AGRI 2315
Introduction to Ag Communications

Welcome
I’m glad you’re here!

In this course you will learn about the field of agriculture communications. It is my hope through this course you will learn more about communications as a whole and understand possible careers you can pursue as an agriculture communication professional.

Contact Me
Dr. Amy Mehaffey
Amy.Mehaffey@sfasu.edu
936-615-6755 (cell)
Class Location: Online / D2L
Office: McGee Business Bldg. Room 403Q
Office Hours: M: 10-12
T: 9-12 (virtual)
W: 10-2
TH: 9-12 (virtual)

Virtual Office Hours
Meeting ID: 938 8182 0825
Passcode: 321963

Text and Materials
Agricultural Communications in Action: A Hands-On Approach – Telg & Irani – Online or hardcopy options
Pinterest Account
Google Account (associated with a gmail account)
Canva Account
Netflix Subscription

Course Description
AGRI 2315 “Introduction to Agricultural Communications” (3 credits). The class meets in an online format and three face-to-face meetings. Students are also required to submit weekly homework based on course lectures, participate in classroom activities and discussion and submit various assignments within each module. These requirements take at least 6 hours of out-of-class student work each week to complete.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES:
- The student will demonstrate entry level skills needed for success in teaching and other highly related careers. (teaching skills)
- The student will demonstrate competence of technical subject matter (technical)
- The student will exhibit problem solving skills. (Problem Solving)
- The student will demonstrate effective communication skills. (Communication)
- The student will exhibit leadership and other interpersonal skills needed for career placement and advancement. (Leadership)

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon completion of this course, a student should be able to:
- Discuss and evaluate various career options in agricultural communications.
- Identify and describe information sources, information channels, and audiences in agricultural communications.
- Discuss and exemplify how to develop story-telling elements in campaign creation and educational campaigns.
- Demonstrate novice-level practical communications skills in preparation for later coursework and professional internships, including writing, print design, photography, electronic/web media, and campaign development.
- Understand methods to combating attacks on agriculture industries and demonstrate how to utilize factual evidence in issue development.
- Demonstrate an understanding of risk and crisis communications and how media relations / public relations can contribute to message development in times of crisis.
Course Information

Student responsibilities:
Each student is expected to come to class having read the assigned chapter and any additional materials assigned each week in D2L.

Homework, Cases and Projects:
All projects in this class should be prepared in a professional manner. Please note that Wikipedia.com or other generic websites are not allowed as a source for projects or homework in this class. No handwritten assignments are allowed.

Syllabus Changes:
As we know, weather and life circumstances will require the course to “pivot” and may cause the syllabus to change. I will notify you via D2L as quickly as possible when this happens. It will always be my goal to only change the syllabus in favor of you, the student.

In the event there is a discrepancy between the syllabus Course Calendar and D2L, D2L will always take precedence. This includes news updates or emails.

Attendance & Grading Policy

Absences: Missing an assignment will result in grade of zero for that assignment. Excuses are considered only when conditions are clearly beyond the student’s control and must be documented. A copy of the excuse will be kept in the files.

Late work: Late work is not accepted except for approved university activity, personal or family illness or other documented emergency.

If you need special accommodations for a deadline, it is important to communicate this effectively to me PRIOR to the deadline so you can receive the greatest amount of fairness possible. Late requests for deadline extensions exemplify poor time management and you will receive less accommodations. If you have a last minute emergency, you should communicate that to me as reasonably possible as well.

Assignment Deadline Policy

Any assignment that is not handed in by the due date and time is automatically given the grade “0.” Be sure you understand this. With most jobs, especially jobs in this field of study, deadlines are generally inflexible.

Academic Integrity (4.1)

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty:
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf.
Withheld Grades
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

Mental Health & Wellness
SFA values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

Student Resources will be listed at the end of this Syllabus.

Class Communications
The professor will send out class information and other material through announcements on D2L.

Each student should check their D2L every weekday and sign up for notifications in D2L in case of last minute changes, course cancelations due to weather, etc.

Since emails to and from SFA addresses are considered official university communication and should be treated as such. If a student decides to forward their SFA email to another email address, it is the student’s responsibility to make sure the other email account is able to and can accept forwards from the SFA email address.

Etiquette: All students are expected to behave, email, and post in a professional, business manner during this class. Projects and homework are graded on content and appearance not only of the homework or project, but on the manner in which the project or homework was submitted and the content of the email accompanying the project or homework.

