Name: Dr. Michael Maurer
Email: use D2L email
Phone: (936) 468-1729
Office: Agriculture Bldg. Rm. 119
Office Hours: MW 9:00 – 9:50 am; TR 9:00 to 10:50 am or by appointment.
Department: Agriculture

Class Meeting time and place: TR 11:00 – 12:15 pm Agriculture Bldg. Room 118.

Course Description: A course investigating the tools of research, problem formulation and analysis, common research design, common errors in research, and instrumentation and sampling techniques.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the experimental design and application in the development of research projects
2. Demonstrate the ability to obtain, synthesize and express scientific material in proper scientific format.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of professionalism in an academic setting as preparation for a professional career in agriculture.
4. Demonstrate the ability to critically think about scientific issues as well as communicate in both written and oral forms.

References:
2. SFA’s thesis guide and forms. It may be downloaded from graduate school website.
3. Steen Library – Getting started on a great literature review.

Course Requirements:
1. Complete Thesis Proposal Draft: If you already have a thesis proposal to your committee, a similar process will be expected for a research topic of interest, approved by your Research Committee Chair. The draft will be developed in sections, with different due dates as the semester continues. (60% of course grade.
2. Oral Presentation of Thesis proposal (15% of course grade).
3. Poster (15% of course grade).
4. Class Assignments as assigned. (10% of course grade). If none, then this grade contribution will be shifted to the above proposal.
Course Calendar:
Topic
1. Introduction to course (1 week)
2. Professional Behavior and Responsibilities in ATCOFA (1 week).
3. Proposals
   • Abstract (1 week)
   • Introduction (1 week)
   • Objectives (1 week)
   • Literature review and plagiarism (2 weeks)
   • Materials and Methods (1 week)
   • Citations and in-text citations (1 week)
   • Tables (1 week)
   • Figures (1 week)
4. Oral presentations (2 weeks)
5. Poster Presentations: (2 weeks)

Due dates:
1. References September 9, 2021
2. Proposal outline September 23, 2021
3. Proposal draft November 4, 2021
4. Complete proposal November 18, 2021
5. Poster October 28, 2021
6. Proposal presentation Nov. 30th or Dec. 2nd, 2021

Grading Policy:
Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A = 90 - 100%
B = 80 - 89.9%
C = 70 - 79.9%
D = 60 - 69.9%
F < 59.9%

Classroom Behavior:
Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have an opportunity to gain from time spent in class, unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from eating in class, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a request to leave the classroom.

Disruptive, distracting, or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom.
**Responsible Use of Technology:**
It is expected that all students will only use cell phones, PDAs, laptop computers, MP3 players and other technology outside of class time or when appropriate in class. Answering a cell phone, texting, listening to music or using a laptop computer for matters unrelated to the course may be grounds for dismissal from class or other penalties.

**Class Attendance**
Regular and punctual attendance is expected for all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which a student is registered. If a student has excessive absences, the instructor reserves the right not to give individual tutoring, special consideration regarding make-up work, or other help the student needs because of missing class. Attendance will also play a crucial role in decisions concerning borderline final grades.

**SFA Ag Department Attendance and Punctuality Policy (reference university policy, 6.7)**
Attendance and punctuality are core skills to have as an engaged student and for a successful career. Therefore, all agriculture faculty have adopted the following policy for unexcused absences.
- Miss one lecture OR lab period, no letter grade reduction
- Miss two lecture OR lab periods, drop one letter grade
- Miss three lecture OR lab periods, fail the course

For reference, below are examples of excused absences.
1.) Approved University activities (require documentation from sponsor and advanced notice)
2.) Death or major illness of an immediate family member (requires documentation and notice as soon as possible)
3.) Major illness of yourself (requires a doctor’s note).
Students missing classes, other than for university-sponsored trips, should contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) and request that an absence notification be sent to the instructor(s). The notification is not an excuse, and is not evaluated by OSRR. The notification is only provided as a courtesy to the student and the student’s instructor(s).

If you miss class for any other reason and feel your absence should be excused, you must provide me with a typed memo explaining why the absence should be excused and provide appropriate documentation. This memo must be provided within one week of the absence. All other absences are considered unexcused.

**Punctuality Policy**
All ag faculty take attendance at the beginning of their classes. Tardy attendance will be counted as unexcused absences at the discretion of the professor.

**Excused Absences**
Students may be excused from attendance for certain reasons, among these are absences related to health, family emergencies, and student participation in certain
university-sponsored events. However, students are responsible for notifying their instructors in advance whenever possible for excusable absences.

Students are responsible for providing timely documentation satisfactory to the instructor for each absence. Students with acceptable excuses may be permitted to make up work for absences to a maximum of three weeks of a semester when the nature of the work missed permits. Whether excused or unexcused, a student is still responsible for all course content and assignments.

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1)**

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/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

Integrity and professionalism are expected at this level of education. Unauthorized collaboration on assignments or projects, as well as dishonesty on exams and quizzes will not be tolerated. Suspected cases of cheating or plagiarism in class and labs as well as grade disputes and appeals will be handled according to the academic regulations of the University. **If it is determined cheating occurred, the student will be dismissed and fail the course**

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**

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.
Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Mental Health
SFASU 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.

On-campus Resources:
SFASU Counseling Services
https://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

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
Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

1. The student will communicate an understanding of scientific discovery and the diffusion of information as it applies to the industry of agriculture.
2. The student will demonstrate competence in the major technical subject matter areas of their graduate program.
3. The student will exhibit problem solving skills based on quantitative and analytical reasoning.
4. The student will demonstrate effective communication skills. Students will demonstrate competence in both written and oral communications.
5. The student will exhibit leadership and other interpersonal skills needed for career placement and advancement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M.S. Agriculture Program Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proficiency Levels</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-Basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-Intermediate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>