



UNIVERSITY OF  
SASKATCHEWAN

## COURSE SYLLABUS

Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics

### **AREC 440.3: Agricultural Marketing Systems**

Term 1 2023-24 (Fall 2023)

**Instructor:** Dr. Jill E. Hobbs

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**Office:** 3E68

**Office hours:** by appointment

**Class time:** Tues/Thurs 2.30-3.50pm

**Room:** Agriculture 1E85

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the agri-food marketing system from analytical and strategic perspectives, building on core concepts of microeconomics. We will explore the role of generic versus brand advertising in the agri-food sector, as well as the economic implications of collective marketing structures such as cooperatives and supply management marketing boards. Supply chains are examined from various perspectives, including how transaction costs and risks arise and are mitigated, and the growing use of contracting in supply chains. We will examine the implications of information asymmetry within agri-food supply chains from various perspectives, including the role of commodity grades, labelling, identity preservation, and traceability. Finally, we will discuss supply chain resilience in the agri-food sector.

**Prerequisite:** AREC315.3

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- Examine the conditions under which generic advertising versus brand advertising is used in agrifood markets and show how economists assess the effectiveness of generic advertising for agricultural commodities
- Show how countervailing power can be created through group marketing using a bilateral monopoly model and explain the challenges faced by marketing cooperatives
- Discuss the economic welfare implications of supply management marketing boards
- Explain how and why supply chain relationships in the agricultural sector are changing, including the changing role of spot markets, contracts and vertical integration
- Discuss contracts from an analytical perspective: when are they an optimal coordination mechanism and what are the implications for buyers/sellers of different contracts.
- Explain the concept of information asymmetry and its implications for food firms
- Analyse the role of grades and standards, labelling, identity preservation, and traceability systems in agricultural and food markets.
- Derive lessons for supply chain resilience from recent supply chain disruptions.

**ASSESSMENT:**

The course uses a mixture of assessments, including, assignments, group projects/cases, a midterm and a final exam. The grade distribution, along with tentative due dates, is provided below. Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due by midnight on the date stated.

*Late assignments will be penalized 10% of their grade for each day late (midnight being the cut off time for each late day).*

GRADING SCHEME	% of final grade	Key dates	
		Assigned	Due
<i>Assignments (20%)</i>			
Assignment 1	10%	Sept 28	Oct 6
Assignment 2	10%	Nov 16	Nov 24
<i>Group projects/cases (20%)</i>			
Project 1 – Contract case	10%	Oct 17	Oct 18 & 20
Project 2 – Resilience Case	10%	Nov 23 or 30	Dec 5
<i>Exams (60%)</i>			
Midterm exam	20%	October 26	
Final Exam	40%	Scheduled by registrar	

*Generative Artificial intelligence tools are not permitted to be used in any assessments for this course. Any use of such tools will be considered academic misconduct in this course.*

**Midterm and Final Exam Scheduling**

Midterm and final exams must be written on the date scheduled. All exams are in-person.

The midterm exam is scheduled for **Thursday October 26** in class.

The final exam may be scheduled at any time during the final exam period (December 9-23 2023). Students should therefore avoid making prior travel, employment, or other commitments for this period. If a student is unable to write an exam through no fault of their 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 at <http://students.usask.ca/academics/exams.php>.

## COURSE OVERVIEW

### Modules:

The course is organized into five modules, with sub-topics. Topics with tentative timings and due dates for graded activities are provided below. Dates are subject to change.

**In class lectures and readings:** The course is taught in-person, lectures will not be recorded, and attendance in class is necessary to benefit fully from the class and to participate in the group projects. Readings (journal articles, book chapters) and additional learning materials such as video clips and blog posts will be made available on Canvas. There is no required textbook for this course. Students are responsible for reviewing all of the learning materials provided in each module, including the readings.

TOPICS	GRADED ACTIVITIES
<b>MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	
Driving forces for change Perspectives on marketing	
<b>MODULE 2: COLLECTIVE MARKETING &amp; PRODUCER GROUPS</b>	
Generic advertising	Assignment 1 <i>Out Sept 28, due Oct 6</i>
Co-operatives	
Supply management marketing boards	
<b>MODULE 3: SUPPLY CHAINS AND CONTRACTS (Oct 4-18)</b>	
Transaction costs	Group project (contract case) ( <i>due Oct 18 &amp; 20</i> )
Contracts	
Contract negotiation case study	
<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b> (in class)	<i>October 26</i>
<b>MODULE 4: INFORMATION ASYMMETRY &amp; QUALITY SIGNALS</b> <i>[Fall break week: no classes Nov 7 &amp; 8]</i>	
Information asymmetry	Assignment 2 <i>Out Nov 16, due Nov 24</i>
Grading and identity preservation	
GMOs: Pooling & Separating equilibria	
Traceability	
<b>MODULE 5: SUPPLY CHAIN RESILIENCE</b>	
Supply chain disruptions	Group case (supply chain resilience) <i>(Dec 5)</i>
Market analysis	

**INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY**

I have an open door policy, so please feel free to stop by my office if you have questions about the course material. I can be reached by email or phone if you'd like to set up an appointment. See the front page of this course outline for my contact information.

**CANVAS**

Course materials (readings, supplementary resource material, assignments, group projects) will be made available through Canvas. Please check the 'Notifications' settings for this course in Canvas to ensure that you receive all instructor announcements, deadline reminders, etc.

