

AREC 478: AGRICULTURAL POLICY COURSE SYLLABUS

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Course Objectives:

1. Policy Analysis - To understand how and why policies are made: why policies are needed, who the policy participants are, how policy is implemented, and how they impact society.
2. Agricultural Issues - To study problems in and related to agriculture that merit policy consideration.
3. U.S. Policies - To familiarize you with domestic agricultural and resource policy.
4. Policy Applications- To apply your newfound analysis skills to address policy issues.

Grading:

Your grade will be based on two mid-term exams, participation, a "policy proposal," and homework as follows:

Mid-term exams (2),	60	percent (30 each)
Homework	5	percent
Participation	5	Percent
Policy Presentation	10	percent (group grade)
Policy Proposal		<u>20</u> percent
Total	100	percent

Late assignments carry a late penalty of 10 percent per day.

What I expect from <u>YOU</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• attend class regularly and participate in discussions• complete all reading assignments before class• treat your classmates with respect• type all assignments, and FOLLOW directions• honor deadlines	What you should expect from <u>ME</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• come to class prepared• make the class interesting and fun• treat you with fairness and respect• be clear about assignments and grading
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Midterm Exams:

Midterms I and II will draw primarily on class lectures, required readings, and homework assignments. They consist of three parts: (1) fill in the blank definitions, (2) short answer, and (3) problem solving (e.g. graphs). The midterms tend to follow closely from the homework assignments. The second midterm is not comprehensive; it focuses on lectures and homework assignments after the first midterm. Midterms may not be made up if missed without my prior approval. You may bring a single (8 ½ x 11) page of handwritten notes (both sides) to any midterm as a "cheat sheet." You may bring back your one-page notes from the first exam to the second exam, plus have your new notes for exam 2. A copy of past exams is available in Canvas for you to study. Tentative dates for the exams will be October 3 and November 10.

Homework:

A series of homeworks will be given out over the semester; all of the homework is on Canvas. You are responsible for downloading the homework and handing it in on time. The purpose of the homework is to improve your understanding of the lectures and prepare you for the midterms. You will do much better in the course if you do them and review them after I provide you with a key. The deadline for all homework is IN CLASS the day that they are due; you may email them or slide them under my door on days you cannot attend class. We will go over the homeworks in class, generally on the day that they are due. Late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor. Your homework will not be returned.

Participation:

Policy is a contact sport. This course lets you choose a participation activity by which to raise your awareness and get engaged. You have two options for participation: 1) discussion boards, or 2) participation in a college club, like the Collegiate Farm Bureau or Farmers Union.

Discussion Boards (OPTION 1): Students choosing this option must participate in discussion boards every other week. That is, log in and participate in week 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. A topic will be provided for each assignment. Your job is to log in with your own comment and to comment on other student's comments. You must make two comments in total (1 of your own plus one on another student)

Involvement in a Policy Relevant Club (OPTION 2): A number of student organizations at CSU provide good exposure to real world policy issues, such as the CSU chapter of Farm Bureau, Farmers Union, Americans for Informed Democracy, College Republicans, Young Democrats, etc.). For your participation activity, you may choose to be actively involved in such a student organization for the semester. The organization must be approved by the instructor at the start of the semester. (Please note: Involvement in fraternities and sororities, social, athletic, or judging activities cannot be used to meet this option.) Your grade will depend on the extent of your involvement. You may have one excused absence from regular meetings/events of the club (include dated letter/e-mail from the advisor excusing you). You will lose 20 percent of your total points for each unexcused absence. You also must participate in at least one committee or special event organized by the club. Turn in a letter to the instructor by the final day of class summarizing your attendance and activities for the semester: 1 page, written by you, and signed by you and by the faculty advisor of the club, along with his/her name, e-mail and phone number.

Policy Proposal Final Projects:

Presentations and Debates: At the end of the semester, we will have a series of six in-class policy presentations, each followed by a short debate. Every student is responsible for signing up to join one of the six teams to do one of these presentations. As a team, you will develop and present a proposal for a new policy or policy reform that will help solve a problem in agriculture or natural resource management (water, fish & game, land use, etc).

Each team is responsible for getting together on your own and determining how you will present your information. I will help by providing a group link in Canvas where you can email each other and exchange information. You must develop a policy **proposal**, as we will have defined it over the course of the semester, regarding the topic for which you signed up. That is, you must offer a policy solution to a current problem. You will have 40 minutes to make your case to the class. Then the instructor will present arguments from an opposing viewpoint for about 10-15 minutes. You will then have some time for rebuttal. All people in the group must speak, but you can use any approach that you want to make your point. See the policy proposal guidelines for more information about requirements (**and deadlines**). The presentation is worth 10% of your final grade. You will be graded both by me and your peers from the rest of the class.

Individual Policy Reports: In addition to your group presentation, each person in the group must individually submit a 5-page typewritten report one week after your group's presentation. You must stick to the same topic of your presentation and support the same side of the issue that your group supported. This report is worth 20% toward your final grade and must be your own work. Again, see the 'policy presentations' page for more information about requirements.

Course Organization

It is worth taking a moment to discuss how this course is organized. Everything you need is organized in Canvas in folders that match the 15 weeks of the semester. The first 12 weeks are lectures. The last three are your presentations. You are responsible for going to the appropriate folder each week. You can work ahead of schedule if you like. In each folder you will find a document (*instructions*) with instructions and reading materials. Often, you will find a homework. You will find instructions about homework and tests in the instructions. I recommend that you print handouts, like the syllabus, where possible. Homework Keys will be passed out in class.

The content is organized around and presented via several items that you will find on the course's Canvas site:

- The *Policy Recipe*, which is one of your first handouts. This is a graphical representation of the course content.
- The *Course Outline*, which has the exact same information as the policy recipe, with more detail.
- The *Course Notes* are a homemade textbook. They provide more filler to the outline and provide the details like those presented in lectures.
- *Various handouts* – You will find extra readings and other handouts in each folder. You are responsible for knowing that material. Some will say recommended or optional. You are not required to read these, but they may strengthen your understanding.
- A set of *Powerpoint Lectures* that represent each lecture will be provided approximately 1 week before each exam.

I will follow this outline explicitly in class and in the powerpoints. Try to focus on the outline and policy recipe as the systematic information you are supposed to learn. This will help you on exams. That is, on exams, use the outline as a template of your answer, filling in details the way I do in course notes and the powerpoints.

Attendance: You are expected in each class. Years of our experience finds that performance on midterms in this class is highly correlated with your presence in class. Repeated absences may result in a reduction of your grade. A half a letter grade will be deducted for any unexcused absence during the policy presentations (the last six classes of the semester).