Course Syllabus
AG 6321.010 – Research Methods

Instructor
Andrew P. Wright, Ph.D.
Email: andrew.wright@angelo.edu
Phone: (325) 486-6751
Office: #226, Vincent Building
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 3:00-4:00 pm, by appointment, or any time that I am in my office with
the door open.

Course Description
This course will introduce students to procedures used in agricultural research including experimental
design, data collection, preparation, and analysis of results.

Meeting Time & Location
Time: 8:00-9:15 am, TR
Location: Vincent Building, Room 160

Required Technology and Computer Skills
To successfully complete this course, students are expected to:

- Possess access to the necessary hardware required to view online materials, such as:
  - A computer or mobile device with a reliable internet connection, and
  - The ability to view videos from various sources and that use various formats.
- Possess basic web navigation skills.

Expected Knowledge Prerequisites
There are no official prerequisites for this course; however, I expect that students enrolled in AG 6321
have prior experience in an elementary statistics class, and that students are familiar with the
mathematic and algebraic concepts taught in an introductory college algebra course. I will be happy to
help any students who feel like they are falling behind; however, it is the responsibility of the student to
seek help.

Textbook & Required Materials
Recommended Textbooks
This course does not require students to purchase a textbook; however, it is strongly recommended that
students purchase or rent the following texts:

Francis. ISBN: 9780415790536 (print); 9781315213033 (electronic)

9781786390356


Purchasing these texts you will give you a reference source to help you prepare for class discussions, answer questions on homework assignments, and prepare for exams.

Gradescope
The College of Science and Engineering has purchased access to a new homework system called Gradescope. Every homework assignment in this class will be deployed, submitted, graded, and returned to students through this program. Exams will also be graded and returned to students though this program. Instructions for how to sign up for Gradescope and how to turn in assignments will be presented in class during the first week of the semester.

Course Learning Objectives

IDEA Objectives
At the end of the semester, you will be asked to fill out an IDEA survey in which you will assess this course in terms of its ability to meet certain objectives. Those objectives are:

1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories).
2. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions).
3. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.
4. Learning appropriate methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information.

Program Objectives
Students working on their M.S. in Animal Science or their Master’s in Agriculture (M.Ag.) should expect to make progress in the following areas:

1. Research Development & Planning (Weeks 1-5)
2. Basic Probability & Statistics (Weeks 6-10)
3. Experimental Designs (Weeks 10-15)

Progress toward these objectives will be assessed using exams and study assignments.

Grading
Your final grade will be calculated based on the number of points you earn out of 700. The grading scale for the course is as follows:

- To earn an A, you must earn 630-700 points
- To earn a B, you must earn 560-629 points
- To earn a C, you must earn 490-559 points
- To earn a D, you must earn 420-489 points

You will earn points based on your performance on the following tasks:

- A written research proposal: 100 points
- Proposal presentation: 100 points
Exams: 200 points
Study Assignments: 200 points
Syllabus “Quiz”: 50 points
Gradescope Set up Quiz: 50 points

Written Research Proposal
During the course of the semester, students enrolled in AG 6321 will work on developing a proposal for an original research project. This assignment is worth 100 points towards a student’s final grade. Instructions for this assignment, along with the grading rubric will be presented in class during the first week of the semester.

Research Proposal Presentation
At the end of the semester, each student will present their research proposal to the rest of the class. The presentation should be professional in nature and should communicate the information detailed in the instructions for the written proposal. This assignment is worth 100 points towards a student’s final grade. Instructions for this assignment, along with the grading rubric will be presented in class during the first week of the semester.

Exams
There are two exams scheduled for this course. Both exams are worth 100 points towards a student’s final grade, for a total of 200 points.

Both exams will be completed by students out of class on the honor system. Students are expected to work on their exams on their own, but may use any text book or other outside reference material they wish.

The anticipated start and due dates for the first exam are Monday, September 30 and Sunday, October 6.

The anticipated start and due dates for the first exam are Monday, December 1 and Sunday, December 8.

Study Assignments
During the course of the semester, you will be given a set of 4-6 study assignments. In total, these assignments will be worth 200 points toward your final grade. The assignment questions and instructions will be posted on the course’s Blackboard page and on Gradescope. Student responses will be turned in via Gradescope. I will provide feedback on assignments via Gradescope. The start and due dates for each assignment will be established in class and posted on both Blackboard and Gradescope.

