**ACE 292**

**Farm, Food and Environmental Policy**

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**Class Time:**

1:30-2:50 Tu Th

426 Mumford Hall

**Course Description**

This course seeks to broaden students’ understanding of the breadth and complexity of agriculture in the United States and the challenges and opportunities to be found in the U.S. food and agricultural system. It includes a week-long trip to California where students will meet with farm, food and environmental leaders who are deeply involved in driving the issues shaping west coast farm, food and environmental policy.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will study agricultural policy issues from the perspective of key interests in a region whose crop mix, resource pressures and political challenges are in significant contrast to those in the Midwest.
2. Students will have the opportunity to interact directly with California agricultural, business and governmental leaders to look at any competitive advantages or disadvantages the region might have in sustaining thriving agricultural operations.
3. Expose the students to the breadth and scope of agriculture in the United States and careers to be found therein.

**Prerequisites**

Juniors and Seniors are preferred. The class is part of an experiential immersion program that seeks to engage students in a highly interactive, hands-on approach to learning. Previous class experience in micro and macro-economic theory, commodity marketing, finance, public policy and/or law is advantageous as this class seeks to connect what they have learned to careers students might pursue after graduation.

Students wishing to enter the course are asked to submit a brief statement of their interest in the class and their expectations of what they hope to get out of their participation.

**Course Format and Policies**

Most class sessions will consist of presentations by and interactions with guest speakers from both the University and various professional sectors. Speakers will provide an orientation to issues that challenge their firm or organization in addition to providing valuable baseline information so students will be better able to interact with the professionals they meet during their trip to California.

Each class meeting will be scheduled for approximately 80 minutes two times per week throughout the spring semester. Enrollment in this class will require participation in a week-long immersion program in California over spring break.

Class materials will be posted on Compass. Assignments will be posted to Compass when they are due. Students will be encouraged to use the Discussion Board in Compass to post comments or questions of interest to the entire class.

**The 3Ps** of class conduct will be followed in class – **Preparation, Participation, and Promptness.**

Preparation: Students will be expected to come to each class prepared to ask questions and to discuss topics with guest speakers, their instructors and fellow students.

Participation: Participation is crucial. A substantial portion of the student’s grade will be based on attendance, participation and a journal that records what they learned in class. Presence is not a sufficient condition for participation. Students are expected to be active in asking questions and expressing their views. They will be encouraged to take full advantage of the opportunity to interact with professionals and to develop communication skills.

Promptness: One attribute of a successful professional is timeliness. Late arrival to class is considered disruptive and rude to guests. It reflects poorly on the class and the University. The classroom will be closed to entry when the class starts. If a student has a difficult time getting to class, he or she will need to make arrangements with the instructor in advance.

**Student-Faculty Communication**

The instructor will be available during office hours or by appointment. Students may e-mail him with questions or concerns.

**Assignments and Grading**

*Class Participation* (25%)

As noted above, participation is important in this class and will be given significant weight in grading. Participation that is thoughtful, respectful and addresses important issues will be most highly valued. Quality is more important than quantity.

*Team Project (35%)*

The members of the class will be divided into 6 research teams (see Attachment B) of approximately 3 students who will collectively develop the following:

1. A PowerPoint presentation that outlines a key issue that challenges California agriculture.
2. A class discussion where students on the team will be asked to present their topic, outline relevant factual information about the issue, identify key players in the policy debate, and provide background on the impact and implications of the issue to farmers, ranchers and the public at large.

These presentations will be made with the expectation that information provided will lay a foundation of basic understanding about issues important to California agriculture in advance of discussions with California agricultural leaders, both in class and on the trip.

*Journals* (20%)

Four times during the 16-week course, a journal entry will be required to be submitted on Compass that includes the student’s personal thoughts about issues discussed, points of view they encountered and how this information could have implications on food and agriculture. A copy of the journal assignment form is attached as Attachment A. The due dates are February 2, February 14, February 28 and March 14.

*Interaction with Guest Speakers (5%)*

Students will be assigned to collect background information about one assigned guest speaker and the speaker’s company or organization. Students may be assigned a speaker from a class session, the immersion program in California or both.

Students should e-mail their assigned speaker(s) with a polite request for a resume or other personal summary. The email should be respectful, professional and to the point. For documentation, your instructor must be copied on the e-mail inquiry. Collecting information about the speaker’s business or organization will consist of visiting website or other resources and writing a short paragraph or two about the company or organization and the sector of which it is part. The assigned introductions should be brief and provide a summary of the speaker’s credentials and qualifications to address the topic at hand.

