Quest 2: AEB 2280
World Agricultural Policy
Spring 2026, 3 credits

I. Course Info

Class Detail

- Online Course (100% asynchronous), Material is provided on Canvas Online Learning Management System. No physical class meeting times are required; however, we will have a live discussion session offered at a variety of times of day on the first week of class for credit.

Instructor

- Dr. Jared Gars
- Office: 1123 McCarty Hall B
- Jgars@ufl.edu
- Phone: 352-294-7692
- Office hours: 3:30 pm-5:00 pm, Thursdays, In person or on Zoom (Links in Canvas)

Teaching Assistant(s)

- Bailey Lavender, bk.lavender@ufl.edu, Thursdays 11:30-12:30 (Zoom)

Course Description

How can agricultural policy be used to address emerging food security and environmental threats around the world? This class explores these questions and focuses on the historical development, the current situation, and the future outlook of the food and agriculture sector in various economies globally. Next, the course dives more deeply into the economic and trade environment surrounding agricultural policy and brings insights from agronomy, environmental science, and international studies.

Quest and General Education Credit

- Quest 2
- Social & Behavioral Sciences
- International (N)

This course accomplishes the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

Required Readings and Works

Required Materials: All required materials will be provided on the Canvas website. Instead of a textbook, a set of readings is provided for each module. The readings should be treated like a required text; you are expected to read them. In addition to required readings, there will be optional readings listed that can aid in your understanding of the issues presented. Lectures are provided online. These online modules contain video lectures and PowerPoint files corresponding to the lectures.

Course Format: This class is asynchronous (we don't all watch the lectures at the same time), but it is not correspondence or self-paced (where you can do the work anytime before the end of the semester). Students are expected to log into Canvas, a password-protected authentication Learning Management System, at least three times per week, on separate days throughout the term.

In this class, you will be watching a series of lectures (available on Canvas) from instructors from around the world, as well as from Dr. Gars. They will be teaching you about the economic environment surrounding food and agricultural policy, production, consumption, and trade. It is your responsibility to keep up with the lectures, so plan to spend at least 2-3 hours of viewing time per week which serves to replace normal class periods. In addition to the time spent watching the lectures, you are expected to work additional time to read the material provided and complete homework assignments. The readings will be posted on Canvas and will be a key part of homework assignments.

Participation policy: As ongoing collaboration and dialogue are essential for effective online courses; students must participate regularly. Your participation is not graded, though your quizzes and discussion posts require that you watch the lectures and read the readings.

II. Graded Work

Description of Graded Work

Item	Frequency	Points per assignment	Total Points	Percentage
Homework	Biweekly (see below for details)	20 per module	120	20%
Reflection	Biweekly (see below for details)	20 per module	120	20%
Quizzes	Questions after most lectures	40 per module	200	33.3%

	(drop the lowest module grade)			
Experiential Project	One per semester	100	100	16.6%
Syllabus Quiz	One per semester	15	15	2.5%
Introduction Post	One per semester	15	15	2.5%
Introduction Session	One per semester	30	30	5%
Total Possible			600	100%

Graded Components

Quizzes (200pts/600pts)

Quizzes will cover material from both the lectures and the readings. At the end of most lectures, there will be 1-3 questions. In total, there will be 20 questions per module (spread across the lectures and readings), for a total of 40 points. These will be available the entire time the module is open, and you do not have to complete them all at one time. *I suggest you watch a lecture, and then answer the questions while the material is fresh.* Once you start any set of quiz questions, you will need to finish it during that sitting (maximum time 5 minutes per question). Additionally, you are allowed to drop one module quiz grade (in other words, the full set of questions for one entire module). Quizzes are online, and you can access your notes while taking the quiz. However, you are not allowed to take the quiz with other students.

Homework (120pts/600pts)

- For each Course Module, you must research and write a quality response to topics that are related to both readings and lectures. Deadlines for the homework questions will be posted on the due dates document and the module pages. It is your responsibility to post on time, canvas will remind you of the homework deadline and 10 points will be deducted from your homework score if you post after this deadline. <u>Once the module closes, you will no longer be able to edit or post a homework response.</u>

- For this class, homework is slightly different than what you might be used to. The first question is merely a starting point. Unlike typical homework, you do not all answer the same question. Once the initial question is answered, you need to do

further research to determine what the next step is. This is why it is critical to READ other students' posts before preparing your answer. You should read the boards, then go research your response, then post, and return to follow up.

