UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
Food and Resource Economics Department
Course Syllabus: Fall Semester 2013 -- Section 8835 – 3 Credits
AEB 6225: PUBLIC POLICY AND THE AGRICULTURAL MARKET

Class Time and Location: M-W-F Period 3 (9:35–10:25 am), 2186 McCarty Hall

Instructor: Dr. John J. VanSickle
1185 McCarty Hall Phone: 294-7634 e-mail: sickle@ufl.edu


Other readings assigned from course homepage

Homepage: A web page has been developed on E-Learning and is available at https://lss.at.ufl.edu/

Other Sources: Additional information may be found at various web-sites. Examples: 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).

Office Hours: The following times will be reserved for student consultation: Monday and Wednesday 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm. If these times are not convenient, you may (and are encouraged to) schedule an appointment with the instructor for another mutually-convenient time.

Learning Objectives: Increase students’ understanding and appreciation of: the role of policy and its impact on the economic environment in which agribusiness firms operate; the effects of various policies and policy issues on domestic and international competition and prices; the relationship between policies and firm decisions at all levels of the food and fiber production/marketing channel; and the role of rent-seeking in the policy process. The course will: give students the opportunity to enhance their analytical and communication skills; challenge students to think critically, and to defend their positions with relevant information, logic and theory, and: help prepare students for the changing policy environment in which they will live and work.

Course Description: This course focuses on understanding the policy-development process and analyzing domestic and international policies and their influence on the
decisions and success of agribusiness firms. Emphasis will be placed on developing a policy perspective and an understanding of the significance of policy dynamics. Various policy environments, drivers, mechanisms and processes will be analyzed. The economic and political forces underlying policy formation and change will be examined. The impact of current policies and policy issues on agribusiness firms, the relationship between policy signals and firm decisions, and the avenues for influencing the policy process will be explored. Policies considered include those associated with domestic agricultural price and income support, international trade, competition, the environment, food safety, biotechnology, country-of-origin labeling, traceability, economic development, agro-terrorism and globalization.

Central Questions for Students: (1) How can I understand the impacts of the policy environment on my personal and professional life? (2) How can I assess the impacts of current and changing policies on agribusiness? (3) How do firms deal with the uncertainties associated with the intended and unintended consequences of a dynamic policy environment? (4) How does agribusiness respond to and attempt to influence relevant policies?

Format: AEB 6225 is a reading-thinking-discussion course. Class time will be used to explore the reading topics. Class discussions will begin where student reading ends.

Attendance Policy: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx UF has summarized campus-wide policies regarding attendance that cover the drop/add period, religious holidays, illness, and UF extracurricular activities, including athletics. In short, you are expected to notify the instructor prior to any absences and provide documentation when relevant. Regular attendance and positive contributions to class discussions are suggested and expected.

Exams: Two exams (midterm and final) will cover material from class discussions and reading assignments. Guidance and suggestions for study will be offered prior to each exam. 40% of course grade (Midterm 20% and Final 20% each). The Final is scheduled for Thursday, December 12 from 10 am – 12 noon.

Quizzes: Quizzes will occur for the material assigned for class. 10% of course grade.

Written Assignments: Students will develop a series of policy briefs addressing various issues, their potential impact on agribusinesses and recommended courses of action. 30% of course grade.

Discussion Contributions & Other Assignments: Positive class contributions, including discussion leadership and participation in discussions, are expected. Students are expected to read widely and contribute outside information and observations (including current events) to discussions. There is an expectation of continued, proactive involvement in class discussions. 20% of course grade.
**Academic Honesty:** In 1995 the UF student body enacted an honor code and voluntarily committed themselves to the highest standard of academic honesty and integrity. When students enroll at the University of Florida, they commit themselves to the standard drafted and enacted by students. In their words, the Honor Code Preamble: In adopting this honor code, the students at 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 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 taken against faculty, staff and administrators who practice dishonest or demeaning behavior.

Moreover, any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action.  

**Student Responsibility:** Students should report any condition that facilitates dishonesty to the Instructor, Department Chair, College Dean or Student Honor Court.  

