Course Syllabus  
AGEC 4317 – Commodities & Futures Trading

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 instruct students in the use of futures and options markets to manage agricultural price risk. Upon successful completion of this course, students should expect to:  
1. Possess a basic understanding of the mechanics, operations, and use of futures and options contracts.  
2. Understand how to use futures and options contracts as risk management tools.

Meeting Time & Location  
Time: 11:00-12:15 am, Tuesday & Thursday  
Location: VIN 263

Required Technology & 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.  
- Possess basic web navigation skills.

Knowledge Prerequisites  
There are no official prerequisites for this course; however, I expect that students enrolled in AGEC 4317 have taken at least one prior course in economics and have prior experience 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 & Learning Platforms  
- I will use the course Blackboard page to deliver course content such as lecture notes and information on assignments.
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. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
4. Learning appropriate methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information.

Agribusiness Program Objectives
As a part of the Agribusiness program, this course introduces students majoring in Agribusiness and students minoring in Agricultural Economics to the use and analysis of futures and options markets. Progress in this course will be assessed using exams, homework assignments, and other assignments.

Course Grades
The grading scale for the course is as follows:

- A = 810-900.00 points
- B = 720-809.99 points
- C = 630-719.99 points
- D = 540-629.99 points
- F = 0-539.99 points

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

- Exams: 300 points
- Homework assignments: 400 points
- Course Entry Task: 100 points
- Attendance: 100 points

Specific information on exams and assignments will be given to students during the first week of class.

Attendance
Students may earn up to 100 points for their attendance in class. The number of points that a student earns will be determined by the number of unexcused absences they accrue during the semester:

- Less than 3 unexcused absences- 100 points
- 3 unexcused absences- 90 points
- 4 unexcused absences- 80 points
- 5 unexcused absences- 70 points
- 6 unexcused absences- 60 points
- 7 unexcused absences- 50 points
- 8+ unexcused absences- 0 points
How I Take Attendance
I will maintain a record of every student’s attendance for each day of class. If I do not record that you were in class then you will be counted absent on that day. In addition, students will incur one unexcused absence for every three classes that they arrive more than five minutes late to class.

Definition of an Unexcused Absence
I generally consider any absence that is not related to a University event or is not approved by me beforehand as unexcused; however, I am willing to consider excusing any absence as long as you inform me of the absence and explain why it cannot or could not be avoided. Please note that consider does not mean accept.

Information Missed During an Absence
You are responsible for any information related to the class that you miss while absent. I am happy to answer any questions you might have, but I will not reproduce a lecture for you in my office.

ASU 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.

Policy on Missing a Due Date
I expect all assignments to be submitted on time and in final draft form. You may turn in any assigned task 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.

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.

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 Blackboard your email might look like this:

Subject: Blackboard is down

Dear Dr. Wright,
I tried to log in to Blackboard to complete the homework assignment that is due tonight, but it seems the program is down for emergency maintenance. Have any other students encountered this issue? Considering the circumstance, would you please extend the assignment’s deadline?

Thank you,
[Your Name]

**Use of Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**
Your cell phone may be left on but should be put away and silenced during lectures. If I see a cell phone out during an exam I will take up your exam and you will receive a failing grade for the exam. If you wish to use an electronic device to take notes during lectures you may do so; however, if I feel that your use of such a device is causing a distraction I will ask you to put it away.

**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**  
The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance.

Students are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU’s Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator at:

Michelle Boone, J.D.  
Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator  
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210  
325-942-2022  
michelle.boone@angelo.edu  

You may also file a report online 24/7 at www.angelo.edu/incident-form.

If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic and Counseling Center at 325-942-2173 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345.

For more information about Title IX in general you may visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

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