COMMUNICATING AGRICULTURAL ISSUES
AGRI 340 – Fall 2024
School of Agriculture – Western Illinois University

INSTRUCTORS
Dr. Graciela Andrango
312 Knoblauch Hall
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OFFICE HOURS
M, W, TH, and F 12:00 to 12:50 a.m. or by appointment

Dr. Dan Atherton
B 22 Knoblauch Hall
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M/W 1:00 to 1:50 or T/TH 12:00 to 12:50 or by appointment

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS: AGRI 340 will meet on M and W in Knoblauch 307. Section 001 meets from 8:00 to 8:50 a.m., and Section 002 from 9:00 to 9:50 a.m.

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

EMAILS: Please include the course and section you are enrolled in in any email.

MATERIALS:
- Agri-Pulse Weekly Newsletter via Western Online
- Articles via Western Online
- Term Project Book: Food Economics- Agriculture, Nutrition, and Health. William Masters & Amelia Finaret. 2024. Via Western Online

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
The goal of the AGRI 340 course is to help students develop written and oral communication skills to address current issues in agriculture.

This course has been designated to meet the Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID) graduation requirement. WID courses provide instruction in the processes and formats for the writing content and style needed to be an effective professional in a student's chosen field. Students will write approximately 30 pages during this course.

PREREQUISITES:
AGRI 220 and ENG 280

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
After taking this course, the student will be able to:
1. Demonstrate superior business writing and communication skills.
2. Understand, analyze, and effectively communicate current agricultural issues.
3. Orally present information on an agricultural issue to different audiences.
4. Write business emails, letters, reports, and presentations.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS:
Participation/ Attendance & Sitting Chart: Attendance is required and will be graded through Kahoot! Quizzes. Students' participation in class is strongly encouraged. Students are expected to read the chapter and activities assigned each week – see the course outline at the end of this document.

Absences: If at any time you have a family emergency, funeral, illness, or any university activity (including Judging Team, AgVocators), please use the Online Absence Reporting System (OARS) system to report your absence (www.wiu.edu/oars). Please note that the OARS system does not excuse your absence; it merely documents it. It is still up to the instructor to excuse the absence (see above for valid excuses). I will need the email generated from this system before class and not after. If I receive the email after class starts, the late grade policies come into effect. Excessive absences will result in failure of the course. The student remains responsible for contacting the instructor to complete missed work as soon as possible and is ultimately accountable for catching up with the material covered in class during the student's absence.

Academic Integrity: This course applies the rules and regulations outlined in the University's policy on academic integrity. See http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in the Student Handbook will result in automatic failure.

Plagiarism is not tolerated in this class. Works evidenced as plagiarism (accidental or willful use of someone else's words or ideas) will be penalized by a failing grade on the homework, quiz, or exam. **In addition, the instructor will follow the procedure according to the Student Academic Integrity Policy- see the link above.**

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

Students with disabilities: In accordance with University values and disability law, students with disabilities may request academic accommodations where there are aspects of a course that result in barriers to inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement. To file an official request for disability-related accommodations, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Development and Success Center at 309-298-1884, *disability@wiu.edu*, or at 125 Memorial Hall. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible to ensure that this course is accessible to you in a timely manner.

Military/Veteran Support Statement: As a military-friendly institution, and in accordance with federal regulations and Illinois statutes, Western Illinois University has established *policies* and procedures to accommodate military service students. In addition to the supports available at WIU's Veterans Resource Center (*wiu.edu/student_success/veterans* / 309-298-3505), veterans, members of the National Guard or Reserves, and active-duty military personnel with military obligations (e.g., deployments, training, drill) are encouraged to communicate these, in advance whenever possible, to the instructor. The Military Service *Policy* can be found at *http://www.wiu.edu/policies/military.php.*

University values: University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at 309-298-1977 or anonymously online at *http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/report.php*. If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator—the complete Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy. The policy is available at: *http://www.wiu.edu/policies/dhsm.php*.

