



TEXAS TECH
UNIVERSITY

Department of Computer Science

Course Syllabus

Course Name: Intro to AI & Agents	Number: CS4331-102	Semester: Summer I 2025
Instructor: Dr. Maaz Amjad	Office: EC 211B	Email: maaz.amjad@ttu.edu
Office Hours: MON 3:30–5:30pm, WED 3:30–4:30pm, or by appointment (M-F)	Location: EC 211B	Link: See Canvas
TA/Grader: Seyed Soroush Tabadkani Avval		Credit: 3 Credits
TA Office Hours: MON, WED: 2 – 4pm, THU: 3 – 4pm		Email: stabadka@ttu.edu
		TA/Grader Office: EC 204A

If you write me an email for this class, please start the email subject with [CS4331-AI Agents].

Catalogue Listing: Foundations of Large Language Models (LLMs), as well as the principles for understanding, designing, and building AI agents.

Recommended Textbook: PDF will be provided on Canvas.

1. Micheal Lanham, *AI Agents in Action*, Manning, 2025
2. Paul Iusztin, Maxime Labonne, *LLM Engineer's Handbook: Master the art of engineering large language models from concept to production*, Packt Publishing, 2024

Course Description: This course introduces students to the fundamentals of AI Agents and teaches the building blocks to design and develop AI Agents.

Course Objectives:

This course covers the fundamental concepts of AI Agents in theory, design, and practice. It provides essential tools and libraries required to understand, design, and build AI agents and introduces various types of AI agents, such as simple reflex agents, model-based agents, goal-based agents, utility-based agents, and learning agents, highlight their differences, functions, and appropriate use cases. It discusses how to develop complex agentic workflows using Python frameworks, and provide best practices for creating advanced agents that leverage Large Language Models (LLMs) to reason, interact with environments, and achieve specific goals. This course prepares students to grasp more advanced topics, such as multi-agent and hierarchical multi-agent systems, build practical agentic AI applications, and thoughtfully consider the ethical implications of AI agents.

Key Topics:

1. Basic concepts and terminology of AI and intelligent agents
2. Foundation of AI and intelligent agents
3. Fundamental building blocks for creating AI agents
4. Build multi-agent and hierarchical multi-agent systems
5. Different types of AI agents
6. Apply AI agents to solve real-world problems
7. Evaluate the performance and limitations of AI agents
8. Ethical and social implications of AI

Expected Prior Knowledge and Skills: The ability to read and write in Python programming, knowledge of data structures and algorithm analysis, and knowledge of statistical and probabilistic mathematics.

Learning Outcomes & Assessment Methods: Students who have completed this course should have the ability to:

Objective	Assessment Methods
Be capable of implementing AI agents using Python	Quizzes/Assignments/Projects
Apply AI agents to solve real-world problems	Quizzes/Assignments/Projects
Know how to apply various tools and frameworks to build AI Agents	Quizzes/Assignments/Projects
Be capable of understanding and code read and code Large Language Models such as ChatGPT	Quizzes/Assignments/Projects

Methods of

Assessment of Learning Outcomes: The expected learning outcomes for the course will be assessed through assignments (including surprise assignments) and projects.

Assignment Submission: All assignments must be submitted via TTU Canvas. No assignments should be submitted via email. Any assignment submitted via email will not be graded and will receive zero grade. In case you have any issues submitting assignments via TTU Canvas, please [contact](#) tech support and resolve the problem.

Grading Policy: The final grade for this course will be based on the items described below:

- Quizzes 10%
 - Quizzes are short tests given through Canvas or during class lecture (in-class) over the subject matter covered in the course.
 - For these quizzes, you may use a calculator and your notes, book, or other lecture materials.
- Assignments: 30%
 - Assignments will be programming or written assignments to be done outside of class.
 - Occasionally, in-class assignments will be assigned with minimal or no warning (surprise assignments) which is due before the end of the class it was assigned.
- Projects 60%
 - Projects will be long programming or written assignments to be done outside of class. They may also consist of giving presentations to the instructor or the class.

Criteria for Grading: All assignments will be graded within two weeks of the due date unless unforeseen circumstances prevent timely grading. Table 1 shows the grading scale and breakdown of grade components.

Table 1: Scores are not rounded

letter grade	lower bound	upper bound
A	90%	100%
B	80%	89%
C	70%	79%
D	60%	69%
F	0%	59%

For example, if you receive an 89.9 score, it will be considered 89%, and you will still receive a B grade.

