International Agriculture and Diplomacy
5564, Fall 2021

Course Description
Advanced study on agricultural leadership. U.S. geostrategic context that includes history, geography, natural resources, cultural identity, governance, macro-economic policy, and security interests shaping the U.S. and other countries' agricultural foreign policies

Course Instructor
Steven Manchester, PhD,
Agricultural, Leadership, and Community Education
Remote location
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Course Materials[1]
- McDonald, B. (2017) Food Power: The Rise and Fall of the Postwar American Food System. New York, NY: Oxford University Press
- Paarlberg, R. (2013). *Food Politics: What everyone needs to know* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press
- Select readings to be shared via *Canvas* course site.

Student Learning Outcomes
- Analyze the exportability of major U.S. agricultural products.
- Develop a leadership strategy for US policies and statutes that protect US agriculture against foreign import of agricultural products.
- Evaluate the impact of US agricultural policies imposed on other U.S. Government organizations (i.e. Department of Defense).
- Evaluate the geostrategic context that shapes the U.S. and other select countries' agricultural foreign policies.

Special Needs Requests
If you are a student with special needs or circumstances, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Academic and Student Support
You can learn about the wealth of academic and student support services available to our students by visiting the pages on the Virginia Tech Online site.

Student Prerequisite Skills
For your assignment submissions, I expect you to be articulate and clear in your writing, commensurate with graduate level work. In regards technical competencies, you should be able to:
- Use standard word processing software to write properly-formatted formal papers.
- Navigate web pages using a web browser, such as Firefox, Safari, or Google Chrome.

Tech Support
Student technical support is available through Computing @ Virginia Tech and 4Help. If you are experiencing technical difficulty accessing materials that you need for this course or a general technical support question please request assistance by filling out the help form or calling 540-231-HELP. When making a request please be sure that you provide as much detail (name, problematic URL, operating system, description of problem) as possible to help solve your problem more efficiently. Virginia Tech's Customer Support Center is available 24/7 to reset passwords, monitor system outages, and answer questions on a wide variety of computer related issues. Moreover, you can find answers to many of your questions by reading Virginia Tech's Knowledge Base.

Work Load Expectations
One of the challenges students face in distance education is related to time management. As a three-credit-hour course, university standards suggest the workload for this course should total at least 135 hours (9 hours per week). With that in mind, please set aside the time necessary to devote to your learning and completion of course assignments.

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[1]You can use the University Bookstore website to mail-order your book - http://www.bookstore.vt.edu. Also note that the book may be available from other commercial vendors or your local library. Remember, don't wait until the last minute - it may take the book a while to get to you.

Disability Accommodations

Any student that is in need of special accommodations due to a disability, as recognized by the Americans with Disabilities Act, should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office. Students with disabilities are responsible for self-identification. To be eligible for services, documentation of the disability from a qualified professional must be presented to SSD upon request. Academic adjustments may include, but are not limited to: priority registration, auxiliary aids, program and course adjustment, exam modifications, oral or sign language interpreters, cassette taping of text/materials, note takers/readers, or assistive technology. For more information on disability accommodations, please contact:

> Lavery Hall, STE 310, Virginia Tech; 430 Old Turner Street; Blacksburg, VA 24061
>
> Phone: (540) 231-3788 Voice; E-mail: ssd@vt.edu; Website: http://www.ssd.vt.edu

Course Administration[2]

This course is administered online via Virginia Tech's *Canvas* course management system, https://canvas.vt.edu. The course is entirely Internet-based with no face-to-face contact with the instructor or other students, though there will be opportunities for real-time communication using telephone, chat, or web conferencing software. Unlike some distance learning classes, the pace of this course will be set by the instructor with specified due dates for completion of assignments. Online learning such as this requires basic computer and Internet literacy and a high degree of self-motivation and discipline. People who recognize that they are primarily responsible for their academic success and are confident in their abilities tend to do well in distance-delivered courses. I urge you to take time to consider: Is online learning right for you?

