

# **Agriculture and Natural Resource Ethics AEB 4126**

Fall 2021

Class Number: 25653

Monday & Friday; 1:55 – 2:45pm; TUR 2336

Wednesday; 1:55 – 2:45pm; MAT 0016

**Instructor:** Dr. Caleb Stair

**Office:** 1193 McCarty A Wing

**Office Hours:** MWF 3pm – 4pm; Tuesday & Thursday (via zoom) 11:00pm – 3pm  
(Also, by appointment)

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**Communications:**

## **DO NOT COMMUNICATE VIA CANVAS MESSAGES!!**

I will communicate with you about news, assignments, emergencies, cancellations etc., through the announcements in Canvas. **PLEASE CHECK OUR CANVAS PAGE FREQUENTLY.** If you are struggling in the class, please let me know. My office hours are listed above. Those are times that you can definitely reach me. This does not mean that those are the only times you can meet with me. If those times do not work for you, we will schedule a separate time.

### **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. This course satisfies the 6000-word "Gordon Rule" writing requirement based on the exams and the debate paper.

### **Course Goals:**

Students will:

- 1) Construct opinions through research and articulate these opinions to others on a scientific/economic/cultural issue.
- 2) 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?
- 3) 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."
- 4) Develop/improve their 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 as hone your analytical and argument skills. “Just as iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”*

### **Required Texts:**

There is no textbook required for this class. Instead, I will pull notes from several different sources and occasionally assign readings for class. All readings are located in the CANVAS class files for the course. Even lacking a “book” or set of books, however, THERE IS A LOT OF REQUIRED READING FOR THIS COURSE. The readings are starting points for our discussions. Your take home essays will be based on both the assigned readings and what we discuss in class.

### **Grades:**

#### 1. *Three Discussion Questions* – (30%).

- Throughout the semester there will be four discussion questions based off the notes and topics we cover. For each question you will be graded for an initial post (60%) of approximately 250 words and a response to a fellow classmate (40%) of at least 150 words. **The response must be to a viewpoint that you disagree with or a least find a portion of their response disagreeable to receive full credit.** Posts should be relevant to the topic being discussed but should also attempt to introduce a new point of view or piece of information or otherwise further the discussion. Posts should use correct grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary appropriate for a university level course. Misuse of the discussion boards will not be tolerated.

#### 2. *Logical Fallacy Paper* - (10%)

- During the semester you will be asked to choose a logical fallacy (it can be one we have discussed in class or one that you have found on your own). You will be expected to write a 500 – 700 word essay that includes: 1) a summary of what the logical fallacy is; 2) examples of the forms the logical fallacy can take; 3) how the logical fallacy is used when debating natural resource or agricultural issues; and 4) a recent example (more recent than 2010) of when the fallacy was used in a prominent way (news article, press conference, publicized debate, etc.).

#### 3. *Logic Quiz* - (5%)

- After the logic section of the course concludes there will be a short (20 questions @ 5pts per questions) logic quiz on canvas. This is untimed and asks you to find logical fallacies in statements and arguments.

#### 4. *Debate* - (15%)

- The class will be randomly divided 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 time to meet with your team to prepare your position statements/arguments. **Grades will be based on your**

**team's overall performance (as judged by the instructor), as well as your teammates' confidential evaluation of your partners' contribution to the project.**

5. *Final Paper* - (15%)

- This will consist of seven short essay questions (approximately 200-250-word answers for each) on topics we covered during the course. The assignment will be posted on the last day of class you will have one week to finish the assignment and **submit it via canvas on the date of our final exam (December 15<sup>th</sup>) by 11:59pm.**

6. *Section Quizzes*– (15%)

- There will be 11 quizzes issued throughout the semester. **You must complete 6 of them that you choose.** Each will cover information covered in the class during an individual week. There will be approximately five multiple choice and/or True/False questions in each quiz. These will be due at 11:59pm on Fridays.

