



AEC 3065: Issues in Agricultural & Life Sciences (3 credit hours)
AEC 4932: Exploring Agricultural Issues in Belize (3 credit hours)

**Spring 2017
Study Abroad**

INSTRUCTORS:

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OFFICE HOURS:

By appointment as needed

CLASS MEETINGS:

3 presessions – 120 Bryant Hall
Study Abroad – March 4-12, 2017 (Spring Break)
2 post-sessions – 120 Bryant Hall

Course outline and general description: The course is designed to educate students about major issues in agricultural and life sciences (ALS) and to expose students to a variety of methods used to effectively communicate, inform, and influence decisions about these ALS issues. All discussions and activities are planned to involve you in "real world" ways.

Objectives: After this course, the student will be able to:

- Recognize and analyze current issues in agricultural and life sciences (ALS).
- Recognize and separate facts, fiction, and opinion.
- Recognize contentious issues in agricultural and life sciences and facilitate consensus building and conflict management.
- Develop messages to communicate about contentious issues in agricultural and life sciences using appropriate multimedia and social media.
- Compare and contrast ALS issues relevant to Florida and Belize.

Text/suggested readings: Successful students will read assigned materials **before class** and be prepared for discussion with the instructor and fellow students.

- *Agricultural Communications in Action: A Hands-On Approach* by Telg & Irani.
 - You will need this textbook for other communications courses in the department.
- OPTIONAL: *The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw* by Bruce Barcott
- Other course readings will be provided as needed.

E-mail: Students are **REQUIRED** to be able to send and receive **e-mail**.

Grading: All out-of-class written assignments **MUST be typed**. Following is the grading scale and assignments:

Grading Scale

A = 930-1000
A- = 900-929
B+ = 860-899
B = 830-859
B- = 800-829
C+ = 760-799
C = 730-759
C- = 700-729
D+ = 660-699
D = 630-659
D- = 600-629
E = 599 and below

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Issues Briefing Guide x 2 (150 each)	300
Daily Reflection Journal	200
Final Project	400
Presentation of Final Product	100
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	1000

- *Issues Briefing Guides (2):* Students, individually, will be responsible for researching an assigned issue and creating a briefing guide that will be distributed to fellow students prior to departing on and after returning from the study abroad.
 - 1. The first guide will be a Florida-based perspective on the issue.
 - 2. The second guide will be a Belize-based perspective on the issue.
- *Daily Reflection Journal:* Students will keep a daily reflection journal throughout the study abroad trip, using the prompts provided by the instructors.
- *Final Project:* Students will create a website (or online product) that captures their overall reflections from the course and the study abroad program. Students are encouraged to be creative and choose a medium that best allows them to express what they learned. Potential formats include – but are not limited to – an essay, a presentation, a poster, or a video. Students will share their reflections at the final post-session.
- *Presentation of Final Project*

UF grading policies: For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

ATTENDANCE: Given the importance of class discussion and participation in demonstrations and exercises, it is not possible for a student to perform satisfactorily in the course without regular attendance. Students are **required** to attend class and to be in class **on time**. Only documented doctor's excuses or UF-approved activities will be excused. Students are still responsible for making up excused work in a timely manner. Students who are repeatedly absent, even with a doctor's excuse, will find it difficult to succeed in this course. (**NOTE:** A note from the Student Health Care Center is not

considered an “official” excuse.) Students’ grades will be lowered if they repeatedly miss class or are late. Tardy arrivals (anything after five minutes after class starts) are counted the same as absences. Students who miss an exam for an excused absence will be allowed to take a make-up, but it will be a slightly different exam. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Late assignment policy: A **10-percent per day** deduction will be assessed for assignments turned in late. Work more than a week late will **not** be accepted. This policy will be **strictly** enforced. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

AEC Expectations for Writing:

In all courses in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication’s Communication and Leadership Development (CLD) specialization, the following **writing** standards are expected to be followed, unless otherwise specified for a particular writing assignment. Not following these writing standards will result in substantially lower grades on writing assignments.