Additional Information

- The final exam will replace your lowest exam grade if the final exam score is higher than your lowest exam score. However, the final exam will not replace the grade on an exam you did not take.
- Deadlines will not be extended due to system failures or disk crashes. Please backup your files securely in the cloud (OneDrive is free for TTU students) to prevent the loss of work.
- Do not save your work to publicly available GIT repos – this increases your risk of being plagiarized.
 - This includes REPL.it or other online compilers that, by default, make your code publicly available.
 - Failure to abide by this rule will subject you to academic penalties even if your online code is used without your knowledge or permission.
- Late work will only be accepted within 72 hours of the due date/time with the following deductions unless prior arrangements have been made with the professor or otherwise stated in class:
 - 10% deduction for the first 24 hours
 - 25% deduction for the second 24 hours
 - 40% deduction for the third 24 hours
- Some assignments will not be accepted late and will be marked as such on Canvas.
- Quizzes will never be accepted late, regardless of reason.
- Students may not make up or submit any item once it has been graded and returned to any student.
- All questions concerning graded material must be submitted **in writing** along with the graded material by the last day of classes as marked in the [Academic Calendar](#).

COURSE SPECIFIC POLICIES

Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual **attendance is not mandatory** for this course. However, as a student, you are required to attend all scheduled lecture sessions. These sessions are pivotal to your learning and provide crucial instruction on the course material. Furthermore, all announcements, assignments, and lecture materials covered in each session will be your responsibility, regardless of whether or not you were present in the lecture sessions.

1. **Responsibility for Class Material:** If you miss a lecture, you are still responsible for all course content covered, including any announcements made, assignments given, and material discussed during the lecture. It is recommended that you collaborate with fellow students to receive any missing lecture materials or learn of any announcements covered during the lecture. Contact the instructor by email or approach the instructor during office hours to discuss any possible make-up opportunities assuming you are in accordance with the rest of this policy.
2. **Notification of Absence:** If you must be absent from class for any reason, you are required to notify the instructor in writing either prior to the absence or within a 48-hour window following the missed lecture. This notification should include the reason for your absence and a plan for making up any missed coursework. If you need to be absent for more than one week, please check [these guidelines](#).
3. **Make-Up Work:** In cases of notified absences, arrangements for make-up work will be made on a case-by-case basis. This may include, but is not limited to, make-up assignments or an alternative exam schedule. Please note that it is at the discretion of the instructor to provide make-up work opportunities.

Extra Credit and Grading Curves

This policy outlines the guidelines for the allocation of extra credit opportunities and the application of grading curves in this course. It is designed to foster consistent attendance active class participation and preserve the standards of our academic community as described in the Attendance and Expanded Academic Integrity policies.

1. Eligibility for Extra Credit and Grading Curves

a. Course Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for academic success. Students must attend at least 70% of the course lectures to qualify for extra credit assignments and to benefit from any grading curves

implemented in this course. Attendance will be strictly monitored for each class session using in-class attendance sheet or/and using other platforms (e.g., TopHat). This requirement is waived for Distance Learning students taking courses specifically marked as for Distance Learning.

b. Academic Integrity

Students who are involved in an academic integrity investigation may not be eligible for extra credit or grading curves. If a student is found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy, their eligibility for extra credit or grading curve advantages will be revoked for the duration of the academic term.

c. Class Participation

Students who are actively involved in class discussions and actively participate in discussing the assigned reading materials and take part in class questions answer sessions may be eligible for extra credit or grading curves.

2. Extra Credit

- d. Extra credit assignments are intended to provide students with an opportunity to improve their grades by demonstrating a deeper understanding of the course material. However, these opportunities are contingent upon meeting the attendance and academic integrity requirements stated above.

3. Grading Curves

- e. When deemed appropriate, grading curves will be employed to more accurately reflect the student's comprehension of the course material. However, the advantage of grading curves will only be accessible to those students who meet the previously mentioned attendance and academic integrity requirements.

Expanded Academic Integrity Policy

This course strongly advocates for an atmosphere of academic integrity and intellectual honesty. All students are encouraged to discuss ideas and problem-solving strategies with the Teaching Assistant, Instructor, and other students, but any form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All submitted codes and assignments are subject to random checks for plagiarism.

1. Code and Answers Sharing

Unless explicitly stated otherwise by the instructor, you are strictly prohibited from sharing, using, or looking at code or answers obtained from online sources, classmates, or friends. This also includes sharing, using, or viewing unauthorized solutions from previous iterations of the course or utilizing ChatGPT or other AI software to write code or devise pseudocode for you.

2. Understanding Academic Dishonesty

It is your responsibility to educate yourself about what constitutes academic dishonesty. This extends beyond plagiarism and may include unauthorized collaboration, falsification, multiple submissions, and facilitating academic dishonesty.

