

AGRON 810A Agronomy Seminar

Fall 2025

Summary

Location: Throckmorton 1014

Meeting Times: Wednesdays and Fridays*, 3:30-5:00pm

Credits: 1

Instructor: Eduardo Santos (email: esantos@ksu.edu) and Sophie Westbrook (sophiewestbrook@ksu.edu)

** Fridays will be scheduled as needed - see course schedule for details*

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete Agronomy Seminar will be able to:

- Effectively communicate research findings to a general audience, and
- Identify and locate resources for preparing oral and poster presentations.

Degree Requirements

M.S. students need a total of 2 seminar credits.

- One credit must be obtained for a 15-minute oral presentation (AGRON 810A).
- One credit must be obtained by one of the following:
 - poster presentation (AGRON 810A)
 - 15-minute oral presentation (AGRON 810A)
 - AGRON 810B Teaching Experience in Agronomy
 - AGRON 810C Extension Experience in Agronomy

Ph.D. students need a total of 3 seminar credits.

- One credit must be obtained for a 40-minute oral presentation.
- Two credits must be obtained by the following:
 - poster presentation (one credit max; AGRON 810A)
 - 15-minute oral presentation (up-to two credits, AGRON 810A)
 - AGRON 810B Teaching Experience in Agronomy (one credit max.)
 - AGRON 810C Extension Experience in Agronomy (one credit max.)

Note: The 3 credit hours of seminar required for the Ph.D. degree are in addition to credit hours earned in completing seminar requirements for the M.S. degree.

The general syllabi for sections B and C are posted on Canvas and with the [M.S. degree requirements](#) and [Ph.D. degree requirements](#) in the current graduate students section of the Agronomy Department website. If you are interested in these options, please work directly with a faculty mentor to outline either a Teaching or Extension Experience, and confirm your plan with the listed seminar section instructor(s) to meet one credit of the seminar requirement.

Poster Presentations

Students will need to prepare and present a research poster to the entire Department of Agronomy on the specified date from 3:00 to 4:30 PM in room TH 2002. The date will be announced in class and posted on Canvas. The poster needs to be prepared following the guidelines given in class. Points to remember include:

- Posters must not exceed four feet in width and must not exceed four feet in height.
- Poster printing (arrangements and payment) will be coordinated between the student and their major professor. No course funds are available for this.
- All materials for poster display (e.g., push pins, display boards/walls) will be provided.
- Posters need to be mounted no later than 2:30 PM the same day of the presentation.
- Poster presentations will be evaluated by the instructor(s) of Agronomy Seminar and assigned student evaluators. Evaluation will be based on the ability of students to effectively communicate the rationale, methods, results, and discussion of the research study to a general scientific audience.

Oral Presentations

General Responsibilities and Expectations

- Presenters must send/give Robert Berry (TH3009, email: rwb7@ksu.edu) the abstract of their seminar or poster **no later than 12:00pm Thursday** before their scheduled presentation. Submit the abstract in **.pdf format**. The abstract must contain title, authors' names, e-mail of the lead author, and abstract body (**250 words maximum**). Timely submission of the abstract is the responsibility of the student. Failure to submit the abstract in time for publication of the weekly seminar announcement is an **automatic deduction of 10 points in the grade**.
- Presenters are responsible for uploading their presentations onto the seminar room computer before the seminar starts, ensuring that the presentation file loads and displays properly, and testing that the microphone is working. You can borrow a laser pointer from the Agronomy Computer Office (TH 1302 B), but it must be returned by 9:00 a.m. on the day following your seminar.

Fifteen-minute Presentation

A presenter has a total of 15 minutes to give their presentation. At the end of the presentation, there will be a period of approximately 5 minutes to answer questions from the audience. This time will be moderated by the seminar instructor(s).

Forty-minute Presentation

A presenter has a total of 40 minutes to give their presentation. At the end of the presentation, there will be a period of approximately 10 minutes to answer questions from the audience. This time will be moderated by the seminar instructor(s).

