

Issues and Crisis
Communication in Agriculture
& Natural Resources
ALEC 441 — Spring 2019

Instructor

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Teaching Assistant

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Office Hours:
M 1-2 p.m. & F 10-11a.m.

Course Time & Location

M, W, & F — 11:15 -12:05
Morgan Hall — 212A

Course Description & Objectives

This course focuses on strategic communication in agricultural and life science industries. Students will explore agricultural issues and discuss the impact public opinion has on the agricultural industry.

Student Learning Objectives:

- Explore and critically think about issues facing the agriculture industry.
- Understand how to plan and address agricultural issues and crises

Course Materials

Textbook:

Issue & Crisis Management: Exploring Issues, Crises, Risk and Reputation; ISBN: 0195529081; Author: Tony Jaques

Supplies: Students will be required to bring a laptop or electronic device when indicated for lectures.

Canvas Account:

All students will be automatically enrolled in the learning management system Canvas once they have paid registration. Assignments, resources, grades and other materials will be posted on the course page throughout the semester. Students are expected to check Canvas frequently and are responsible for monitoring their grades on the system.

Remind:

Remind will be used to notify students of upcoming assignments, materials needed and any class reminders. All students are required to register for the semester. Send a text to **81010** and enter the code **@alec441** in the body of the text. You may also download the application on your smart phone.

Course Expectations

As the instructor, I am committed to helping you become an effective communicator. To that end, you can expect constructive feedback on your assignments and an opportunity to apply that feedback on future assignments.

Punctuality & Participation:

I expect punctual attendance, collegial class participation, on-time submission of assignments, and honest effort. Tardiness is disruptive and disrespectful to the classroom, students, and instructor. Roll call will be taken promptly at 11:15, and you will not receive credit for the day if you miss roll call.

Excused absences will only be reserved for UTK-approved activities. All other requests need to be discussed with your instructor and will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Documentation for excused absences must be submitted a week in advance for consideration. Students are responsible for obtaining any missed class material.

Electronic devices:

I recognize the benefits of technology in the classroom, especially when used throughout the semester for activities and assignments. However, all devices should be put away unless they are being used for a class activity.

Weekly Readings

Some weeks you will be required to complete readings in the course text, which are indicated on the course schedule. You will also be given supplemental readings when appropriate for the upcoming week's lecture. A variety of in-class assignments will be given to capture your understanding and application of the readings assigned. All readings are expected to be completed by class time on the Monday of the assigned week.

Writing Expectations

As a student in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at UTK, you are expected to produce high quality writing. This means your writing assignments should meet college standards.

- Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure
 - No use of first person
 - No use of contractions when indicated
 - The use of proper APA citations when assignments require it
 - The use of proper Associated Press Style writing for journalistic writing
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Assignments

Submission:

All submitted assignments should be in Microsoft Word format with your last name and first initial as the file name (Leal, A.).

All assignments are due by the deadline indicated on assignment rubrics. Technical difficulties will **NOT** be an excuse, so plan ahead. Any assignment submitted after the deadline will be considered late and **15% will be deducted for each day late**. Assignments will not be accepted beyond **two days** after the assignment due date.

In-Class:

You will have several in-class assignments throughout the semester. The purpose of these in-class assignments is to allow you to reflect on class concepts, explore relevant resources, and practice expressing your thoughts through writing.

You must be in class, and activities cannot be made up without a documented university excused absence. In-class assignments are due when indicated, and no late submissions will be accepted.

Grade Discrepancies:

All grade discrepancies are to be addressed within **a week** of the assignment being posted to Canvas.

Syllabus Disclaimer

Serious effort and consideration were used in formulating this syllabus. While viewed as an educational contract between the instructor and student, unforeseen events may cause changes to the scheduling of assignments, lectures, etc. I reserve the right to make any changes deemed necessary to best fulfill the course objectives. You will be made aware of any changes in a timely fashion using reasonable means.

University Civility Statement

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, gracious-ness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteous-ness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus.

<http://civility.utk.edu/>

Academic Integrity

"An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity."

Unplag plagiarism detection engine will be used in the course to check each assignment submitted through Canvas. All parties involved will be reprimanded if evidence of plagiarism surfaces through the guidelines established by the university conduct board. The student may receive a zero on the assignment or in some cases may fail the course.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.lib.utk.edu/instruction/plagiarism>

Services for Students with Disabilities

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 865-974-6087 in 100 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. ODS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

For more information regarding your rights as a student at UTK, please visit:
<http://accessibility.utk.edu>

Grade Breakdown

A	100% — 90%	C-	72.9% — 70%
B+	89.9% — 87%	D+	69.9% — 67%
B	86.9% — 83%	D	66.9% — 63%
B-	82.9% — 80%	D-	62.9% — 60%
C+	79.9% — 77%	F	Below 59.9%
C	76.9% — 73%		

Grade Weighting

Assignments	80%
In-Class Assignments	10%
Punctuality & Participation	10%

Course Assignments

Assignment	Due Date	Points Available
Case Studies	Various	100 x2
Debate	Various	100
Focus Group	Various	100
Message Testing Report	Apr. 7	100
Issues Management Plan	May 1	150
Punctuality & Participation	Various	100

Week	Course Schedule	Readings
1 Jan. 7	Introduction & Syllabus Overview — Critical Thinking	
2 Jan. 14	Critical Thinking — Case Studies — Agricultural Issues	
3 Jan. 21	(Mon) <i>MLK Day</i> — Issue Management	Ch. 1 & 2
4 Jan. 28	Issue Management Due: Case Study 1 (2/1)	Ch. 3
5 Feb. 4	Issues Management	Ch. 4 & 5
6 Feb. 11	Attitudes & Behavior — Public Opinion — Message Development	
7 Feb. 18	Message Development Rough Draft: Moderator's Guide (2/24)	
8 Feb. 25	Mock Focus Group — Crisis Management	Ch. 6
9 Mar. 4	Crisis Management	Ch. 7 & 8
10 Mar. 11	Diffusion of Innovations	
11 Mar. 18	<i>Spring Break</i> Due: Case Study 2 (3/24)	
12 Mar. 25	(Mon) No Class — (Wed) No Class — (Fri) Work Day	
13 Apr. 1	Debates — (Fri) Work Day Due: Message Testing Report (4/7)	
14 Apr. 8	Science Communication — Risk Management	Ch. 10 & 11
15 Apr. 15	Leadership & The Future (Fri) <i>Spring Recess</i> Rough Draft: Issues Management Plan (4/15)	Ch. 12
16 Apr. 22	Work Week Due: Issues Management Plan (5/1)	