3. Clarifying Doubts

If you are unsure about the legitimacy of a specific action or behavior, it is essential to discuss it with the instructor before proceeding. This proactive approach can help avoid any unintentional violations of this policy.

4. Penalties for Violation

a. Graduate Students:

This course has a zero-tolerance policy towards academic dishonesty for Graduate Students. Any Graduate Student found guilty of academic dishonesty will receive an 'F' for the course, and their actions will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

b. Undergraduate Students

Penalties for academic dishonesty will depend on the severity and frequency of the violations.

- For a first-time violation on an assignment, the student will receive a score of '0' on the assignment in question.

- Any student caught (1) violating this rule on an exam or project, (2) committing multiple violations, or (3) committing a severe enough violation as deemed by the professor will receive a grade of 'F' for the course and their actions will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY POLICIES / STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Statements:

Academic integrity is taking responsibility for one's own class and/or course work, being individually accountable, and demonstrating intellectual honesty and ethical behavior. Academic integrity is a personal choice to abide by the standards of intellectual honesty and responsibility. Because education is a shared effort to achieve learning through the exchange of ideas, students, faculty, and staff have the collective responsibility to build mutual trust and respect. Ethical behavior and independent thought are essential for the highest level of academic achievement, which then must be measured. Academic achievement includes scholarship, teaching, and learning, all of which are shared endeavors. Grades are a device used to quantify the successful accumulation of knowledge through learning. Adhering to the standards of academic integrity ensures grades are earned honestly. Academic integrity is the foundation upon which students, faculty, and staff build their educational and professional careers. [Texas Tech University ("University") Quality Enhancement Plan, Academic Integrity Task Force, 2010].

Texas Tech University expects students to "understand the principles of academic integrity and abide by them in all class and/or course work at the University" (OP 34.12.5). Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that involves (1) the representation of words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, other expression, or media of another as one's own and/or failing to properly cite direct, paraphrased, or summarized materials; or (2) self-plagiarism, which involves the submission of the same academic work more than once without the prior permission of the instructor and/or failure to correctly cite previous work written by the same student. This video, retrieved from the University of Kansas Libraries website, provides an example of a plagiarism definition as well as examples of plagiarism and how to avoid it. Please review Section B of the TTU Student Handbook for more information related to other forms of academic misconduct, and contact your instructor if you have questions about plagiarism or other academic concerns in your courses. To learn more about the importance of academic integrity and practical tips for avoiding plagiarism, explore the resources provided by the TTU Library and the School of Law.

Although students are encouraged to discuss ideas and problems with the instructor, assistant, and other students, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. You are not allowed to share code or answers, use or even look at code or answers obtained from online sources, friends, or classmates. Posting, publishing, or otherwise sharing questions or answers to exams, quizzes, tests, finals, or other assignments without the explicit permission of the instructor is a serious violation of the code of conduct and will result in serious repercussions.

It is your responsibility to educate yourself about actions that constitute academic dishonesty. If you are not sure whether a specific action is allowed, talk to the instructor. All submitted codes and assignments will be checked for plagiarism. Students may be asked to explain the work they have submitted. Academic dishonesty of any kind, if discovered, will result in one or more of the following sanctions: a grade of 0 for the corresponding graded item, a grade of "F" in the course, and further action according to the TTU operating procedures: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/opmanual/OP34.12.pdf>.

AI Use Policy:

You may use generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Grammarly, Copilot, or similar tools) to support your learning and understanding of concepts. However, any code or content in any data type or format that is generated, debugged, or obtained through AI tools cannot be submitted as your own work, even with proper citation. Submitting AI generated content (e.g., code, text, information, or images) as your own work violates academic integrity and may result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to contact me regarding this course policy.

Ethical Conduct

Students are expected to comply with the Texas Tech Code of Student Conduct in all aspects of this class. The Code of Student Conduct may be found in the Student Handbook and/or Office of Student Conduct (<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/Studenthandbook2022forward/Student-Handbook-2023-2024.pdf>).

In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any other form of distraction, such as working on other classes, taking cell phone calls, text messaging, and working on laptop computers. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request to leave class. Violations of conduct, including academic dishonesty, foul language, and classroom citizenship, are eligible to be reported to the Student Conduct Office.

ADA Statement

The University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note: instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information, please contact [Student Disability Services](#) in Weeks Hall or call 806-742-2405.

Religious Holy Days

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Texas Tax Code §11.20. A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily. Please check the university [policy](#) on excused absences for religious holidays.