Communicating with your Instructor
All email communication between student and professor should be done in a professional manner.

I expect you to communicate with me as soon as reasonably expected when you experience issues or emergencies. When this happens, I expect a professional email. Components of a professional email include:
- Capitalizing sentences
- Using correct grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Not using “shorthand”
- Closing messages with your name
- Proofreading Before you hit “send”
Assignments

This syllabus contains basic information and instructions for each assignment. It is your responsibility to follow these instructions carefully. Be prepared to receive additional instructions for each assignment in class. Questions are encouraged.

The due dates for each assignment are on the class schedule of this syllabus. Remember that if the assignment is not turned in, the assignment due will receive a 0.

Weeks begin each Tuesday and conclude the following Monday at midnight. All due dates will be when each module concludes—every Monday at midnight CST.

The following averages are needed to attain a grade of: A=900 or higher, B=800 to 899, C=700 to 799, D=650 to 699, F=649 and below.

Grading Policy and Notable Assignments

Quizzes: Throughout the course we will utilize document based cases to study 10 real world examples of technology uses in agriculture. 250 points (10 total – 25 points each)

Module Assignments: Each assignment will be given to you after completing an online module in D2L. At the end of each module, there will be an assignment designed to test your proficiency in learning the concepts, data application, or software. Specific guidelines will be given in class. 650 points

FlipGrid and Discussion Posts:
10 modules will include discussion posts. Specific guidelines will be given in class. 100 points

Total Points 1000 points

Notable Module Assignments Include:

Interview and News Article Project:
You will learn about message development and use this information to conduct an interview with an industry professional. After that, you will take this information and write a feature news story.

Photography Portfolio: Part of our class (3 meetings total) will happen syronasoly. This means you will have an opportunity to come to campus and utilize department cameras to learn to take fundamentally sound photos. You will check out the cameras as needed to complete this project, and create a portfolio of images.

Children’s Book Project: You final project includes creating a children’s book to disseminate information about agriculture related topics.
# Course Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module / Chapter</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start Here Module</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 1 - Exploring Ag. Comm. / Chapter 1</td>
<td>Tuesday Aug. 24 - Monday Aug. 30</td>
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<td>Module 2 - Message Development and Audience Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>Tuesday Aug. 31 - Monday Sept. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapters 6 &amp; 8 - Document Design</td>
<td>Tuesday Sept. 7 - Monday Sept. 13</td>
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<td>Chapters Chapter 4 - Business Communications</td>
<td>Tuesday Sept. 14 - Monday Sept. 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapters 5, 12 &amp; 13 - Journalism and Interviewing</td>
<td>Tuesday Sept. 21 - Monday Sept. 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 10 &amp; 11 - Modern Journalism</td>
<td>Tuesday Sept. 28 - Monday Oct. 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapters 17 - Communicating Accurately</td>
<td>Tuesday Oct. 5 - Monday Oct. 11</td>
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<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Tuesday Oct. 12 - Monday Oct. 18</td>
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<td>Chapter 9- Photography Basics</td>
<td>Tuesday Oct. 19 - Monday Oct. 25</td>
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<td>Chapter 9 - Photo Editing</td>
<td>Tuesday Oct. 26 - Monday Nov. 1</td>
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<td>Chapter 14 - Risk Development &amp; Crisis Communications</td>
<td>Tuesday Nov 2 - Monday Nov. 8</td>
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<td>Chapter 15 - Educational Campaigns</td>
<td>Tuesday Nov 9 - Monday Nov. 15</td>
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<td>Chapter 16 - Special Events</td>
<td>Tuesday Nov. 16 - Monday Nov. 22</td>
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<td><strong>THANKSGIVING BREAK</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Book Project Introduction</td>
<td>Tuesday Nov. 30 - Monday Dec. 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children's Book Project</td>
<td>Tuesday Dec. 7 - Thursday Dec. 10</td>
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University Resources

Throughout the course of the term, you may find yourself in need of some type of support. Please take note and, if needed, use the resources below:

**Academic Assistance Resource Center (AARC) Tutoring Services**

The AARC is an award-winning program that provides free peer tutoring for many entry-level courses. Some services provided by the AARC that you may find of benefit include online resources (including the Online Writing Lab [OWL]), on-call tutoring at walk-in tables, 1:1 appointments, student instructor groups, and learning teams. For additional information, go to [http://sfasu.edu/aarc](http://sfasu.edu/aarc).

