



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

Spring 2021 – via Face-to-Face & Online (Zoom)
Tuesdays 4 (10:40 – 11:30 am), Thursdays 3-4 (9:35 – 11:30 am)

INSTRUCTOR:

Becky Raulerson, M.S.

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Course website: On Canvas

OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

By appointment as needed

Graduate TA:

Heather Young

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OFFICE HOURS:

By appointment as needed

CLASS MEETS:

Online (Class 29558) - via **ZOOM**, synchronous – Link located in Canvas

Face-to-Face (Class 10303) – Tuesdays, period 4 in Little Hall 109

Thursdays, periods 3-4 in Florida Gym 230

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.
- Recognize components of crisis and risk communication management in ALS.
- Develop a crisis communication plan for contentious issues in ALS.

Prerequisites: AEC 3030C Effective Oral Communication (or equivalent) **OR** AEC 3033C Research and Business Writing in Agricultural and Life Sciences (or equivalent)

OPTIONAL text/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.
- Other course readings will be provided as needed either in class or on Canvas

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

Canvas: This course is managed on Canvas. Grades and files can be found on Canvas.

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 Fact Sheet (individual)	150
Speaker reflections (10 x 30 pts -- individual)	300
Crisis communication plan (individual)	250
End-of-Course Assessment	200
Attendance	50
Participation (Top Hat)	50

1000

-  **Issues Fact Sheet:** Students, individually, will be responsible for researching an assigned issue and creating a fact sheet that includes information about the issue and multiple stakeholders' perceptions, as well as resources used. This will be turned in as an assignment on Canvas.
- Speaker/Case Study Reflections:** Students will provide written reflections on the presentations/case studies in class. A total of 10 reflections will be counted out of 12 possible opportunities. You may use extra guest speakers to make up speaker reflections missed earlier in the semester. If more than 10 reflections are completed, the top 10 scoring reflections will be used to calculate final grade. These will be turned in as assignments on Canvas.
-  **Crisis Communication Plan:** Students will choose an issue and create a strategic crisis communication plan in preparation of a crisis. This will be turned in via a PDF on Canvas.
- End-of-Course Assessment:** Assessment will cover any material taught in class, any material in the textbook, and any information from guest speakers. Students who know they will be absent for the assessment must make arrangements to take it prior to the scheduled assessment time.

- *Attendance/in-class/participation:* Students are expected to actively participate in class and to be present at all class periods via student's assigned delivery format. Attendance is **mandatory**. Attendance will be taken each class.
 - **Fifty points** of "Participation/Attendance" will be based on in-class participation. The other **50 points** will be based on attendance and tardies.
 - You should be in class and on time in order to actively participate in class. If you are **absent or tardy repeatedly**, you will **not** receive full or possibly **any** in-class participation credits.
 - **Late or Absent**
 - 0-2 = 0 points deducted
 - 3 = 10 points deducted
 - 4 = 20 points deducted
 - 5 = 30 points deducted
 - 6 = 40 points deducted
 - 7+ = 50 points deducted

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

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 via Zoom and to be in class **on time**. 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/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

ZOOM: Although this course will be taught online via Zoom in synchronous class sessions, and I do plan to record class sessions, attendance is still mandatory. This course requires a lot of in-class participation and the building of a classroom community. Cameras are expected to be turned on, and audio is expected to be unmuted as appropriate with participation. (See COVID-19 Safety Info.)

Late assignment policy: A **10-percent per day** deduction will be assessed for assignments turned in late. Work more than a week late (7 days) 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/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

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 Express or Pro X (video)

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/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

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*
- *U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/*
- *Career Connections Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, <https://career.ufl.edu/>*
- *Students with disabilities requesting accommodations: 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, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>.*
- *Student Complaints:
-Residential Course: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.*

-Online Course: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN: We will have face-to-face instructional sessions for those students assigned to that format. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions:

- Students and instructors are required to wear a face covering (mask or similar covering) at all times they are in one of the two physical classrooms. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom. Students must maintain at least a 6-foot distance from each other as they enter and leave the room and when they are in the room.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Only the allowed number of students, per UF guidelines, will be allowed in the classroom at any time.
- If a student or instructor is unable to attend the class due to illness, the course will be able to be taught in an online-only format. Class meetings will take place at specified times via Zoom.
- In the event the university has to cancel in-person instruction, class meetings will continue through Zoom. Students will continue to have access to pre-recorded lectures.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms ([Click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus](#)), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. [Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms](#).
 - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. [Find more information in the university attendance policies](#).
- Because some class sessions of this course will be taught online, the sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who unmute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