Technical Support for Western Online:
- Provided through the Western Online Brightspace Virtual Assistant by clicking on the **Get Help! link/icon at the bottom right corner of every page** in Western Online.
- Instructions for using the Virtual Assistant can be found at https://wiu.edu/citr/home/get_help.php.
- All other technical support, including issues with enrollment in online courses, should be requested by contacting:
  University Technology (uTech) Support Center
  Website: http://www.wiu.edu/university_technology/
  Phone: (309)298-TECH (8-8324)

University Writing Center: The University Writing Center (UWC) is your go-to resource at any stage of the writing process! Appointments are available in three formats: in-person (3rd Floor, Malpass Library or QC Complex 2219), online (real-time with video or chat and document sharing), and e-tutoring (asynchronous feedback on an uploaded paper).

Visit wiu.mywconline.com to schedule an appointment, or call (309) 298-2814. **Fall 2024 UWC Hours at the 3rd Floor, Malpass Library:** M – Th: 9 AM - 8 PM, F: 9 AM - 4 PM, and Sun: 2 - 8 PM

USE OF CELLULAR PHONES, SMART WATCHES, TABLETS, AND LAPTOPS:
All cell phones should be turned off before class as a courtesy to other students and the instructor. Continued disregard of this policy may result in ejection from the course. If a student needs an exception to this policy due to medical or public safety concerns, he/she should inform the instructor before class.

The use of laptops or tablets is not allowed in class unless it is required by the instructor to conduct research or any class activity related to the topic being covered. Lecture notes will be available at Western Online and must be printed in advance. **Texting or surfing the internet** is not allowed during class, and repeated violations may lead to dismissal from the course with an assigned grade of F.

TOBACCO POLICY:
Tobacco use of any kind will not be tolerated in class. This <u>includes</u> chewing tobacco.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Monday, Sep 2	Labor Day – No Class/ University Closed
Friday, Oct 4	Fall Break – No Class/ University Closed
Sunday, Oct 27	Last day to drop classes or withdraw from the university
Tuesday, Nov 5	2024 General Election Day – No Class/ University Closed
Nov 25 – 29	Thanksgiving Break – No Class/ University Closed
Monday, Dec 09	Section 1: 8:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. (Term Paper Presentations)
Wednesday, Dec 11	Section 2: 8:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. (Term Paper Presentations)

GRADING POLICY:
The course grade will be based on the following factors, with weightings as indicated:

Writing Assignments	50%	A = 93% or above	C = 73 - 76.99%
Agri-Pulse Oral Presentation	15%	A- = 90 - 92.99%	C- = 70 - 72.99%
Quizzes	10%	B+ = 87 - 89.99%	D+ = 67 - 69.99%
Term Project	25%	B = 83 - 86.99%	D = 63 - 66.99%
Total	100%	B- = 80 - 82.99%	D- = 60 - 62.99%
		C+ = 77 - 79.99%	F = <60%

Grade-breaking points may be lowered, but they will never be raised. They will be evaluated only after the final numerical grades are calculated.

Attention Education Majors: With the changes within the Illinois State Teaching License requirements, students must receive a grade of a "C-" or better in this course to meet state requirements. With the university's +/- grading system, receiving a grade below a "C-" will require you to retake this course or find a substitute course to meet School of Agriculture graduation requirements.

GRADING DISAGREEMENTS:
If students disagree with a particular answer, they must provide a logical reason in writing for their disagreement. This does not apply to scoring errors. All instructors are human, and occasional errors in grading will occur. Please bring any such mistakes to the instructor's attention immediately.

ASSIGNMENTS
Formatting
Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be:
- Typed, 12 pt. font, double-spaced
- 1" margin on all sides
- Times New Roman
- Labeled with your name, date, assignment name, and class section
- Cited using APA, Chicago, or Harvard style
- Uploaded to Western Online in Word (.docx) format

Note: Handwritten assignments or screenshots will not be accepted, resulting in zero points.

Basic Rules
All writing assignments will be graded for mechanics, and additional errors will result in a loss of points. Assignments will also be graded on content, clarity, attention to detail and instructions, and completeness. Students will write approximately 30 pages during this course. "Revision assignments" allow you to submit the assignment, receive feedback, revise, and resubmit for a grade.

Brief Description of the Assignments

Attendance/ Kahoot! Quizzes and other type of quizzes (frequent but unannounced)
The quizzes will be based on the weekly Agri-Pulse Newsletter, which is available at Western Online, and any content we cover in class.

Participation & Agri-Pulse Newsletter 5-min Presentation
In each class session, one student will discuss an article from the Agri-Pulse Newsletter. Participation is highly encouraged.