- In the first week of the module, you will make a homework post. You can answer more than the minimum number, however, quality, not quantity, is graded. It is common for students to follow up on an initial answer with additional information as a result of postings by other students or the instructor. These follow-up posts count toward the original answer (think of this as a chance to improve your grade), and not as a new answer. Take advantage of this opportunity to add to your posting. If the instructor, TA, or another student asks about your post, follow up. This means it is important to check back after you post your answer.

- Homework responses can be in response to the question posted by the instructor or to peer posts. A grading rubric for homework is found below. *NOTE: The homework responses are turned in online and should be thought of as a discussion. This means you can't only participate at one point in time. You are expected to be online at least three times a week and should check the homework boards regularly.*

- In the homework, the **quality** of your responses is more important than the length of the answer. Contributions should be thoughtfully considered and based on one's personal reflections, observations from the readings, lectures, external research, and/or synthesis, and consideration of the merits of other student's comments. Homework posts that repeat previous responses do not count. A homework post needs to contain your own analysis of the situation - merely cutting and pasting from a source (even with citation) is not enough to get credit. It is important to cite sources when posting, but please make sure you contribute to why the other source is relevant to the discussion. ***Please fashion responses using correct grammar and spelling.* <u>Important:</u> *Citations can be included as links in the post but should be formatted in Chicago style (this includes webpages as well). Please see [Chicago Style](#) for reference on how to format your citations within the text and the reference section (if you include one) and there are also further directions and examples on the Canvas landing page.***

- I look for three basic things in each homework post: new information (must be cited correctly and clear what is coming from the citation and what is coming from you); response to other students/threads already posted; and your thoughts on the topics.

- Important note about the grading of discussion boards: Although the TAs and I will be reading all posts to the discussion boards, for grading, we will randomly

choose one of your two main posts to apply the rubric shown below. This means all posts need to be of the minimum quality you would like to receive a grade for.

Homework post Grading information	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Content 8 pts possible	**8 pts:** Relates new content to what is being learned in class and cites sources (minimum 2 outside sources).	**6 pts:** Includes outside information and cites sources with limited connection to class content (minimum 2 outside sources).	**4 pts:** Includes outside information from one outside source, but mainly as cut and paste, OR includes content, but mainly from lectures and readings.	**2 pts:** Does not bring in outside information (no outside sources)
Critical Analysis 6 pts possible	**6 pts:** Contains critical analysis. Adds own thoughts to the material and how it relates to the question as well as to readings, sources, lectures, and discussions. Discusses and adds own opinions with explanations.	**4 pts:** Contains some critical analysis. Adds own thoughts to the material with limited relation to the question and/or explanation. Reference points from readings, sources, lectures, and discussions. Provides little explanation of opinions.	**2 pts:** Adds opinions but doesn't tie them to the information. Or posts answers but does not relate to the bigger picture.	**1 pts:** Only states an opinion, doesn't support with facts, or doesn't state any opinions, just posts information. Or only repeats what has already been discussed.
Contribution 4 pts possible	**4 pts:** Furthers the discussion with questions or statements that encourage others to respond. Responds directly to other posts. (Uses phrases such as I agree, I disagree, adding to what xx says…)	**3 pts:** Participates, and sometimes interacts with others.	**2 pts:** Interacts but incorrectly characterizes others' arguments/posts or does not refer to others' posts except using another person's name.	**1 pts:** Posts without interacting and/or does not make any new arguments relative to previous posts.
Professionalism 2 pt possible	**2 pts:** Posts with proper grammar, spelling, and citations. Does not wait until the last minute to post.	**1.5 pts:** Some minor grammar, spelling, or citation errors.	**1 pts:** Many grammar, spelling, or citation errors.	**.5 pts:** Does not use proper grammar, spelling, or citations throughout.

Reflection posts (120pts/600pts)

- For each Course Module, you must write a reflection post on another student's homework post. You must answer a minimum of 1 reflection post per module. Deadlines for the reflection posts will be posted on the due dates document and the module pages.

- Based on another student's homework posts for the prior week, answer the following questions: (1) What is one thing you learned in this post? (2) What was something you wish was discussed but wasn't? (3) What would you want to know more about this?

- You should indicate "Reflection Post" on the discussion board to distinguish your reflection post from your homework post.

Live Discussions (30pts/600pts) and Extra Credit (10pts/600pts)

- You are required to attend **one live session during the first week** of classes to learn about the class and be able to ask questions about expectations and the syllabus. There will be four scheduled sessions and you must attend at least one. If you are not able to attend at least one of the sessions and provide documentation for an excused absence, you will be able to watch a recorded session and submit your participation questions within 24 hours.

