

AGEC 250: Introduction to Agricultural Sales

Spring 2024 Course Syllabus

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 other communication skills.

Instructor:

Instructor: Dr. Anthony R. Delmond
Office: 143 Brehm Hall
Phone: (731) 881-1098
Email: adelmond@utm.edu
Class Time: MWF, 1:00-1:50 p.m. Central Time, 204 EPS
Office Hours: MW, 9:00-11:00 a.m. or by appointment
Credit Hours: 3.0
Prerequisites: N/A

Course Resources:

This course will require students to have access to a computer with high-speed internet capabilities. Homework will be assigned through the textbook website, and sales presentations,

papers, and professional development projects will require basic document processing and presentation software. Some lecture material will be delivered online (virtually or recorded).

Required Materials:

Text: [Introduction to Agricultural Sales, First Edition](#). Anthony R. Delmond. Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 2023.

Additional Readings:

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

Assessments:

Assignments and Participation: This class will include (1) individual homework, (2) simple pop quizzes, (3) scheduled in-class group work, and (4) role-playing activities (it is a sales class, after all). Homework will be completed primarily on the textbook website. Homework deadlines are firm and will be posted on the website (and in Canvas). Late work will not be accepted in this course and alternative assignments will not be offered. Attendance in this class is mandatory. To receive credit for in-class group work, discussions, and role-playing activities, students will need to be present in 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 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 be additional assignments distributed or discussed in class.

Exams: There will be two noncumulative midsemester exams and a cumulative final exam. Concepts in this course build upon each other, and material often is repeated throughout the term. To ensure your success in this course, it is essential that you keep up with the material. Make-up exams will NOT be offered in this course except in extreme cases. 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 LinkedIn profile assignment, a presentation viewing with reflection, and a sales project/presentation. The profile and presentation reflection will be part of the Professional Development component of the course (worth 10% of the course grade), and the Sales Project is its own grading category (worth 20% of the course grade).

Profile Assignment: Selling yourself to a potential employer is one of the most important sales you will make in your career. 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 10 people, at least 5 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 10 required connections. Your submission is your connection request with the professor.

Professional Development Activity/Reflection: Students must attend at least one formal presentation outside of class. This must be pre-approved by the Instructor to guarantee that the presentation qualifies. The event/activity cannot be required by another class. The student will write a short, 300-word reflection on the experience. Guidelines and expectations are provided. This is due on the final class day of the semester.

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 some time after the first exam. The sales presentation will include a proposal, a written report, and 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 peer assessment will be used to hold group members accountable. Depending on peer assessment scores, the Instructor may replace a student's entire grade for the sales project, regardless of the group scores for individual components of the project.*] The requirements and grades are further discussed in the **Group Sales Project Guidelines** document.

Exam Dates (subject to change):

- Exam 1 Friday, February 16
- Exam 2 Wednesday, March 20
- Final Exam Monday, April 29, 12:45-2:45 p.m.

Grading Policy:

- Assignments & Participation 35%
- Professional Development 10%
- Sales Project 20%
- Midsemester Exams (2) 20%
- Final Exam 15%

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 Below 60%

Scores will be updated on Canvas on a regular basis.

Contacting the Instructor:

Students are encouraged to ask questions via the Discussion board in Canvas. This is important as students often have similar questions and the Discussion board provides the most efficient option for the instructor to answer questions for the entire class. Students may also ask questions 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.

Attendance Policy & Classroom Expectations:

Be Prepared: Participation is included in the course grade, so skipping discussions or readings/lectures is usually a suboptimal decision. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings. Referring to lectures, videos, and any assigned readings will give students a better understanding of the course content and make for more active and meaningful class discussions. 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. 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. While I do not expect to have any issues in this class, instances of cheating have generally been on the rise since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cheating. 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.

Plagiarism. 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: <https://libguides.utm.edu/plagiarism>.

ChatGPT/AI. The use of ChatGPT and/or any other AI technology in writing (for papers, discussions, essays, assignments, exams, etc.) is strictly prohibited unless otherwise directed by the instructor. There are currently many detection options available for faculty, and some of the assignments/exams will be processed directly through a detection program. If the instructor suspects a student of using AI technology, disciplinary action will be assessed as with any other form of cheating.

Cheating, plagiarism, and the use of ChatGPT/AI are serious offenses. If you are caught doing any of these you will receive an automatic failing grade for the course and the case will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

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.

Illness and Health-related Policies:

This class will adhere to any State and University policies regarding COVID-19 and other health-related precautions. For example, any University masking 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 health-related absences, students are responsible for making up all assignments within a reasonable timeframe (to be determined on a case-by-case basis by the instructor). Illnesses will follow the normal procedures (doctor's notes, etc.). To ensure you are able to earn 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: <https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/student-conduct/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: <https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/student-conduct/>.

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 Wendy Elliott in the Accessibility Resource Center located in the Student Success Center, 206 Clement Hall, (731) 881-7195 (<https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/accessibility-resource-center/>).

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/offices-and-services/public-safety/rave-alert-text-messaging-opt-in-procedures.php> (Emergency Response Plan at https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/environmental-health-and-safety/_media/Emergency%20Response%20Plan%20-%20MASTER_Media%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. The ADA Coordinator at the Office of Equity and Diversity can be found at <https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/office-of-equity-and-diversity/>.

Useful Resources:

The **Hortense Parrish Writing Center** (<https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/hortense-parrish-writing-center/>) 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/academics/library/>) 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/offices-and-services/student-success-center/transfer-student-support-services.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. A local advocacy group is <https://www.tnvoicesforvictims.org/>.

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.