7. *Participation* – (10%)

- Randomly throughout the semester we will have 10 in-class activities. Your two lowest scores will be dropped. You also must attend 2 out of the 6 debates at the end of the semester (**not counting your own**).

**Course grades:**

A = 93 – 100 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  
D+ = 67 – 69.9 points  
D = 63 – 66.9 points  
D- = 60 – 62.9 points  
F = below 59.9 points

**Course Policies:**

- I expect you to abide by standards of civility and professionalism in this course. It has a large discussion-based component and several of the topics may elicit passionate debate about the subject at hand. Debates can be passionate; however, a lack of civility or professionalism is unacceptable.
- Late writing assignments will only be accepted up to two days after the due date. If an assignment is issued on Thursday and is due in a week it must be submitted by 11:59pm the following Thursday. Assignments submitted at 12:00am Friday are considered one day late. Late writing assignments will receive only half credit

and writing assignments that are not submitted or that are submitted more than two days after the deadline will receive a 0.

- Plagiarism is unacceptable in this class. I will use the plagiarism database Turnitin.com to check submitted work. While I will cover some aspects of plagiarism and how to avoid it in class UF also has resources that can provide assistance in avoiding plagiarism in your writing and citing styles at <http://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/c.php?g=147797&p=967443>
- For the most part, notes will be provided via Canvas along with short videos concerning the subjects. I will post these to our CANVAS website as the semester progresses. If you read the Canvas notes and are still confused, please contact me and we can discuss any issues.
- If for some reason you need to submit an assignment via email, make sure that in the subject line please you state the course number and assignment title. Also, please save your documents as *AEB4126\_AssignmentTitle\_YourNameHere*
- COVID-19
  - We will have face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions. Understand that this is an evolving situation so these policies may be updated as the semester progresses.
  - Masks are **strongly recommended** (regardless of vaccination status) while in the classroom.
  - Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
  - Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
  - If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect-2/frequently-asked-questions/covid-19-exposure-and-symptoms-who-do-i-call-if/>
  - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. Find more information in the university attendance policies.

### **Academic Honesty and the UF Honor Code**

The University of Florida holds its students to the highest standards, and we encourage students to read the University of Florida Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040-1), so they are aware of our standards. Any violation of the Student Honor Code will result in a referral the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution and may result in academic sanctions and further student conduct action. The two greatest threats to the academic integrity of the University of Florida are cheating and plagiarism. Students should be aware of their faculty's policy on

collaboration, should understand how to properly cite sources, and should not give nor receive an improper academic advantage in any manner through any medium. The honor code can be found at <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/4.040-1.pdf>

### **In-Class Recording**

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled.

The only allowable purposes are: (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

### **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.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

Resources for Disabled Students: If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible to set up the appropriate arrangements. Please do not wait until an assignment is due to request accommodations. Further information can be found at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>.

### **Student Counseling and Support:**

Several resources are available on campus for students. <http://www.umatter.ufl.edu/>

- Honors Advising
  - <http://www.honors.ufl.edu/current/advising/>
  - 343 Infirmary Building
  - (352) 392-1519
- Dean of Students
  - <http://www.dso.ufl.edu>
  - P202 Peabody Hall
  - (352) 392-1261
- Counseling and Wellness Center
  - <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>
  - 2190 Radio Road
  - (352) 392-1575
- Student Health Care Center
  - <http://shcc.ufl.edu>
  - Infirmary Building
  - (352) 392-1161
- Career Resource Center
  - <http://www.crc.ufl.edu>
  - 1st Floor, Reitz Union
  - (352) 392-1601
- International Center
  - <http://www.ufic.ufl.edu/>
  - Suite 170, Hub Building
  - (352) 392-5323

