Remote Learning Context.
Due to COVID-19, I recognize that the Fall semester is happening under unusual circumstances and that the remote learning context is likely new to most, if not all of you. Nevertheless, I hope that you find the course to be a valuable learning opportunity. I encourage you to maximize the opportunity to interact with one another as the course progresses. As you will see, there are a number of interactive participations built into the course and we should all be cognizant of the different circumstances under which various students may be participating in the course in our interactions with one another.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:
This course introduces graduate students to theoretical and empirical methods for analyzing the structure and organization of agri-food marketing channels, and the effect of information asymmetry and quality differentiation in food supply chains. The course is designed to deepen analytical and critical thinking skills.

Upon completion of the course you should be able to:
1. Apply the transaction cost economics framework to analyzing vertical coordination in agri-food supply chains
2. Evaluate empirical approaches to analyzing supply chains, contracting, and market power
3. Apply economic analysis to collective marketing situations (supply management, generic advertising)
4. Describe the economic effects of quality differentiation in agri-food markets
5. Derive industry and policy implications from economic analysis of agri-food marketing issues
6. Critically assess research methodologies and frame research questions pertaining to the economics of agri-food marketing

OFFICE HOURS
I will hold office hours for this course via video conference (Microsoft Teams) on Tuesday mornings from 9.30-10.30am (Saskatoon time). The video conference office hour is an opportunity for you to ask me any questions you may have about the readings for that week’s module, ask about concepts we are covering in the class, and about the final exam question for that module. It will also give you an opportunity to interact with other students. Attendance at these weekly one hour sessions is optional but encouraged. I will send out a set of weekly calendar invitations for the office hours and be standing by for those who wish to join the video conference session. Note, that the office hour session will be recorded and made available to the class so that any students not able to attend the office hour can review the discussion. If you wish to discuss a personal matter please make a separate appointment to speak with me.
Office hours will begin on Tuesday September 8. Please note, there will be no office hours during the Fall break (Tuesday November 10).

ASSESSMENT:
Assignments/Graded activities = 48% of course grade  
Final exam = 52% of course grade

Assignments (48% of course grade):
The assignments will be 9 graded activities/assignments corresponding to modules throughout the course, from which your best 8 grades will count. Each assignment/graded activity is worth 6% of the final exam grade. 8 assignments x 6% = 48%

All graded activities will be released at 12pm on Tuesdays, due 11pm Fridays. Late assignments will be penalized 10% of their final grade for each day late | (11pm being the cut off time for each late day).

Final exam: 52% of course grade
Each potential final exam question will be made available to you within the module as you access each module. Five of these questions will be selected at random by the instructor for the final exam (comprising 75% of the final exam grade). The remainder of the final exam (25%) will consist of material that you have not previously seen.

It is strongly recommended that you complete the potential final exam question for each module each week. This will enable you to focus on answering the second part of the final exam (worth 25% of the final exam grade) that you will have not seen before.

The exam will be a take-home exam set over a 3 day (72 hour) period during the final exam period. Students should avoid making prior travel, employment, or other commitments for the entire final exam period (December 8-23) until the final exam dates are confirmed.

The take-home style exam is designed to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate analytical and critical assessment skills in more depth than is generally possible in an examination room setting. As such, students are expected to answer these questions independently. As a rough guide, to address the topics adequately, answers to the final exam essay questions should be around 1500 words in length.

If a student is unable to write an exam through no fault of his or her own for medical or other valid reasons, documentation must be provided and an opportunity to write the missed exam may be given. Students are encouraged to review all examination policies and procedures:
http://students.usask.ca/academics/exams.php
Course Overview

The course is structured around a set of 12 weekly modules, which build upon one another. The modules contain a set of required readings, and a mixture of course notes, videos, and graded activities.

What to expect throughout the course:

1. **Potential final exam questions**: when you begin a module you should read the potential final examination question for that module. While you will not be able to answer the question at that point, it will provide insights into where the module is going.
2. **Course notes, Powerpoint videos & other online materials**: you should read and digest the additional background material for each module.
3. **Required readings**: within each module required readings are designed to provide you with an in-depth understanding of the concepts.
4. **Weekly office hours**: provide an opportunity to interact with me and with fellow students with questions about the readings and course material for that module.
5. **Graded activities and assignments**: that are to be completed can be found in the modules.
6. **Final exam questions**: Finally, for each module you should draft an answer to the potential final exam question for that module.
7. **The final exam**: will take place over a 72 hour period. It will consist of 5 questions from the 12 questions from the modules (75%) and an additional question (25%) that you have not previously seen.