Absence due to Officially Approved Trips

Students planning an approved absence must notify the instructor of their departure and return dates prior to the trip to obtain advance permission; please check [these guidelines](#).

Accommodation for Pregnant Students

To support the academic success of pregnant and parenting students and students with pregnancy-related conditions, the University offers reasonable modifications based on the student's particular needs. Any student who is pregnant or parenting a child up to age 18 or has conditions related to pregnancy may contact Alex Faris, the Texas Tech University designated Pregnancy and Parenting Liaison, to discuss support available through the University. The Liaison can be reached by emailing alfaris@ttu.edu. Should a student communicate with the instructor that they are pregnant or have a pregnancy-related condition or may need additional resources related to pregnancy or parenting, the instructor will communicate that student's information to the Title IX Coordinator, who will work with the student and others, as needed, to ensure equal access to the University's education program or activity. For more information regarding supportive measures, please contact pregnancy and parenting liaison Alex Faris (alfaris@ttu.edu | 806.834.3420) or visit below website to submit a request to Alex Faris for assistance. <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/titleix/PregnancyandParenting/index.php>

Late Arrival, Late Return, and Early Departure Policy

The Computer Science department strictly follows the official academic calendars and requires students who are enrolled in face-to-face sections to be on campus by the first class day of each semester and leave campus no earlier than the last day with scheduled course activities. The only exception we make is for incoming new

international students who often need more time to obtain the necessary paperwork, including a study visa, and in such cases, we accommodate late arrival for up to the 12th class day of their first semester. No exceptions will be made for late return or early departure requests from current students in general. If it is because of an unforeseen and uncontrollable situation, a student needs early departure or late return; then the student must obtain in-advance approval from the academic advisors and instructors of all enrolled courses for an excused absence of four (4) or fewer weekdays and an additional in-advance approved Extended Absence Verification* from the Office of the Dean of Students for an extended absence of five (5) or more weekdays. If a student has unexcused absences, then the student must take full responsibility for any missed classes, missed academic work, or any financial issues caused.

*Extended Absence Verification Request to be verified by Office of the Dean of Students:
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TexasTechUniv&layout_id=6

FOOD INSECURITY

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. The important thing is that all of the programs are now housed under the umbrella of The Raider Relief – Advocacy and Resource Center. It was developed to support student needs and connect them with essential resources necessary for academic success as a Texas Tech student. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. Raider Red's Food Pantry (located in Doak 117) supplies personal care items and a selection of nonperishable food to students. The Raider Relief Advocacy and Resource Center (RR- ARC) is a centralized hub of resources and support for students facing hardships with their basic needs. Through a comprehensive network of campus and community partnerships, we strive to alleviate the burden of financial, physical, and emotional hardships and promote the well-being and academic success of all students. Please check these outreach initiatives, Raider Relief Fund, Raider Red's Food Pantry, and Red to Black Peer Financial Coaching, and fill out our form to get connected: <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/raiderrelief/>.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Education Code, Section 51.252 (formerly known as Senate Bill 212) requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report to the Title IX Office any information regarding incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive information about incidents of this type (including, but not limited to, written forms, applications, one-on-one conversations, class assignments, class discussions, or third-party reports) must report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, please remember that I will be required to report this information.

Texas Tech University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from gender and/or sex discrimination of any kind. Sexual assault, discrimination, harassment, and other Title IX violations are not tolerated by the University. Report any incidents to the Office for Student Rights & Resolution (806)-742-SAFE (7233) or file a report online at titleix.ttu.edu/students. Faculty and staff members at TTU are committed to connecting you to resources on campus. Some of these available resources are TTU Student Counseling Center, 806- 742-3674, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/scc/> (Provides confidential support on campus.) TTU 24-hour Crisis Helpline, 806-742-5555, (Assists students who are experiencing a mental health or interpersonal violence crisis. If you call the helpline, you will speak with a mental health counselor.) Voice of Hope Lubbock Rape Crisis Center, 806-763-7273, voiceofhopelubbock.org (24-hour hotline that provides support for survivors of sexual violence.) The Risk, Intervention, Safety and Education (RISE) Office, 806-742-2110, <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/rise/> (Provides a range of resources and support options focused on prevention education and student wellness.) Texas Tech Police Department, 806-742- 3931, <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/ttpd/> (To report criminal activity that occurs on or near Texas Tech campus.). If you would like to have more information about reporting options and resources, I

encourage you to visit the TTU website for more information or to contact the professional staff: https://www.depts.ttu.edu/titleix/students/Report_an_Incident.php.

