

International Agricultural Trade Policy (aka Agricultural and Food Policy)

AEB 4242 -- Section 4029 – Spring 7

Period 7 Tuesdays (1:55-2:45)

Period 7-8 Thursdays (1:55-3:50)

Instructor: Dr. Jeff Burkhardt

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Office Hours: Tues & Thursdays 12:30 – 1:30

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Communications: I may occasionally need to communicate with you about emergencies, changes in plans, interesting news, etc. Although email is slow and a pain, the most efficient way to communicate with you is through a listserv for AEB 4242. Thus, I will occasionally post mail to your Gatorlink email account. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK. ALSO, PLEASE DO NOT SEND EMAIL THROUGH CANVAS.**

Course Description:

This course offers a multi-disciplinary approach to understanding agricultural and food policy in the United States and the world. It draws on the theories and insights of economics, sociology, political philosophy and history to examine the agricultural policy process and its outcomes. It thereby helps students develop a better understanding of policy-making entities at various levels of government in the United States. It also provides a broad understanding of how policy actions in agriculture impact not only farmers' incomes, but also the well being of consumers, the economic viability of rural communities, and the quality of environmental resources worldwide.

We will look into U.S. history to understand when and why the federal government began to take an active role in setting agricultural policy, and examine how the role of the federal government has changed over time. We will examine how interest groups—ranging from general farm organizations to commodity groups to environmental organizations—play a critical role in agricultural policy formation. We will spend time discussing the international arena as we analyze the importance of international trade to the agricultural economy, how the policies of the U.S. and other nations shape trade flows, and the controversies surrounding multilateral trade agreements governing agricultural trade. Along the way, we will briefly examine how the policy actions of state and local governments impact agriculture.

Course Objectives

1. To develop a basic understanding of the history of U.S. agricultural and food policy, including the alternative philosophies used to justify government involvement in agriculture over time.
2. To gain the broad appreciation of contemporary agricultural policy issues needed by professionals in a variety of agriculture-related occupations.
3. To evaluate the impacts of alternative policy options.

4. To develop an understanding of the policy process itself, including the actors and arenas involved, especially as it applies to agricultural and food policy.
5. To gain experience in accessing a wide array of resources (especially online resources) pertaining to agricultural policy formation and analysis, so that students can return to these resources as a way to stay informed on current policy issues in their future careers.

Required Texts

Ronald D. Knutson, JB Penn, Barry L. Flinchbaugh and Joe L. Outlaw. 2007. *Agricultural and Food Policy*. Sixth Edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Notes on Canvas website

Other Sources: Additional information may be found at various web-sites. Examples: Food & Resource Economics Department Farm Bill web page (<http://fred.ifas.ufl.edu/FarmBill/>) Center for Food and Agribusiness (agecon.purdue.edu/cab); Agr. and Food Policy Center (afpc.tamu.edu); Center for North American Studies (CNAS.tamu.edu); Texas Agricultural Market Research Center (tamrc.tamu.edu); Agricultural Issues Center (aic.ucdavis.edu); the U.S. Trade Representative (ustr.gov); U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service (fas.usda.gov); U.S.D.A. Economic Research Service (ers.usda.gov); choicesmagazine.org; truthabouttrade.org; U.S. International Trade Commission (usitc.gov).

IMPORTANT Note on Assignments: The readings in the books and on the websites are starting points for our discussions. You will be tested on both the assigned readings and what we discuss in class as drawn from my notes (Available in “Resources” section of Sakai) AND class discussions. ***I expect you will have read the each day’s assigned reading in advance (usually a chapter a week plus supplementary readings.*** Therefore, read the assignments and be prepared to talk about what you have read.

Grades will be based on:

1. TWO in-class examinations – 30 points each (2 X 35 = 70%). These will consist of multiple-choice, true-false and short-answer essay questions. The exams will cover the material up to and including the last class period before the exam.

NOTE: There are NO make-up examinations. If you miss an exam, OR want to try to drop one of your exams with the lowest score, a COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAMINATION will be given on THURSDAY April 26

2. THREE PROJECTS – 10 points each (3 X 10 = 30%). These will consist of 2-3 page “Policy Briefs” (I’ll explain).

3. Attendance/Participation – I will periodically send around sign-up sheets. Your signature on any one of these sheets counts 1 point toward your final grade. It is theoretically possible for you to end up with a final point total for the course >100.

A NOTE ON ATTENDANCE AND THE BOOKS

This is a course that the Food and Resource Economics Department requires of all its majors. It is not especially difficult material, but there is a lot of it. Unfortunately, the Knutson textbook is rather shallow in discussing some important issues, and therefore the lectures/discussions are intended to flesh out the issues the text's authors miss. Plus, the authors are opinionated and wrong about certain things, and the book is almost 8 years old – dated in many respects. In all cases, when I say something that contradicts this book, what I say is what you will be responsible for knowing. So, if you can figure out on your own where they are “off,” you don't need to come to class. However, your attendance and attention will help you, help others, and help me since I won't know what you aren't “getting” unless you tell me – or I'll find out anyway after you've taken and screwed up some of the exam.

ANY DEVICE WITH A “SCREEN” (PHONE, TABLET, LAPTOP) WILL BE OFF AND PUT AWAY DURING THIS CLASS. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Exam and project grades points will be posted on the Sakai site within a week at the latest after the exam/assignment date. If you have a dispute with a grade, see me (not my TA) within a week of when grades or posted. After that, there will be no discussion of the examination or grades.

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

Classroom Civility and Management

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 NOT doing the following:

- (1) Talking while any other person -- instructor or fellow student -- is talking;
- (2) Reading or studying anything other than materials relevant to this course, and

(3) **Showing up for class late or departing early** (or getting ready to leave by packing up books, etc., when class time is nearly ended).

PLEASE be respectful of your instructor and other students when using electronic devices. Turn OFF RINGERS!!!

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. 0001 Reid Hall, 392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/