- In the second half of the semester, we will offer additional live sessions on current topics related to class. You will be able to attend one for **extra credit (10 points)**.

- Grading for the live session will be based on your contribution to the discussion, as well as some questions I will ask during the discussion. I will not be lecturing about something you have already watched or read, I will be leading the discussion, and this can only work if those in the "room" are prepared to "talk" (can use the chat function and type).

- You can attend more than one extra session (some students enjoy the "live" part of this and participate in more than required), however, this will not change your overall course grade.

Experiential Learning Project (100pts/600pts)

- Each student will turn in their own unique **experiential project** analyzing (addressing, describing, discussing) a topic related to international agriculture through the lens of food. In essence, during the first half of the semester, you will go to one of the international restaurants or markets located in Gainesville (or your city if you are located off-campus) and pick a food to try. You can choose one that is already prepared, you can cook a dish, or choose something such as

dates from Egypt or canned fish from the Philippines. It is completely up to you as long as it involves experiencing food from one of the regions in the class. You will then develop a project that is based on the food or dish of your choice. You can also just discuss one ingredient in the food or dish. I am giving you the freedom to explore and choose the topic, as long as it relates to international agriculture, with a focus on the economic, policy, and food environment. This should cover any area of the world except for the US but must be about a topic we did not address in class (or have not yet addressed).

- You must provide a picture or video of you in the store or restaurant with the product. In your presentation, you must discuss your experience purchasing/cooking and consuming the product, and which part of the product you will be discussing.

- The project should further demonstrate the following:
    - The historical development of the food/ingredient and agricultural economy surrounding it in the country/region
    - Identify how location and socioeconomic factors relate to your chosen food/ingredient
    - Explain policy, government structures, or processes related to the food in the country/region
    - Explain the cultural aspects of the food/ingredient and compare this to different regions

- Regarding the amount of work, think about the time you would spend writing a paper with a minimum of 5 peer-reviewed references, and that's more or less what I am suggesting you spend working on the project. It is worth 15% of your grade, so please take it seriously.

- With your creation, you will need to have audio and video components. You may use PowerPoint, but you are welcome to use other methods (such as a YouTube video) to provide the presentation. *Make sure that you present the inspiration behind the project and why you chose this food, and how it relates to the international agricultural topic and region of your choice (the content).*

- Your presentation will be posted on the class website for other students to view. Feel free to turn in your project anytime during the semester before the posted due date.

- If you do not want me to use your project in future semesters as an example, please notify me.

Grades for this project will be based on the following scale:	Points Possible
Creativity The student has taken a concept/idea and applied it in a way that is his/her own. The student's "personality/voice" comes through **(the presentation is more than a PowerPoint or Prezi lecture with pictures inserted).**	15
Content and coherence The project has a message and is coherent, rich in content, and informative to the observer (reader, listener, etc). The project should demonstrate the following: 1. The historical development of the food and agricultural economy of the region 2. Identify how location and socioeconomic factors relate to a current situation 3. Explain policy, government structures, or processes related to the region and topic 4. Explain how culture impacts the topic and compare this to different regions	40
Rigor and Attention to Detail Appropriate information is used to build/create/prepare the project, and the sources are cited and referenced appropriately. Audio and/or visual components are included.	25
Explanation of Project The student clearly and sufficiently explained the meaning and inspiration behind her/his project.	10
Evaluation of Other Student Submissions Watch and comment on at least five other student's submissions.	10
Total Score:	**100**

Grading Scale

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

Grading for AEB 3671	A	558+ points	A-	540 – 557 points	
B+	522 – 539 points	B	498 – 521 points	B-	480 – 497 points
C+	462 – 479 points	C	438 – 461 points	C-	420 – 437 points
D+	402 – 419 points	D	378 – 401 points	D-	360 – 377 points
E	Less than 360 points				

Note: Your final grade will be posted on e-learning after the final assignment has been graded. The professor has the right to change this point structure at any point so long as it improves the student's final score.

Please note that grades are not "rounded" or "adjusted" at the end of the term. Haggling over grades at the end of the semester is NOT entertaining. Of course, if there is an error in recording a grade, I will gladly give you the correct points. If you believe that your assignment is incorrectly graded or that your grade is incorrectly posted, please contact me via email as soon as possible. You have seven days after a grade has been posted to voice your concern. After seven days have passed, your posted grade will be assumed to be correct and accurate.

