

Instructor: Carl Igo, PhD

Office: TRASC 110

Office Hours: T, Th 9:30-10:45 AM; T, Th 1:00-3:30 PM or by appointment

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Phone: 432-837-8260

Course Time and Location:

T-Th, 11:00-12:15, Jan 15-April 28, 2026

Credits: 3.0

TRASC Room 130

Required Materials: No required textbook; Access to Blackboard and SRSU email.**Supplemental Materials:**

Articles, readings and videos as assigned – provided by instructor during the weekly learning module in which they are assigned.

Core Curriculum Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will develop critical thinking skills to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
- Students will develop communication skills to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
- Students will develop empirical and quantitative skills to include manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed decisions.
- Students will develop teamwork skills to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

Course Description: The primary purpose of this course is to provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges facing the agriculture industry in present day. The course is designed to educate students about major issues in the food, agricultural, and natural resource sciences; to expose students to a variety of methods used to critically evaluate contentious issues and effectively communicate, inform, and influence decisions made about these issues. Additionally, this course explores the impacts agricultural issues have on the agricultural industry and society.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of the course, students will:

1. Describe the components involved in agricultural issues;
2. Recognize the diverse viewpoints across issues in the agriculture industry;
3. Identify current and potential issues challenging the agriculture industry;
4. Evaluate information resources used for informing, persuading and affecting perceptions related to agricultural issues;
5. Examine agricultural issues from multiple perspectives.

Course Syllabus: Due to the organizational nature of the instructor, beyond this point, this syllabus is laid out in alphabetical order by topic. If, after reviewing the information presented here, you have questions about course access, assignments, policy etc. please do not hesitate to contact the instructor.

Academic Expectations: According to SRSU [Undergraduate Academic Regulations](#), students must :

- A. be regular and punctual in attending classes;
- B. be well prepared for classes;
- C. submit required assignments in a timely manner;
- D. take exams when scheduled;
- E. act in a respectful manner toward other students and the instructor and in a way that does not detract from the learning experience; and
- F. make and keep appointments when necessary to meet with the instructor.

In addition to the above items, students are expected to meet the additional course and behavioral standards as defined in this syllabus.

Academic Integrity: Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or instructor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

Academic Writing: Unless specifically noted otherwise, all written work submitted must be in Microsoft WORD™, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, pages numbered, and have 1" margins on all sides. All work submitted should follow APA 7th edition guidelines for formatting and bibliographical citations. Peer review of written work is an excellent practice and highly encouraged prior to submission of written assignments. Feedback will focus on creative problem solving and conceptual development of ideas.

In this course, you may utilize AI language models as a resource to support your writing assignments. AI language models are powerful tools developed to generate text based on the input provided. It can provide suggestions, offer alternative phrasing, and help brainstorm ideas for your written work. While the AI language models can help refine your writing, it is important to remember that it is an AI system and not a substitute for your critical thinking and creativity. If you choose to use this tool, apply it as a supplement to your writing process and do not rely solely on its suggestions. Ultimately, you are responsible for the content and quality of your written assignment. Therefore, you should critically evaluate all AI outputs for accuracy, potential bias, and relevancy. When utilizing AI language models, it is essential to ensure that your writing remains original and properly attributed, including citing outputs or text generated by the tool. Please see [How to cite ChatGPT](#) in APA Style resources. I encourage you to use AI language models to enhance your writing skills, experiment with its capabilities, and learn from its suggestions. If you have any questions or concerns regarding using AI language models for writing assignments, please discuss them with me. By acknowledging and understanding the appropriate use of AI language models, you can effectively incorporate this tool into your writing process, harnessing its potential to improve your written work while maintaining academic integrity and originality.

The University does not recommend or endorse any specific AI tools or resources. Students should be aware that many generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) store user input and may use this data to train future models. For this reason, students should never upload or share personal, confidential, or identifiable information—such as names, ID numbers, health data, or assignment submissions containing such details—into any generative AI platform. When using AI tools, students should verify whether the tool complies with student privacy standards as indicated by the University. Faculty may recommend specific tools that better align with institutional data privacy policies, but ultimate responsibility for data protection rests with users. Students are encouraged to use faculty-recommended platforms when engaging in coursework involving generative AI. The University is not liable for any adverse experience or impact when students interact with these tools.

