Angelo State University
Course Syllabus
AGRB 4305 – Agricultural Policy – Section 001
Spring 2021

Instructor: Dr. English Ratliff
Office: Vincent Building 226
Email: eratliff@angelo.edu
Phone: 325-486-6938

Lecture Days: Tuesday & Thursday
Lecture Hours: 9:30-10:45am
Lecture Room: Vincent Building 263
Credit Hours: 3

Office Hours:
Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm are set as official office hours.

However, you are welcome to stop by my office any time you want and check if I have time for questions. If you wish to make an appointment, check with me after class or by email. You are highly encouraged to stop by my office with any questions or concerns about the class or just to say hi and introduce yourself.

E-mail:
I frequently use email to communicate with the class. E-mails will be sent only to your Angelo account. It is the students' responsibility to make sure their email address is correct and to check their regular email inbox, as well as the spam and/or junk folder. I also use Blackboard to send announcements so please make sure that you have announcements turned on for email notification.

How This Class Will Run: I am still trying to make sure that we have the exact number of students in the class before I decide how to run this class. I will let everyone know with an email the day before class at the latest.
Textbook:

Recommended:


Handouts – Lecture notes: 
Appropriate handouts will be provided throughout the course.

Course Description: While virtually all the developed countries subsidize agriculture they do so in different ways and at different levels. To understand why, this course will provide an overview of issues relating to agricultural policy, economic development and globalization. Furthermore, we will develop an understanding of the nature of agriculture as an industry. The focus of the analysis will be European Union, United States, Canada and China.

Learning Objectives: The objectives of the class may be summarized as follows:
1) Develop the tools necessary to analyze past, current and proposed agricultural policies.
2) Investigate the major international organizations that influence agricultural policy.
3) Analyze the interaction between economic goals and social goals and evaluate the ability of agricultural policy to accomplish these goals.

Teaching Philosophy: My teaching objective is to create an environment in which students can successfully reach the learning outcomes of the course. My teaching philosophy involves my rejection of power over you in favor of creating opportunities, the minimization of stress, a focus on learning based rather than performance based evaluation and creating a welcoming environment of two way communication.

Teaching Methods: A variety of teaching methods will be used in the course. These include: 1) lectures by the instructor, 2) individual and a group in-class discussion, 3) individual and in-class exercise

Grading System for Evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Weight in Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam 1:</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exam 2:</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (cumulative):</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short paper presentations:</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term project:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Evaluation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation:</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading:
Grades will be determined as follows:

- $90\% < A \leq 100\%$
- $80\% < B \leq 90\%$
- $70\% < C \leq 80\%$
- $60\% < D \leq 70\%$
- $F \leq 60\%$

Note that the lower bound of each grade bracket is a “greater than” sign, not a “greater than or equal to” sign. For example a grade of 89.9% is a B not an A. This policy is designed to reduce conflicts over round off in computing grades.

Although individual exams, homework and in class assignments for this course will not be graded on a curve, if a student is close to a grade threshold the instructor reserves the right to adjust grades at his discretion. For example if you have an 89.5% I may increase your letter grade to A due to excellence in class participation.

Examination Schedule
Tentative major examination scheduling is as follows:

- Exam 1: Tuesday, February 25 9:30 a.m.– 10:45 a.m.
- Exam 2: Thursday, April 15 9:30 a.m.– 10:45 a.m.
- Final Exam: Thursday, May 13 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Rules and Regulations:

Attendance: Regular attendance and verbal contribution is expected. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to determine what material you missed. You should obtain this material from another student; do not ask the instructor to bring you up to speed if you missed a class. Poor performance on an exam, which results from missing a class, will under no circumstances be accepted as a rationale for alteration of any grade. Even if you have a legitimate excuse for absence, it is still your responsibility to learn what you missed.
**Class Participation:** During each class period a participation sheet with a question related to the lecture will be circulated. These participation sheets account for 5% of your grade. Specifically, if you complete more than 80% of the total participation sheets five (5) points will be added to your final grade. If you complete 70% - 80% of the total participation sheets four (4) points will be added to your final grade. If you complete 60% - 70% of the total participation sheets three (3) points will be added to your final grade. If you complete less than 50%-60% of the total participation sheets two (2) points will be added to your final grade. If you complete less than 50% of the total participation sheets, zero (0) points will be added to your final grade.

