

AGEC 250: Introduction to Agricultural Sales Syllabus, Fall 2021

University of Tennessee at Martin

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Class Time: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 1:00-1:50 p.m., Johnson EPS 227
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-4:00 p.m. (see below), or by appointment
Credits: 3.0
Prerequisites: N/A

Course Description:

The course will provide students with an introduction to (1) the principles of personal selling, (2) marketing and promotional activities undertaken by various supply-chain members, and (3) some of the basic concepts and skills associated with a career in sales – all within the context of agriculture.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the fundamentals of selling. Throughout this course, students will:

- become familiar with many facets of the sales profession to make informed decisions regarding a potential career in agricultural marketing;
- learn the terminology and principles of selling so they are able to apply general sales concepts to an agricultural setting;
- begin to understand the role of personal selling as a major function within the marketing and promotional mix of a firm, recognizing the interaction of sales and other marketing concepts;
- become more cognizant of the psychological elements of sales relationships as they develop their interpersonal skills;
- start actively creating and working to meet career development goals;
- expand their ability to effectively communicate information and persuade potential customers through a formal sales presentation; and
- improve their writing, presentation, and group-work skills.

Course Resources:

This course will require students to have access to a computer with some internet capabilities. Homework will be assigned through Canvas, and sales presentations, papers, and resume projects will require basic document processing and presentation software.

Course Design:

Barring any changes at the State or University level, this course will be taught primarily in person on campus. However, UTM is participating in a hands-on international study abroad program in Siena, Italy in Fall 2021. The instructor will participate on site between September 15 and October 17, and some content during that portion of the course will be delivered online. More information about that will be provided as the time approaches.

Recommended Materials:

Text: *Introduction to Agricultural Sales*, Preliminary Edition. Anthony R. Delmond. Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 2021.

Fundamentals of Selling: Customers for Life through Service, 13th Edition. Charles M. Futrell. McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2014.

Additional Readings:

Any other literature distributed throughout the semester is considered required unless otherwise stated by the instructor.

Assessments:

Assignments, Quizzes, and Participation: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Homework should be completed prior to class time on the due date. Late work will not be accepted in this course. Homework deadlines are in the calendar in Canvas. There will be in-class group discussions and quizzes in this course. To receive credit for these discussions, students will need to be present in class. Attendance is mandatory. Quizzes will be completed during class time, and they may be announced or unannounced. Make-up quizzes will not be offered in this class. Generally, grades are strongly correlated with attendance and participation. To encourage student turnout and comprehension, participation will be a significant component of the Assignments, Quizzes, and Participation grade, which is in turn the largest single component of the course grade. Regardless of whether students attend class or complete assignments and quizzes, students are responsible for learning the material covered in class, in the assigned readings, and on missed assignments and quizzes. There may also be additional assignments distributed or discussed in class.

Exams: There will be two noncumulative midsemester exams and a cumulative final exam. The nature of the material covered in this course, however, is such that concepts build upon each other and material often is repeated throughout the term. To ensure student success in this course, it is essential that students keep up with the material. Make-up exams will NOT be given in this course. Please see the instructor **at least one week prior to a scheduled exam** if you foresee a conflict requiring special accommodations.

Projects: There will be three projects in this course: a resume assignment, a social media profile assignment, and a sales project/presentation.

Resume Assignment: Selling yourself to a potential employer is one of the most important sales you will make in your career. You need to develop a resume that adequately highlights your skills and strengths. It must be professional and free of errors. This project should provide a solid foundation for your actual resume as you prepare to enter the labor market. UT Martin students have a wonderful resource available for resume writing at the office of Career Planning & Development (<http://www.utm.edu/departments/careers/resume.php>). CPAD has many resources and people who can help at multiple stages of the resume-writing process. I am available to help with this as well! Resumes must be submitted through Canvas and are due by class time on Friday, September 24, 2021.

