

## **CONS 305: Introduction to Sustainable Agriculture - Fall 2024**

**Instructor:** Dr. Joel Gruver

**Office:** Knoblauch Hall 302

**Office hours:** M, W 10-11, Friday 9-11

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### **Class meeting time and location:**

1-1:50 M, W& F in Knoblauch 305

### **Course description:**

This course operates from the premise that ag literacy is the foundation of sustainable agriculture. We will start with an exploration of what it means to be ag literate from both the perspective of the ag community and the non-ag public.

The rest of the first half of the semester will explore the concept of risk and resilience in agriculture. Major types and drivers of change in agriculture will be investigated with a focus on their impacts on risk and resilience.

The second half of the course will explore specific opportunities to reduce risk and increase resilience in agriculture including management intensive grazing, organic agriculture, and alternative crops.

We will wrap up the course with investigations of 3 key issues: the 80s Farm Crisis, global food security and intergenerational transitions in farming.

The course will consist of many formats of learning including movies, short videos, interview projects, guest speakers, panel discussions, field trips, personal initiative activities and lectures.

### **Attendance:**

Attendance will be monitored EVERY class session. ATTENDANCE IS A VERY IMPORTANT PART OF THIS CLASS!!!

**Interview projects:** Interview projects will be a VERY important part of this class. The Western Online Survey Tool and possibly other on-line software will be used to collect a wide variety different types of survey answers (e.g., farmers interview responses, student feedback on movies/videos, student answers to reading Qs, documentation of personal initiative activities). ALL submissions should be ORIGINAL and submitted on time!

### **Personal initiative activities:**

Personal initiative activities are opportunities for students to dig deeper into course related topics of personal interest. Documentation for 4 personal initiative activity should be submitted using the Western Online Survey Tool before established due-dates.

**Readings:**

Readings from a wide variety of sources will be assigned to complement lecture content. All readings will be accompanied by questions. Answers should be submitted using Western Online or the Interview Archive (as designated).

**Calculation of your grade:**

Interview projects 25%

Attendance 20%

Personal initiative activities 15%

Homework 15%

Midterm exam 10%

Take home final exam 10%

Pop quizzes 5%

**A** > 93**C+** 77-80**A-** 90-93**C** 73-77**B+** 87-90**C-** 70-73**B** 83-87**D** 60-70**B-** 80-83**F** < 60**Schedule of topics:**

<b>week #</b>	<b>Date</b>	
Ag Literacy 1	Mon Aug 19	How well do you understand agriculture?
	Wed Aug 21	What should people know about agriculture?
	Fri Aug 23	Discussion of the Ag Trends FAQ
At Any Price (film) 2	Mon Aug 26	<i>At Any Price</i> - first half
	Wed Aug 28	<i>At Any Price</i> - second half
	Fri Aug 30	Discussion of <i>At Any Price</i>
Ethics in Agriculture 3	Mon Sept 2	No class
	Wed Sep 4	Ethics in agriculture
	Fri Sep 6	Overcoming and setting boundaries
Mechanical Revolution 4	Mon Sep 9	Mechanical Revolution part 1
	Wed Sep 11	Mechanical Revolution part 2
	Fri Sep 13	<i>Bitter Seeds</i> – first half
Chemical Revolution 5	Mon Sep 16	<i>Bitter Seeds</i> – second half
	Wed Sep 18	Mechanical Revolution part 3
	Fri Sep 20	Mechanical Revolution wrap-up
Bitter Seeds (film) 6	Mon Sep 23	Chemical Revolution part 1
	Wed Sep 25	Chemical Revolution part 1
	Fri Sep 27	Chemical Revolution wrap-up
Genetic Revolution 7	Mon Sep 30	Genetic Revolution part 1
	Wed Oct 2	Genetic Revolution part 2
	Fri Oct 4	Genetic Revolution wrap-up
Innovation in Agriculture	Mon Oct 7	When is necessity the mother of invention?

8	Wed Oct 9	Appropriate Technology
	Fri Oct 11	No class
Resistance 9	Mon Oct 14	Intro to resistance concepts
	Wed Oct 16	The story of waterhemp
	Fri Oct 18	Managing resistance
Management intensive grazing 10	Mon Oct 21	What is MIG?
	Wed Oct 23	Profiles of Success with MIG
	Fri Oct 25	Guest speaker
Organic Agriculture 11	Mon Oct 28	Historical development of Organic Ag
	Wed Oct 30	Modern organic ag
	Fri Nov 1	Guest speaker or film
Alternative Crops 12	Mon Nov 4	Intro to alternative crops
	Wed Nov 6	Guest speaker (hemp)
	Fri Nov 8	Guest speaker (CoverCress)
Feeding the World 13	Mon Nov 11	What is malnutrition?
	Wed Nov 13	Why haven't we solved this problem?
	Fri Nov 15	Guest speaker or film
80s Farm Crisis 14	Mon Nov 18	Introduction to the 80s Farm Crisis
	Wed Nov 20	Farm Crisis film - first half
	Fri Nov 22	Farm Crisis film - second half
15	Nov 25-29	Discussion w/ friends and family
Intergenerational transitions 16	Mon Dec 2	The role of family in agriculture
	Wed Dec 4	Opportunities for new farmers
	Fri Dec 6	Additional opportunities
17	Mon Dec 9	Panel discussion

## EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

### Attendance, participation and timeliness:

I am expecting YOU to attend EVERY class, actively participate in class discussions and submit assignments on time. Attendance will be monitored EVERY class using check-in Qs in the Western Online Survey Tool. Remote attendance is discouraged but is possible on a case-by-case basis when students clearly explain extenuating circumstances. Requests and explanations must be provided at least 15 minutes BEFORE the start of class.

### Academic integrity:

**NO CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, OR OTHER VIOLATIONS**

## **OF THE WIU ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY WILL BE TOLERATED**

Please talk to me if you have any questions about the WIU academic integrity policy. All suspected violations of the WIU academic integrity policy will be addressed promptly and individually.

### **Student rights and responsibilities:**

Detailed information regarding student rights and responsibilities can be found at <http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/>

You are responsible for being familiar with your rights and responsibilities.

### **Special accommodations are available:**

If you have any special needs, please feel free to discuss them with me and/or contact Disability Support Services at 298-2512 or [disability@wiu.edu](mailto:disability@wiu.edu)

### **No forms of discrimination will be tolerated:**

University values, Title IX, and other federal and state laws prohibit sex discrimination, including sexual assault/misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of any of these offenses, we encourage you to report this to the Title IX Coordinator at 309-298-1977 or anonymously online

at: [http://www.wiu.edu/equal\\_opportunity\\_and\\_access/report.php](http://www.wiu.edu/equal_opportunity_and_access/report.php). If you disclose an incident to a faculty member, the faculty member must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The complete Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy policy is available at: <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/dhsm.php>.

### **Special note for education majors:**

Education majors who receive a "C- " or below must retake this course or find a substitute course to meet School of Agriculture graduation requirements