



EAST TEXAS A&M

AEC 500.01W – FOOD INDUSTRY TRENDS & ISSUES
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FALL 2025

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor

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Semester Credit Hours

3 SCH

Class Time

Web Based Course (myleonline.tamuc.edu)

Office Hours

For immediate consultation, I will be available in my office Tuesdays and Thursday from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (noon), 1:00 – 2:30 p.m., and by appointment. The best way to contact me is via email at Jose.Lopez@etamu.edu. You can also email me from D2L (myleonline.tamuc.edu). I generally answer emails within 48 hours. Students who email me after 5:00 PM can expect to receive a reply within 48 hours starting at 8:00 am of the next business day (M-F). Students who email me during holidays or over the weekend should expect a reply within 48 hours from 8:00 am of the next regularly scheduled business day.

COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook

No textbook is required for this course.

Course Material

This course will require that you purchase, rent, or view from a subscription-video-streaming-service website of your choice several documentaries. Most of the documentaries are available at video streaming service websites such as Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Hulu, or similar for which you will need to pay a monthly subscription fee. Alternatively, most of the documentaries are also available at IMDb or AppleTV or YouTube where you can pay per documentary as you watch them.

Prerequisites

None.

Teaching Philosophy

1. A course must deliver information, concepts and methods that will be useful in the student's professional life. However, learning analytical reasoning skills and improving the ability to process and use information efficiently is more important than memorizing facts and formulas and performing procedures repeatedly.
2. Students learn best when theories, concepts and procedures are explained in plain language as well as formally, and are complemented with examples or applications that are relevant to the students.

Character Formation

It is important during your graduate education to learn the values and rewards of hard work, responsibility, and honesty. The professor will promote character formation while teaching the course.

Course Description

Analysis of current trends in the food industry, including norms, specifications, and standards; trade issues; and policies with national and international scope that affect the U.S. food industry. The focus is on developing an understanding of the causes and consequences of such trends, the various issues involved, and how they affect stakeholders and society.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon satisfactory completion of the course the students will be able to:

- Understand the complexities of the food industry.
- Discuss food issues from a national and international perspective.
- Describe the role of major government regulations.
- Discuss and understand research related to the food industry, including food products and agricultural commodities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems).
- Improve students' ability to write, synthesize, and effectively communicate information relevant to agribusinesses and the food industry.

Topics

The following are examples of relevant documentaries that may be discussed in this course. I will select relevant documentaries depending on their availability at popular video streaming service websites.

- **Lines in the Sand (2018)**, 1 hour 25 minutes
Network: History Channel, The Food That Built America, S1 E1
Aired on: September 5, 2018
 - After the Civil War, a revolution takes place on the backs of visionary entrepreneurs of industry. The documentary discusses food industry innovators such as Milton Hershey, Henry Heinz, Forrest and Frank Mars, John and Will Kellogg, Marjorie and C.W. Post, Dick and Mac McDonald, and more. John Pemberton invents Coca Cola.
- **Best Served Cold (2019)**, 1 hour 26 minutes
Network: History Channel, The Food That Built America, S1 E2
Aired on: August 12, 2019