The student doing the introduction will be responsible for:

* introducing himself or herself upon the speaker’s arrival;
* finding out an “interesting fact” to share in the introduction; and,
* generally acting as a host to the speaker.

*Thank You’s* (5%)

Students will be required to write a thank you letter to the guest speaker they are assigned to introduce. In addition, each student will be asked to write up to four thank you’s to people with whom we meet during the California study tour. All letters must be typed in appropriate business format or handwritten on a professional note card. They must be completed within two weeks of the class presentation or by the end of March for those speakers we meet in California. The letters are to be given to Lori Snipes in Room 304 Mumford Hall for mailing. Your instructor will review the letters and forward them to the appropriate speaker. Students may write thank you notes to additional speakers if they wish.

*Blog* (10%)

Students will be required to write and post one blog post during the trip to California describing who they met with, what they saw and what they learned.

*Grading Summary*

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| **Class Element** | **Due Date** | **Grading weight** |
| Class Participation | All 16 weeks | 25% |
| Team Project | February 2 | 35% |
| Journals | April 6 | 20% |
| Speaker Interaction | Day Of Assignment | 5% |
| Thank You’s | Two weeks after | 5% |
| Blog | April 6 | 10% |
|  |  |  |
| Total |  | 100% |

The +/- grading system will be used. Illinois Compass will be used to store and retrieve grades. You can access Illinois Compass at [https://compass2g.uiuc.edu](https://compass.uiuc.edu).

**Attendance** **policy**

Students are entitled to one unexcused absence. Nevertheless, they are responsible for turning in their assignments on time. The unexcused absence cannot be used on the trip to California, your presentations session, and any field visits.  Absence from scheduled field visits will only be excused for acceptable reasons, e.g. prior commitments related to your academic program.  Absence from the California trip will only be justified in cases of serious illness or emergency.  If a student has to miss more sessions, please send an email to your instructor ahead of time justifying the absence.  For each unjustified absence, there will be a deduction from points accumulated for the class participation portion of the course grade.

**Professionalism and Academic Integrity**

In this class, students will be expected to present and conduct themselves in a professional manner. This is not a setting for sloppy dress or comportment. It is a place to demonstrate potential to be an effective professional, including professional appearance and interaction and effective speaking and writing. Assignments will be graded on overall quality, including proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation and the respect, courtesy and engagement with which students interact with others.

Apart from instructional technologies, no personal electronic devices are to be used during class. Such devices should be turned off and put away. Violation of this policy is grounds for immediate expulsion from the class session when the violation takes place. Repeated violation is grounds for permanent expulsion from the class. Maintaining enrollment in this class constitutes acceptance of these rules.

All parties in this class are responsible for being familiar with and abiding by the University’s Student Code of Conduct which can be accessed at the following URL: <http://studentcode.illinois.edu/> .

Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade. Every student is expected to review and abide by the Academic Integrity Policy: <http://studentcode.illinois.edu/>.  Ignorance is not an excuse for any academic dishonesty. It is the student’s responsibility to read this policy to avoid any misunderstanding. Do not hesitate to ask the instructor if you are ever in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, or any other breach of academic integrity.

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the as soon as possible. To insure that disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the beginning, students with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this class should contact Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) and see the instructor as soon as possible. If you need accommodations for any sort of disability, please speak to the instructor after class or make an appointment to visit during office hours. DRES provides students with academic accommodations, access, and support services. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603 (V/TDD), or e-mail a message to [disability@uiuc.edu](mailto:disability@uiuc.edu). <http://www.disability.illinois.edu/>.

**Emergency Response Recommendations**

Emergency response recommendations can be found at the following website: <http://police.illinois.edu/emergency-preparedness/>.  You are encouraged to review this website and the campus building floor plans website within the first 10 days of class.  <http://police.illinois.edu/emergency-preparedness/building-emergency-action-plans/>.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Any student who has suppressed their directory information pursuant to *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*(FERPA) should self-identify to the instructor to ensure protection of the privacy of their attendance in this course. See <http://registrar.illinois.edu/ferpa> for more information on FERPA.

**Cost**

An extra fee will be charged for this class to cover lodging, transportation and some meals for the California trip.