Your grade on e-learning throughout the semester may not reflect your true performance in the course. Do NOT wait until the end of the semester as there is nothing I can do to help at that point. If you have any questions about your score at any point, you may come to me during office hours to clarify the number of points you have and what points will be required to achieve your desired grade.

<u>The use of Chat GPT or any other automated writing tools to generate written assignments, including homework, reflection posts, projects, or other coursework is considered plagiarism and will result in disciplinary action. The use of these tools should be limited usage similar to search engines and existing publications (e.g. brainstorming).</u>

This course adheres to all UF Academic Policies: https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies

III. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Specific Course Objectives:

1. *Discuss the historical development* of the food and agricultural economy in *different regions* of the world.
   Method of assessment: weekly quizzes
2. *Evaluate the current situation* of the food and agricultural economy in different regions of the world. Be able to *identify how geographic location and socioeconomic factors relate to the current situation* in the regions studied.
   Method of assessment: experiential learning project and reflection posts

3. Critically discuss the outlook for the food and agricultural economy in different regions of the world.
   Method of assessment: synchronous and asynchronous discussions

4. *Identify and explain policy, structure of related government and industries, and processes related to agriculture in each region studied*.
   Method of assessment: homework posts and reflection posts

5. Assess the *comparative advantage of different regions* within the agricultural economy. *Evaluate how culture impacts the agricultural industry and food consumption* in different regions of the world and *compare it to the United States*.
   Method of assessment: weekly quizzes, homework, discussions, and experiential learning project

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) learning outcomes as follows:

Content*: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the discipline(s)*.
Content: Know the values, attitudes, and norms that shape the cultural differences of people who live in countries other than the United States. Know the roles of geographic location and socioeconomic factors on the lives of citizens in other countries. (I)
Content: Know key themes, principles, and terminology within agriculture, economics, and policy. Know the history, theory, and/or methodologies used within that discipline. Identify, describe, and explain social institutions, structures, and processes related to economics and international trade in agriculture. (S)

Critical Thinking: *Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the discipline(s).*
Critical Thinking: Analyze and evaluate your cultural norms and values in relation to those held by citizens in other countries. (I)
Critical Thinking: Apply formal and informal qualitative and/or quantitative analysis effectively to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions. Assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions. (S)

Communication: *Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline(s).*
Communication: Communicate knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning clearly and effectively about topics in an international context. (I)
Communication: Communicate knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning clearly and effectively. (S)

Connection: *Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.*
Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Quest 2).

Recognize how you, as an individual, and you, as a part of a community, can personally contribute now and in your career to addressing food security, agricultural policy, and environmental issues (Gen Ed).

IV. Quest Learning Experiences

1. Details of Experiential Learning Component

See experiential learning project (Section II. Graded Work).

2. Details of Self-Reflection Component

As discussed in the Homework and Reflection posts section, you will be reflecting on the information presented to you. There are 6 reflection assignments throughout the semester (one per module). These are occasions when you will examine what you think, why you think it, and what are the implications of your thoughts for yourself and for others. In your reflection posts, based on another student's homework posts for the prior week, answer the following questions:

- What is one thing you learned in this post that you did not know?
- What was something you wish was discussed but wasn't?
- What would you want to know more about this?

V. Annotated Weekly Schedule

Week	Topics, Homework, and Assignments
Week 1 (Jan 12-Jan 16)	**Topic: Getting Started** **Summary:** You will attend one of the offered live lectures that introduces the content of the course and how to navigate Canvas to view the lectures and readings, complete quizzes, and post your homework and discussion posts. A recording will also be provided if unable to attend live session. **Graded Assignments/Activities**: • Introduction post on discussion board (15 points) • Introduction session (30 points) • Syllabus quiz (30 points)