Accommodations for Students: Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Ronnie Harris, LPC Counselor at 432-837-8203, email ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. The Accessibility Services office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall – room 112; mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Add /Drop Policy: This course will follow the University add/drop policy and timeline.

Assignment Policy: It is expected that assignments will be submitted on or before the specified due date. *Assignments may be submitted after the due date and will be assessed a percentage penalty; submitted within 7 days = 15%; submitted 8-14 days = 30%; submitted 15 days & beyond = 50%.* The last day to submit late/make-up assignments is the last class day of the semester: Wednesday, April 30 by 11:59 PM. Incompletes will only be assigned under extreme circumstances.

Assistive/Service Animal Protocol: At Sul Ross State University policy, assistive animal and service animals are under differing rules. Assistance animals are not permitted in classroom/labs; service animals, as defined under the ADA, are permitted anywhere on campus. For additional clarification reference the [SRSU Assistance Animal/Service Animal policy](#).

Attendance: Class participants will be treated as mature individuals who have developed a sense of responsibility for their education. As such, class participants will be held accountable for all material covered in class, despite valid reasons for absence. Attendance will be recorded at each class session. In the case of emergency, students should contact the instructor as soon as possible after the emergency situation has been resolved. Documentation of a “university excused absence” will allow the student to make up missed work, but WILL NOT count towards earned attendance points.

Health-Related Absences: Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and other on-campus events if you are ill. Students who miss class due to illness will be given opportunities to access course materials online. In the event of contagious illness, please do not come to class or to campus to turn in work. Instead notify the instructor by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that accommodations can be made. Please note that documentation (a Doctor’s note) for medical excuses is not required.

Classroom Climate and Respect: It is my intent, as course instructor, that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and beyond the course, and that the multiplicity students bring to this course be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of all students. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of this course are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.

We support a learning environment where individual and cultural differences are appreciated, recognized, respected and understood. We shall hold each other accountable to demonstrate diligence in recognizing and respecting differing behaviors, perspectives and worldviews. In addition, in scheduling assignments, I have attempted to avoid conflicts with major religious/cultural holidays. If, however, I have inadvertently scheduled a major deadline that creates a conflict with your religious/cultural observances, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can make other arrangements.

Collaboration: University policy states that, unless otherwise specified, students may not collaborate on graded material. Any exceptions to this policy will be stated explicitly for individual assignments. If you have any questions about the limits of collaboration, you are expected to ask for clarification.

Copyright Notice for Course Materials: U.S. copyright laws protect this syllabus, course presentations, all Blackboard™ materials and any other course materials provided throughout this term. Students enrolled in the course may use materials for their own research and educational purposes within the Educational Fair Use policy of the U.S. Copyright Office. However, reproducing, selling or otherwise distributing these materials in any manner or medium without written permission of the copyright owner is expressly prohibited.

Electronic video and/or audio recording is not permitted during class/lab unless the student obtains written permission from the instructor. If permission is granted, any distribution of the recording is prohibited.

Course Communication: Communication is a two-way interaction. Students are encouraged to stop by my office during posted office hours to ask questions, check-in or simply say hello. I also encourage you to call (phone number listed on p. 1) or email (also listed on p. 1). During the work week, I will check email multiple times through the day and will commit to responding to your communication within 48 hours. Weekend communication (noon Friday-8:00 AM Monday) will not be answered until Monday mornings after 8:00 AM. I request the same commitment from you.

Evaluation Components:

Attendance: **Attendance will be recorded for each class session. You must be present when the roll is taken in order to earn the points.** An attendance percentage will be used to determine points for less-than-perfect attendance.

Agricultural Issues Reflection Essays: Each student is expected to prepare a self-written reflection in 5-paragraph essay format for one of the issues discussed through each content topic area of the course, including animal agriculture, plant agriculture, natural resources, and business, communication, culture and education. The grading rubric can be accessed through Blackboard. (4 @ 100 points).