**Course Detail**

1/17 Introductions, Objectives, Expectations

1/19 Team Division and Organization

Photo session

1/24 Overview of California Agriculture

Karen Ross, Secretary

California Department of Food and Agriculture

1/26 California Initiative Process / Impact on Agriculture

## 1/31 Public View of Agriculture

Lori Laughlin, Director of Issue Management

Illinois Farm Bureau

## 2/2 Class Issue Reports

## 2/7 Water

Dan Dooley

Principal, New Current Water and Land, LLC

Sacramento, CA

2/9 GMO Labeling

Brenna Ellison, Assistant Professor

Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics

## Organic and Conventional Farming

2/14 Organic and Conventional Farming

Tom O’Brien, Executive Vice President and General Counsel

Driscoll’s

2/16 Land Protection

Ed Thompson

California Director

American Farmland Trust

2/21 Crop Protection Product Use

Brian Leahy, Director

California Department of Pesticide Regulation

2/23 Animal Care

Sarah Wilbourn, Director of Animal Welfare

United Egg Producers

2/28 Labor/Immigration

Luawanna Hallstrom, Past President

National Council of Agricultural Employers

3/2 No Class

3/3 (all day) Contrasting Illinois Agriculture

Dairy farm

Grain farm

Fertilizer and chemical facility

3/7 No Class

3/9 Class discussion

3/14 Prep for trip

3/16 No Class

3/18-24 Spring break trip to Northern California

3/28 No class

3/30 Post- trip review and critique

4/4 Competing Visions for Agriculture

Food, Inc

Discussion

4/6 Competing Visions of Agriculture

Farmland, The Movie

Discussion

4/11 TED Talk – “Food is a Privilege, Not a Right”

A.G. Kawamura

Former California Secretary of Agriculture

4/13 Class discussion – wrap up

4/18 – 5/2 Classes cancelled

12/13/16

Attachment A

**Name:**

**ACE 292 Journal Worksheet**

**Date:**

**Speaker:**

**Topic:**

***Potential questions for the presenter(s)*** *(to be completed prior to class)****:***

***Key points of the presentation*** *(to be completed during class)****:***

***Reaction*** *(to be completed after class)****:***

*What did you learn? What surprised you?*

*What will you change as a result of what you learned?*

***Additional Comments:***

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**Spring 2017**

**Journal Worksheet Instructions**

***Requirements:***

Interacting with and learning from notable leaders dealing with important agricultural issues is a key feature of this class. Students should be prepared to ask questions and to think about the key points they learn from their presentations. Journals are an important tool in helping to organize your thoughts, both before and after the presentations.

Prior to class, come prepared to ask questions and participate in discussions with the speakers about their field.

During class, use the space provided on the worksheet to write down key points of the presentation and to add additional comments/notes. Answer each question in two to three brief sentences.

After class, reflect on what you heard and complete the last section on the worksheet.

***Due Dates:***

One journal worksheet will be due four times on the dates of February 2, February 14, February 28 and March 14.

***Submission Procedures:***

You have two options for turning in journal worksheets. You may either submit them via e-mail to Jon Scholl (jscholl1@illinois.edu*)* or via Compass. Any journals not received by the time the following class begins will be late and will receive a grade of zero.

***Grading:***

The grading of your journals will be 20% of your final grade. Journals will be graded on content, completeness, grammar and style. No journal may be submitted if you did not attend the class.

Attachment B

**Research Groups**

Research done by the groups will seek to pique the interest and deepen the class’ understanding of issues we will be seeing and discussing throughout the semester.

Students will be asked to prioritize their interest in the topics listed on the first day of class. Your instructor will try to assign each student to a group addressing a topic of priority interest.

The groups will present their information on a PowerPoint.

Topics:

1. Water
2. Agricultural Labor
3. Organic and Conventional Farming
4. Animal Care
5. Land Protection
6. Product Labeling

Sample Questions:

* + - 1. What is the key issue or issues being addressed?
      2. What statistics or examples can you provide to describe the nature and extent of the issue?
      3. Who are the key players in discussions about the issue?
      4. What are the primary concerns of the major proponents and opponents?
      5. What are the impacts upon and implications for farmers, ranchers and consumers?
      6. Are there pending bills or initiatives in California that could significantly impact the future of the problem it’s citizens?
      7. How might the interests and concerns of farmers, ranchers and consumers in California differ from those in Illinois?

Due Date:

PowerPoints are due to the instructor at least 24 hours before presentations.

Presentations will be made on February 2, 2017.