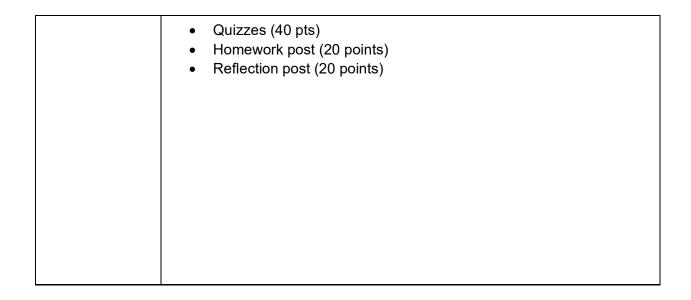|	
Weeks 2&3 (Jan 20-Feb 3)	**Topic: European Union** **Summary:** Module will cover the history of the region through lectures and readings (in Canvas). The lectures will cover the history, geography, and development of agriculture in the region as well as an overview of the current situation including agricultural and environmental policy, trade, and future outlook. **Readings (in Canvas)** • Angry Farmers are Reshaping Europe (Cohen, 2024) • Aligning Food Taxation with Climate Goals (Ricci et al., 2025) • Since Brexit, UK's Agricultural Trade with EU Remains Strong (Gerval and Joliffe, 2023) **Graded Assignments/Activities**: • Quizzes (40 pts) • Homework post (20 points) • Reflection post (20 points)
Weeks 4&5 (Feb 4 – Feb 17)	**Topic: Sub-Saharan Africa** **Summary:** Module will cover the history of the region through lectures and readings (in Canvas). The lectures will cover the history, geography, and development of agriculture in the region as well as an overview of the current situation including agricultural and environmental policy, trade, and future outlook. **Readings (in Canvas)** • A Researcher's Journey to Conserve Water in Uzbekistan (USAID, Central Asia) • Global Fertilizer Market Challenged by Russia's Invasion of Ukraine (Kee, Cardell, and Zereyesus, 2023) • Russia Halts Wheat Exports, Deepening Fears of Global Food Shortages (Ulybina & Rastogi, 2024) **Graded Assignments/Activities**: • Quizzes (40 pts) • Homework post (20 points) • Reflection post (20 points)

Weeks 6&7 (Feb 18 – Mar 3)	**Topic: Russia and the former Soviet Union** **Summary:** Module will cover the history of the region through lectures and readings (in Canvas). The lectures will cover the history, geography, and development of agriculture in the region as well as an overview of the current situation including agricultural and environmental policy, trade, and future outlook. **Readings (in Canvas)** • Africa's Infrastructure-Led Growth (Pg 14-19) • Market Opportunities Expanding for Agricultural Trade and Investment in Africa (Johnson, Morgan, and Farris, 2023) • EU chicken dumping starves Africa (Ward, 2017) **Graded Assignments/Activities**: • Quizzes (40 pts) • Homework post (20 points) • Reflection post (20 points)
Weeks 8&9 (Mar 4 – Mar 24) Spring Break (Mar 16 – Mar 21)	**Topic: South America** **Summary:** Module will cover the history of the region through lectures and readings (in Canvas). The lectures will cover the history, geography, and development of agriculture in the region as well as an overview of the current situation including agricultural and environmental policy, trade, and future outlook. **Readings (in Canvas)** • How U.S. tariffs might impact countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (Glauber & Gianatiempo, 2025) • China Wants Food. Brazil Pays the Price (Chen and Araújo, 2020) • High orange juice prices may be on the table for a while due to disease and extreme weather (Durbin & Pollastri, 2024) **Graded Assignments/Activities**: • Quizzes (40 pts) • Homework post (20 points) • Reflection post (20 points)

Weeks 10&11 (Mar 25 – Apr 7)	**Topic: Oceania** **Summary:** Module will cover the history of the region through lectures and readings (in Canvas). The lectures will cover the history, geography, and development of agriculture in the region as well as an overview of the current situation including agricultural and environmental policy, trade, and future outlook. **Readings (in Canvas)** • Multinationals, farmers take emissions targets into their own hands (Foley 2020) • How Far Is China's Slowdown Spreading? (Cherney, 2023) • New Zealand abandons plans to price farm emissions (Lyumobirova, 2024) **Graded Assignments/Activities:** • Quizzes (40 pts) • Homework post (20 points) • Reflection post (20 points)
Week 12 (Apr 8-Apr 14)	**Topic: Experiential project workweek** **Graded Assignments/Activities:** • Experiential project (100 points)
Weeks 13&14 (Apr 8 – Apr 24)	**Topic: Asia** **Summary:** Module will cover the history of the region through lectures and readings (in Canvas). The lectures will cover the history, geography, and development of agriculture in the region as well as an overview of the current situation including agricultural and environmental policy, trade, and future outlook. **Readings (in Canvas)** • The consequences of inter-state trade liberalisation for Indian farmers (Chaterjee, 2023) • Trade Liberalization Could Benefit India's Soybean Processing Sector (Ajewole, 2020) • Japan faces a reckoning over rice (Economist, 2025) **Graded Assignments/Activities:**

	- Quizzes (40 pts) - Homework post (20 points) - Reflection post (20 points)

Note: The instructor reserves the right to change the terms and dates stated in this course syllabus at any time. Any changes will be communicated in class and on e-learning as an announcement. It is solely the student's responsibility to stay informed of any changes. By enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to the terms outlined in this syllabus.