Course Syllabus
AGEC 2317.D10 – Introduction to Agricultural Economics and Business

Instructor
Andrew P. Wright, Ph.D.
Email: andrew.wright@angelo.edu
Phone: (325) 486-6751
Office: #219, 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 is designed to provide students with an introduction to the fundamental principles of economics and their application to the behavior of individuals, businesses, and societies.

Meeting Time & Location
This is an online class. As such, it has no official meeting time or location.

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,
  - The ability to view videos from various sources and that use various formats, and
  - A webcam connected to their computer or mobile device for use during exams.
- Possess basic web navigation skills.
- Register for McGraw-Hill Connect Plus during or before the first week of class.
- Install the Respondus Lock-Down Browser on their computer or mobile device during or before the first week of class.

Instructions that explain how to register for Connect Plus and how to install the LockDown Browser can be accessed from the Course Blackboard page. Students will need to pay to register for Connect Plus, but can begin the class with two weeks of free courtesy access.

Expected Knowledge Prerequisites
As an introductory course in microeconomics, this class has very few required prerequisites in terms of knowledge. I do expect that students taking this course have prior experience with some basic mathematic and algebraic concepts:

- Students should know what a ratio is and how to interpret one.
- Students should know what the slope of a straight line communicates about the relationship between two variables.
- Students should be able to calculate the slope of a line using information found in a graph.
- Students should be able to solve for an unknown variable in an equation.
- Students should know how to take numerical information and plug it in to an equation to calculate a solution.
I provide an opportunity to review and practice these skills as a graded assignment during the first week of the course.

Textbook & Learning Platforms

**McGraw-Hill Connect Plus**
This course is based on the 7th edition of *Principles of Microeconomics* by Frank, Bernanke, Antovics & Heffetz (2019; ISBN: 9781260110869). Registering for McGraw-Hill Plus will provide you with an electronic copy of the text. I will use McGraw-Hill Connect Plus to deploy weekly reading and study assignments. You will be able to access all course content, including McGraw-Hill content, through the course Blackboard page.

**Respondus Lock-Down Browser and Respondus Monitor**
This course requires the use of LockDown Browser for online exams. A short video and a Quick Start Guide have been provided in Blackboard to give students a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and the optional webcam feature (which is also required for exams).

To take an online test, start LockDown Browser and navigate to the exam. (You won't be able to access the exam with a standard web browser). When taking an online exam, follow these guidelines:

- Select a location where you won't be interrupted,
- Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and make sure that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it,
- Turn all mobile devices, phones, etc. and don't have them within reach,
- Clear your area of all external materials — books, papers, other computers, or devices,
- Remain at your desk or workstation for the duration of the test, and
- Remember that LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted.

To ensure LockDown Browser and the webcam are set up properly, do the following:

- Start LockDown Browser, log into Blackboard, and select this course.
- Locate and select the Help Center button on the LockDown Browser toolbar.
- Run the Webcam Check and, if necessary, resolve any issues.
- Run the System & Network Check. If a problem is indicated, see if a solution is provided in the Knowledge Base. Troubleshooting information can also be emailed to our institution's help desk.
- Exit the Help Center and locate the practice quiz named Respondus Set-Up Quiz (found in the orientation module).
- Upon completing and submitting the practice quiz, exit LockDown Browser.

Course Learning Objectives
As your instructor, I have established a set of learning goals and related objectives:

- **Goal 1:** Learn essential knowledge. Students will demonstrate the correct use of microeconomic principles to draw conclusions about market outcomes.
- **Goal 2:** Develop critical thinking skills. Students will take numerical and graphical data, synthesize this data into usable information, and use the information they create to draw conclusions about market outcomes.
• Goal 3: Develop quantitative skills. Learning Goal 3 is strongly related to Goal 2. Where Goal 2 emphasizes the ability to draw conclusions using data, Goal 3 emphasizes the ability to use quantitative skills to create the information you need to draw conclusions.

This list provides a general idea of what a student must do to successfully complete this course. A more detailed list of goals and objectives will be made available to students on the course Blackboard page. Students’ progress toward these goals will be assessed through their performance on exams and weekly application/study assignments.

**THECB Core Curriculum Learning Objectives**

AGEC 2317 has been approved to count towards your Social Sciences core credit. To this end, students taking this course must show progress toward 4 goals.

- Demonstrate critical thinking skills (CT)
- Demonstrate communication skills (CS)
- Demonstrate empirical and quantitative skills (EQS)
- Demonstrate social responsibility (SR)

Progress toward these objectives will be assessed through a written set of short essay assignments that will be deployed during the semester. These assignments will not count toward a student’s grade; however, any student that does not complete these assignments will receive a grade of “Incomplete” for the course until they turn the assignments in.

**Grading**

Your grade will be calculated based on the number of points you earn out of 1500. The grading scale for the course is as follows:

- To earn an A, you must earn 1350-1500 points
- To earn a B, you must earn 1200-1349 points
- To earn a C, you must earn 1050-1199 points
- To earn a D, you must earn 900-1049 points

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

- Exams: 375 points
- Weekly reading & study assignments: 1100 points
- Course entry tasks: 100 points
- Course exit task: 25 points

**Exams**

There are three exams scheduled for this course. Each exam consists of 100 multiple choice questions, taken from the test bank provided by the authors of the textbook, split into four parts. Each part contains 25 questions and focuses on one chapter. Each exam is worth 100 points towards a student’s final grade with the exception of the third exam which is worth 75 points.

- Exam 1: The first exam will be deployed in Week 6 (February 17-23) and covers Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 4.
- Exam 2: The second exam will be deployed in Week 11 (March 30- April 5) and covers Chapters 5, 6, 7 & 8.
• Exam 3: The third exam will be deployed during Finals Week (May 4-7) and covers Chapters 11, 13 & 14.

