

COMMUNICATING AGRICULTURAL ISSUES
AGRI 340 – Fall 2017
School of Agriculture - Western Illinois University

INSTRUCTOR

Jana Knupp

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Office Hours: M/W 8-9 a.m., T 1:00-4:00 p.m.

& TH 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. and by appointment

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Section I will meet Monday & Wednesday 9:00-9:50 a.m. KH 152

Section II will meet Monday & Wednesday 11:00-11:50 p.m. KH 152

Section III will meet Monday and Wednesday 1:00-1:50 p.m. KH 152

This is a two-semester hour lecture/discussion, **writing intensive** course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITES

AGRI 340 Development of written and oral communication skills to address current issues in agriculture. Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID) course. Pre-Requisite: Eng 280 & Agri 220.

MATERIAL

- Facebook Account
- Twitter Account
- WordPress Account
- Course handouts will be provided as necessary. Notes and additional information can be found on WesternOnline.
- Activities outside of the classroom will be required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate stronger business writing and communication skills.
2. Analyze, understand, and effectively communicate current agriculture issues.
3. Orally present information on an agricultural issue with confidence.
4. Write business e-mails, letters, reports, blog posts, and presentations.
5. Feel comfortable discussing a variety of agriculture issues and help others to have a greater understanding of agriculture.
6. Question everything. Ask yourself why you do things the way you do. Strive to make improvements in agriculture.

IMPORTANT DATES

September 4-Labor Day, University is closed

October 4-No Class-Go to the Career Fair!

October 29-Last day to drop the course with a "W" grade

November 20-24-Thanksgiving break, University is closed

December 13-Section I Final 8 a.m.

December 13-Section II Final 10 a.m. December 13-Section III Final 1 p.m.

CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Important class announcements (cancellations, etc.) will be made via WIU email, WesternOnline, and the WIU text notification system.

CLASS RULES

Failure to comply with the class rules will result in a loss of participation points. Repeated offense will result in the loss of one letter grade.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are not to be used during class unless requested to do so for class activity purposes. If, due to medical or public safety concerns, a student needs an exception to this policy he/she should inform the instructor prior to class. **Phone usage is not allowed during class. This isn't a joke. Seriously, put your phones away.**

Tobacco: Use of tobacco **in any form** is prohibited in university buildings/classrooms.

Talking: Unnecessary side conversations will not be tolerated.

Respect: Please respect the opinions of your classmates during all class discussions and activities. **Fifty points** will be deducted if at any time during a debate you are harassing or demeaning towards another student with an opposing viewpoint.

Do. The. Work.: The more effort you put into this class, the more you will get out of it.

ABSENCES

Attendance is required. Excused absences (emergencies, funerals, and illness) should be cleared with the instructor prior to the class either via email or the OARS system. Unexcused absences will result in a loss of participation/attendance points for that day. All assignments due for that class period should be completed prior to the next class period.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments do not exist. Your assignment is due at the beginning of class on the day it is due in the form assigned (WO, hard copy, etc). No exceptions.

PLAGAIRISM

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment and possibly the course. Properly learning to cite a source is vital to this course. <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

Participation: Students are expected to regularly attend class and to actively participate in discussions and activities.

Academic Integrity: The rules and regulations outlined in the University's policy on academic integrity are applied to this course.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Detailed information regarding student rights and responsibilities can be found at <http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/>. It is your responsibility to be familiar with the posted information.

Special Accommodations: If you need special accommodations, please feel free to stop by and discuss your needs or contact Disability Support Services at 298-2512.

GRADING POLICY:

The course grade will be based on the following:

GRADING SCALE:

93% and above = A

90 – 92 = A-

87 – 89 = B+

83 – 86 = B

80 – 82 = B-

77 – 79 = C+

73 – 76 = C

70 – 72 = C-

67 – 69 = D+

63 – 66 = D

60 – 62 = D-

59 and below = F

Agriculture Education Majors please note the following:

In accordance with the Illinois State Board of Education certification rules, all candidates seeking teacher certification are required by Western Illinois University to obtain a grade of "C" or better in all directed general education courses, all core courses, and all courses in the option. Note C- is below a C.