Course Communication

I will be available to answer your questions:

- Through the "Questions" **Discussions**

    If you have questions about the course material or assignments, you should post them there. If your question has to do with the course as a whole, post to the topic, *Whole Course*. If it concerns a particular topic, post to that topic. The title of your post should give an idea of what your question or comment is concerning and you should check the existing **Discussions** threads before posting your own question to see if it has already been answered. All forum posts should follow appropriate "netiquette." I plan to check the **Discussions** section of our course site for new posts every day and will usually post responses to all these inquiries by 9:00 PM the following day.

- By **email**

    You may email me if your questions are of a personal or sensitive nature. However, most questions or comments should be posted to the "Questions" **Discussions** so everyone can benefit.

- By **telephone**

    I am willing to communicate by telephone, but this mode of communication will generally require an appointment.

You will also communicate with your peers during the *Introduce Yourself* **Discussions** assignment and can use the **Conversations** and **Chat** tools to communicate with your fellow students on an ad hoc basis.

General Structure of Learning Modules/Lessons

This course is divided into 15 modules/lessons, each corresponding to a topical unit of study. The general structure of each module/lesson is as follows:

- **Introduction:** The purpose of the introduction is to provide pre-study information you can use to recall your prior knowledge as well as to identify critical ideas that will appear in the lesson.
- **Objectives:** The purpose of presenting objectives is to inform you of what you should be able to do once you have completed the module.
- **Pre-reading questions:** You will have the opportunity to "test" your knowledge of the material in each module before you study the module. You will be presented up to 5 multiple choice questions on ideas, concepts, principles, facts, and theories that are part of the lesson. Once you have completed the test, you will receive a score which you can use as an indicator of how well you already understand the main points and details in the module. This will help you identify areas you need to pay particular attention to as you progress through the material.

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[2]The syllabus is a guide for the course, but it is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes in assignments and expectations will be announced on Canvas.

- **Guiding questions:** The purpose of these pre-study questions is to help you recall what you already know and believe about the topics of the module as well as to pose questions that you should consider as you study.
- **Assigned reading:** The purpose of the reading is to present the basic information, the "facts" if you will, for the module. This material, together with the guidance provided by the interactive activities and the feedback from the formative evaluation, should enable you to successfully master the objectives.
- **Post-reading questions:** You will have available up to 5 multiple choice questions to test your own understanding of the material you have studied. These questions are linked to elaborated explanations of the answers. As a result, you will be able to enrich your understanding of these ideas by, first, seeing if you understand well enough to choose the correct alternative, and second, by studying the explanation of the answer to ensure your explanation matches the text-based explanation.
- **Interactive activity:** The purpose is to provide an opportunity to interact with one or more of the concepts included in the module. The interactive activity may focus on a single important concept or help you develop an understanding of relationships between concepts.
- **Activities for Assessment:** This section will refer you to the next steps – assignments that will be scored as an assessment of your learning and involvement in the course.

Honor Code
Virginia Tech's Graduate Honor Code
([https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/expectations/graduate-honor-system.html)](https://graduateschool.vt.edu/academics/expectations/graduate-honor-system.html) will be followed and enforced in this class. Violations of the Honor Code include copying another's work, cheating on exams or assignments, and plagiarism of another's work, whether another student's or something found online.

Activities for Assessment

1. Discussion Forum Posts (50% of your final grade)
    As part of each learning module, you must contribute at least two posts to the module's discussion forum: one original example (OE) and one value-added comment (VAC). Each OE and VAC must contain clear and carefully composted sentences. An OE must be truly original; it must not duplicate a classmate's OE or any in the assigned readings. Each VAC must live up to its name by truly adding value to the OE or another VAC. Additional details and expectations will be shared on the course page in *Canvas*.

2. US Agriculture Commodity Exportability paper (20% of your final grade)
    You will submit an eight-page paper on an U.S. agricultural industry. You will identify the commodity, value of the commodity, current legislation related to the commodity in the US 2020 Farm Bill, US State (s) of commodity origin, country that the commodity is being exported to. You will identify the authority that the export was transferred, foreign country's indigenous ability to produce the same product. Identify the foreign country's limiting factors to production [topography, environment, agricultural industry capacity]. Additional details and expectations will be shared in class and on the course page in *Canvas*.

