Agri 340 – Issues in Agriculture
Spring 2013
School of Agriculture – Western Illinois University
Sections 1-2

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Bruening, 321 Knoblauch Hall Office: 298-1611 Office Hours: M-F 9-10, Tuesday 1:30-3:00. Please send an email to make an appointment:  E-mail: T-Bruening@wiu.edu.

Course Description: The study of current issues in Agriculture and the development of skills to publicly address these issues. Section 1 meets at 12-12:50 and section 2 meets from 3-3:50 in room 305 Knoblauch on Tuesdays.

Objectives:

1. Explain and analyze current issues in today’s agriculture.
2. Prepare a research paper on a current issue in agriculture.
3. Effectively present information on specific agricultural issue.
4. Formulate a position on a current agricultural issue.
5. Enhance writing skills and abilities.

Date    Topics

1/15 Introduction to the course and the expectations for the semester
1/22 Topic Selection – writing fundamentals
1/29 Writing, editing and using APA Style
2/5 Writing essentials – strategies to write a research paper
212 No Class Abraham Lincoln’s Birthday
2/19 Thesis statement and paper section outline
2/26 Review first draft – two pages
3/5 Developing the opposing position - speaking and writing
3/11-3/15 No class WIU spring break
3/19          Review second draft – four pages
3/26          Presentations 1
4/2           Presentations 2 – Review third draft – six pages
4/9           Presentations 3
4/16          Presentations 4 – Review fourth draft – eight pages
4/23          Presentations 5
4/30          Presentations 6 – Turn in final paper for extra credit - early
5/7           Final paper due


Grading Scale

A 100-92% A- 91-90% B+ 89-88% B 87-82% B- 81-80% C+ 79-78% C 77-72% C-
71-70% D+ 69-68% D 67-62% D- 61-60% F <60%

Grades Based On:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points possible</th>
<th>Your score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft Reviews (4-20 points each)</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar exercises</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using APA style quiz</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issues Journal</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Points</td>
<td>400</td>
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Presentation: You will give a presentation on the topic of your paper. The purpose of this presentation is to help you organize the material, improve verbal communication skills, and to receive feedback to help you better prepare your paper. This speech should be 6-8 minutes long – be prepared to answer questions. A schedule will be distributed. **Be prepared for the day you are scheduled, even if it appears unlikely that you will present on that day. Points will be deducted if you are not prepared. The focus of this presentation will be on the opposition to your topic.**

Issues Journal: You must take notes on presentations on the various issues. For each presentation, write at least 1/2 page (content), detailing what you learned, strong and weak points of the presentation, what you agreed and disagreed with, and why (important). The journal you hand in must be typewritten with a maximum of 1 in. margins on all four sides. The written discussion should be double-spaced. Hard copy only is needed.

APA style. **APA stands for American Psychological Association. This writing style will be used in this class.** When editors or teachers ask you to write in APA Style®, they are referring to the editorial style that many of the social and behavioral sciences have adopted to present written material in the field. APA Style was first developed 80 years ago by a group of social scientists that wished to establish sound standards of communication. Since that time, it has been adopted by leaders in many fields and has been used by writers around the world.

Final Paper: You will be assigned a topic about which you must write a paper of at least 8 pages, double spaced, with margins of 1 inch on top, bottom and sides, using 12 pt. Times New Roman font. The eight pages do not include the cover, or the bibliography. **If a paper were submitted that was less than eight pages in length it will not be reviewed.** The paper must include references and follow APA style. The paper must include information about both sides of the controversial issue. Wikipedia CANNOT be used as a reference in this paper. At least seven different references should be used in this paper.

Draft reviews – to receive full credit students will write at least two complete pages for each review using the criteria noted for the final paper (above).

IMPORTANT: **You must receive a passing grade on the final paper to pass the class.**

Excuses: Class attendance will be taken. If you are unable to attend class on a certain day, you **MUST** contact the instructor prior to class either in person, or via
phone or email. In general, the only accepted excuses will be for official university events, personal health if a doctor’s excuse is available, and verifiable family emergencies.

**Deadlines for all assignments will be strictly followed** in order to keep the class on schedule and not disrupt the progress of other students. A penalty of 10 points will be assessed for each class period or week that an assignment is late. **No assignments will be accepted more than two weeks late.**

You are highly encouraged to use the Writing Center in Simpkins 341. There are also satellite locations in Thompson and Bayliss/Henninger Halls. See their webpage at: http://www.wiu.edu/cas/english_and_journalism/university_writing_center/locations.php

**Harassment/derogatory remarks:** While debate on the issues, questions and varied viewpoints are highly welcomed in the class, no harassment or derogatory comments will be allowed toward any individual, or to that individual’s viewpoint.

**Cell phones:** Cell phones must be turned off when in class. Ten points will be deducted for each cell phone call/use made or received in class (this includes texting).

Dress: Hats off! Hats and caps will not be worn in class during presentations. Students wearing hat/caps during presentations will lose 25% of the points for the presentation. Extra credit points could be awarded for business casual dress. Each student needs to review the information at: http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php

**It is important to especially note the section on plagiarism.** Plagiarism may be grounds for failing an assignment and also the course. Learning how to properly provide citation is a component of the course.

**Staplers:** Assignments with multiple pages will have five points deducted if not stapled together. I do not have a stapler that you can use.

**Attention Education Majors:**
The changes within the state certification require all education majors to receive a grade of a "C" or better in this course in order to meet these new requirements. With the university +/- grading system, receiving a "C-" or below will require you to retake this course or find a substitute course to meet School of Agriculture graduation requirements.
In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. For the instructor to provide the proper accommodation(s) you must obtain documentation of the need for an accommodation through Disability Resource Center (DRC) and provide it to the instructor. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor’s attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students. Students who may require special assistance in emergency evacuations (i.e. fire, tornado, etc.) should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow in such an emergency. Contact Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 298-2512 for additional services.