- Proper grammar and punctuation are mandatory.
- Proper sentence structure is required. This means...
 - Not using “tweet-talk” in your assignments.
 - Making sure that your sentences have a subject, verb, and (when needed) an object.
 - Not having sentence fragments.
 - And anything else that would pertain to “proper sentence structure.”
- No use of first person (I, me, my, mine, our) unless denoted within the assignment rubric.
- NO use of contractions.
- Good thoughts/content throughout the writing assignment.
- For assignments that require citations, use American Psychological Association style. Proper APA citation and reference document is expected.
- For assignments that are more reporter-style articles (news stories, news releases, public relations writing), you are expected to follow Associated Press Style, as discussed in AEC 4031.

AEC Expectations for Design:

In all courses in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication’s Communication and Leadership Development (CLD) specialization, the following design standards are expected to be followed, unless otherwise specified for a particular writing assignment. Not following these design standards will result in substantially lower grades on design-related assignments.

- Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure are mandatory. Although these are design assignments, writing has to be perfect so as not to detract from the design.
- For assignments that feature more reporter-style articles (news stories, news releases, public relations writing), you are expected to follow Associated Press Style, as discussed in AEC 4031.
- Use the proper photographic settings for the assignment (300 ppi for printed photos; 72 ppi for Web). Pixilated photos will result in lower grades.
- Students should not use copyrighted materials for design assignments. For example you may not “borrow” a graphic or design. Commercial artwork that is purchased may be used for assignments. Similarly, you may use *ideas* for a graphic/design assignment, but the use of the actual graphic/design is not acceptable.

- The following minimal design skills are expected to be demonstrated on all design assignments. The ability to resize an image, create documents in multiple columns, insert a graphic on a page, insert text with a graphic, alter the color of text and/or graphics. Additionally, the student should have moderate ability with the following software in order to complete design assignments:
 - Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Microsoft Word
 - Adobe Photoshop (photographs)
 - Adobe Illustrator (graphics). This software program is taught only in AEC 4035. The expectations for actual graphic design in other courses will be minimal.
 - Adobe InDesign (print layout)
 - WordPress (Web)
 - Final Cut Pro X or Adobe Premiere (video)

The University of Florida has an agreement with Lynda.com to provide FREE online tutorials to students and faculty on many software programs. If you feel “rusty” with any program, after being introduced to it in an AEC course, it is **highly recommended** that you take it upon yourself to go through some of the Lynda.com tutorials: <http://www.it.ufl.edu/training/>. Click on the Lynda.com yellow box on the right side of the screen.

DIGITAL DEVICES (cell phones, iPads, laptops): Students are asked to turn off their cellular phones before entering the classroom. Unless students are taking notes on their laptops, laptops should be OFF during class. If students are found to be Facebooking or texting, they will be asked to turn off their digital device.

PROFESSIONALISM STATEMENT: Educators and learners are professionals guided by specific values and engaging in particular behaviors. These values and behaviors include respect, cooperation, active participation, intellectual inquiry, punctuality, and regular attendance. In addition to what you know and can do, you will be evaluated on your growth as a professional. Professional characteristics on which you will be judged include punctuality, attendance, collegial attitude, and participation. Because this course relies extensively on discussion and other class interactions, attendance is crucial to your success and that of your classmates. If you are ill or an emergency occurs, contact your instructor PRIOR TO the scheduled class time; otherwise, your attendance and participation are firm expectations.

STATEMENT ABOUT PLAGIARISM: A student who represents another’s work as the original work of the student is plagiarizing. If you do *not* think you will get caught plagiarizing, you are **wrong**. Plagiarism will be dealt with up to the full extent of the UF Honor Code, including a zero for the assignment and possibly a zero for the entire semester. A full explanation of plagiarism and its consequences can be found at <http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/msl/07b/studentplagiarism.html>.

