

PLSC 470 & 501: Professional Practices in the Green Industry
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

COURSE INFORMATION

Meeting Time: Monday from 4:45 pm to 6:40 pm

Location: Online on Zoom

Course Credit: 1.0 Hours PLSC 470, 2.0 hrs PLSC 501

Faculty Contact Information

- Amanda Spangler
- aplante@utk.edu
- 112 Plant Biotechnology Building
- 865-974-7182
- Office Hours: On Zoom by Appointment



Welcome Statement

My name is Amanda Spangler, and I will be your instructor for the course. I am looking forward to getting to know you this semester! This class will have scheduled weekly assignments (including writing assignments), quizzes, and group projects.

This is not a self-paced course. It's important that you manage your own time each week to know when assignments, and any other weekly course obligations, are due. This will involve regularly logging into Canvas to check communications, monitoring your campus email address, and virtually interacting with your classmates, myself, and course materials.

I look forward to working with you this semester and getting off to a strong start!

Instructor Availability

Please feel welcome to email me with updates, questions, or concerns. I will typically respond within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on the weekend. I will notify you if I will be out of town and if connection issues may delay a response.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An overview of professional skills needed for success in the green industry. Professionalism, sales, sales proposals, budgeting, managerial skills, estimating, specifications, and contract management in the turf, public horticulture, and landscaping professions.

Course Objectives

Professionalism is a key to success in any industry, including the field of plant sciences. The course is designed give an overview of important professional skills that are vital to career success in the industry. The main course objectives are as follows:

1. To promote and highlight the importance of the use of professional skills directly applicable to the green industry.
2. To provide a high-level overview of the necessary business components to run and manage a green industry company.
3. To provide exposure to various green industry personnel via guest speakers representing variously sized companies, for comparison.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This is a fully online course, which means that you are not required to travel to campus to complete this course. You will participate in this course using Canvas, the University of Tennessee's Learning Management System. Synchronous sessions will be conducted using Zoom. Additional [Canvas](#) and [Zoom](#) resources are available for students unfamiliar with these online environments. **If you need any equipment to complete this course online, you can submit a technology request online at forms.utk.edu/tech-request.**

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS COURSE

Students are expected to attend each virtual class, and they are encouraged to prepare for class by completing the independent research assignments as outlined in the semester calendar. Follow along with the semester calendar to be aware of upcoming assignments and assessments. Reach out to the instructor as soon as possible with any questions, ideas, or concerns about the class. Students are encouraged to review UT's Online Programs information for [How to be Successful in an Online Course](#).

Learner Expectations

- Be prepared for all classes
- Be respectful of others
- Actively contribute to the class and learning activities
- Commit to setting and meeting high expectations for yourself

- Stay up-to-date on materials posted to the course Canvas site
- Read and (if necessary) respond to communications from the instructor
- Completely read and follow all instructions given for assignments and assessments
- Ask the instructor for clarification when needed
- Abide by the [UT Student Code of Conduct](#).

Instructor Expectations

- Be prepared for all classes
- Evaluate all fairly and equitably
- Be respectful of all students
- Create and facilitate meaningful learning activities
- Clearly and effectively communicate course expectations and content
- Abide by the University codes of conduct

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Textbook

None required.

Required Equipment

Students must have a working computer that meets the [system requirements for using Zoom](#), a microphone, and a webcam in order to participate in online classes and to complete assignments. **If you need any equipment to complete this course online, you can submit a technology request online at forms.utk.edu/tech-request.** Students may be able to participate in class by using resources available in an [on-campus computer lab](#).

Course Resources

Zoom

We will be utilizing [LiveOnline@UT \(Zoom\)](#) *to meet in live, online sessions using webcams and audio*. Be sure to use the meeting link as provided to join the class meeting sessions. Please use your UTK Zoom account rather than a personal account for this class to ensure that you are accounted for when attendance is taken and during in-class assignments.