**Timings**: Course modules will begin on the Saturday of each week and close the following Friday. I recommend completing the weekly readings for each module prior to Tuesday morning, so that you can ask me any questions about the readings during our office hours session. Graded activities accompanying the modules will be released at 12pm (noon) on Tuesday and due by 11pm on Wednesday/Friday.

**Canvas**: The course will be conducted entirely through Canvas, the University of Saskatchewan’s new Learning Management System (canvas.usask.ca). All course materials, including the readings, are available through Canvas. Please ensure that you follow the instructions for each module, which will guide you in the learning activities (including the order in which to review the learning materials).

If you have technical issues, please contact Canvas help when logged into canvas.usask.ca via the Help menu. You can make a phone call, start a live chat, or report a problem. Also, let your instructor know if you are having difficulties accessing Canvas.
CLASS SCHEDULE

The course is organized in four sections.

PART I: TRANSACTION COSTS & THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS

September 12–18 – Module 2: Transaction Cost Economics (TCE)
Module 2 graded activity: released Sept 15. Due Sept 18

September 19–25 – Module 3: Empirical Applications of TCE to Agrifood Marketing

PART II: SUPPLY CHAINS, CONTRACTS, AND MARKET POWER
September 26–October 2 – Module 4: Spot Market Transactions
Module 4 graded activity: released Sept 29. Due Oct 2

October 3–9 – Module 5: Contracts: Information and Hold-ups
Module 5 graded activity: released Oct 6. Due Oct 9

October 10–16 – Module 6: Vertical Integration, Contracts and Incentives

October 17–23 – Module 7: Value Chains and Relationship Sustainability
Module 7 graded activity: released Oct 20. Due Oct 23

PART III: PRODUCER GROUPS AND COLLECTIVE MARKETING
October 24–30 – Module 8: Supply Management Marketing Boards
Module 8 graded activity: released Oct 27. First post due Oct 28, Responses due Oct 30

October 31–November 6 – Module 9: Generic Advertising in Commodity Markets
Module 9 graded activity: released Nov 3. Due Nov 6

November 7–13 – Fall break week. No Module

PART IV: QUALITY SIGNALS AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR
November 14–20 – Module 10: Information Asymmetry and Quality Signals

November 21–27 – Module 11: Food Safety, Quality Assurance and Traceability

Module 12 graded activity: released Dec 1. Discussion posting Dec 2, Due Dec 4
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Student feedback:
Your feedback on the course is important to me and helps me revise and change the course from year to year. Please take the time to complete the course evaluation at the end of the semester. I also welcome any informal feedback as the course progresses.

Recommended video use:
For participation in the optional office hours sessions, it is recommended that you have your video on, through the use of a webcam built into or connected to your computer. This will facilitate discussion and interaction with the instructor and with other students. For questions about use of video in your sessions, including those related to your privacy, contact your instructor.

Use of Video and Recording of the Course
The only ‘live’ portion of this course will be the optional weekly office hour session, which will be held as a video conference. Video conference sessions, including your participation, will be recorded and made available only to students in the course for viewing via Canvas after each set of office hours. This is done, in part, to ensure that students unable to join the office hours session (due to, for example, issues with their internet connection) can view the office hours session at a later time. This will also provide you the opportunity to review any material discussed.

Please remember that course recordings belong to your instructor, the University and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share recordings without the explicit permission of the instructor.

For questions about recording and use of sessions in which you have participated, including any concerns related to your privacy, please contact your instructor. More information on class recordings can be found in the Academic Courses Policy https://policies.usask.ca/policies/academic-affairs/academic-courses.php#5ClassRecordings.

Copyright
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Before you copy or distribute others’ copyright-protected materials, please ensure that your use of the materials is covered under the University’s Fair Dealing Copyright Guidelines available at https://library.usask.ca/copyright/general-information/fair-dealing-guidelines.php. For example, posting others’ copyright-protected materials on the open web is not covered under the University’s Fair Dealing Copyright Guidelines, and doing so requires permission from the copyright holder.
For more information about copyright, please visit [https://library.usask.ca/copyright/index.php](https://library.usask.ca/copyright/index.php) where there is information for students available at [https://library.usask.ca/copyright/students/rights.php](https://library.usask.ca/copyright/students/rights.php), or contact the University’s Copyright Coordinator at [mailto:copyright.coordinator@usask.ca](mailto:copyright.coordinator@usask.ca) or 306-966-8817.

**Integrity in a Remote Learning Context**

Although the face of teaching and learning has changed due to covid-19, the rules and principles governing academic integrity remain the same. If you ever have questions about what may or may not be permitted, ask your instructor. Students have found it especially important to clarify rules related to exams administered remotely and to follow these carefully and completely.

