

Course Description: This course examines major, contemporary issues in agriculture and food policy with emphasis on the ethical aspects of each issue. Discussion focuses on assessing the particular economic, cultural, geographic, political, religious, technological and scientific principles with a moral and ethical framework. Course scope is approximately half U.S. domestic issues and half international issues. Prerequisite: Junior standing.

Textbook

There is no specific textbook for this course. Material will come from a variety of sources including scientific and professional journals, publications from governmental agencies, information from agricultural organizations, and guest presenters. Other documents/handouts will be provided through your university D2L account.

A Facebook group page, specifically for this class will also be used to disseminate relevant news and opportunities for extended learning as well as provide opportunities to further develop your skill in the use of social media. Therefore, you will need a Facebook account for this course in order to fully benefit from course content and activities. Students choosing not to submit their assignments through Facebook to allow for peer review and further discussion will not be able to earn full credit for those assignments and must communicate directly with the professor regarding options for submitting those assignments in an alternative format.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course the student will be able to-

- a. **Learning Outcome 1:** Students will be able to demonstrate *knowledge* of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems) in context of food production, processing, distribution, and consumption.
- b. **Learning Outcome 2:** Students will be able to *apply* knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics as evidenced through course related activities and assignments.
- c. **Learning Outcome 3:** Students will be able to view themselves as *engaged* citizens within an interconnected and diverse world as reflected in the final *Issues in Retrospect* essay.

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The following instructional objectives will guide course content to achieve these outcomes.

1. Recognize historical and contemporary issues of ethical concern in agriculture and food systems as well as in renewable resource utilization and conservation.
2. Identify, analyze, and utilize various sources/types of information and:
 - a. Discuss relevance to her/his profession.
 - b. Distinguish between facts, values, and beliefs.
 - c. Determine the credibility of the source.
 - d. Recognize limitations of the information.
3. Evaluate the *pros (advantages)* and *cons (disadvantages)* of contemporary issues in food, agriculture, and renewable natural resources.
4. Present contrasting viewpoints in a civil and effective manner.
5. Compose informative and/or persuasive presentations on controversial topics.
6. Collaborate with team members of varied backgrounds, beliefs, and values.
7. Engage in social media to access and present relevant information.
8. Participate in the *peer review* assessment process.
9. Engage in public debate/discussion in a civil manner.
10. Identify sources of influence in the development of regulations and policies affecting the production, distribution, and management of food, agriculture, and natural resources systems.

Grade Determination:

	<i>Possible Points</i>
Completion of online discussions (12 @ 10 pts each)	120
Introductory video submitted on course Facebook group page	80
Prepared speech (2 minutes) over professor-approved topic	100
Position research brief (pro or con position term paper) on <i>agricultural</i> issue	100
Service-based experiential learning activity and video reflection on Facebook*	100

* Assignment will serve as your *global artifact* for QEP purposes.

$$\text{Your Grade (\%)} = \frac{\text{Points Earned}}{500} \times 100$$

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = below 60%

Class Participation in Discussions

Participation in online discussions for each module serves a formative assessment for learning progress (checking for understanding) and is expected to be done by the due date in order to receive full credit. Additionally, responses must reflect adequate explanation/understanding to indicate a working grasp of the concepts presented. Otherwise, the grade for the discussion response will be less than full credit.

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Prepared Informative or Persuasive Speech

Each student will develop a 2-3 minute speech on an instructor-approved topic. The student may use the rules for *Texas FFA Extemporaneous Public Speaking* or *Texas University Interscholastic League (UIL) Persuasive or Informative Speaking* guidelines as a suggested format. Due date for topic approval and presentation will be announced early in the semester.

Research Brief

Students will select a topic from a pre-determined set of controversial (ethical dilemmas) agricultural issues. Each student will conduct background research on the topic and prepare a 3-5 page *Position Research Brief* (term paper) as directed in D2L including the use of in-text citations and reference page in APA format.

Service-Based Experiential Learning Activity and Reflection

Each student is expected to assist with the preparation and/or coordination of the Area V & VI FFA Career Development Events hosted by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources on April 15 or 16. This is an all-day event that requires about 250 student volunteers to support the contests we hosts for approximately 2500 students. Some of the events will be held in Commerce and others in Sulphur Springs. All CASNR courses are cancelled that day to allow students and faculty to assist with this activity. Student absences for classes outside of CASNR are considered excused and work may be submit early or upon to return to the class, contingent upon your communication with the professor in advance of April 15-16.

You will prepare a 1-2 minute video summarizing the activity for which you provided assistance, lead contact for the event, location of the event, and how your participation in this service helped you to understand the “bigger picture” of agricultural ethics context such as virtue of competition, value of career development experience, potential for networking with ag professionals, agricultural or food justice, etc. This video will be posted on the Facebook course page and will be your final project for the course.

In the event that work, health, or other life circumstances prevent your engagement in service learning with the FFA Career Development Events on one of the days specified, you may seek approval from the professor to do five hours of volunteer service with one of the following pre-approved entities. Service at another location or with other organizations must be approved by the professor in advance. The following are pre-approved alternative service-learning opportunities.

1. Volunteer at Twin Oaks Farm for Experiential Learning
2. Volunteer with Lion Gardeners on the Go

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3. Volunteer at with a hands-on event hosted by GROW North Texas of Grow Garden Grow
4. Volunteer at the Lion, Commerce, Bread of Life, or other food pantry.
5. Serve as a judge for an event in 4-H, FFA, or FCCLA

All service-learning activities must be conducted during the Spring 2024 semester.

Written Assignments and Format

The Research Brief, presentation, and essays should be written in a format compatible with the *American Psychological Association (APA) Manual for Publication*, 7th edition. A synopsis and tutorial on scientific writing, including the use of APA format is available from the Online Writing Lab at Purdue University (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>). Personal face-to-face assistance with editing and format suggestions is available from the on-campus Writing Center at TAMU-Commerce.

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Syllabus Addendum for Dr. Bob Williams for the Spring 2024 Semester

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours are available for student conferences with the professor for additional course support and, if applicable, academic/career advisement. The following hours will be maintained for this purpose, provided they are not circumvented by administrative assigned tasks beyond the professors control, professional travel to conferences or meetings, or medical appointments for professor or his household dependents.

Monday	9:00-9:50 a.m.
Tuesday	9:30-11:30 a.m.
Wednesday	9:00-9:50 a.m.
Thursday	by appointment
Friday	by appointment

TECHNOLOGY ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

The electronic gradebook on D2L will be used in this course. You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace [D2L] , please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words “[click here](#)” to submit an issue via email.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

The professor and GAs or SIs will be accessible to students via email as well as the professor will have specific office hours and times when students may schedule an appointment. Email is the most effective form of correspondence with the professor. **Do not attempt to text, Skype, or Facetime the professor.** Response to emails, except for the weekends or during times which the professor may be in remote area conducting research, will normally occur within 24 hours or receipt of the original message.

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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

[Netiquette http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html](http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html)

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

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Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer. Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COVID-19 Conditions and Response

In the event of another pandemic, you may face periods of isolation or restriction of movement. Since this is an online course, it is designed for your completion from anywhere that internet access exists. If you do not have internet access in your current residence, you need to identify how you will access your assignments if you cannot leave. This may include the use of a smart phone or other digital device that can offer connectivity. Most assignments can be completed offline, but the internet may be required for research, online discussions, and the uploading of assignments/projects. If you have a medical reason for an assignment to be delayed, I will excuse that. Internet access, or the lack of it, is not a medical excuse.

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