Canvas

This course will use Canvas via [Online@UT](#). As a student registered for this course you are automatically loaded into the course Canvas site, and it should appear on your homepage. I will post course announcements and materials on the Canvas site. Unless otherwise specified, all exams, discussion groups, and quizzes must be completed online through Canvas, and reports must be submitted online through Canvas.

Technical Support

For technical issues, contact the OIT HelpDesk by phone at (865) 974-9900 or at the [Walk-in HelpDesk](#). For IT and Computing issues, use the online [Contact Form](#). **Again, if you need**

any equipment to complete this course online, you can submit a technology request online at forms.utk.edu/tech-request.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Online “Classroom” Etiquette (Netiquette)

All online and offline communication should adhere to [UT’s Principles of Civility and Community](#).

Announcements

Announcements will be used to communicate with you about course logistics. All students are responsible for logging into Canvas on a daily basis to check for course updates. The three most recent announcements are posted at the top of the course home page. Students should check their [Canvas notification settings](#) to ensure they receive instructor announcements.

Discussions

We may use Discussion Boards or other group communication applications in this online. When using the discussion space, remember to: respect each other's ideas, feelings and experience; be courteous and considerate; and explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.

Email

All students are provided with a working university email address. The instructor will use university email to communicate course information. Students are responsible for staying up-to-date on email communications. For assistance with email, please visit help.utk.edu. Thank you for your attention to detail and professional courtesy in all communications regarding the class, including email.

COURSE ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Participation in each class is crucial to fulfilling class purposes. **Students are expected to attend online classes synchronously.** Students may not be distracted or distracting during class. Cell phones, tablets, and laptops should be used for online attendance, participation, and note taking purposes only.

Campus Closures

Online, distance, and hybrid courses follow the same academic calendar and semester schedule as on-campus courses. If the university closes campus for any reason, including [inclement weather](#), students who are unable to attend, submit assignments, or otherwise participate in an online class session will not be penalized.

ASSIGNMENTS, ASSESSMENTS, AND EVALUATIONS

Assignments

Concepts will be reinforced through weekly individual and group assignments. **Each assignment is worth 25 points.** Assignments are designed to reinforce class content, demonstrate comprehension, and improve communication skills. Student work is expected to meet the content and formatting requirements outlined in the assignment sheets and rubrics. Assignment sheets and rubrics will be posted on Canvas. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Quizzes

You will be quizzed each week over material that was covered in the previous class. **Each quiz is worth 10 points.** No make-up quizzes will be given.

Group Presentation

All students will work in groups to deliver an oral presentation to the class about an important business concept. Topics will be assigned by the instructor. **The group presentation is worth 60 points.**

Guest Speakers

We are extremely fortunate to host guest speakers for virtually every class period. These are professionals in their field, and their input replaces a textbook. You are expected to be respectful, take notes, and ask speakers thoughtful questions. The instructor may from time-to-time assign a written report on a particular guest speaker's presentation. **Each report will be worth 25 points.**

Additional Projects

Students who are enrolled PLSC 501 are required to complete four independent projects over the course of the semester. Term projects include an interview of a business in the student's field of study, preparing a sales proposal, preparing a project estimate, and educating the public about careers in the green industry. **Each additional project is worth 50 points toward your PLSC 501 grade.**

Academic Honesty and Student Conduct

For this course, academic integrity includes, but is not limited to, not receiving unauthorized assistance to complete an assignment and selling or purchasing course assignments or assessments. Academic honesty will apply in accordance with policies found in [Hilltopics](#), the official student handbook of the University of Tennessee. Students must adhere to the principles and rules of the University and pursue academic work in a straightforward and truthful manner, free from deception or fraud.

GRADING CRITERIA

Points possible

Assignment	Points Possible
Weekly Assignments	225 pts (25 pts ea.)
Group Presentation	60 pts
Weekly Quizzes	70 pts (10 pts ea.)
<i>Guest Speaker Reports</i>	<i>Up to 150 pts (25 pts ea.)</i>
Total Points Available	355 - 505 pts

Grading Scale

Final grades will be assigned in accordance with the UT grading scale. For further explanation about student [UT Grades and GPA](#) or other policies related to academic standing, please reach out to [OneStop](#).