Three unique things about me that will help me succeed (~250 words)
One skill, one personal characteristic, one connection

Book Chapter & Group Rules
Students will choose their partner and book chapter for the Term Project. Each group will submit a set of teamwork rules.

Sources Citation
Learn strategies for reviewing literature and citing sources to support statements with evidence. Students will submit a small summary of reviewed articles of their choice (related to the term project) and will cite sources using APA, Chicago, or Harvard style.

Ag Policy/Regulation/ Agricultural Practice/Concept Factsheet
Learn strategies to provide farmers with valuable information. Students will choose a topic and create a factsheet to help their audience learn about it.

Ag Policy/Regulation/ Agricultural Practice/Concept Brief
Learn strategies to provide policymakers with valuable information about agricultural issues. Students will choose a topic and create a brief to help their audience learn about it.

Survey instrument
Students will choose a topic and design a questionnaire to collect information from a particular audience to understand it better.

Data analysis and visualization: Graphs & Tables
Students will create graphs and tables using the information collected through the survey.

Findings Report
Writing a report about the information collected from the survey.

AI Activity
How can AI be used to improve our efficiency?

Email/Letter
Learn email protocol to communicate appropriately and safely in the industry.

Procedure
Write a procedure for employees to follow.

Consumer Concern Response
Learn how to respond to consumers' concerns using facts and evidence.

Term Project

LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Your assignment is due at 11:59 p.m. on the day it is due on Western Online. Unless otherwise stated, all assignments will be submitted electronically. All files must be .docx documents. Late assignments will have a penalty. Assignments submitted after the third day of the due date will receive a zero in the grade book.

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

AGRI 340 – COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Date	Topic/ Material	Assignments/ Due dates
1	Aug 19 – Aug 23	What do we want/Importance of Science Communication UWC visit	***Due: Friday, Aug 23*** ▪ Three unique things about me
2	Aug 26 – Aug 30	Term Project: Introduction Research and Source Citation	***Due: Friday, Aug 30*** ▪ Book Chapter & Group Rules ▪ Sources Citation
3	Sept 02 – Sept 06	Writing a Brief to Inform Farmers about a Specific Ag Policy/ Regulation *Sept 02 – Labor Day – No Classes*	***Due: Friday, Sept 06*** ▪ Ag Policy Factsheet
4	Sept 09 – Sept 13	Supporting/Critiquing an Existing Ag Policy/ Regulation	***Due: Friday, Sept 13*** ▪ Ag Policy/ Regulation Brief
5	Sept 16 – Sept 20	The Survey Instrument	***Due: Friday, Sept 20*** ▪ Survey instrument
6	Sept 23 – Sept 27	Data Collection & Visualization	***Due: Friday, Sept 27*** ▪ Graphs & Tables
7	Sept 30 – Oct 04	Writing a survey findings report *Oct 04 – Fall Break – No Classes*	***Due: Thursday, Oct 03*** ▪ Findings Report
8	Oct 07 – Oct 11	AI: Pros and Cons	***Due: Friday, Oct 11*** ▪ AI
9	Oct 14 – Oct 18	Writing emails/letters in the industry	***Due: Friday, Oct 18*** ▪ Email/Letter
10	Oct 21 – Oct 25	Term Project: Headers & Sub-headers	***Due: Friday, Oct 25*** ▪ Term Project- Rough Draft
11	Oct 28 – Nov 01	How do you write a policy/procedure/regulation for your employees?	***Due: Friday, Nov 01*** ▪ Procedure
12	Nov 04 – Nov 08	Term Project: Discussion *Nov 05 – 2024 General Election – No Classes*	***Due: Friday, Nov 08*** ▪ Term Project- Final version
13	Nov 11 – Nov 15	How do we respond to consumer concerns? Bias & Facts	***Due: Friday, Nov 15*** ▪ Consumer Concern Response
14	Nov 18 – Nov 22	Communicating with PowerPoint	***Due: Friday, Nov 22*** ▪ Term Project- Slides
15	*Nov 25 – Nov 29*	*Thanksgiving Break*	
16	Dec 02 – Dec 06	Term Project Presentations	
17	Dec 09 – Dec 13	Term Project Presentations Monday, Dec 09 - Section 1: 8:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m. Wednesday, Dec 11 - Section 2: 8:00 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.	

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