If you are not in class at the time the participation question is circulated you will be counted as absent (you are expected to show up for class on time). Signing the class roll for a student who is not present will be considered as a case of academic dishonesty and will be referred to the university.

Lastly, a student with an excessive number of absences may be withdrawn at the discretion of the instructor.

**Short paper presentations:** After the first exam the class will shift to one lecture and one discussion session per week. For the discussion sessions you will be divided into a number of groups (if we have 19 students we will have 8 groups of two and one group of three). Each group will be required to find a **scholarly article** on the topic discussed previously and prepare two pages synopsis. Copies of the synopsis should be provided to me by 8:00 a.m. the day of the presentation. In class we will discuss the topic of the week using ideas from the articles to provide different perspectives. **Note:** these discussions are worth slightly less than 20% of your grade, so I expect considerable effort on your part. Written directions will of course fail to totally communicate relevant information so do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions after my oral directions have been given.
Peer Evaluations:

The instructor will ask each student to complete a set of peer evaluations (one for each team member) during the semester. Peer evaluation grades will be determined based on the attendance at group meetings, contributions and efforts to the 1) paper summaries and 2) group presentations. Students failing to submit peer evaluations for other group members will receive a peer evaluation grade of zero.

Term Project:

Agricultural policies are often a controversial issue. Some farmers, citizens, politicians etc. are in favor of them while others are not. Start by reading some of the popular press on an agricultural policy issue. Then start looking at the recent economic literature to refine your knowledge. Prepare a 7-10 double space page position paper on whether or not the policy you examine is desirable. You may present up to two additional pages for tables and figures beyond the 7-10 pages. Also you are required to reference material appropriately. Project citations should include only credible sources (i.e. not Wikipedia or other open source websites)

Possible term project topics:

- U.S. Cotton Policies
- U.S. Dairy Policies
- U.S. Ethanol Policies
- Food Stamps
- U.S. Peanut Policies
- Country of Origin Labeling
- EU Multi-functionality
- EU sugar
- Green Payments and Agro-Environment Regulations
- Any other topic of your choice. If you choose the policy yourself I must agree to it.
**Academic Integrity and Misconduct**

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject to disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU. The College of Science and Engineering adheres to the university’s Statement of Academic Integrity.

**Angelo State University Policy on Religious Holy Days**

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.

**COVID-19 Policies**

*Required Use of Facial Coverings*

As a member of the Texas Tech University System, Angelo State University has adopted the mandatory Facial Covering Policy to ensure a safe and healthy classroom experience. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, in compliance with the university policy students in this class are required to wear a mask/facial covering before, during, and after class. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge as a prerequisite to enter the classroom. You are also asked to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability. For the safety of everyone, any student not appropriately wearing a mask/facial covering will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. The student will be responsible to make up any missed class content or work. Continued non-compliance with the Texas Tech University System Policy may result in disciplinary action through the Office of Student Conduct.
Missed Examinations – Missed Assignments:

Missing an exam or an assignment will result in zero credit, unless a valid, written excuse is provided. A valid excuse is something which is truly beyond your control such as a medical emergency. You must provide the instructor with an official document in order for the absence to be excused. For university related activities such as traveling with a team etc. you must inform the instructor with an official letter indicating the necessity of your trip at least one week in advance.

Any exam that was scheduled at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be given at the next class meeting unless contacted by the instructor. Any assignments due at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be due at the next class meeting unless contacted by the instructor. Any extension or postponement of assignments or exams must be granted by the instructor via email or Blackboard within 24 hours of the weather related cancellation.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Angelo State University is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation. Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website. The employee charged with the responsibility of
reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:
Dallas Swafford
Director of Student Disability Services
Office of Student Affairs
325-942-2047
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu
Houston Harte University Center, Room 112

Title IX at Angelo State University
The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance.