If you have technical issues, please contact Canvas help when logged into [canvas.usask.ca](https://canvas.usask.ca) via the Help menu. You can make a phone call, start a live chat, or report a problem. Also, let me know if you are having difficulties accessing any of the learning materials in Canvas.

**COPYRIGHT**

Course materials are provided to you based on your registration in this class, and anything created by your professor is their intellectual property and cannot be shared without written permission. This includes PowerPoint slides, reading and resource material, assessments, and exams. All course materials developed for this course, including the PowerPoint slides are the intellectual property of the instructor. Additionally, other copyright-protected materials created by textbook publishers, journals, and authors may be provided to you based on license terms and educational exceptions in the Canadian Copyright Act. These materials are for your personal use only. **It is NOT permitted to post any of the course materials to online forums or to share these materials beyond this course.** Inappropriate sharing of course materials will be considered academic misconduct.

**STUDENT FEEDBACK**

Your feedback on the course is important to me. Please take the time to complete the course evaluation at the end of the semester, as well as the midterm evaluation surveys. I also welcome any informal feedback as the course progresses.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University of Saskatchewan is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and The University of Saskatchewan is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity. <https://academic-integrity.usask.ca/>

Students are urged to read the [Regulations on Academic Misconduct](#) and to avoid any behaviours that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence.

For help developing the skills for meeting academic integrity expectations, see: <https://academic-integrity.usask.ca/students.php>

Students are encouraged to ask their instructors for clarification on academic integrity requirements.

***Generative Artificial intelligence tools are not permitted to be used in any assessments for this course. Any use of such tools will be considered academic misconduct in this course.***

**ACCESS AND EQUITY SERVICES (AES)**

Access and Equity Services (AES) is available to provide support to students who require accommodations due to disability, family status, and religious observances.

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.

Students who require accommodations for pregnancy or substantial parental/family duties should contact AES to discuss their situations and potentially register with that office.

Students who require accommodations due to religious practices that prohibit the writing of exams on religious holidays should contact AES to self-declare and determine which accommodations are appropriate. In general, students who are unable to write an exam due to a religious conflict do not register with AES but instead submit an exam conflict form through their PAWS account to arrange accommodations.

Any student registered with AES, as well as those who require accommodations on religious grounds, may request alternative arrangements for mid-term and final examinations by submitting a request to AES by the stated deadliness. Instructors shall provide the examinations for students who are being accommodated by the deadlines established by AES.

For more information or advice, visit <https://students.usask.ca/health/centres/access-equity-services.php>, or contact AES at 306-966-7273 (Voice/TTY 1-306-966-7276) or email [aes@usask.ca](mailto:aes@usask.ca).

## **STUDENT SUPPORTS**

### **Academic Help for Students**

Visit the [University Library](#) and [Learning Hub](#) to find supports for undergraduate and graduate students with first-year experience, study skills, learning strategies, research, writing, math and statistics. Students can attend [workshops](#), access [online resources and research guides](#), book [1-1 appointments](#) or hire a [subject tutor](#) through the [USask Tutoring Network](#)

Connect with library staff through the [AskUs](#) chat service or visit various [library locations](#) on campus. Enrolled in an online course? Explore the [Online Learning Readiness Tutorial](#).

### **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 unexpected 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>.

### **Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre**

The Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre) is dedicated to supporting Indigenous 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 an intercultural gathering space that brings Indigenous and non-Indigenous students together to learn from, with and about one another in a respectful, inclusive, and safe environment. Visit <https://students.usask.ca/indigenous/index.php> or students are encouraged to visit the ASC's website <https://students.usask.ca/indigenous/gorbosc.php>

### **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. Visit <https://students.usask.ca/international/issac.php> for more information.

**College Supports (Agbio)**

Please contact AgBio Student Services in the Dean's office at [agbio.studentservices@usask.ca](mailto:agbio.studentservices@usask.ca)

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

As we gather here today, we acknowledge that the Saskatoon campus of the University of Saskatchewan is on Treaty Six Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nation and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another. We recognize that in the course of your studies you will spend time learning in other traditional territories and Métis homelands. We wish you safe, productive and respectful encounters in these places.

**University of Saskatchewan Grading System (for undergraduate courses)**

**Exceptional (90-100)** A superior performance with consistent evidence of

- a comprehensive, incisive grasp of the subject matter;
- an ability to make insightful critical evaluation of the material given;
- an exceptional capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently.

**Excellent (80-90)** An excellent performance with strong evidence of

- a comprehensive grasp of the subject matter;
- an ability to make sound critical evaluation of the material given;
- a very good capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- an excellent ability to organize, to analyze, to synthesize, to integrate ideas, and to express thoughts fluently.

**Good (70-79)** A good performance with evidence of

- a substantial knowledge of the subject matter;
- a good understanding of the relevant issues and a good familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- some capacity for original, creative and/or logical thinking;
- a good ability to organize, to analyze and to examine the subject material in a critical and constructive manner.

**Satisfactory (60-69)** A generally satisfactory and intellectually adequate performance with evidence of

- an acceptable basic grasp of the subject material;
- a fair understanding of the relevant issues;
- a general familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- an ability to develop solutions to moderately difficult problems related to the subject material;
- a moderate ability to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner.

**Minimal Pass (50-59)** A barely acceptable performance with evidence of

- a familiarity with the subject material;
- some evidence that analytical skills have been developed;
- some understanding of relevant issues;
- some familiarity with the relevant literature and techniques;
- attempts to solve moderately difficult problems related to the subject material and to examine the material in a critical and analytical manner which are only partially successful.

**Failure <50** An unacceptable performance