### **Online Course Evaluation Process**

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

### **TENTATIVE DISCUSSION TOPICS AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Due that Day</b>
8/23/2021	Monday	Syllabus Day	
8/24/2021	Tuesday		
8/25/2021	Wednesday	Logic	
8/26/2021	Thursday		
8/27/2021	Friday	Logic	
8/30/2021	Monday	Ethics Overview	

8/31/2021	Tuesday		
9/1/2021	Wednesday	Ethics Overview	Logic Quiz Due
9/2/2021	Thursday		
9/3/2021	Friday	Ethics Overview	Ethics Quiz Due
9/6/2021	Monday	Labor Day	
9/7/2021	Tuesday		
9/8/2021	Wednesday	Fisheries	
9/9/2021	Thursday		
9/10/2021	Friday	Fisheries	Fisheries Quiz Due
9/13/2021	Monday	Wildlife	
9/14/2021	Tuesday		
9/15/2021	Wednesday	Wildlife	Discussion Question #1 Due
9/16/2021	Thursday		
9/17/2021	Friday	Wildlife	Wildlife Quiz Due
9/20/2021	Monday	Trade	
9/21/2021	Tuesday		
9/22/2021	Wednesday	Trade	
9/23/2021	Thursday		
9/24/2021	Friday	Trade	Trade Quiz Due
9/27/2021	Monday	Resource Extraction	
9/28/2021	Tuesday		
9/29/2021	Wednesday	Resource Extraction	
9/30/2021	Thursday		
10/1/2021	Friday	Resource Extraction	Resource Extraction Quiz Due
10/4/2021	Monday	Water Rights	
10/5/2021	Tuesday		
10/6/2021	Wednesday	Water Rights	
10/7/2021	Thursday		
10/8/2021	Friday	Homecoming	Water Rights Quiz Due
10/11/2021	Monday	Alternative Energy	
10/12/2021	Tuesday		
10/13/2021	Wednesday	Alternative Energy	Discussion Question #2 Due
10/14/2021	Thursday		
10/15/2021	Friday	Alternative Energy	Alternative Energy Quiz Due

10/18/2021	Monday	GMOs vs. Organic	
10/19/2021	Tuesday		
10/20/2021	Wednesday	GMOs vs. Organic	Logical Fallacy Paper Due
10/21/2021	Thursday		
10/22/2021	Friday	GMOs vs. Organic	GMOs vs. Organic Quiz Due
10/25/2021	Monday	Animal Agriculture	
10/26/2021	Tuesday		
10/27/2021	Wednesday	Animal Agriculture	
10/28/2021	Thursday		
10/29/2021	Friday	Animal Agriculture	Animal Agriculture Quiz Due
11/1/2021	Monday	Automation	
11/2/2021	Tuesday		
11/3/2021	Wednesday	Automation	
11/4/2021	Thursday		
11/5/2021	Friday	Automation	Automation Quiz Due
11/8/2021	Monday	Moral Hazards	
11/9/2021	Tuesday		
11/10/2021	Wednesday	Moral Hazards	
11/11/2021	Thursday	Holiday	
11/12/2021	Friday	Moral Hazards	Moral Hazards Quiz Due
11/15/2021	Monday	Economic Systems	
11/16/2021	Tuesday		
11/17/2021	Wednesday	Economic Systems	Discussion Question #3 Due
11/18/2021	Thursday		
11/19/2021	Friday	Economic Systems	Economic Systems Quiz Due
11/22/2021	Monday	Debate	
11/23/2021	Tuesday		
11/24/2021	Wednesday	Thanksgiving	
11/25/2021	Thursday	Thanksgiving	
11/26/2021	Friday	Thanksgiving	
11/29/2021	Monday	Debate	
11/30/2021	Tuesday		



12/1/2021	Wednesday	Debate	
12/2/2021	Thursday		
12/3/2021	Friday	Debate	
12/6/2021	Monday	Debate	
12/7/2021	Tuesday		
12/8/2021	Wednesday	Debate	
12/15/2021	Wednesday	Final Exam Day	Final Paper Due