Evaluation

Each oral presentation will be evaluated by the seminar instructors and two designated student evaluators. Private feedback from the instructors and student evaluators will be provided at the end of the seminar class after the audience has left the room. Feedback will be limited to no more than 10 minutes. Evaluation will be based on the rubrics posted here: [Evaluation Rubrics](#)

All students will provide short feedback on Canvas for each oral presentation (exception: if you are a student evaluator, you do not also have to provide Canvas feedback for that day). The Canvas feedback will be limited to two simple questions about the presentations.

- **What is one thing you really enjoyed about the presentation?**
- **What is one thing you would change about the presentation?**

The short peer-reviews must be submitted through Canvas **by noon on the day after the presentation**. The peer-reviews will comprise part of the course grade. The quality of the feedback will be considered in the final student evaluation. This feedback will be made available to individual presenters. Examples of good and bad feedback can be found here: [Feedback Examples](#).

Each poster presenter must prepare a ~3-min oral presentation of their poster that can be understood by a general scientific audience. The seminar instructor(s) and student evaluators will visit each presenter and will evaluate the poster presentation based on the rubric posted on Canvas. No class-wide feedback will be assigned for attendance points related to the poster session.

Attendance Policy

- The first day of class is mandatory for all enrolled students, even if you have previously been enrolled in the course.
- Students who are taking AGRON 810A **for the first time** are required to attend the two training sessions on best practices for oral and poster presentations (September 3 and 10). Students who have attended the classes about best practices for oral and poster presentations in a previously enrolled semester can opt to skip these classes. All students are still encouraged to attend.

- Students are expected to attend all seminar presentations and the poster session. AGRON 810A is an excellent opportunity to support each other and learn about the interesting work your peers are engaged in!
- Except for the orientation sessions (where students must sign in to record their attendance), the attendance will be recorded by the Canvas surveys or filling out the student-evaluator sheet if you are an evaluator for that week. You must complete these tasks to be recorded as present. Note that the Canvas deadline is noon the next day.
- **Attendance is graded.** There are 5 points for participation each week times 13 weeks' participation (11 weeks for returning students who do not attend the trainings) = 65 participation points plus 100 points for your oral presentation or poster = 165 points in the course. Even if you get a 100% on your oral presentation or poster, missing more than 3 class periods will drop your score a letter grade, e.g., 165 minus 20 (four absences) = 145/165= 88% (B)

Excused Absence Policy

Per the University Handbook, Section F62, (<https://www.k-state.edu/provost/policies-resources/university-handbook/fhsecf.html>) university-wide excused absences would be the following: University representation events (i.e., judging teams and academic conferences), military service, court appearances, disability accommodations, pregnancy, childbirth, child adoption, religious observances, complex/non-routine medical appointments, hospitalization, severe health concerns, and inclement weather. All other excused absence policies beyond these events are at the discretion of individual course instructors.

For the sake of this course, excused absences are limited to extreme, extenuating circumstances with appropriate documentation. **Routine fieldwork is NOT considered an excused absence, and class missed for this reason will be considered an absence.** It is understandable that fieldwork must be timely but learning how to schedule activities around other commitments is a crucial skill.

If fieldwork must be completed on a strict timeline and missing class is unavoidable, documentation must be provided to show 1) the research protocol or other proof that the work **MUST** be done during the scheduled class time and 2) the student has attempted to reschedule such research activities, but is unable to do so. The decision of the seminar instructor(s) is final on the matter of excused absences.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I give more than one presentation in one semester?

- No. See instructors if you think you need an exception.

Does my thesis/dissertation presentation count as a seminar presentation?

- The seminars presented during the defense of a thesis or dissertation do not count towards fulfilling the departmental seminar requirements for graduate degrees.

Do my oral and poster presentations at professional meetings count as a seminar presentation?

- Oral and poster presentations at professional meetings do not count towards fulfilling the departmental seminar requirements for graduate degrees.