grading process starts with the assumption that the work is "good," which earns a grade of "B." (See "good" definition above.)
  2. You may write a story with no errors that earns a "B."
  3. Strong and (when appropriate) clever leads, exceptional storytelling, effective and appropriate use of traditional literary devices such as alliteration, metaphors and parallel constructions help boost stories to the "A" category. In addition, exceptional reporting, diplomacy and adherence to strategy can boost stories to the "A" category.
  4. Fact errors, poor organization, grammar/spelling/usage errors, weak verbs, weak leads, unsound strategic judgment, bad diplomacy, missed deadlines and/or failure to follow proper style and format will lower an assignment's grade.
- H. **Late Assignments:** Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified.
- I. **Attendance and Tardiness Policy<sup>7</sup>:** This course is a combination lecture and fieldwork. The class is set up as a public relations/advertising agency. As such, you are expected to be at work on time each day. Your attendance grade will be adversely affected should you miss a scheduled class or group meeting.

Tardiness will also adversely affect your grade. You are also expected to attend all team meetings scheduled outside of class time. Failure to attend these meetings will adversely affect your peer evaluation grade.

**Teams should set up a meeting schedule for the entire semester and adhere to it. Plan your outside work schedules around the team-meeting schedule, if necessary. You should plan to spend between 60-80 hours outside of class time working on assignments for the course.**

## VII. University Policies

### A. UT Tyler Honor Code:

1. Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do. Students Rights and Responsibilities To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

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**C. Campus Carry:**

1. We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

**D. UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:**

1. All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit [www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free](http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free).

**E. Academic Honesty Policy:** Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker’s or writer’s indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action.

**F. Student Standards of Academic Conduct**

1. Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.
  - a) “Cheating” includes, but is not limited to:
    - (1) copying from another student’s test paper;
    - (2) using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
    - (3) failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
    - (4) possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed “crib notes”. The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;

- (5) using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
  - (6) collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
  - (7) discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
  - (8) divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructor has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
  - (9) substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
  - (10) paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
  - (11) falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
  - (12) taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
  - (13) misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.
- b) “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.
  - c) “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.
  - d) All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

**G. The U-T Tyler Writing Center** provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your

tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: CAS 202. Appointments: 903-565-5995.

#### H. Disability/Accessibility Services:

1. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application.
2. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

#### I. Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:

1. Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (STE 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. (For Spring, the **Census Date is January 25, 2021.**) Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.
2. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.
3. The **Census Date (January 25, 2021)** is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:
  - a) Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
  - b) Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
  - c) Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)

- d) Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- e) Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

**J. State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:**

1. Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).
2. Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

**K. Student Absence due to Religious Observance:**

1. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

**L. Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:**

1. If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time, the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

**M. Social Security and FERPA Statement:**

1. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**N. Emergency Exits and Evacuation:**

1. Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

**O. UT Tyler Resources for Students:**

1. UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), [writingcenter@uttyler.edu](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu)
2. UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), [tutoring@uttyler.edu](mailto:tutoring@uttyler.edu)

3. The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.

4. UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

**VIII. Dates that Affect You**

**A. March 1, 2021 – Final Filing Deadline for Spring 2021 Graduation**