**Center for Career and Professional Development**

The Center for Career and Professional Development exists to empower students and alumni to achieve life-long career success through individualized assistance, diverse career development programs, and collaboration with both internal and external partners concentrated on career goal achievements. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/ccpd](http://www.sfasu.edu/ccpd).

**Counseling Services**

Counseling Services assists SFA students in overcoming obstacles to their personal and academic goals through individual and group counseling for students and outreach, presentations, training, and consultation for the campus community. For additional information, go to [http://sfasu.edu/counselingservices](http://sfasu.edu/counselingservices).

**Counseling Clinic (Human Services)**

The SFASU Counseling Clinic is a service provided by the Department of Human Services Counselor Education Programs. It is a training clinic in which services are provided by graduate students who are in the Practicum and Internship portion of their education. All services are supervised by fully licensed Counselor Education faculty. The Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) Counseling Clinic combines a therapeutic and community focus which offers a full continuum of counseling care. The service is geared to each person's needs. Client progress is based on the person's ability to move through counseling according to individual readiness. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp).
University Resources (cont.)

COVID-19 Specific Resources

For the most up-to-date information related to COVID-19, please reference the SFA COVID-19 webpage at http://www.sfasu.edu/covid19.

Crisis Resources

Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Dean of Students Office

The Dean of Students helps students when they are struggling, in-crisis, or just generally don’t know where to go. Students are encouraged to reach out when they need help with something on or off-campus and Dean of Students Office staff will assist them in navigating the issue or get them connected with the person or office that can help. Staff help to promote The SFA Way in everything they do. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/vpsa/85.asp.

Financial Literacy

Student Financial Advisors are available to help you with your finances through one-on-one appointments, presentations, and workshops. Topics covered include budgeting, credit cards, debt management, insurance, identity theft, fraud prevention, investing, savings, retirement, banking, and paying for college. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/studentaffairs/1691.asp.

Health Clinic

The Health Clinic offers a full range of medical services to enrolled or registered students. For additional information, go to http://sfasu.edu/life-at-sfa/health-safety/health-clinic.

Involvement Center

The SFA Involvement Center a one-stop shopping site for involvement on campus. The program is the center for student involvement on our campus, a distribution and receiving site for applications for any number of opportunities on campus and a place for involved students to meet, hang out and collaborate with other students. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/studentaffairs/69.asp.
University Resources (cont.)

Nutrition Counseling (Dining Services)

Should you have a food allergy, specific dietary need, or simply want help learning more about healthy eating you are encouraged to meet with Dining Services’ Registered Dietitian. For additional information, go to https://dineoncampus.com/sfa/your-dietitian.

Research and Instructional Services (RIS)

Develop research skills from hands-on and classroom experience with the Research and Instructional Services department. For additional information, go to https://library.sfasu.edu/services#/research?_k=hjbdvf.

Sex- and Gender-based Misconduct Prevention, Support, and Response (Lumberjacks Care)

The university prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct because such behavior violates the university's institutional values, adversely impacts the university's community interest, and interferes with the university's mission. The university also prohibits retaliation against any person who, in good faith, reports or discloses a violation of this policy, files a complaint, and/or otherwise participates in an investigation, proceeding, complaint or remediation. Once the university becomes aware of an incident of sexual misconduct, the university will promptly and effectively respond in a manner designed to eliminate the misconduct, prevent its recurrence and address its effects. To report an incident and/or seek support, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/lumberjacks-care/.

SFA Food Pantry

The SFA Food Pantry exists to reduce food insecurity on the SFA campus. For additional information, go to http://sfasu.edu/studentaffairs/1319.asp.

Technical Support

Brightspace by D2L Support: https://www.sfactl.com/student-support; d2l@sfasu.edu; 936.468.1919

Technical Support Center/Help Desk: https://help.sfasu.edu; helpdesk@sfasu.edu; 936.468.4357

Veterans’ Resource Center

The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) provides a space for veterans, dependents of veterans, and ROTC members to gather, socialize, and form relationships with others that can provide networks of support and access to veterans’ resources provided by the university and outside agencies. For additional information, go to http://sfasu.edu/vrc/.