- In the 20th century, a new period in history begins when a novel breed of innovator rises up to expand American industry and push the limits of new technology. Pioneer Milton Hershey bets big on a revolutionary idea, and Forrest and Frank Mars start on a path to challenge the chocolate throne. The role of the food titans during World War I push the boundaries of invention in the 1920s.
- **The Spoils of War (2019)**, 1 hour 26 minutes
 Network: History Channel, The Food That Built America, S1 E2
 Aired on: August 13, 2019
 - The stories behind major food titans in America like Henry Heinz and Milton Hershey around the time of the Great Depression and WWII. Incentives for food titans innovate to feed a hungry nation. How Harland Sanders, founder of the Kentucky Fried Chicken, and the McDonald brothers along with Ray Kroc revolutionize the restaurant industry.
- **The Founder (2016)**, 1 hour 55 minutes
 Production companies: FilmNation Entertainment, The Combine Faliro House Productions S.A.
 Distributed by: The Weinstein Company
 Release date: December 7, 2016 (Arclight Hollywood), January 20, 2017 (United States)
 - Ray Kroc and the McDonald brothers; how the fast food industry for hamburgers, fries, and milkshakes has evolved from 1940s to today; franchise agreements and their limitations; challenges small business owners/entrepreneurs face as their business grow; quality control and enforcing standards; protecting of innovation and revolutionary ideas.
- **BIG MAC: Inside The MacDonald's Empire (2014)**, 41 minutes
 Directors: CNBC
 Studio: NBC New Documentaries
 DVD Release Date: October 13, 2009 (TV Release Date: 2007)
 ASIN: B002SF9Y7U
 - “See how a quick-service hamburger stand grew into one of the most famous brands on the planet, serving 52 million people around the world each day.” by IMDb (Last accessed 5/21/2020)
- **Food, Inc. (2008)**, 1 hour 33 minutes
 Production companies: Dogwoof Pictures, Participant Media, River Road Entertainment
 Distributed by: Magnolia Pictures
 Release date: September 7, 2008 (TIFF), June 12, 2009 (United States)
 - A look at what goes into making the products we consume and the secretive and surprising journey food takes on the way from processing plants to our dinner tables.
- **GMOs (2013)**, 1 hour 24 minutes
 Production company: Compeller Pictures
 Distributed by: Submarine Deluxe
 Release date: September 13, 2013

- What is a GMO, the implication of GMOs, types of GMOs, arguments by GMO proponents and opponents; the worldwide seed proprietary market; Dupont, Monsanto, and Syngenta; feeding the world; role of scientists and regulators.
- **Sustainable (2016)**, 1 hour 31 minutes
 - Chef Rick Bayless, farmers and others discuss the history leading to the sustainable food movement and how it could change what we eat in the future.
- **Global Waste: The Scandal of Food Waste (2011)**, 54 minutes
 - Food waste pervades modern society in countries around the globe. This documentary visits key locales to show the problem and a few solutions.
- **Trash Inc.: the Secret Life of Garbage (2010)**, 44 minutes
 Network: CNBC, CNBC Originals, Season 2, Episode 12
 Release date: September 29, 2010
 - One man's trash has become another man's multibillion-dollar treasure. The garbage industry: where the money is made, who's making it, and how trash amounts to a \$52-billion industry.
- **The Costco Craze: Inside the Warehouse Giant (2012)**, 43 minutes
 Network: CNBC, CNBC Originals, Season 2, Episode 29
 Release date: April 26, 2012
 - Costco never advertises, charges its 64 million members to shop there and does not mark up any product more than 15%. Its unconventional business model generates \$93 billion in annual sales. Go inside the world's largest membership warehouse chain.
- **Supermarkets Inc: Inside a \$500 Billion Money Machine (2011)**, 43 minutes
 Network: CNBC, CNBC Originals, Season 2, Episode 18
 Release date:
 - A fascinating look at today's supermarket industry. A business generating half a trillion dollars in annual sales.
- **The Age of Walmart (2009)**, 1 hour 30 minutes
 Published on: October 11, 2015
- **The New Age of Walmart (2009)**, 90 minutes
 Release date: September 23, 2009
 - The secrets and challenges facing the world's largest retailer; criticisms and controversies; labor unions; globalization; environmentalism; leadership, green policies; where to build; Walmart in Asia; and more.
- **Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Prices (2005)**, 1 hour 37 minutes
 Release date: November 5, 2005
 - Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price is a feature documentary that uncovers a retail giant's assault on families and American values.
- **Target: Inside the Bullseye (2011)**, 44 minutes
 ISBN: 978-1-62102-283-1

