

Agriculture and Natural Resource Ethics

AEB 4126 -- Section 01H9 – Spring 2015

Periods 8-9 Tuesdays (3:00-4:55) and 9 Thursdays (4:05-4:55)

1142 McCarty A Wing

Instructor: Dr. Jeff Burkhardt. Office: 1081 McCarty B Wing

Office Hours: 12:30-1:30 Tuesdays & Thursdays, also by appointment

Phone: 274-4796; 318-9200 (cell)

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Communications: I will communicate with you about news, emergencies, etc., through a listserv for AEB 4126. That is, I will occasionally post mail to your Gatorlink email account. If you do not use your Gatorlink email account as your primary email send/receive, go to your Gatorlink mailbox and set your Gatorlink mail to be forwarded to your usual email account (e.g., gmail, cox.net, etc.)

PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL FREQUENTLY. ALSO, don't send mail through SAKAI.

Course Description:

This is a course about social, political, economic and ethical issues that arise in connection with the "food and fiber system" -- agriculture, food production/distribution, natural resource use/management, etc. --and public policy responses to those issues. My goals are for you to:

- Understand the "big picture" regarding the food and fiber system: How do the individual "pieces" like traditional family farms, environmental activists, global corporations, public policy decision-makers, consumers, etc, fit together in the larger scheme of things?
- Learn philosophical / ethical concepts and positions that can be useful in thinking about actions, practices and policies, for example, the difference between thinking of ethical obligations in terms of "protecting rights" vs. "securing the greater social good."
- Develop/improve your ability to think, talk, and most importantly write intelligently and reflectively (critically) about issues and positions and arguments as exemplified in (1) and (2) above.
- I hope that you will use this course to inform yourself in greater depth about the food system and about ethics, and also use this course to help you clarify your own beliefs and values regarding these and other ethical issues, as well sharpen your analytical and argument skills.

Required Texts:

- **The syllabus identifies the reading materials on the AEB 4126 Sakai E-Learning page for a given class. Other readings may be assigned over the course of the semester.**

IMPORTANT Note on Assignments: **THERE IS A LOT OF REQUIRED READING FOR THIS COURSE.** The readings are starting points for our discussions. You will be tested on both the assigned readings and what we discuss in class.

Grades will be based on:

- (1) **Three take-home examinations** -- 25 points each (75%). These will consist of 3-5 short (2-4 pages each) essay answers to questions I will assign. I will give you ~2 weeks before the exam is due. This course qualifies to satisfy the 6000-word “Gordon Rule” writing requirement.
- (2) **Group Project** – 15 points (15%). I will randomly divide the class into small (~4-person) teams mid-semester. These teams will research the background on specific pre-determined topics in preparation for a series of debates at the end of the semester. You will be given ample in-class time to meet with your team to prepare your position statements/arguments, and to develop a 1-2 page typed summary of your points and relevant bibliography (to be handed in to the instructor). Grades will be based on your team’s overall performance (as judged by the instructor and the rest of the class), as well as your teammates’ confidential (between her/him and the instructor) evaluation of your partners’ contribution to the project.
- (3) **Attendance & Participation** – There will be a sign-in sheet every class day. Additionally, there are several REQUIRED attendance days. “Perfect” attendance and class participation = 10 points.

Course grades are based on:

A = 93 – 100 points (I’ve deducted 2 points from the UF norm which has A=95 points/%).

A- = 90 – 92.9 points

B + = 87 – 89.9 points

B = 83 – 86.9 points

B- = 80 – 82.9 points

C+ = 77– 79.9 points

C = 73 – 76.9 points

C- = 70 – 72.9 points and below

D+ = 67 – 69.9 points

D = 63 – 66.9 points

D- = 60 – 62.9 points

E = below 59.9 points

Student Information Sheet

Please fill in the student information sheet (posted under “resources” on Sakai), attach a recent picture of yourself, and **turn in no later than January 13.**

Academic Honesty, Software Use, UF Counseling Services, Services for Students with Disabilities

In 1995 the UF student body enacted a new honor code and voluntarily committed itself to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. When students enroll at the university, they commit themselves to the standard drafted and enacted by students.

In adopting this honor code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the university community. Students who enroll at the university commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the honor code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the honor code is bound by honor to take corrective action. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon community acceptance and enforcement of the honor code.

The Honor Code: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: **“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”**

The university requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors. A fundamental principle is that the whole process of learning and pursuit of knowledge is diminished by cheating, plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty. In addition, every dishonest act in the academic environment affects other students adversely, from the skewing of the grading curve to giving unfair advantage for honors or for professional or graduate school admission. Therefore, the university will take severe action against dishonest students. Similarly, measures will be taken against faculty, staff and administrators who practice dishonest or demeaning behavior.

Students should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the instructor, department chair, college dean or Student Honor Court. (*Source: 2007-2008 Undergraduate Catalog*)

It is assumed all work will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as a group project in writing by the instructor.

This policy will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course.

Software Use:

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. Both the Counseling Center and Student Mental Health Services provide confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance. The Counseling Center is located at 301 Peabody Hall (next to Criser Hall). Student Mental Health Services is located on the second floor of the Student Health Care Center in the Infirmary.