The University of Saskatchewan is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Student Conduct & Appeals section of the University Secretary Website and avoid any behavior that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.


For more information on what academic integrity means for students see the Academic Integrity section of the University Library Website at: [https://library.usask.ca/academic-integrity#AboutAcademicIntegrity](https://library.usask.ca/academic-integrity#AboutAcademicIntegrity)

You are encouraged to complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial to understand the fundamental values of academic integrity and how to be a responsible scholar and member of the USask community - [https://library.usask.ca/academic-integrity.php#AcademicIntegrityTutorial](https://library.usask.ca/academic-integrity.php#AcademicIntegrityTutorial)

**Examinations with Access and Equity Services (AES)**

Students who have disabilities (learning, medical, physical, or mental health) are strongly encouraged to register with Access and Equity Services (AES) if they have not already done so. Students who suspect they may have disabilities should contact AES for advice and referrals at any time. Those students who are registered with AES with mental health disabilities and who anticipate that they may have responses to certain course materials or topics, should discuss course content with their instructors prior to course add / drop dates. In order to access AES programs and supports, students must follow AES policy and procedures. For more information or advice, visit [https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/access-equity-services.php](https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/access-equity-services.php), or contact AES at 306-966-7273 or [aes@usask.ca](mailto:aes@usask.ca).
Students registered with AES may request alternative arrangements for mid-term and final examinations. Students must arrange such accommodations through AES by the stated deadlines. Instructors shall provide the examinations for students who are being accommodated by the deadlines established by AES.

For information on AES services and remote learning please visit https://updates.usask.ca/info/current/accessibility.php#AccessandEquityServices

**Student Supports**

**Academic Help for Students**

**Teaching, Learning and Student Experience**
Teaching, Learning and Student Experience (TLSE) provides developmental and support services and programs to students and the university community. For more information, see the students’ web site http://students.usask.ca.

**Financial Support**
Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact Student Central (https://students.usask.ca/student-central.php).

**Aboriginal Students’ Centre**
The Aboriginal Students’ Centre (ASC) is dedicated to supporting Aboriginal student academic and personal success. The centre offers personal, social, cultural and some academic supports to Métis, First Nations, and Inuit students. The centre is also dedicated to intercultural education, bringing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students together to learn from, with and about one another in a respectful, inclusive and safe environment. Students are encouraged to visit the ASC’s Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/aboriginalstudentscentre/) to learn more.

**International Student and Study Abroad Centre**
The International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC) supports student success and facilitates international education experiences at USask and abroad. ISSAC is here to assist all international undergraduate, graduate, exchange and English as a Second Language students in their transition to the University of Saskatchewan and to life in Canada. ISSAC offers advising and support on matters that affect international students and their families and on matters related
to studying abroad as University of Saskatchewan students. Please visit students.usask.ca or updates.usask.ca for more information.

**Recommended Technology for Remote Learning**

Students are reminded of the importance of having the appropriate technology for remote learning. The list of recommendations can be found at https://students.usask.ca/remote-learning/tech-requirements.php.

Remember, there are many supports available to help you thrive in the remote learning context
University of Saskatchewan Grading System for graduate courses
The following describes the relationship between literal descriptors and percentage scores for courses in the College of Graduate Studies and Research:

90-100 Exceptional
A superior performance with consistent strong evidence of
- a comprehensive, incisive grasp of subject matter;
- an ability to make insightful, critical evaluation of information;
- an exceptional capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an exceptional ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently;
- an exceptional ability to analyze and solve difficult problems related to subject matter.

80-89 Very Good to Excellent
A very good to excellent performance with strong evidence of
- a comprehensive grasp of subject matter;
- an ability to make sound critical evaluation of information;
- a very good to excellent capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- a very good to excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently;
- a very good to excellent ability to analyze and solve difficult problems related to subject matter.

70-79 Satisfactory to Good
A satisfactory to good performance with evidence of
- a substantial knowledge of subject matter;
- a satisfactory to good understanding of the relevant issues and satisfactory to good familiarity with the relevant literature and technology;
- a satisfactory to good capacity for logical thinking;
- some capacity for original and creative thinking;
- a satisfactory to good ability to organize, to analyze, and to examine the subject matter in a critical and constructive manner;
- a satisfactory to good ability to analyze and solve moderately difficult problems.

60-69 Poor
A generally weak performance, but with some evidence of
- a basic grasp of the subject matter;
- some understanding of the basic issues;
- some familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- some ability to develop solutions to moderately difficult problems related to the subject matter;
- some ability to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner.

<60 Failure
An unacceptable performance.