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

The University Writing Center is available to you for your use on assignments and papers. Please feel free to visit it about material for this class or other classes. http://www.wiu.edu/university_writing_center/index.php

ASSIGNMENTS

Formatting: Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be:

- **typed**, 12 pt. font
- Double spaced
- 1" margins on all sides
- Times New Roman or Garamond font
- Labeled with your name, date, assignment name, and class section.
- MLA format
- All papers of one draft stapled together. Drafts should be paper clipped together.
- Assignments should be turned in in the form requested (hard copy or Western Online)

Failure to properly format any assignment will result in a loss of 5 points.

**Handwritten assignments will not be accepted and will result in 0 points.

Writing Focused Assignments

Ag Issue Opinion Piece: (30 pts) Write a brief on the biggest issue facing the agriculture industry today. If you are stating the obvious, look at it from all angles. Breathe new life into the issue.

Email: (30 pts) Write and send a professional email.

Letter: (50 pts) Write a business letter.

Blog Post (120 pts): Write a blog post and post it to the WIU School of Ag blog. Posts should include a title, your name as the author, relevant, pre-approved content, and photos. Your post will be read by the public. **Posts deemed inappropriate or profane will result in a failing grade.

Facebook Posts: (50 pts) Create 10 Facebook posts advocating for agriculture. **Five** shares of articles (not classmates posts) are allowed, but you **must** include your own unique comments for the post. Five of your posts must be created using Canva.com. Summarize your experience. Was there engagement? Did people comment/like/share your post? Did you receive any negative comments? If so, how did you handle them? Screenshot each of your posts and comments and include with your write-up in a Word document.

Twitter Posts: (50 pts) Create 10 Twitter posts advocating for agriculture. **Five** retweets (not from classmates) are allowed, but you must include your own unique comments for the post. You **must tag @WIUAg** and use the hashtag **#WIUAgLife**. If you do not tag WIUAg AND use the hashtag, you will not receive credit for that tweet. Compile screenshots into a Word document on WO. No write up is needed.

Conversation Prompt Responses: (50 pts) Respond to conversation prompts using the EASE method of communicating agriculture issues.

Ag Documentary Reflection Summary: (50 pts) After watching a documentary in class, write a reflection summary based on the questions provided and your own reaction.

Group Research Writing/Presentation

Source Credibility Check: (25 pts) Determine the credibility of the provided sources by answering the questions provided in the library guide.

Source Identification: (10 pts) Identify two credible sources of information for your essay. Hand in two complete MLA citations.

Thesis & Outline: (50 pts) Complete a working thesis and outline of your final paper to help you organize your research and the flow of your paper. Additional items may be added to your final paper, however the material presented in your outline should appear in your paper. You must hand this in with your final paper.

Draft: (50 pts) Your research essay draft should be 1-page long. It will be reviewed by the instructor as well as a peer in order to provide constructive feedback as you finalize your paper. You must hand in this draft with your final paper.

Peer Review: (15 pts) Review a draft of a paper written by another group. Your feedback should be constructive.

Ag Issues Essay: (300 pts) As a group, formulate a paper covering food production and safety and the issues that relate to it. Specific topics will be chosen in class. Your final paper should be a minimum of 8 pages. The cover page, executive summary, bibliography, and addendums with graphs, photos, etc. do not count in your page total. Please hand your graded final draft with your final paper (one paper per group). The comments made in your draft should be addressed in your final paper unless previously cleared with the instructor. Your paper should explain both sides of the issue. Your paper should include:

- A cover page with paper title, names of each student in the group, class number and section, date.
- Executive summary
- 4 page paper
- Optional addendums
- Works Cited: You must use a minimum of 4 credible sources for your paper. You may NOT use Wikipedia as a source. All sources must be validated using the CRAAP test.

In-Class Group Presentation: (100 pts) Present your group presentation to the class as if you are speaking to a lay audience. Answer questions raised in an effective manner.

Agriculture Advocacy Project/College Aggies Online

Plan Proposal: (50 pts) As a group, complete a project plan proposal for your agriculture outreach project in detail. Intent, dates, times, message, supplies, budget, etc. are all needed in the proposal.