Weekly Reading & Study Assignments
You will be required to complete a set of five reading/study assignments during weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, & 14. These assignments include:

• **LearnSmart Modules:** Adaptive learning modules in Connect that measure how well you understand each chapter of the textbook. You will receive full credit upon completion of a module.

• **Video Assignments:** A set of videos and questions related to concepts introduced in each chapter of the textbook. You have 3 attempts to answer each question correctly and your correct answers are saved after each attempt. In addition, after each attempt you will have the opportunity to view feedback that you can use to correctly answer any questions for which you did not receive full credit.

• **End of Chapter Questions:** A set of problems in Connect that are related to the review questions at the end of each chapter of the textbook. You have 3 attempts to answer each question correctly and your correct answers are saved after each attempt. In addition, after each attempt you will have the opportunity to view feedback that you can use to correctly answer any questions for which you did not receive full credit.

• **Chapter Quizzes:** A set of multiple choice questions taken from the test bank provided by the authors of the textbook. One have one attempt to answer each questions correctly.

These assignments are due by the end of the week that they are assigned (Sunday at 11:59 pm). Each assignment is worth 25 points towards a student’s final grade for a total of 100 points per week, or 1100 points for the entire semester. The purpose of these assignments is to structure your approach to the material and to help you assess your progress through the course.

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 interact with Blackboard, Respondus LockDown Browser, Respondus Monitor, and the McGraw-Hill Connect Plus platform. Theses assignments include:

• **Syllabus quiz:** A four question (yes/no) assignment in which students 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.

• **Respondus Monitor Set-Up Quiz:** A one question (yes/no) assignment that uses Respondus Lock-Down Browser and Respondus Monitor. Students must indicate that they have successfully installed the browser, and that they have correctly set up their webcam, so that they are prepared to take exams. You have unlimited attempts to complete this task.

• **Connect Orientation:** A set of videos in McGraw-Hill Connect that shows students how to interact with the Connect platform (access SmartBook, access assignments, view feedback, etc.). You have 3 attempts to answer each question correctly and your correct answers are saved after each attempt. In addition, after each attempt you will have the opportunity to view feedback that you can use to correctly answer any questions for which you did not receive full credit.
• **Economics Math Review**: A set of tutorials and questions in Connect that are designed to help students review the math concepts and algebra skills that they will need to successfully complete the course. You have 3 attempts to answer each question correctly and your correct answers are saved after each attempt. In addition, after each attempt you will have the opportunity to view feedback that you can use to correctly answer any questions for which you did not receive full credit.

• **Connect Graphing Tutorial**: A set of tutorials and questions in Connect that are designed to teach students how to interact with graphs in homework assignments. You have 3 attempts to answer each question correctly and your correct answers are saved after each attempt. In addition, after each attempt you will have the opportunity to view feedback that you can use to correctly answer any questions for which you did not receive full credit.

• **Preliminary Assessment of Economic Knowledge**: A set of questions designed to assess the amount economic knowledge students possess prior to starting this course. This is a completion grade. Students will receive full credit for attempting the assessment regardless of their actual score.

All six entry tasks must be completed by 11:59 pm on Sunday, January 19. Each assignment is worth 15 points towards a student’s final grade with the exception of the Assessment of Economic Knowledge which is worth 25 points.

**Course Exit Task**
The final task that a student must complete to finish the course is the retake the Assessment of Economic Knowledge during Finals Week. The purpose of retaking the assessment is to measure how much a student has learned in this course. Taking this assessment is worth 25 points towards a student’s final grade. Once again, this is a completion grade. Students will receive full credit for attempting the assessment regardless of their actual score.

**Policy on Missing a Deadline**

*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 assessment must be completed by the date and time listed in the course schedule and in Blackboard to receive full credit. You may complete any of the weekly reading/study assessments 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 May 3 at 11:59 pm.

Exams must be completed within the time frame listed in the course syllabus, the course schedule, and on Blackboard; that is, by the end of the week that they are assigned (Sunday at 11:59 pm). Students will not generally be allowed to access an exam once the deadline is passed.

Special circumstances may warrant an extension on the deadline for any assignment or exam. 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 thinks they might miss an assignment due date because they intend to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the due date. A
student who misses a die date for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment 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 or exam by the given due date. 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, 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 or exam by the given due date, you may request that its due date be changed. Once this change is made you will be expected to complete the assessment 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: Connect is down

Dear Dr. Wright,

I tried to log in to Connect to complete this week’s LearnSmart assignment, 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

Course Schedule

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<th>Dates</th>
<th>Chapter &amp; Topic</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>January 13-19</td>
<td>Course Orientation</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>January 20-26</td>
<td>Chapter 1: Economic Decision Making</td>
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<td>Chapter 2: Comparative Advantage &amp; Trade</td>
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<td>Chapter 5: Demand &amp; Consumer Behavior</td>
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<td>March 2-8</td>
<td>Chapter 6: Perfectly Competitive Supply</td>
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<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>March 16-22</td>
<td>Chapter 7: Efficiency &amp; the Invisible Hand</td>
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<td>Chapter 14: Public Goods &amp; Tax Policy</td>
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<td>Chapter 13: Labor Markets</td>
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<td>April 27- May 3</td>
<td>Catch-up Week</td>
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<td></td>
<td>May 4-7</td>
<td>Exam 3</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 policies or 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 to the class via Blackboard and email. Once announced, any such change will supersede what is written in this syllabus or currently published online.

\[\text{http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/}\]
\[\text{http://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/index.php}\]