Civility in the Classroom

Texas Tech University is a community of faculty, students, and staff that enjoys an expectation of cooperation, professionalism, and civility during the conduct of all forms of university business, including the conduct of student-student and student-faculty interactions in and out of the classroom. Further, the classroom is a setting in which an exchange of ideas and creative thinking should be encouraged and where intellectual growth and development are fostered. Students who disrupt this classroom mission with rude, sarcastic, threatening, abusive, or obscene language and/or behavior will be subject to appropriate sanctions according to university policy. Likewise, faculty members are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism in all interactions with all constituents of the University (www.depts.ttu.edu/ethics/matadorchallenge/ethicalprinciples.php). If you exhibit distractive or inappropriate behavior (without explicit consent of the instructor), you may be asked to leave the class session and be subject to attendance-related penalties.

COVID-19 Statement

The University will continue to monitor CDC, State, and TTU System guidelines concerning COVID-19. Any changes affecting class policies or temporary changes to delivery modality will be in accordance with those guidelines and announced as soon as possible. Students will not be required to purchase specialized technology to support a temporary course modality change, though students are expected to have access to a computer to access course content and course-specific messaging as needed. If you test positive for COVID-19, report your positive test through TTU's reporting system:

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/communications/emergency/coronavirus/> . Once you report a positive test, the portal will automatically generate a letter that you can distribute to your professors and instructors.

RECOVERY SERVICES

The Center for Students in Addiction Recovery offers students in recovery a nurturing and supportive community. The Center provides students in recovery with an abstinence-based program where students can flourish in recovery as they attain educational goals, including advanced degrees. The services provided through the CSAR increase the continuum of care for students in recovery, enhancing the quality of life for students in recovery at Texas Tech University. The CSAR supports students in recovery from alcohol, drugs, and behavioral addictions. By providing recovery support through relationships with staff, academic advising, scholarships/fellowships, recovery housing, study abroad opportunities, and more, students can flourish in recovery and in life.

Safety and Wellness:

The Texas Tech University (TTU) and Edward E. Whitacre Jr. College of Engineering are committed to the safety and wellness of our students by providing various services and resources.


Make sure you register with [Tech Alert](#) to get emergency notifications by phone call, text, or email. You are encouraged to review the [Emergency Action Plans \(EAPs\)](#) and watch the videos of [Know What To Do In Emergency Events](#) and [Surviving an Active Shooter Event Training](#) to be prepared for those emergency situations. Additionally, due to the nature of laboratory or design courses, it is mandatory for you to follow the [university safety policies](#) and any additional safety protocols required by the course instructor(s).

For your well-being, various services are available at [Student Counseling Center](#) and [Student Health Services](#). The Student Wellness Center provides convenient walk-in services M-F from 8 am to 5 pm. Furthermore, the Texas Tech Crisis HelpLine (806-742-5555) provides 24/7/365 assistance for students experiencing a crisis or distress.


Emergency/Crisis Phone Number

TTU Police (UPD) Emergency	911
TTU Police (UPD) Non-Emergency	806.742.3931
TTU Emergency Maintenance	806.742.4677
TTU EHS (M-F, 8 am – 5 pm)	806.742.3876
SafeRide	806.742.7433
TTU Crisis HelpLine	806.742.5555
Student Wellness Center (From Urgent Care to a Full-Service Pharmacy on site)	806.742.2848
Title IX Reporting	806.742.7233
The Dean of Students	806.742.2984


Course Resources/ Tools



Dr. Maaz Amjad



Learning Management System



Recommended Books

Important Note: The topics (below table), the order in which they are presented, and the information presented in this complete syllabus are subject to change, expansion, and contraction or stasis during the semester at the instructor's discretion because of scheduling issues, developments in the discipline, or other contingencies. The copy of syllabus on Canvas takes precedence in case of conflict between different versions of syllabus. This schedule is also tentative and subject to change.

Week of...	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
05/26/2025	X	X	X	X	Course Introduction
06/02/2025	Course Introduction /Foundations	Foundations	Foundations	Generative AI	Fine-tuning
06/09/2025	Prompting Techniques	Prompting Techniques	Prompting Techniques	Retrieval Augmentation Generation	Retrieval Augmentation Generation
06/16/2025	Generative AI	Representation Learning & Gen.AI	Representation Learning & Gen.AI	School Holiday	Vector Databases
06/23/2025	Vector databases	Frameworks to Build AI Agents	Frameworks to Build AI Agents	Advanced AI Agents	Advanced AI Agents
06/30/2025	Advanced AI Agents	Review for Final Project/Exam	X	X	X
	Final Exam: July 2-3, 2025				