Agricultural Issues Team Paper: Students will self-select into teams of 4-6 to examine both sides of an agricultural issue. Each team will prepare a scholarly-based essay incorporating the academic writing format provided in this syllabus. The paper must provide points, subpoints and support for both sides of the issue. Paper length should be 8-10 pages, not counting the works cited list. The paper evaluation score will be applied to all team members.

Agricultural Issues Team Presentation: Students will self-select into teams of 4-6 to examine both sides of an agricultural issue. Issue topics will be assigned by the instructor. The presentation format is detailed on the course website.

*Bonus Point Opportunities: For each of the four major issues topic categories listed in the syllabus outline, each student may choose to submit **IN ADVANCE** of the topic discussions one current contentious issue related to that topic with a total of four verifiable sources of information related to that issue (up to 4 @ 25 points each)

Examinations: (midterm and final) Components of the examinations represent different types of test items including, but not limited to, defining, multiple choice, T/F, short answer, problem solving and essay. You will be given the opportunity to make some decisions on which test items to which you respond. Unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor, students will not be allowed to take exams at other than the specified date and time. (2 @ 125 points)

Evaluation Points		Evaluation Scale
Attendance	100 pts	1000-900 points = A
Ag Issue Reflection Essays (4 @ 100 pts)	400 pts	899-800 points = B
Ag Issues Team Paper	100 pts	799-700 points = C
Ag Issues Team Presentation	150 pts	699-600 points = D
*Bonus Opportunities (4 @ 25 pts)		<600 points = F
Exams (2 @ 125 pts)	<u>250 pts</u>	
TOTAL	1000 pts	

Library Information: The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

Marketable Skills: Students successfully completing the course will gain the following marketable skills, as defined in the SRSU Animal Sciences BS program:

3. Students demonstrate understanding of the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making;
4. Students use logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions and approaches to problems;

5. Students identify complex problems and review related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.

Plagiarism: Paraphrasing or quoting another's work without citing the source is a form of academic misconduct. Even inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is considered plagiarism. If you have any questions about using and citing sources, you are expected to ask for clarification.

Shared Expectations:

I will expect you to:

- Complete all assignments thoroughly, in a timely manner.
- Look at each assignment as an occasion for you to learn, and make the most of every learning opportunity.
- Be honest and submit your own original work.
- Participate in class discussions and activities; this helps you as well as all of your classmates.
- Enjoy this class!

You can expect me to:

- Provide learning opportunities that advance your knowledge and development in agricultural education.
- Be available to answer questions and provide assistance related to the course.
- Be fair in my grading and assessment of your work.
- Provide you with timely, constructive feedback on your work.
- Enjoy this class!

Student Learning Outcomes (SACSCOC)

1. Students will demonstrate basic skills of analyzing and interpreting research-based information;
2. Students will apply critical thinking skills.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate through written, spoken and graphic media.

Student Records: All records related to this course are confidential and will not be shared with anyone, without a signed, written release. If you wish to have information from your records shared with others, you must provide written request/authorization to the instructor. This includes any requests for recommendations/references. Before giving such authorization, you should understand the purpose of the release and to whom and for how long the information is authorized for release.

Student Responsibilities: All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [SRSU Student Handbook](#), the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University Rules and Regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the University. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws. Sul Ross State University expects all students to conduct themselves as honest, responsible and law-abiding members of the academic community and to respect the rights of other students, members of the faculty and staff and the public to use, enjoy and participate in the University programs and facilities.

Students are full partners in fostering a classroom environment conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class; students are prohibited from engaging in any form of behavior that detracts from the learning experience of fellow students. Inappropriate behavior will result in a request for the offending student to leave class. Opposing perspectives are welcomed and encouraged. Nevertheless, class participants are expected to treat one another with the respect and dignity to which all community members are entitled. Nothing less than such democratic behavior will be acceptable. All SRSU community members will demonstrate diligence in understanding how peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews enhance us all as individuals and as a community.

Hands-on participation is essential for successful completion of this course; therefore, each class member must come prepared, both physically and mentally, to take part in each class activity. Other specific classroom rules will be discussed as appropriate.