ASIN: B00CLS6CHO

- How Target became both tastemaker and discount retailer extraordinaire, while continually reminding its customers to “Expect More, Pay Less.”
- **The Coffee Addiction (2011)**, 43 minutes
Network: CNBC, CNBC Originals, Season 2, Episode 24
Release date: September 29, 2011
 - “Coffee is so much more than just a drink. As one of the most actively traded commodities, coffee is now a multibillion-dollar global industry.” - Hulu
- **Pepsi’s Challenge (2011)**, 43 minutes
Network: CNBC, CNBC Originals, Season 2, Episode 26
Release date: November 10, 2011
 - An exclusive look inside the global powerhouse that makes more than one billion products purchased every day.
- **Coca Cola: The Real Story Behind the Real Thing**, 43 minutes
Network: CNBC, CNBC Originals, Season 2, Episode 2
Release date: November 11, 2009
 - A look at Coca Cola's system of mass production and remote distribution, how this American enterprise has quenched the thirst of people around the world.
- **Budweiser (2009)**, 43 minutes
Copyright date (2009)
TV release date: July 17, 2008
Production: CNBC Originals
ISBN: 978-1-61616-458-4
 - A look at Anheuser-Busch and how it plans to meet the challenge of an ever-changing marketplace and stay on top.
- **The Profit Marijuana Millions (2017)**
Network: CNBC, CNBC Originals, Season 3, Episode 2
Release date: August 8, 2017
 - A look at a new and thriving marijuana industry and how it infuses capital and jobs into the economy. The evolving acceptance and commercialization of pot in America.

GRADING

Grading

<u>Item</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Documentary Assignments and Discussions	8.00%
Relevant Article Assignment	7.00%
Industry Activity Assignments	5.00%
Term Paper	5.00%
Quizzes	15.00%
Exams 1-4	60.00%
	<hr/>
	100.00%

Note: There would be an optional final comprehensive exam (Exam 5). The optional final comprehensive exam will replace your lowest exam grade (if you decide to take it). All your grades will be available in D2L, the learning management system used by East Texas A&M University.

Grading Scale

<u>Range</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100.00	A
80-89.99	B
70-79.99	C
60-69.99	D
Less than 60	F

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

This course will be offered online using D2L, the learning management system used by East Texas A&M University. Students will be required to download PDF Handouts of the PowerPoint presentations and other important class material from the D2L website for the course.

Learning Management System

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

Panopto

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/academicTechnology/educational-technology/panopto.aspx>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be offered online using D2L, the learning management system used by East Texas A&M University. To log into the course, go to: myleoonline.tamuc.edu

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@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Student Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

The primary form of communication with the class will be through course Announcements and emails. Any changes to the syllabus or other important information critical to the class will be disseminated to students via class Announcements and/or via email through your official university email address available to you through MyLeo. It will be your responsibility to check the course Announcements and your university email regularly.

I generally answer emails within 48 hours. Students who email me after 5:00 PM can expect to receive a reply within 48 hours starting at 8:00 am of the next business day (M-F). Students who email me during holidays or over the weekend should expect a reply within 48 hours from 8:00 AM of the next regularly scheduled business day.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures

Academic Honesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including (but not limited to) receiving a failing grade on the assignment, the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. In **ALL** instances, incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head. Please be aware that academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

Cheating is defined as:

- Copying another's test or assignment

- Communication with another during an exam or assignment (i.e. written, oral or otherwise)
- Giving or seeking aid from another when not permitted by the instructor
- Possessing or using unauthorized materials during the test
- Buying, using, stealing, transporting, or soliciting a test, draft of a test, or answer key

Plagiarism is defined as:

- Using someone else's work in your assignment without appropriate acknowledgement
- Making slight variations in the language and then failing to give credit to the source

Collusion is defined as:

- Collaborating with another, without authorization, when preparing an assignment

If you have any questions regarding academic dishonesty, ask. Otherwise, I will assume that you have full knowledge of the academic dishonesty policy and agree to the conditions as set forth in this syllabus.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend class and actively participate. Student participation/activity will be monitored by the professor. Students should plan to dedicate approximately 15-20 hours/week of time to this course.