Academic Honesty, Software Use, UF Counseling Services, Services for Students with Disabilities

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: “*We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.*” You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “*On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.*”

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/SCCR/honorcodes/honorcode.php>.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university’s counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- *University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/ Counseling Services Groups and Workshops Outreach and Consultation Self-Help Library Training Programs Community Provider Database*
- *Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, www.crc.ufl.edu/ **Services for Students with Disabilities** The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation 0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/ **Recommended Statement for Distance Courses** The following statement is recommended for all distance-delivered courses but is not required. Each online distance learning program has a process for, and will make every attempt to resolve, student complaints within its academic and administrative departments at the program level. See <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> for more details.*

Course schedule

Day	Topics	Assignments Due
Pre-session 1 Wed., Jan. 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course introduction and review syllabus • Overview of food, agriculture, and natural resources systems • Review Issues Briefing Guide assignment 	
Pre-session 2 Wed., Jan. 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking critically about issues facing food, agriculture, and natural resources systems • Logistics of Final Project – Communications basics 	

Pre-session 3 Wed., Feb. 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trip logistics and overview • Review reflection journal expectations • Present Florida-perspective issues briefing guides 	Issues Briefing Guide (Florida perspective)
Study Abroad Day 1 Saturday, March 4	<p>Travel Day Depart U.S and arrive in Belize before 1 PM local time. (Belize City) Land transfer to Belize Zoo Issues: wildlife conservation, natural resource conservation</p> <p>Overnight at the Log Cab-Inn Orientation/Overview/Expectations</p>	Reflection Journal Entry
Study Abroad Day 2 Sunday, March 5	<p>AM: Guided Tour of Xunantunich Issues: Belizean culture</p> <p>PM: Mestizo Lunch & Botanical Gardens visit</p>	Reflection Journal Entry
Study Abroad Day 3 Monday, March 6	<p>AM: Large scale farm visit in Buena Vista Village Issues: food production, farming systems, labor, capacity building</p> <p>PM: Farm visits (Spanish Lookout and small farms) Issues: farming systems, urban/rural interactions, ethnic interactions, food production, water quality/quantity, labor, agricultural technology</p>	Reflection Journal Entry
Study Abroad Day 4 Tuesday, March 7	<p>AM: Central Farm Service Project Issues: food production, farming systems, labor, capacity building, education</p> <p>PM: Guest lectures on natural resources and food/nutrition in Belize Issues: obesity, human nutrition, food security</p>	Reflection Journal Entry
Study Abroad Day 5 Wednesday, March 8	<p>AM: Central Farm Service Project Issues: food production, farming systems, labor, capacity building, education</p> <p>PM: Land transfer to Central Farm for horticulture unit presentation Issues: Belizean culture, food production, urban/rural interactions, water quantity/quality, labor</p>	Reflection Journal Entry
Study Abroad Day 6 Thursday, March 9	<p>AM: Tour cassava farm Issues: food production, export-driven agriculture, water quantity/quality, labor</p> <p>PM: Land transfer to Hopkins and Coconut Row, R&R Overnight at Pelican Beach Resort Hotel</p>	Reflection Journal Entry
Study Abroad Day 7 Friday, March 10	<p>AM: Tour banana farm Issues: food production, export-driven agriculture, water quantity/quality, labor</p> <p>PM: Meet with Placencia Seaweed Farmers, Mayan Center shopping and traditional Mayan lunch, then personal time ending with Garifuna Cultural Presentation Issues: Belizean culture, food production, marketing, water quality, labor</p>	Reflection Journal Entry
Study Abroad Day 8 Saturday, March 11	<p>AM: Aquatic tour/snorkeling Issues: water quality/quantity, climate change, natural resource conservation</p> <p>PM: Group debriefing about issues facing food, agriculture,</p>	Reflection Journal Entry

	and natural resources systems in Belize.	
Study Abroad Day 9 Sunday, March 12	Travel Day Depart Belize and arrive in U.S.	Reflection Journal Entry
Post-Session 1 Wed., March 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share Belize-perspective issues briefing guides 	Issues Briefing Guide (Belize perspective)
Post-Session 2 Wed., April 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Presentations of Final Project 	Final Project