Course Syllabus
AG 6321 – Research Methods

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 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 263

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 most 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 mathematics 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
This course requires the following textbook:


In addition, I may assign reading from other sources including web sites and academic journals.
COVID-19 Policies

Required Use of Facial Coverings
As a member of the Texas Tech University System, Angelo State University has adopted the mandatory Facial Covering Policy to ensure a safe and healthy classroom experience. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, in compliance with the university policy students in this class are required to wear a mask/facial covering before, during, and after class. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge as a prerequisite to enter the classroom. You are also asked to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability. For the safety of everyone, any student not appropriately wearing a mask/facial covering will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. The student will be responsible to make up any missed class content or work. Continued non-compliance with the Texas Tech University System Policy may result in disciplinary action through the Office of Student Conduct.

Course Delivery
The primary mode of instruction for this course will be in-person lectures and guided classroom activities. I will record in-class lectures and activities using Blackboard Collaborate or a similar program. My goal is to make these recordings available for students to view within 24 hours of the related lecture period.

Policy Regarding In-Class Attendance/Participation
Regular attendance in face-to-face sessions is a vital part of the learning process. I expect students enrolled in AG 6321 to attend scheduled lecture; however, it may be unsafe for some students to attend class. Any student who wishes to avoid face-to-face lectures may isolate themselves and either watch the lecture in real time or watch the recording once it is available.

To help me separate students who are skipping class from those who are participating remotely, I ask that students who choose the remote option for any length of time to submit the following information to me:

1. A written request that they be exempt from attending class. This may be a formal request for an accommodation from Angelo State’s Office of Disability Services or as informal as a simple email requesting the exemption.
2. A written plan of action that describes how they will keep up with the course material. This plan needs to be very detailed and should show me that you are prepared to put the time in to make remote learning work.

It is fine for a student to change their decision to participate remotely or face-to-face. I simply ask that you keep me informed of your decision.

Transitioning to Remote Learning
Should the need to transition to remote learning arise, I will develop and post a new syllabus that will describe the changes we will need to make. In the event that we transition to remote learning, the first thing that I will require of each student is an action plan that describes the steps you will take to keep up with the course in the new format. Please start thinking now about what you will do so that you are prepared.
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
2. Scientific writing
3. Experimental design
4. Data analysis

Progress toward these objectives will be assessed using study assignments and a research project proposal.

Grading
Your final grade will be calculated based on the number of points you earn out of 800. The grading scale for the course is as follows:

- To earn an A, you must earn 720-800 points
- To earn a B, you must earn 640-719 points
- To earn a C, you must earn 560-639 points
- To earn a D, you must earn 480-559 points

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

- Written research proposal: 400 points
- Research proposal presentation: 100 points
- Study Assignments: 300 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 400 points towards a student’s final grade and will be split into four parts:

- Develop a conceptual framework (100 points), Due on September 20
- First draft of problem statement & literature review (100 points), Due on October 4
- Describe your data collection method (100 points), Due on October 25
- Submit your finished proposal (100 points), Due November 15
Instructions for each part of this assignment, along with their 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.

Should the class transition to remote learning, each student will record their presentation and submit it for grading. If this happens, I will provide more specific instructions on how to record and submit your presentations.

**Study Assignments**
During the semester you will be given three study assignments related to what we are discussing in class. The purpose of these assignments is to help you get “hands on” with some of the ideas we will discuss this semester. I encourage you to use these assignments as a chance to think beyond what we discuss in class and see their application to research problems in the real world. I will provide specific instructions for each assignment as we progress through the semester.

**Policies on Missing a Due Date**

*General Policy*
Every assessment that I give in this class will have a deadline by which you need to submit it for grading. I appreciate when students respect these deadlines; however, I am also flexible. It’s fine to take an extra day or two to finish an assignment if you need to; however, if you believe you need more than a couple of extra days to finish any assigned work, please contact me and request a formal extension to the assignment’s deadline.

Once I have graded an assignment and returned it to the rest of the class, any late work submitted by a student will be subject to a grading penalty.

*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.

**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: Blackboard is down

Dear Dr. Wright,

I tried to log in to Blackboard to submit the first study 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

**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 by filling out this [incident form](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?AngeloStateUniv&layout_id=1).

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 Angelo State’s [Title IX website](https://www.angelo.edu/services/title-ix/).

### Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week(s)</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 27</td>
<td>Course orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>August 24 - September 20</td>
<td>Introduction to research &amp; scientific writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>September 21 - October 18</td>
<td>Methods of data collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-13</td>
<td>October 19 - November 15</td>
<td>Methods of data analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 16-22</td>
<td>Research proposal 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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1. [www.texastech.edu/downloads/ttus-policy-face-coverings.pdf](https://www.texastech.edu/downloads/ttus-policy-face-coverings.pdf)
5. [https://www.angelo.edu/services/title-ix/](https://www.angelo.edu/services/title-ix/)