Course schedule

**Subject to change as semester progresses*

Tuesdays (10:40 – 11:30 am) – LIT 109 or via ZOOM	Thursdays (9:35 – 11:30 am) – FLG 230 or via ZOOM
<p>January 12 TOPIC: Introduction, review syllabus What is agricultural and life sciences, natural resources? WATCH: <i>Florida Agriculture</i> http://vimeo.com/17235079</p>	<p>January 14 TOPIC: <i>Issues fact sheets (discuss rubric)</i> <i>Speaker reflections (discuss rubric)</i> What is agricultural and life sciences, natural resources? (CONTINUED) WATCH: <i>Florida Agriculture</i> http://vimeo.com/17235079 Professionalism, Zoom etiquette, & guest speaker interaction PREP: Land-grant system</p>
<p>January 19 TOPIC: Land-grant system GUEST SPEAKER: TBD</p>	<p>January 21 REVIEW: Land-grant system DUE: <i>Reflection 1 on land-grant system</i> TOPIC: Critical thinking and ALS issues</p>
<p>January 26 Discuss graded reflections (reflection 1) TOPIC: Climate change GUEST SPEAKER: TBD</p>	<p>January 28 REVIEW: Climate change DUE: <i>Reflection 2 on Climate change</i> TOPIC: Agenda setting and framing messages</p>
<p>February 2 TOPIC: Invasive Species-Citrus Greening Case Study</p>	<p>February 4 TOPIC: Invasive Species-Citrus Green Case Study (continued)</p>
<p>February 9 DUE: <i>Reflection 3 on Invasive Species-Citrus Greening Case Study</i> TOPIC: Antibiotics in Animal Agriculture Case Study</p>	<p>February 11 TOPIC: Antibiotics in Animal Agriculture Case Study (continued)</p>
<p>February 16 DUE: <i>Reflection 4 on Antibiotics in Animal Agriculture Case Study</i> TOPIC: Small farms, Organic farms, Conventional farms (Farming size and methods) GUEST SPEAKER: TBD</p>	<p>February 18 REVIEW: Small farms, Organic farms, Conventional farms (Farming size and methods) DUE: <i>Reflection 5 on Small farms, Organic farms, Conventional farms (Farming size and methods)</i> TOPIC: Tentative - Interpreting Research – Dr. J.C. Bunch</p>
<p>February 23 TOPIC: Guest speaker from UF Field & Fork Program DUE: <i>Issues Fact Sheet assignment</i></p>	<p>February 25 TOPIC: Class visit to UF Field & Fork Gardens</p>
<p>March 2 DUE: <i>Reflection 6 on Field and Fork Gardens visit</i> TOPIC: Water quality and quantity GUEST SPEAKER: TBD</p>	<p>March 4 REVIEW: Water quality and quantity DUE: <i>Reflection 7 on Water quality and quantity</i> TOPIC: Persuasion <i>Students assigned crisis communication plan and choose companies</i> <i>Crisis communication plan (discuss rubric)</i></p>

Tuesdays (10:40 – 11:30 am) – LIT 109 or via ZOOM	Thursdays (9:35 – 11:30 am) – FLG 230 or via ZOOM
March 9 TOPIC: Crisis Communication Case Study	March 11 TOPIC: Crisis Communication Case Study (continued)
March 16 DUE: Reflection 8 on The Blue Bell Crisis Case Study TOPIC: Urban/rural interface GUEST SPEAKER: TBD	March 18 REVIEW: Urban/rural interface DUE: Reflection 9 on Urban/rural interface TOPIC: Introduction: Crisis communication
March 23 TOPIC: Food security GUEST SPEAKER: TBD	March 25 REVIEW: Food security DUE: Reflection 10 on Food security TOPIC: Crisis communication (continued)
March 30 TOPIC: Obesity and nutrition GUEST SPEAKER: TBD	April 1 REVIEW: Obesity and nutrition DUE: Reflection 11 on Obesity and nutrition
April 6 TOPIC: Immigration/labor GUEST SPEAKER: TBD	April 8 WORK DAY for Crisis Communication Plans – No Class Meeting DUE: Reflection 12 on Immigration/labor
April 13 DUE: Crisis communication plans TOPIC: Wrap up & Review for End-of-Course Assessment	April 15 End-of-Course Assessment
April 20 TOPIC: Return graded crisis communication plans, Extra Credit Speaker Day, Course Evaluations	



we are
AEC-CLD
at the University of Florida

We learn to think critically and dialogue about agricultural and natural resources issues facing Florida and our world.

We build our communication and leadership skills to address evolving agricultural and natural resources issues in a multicultural society.