

AGBU 341: Agricultural Economics & Geography (3 Credits)

The Pennsylvania State University Fall Semester, 2016

Class Meeting Time:

Class: Monday & Wednesday, 10 am-10:50 am Ferguson 202

Lab: Tuesdays, 2 pm-3:50 pm Ferguson 202

Instructor:

Meghan Tanner, M.S. Student

Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology and Education

Office: 009 Ferguson Building

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Overview: AGBU 341 will be an exploration and analysis of geographical (spatial) influences on the economic activity and economic development here in the United States. With an “Amero-centric” focus, we will be assessing the geographical determinants of agricultural activity, the history of agricultural regions and the movement of agricultural outputs across the marketplace. The role of futures markets and their relationship to agricultural geography will also be address. Prerequisites: AGBU 103

Course Goals: By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

- a. Identify the major agricultural regions in the United States and explain the influence these regions have on agricultural activity
- b. Explain and analysis the physical and economic determinants of agricultural phenomena
- c. Understand and evaluate the historical and cultural perspective
- d. Explain and analysis the economic development theories associated with the agricultural phenomena
- e. Understand and discuss the value of future markets and their relationship to the agricultural geography

Suggest Text: Wheeler, J., P. Muller, G. Thrall, and T. Fik. *Economic Geography (3rd Ed.)* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Additional readings as assigned by the instructor

Teaching Methods and Expectations: This course will be a lecture based course but student discussions are highly encouraged. The Instructor strives to create a structured, respectful atmosphere for the open flow of discussion on the course topics. My primary expectation of you is that you LEARN and I will make myself available in every possible way to help facilitate your learning.

Grading:

| | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Exams (3) | 250 points each | 750 points |
| Homework (3) | 50 points each | 150 points |
| Lab/In-Class Activities | 50 points | 50 points |
| In-Class Pop Quizzes | 50 points | 50 points |
| TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE | | 1000 points |

Grading scale will be as follows:

| Grade | Points Required | Grade | Points Required |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| A | 937-1000 | B - | 820-846 |
| A - | 910-936 | C + | 793-819 |
| B + | 883-909 | C | 730-792 |
| B | 847 – 882 | D | 640-729 |

Exams: The exams will be given during lab sessions and will consist of multiple choice, short answer and mechanical questions. When evening review sessions are offered prior to exam dates, I highly encourage students to participate.

Late/Make-Up Policy: No make-up tests will be given unless arranged with the instructor prior to the exam date. Late homework assignments will be discounted 5% each day late, unless arrangements are made with the instructor prior to the homework due date. You will be given at least 7 days to complete each homework (i.e. if the homework assignment is given on Monday, you will have until next Monday to complete it). **Assignments turned in more than one week after the due date will not be accepted. In-class pop quizzes cannot be made up.**

Student Expectations: A learner will be successful by coming to class prepared, willing to learn and actively participating in class discussions. While I will not be taking attendance in every lecture, it is in your best interests to attend class regularly!! You will get out of this course what you put in. Class discussion is highly encouraged but, as always, I expect all students to be respectful of the thoughts and opinions expressed by their peers, instructors and any guests.

Note to Students with disabilities:

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for modifications or reasonable accommodations in this course, contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) located in room 116 Boucke Building at 814-863-1807 (V/TTY). If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course, please contact me as soon as possible.

Course Schedule:

This outline is subject to change and additions may be made throughout the semester.

| WEEKS | TOPIC(S) |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 & 2 | Introductory Material: The Study of Economic Geography; Documentation and description of the landscape of the United States; Mapping terminology; USDA datasets |
| 3 & 4 | Explanation and Analysis of Observed Spatial Phenomena: PHYSICAL PERSPECTIVE- Physical optima and limits; U.S. Surface maps; Growing Degree Days |
| 5, 6, 7, & 8 | Explanation and Analysis of Observed Spatial Phenomena: ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE- Comparative and absolute advantage; traditional location theories and modern exceptions; the role of transportation; the U.S. Food Distribution System |
| 9, 10, & 11 | Explanation and Analysis of Observed Spatial Phenomena: HISTORICAL/CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE- Development of the poultry regions in the U.S.; Development of the livestock feeding sector in the U.S. |
| 12 & 13 | Economic Development Theories: How does economic activity FIRST begin to happen in a place? |
| 14 & 15 | Futures Markets: What are they? How do they work? Relationships to agricultural geography |

Academic Integrity:

Please refer to Penn State's policies at <http://www.psu.edu/oue/aappm/G-9-academic-integrity.html> and ask the instructor if you have any questions regarding this issue.

Commitment to Diversity:

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to program, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. The Pennsylvania State University does not discriminate against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.