General Rules for Classroom:

1. You are not to bring food into the classroom unless pre-authorized by the instructor.
2. You may bring a drink with an appropriate lid to class. This privilege WILL be suspended if abused.
3. Head coverings (hats, caps, hoodies), sunglasses, earbuds, headphones are to be removed during class unless allowed through a prescribed learning accommodation.
4. Professionalism, including professional dress when presenting, is expected.
5. Cell phones, tablets, laptops and other devices used for class involvement are encouraged.

Student Wellness: SRSU strives to create a culture of support and recognizes that your mental health and wellness are equally as important as your physical health. We want you to know it is OK if you experience difficulty, and there are several resources on campus to help you succeed emotionally, personally, and academically. Please know that if you choose to confide in me, I am required by the university to report to the Title IX Coordinator, as SRSU and I want to ensure you are connected with all the support the university can offer. You are not required to respond to outreach from the university if you do not want to do so. You can also make a report yourself, including an anonymous report, through the [SRSU Title IX Report Form](#).

TEA AFNR Educator Standards applicable in this course:

Standard I: The AFNR teacher understands the scope of agriculture and the foundations of agricultural education and applies the process of scientific discovery to the various disciplines of agriculture;

Standard VII: The AFNR teacher has a basic understanding of emerging technologies and understands the use of information technologies in the AFNR industries;

Standard VIII: The AFNR teacher understands and applies knowledge of environmental systems, natural resource management, and the effects of agriculture, energy and food processing on the environment;

Standard IX: The AFNR teacher knows how to organize and manage an effective agriculture, food and natural resources program and how to work with school, community and industry representatives to support the program.

ANSC 2312 Tentative Course Schedule

Wk	Date	Topic(s)
1	1/15	What makes an issue?
2	1/20	Review Syllabus, Assignments, & Expectations
	1/22	Maintaining calm amidst issues / Issues and Viewpoints <i>Agricultural Bus, Comm, Culture, Educ issues bonus assignment due</i>
3	1/27	Assignment adjustment negotiations / Agricultural Culture issues
	1/29	Agricultural Communications issues (information sources and resources)
4	2/3	Agricultural Business issues
	2/5	Agricultural Education issues (agricultural literacy) <i>Animal Agriculture issues bonus assignment due</i>
5	2/10	Agricultural Education issues (career challenges)
	2/12	Animal agriculture issues (beef, sheep, goats, swine) Ag Business/Culture/Communication/Education Issue Reflection due
6	2/17	Animal agriculture issues (small meat animals)
	2/19	Animal agriculture issues (equine)
7	2/24	Animal agriculture issues (working animals)
	2/26	Issues and conflict
8	3/3	Midterm Review Animal Ag Issue Reflection due
	3/5	Midterm Exam
	3/10	SRSU SPRING BREAK
	3/12	
9	3/17	Ag Issues Team formation / Leadership within Teams <i>Plant Agriculture issues bonus assignment due</i>
	3/19	Plant agriculture issues (human food plants)
10	3/24	Plant agriculture issues (animal feed plants)
	3/26	Plant agriculture issues (non food/feed plants)
11	3/31	Plant agriculture issues (landscape/garden/greenhouse plants) <i>Natural Resources issues bonus assignment due</i>
	4/2	SRSU Ag Day Invitational CDEs (Class Comp Time) *Bonus Points Available*
12	4/7	Natural Resources issues (private and public land use) Plant Ag Issue Reflection due
	4/9	Natural Resources issues (native and introduced species)
13	4/14	Natural Resources issues (water)
	4/16	Ag Issues presentations Natural Resource Issue Reflection due
14	4/21	Ag Issues presentations
	4/23	Ag Issues presentations
15	4/28	Final Exam Review Ag Issues Team Paper Due
	5/4	Final Exam 10:15-12:15 RAS 130

Other dates to put on your calendar:

January 19: MLK Day Holiday
 January 20: Deadline for spring registration
 Payment Deadline
 January 30: No-Grade Drop Deadline
 Spring '26 Graduation App Deadline

March 30: Su/Fa Course Registration opens
 April 3: Course Withdrawal deadline
 April 29: Last regular class day
 May 8: Commencement Ceremony