

COURSE SYLLABUS
AGR 238.01
Computers in Agriculture
Credit Hours: 3.0
Spring 2008

AGR 238 MICROCOMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN AGRICULTURE. [AGRI 1309] This course is designed to acquaint students with software applications useful to agriculture and how various technological advances are applied in modern agricultural enterprises. (3-0), Credit 3.

Basic Information

Instructor: Mr. Art Wolfskill

Office: Thomason 312; Hours: Mon, Tue, Thu 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.,
 or by appointment

Phone: 936-294-1226

Email: wolfskill@shsu.edu

Class Meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00-9:30; AB2 Rm 110

Course Objectives

Agribusinesses in today's competitive environment expect college graduates to have a variety of skills. Business leaders consistently say that they are looking for people with the following abilities:

- 1) excellent communication skills (both written and oral);
- 2) good problem-solving and critical thinking skills;
- 3) listening skills and a willingness to understand the opinions of others;
- 4) the ability to work well in teams; and
- 5) the ability to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

This course is designed to help you develop these skills, while learning about agricultural uses of computers. We will use lectures, class discussions, presentations, a project, and various homework activities to accomplish this. Three of our most important goals are:

- 1) to develop specific techniques and abilities in using MS Office '07 programs,
- 2) to become familiar with the kinds of specialized programs that can help Ag Businesses,
- 3) to learn specific computer techniques that will help in upper division courses.

Performance Evaluation

Your final grade will be a function of:

Three midterm exams	45%
Various quizzes and Homework assignments	40%
Final examination (comprehensive)	<u>15%</u>
Total Class Grade	100%

Course grades will be assigned from a student's weighted course average.

Grades will be based on percentages and are assigned as follows:

- A = 90.0% and Above D = 60.0% - 69.95%
 B = 80.0% - 89.95% F = Below 60.0%
 C = 70.0% - 79.95%

There will be three midterm examinations during the semester. The final exam will be cumulative. The exams will cover material from lectures, class discussion, class handouts, and assigned readings. Exam format will vary and may consist of objective questions (T/F, M/C), short answer, essay, and mathematical/ graphical analysis. I hope to have exams on Blackboard, but that is currently a work in progress.

It is absolutely essential that you come to class ready to work. Class in a computer lab has all kinds of temptations, including email, chat, facebook, etc. During class time, non-class activities such as these will not be permitted. You will be required to close all such applications, and not even have them running during class period. Using these applications during class may result in a grade penalty. I cannot emphasize this enough.

NO late work will be accepted following the due date without a compelling reason. Notice of the compelling reason must be delivered to the instructor well in advance of the scheduled due date. Failure to notify the instructor of an impending absence will result in a score of zero for that item. Notice of an anticipated absence does not guarantee approval by the instructor. If you do get to turn in something late, it will start at half credit. An excused missed exam will receive the grade that you make on the Final Exam. A second missed exam for any reason will receive a grade of zero.

Active participation in class discussions is a must: therefore, class attendance is required throughout the semester. Attendance will be taken each class period, and absence from class will result in a loss of points for the semester. We will do many in-class assignments during the semester, and they are heavily weighted in the grading scheme. Don't miss!

Students are to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times.

If you believe your exam or other coursework deserves a grade other than the one you received, bring it to my attention during office hours. I am happy to entertain a confidential discussion about anything I grade up to one week after it is returned to the class. If your request is to "re-grade" your work, I reserve the right to evaluate the entire exam, homework, or project, and your total points may go up or down. After one week, any grade stands as given.

Violations of SHSU Academic Honesty Policy will result in a grade of zero for the assignment, and possibly the entire course.

Expected Student Behavior

- Students are expected to turn off all pagers, cell phones and other electronic devices during class time. A ringing cell phone may incur the wrath of an immediate pop quiz for the whole class.
- Students are expected to pay attention and participate in class discussion, and not perform other computer tasks (email, chat, facebook, etc.) during lecture/discussion. You must exit these types of programs at the start of class.
- Students are expected to remain in class during the entire session.
- Inappropriate or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated, nor will lewd or foul language.
- The class follows the standards set by the university, and students are subject to disciplinary action for violations.

AGR 238 TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

I. Windows / MS Office Basics

A review of what you learned in your CS 133 (or equivalent) class, if taken

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II. Advanced MS Office Techniques

We will cover the types of computer tasks that you will need to do well in:

- your upper division AGR classes such as 367, 461, etc.
- business skills that will be helpful in your career
- other good stuff that relates to agriculture and computers

III. Ag-specific software

We will look at various commercial packages that can aid you in managing agribusinesses, such as specialized cow-calf software, GPS/GIS and precision farming, specialized ag search engines, fertilization programs, IPM management programs, etc.

Important examination and project due dates will follow.

The Boilerplate (read it; it's important!)

Student Syllabus Guidelines: You may find online a more detailed description of the following policies. These guidelines will also provide you with a link to the specific university policy or procedure: <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

Attendance Policy

Department attendance policy will be strictly enforced. Attendance will be taken each class period.

Department of Agricultural Sciences Attendance Policy

1. Regular and punctual attendance is expected of each student in the Department of Agricultural Sciences at Sam Houston State University.
2. Each faculty member will keep a written record of student attendance.
3. If a student misses four or more classes, the student's grade will be reduced by one letter grade. Additional penalties may be assessed at the discretion of the instructor.
4. Three unexcused or unjustified tardies or early departures are considered as one absence.
5. Excused absences must be documented by the student with a letter of confirmation from the sponsoring student organization, professor or doctor. Exemptions will include participation in departmental activities when prior approval is attained from the Department Chair.
6. No exams or assignments will be given at alternative times unless arrangements are made with the professor/instructor before the scheduled activity occurs.

Academic Dishonesty: Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines.*

Classroom Rules of Conduct: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students are to treat faculty and students with respect. Students are to turn off all cell phones while in the classroom. Under no circumstances are cell phones or any electronic devices to be used or seen during times of examination. Students may tape record lectures provided they do not disturb other students in the process.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days: Students are allowed to miss class and other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students remain responsible for all work. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines.*

Students with Disabilities Policy: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. *See Student Syllabus Guidelines.*

Visitors in the Classroom: Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

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