Profile Assignment: For this assignment, students are expected to create a social media profile in LinkedIn. At the very least, this should include a photo, a short bio, and anything else you feel is important to include in a professional introduction. If you already have a LinkedIn account, you should use that for this assignment. The goal is to create a professional introduction that will serve as a client or potential employer's first impression of you, your goals/values, and your personality. You will want to start this early, because you are required to connect with 5 people, at least two of which are not affiliated with UTM. You will also need to connect with the professor for grading, but this will not count as one of your five connections. The Profile Assignment will be included in the Assignments, Quizzes, and Participation section for grading. Your submission is your connection request with the professor. This is due by class time on October 29, 2021.

Sales Project/Presentation: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the sales profession through a group sales presentation toward the end of the semester. Assignment details and due dates will be provided during the term. Groups will be assigned by the instructor. The sales presentation will include a proposal, a written report, a presentation, participation as a buyer, and a peer evaluation. This project/presentation will be worth 20% of the final grade for the class, and grades for the assignment will be based on writing ability/accuracy (grammar and punctuation, clarity, citation), product idea (innovation, marketability, unique selling proposition), sales presentation technical aspects (graphics, font, flow), sales presentation delivery* (eye contact, voice, elevator speech, audience connection), and peer assessment*. [**The last two components of the grade – delivery and peer assessment – will be graded individually; the other three components will apply to the group as a whole, unless the professor deems it necessary to deviate from that.*] The requirements and grades are further discussed in the **Group Sales Project Guidelines** document.

Exam Dates (subject to change):

Exam 1	Wednesday, September 22
Exam 2	Friday, October 22
Final Exam	Monday, December 6, 12:45-2:45 p.m.

Grading Policy:

Assignments, Quizzes, and Participation	35%
Midsemester Exams (2)	20%
Final Exam	15%
Sales Project/Presentation	20%
Resume Assignment	10%

Course grades will be determined using the following scale:

A	90–100%
B	80–89.99%
C	70–79.99%
D	60–69.99%
F	0–59.99%

Scores will be updated in Canvas on a regular basis.

Contacting the Instructor:

Students are encouraged to ask questions in class. This is important as students often have similar questions and addressing them in class is the most efficient option for everyone. Students may also ask questions during office hours and by email. **If you send an email, please include “AGEC 250” in the subject line.** The instructor will usually answer all emails within one business day (unless I am away from the office). You should try to complete all assignments well in advance of deadlines in case you have questions. The instructor cannot guarantee availability to answer questions shortly before deadlines.

Attendance Policy & Classroom Expectations:

Be Prepared: Students are expected to attend all classes and are responsible for all announcements made in class, whether present or not. Participation is included in the course grade, so skipping class (or playing smartphone Tetris during lectures) is usually a suboptimal decision. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings prior to the class period. Referring to course materials (lectures, videos, and any assigned readings) will give students a better understanding of the course content and make for more active and meaningful classroom discussions. Class participation and discussion enhances student learning.

Be Professional: Each student is expected to be a positive member of and contributor to the class. Students are expected to be courteous and participate in a manner that facilitates a positive learning environment for everyone. Mutual respect and collaborative effort are essential. Students who cannot adhere to a policy of mutual respect will be asked to leave the classroom. Regarding professional communication, emails (and written class discussions/communications) should *never* include text-like abbreviations or slang (for example, “LOL”). It is beneficial for you as a student to practice formal communication to better prepare for a professional career. An email should include a salutation or greeting, a body with proper and appropriate grammar, and a signature. Please practice formal communication with other students and certainly with all of your UTM professors!

Be Honest: In addition to the University policies outlined below, I include a comment on honesty. Cheating will not be tolerated in this course. This includes acquiring answers, using “cheat sheets,” cell/smart phones, or providing answers to others during examinations or assigned work, unless otherwise specified by the instructor. Presenting work or ideas of another individual without giving credit and proper documentation is plagiarism. According to Richard L. Saunders from the UTM Paul Meek Library, “Plagiarism is using others’ ideas or words without clearly acknowledging the source. Boiled down, plagiarism means passing off someone else’s work or ideas as your own, whether or not the source is identified. Copying all or part of a Website, document, or presenting an image without a correct citation, constitutes plagiarism.” Consult the following Website if you have questions about plagiarism: <http://www.utm.edu/departments/library/tutorials/plagiarism/>. Cheating or plagiarism is a serious offense. If you are caught cheating in any form you will receive an automatic failing grade for the course and the case will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