Students are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU’s Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator at:

Michelle Boone, J.D.
Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210
325-942-2022
michelle.boone@angelo.edu

You may also file a report online 24/7 by filling out this incident formiii. If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic and Counseling Center at 325-942-2173 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345. For more information about Title IX in general you may visit Angelo State’s Title IX websiteiv.
**Miscellaneous:**

No distractions will be permitted; be courteous and respectful of your colleagues. **Please turn off your cell phones.** Be reasonable and respectful of other students and me. Typing notes on a laptop or similar device is fine if you are still engaged in class discussion and remain attentive.

Last note: Students will be electronically notified for any corrections to the syllabus.

**Emailing the Instructor**

Communication is an important skill that nearly all employers look for in new employees, and particularly in college graduates. Learning to communicate professionally is vital if you wish to remain employed in any career for very long. For this reason, when you contact me via email, please include a subject, a greeting, and a signature. For example, if you are experiencing a difficulty logging into Blackboard, your email might look like this:

Subject: Blackboard is down

Dear Dr. Ratliff,

I tried to log in to Blackboard to look at this assignment, but the program is down for emergency maintenance. Have any other students encountered this issue? Considering the circumstance, would you please extend the assignment’s due date?

Thank you,

[Your Name]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Book Chapter(s)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Introduction to AGEC 4305 – Discussion of the Syllabus</td>
<td>Schmitz et al. Ch. 1&amp;2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>The Farm Problem</td>
<td>Schmitz et al. Ch. 1&amp;2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>Economic Efficiency</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 4, Schmitz et al. Ch. 3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Market Failures: Public – Private Goods</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Market Failures: Externalities</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Market Failures: Natural Monopoly</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>Government Failures</td>
<td>Knutson et al. Chapter 2 &amp; 3,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Weimer Ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Correcting Government Failures</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 8 &amp;10</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>Review for Exam #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td><strong>Exam #1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>U.S Farm Policy</td>
<td>Knutson Chapter 7,</td>
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<td>Schmitz et al. Ch. 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td><strong>Paper Summaries &amp; Presentations #1</strong></td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>3/04</td>
<td>Common Agricultural Policy of Europe</td>
<td>Schmitz et al. Ch. 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td><strong>Paper Summaries &amp; Presentations #2</strong></td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>Multifunctionality of Agriculture</td>
<td>Notes will be provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>3/16</td>
<td><strong>Paper Summaries &amp; Presentations #3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>Agricultural Policy of Canada</td>
<td>Schmitz et al. Ch. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3/23</td>
<td><strong>Paper Summaries &amp; Presentations #4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>Labeling</td>
<td>Notes will be provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>3/30</td>
<td>Future Agricultural Policy</td>
<td>Knutson Chapter 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>4/1</td>
<td>Review for Exam #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Assignment/Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
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<td>4/8</td>
<td>Paper Summaries &amp; Presentations #5</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>Agricultural Policy of China</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/15</td>
<td>Paper Summaries &amp; Presentations #6</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>Cost – Benefits Analysis</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/22</td>
<td>Cost – Benefits Analysis</td>
<td>Weimer Ch. 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>Organizing your Policy Analysis</td>
<td>Schmitz et al. Ch. 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/29</td>
<td>Policy Decoupling GATT &amp; WTO</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/4</td>
<td>Term Projects due date</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Review for Final</td>
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Note: The instructor reserves the right to adjust content, sequence evaluation and grading scales as may be deemed to be in the best interest of the class and accomplishment of the course goals

1 https://www.angelo.edu/live/files/27603-student-handbook-2020-21#page=96
1 https://www.angelo.edu/current-students/disability-services/
1 http://www.angelo.edu/incident-form
1 https://www.angelo.edu/title-ix