Course Entry Tasks
During the first week of class, you will be required to complete a set of assignments designed to help you prepare to take this course and interact with the Gradescope platform. Theses assignments include:

- **Syllabus quiz**: A four question (yes/no) assignment in Blackboard. Students will indicate that they have read and understood the material presented in the course syllabus, as well as the material presented in the Angelo State Student Handbook regarding academic integrity and academic dishonesty. You have unlimited attempts to complete this task.
• **Gradescope Set-Up Quiz**: A three question assignment to verify that each student has signed up for the class in Gradescope and is prepared to submit assignments through this platform.

Both of these assignments are worth 50 points towards a student’s final grade, for a total of 100 points, and must be completed by the end of the day (11:59 pm) on Sunday, September 1.

**Policies on Missing a Due Date**

*General Policy*

It is vital that you regularly assess your knowledge of the material presented in this course if you want to accomplish the course learning goals. For this reason, every study assignment must be completed by the date and time announced in class, on Blackboard, and on Gradescope to receive full credit. You may complete any of the study assignments or course entry tasks after their due date; however, late assignments will receive an automatic 50% reduction in their score. The deadline to submit late assignments for partial credit is December 11 at 11:59 pm.

Special circumstances may warrant an extension on the deadline for any assignment. Please see the policy on requesting extensions or changes in due dates for more information.

*Angelo State University Policy on Religious Holy Days*

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Requesting an Extension or Change in a Due Date**

As you progress through the course you may find yourself faced with a situation that prevents you from accessing and submitting an assignment by the given due date, or taking an exam during the scheduled exam period. When these circumstances occur, you may contact me to request an extension. When you request an extension please provide an explanation for why you will miss the due date or exam period, why the circumstance cannot reasonably be avoided, and an estimate for when you expect to complete the assignment or exam.

If you know beforehand that you will be unable to access and/or submit an assignment by the given due date or attend an exam during the scheduled period, you may request that its due date be changed. Once this change is made you will be expected to complete the assignment or exam by the new deadline, and will be subject to the same consequences for missing due dates that any other student faces.

Please submit all requests for extensions or a change in due dates to me by email so that there is a written record of the request. In addition, please note that you are not guaranteed an extension or change in due date that you ask for. I will consider each request based on their individual merits. Please also be aware that simply forgetting to complete a task is not generally a sufficient reason for an extension; however, I usually give every student one “free”, no-questions-asked extension. Use this freebie wisely.
Emailing the Instructor
Communication is an important skill that nearly all employers look for in new employees, and particularly in college graduates. Learning to communicate professionally is vital if you wish to remain employed in any career for very long. For this reason, when you contact me via email, please include a subject, a greeting, and a signature. For example, if you are experiencing a difficulty logging into Connect your email might look like this:

Subject: Gradescope is down

Dear Dr. Wright,

I tried to log in to Gradescope to submit Assignment #1, but the program is down for emergency maintenance. Have any other students encountered this issue? Considering the circumstance, would you please extend the assignment’s due date?

Thank you,

[Your Name]

Academic Integrity and Misconduct
Angelo State University expects its student to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the policies set forth in the Student Handbook.

Americans with Disabilities Act
Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website. The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:

Dallas Swafford
Director of Student Disability Services
Office of Student Affairs
325-942-2047
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu
Houston Harte University Center, Room 112
Title IX at Angelo State University

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Boone, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manner:

Online: Title IX Incident Reporting Form
Face to Face: Mayer Administration Building, Room 210
Phone: (325) 942-2022
Email: michelle.boone@angelo.edu

Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171).

For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State’s policy please visit Angelo State’s Title IX webpage.

Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Week(s)</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 27</td>
<td>Course &amp; Gradescope orientations</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>August 29 &amp; September 3-5</td>
<td>Introduction to research</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>September 9-29</td>
<td>Writing a research project</td>
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<td>6-10</td>
<td>October 1-29</td>
<td>Probability &amp; statistics</td>
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<td>10-14</td>
<td>October 29- November 26</td>
<td>Experimental design &amp; methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>December 3 &amp; 5</td>
<td>Student presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finals</td>
<td>December 10</td>
<td>Student presentations</td>
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Policies on Deviations from the Published Schedule

While I hope I do not have to make any changes to the course schedule, there is always the possibility that special circumstances will arise that necessitate changes be made. If such a circumstance occurs then I will communicate it in class, via Blackboard, and by email. Once announced, any such change will supersede what is written in this syllabus or currently published online.

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i http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/
ii http://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/index.php
iii http://www.angelo.edu/incident-form
iv https://www.angelo.edu/services/title-ix/