Agriculture Outreach Project: (300 pts) Develop, organize, and conduct an agriculture outreach project to educate the consuming public about the truths of food and fuel production and practice communicating with people about agriculture. Messages should be effective, informative, and reach the masses.

Ag Outreach Summary: (75 pts) Complete a summary stating what you did for your project. What was the overall message? How did you convey the message? Was it effective? What would you change if you could do it differently? Include a minimum of 10 photos from your event. Due within one week after your event is held.

Advocacy Project Assistance: (25 pts) Assist another group in one of the 340 sections with the execution of their event. Many events are large in scale and extra help is needed to complete them.

EXAMS

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given at the instructor's discretion and will be unannounced. Questions will be multiple choice, true/false, and short answer.

Final: (200 pts) The comprehensive final exam will cover the material presented in class by the instructor and the group presentations. Questions will be multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and long answer to conversation prompts.

EXTRA CREDIT

Daily Dirt: Each week we will discuss a current event/ag issue. If you provide me with the topic you wish to discuss and lead the discussion in class, you will receive 10 extra credit points. You must notify me of the topic prior to class, either via email or in person.

CBT Professional Development Series: (up to 10 points each-30 points max) Attend and write a summary about what you learned from a session from the CBT Professional Development Series, September 11-22. For a full list of sessions, visit <http://www.wiu.edu/cbt/career/> **Bring your WIU ID!**

College Aggies Online Individual Contest: (100 pts) Sign up as an individual competitor in the College Aggies Online contest and complete at least 3 of the challenges. When signing up, list “Western Illinois University Ag Club” as a referral. Sign up at <http://animalagalliance.org/connect/#collegeaggies>

THE BASICS

Proper grammar, spelling, verb usage, flow, punctuation, capitalization, etc. should come naturally to you by now. All writing assignments will be graded for these and errors will result in a loss of points.

ACCREDITATION

The School of Agriculture is housed in the College of Business and Technology which is accredited by AACSB-International.

NOTICES

Please be advised that this syllabus is **tentative**. All classes are different and we may or may not be able to address all of the content areas. Any deviations from the syllabus will be announced as soon as possible.

Date	Discussion	Assignment DUE
M 8/21	Course Introduction	
W 8/23	MLA/ Group Paper/Presentation formulation/topic selection	Ag Brief-Western Online
M 8/28	Library Resource Tour (meet in 2nd floor classroom/lab in library)	Source Creditability Check-Hard copy in Library
W 8/30	Writing Well/Effective Essays	2 MLA citations-Western Online
M 9/4	No Class-Labor Day	
W 9/6	Thesis/Outline Peer Review	Working Thesis & Outline
M 9/11	College Aggies Projects-overview/planning	*Feel free to bring tablets/laptops today*
W 9/13	Blogging	
M 9/18	Social Media & Blogging cont.	College Aggies Plan-hard copy in class AND Western Online*
W 9/20	Social Media	
M 9/25	Communication Skills	
W 9/27	Communication Skills	
M 10/4	No Class-Ag Career Fair	
W 10/6	Aggies Project Work	
M 10/9	Advocating	
W 10/11	Advocating	
M 10/16	Letters/Emails	Conversation Responses
W 10/18	Letter Peer Review	Rough Draft letter
M 10/23		Final email (via email) and letter-hard copy in class
W 10/25	Draft Peer Review	Draft #1 due/Editing/Peer Review
M 10/30	Food Labels	
W 11/1	Food Labels	
M 11/6		
W 11/8	Ag Documentary	
M 11/13	Group Presentation	Twitter/Facebook Posts -Western Online
W 11/15	Group Presentation	Ag Documentary Write-Up-Western Online
M 11/20	No Class-Fall Break	
W 11/22	No Class-Fall Break	
M 11/27	Group Presentation	Group Papers Due
W 11/29	Group Presentation	
M 12/4	Group Presentation	
W 12/6	Final Review	
W 12/13	Ag 340 Final 8 am, 10 a.m., 1 pm.	
<i>**Calendar is tentative</i>	<i>*Guest speakers will be scheduled throughout the semester.</i>	