

AGRICULTURAL POLICY AREC 478 Online 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, a "policy proposal," and homeworks as follows:

Mid-term exams (2),	60 Percent (30 each)
Homeworks	10 Percent
Policy Proposal	<u>30 Percent</u>
Total	100 Percent

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

Midterms:

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, (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, but includes basic material from the first midterm. Midterms may not be made up if missed without my prior approval. They are open book. See the course schedule for timing of midterms.

Homeworks:

A series of homeworks will be given out over the semester. The purpose of the homeworks 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. The deadline for all homeworks is midnight on the day they are due, which is listed in the weekly instructions. Your homeworks will not be returned but I will supply you with a key. So you may want to copy your homework before sending it. I want you to think of homework as practice for the class. I would rather you try and not do so well, than to get help just to get your homework right and not learn from the

experience. So, please put forward your best effort and turn in your work, even if you feel it has errors or is incomplete. Next, wait for me to send you the key. Go over the key and see if you missed anything. You should get a description about how to do anything you missed at that time. If you understand what you missed, you are ready to move on. If not, that is the time to contact me to discuss what you still don't understand. I grade the homeworks very sparingly. Basically, you will receive most of the points if you try. Your grade will not suffer if you make an honest attempt. I know you might get frustrated at times when you have to do your homework, but this system works well. If you are still frustrated, you will get the help you need after you see the key and try to figure it out for yourself.

Policy Proposal Final Projects:

Each of you must submit a powerpoint presentation by Midnight on May 6. That is the last day of class in week 15. There are no lectures in week 13, 14 or 15, which should give you time to complete this assignment. The purpose is to suggest a policy solution to some actual problem in or related to agriculture. Please find full instructions in your handouts, including dates for early versions (drafts). The powerpoint may be up to 40 slides. It must be powerpoint and it must be submitted to me as a powerpoint (not pdf or some other format).

Course Organization

It is worth taking a moment to discuss how this course is organized. Everything you need is organized in Canvas folders that match the 15 weeks of the semester. The first 12 weeks are lectures. The last three are for writing and submitting your presentations. There are 9 lecture folders that cover the first 12 weeks of lectures. The first exam will be sometime over the week of February 29th (week 7); the second will be the week of April 17 (week 13, not counting a week for Spring Break, which is the week of March 14). 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 with instructions and reading materials. Often, you will find a homework. You will find instructions about homework and tests in the ***weekly instructions*** file that you will find on the homepage. I recommend that you print handouts, like the syllabus, where possible. Homework Keys will be posted after they are due.

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.
- A set of ***Powerpoint 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 ***Narrated powerpoint lectures***, which are the same as above but in streaming video with me making comments. If you choose the narrated lectures, you still need to review the powerpoint lectures to see if I have made any updates. The narrated lectures are not updated every semester.

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.