- *University Counseling Center*, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, www.counsel.ufl.edu
- *Career Resource Center*, CR-100 JWRU, 392-1602, www.crc.ufl.edu/
- *Student Mental Health Services*, Rm. 245 Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, www.shcc.ufl.edu/smhs/
 - Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (ASAP)
 - Center for Sexual Assault / Abuse Recovery & Education (CARE)
 - Eating Disorders Program
 - Employee Assistance Program
 - Suicide Prevention Program

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

On Classroom Civility

I expect you to abide by standards of civility and professionalism in my classroom. This means that you will respect the instructor and your fellow students by (1) not talking while any other person -- instructor or fellow student -- is talking, (2) not reading or studying anything other than materials relevant to this course (including the Alligator), and (3) not showing up for class late or departing early (or getting ready to leave by packing up books, etc., when class time is nearly ended).

Anything that ‘rings’ must be turned off before class.

A part of ethics is manners, and I expect both from you. One accidental cell-phone ring will be excused. A second will cost you 4 points off the total points accumulated for the class.

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Jan	6	Introduction
Jan	8	Ethical Theory "Why Ethics" (Sakai)
Jan	13	Kantian Ethics "Kant's Moral Philosophy" (Sakai)
Jan	15	Ethical Theory II "Rights Theory" (Sakai)
Jan	20	Ethical Theory III "Utilitarianism" (Sakai)
Jan	22	Ethical Theory IV
Jan	27	Ethical Theory V "Virtue" (Sakai)
Jan	29	Ethics and the new "Food Movement" "The Food Movement Rising" (Sakai)
Feb	3	Ethics and Food II "Put Your Ethics Where Your Mouth Is" *** EXAM I handed out ***
Feb	5	Animal Ethics "Animal Ethics" (Sakai)
Feb	10	Animal Ethics II "Animals Deserve Ethical Treatment" (Sakai) "PETA" (Sakai)
Feb	12	Ethics & Agriculture "History of American Agrarianism" (Sakai)

		"Economics & Ethics of the Food System" (Sakai)
Feb	17	Ethics & Agriculture II "Berry" (Sakai) "Agrarianism Reborn" (Sakai) *** EXAM I DUE ***
Feb	19	Ag Ethics & Biotechnology "Ethics and Agricultural Biotechnology" (Sakai) "Why is Technology Important?" (Sakai)
Feb	24	Biotech II
Feb	26	Food Safety & Risk "Ethics and Food Safety" (Sakai)
Feb	28	Spring Break
Mar	10	Food Choice & Labeling "Ethics and Food Labels" (Sakai) *** EXAM II handed out ***
Mar	12	Ethics and the Environment "Environmental Philosophy" (Sakai)
Mar	17	Environmental Ethics II ***Debate Topics Discussed***
Mar	19	Global Ethics I "Living on a Lifeboat" (Sakai)
Mar	24	Global Ethics II "Famine, Affluence and Morality" (Sakai) *** Exam II Due ***
Mar	26	Global Ethics III *** Debate Teams Assigned -- Attendance Required **
Mar	31	Debate Preparation (meet with your teams)

Apr` 2 **Debate Preparation (meet with your teams)**

Apr 7 **Group Presentations (2) – Attendance Required**
***** Exam III handed out *****

Apr 9 **Group Presentations (1) – Attendance Required**

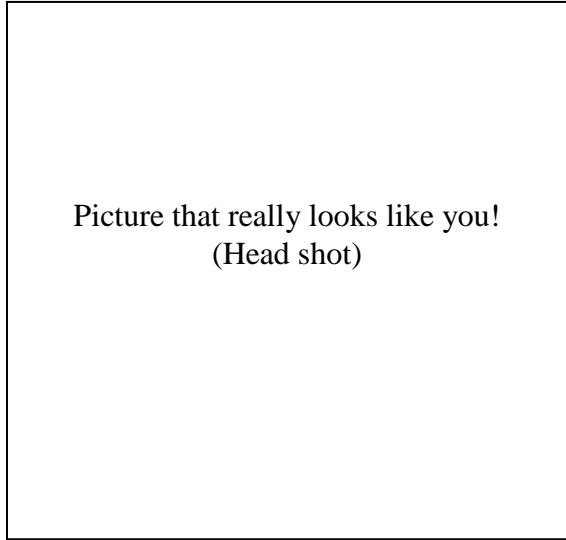
Apr 14 **Group Presentations (2) – Attendance Required**

Apr 16 **Group Presentations (1) – Attendance Required**

Apr 21 **Group Presentations (2) – Attendance Required**
***** EXAM III DUE*****

AEB 4126
STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET
Spring 2015

Name (print or type)
(as you like to be called)



Major

Home town

What are your hobbies/what do you do in your spare time?

What kind(s) of music do you like/ favorite band/artist?

I understand that I must get this form to Dr. Burkhardt by the end of class on September 4 or will be penalized 5 points on the first examination. I have received a copy of the syllabus and understand the requirements of this course.

Signature

UFID
