

**MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY**

Revised 9/15

**SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE**

**COURSE PREFIX: AGR      COURSE NUMBER: 199      CREDIT HOURS: 3**

**I.      TITLE:**

Contemporary Issues in Agriculture

**II.     CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

A course designed to increase the understanding, awareness, and critical analysis of contemporary agricultural issues and their effect upon the social, political, economic and cultural aspects of society. Topics will include environmental issues, biotechnology, animal, crop, career, economy and trade, agricultural policy, food quality, safety and international agriculture issues.

**III.    COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

After completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Identify and prioritize key U.S. and Global agricultural issues.
- B. Conduct research to increase their knowledge about issues.
- C. Analyze information to effectively communicate both sides of an issue.
- D. Interact and participate in group discussion.
- E. Form independent decisions utilizing critical thinking and conflict resolution skills.
- F. Gain self-confidence in their ability to make rational decisions.
- G. Gain knowledge in agriculture and its relation to society.

**IV.    CONTENT OUTLINE:**

- A. Agricultural Issue Analysis
- B. Importance and History of Agriculture
- C. Agricultural Issues\*
  1. Career Issues
  2. Environmental issues
    - a. Water
    - b. Land use
    - c. Air
  3. Animal issues
  4. Crop Issues/Genetically modified crops
  5. Agricultural Biotechnology Issues
  6. Food Quality, Safety and Policy Issues
  7. Economy and Trade Issues
  8. Agricultural Policy Issues

- 9. International Agricultural Issues
- 10. Other Issues
  - \*Example issues

**V. INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

- A. Interdisciplinary guest speakers
- B. Research investigations of electronic (internet) and printed media (journals)
- C. Class discussions
- D. Individual oral presentations
- E. Team debates
- F. Written reports/research papers
- G. Interview of professionals
- H. Role playing
- I. Discussion groups on email

**VI. FIELD AND CLINICAL EXPERIENCES:**

As given in class.

**VII. TEXTS AND RESOURCES:**

*Saving the Planet with Pesticides and Plastics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Author: Dennis Avery. Hudson Institute.

- A. TV shows “Ag Day” and “US Farm Report”
- B. Internet sites: <http://gopher.ag.uiuc.edu/aim/discovery/>,  
<http://www.agday.com>
- C. “Farmer’s Pride” Newspaper publication

**VIII. GRADING PROCEDURES:**

Test 1: Agricultural History	100
Test 2: U.S. Agricultural & Food Issues	100
Test 3: Global Agricultural Issues	100
Presentation of Ag Issues	50
Quizzes	75
Total	425

Grades will follow the standard grading scale:

90 – 100	=	A
80 – 89	=	B
70 – 79	=	C
60 – 69	=	D
Below 60	=	E

\*Note: Quizzes may not be made up. 5 points per school day will be deducted for all late papers/projects turned in.

#### **IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Students are expected to adhere to the MSU Attendance Policy outlined in the current *MSU Bulletin*.

\*Excessive class absences (seven or more) may result in failure of the course or the lowering of a grade.

#### **X. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**

Murray State University takes seriously its moral and educational obligation to maintain high standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior. Instructors are expected to evaluate students' academic achievements accurately, as well as ascertain that work submitted by students is authentic and the result of their own efforts, and consistent with established academic standards. Students are obligated to respect and abide by the basic standards of personal and professional integrity.

##### **Violations of Academic Honesty include:**

**Cheating** - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized information such as books, notes, study aids, or other electronic, online, or digital devices in any academic exercise; as well as unauthorized communication of information by any means to or from others during any academic exercise.

**Fabrication and Falsification** - Intentional alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves changing information whereas fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information.

**Multiple Submission** - The submission of substantial portions of the same academic work, including oral reports, for credit more than once without authorization from the instructor.

**Plagiarism** - Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, creative work, or data of someone else as one's own in any academic exercise, without due and proper acknowledgement.

Instructors should outline their expectations that may go beyond the scope of this policy at the beginning of each course and identify such expectations and restrictions in the course syllabus. When an instructor receives evidence, either directly or indirectly, of academic dishonesty, he or she should investigate the instance. The faculty member should then take appropriate disciplinary action.

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to the following:

- 1) Requiring the student(s) to repeat the exercise or do additional related exercise(s).

2) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) on the particular exercise(s) involved.

3) Lowering the grade or failing the student(s) in the course.

**If the disciplinary action results in the awarding of a grade of E in the course, the student(s) may not drop the course.**

Faculty reserve the right to invalidate any exercise or other evaluative measures if substantial evidence exists that the integrity of the exercise has been compromised. Faculty also reserve the right to document in the course syllabi further academic honesty policy elements related to the individual disciplines.

A student may appeal the decision of the faculty member with the department chair in writing within five working days. Note: If, at any point in this process, the student alleges that actions have taken place that may be in violation of the Murray State University Non-Discrimination Statement, this process must be suspended and the matter be directed to the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access. Any appeal will be forwarded to the appropriate university committee as determined by the Provost.

NOTE: The School of Agriculture Faculty have adopted and implemented an Academic Honesty Policy in addition to the University Honesty Policy, which can be found in the current *Undergraduate Bulletin and Graduate Bulletin*. The policy sets guidelines regarding acts of dishonesty and the procedure to follow should an event occur. It is each Agriculture student's responsibility to obtain and read a copy of this document. The School's Academic Honesty Policy can be obtained by asking for a copy from any Agriculture Faculty member or the Secretary.

## **XI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

### Policy Statement

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. For more information, contact the Executive Director of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Access, 103 Wells Hall, (270) 809-3155 (voice), (270) 809-3361 (TDD).

### Students with Disabilities

Students requiring special assistance due to a disability should visit the Office of Student Disability Services immediately for assistance with accommodations. For more information, students should contact the Office of

Student Disability Services, 423 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071. 270-809-2018  
(voice) 270-809-5889(TDD).

## **XII. CELL PHONE POLICY**

The School of Agriculture recognizes that in today's world cell phones are a familiar and often necessary form of communication for students.

It shall be the policy of the School that no cell phone usage shall be allowed in class and/or labs without the prior consent of the course instructor. This shall include verbal calling, incoming calls, email, text messaging, and use of cell phone calculators on tests and quizzes.

Cell phones must be kept on vibrate and out of sight and use (i.e. secured to a person's belt or kept in a bag or purse away from desks and lab counters).

Should a student's cell phone be visible, ring, or other form of unauthorized usage that is interruptive to the class or lab, the student may be asked to leave class and not return for that class/lab period.

Upon prior consent of the instructor, a student may obtain permission to use their phone in case of an emergency or in critical family situations.

This policy also includes pagers and other electronic equipment such as blackberries and/or computers/laptops.