

# Communicating in Agriculture and Natural Resources

ALEC 535  
Summer 2019

**Instructor:**

Dr. Garrett M. Steede  
gsteede@utk.edu

**Office Hours:**

Phone or video appointments are  
available upon request.

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**Course Information*****Time and Location:***

This course is being offered via distance, asynchronously. Weekly modules will begin on Monday and should be completed by Sunday of each week. However, the course Canvas site can be accessed 24 hours a day, and each student may complete the coursework at their own pace within this weekly time frame —

<https://online.utk.edu>.

***Communication:***

All individual communication between students and instructor will be done via email, unless a phone or video conference is scheduled. On campus students are welcome to schedule face-to-face meetings if preferred. Students are discouraged from using any messaging feature available in Canvas as it will not be monitored or responded to. I will do my best to respond within 24 hours to all emails. However, after 5 and weekends are mine, so you should not expect a response until the following workday.

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**Course Description & Objectives**

This course focuses on strategic communication for agriculture and life science industries. The content is designed to explore the practical and philosophical elements when communicating with both agricultural and non-agricultural audiences. Additionally, students will explore the historical and foundational elements of agriculture and communications.

***Student Learning Objectives:***

- Understand the foundational elements of agricultural communications.
  - Understand the practical and philosophical elements guiding agricultural communications.
  - Explore and critically think about issues facing the agricultural industry.
  - Understand the role public opinion serves in the agricultural industry.
  - To recognize your individual role in agricultural communications.
  - To write using clear, concise and effective prose as well as accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation.
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**Course Materials*****Course Text:***

This course does not have a required text book. This course will use a mixture of lectures, reading materials and electronic resources.

### *Canvas Account:*

All students will be automatically enrolled in the learning management system, Canvas, once they have paid registration. Notifications, assignments, resources, grades, and other materials will be posted on the course page throughout the semester. Students are expected to check Canvas frequently and are responsible for monitoring their grades on the system.

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## **Writing Expectations**

While this may not be a "writing course" per se, you will be expected to produce high quality writing as a student in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at UTK. I expect you to perform and you will be evaluated at a graduate writing level.

- Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure
  - No use of first person
  - No use of contractions when indicated
  - The use of proper APA citations when assignments require it
  - The use of proper Associated Press Style writing for journalistic writing
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## **Assignment Submissions**

All assignments will be submitted on Canvas, unless otherwise directed, and should be in Microsoft Word format with your last name and first initial as the file name (Steede, G.).

### *Late Assignments:*

All assignments are due **at 11:45 p.m.** by the deadline indicated on the syllabus and assignment rubrics. Technical difficulties will **NOT** be an excuse so plan ahead. No late assignments will be accepted that are unexcused. Notify me immediately if an emergency arises to be considered for an excused late assignment submission, which will be accepted up to two days late with a **15% deduction for each day late**.

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## **Syllabus Disclaimer**

Serious effort and consideration were used in formulating this syllabus. While viewed as an educational contract between the instructor and student, unforeseen events may cause changes to the scheduling of assignments, lectures, etc. I reserve the right to make any changes deemed necessary to best fulfill the course objectives. You will be made aware of any changes in a timely fashion using reasonable means.

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## **University Civility Statement**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, gracious-ness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteous-ness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus.

<http://civility.utk.edu/>

## Academic Integrity

“An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”

Unplag plagiarism detection engine will be used in the course to check each assignment submitted through Canvas. All parties involved will be reprimanded if evidence of plagiarism surfaces through the guidelines established by the university conduct board. The student may receive a zero on the assignment or in some cases may fail the course.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.lib.utk.edu/instruction/plagiarism>

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## Services for Students with Disabilities

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 865-974-6087 in 100 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. ODS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

For more information regarding your rights as a student at UTK, please visit:  
<http://accessibility.utk.edu>

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## Grade Breakdown

A	100% — 90%
B	89.9% — 80%
C	79.9% — 70%
D	66.9% — 63%
F	Below 59.9%

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## Grade Weighting

Weekly Assignments	15%
Exam	15%
Public Opinion Survey Report	30%
Issue Management Plan	40%

**Week****Course Schedule**

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1	Jun. 3	Historical Background of Agricultural Communications
2	Jun. 10	Communicating with Others
3	Jun. 17	Science Communication <i><b>Due:</b> Exam (Jun. 21th)</i>
4	Jun. 24	Public Opinion
5	Jul. 1	Survey Development <i><b>Due:</b> Rough draft of public opinion survey (Jul. 5th)</i>
6	Jul. 8	Persuasive Communication
7	Jul. 15	Changing Attitudes
8	Jul. 22	Issue Management <i><b>Due:</b> Public opinion survey report (Jul. 26th)</i>
9	Jul. 29	Crisis Communication
10	Aug. 5	Diffusion of Innovations <i><b>Due:</b> Issue Management plan (Aug. 12th)</i>

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