Technology: You are adults. Act like it. I do not have a strict policy on smartphones in class. That said, students should refrain from cell phone use and texting during class time. I recognize that circumstances may arise requiring students to have access to communication devices. Laptops may be used in class for assignments and notetaking, but not for social media or general web browsing during class time. *If cell phones and laptops become a distraction, the instructor may revise his lenient policy.* The only exception is for exams. On exam days, cell phones and laptops should not be present (inside pockets or zipped into backpacks is fine). Any violation of this rule may result in a zero on the exam or further disciplinary action, if necessary. Changes in classroom policies, deadlines, or the course schedule will be announced in class. Any changes made between class meetings will be sent via email or posted as announcements in Canvas.

Instructor Responsibilities:

The instructor agrees to be prepared, professional, respectful, honest, and fair. It is the instructor’s responsibility to ensure that students have the opportunity to gain a clear understanding of the course material and to be fair and consistent in grading. The instructor agrees to be available for additional help and to be conscious of the learning pace of the class (and adapt the pace as necessary). I am here to help you! Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need extra assistance.

Office Hours:

Office hours will be conducted either virtually or walking on the Quad, weather permitting. The instructor will begin in front of Brehm Hall at the beginning of office hours and conduct clockwise circuits for the first hour of office hours each day, then return to his office to conduct the remainder of office hours via Zoom. The instructor will also be available by appointment.

COVID-19 Precautions:

This class will adhere to any State and University policies regarding COVID-19 precautions. For example, any University mask policy in effect will be observed in this classroom by students, faculty, and guests. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in removal from the classroom and a referral to the Office of Student Conduct, similar to any other class disruption. Regarding quarantine and coronavirus-related absences, students are responsible for making up all

assignments within a reasonable timeframe. Illnesses will follow the normal procedures (doctor's notes, etc.). To ensure you are able to earn all the credit for missed assignments, **keep the instructor informed.**

Disclaimer:

This syllabus may be adjusted during the semester at the instructor's discretion.

University Policies & Resources

Academic Integrity: The University of Tennessee at Martin has chosen as its primary objective quality undergraduate education. Commitment to this objective must include an obligation by all members of the University community to promote and protect the highest standards of integrity in study, research, instruction and evaluation. Dishonesty or unethical behavior does not belong at an institution dedicated to the promotion of knowledge and learning. Integrity of the academic process requires fair and impartial evaluation by faculty and honest academic conduct by students. Specific integrity attributes can be found at:

http://www.utm.edu/departments/conduct/new_academic_integrity.php.

Standard of Conduct: When persons enroll in the University of Tennessee at Martin, they retain the rights and duties of a citizen. Additionally, they must assume the duties and observe the regulations imposed by the University community. Specific conduct attributes can be found at: <http://www.utm.edu/departments/conduct/conduct.php>.

Disability Services: The University of Tennessee provides reasonable accommodations (academic adjustments and auxiliary aids) to ensure equal access to educational content and university programs for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodation, or if you have questions related to any accommodations for testing, notetaking, reading, etc., please speak with the instructor as soon as possible. Students who are eligible for and who request accommodations through the Office of Disability Services must provide instructors with a **letter of accommodation** (sent directly from the Student Success Center). If you need a letter of accommodation for the semester or if you think you may have a learning disability, contact the Office of Disability Services located in the Student Success Center, 203 Clement Hall, (731) 881-7605 (<https://www.utm.edu/departments/disabilities/>).

Emergency Alerts: Though the probability of incurring a campus emergency is minimal, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with various emergency alerts and evacuation procedures in case of emergency. University alerts and guidelines are available at:

<https://www.utm.edu/alerts/> (Emergency Response Plan at https://www.utm.edu/_pdfs/Emergency%20Response%20Plan%20-%20Revised%20Dec%202016%20-%20MEDIA%20Version.pdf).

Non-Discrimination Statement: The University of Tennessee at Martin is an equal employment opportunity institution and does not discriminate based upon race, color, or national origin. The University's Office of Equity and Diversity has adopted a policy and procedures to provide students and employees, who feel that they have experienced discrimination but are uncertain as to whether a complaint is justified or whether they wish to initiate a formal complaint, the opportunity to discuss their concerns confidentially and informally with the Equity and Diversity Officer/Title VI Coordinator for prompt and equitable resolution of discrimination complaints.

