

## AGRI 482 Agricultural Issues

**Instructor:** Dr. Mollie Aschenbrener  
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**Office Hours:** Tuesday/ Thursday 11:00 –12:30 p.m.  
\*NOTE: Due to supervision of student teachers off campus, additional office hours will need to be arranged as needed.

**Schedule:** Lecture  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00- 9:15 a.m. (Section One)  
Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30- 10:45 a.m. (Section Two)

**Location:** 303 Plumas Hall

### **Course Description:**

This course is designed to develop critical thinking and writing skills and develop an understanding for current issues facing the agricultural industry. Students will gain an appreciation for the diversity of agriculture and agricultural policies.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Develop and improve critical reading, writing and speaking skills
2. Develop analytical skills for the recognition and separation of facts, fiction and opinion
3. Develop intellectual honesty and willingness to test personal beliefs and values against perceptions of truth and value
4. Come to terms with changing social value and the dichotomy between urban and rural outlooks on life
5. Begin to understand the “soft systems” approach to consensus building and conflict resolution
6. Understand and appreciate the importance of teamwork in development of solutions for major problems confronting agriculture

### **Course Materials:**

All readings will be available on WebCT or in class. It is your responsibility to complete all posted reading assignments **prior to lecture**.

### **Policies:**

1. ADA Policy – If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and need assistance, please notify the Disability Support Services, 172 Student Services Building, 898-5959 or your course instructor immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.

2. Academic Honesty – Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of any university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person’s work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the gain is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the instructor.
3. Attendance and Participation – Regular attendance is expected. Please contact the instructor by either phone or e-mail prior to the absence if you must miss a class for any reason. You will be responsible for obtaining handouts and/or materials that were distributed during your absence. **Missed assignments due to absence from class may only be submitted with approval of the instructor. A note from the health center does not justify missing an assignment or exam.**
4. Late Assignments – All papers and assignments should be submitted on or before the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted.
5. Communication  
All communication for this course will be conducted via WebCT Vista. This includes email communications and course announcements. It is the student’s responsibility to check WebCT prior to classes for any announcements regarding the course. If an activity or lab is not posted to WebCT by 6 pm of the day before that lab/activity; the instructor will bring copies to class.

#### **Assignments:**

1. Topic and Development/ Discussion - During the first three weeks, the class will be responsible for developing five class-selected topics. Students will be assigned to a small group to research one of the five issues and prepare a 10-12 page packet summarizing relevant research for the class (to be submitted electronically – (see WebCT for instructions).
2. Quizzes and Additional Assignments – The instructor reserves the right to assign out-of-class assignments and to administer pop quizzes. Students must be present on the day such assignments are given, and neither the assignments nor the pop quizzes may be made up. Students should be prepared to have a quiz prior to each group presentation on each of the five topics.
3. Writing Assignments- A variety of writing assignments will be given throughout the semester. Additional details will be found on WebCT.
4. Group Presentations - Each group (5-6 individuals) will present the facts and values leading to a set of beliefs and recommendations for each of the class-determined topics. Following these presentations, each group will attempt to formulate a common set of recommendations for the class as a whole and resolve the issue. This resolution must be based on factual knowledge and generally accepted values, and must enhance/protect that which society needs and values.

5. Individual Presentations

During the final three weeks of class, all students will write and orally present a paper (1500 word maximum) on a controversial topic approved by the instructor (Other than those discussed during the group presentations). The paper will differ from the other essays in terms of depth of development and quality of writing, but will be of the same format.

**Tentative Schedule:**

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1.	1/24	Introduction Ag Awareness Quiz
	1/26	Perceptions Issue Development
2.	1/31	“A Guide to Editing Your Own Writing” Sourcing material, valid sources, plagiarism, citing the internet Issue Development
	2/2	APA Essay Format Finding information, managing the info. <i>Writing Assignment 1 Due</i>
3.	2/7	Fact-Opinion-Myth “How to be a Discerning Reader” “Env. Seek Logging Halt” <i>Issue Development</i> Final issue selection – assign groups
	2/9	
4.	2/14	“Farmer’s Have Good Public Image” “Teaching About the Environment in Cattle Country: A Reflection” <i>Issue Development</i> <i>Writing Assignment 2 Due</i>
	2/16	<i>APA Exam</i> Soft Systems” Approach to conflict resolution
5.	2/21	“Shaping Good Oral Presentations” <i>Writing Assignment 3 Due</i>
	2/23	Final Presentation Tips
6.	2/28	No class – room available for group meeting Work on packets
	3/1	Writing workshop <i>Issue Packets Due! No later than noon</i>
7.	3/6	Group 1 Presentation <i>Quiz 1</i> <i>Assignment 4 Due</i>
	3/8	Speaker/Video <i>Individual Topics Due</i>

**Tentative Schedule, Continued:**

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Topic</b>
8.	3/13	Spring Break- No Class
	3/15	Spring Break- No Class
9.	3/20	Speaker/Video <i>Essay 1 Due</i>
	3/22	Group 2 Presentation <i>Quiz 2</i>
10.	3/27	Speaker/Video
	3/29	Group 3 Presentation <i>Quiz 3</i> <i>Essay 2 Due</i>
11.	4/3	
	4/5	Group 4 Presentation <i>Essay 3 Due</i> <i>Quiz 4</i>
12.	4/10	Speaker/Video
	4/12	Group 5 Presentation <i>Quiz 5</i> <i>Essay 4 Due</i>
13.	4/17	No class... work on individual presentations
	4/19	Speaker/Video <i>Essay 5 due</i>
14.	4/24	Individual Project Presentations <i>Individual papers due!</i>
	4/26	Individual Project Presentations
15.	5/1	Individual Project Presentations
	5/3	Individual Project Presentations
16.	5/8	Individual Project Presentations
.	5/10	Individual Project Presentations
Finals	No final – have a great finals week!	

**Grading Scale:**

A+ = 98% & above	C+ = 78% - 79.99%	F = less than 60%
A = 93% - 97.99%	C = 73% - 79.99%	
A- = 90% - 92.99%	C- = 70% - 72.99%	
B+ = 88% - 89.99%	D+ = 68% - 69.99%	
B = 83% - 87.99%	D = 63% - 67.99%	
B- = 80% - 82.99%	D- = 60% - 62.99%	

**Evaluations:**

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Points Possible</i>	<i>Points Earned</i>	
<i>Examinations and Quizzes</i>				
APA Exam	2/16	100		
Other Quizzes (based on discussion, feedback and participation)	You never know!	100		
<i>Homework Assignments:</i>				
Writing Assignments	2/2	25		
	2/14	25		
	2/21	25		
	3/6	25		
<i>Group Project (total = 425 points)</i>				
Presentation Packet and Presentation		3/1	200	
Quizzes	1.	3/6	10	
	2.	3/22	10	
	3.	3/29	10	
	4.	4/5	10	
	5.	4/12	10	
Essays – 4 (total = 200 points) (*You will NOT write an essay on the topic your group presents!)	1.	3/20	50	
	2.	3/29	50	
	3.	4/5	50	
	4.	4/12	50	
	5.	4/19		
Peer Evaluations			25	
<i>Individual Project (total = 250 points)</i>				
Individual Final Paper		4/24	200	
Individual Final Presentation			50	
<b>TOTAL</b>			*	

\* Note: Points may vary depending upon additional quizzes and assignments given.