3. US Agriculture Diplomacy Paper (30% of your final grade)
    You will submit a twelve-page paper on a US foreign policy action that utilizes agriculture as a tool for diplomacy. More information about this assignment will be provided in *Canvas*.

All assignments are due by 11:55 PM on the respective date identified in Canvas.

Grading Scale
A	90% - 100%		
B+	87% - 89%	B	80% - 86%
C+	77% - 79%	C	70% - 76%
D+	67% - 69%	D	60% - 66%
F	Below 60%		

Course Outline
Note: Reading materials and resources for each unit will be outlined in the Modules function in *Canvas*.

Unit/Module #1 – Introduction
- Objectives

  - *o   Student will understand the requirements of the course*

Unit/Module #2 – Introduction to an American Farm

- Objectives
  - o   Understand the complexity of being a farmer in the United States.
  - o   Identify the economic impact of commodities on farmers and the nation as a whole
  - o   Recognize the impacts of trade agreements on farmers

Unit/Module #3 – Geo-strategic importance of agriculture
- Objectives
  - *o   Student will be able to identify the major agricultural products exported by the United States*

Unit/Module #4 – Importance of agriculture to the United States
- Objectives
  - *o   Student will be able to identify the major agricultural products or commodities exported by the United States*

Unit/Module #5 Introduction to an American Farm
- Objectives
  - o   Understand the complexity of being a farmer in the United States.
  - o   Identify the economic impact of commodities on farmers and the nation as a whole.
  - o   Recognize the impacts of trade agreements on farmers

Unit/Module #6 Agricultural Leadership in the United States
- *Objectives*

  - o   Understand the U.S. agricultural policy "lay-of-the-land" and key players and actors at the USDA, with a focus on foreign agricultural issues, services and programs.

  - o   Assess essential elements of U.S. agricultural policy, including regulation, trade, global food security, food safety, rural development, and nutrition

  - *o*   Understand the Farmland Protection Policy Act

Unit/Module #7 US Department of State Agricultural Policy
- *Objectives*
  - o   Assess essential elements of US foreign agricultural policy
  - o   Identify the tools of foreign diplomacy

Unit/Module #8 Agriculture organizations
- *Objectives*
  - o   Explain the role and influence of American Farm Bureau Federation on US agriculture legislation.
  - o   Identify agriculture related organizations that influence US agricultural legislation.

Unit/Module #9 Agriculture policies imposed on other federal organizations

- *Objectives*
  - o   Understand how the Berry Amendment protects US agriculture.

Unit/Module #10 Diplomacy and decision making

- *Objectives*
  - o   Explain the role of the US Agency for International Development
  - o   Describe the purpose of the USDA Global Outlook
  - o   Understand and explain the role and responsibility of the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

Unit/Module #11 Agriculture and Diplomacy II
- *Objectives*
  - o   Understand inter-agency approach to global food security
  - o   Analyze essential elements of U.S. foreign assistance policy, including global food security, food safety, rural development, and nutrition

Unit/Module #12 Introduction to an American Farm
- *Objectives*
  - o   Understand the complexity of being a farmer in the United States.
  - o   Identify the economic impact of commodities on farmers and the nation as a whole
  - o   Recognize the impacts of trade agreements on farmers

Unit/Module #13 Global Food Security
- *Objectives*
  - *o*   Understand the relationship between food security and geopolitical stability
  - *o*   Recognize the challenges and opportunities associated with feeding the world in 2050

Unit/Module #14 Agriculture in a War Zone
- *Objectives*
  - *o*   Explain how the Department of Defense utilizes agriculture in war zones
  - *o*   Recognize the diplomatic and national interests of bringing agriculture to a war-torn country

*Unit/Module #15 **The future; conflict, climate change, disasters, & global crisis's***

- *Objective*
  - o   Recognize and explain the impact of catastrophic events on agriculture from a global perspective
  - o   Identify tools of diplomacy to address international issue related to a global crisis
  - o   Understand the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) identified by the United Nations