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	More than 93 %
A-	90 to less than 93 %
B+	87 to less than 90 %
B	83 to less than 87 %
B-	80 to less than 83 %
C+	77 to less than 80 %
C	73 to less than 77 %
C-	70 to less than 73 %
D	60 to less than 70 %
F	Less than 60 %

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Each student is responsible for their personal integrity in academic life and for adhering to UT's Honor Statement. The Honor Statement reads: "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.*"

University Civility Statement

"Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. 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." See the [UT Principles of Civility and Community](#).

Disability Services

Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the [Student Disability Services](#) (SDS) at 865-974-6087 [or by video relay at 865-622-6566] in 100 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. Student Disability Services will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Emergency Alert System

The University of Tennessee is committed to providing a safe environment to learn and work. When you are alerted to an emergency, please take appropriate action. Learn more about what to do in an emergency and sign up for [UT Alerts](#). Check the emergency posters near exits and elevators for building specific information. In the event of an emergency, the course schedule and assignments may be subject to change. If changes to graded activities are required, reasonable adjustments will be made, and you will be responsible for meeting revised deadlines.

Your Role in Improving Teaching and Learning Through Course Assessment

At UT, it is our collective responsibility to improve the state of teaching and learning. During the semester you may be requested to assess aspects of this course either during class or at the completion of the class. You are encouraged to respond to these various forms of assessment as a means of continuing to improve the quality of the UT learning experience.

Wellness

The [Student Counseling Center](#) is the university's primary facility for personal counseling, psychotherapy, and psychological outreach and consultation services. The [Center for Health Education and Wellness](#) manages 974-HELP, the distressed student protocol, case management, the Sexual Assault Response Team, and the Threat Assessment Task Force.

Social Distancing and [COVID-19 Procedures](#)

The Volunteer Creed reminds us that we bear the torch in order to give light to others. As Volunteers, we commit to caring for one another and for the members of the communities in which we live, work, and learn. This semester, the University asks that we all demonstrate the Volunteer spirit by following these and other health guidelines and requirements.

University Policies and Support for Students Needing to Self-Isolate

Getting Tested for COVID-19

If you need to be tested for COVID-19 because you are feeling sick or have been in close contact with someone who has been exposed, the Student Health Center provides diagnostic testing for students. If you get tested for COVID-19, you should begin self-isolating and follow university policies explained below.

Self-Isolation Policy

If you begin to feel sick or you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, the first step is to begin self-isolating immediately and fill out the university's self-isolation form. The contact tracing team will follow up with you—generally within 24 hours, but the response time can vary depending on caseloads. You can read more about the university's self-isolation policy and procedures here.

Contact Information for Questions or Health Concerns

If you have a health concern, you can call the Student Health Center nurse triage line at 865-974-5080. The university has a nurse available to speak to students by phone 24 hours a day. After-hours care has been arranged for eligible students through the UT Medical Center emergency room at 865-305-9000.

If you are having an emergency, you should call 911.

If you have any questions about the university's COVID-19 policies and procedures, you can call 865-656-SAFE (7233), Monday–Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Classroom Policies for Students Who Are Ill or Self-Isolating

Classroom Attendance Policy as Pertaining to COVID-19

If you are feeling well enough, you should continue to attend class. If you are too ill to attend class, **your absences will be excused and accommodated only if you have followed the university's policy on self-isolation.** To verify that you are following university policy, you will need to email me a copy of the confirmation email you receive after submitting your self-isolation form. You do not need to provide any personal medical information. You should begin attending class again as soon as you are feeling well enough to do so.

Make Up/ Late Work as Pertaining to COVID-19

If you are feeling well enough, you should continue to attend class.