All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment and admission without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, veteran status, and parental status. In accordance with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the University of Tennessee at Martin affirmatively states that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, or disability in its education programs and activities, and this policy extends to employment by the university. Inquiries and charges of violation of Title VI (race, color, and national origin), Title IX (sex), Section 504 (disability), the ADA (disability), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (age), sexual orientation, or veteran status should be directed to the Office of Equity and Diversity, 544 University Street, #303, Martin, TN 38238, telephone 731-881-3505. Requests for accommodation of a disability should be directed to the ADA Coordinator at the Office of Equity and Diversity (<https://www.utm.edu/departments/equalopp/>).

Useful Resources:

The **Hortense Parrish Writing Center** (<http://www.utm.edu/departments/writingcenter/>) offers free, non-credit, tutorial instruction to UTM students who need help with any stage of the writing process, including brainstorming, outlining, organization, drafting, revision, research, creative writing, source citation, and grammar. Walk-in and virtual tutoring appointments (via Zoom) are available, so feel free to stop by their office located at 209 Andy Holt Humanities Building, or send them a virtual-tutoring appointment request (owl@utm.edu). Questions can be sent to the same email address or you can call (731) 881-7277.

The Paul Meek Library (<https://www.utm.edu/departments/library/information/>) is an excellent resource for students with skilled staff available to help students find what they need.

In addition to your department faculty advisor, the University offers Student Support Resources (https://www.utm.edu/departments/ecos/student_support.php), including help and information on registration, fees, financial aid, and student health and counseling services. You are welcome to talk with your faculty advisor or any instructor regarding issues you may be facing.

Lauren's Promise: I will listen and believe you if someone is threatening you.

Lauren McCluskey, a 21-year-old honors student athlete and the daughter of my PhD committee chair, was murdered on Oct. 22, 2018, by a man she briefly dated on the University of Utah campus. We must all take action to ensure that this never happens again.

If you are in immediate danger, call **911** or the appropriate emergency services number for your area.

If you are experiencing sexual assault, domestic violence, and/or stalking, please report it to me and I will connect you to resources or call the Tennessee Domestic Violence Hotline at (800) 356-6767, WRAP (Women's/Men's Resource and Rape Assistance Program) at (800) 273-8712, or Pathways Crisis Hotline (800) 372-0693.

Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be tolerated at the University of Tennessee at Martin. UTM has instituted procedures to respond to violations of these laws and standards, programs aimed at the prevention of such conduct, and intervention on behalf of the victims.***

UTM police officers will treat victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking with respect and dignity. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and UTM police will assist by providing resources to victims. In addition to its law enforcement efforts regarding sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking, UTM police refer victims to the appropriate university and/or local community counseling and other resources devoted to assisting victims.

Advocates help survivors determine their own needs in regards to their physical and emotional health, reporting options, and academic concerns. They connect survivors to campus and community services, and provide accompaniment to important appointments (court, hospital, and police) and support throughout the process. UTM police can also connect you with advocacy services, if desired. The local advocacy group is the [Victim Assistance and Advocacy Project](#).

Other confidential resources include UTM [Student Health and Counseling Services](#). Information shared with UTM counselors will not be provided to UTM police without expressed permission from you. If you are an online student and cannot arrange counseling services at the UTM campus, I would be happy to help you gain access to similar services in your area.

AGEC 250: Introduction to Agricultural Sales Tentative Course Schedule, Fall 2021

Section I

- Introduction to Sales
- Developing Sales Relationships
- The Agricultural Marketing Mix
- Organizational Structure and Ethics

Exam #1

Section II

- Customer Needs and Preferences
- Communication
- Prospecting
- Planning

Exam #2

Section III

- The Presentation
- Closing
- Follow-up and Service

Sales Presentations will be in the final weeks of the semester (Nov.22-Dec.3, with more specific presentation dates to be announced closer to the end of the term)

Final Exam (Monday, Dec. 6, 12:45-2:45 p.m.)