**Faculty Responsibility:** Faculty members have a duty to promote honest behavior and to avoid practices and environments that foster cheating in their classes. Teachers should encourage students to bring negative conditions or incidents of dishonesty to their attention. In their own work, teachers should practice the same high standards they expect from their students.  

**Administration Responsibility:** As highly visible members of our academic community, administrators should be ever vigilant to promote academic honesty and conduct their lives in an ethically exemplary manner (Source: 2010-2011 UF Undergraduate Catalog).  

This policy will be vigorously upheld at all times in this course. **Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.**
Attendance Policy:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx UF has summarized campus-wide policies regarding attendance that cover the drop/add period, religious holidays, illness, and UF extracurricular activities, including athletics. In short, you are expected to notify the instructor prior to any absences and provide documentation when relevant. Regular attendance and positive contributions to class discussions are suggested and expected.

UF Counseling Services: The life of a college student can sometimes be overwhelming. Resources are available on-campus to help students manage personal issues or gain insight into career and academic goals. Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university’s various counseling resources. The following resources are available to all UF students:

- General Student Affairs – Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261 (after hours, 392-1111).
- Mental Health Consultations - University Counseling and Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575 (24 hour access)
- Physical Health Consultations – Student Health Care Center, 392-1171
- Victims of Sexual Assault – Office of Victim Services, 392-5648 (after hours call 392-111)
- Career Guidance - Career Resource Center, 1st Floor, Reitz Union, 392-1602, www.crc.ufl.edu

Students with Disabilities: The Dean of Students Office provides individual assistance to students with documented disabilities based upon the need and impact of the specific disability. There is no requirement for a student to self-identify his/her disability. However, students requesting classroom accommodations must register with the Dean of Students Office in 202 Peabody Hall, or phone 392-1261.

Software Use: All faculty, staff, and students of the University of Florida 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. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.
Grades: Grades are neither rewards nor punishments, but rather consequences. Grades tend to be positively associated with timely reading of assignments, thinking about the readings/discussions, and regular class attendance and contribution.

Course Grade Composition: Final course grades are composed of 40% exams, 10% quizzes, 30% policy briefs and 20% class contributions and other assignments.

Course grades will be assigned according to the following scale:
- 91% or greater A
- 89-90.99% A-
- 87-88.99% B+
- 81-86.99% B
- 79-80.99% B-
- 77-78.99% C+
- 71-76.99% C
- 67-68.99% D+
- 61-66.99% D
- 59-60.99% D-
- Less than 59% E

Topical Outline
1. Public Policy Perspectives and an Overview of the Policy Process
2. U.S. Farm and Food Policy
4. Arguments and Tools for Protection
5. Trade Agreements and Negotiations: GATT and the WTO
6. Selected Trade Policy Issues
7. Environmental Policy
8. A Potpourri of Policy Issues Affecting Agribusiness
AEB 6225 – Public Policy and the Agribusiness Firm – Fall 2013

Name ___________________________ UFID#______________
Local Phone:____________________ Cell Phone:____________________ Circle Preference
Hometown/State/Country:______________________________________________
Undergraduate Major:____________________ University:______________
Current Major/Degree Program:________________________________________
Agriculture/Agribusiness/Business or Internship Experience:____________________
________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Career Objectives (if any):______________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Goals for this Course (if any):___________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Hobbies: _____________________________________________________________

Which best describes your background? farm___; rural non-farm___; urban/suburban___

In which subjects (or equivalent) have you completed courses? (check all that apply)
U.S. Food and Agricultural Policy (AEB 4224) ______
International Trade Policy in Agriculture (AEB 4242) ______
Natural Resource and Environmental Policy (AEB 4274) ______
Introduction to Environmental Economics (ECP3302) ______
Introduction to Natural Resource and Environmental Economics (AEB 3450) ______
International Development Policy (AEB 4283) ______
International Humanitarian Policy (AEB 4282) ______
Other Policy Subjects:_____________________________________________________

_____ I have read and understand the provisions of the Course Syllabus. I understand that class participation is important in determining my grade.

Signature: __________________________________________ Date: ________