

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

Class Number: 10218 – Spring 2021

T | Period 8 - 9 (3:00 PM - 4:55 PM); Room: CSE E119

R | Period 9 (4:05 PM - 4:55 PM); Room: CSE A101

Class Number: 26513 – Spring 2021

T | Period 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM); Room: FAB 0103

R | Period 7 - 8 (1:55 PM - 3:50 PM); Room: FAB 0103

**Instructor:** Dr. Caleb Stair

**Office:** 2111 McCarty B Wing

**Office Hours:** MWF 11:30am-2:30pm (*Also, by appointment*)

**Phone:** 352-294-7687

**Email:** cstair@ufl.edu

**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:**

- 1) 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?
- 2) 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."
- 3) 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 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 200 words and a response to a fellow classmate (40%) of at least 100 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. *Two Ethics Question Submissions* - (10%)

- During the semester you will be asked to create your own ethics questions for a theme. For example, if the theme is animal agriculture a question submitted could be “*What is a defensible argument for the moral “good” of eating meat?*” Each assignment will require you to submit three questions. **More complex questions will be awarded a better score.**

#### 3. *Logic Quiz* - (10%)

- 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. *Article Review* – (5%)

- During the semester four articles will be opened up for you to read and then you will write a 250 – 300 word opinion of the article. This is **NOT** an article summary. I want to read about your thoughts on the topic discussed.

#### 5. *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.**

6. *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 (April 29th) by 11:59pm.**

7. *Section Quizzes*– (15%)

- There will be 11 quizzes issued throughout the semester. 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.

**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.
  - You are required to always wear approved face coverings during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
  - This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students.
  - Please do not move desks or stations.
  - 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>

### **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 Infirmery 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>
  - Infirmery 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

Date	Day	Subject	Things Due
11-Jan	Monday		
12-Jan	Tuesday	Syllabus Day	
13-Jan	Wednesday		
14-Jan	Thursday	Debates and Logic	
15-Jan	Friday		
18-Jan	Monday		
19-Jan	Tuesday	Ethics Overview	
20-Jan	Wednesday		Logic Quiz Due
21-Jan	Thursday	Ethics Overview	
22-Jan	Friday		Ethics Quiz Due
25-Jan	Monday		
26-Jan	Tuesday	Fisheries	Discussion #1 Issued
27-Jan	Wednesday		
28-Jan	Thursday	Fisheries	
29-Jan	Friday		Fisheries Quiz Due
1-Feb	Monday		
2-Feb	Tuesday	Wildlife	Discussion #1 Due
3-Feb	Wednesday		
4-Feb	Thursday	Wildlife	
5-Feb	Friday		Wildlife Quiz Due
8-Feb	Monday		
9-Feb	Tuesday	Trade	
10-Feb	Wednesday		
11-Feb	Thursday	Trade	
12-Feb	Friday		Trade Quiz Due
15-Feb	Monday		
16-Feb	Tuesday	Automation	Ethics Questions #1 due
17-Feb	Wednesday		
18-Feb	Thursday	Automation	

19-Feb	Friday		Automation Quiz Due
22-Feb	Monday		
23-Feb	Tuesday	Resource Extraction	Discussion #2 Issued
24-Feb	Wednesday		
25-Feb	Thursday	Resource Extraction	
26-Feb	Friday		Resource Extraction Quiz Due
1-Mar	Monday		Debate Selection Due
2-Mar	Tuesday	Alternative Energy	Discussion #2 Due
3-Mar	Wednesday		
4-Mar	Thursday	Alternative Energy	
5-Mar	Friday		Alternative Energy Quiz Due
8-Mar	Monday		
9-Mar	Tuesday	GMOs vs Organic Agriculture	
10-Mar	Wednesday		
11-Mar	Thursday	GMOs vs Organic Agriculture	
12-Mar	Friday		GMOs vs Organic Agriculture Quiz Due
15-Mar	Monday		
16-Mar	Tuesday	Water Rights	
17-Mar	Wednesday		
18-Mar	Thursday	Water Rights	
19-Mar	Friday		Water Rights Quiz Due
22-Mar	Monday		
23-Mar	Tuesday	Animal Agriculture	Discussion #3 Issued
24-Mar	Wednesday		
25-Mar	Thursday	Animal Agriculture	
26-Mar	Friday		Animal Agriculture Quiz Due
29-Mar	Monday		
30-Mar	Tuesday	Moral Hazards	Discussion #3 Due
31-Mar	Wednesday		
1-Apr	Thursday	Moral Hazards	
2-Apr	Friday		Moral Hazards Quiz Due

5-Apr	Monday		
6-Apr	Tuesday	Debate	Ethics Questions #2 Due
7-Apr	Wednesday		
8-Apr	Thursday	Debate x2	
9-Apr	Friday		
12-Apr	Monday		
13-Apr	Tuesday	Debate	
14-Apr	Wednesday		
15-Apr	Thursday	Debate x2	
16-Apr	Friday		
19-Apr	Monday		
20-Apr	Tuesday	Debate	Article Review Due
21-Apr	Wednesday		
29-Apr	Thursday	Final Exam Day	Final Paper Due