APA Citation Format Policy

It is very important that you learn how to cite properly. In some ways, citations are more important than the actual text of your paper/assignment. Therefore, you should take this task seriously and devote some time to understanding how to cite properly. If you take the time to understand this process up front, it will save you a significant amount of time in the long run (not to mention significant deductions in points).

In the social and behavioral sciences, we generally follow the APA (American Psychological Association) formatting style. As a rule of thumb, one cites whenever they are paraphrasing other people's words or when they quote other's words directly. You may learn to cite from a variety of different sources including the APA Tutorial and the sources listed below and in the Getting Started section of your course.

www.apastyle.org

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>

www.library.cornell.edu/resrch/citmanage/apa

It is the student's responsibility to understand how to cite properly. If you have questions, feel free to ask.

Late Work

It is the student's responsibility to plan accordingly and submit their assignments in a timely manner. Class assignments will be announced. The instructor reserves the right to assign a grade of zero to any late assignment.

Drop Course Policy

Students should take responsibility for dropping themselves from the course according to University policy should this become necessary.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

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/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance 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 East Texas A&M University 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>

Counseling Center

A student that faces a crisis or a serious and unforeseeable event that affects his/her class performance must contact the Counseling Center, Halladay Student Services Building, Room

204, Phone (903) 886-5145. If important class material or course assignments are missed because of such crisis or event, the student must contact the instructor as soon as possible. Website: <http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/counselingCenter/>

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit the following website. Website: www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

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:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
East Texas A&M University
Gee Library- Room 162
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)
<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University 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.

Website:

<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.

AI Use Policy

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

IMPORTANT DATES

Date	Description
Aug 25, Monday	First day of classes.
Nov 27-28	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 5, Friday	Last day of classes.
Dec 7-12	Week of final examinations.

COURSE CALENDAR

Every effort will be made to adhere to the course calendar below. However, unforeseen circumstances may require changes to the course calendar. In that case, changes will be announced via University Email and in Announcements. The professor reserves the right to change the course calendar if necessary and depending on the progress of the class. I highly recommend that you follow the calendar outlined below **VERY CAREFULLY** so that you are sure to complete readings as assigned and turn your assignments in on time.

AEC 500.01W - FOOD INDUSTRY TRENDS & ISSUES
Course Calendar, Fall 2025
Web Based Class

Week	Subject/Material Covered	Assignment (Due By 11:59 PM on Date Provided)
Week 1 Aug 25 – 31	Syllabus + D2L Tutorial (MyLeo Online Student Resource Course) Topic 1	Quiz Discussion Article Activity
Week 2 Sep 1 – Sep 7	Topic 2	Quiz Discussion Article Activity
Week 3 Sep 8 – 14	Topic 3	Quiz Discussion Article
Week 4 Sep 15 – 21	Exam 1 (Topics 1-3)	Exam 1
Week 5 Sep 22 – 28	Topic 4	Quiz Discussion Article Activity
Week 6 Sep 29 – Oct 5	Topic 5	Quiz Discussion Article Activity
Week 7 Oct 6 – 12	Topic 6	Quiz Discussion Article
Week 8 Oct 13 – 19	Exam 2 (Topics 4-6)	Exam 2
Week 9 Oct 20 – 26	Topic 7	Quiz Discussion Article Activity

Week 10 Oct 27 – Nov 2	Topic 8	Quiz Discussion Article Activity
Week 11 Nov 3 – 9	Topic 9	Quiz Discussion Article
Week 12 Nov 10 – 16	Exam 3 (Topics 7-9)	Exam 3
Week 13 Nov 17 – 23	Topic 10 + Topic 11	Quizzes Discussions Articles Activities
Week 14 Nov 24 – 30	Thanksgiving Break 27 th -28 th (No Classes)	
Week 15 Dec 1 – 7	Topic 12	Quiz Discussion Article
Week 16 Dec 8 - 12	Exam 4 (Topics 10-12) Optional Exam 5 (Topics 1-12) Term Paper	Exams 4 & 5 Term Paper