If you are too ill to complete daily tasks, we will discuss accommodations individually. You should begin attending class again as soon as you are feeling well enough to do so. **It is your responsibility to reach out to me once you return to class to set up a time to discuss any needed accommodations.**

KEY CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- [974-HELP](#) (developed to help distressed or distressing students reach their academic goals and to help maintain a safe community and learning environment for all students)
- [Center for Career Development](#) (Career counseling and resources, HIRE-A-VOL job search system)
- [Computer Labs](#) (Note, OIT run computer labs may be closed due to the pandemic. However, the computer labs in Pendergrass Library, Biosystems Engineering & Soil Science, and Brehm Animal Sciences on the Agriculture Campus should remain open to students with limited seating.)
- [Course Catalogs](#) (Listing of academic programs, courses, and policies)
- [COVID-19 Information and Support](#) (Visit the site for a list of resources)
- [Herbert Virtual Learning Commons](#) (Academic support, tools for individual study, wellness resources, and study groups)
- [Hilltopics](#) (Campus and academic policies, procedures and standards of conduct)
- [Judith Anderson Writing Help Center](#) (Writing support, navigating the writing process, and writing guides)
- [OIT HelpDesk](#) (865) 974-9900
- [Schedule of Classes/Timetable](#)
- [Student Counseling Center](#) (Visit the site for a list of services)
- [Student Health Center](#) (Visit the site for a list of services)
- [Student Success Center](#) (Academic support resources)
- Study Spaces (Check out this [Map of Quiet Indoor and Outdoor Study Spaces on Campus](#) to learn where you can find a distraction-free spot to attend online classes.)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising](#) (Advising resources, course requirements, and major guides)
- [University Libraries](#) (Access to library resources, databases, course reserves, and services)

This document is subject to change at any time at the discretion of the instructor.

SEMESTER CALENDAR

Month	Week	Date	Topics to be covered	Assignments Due	
January	1	M	1/25	First day of class: Introductions, Syllabus, Professionalism, and Business Ethics	A1: Email Activity
February	2	M	2/1	Career Search, Applications, and Interviews <i>Guest Speaker: Alexis Andershock, UT Center for Career Development</i>	A2: Career Search Assignment
	3	M	2/8	Project Estimates <i>Guest Panel: My Personal Gardener, Riverdale Nursery, Sevier Blumen</i>	A3: WSNH Discussion A4: Expense Activity
	4	M	2/15	Sales Appointments and Public Relations <i>Guest Speaker: Amy Barnett, Ambius</i> <i>Guest Speaker: Katie Dubow, Garden Media Group</i>	A5: Sales Article Summary
	5	M	2/22	Benchmarking, Profitability, and Key Financial Statements <i>Guest Speaker: Richard J. Ott, Natl. Interiorscape Network</i> <i>Guest Speaker: Margarita Velandia, UT Agriculture Economics</i>	A6: Benchmarking Article Summary A7: Financial Statement Activity
	6	M	3/1	Strategic Planning and Personnel Mgmt. <i>Guest Speaker: Richard J. Ott, Natl. Interiorscape Network</i> <i>Guest Speaker: John Watson, Common Grounds</i>	A8: Personnel Mgmt. Article Summary
March	7	M	3/8	Graduate School <i>Guest Speaker or a panel of Graduate Students</i> Last Day for PLSC 470	Group Presentations A9: Graduate School Assignment
	8	M	3/15	No class	
	9	M	3/22	PLSC 501 Assignment Meeting	
April	10	M	3/29	<i>Extra Credit: Submit concepts for proposal assignment, estimate assignment, interview assignment, and public presentation</i>	
	11	M	4/5	<i>No assignments due</i>	
	12	M	4/12	<i>Extra Credit: Submit proposal draft, estimate and accompanying report drafts, and public presentation report draft</i>	
	13	M	4/19	<i>Last day to conduct interview</i> <i>Extra Credit: Submit interview draft</i>	
	14	M	4/26	<i>B1: Submit proposal assignment</i> <i>B2: Submit estimate assignment</i> <i>B3: Submit interview report</i> <i>B4: Submit public presentation report</i> Last Day for PLSC 501	

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