

APSC 4004-10730: Contemporary Issues in APSC

Recitation Section

Spring 2021

Instructor

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Office Hours: By appointment

Time and Location

- Tue 11:15 am - 1:05 pm
- Online

Objectives

In conjunction with Dr. Knight's Lecture Section, this class aims to:

- Apply critical thinking and evaluation skills to contemporary issues in animal agriculture, with an emphasis in animal growth and development, biotechnology and research.
- Enhance abilities to analyze scientific information, develop rational solutions, and effectively present technical and scientific concepts.
- Improve technical/scientific writing and oral communication skills.

Requirements

- Attend and participate in each weekly discussion session. No absence from class is excused unless the instructor is notified and agrees prior to class time. This should clearly be communicated via email to Dr. Morota as to why absence is necessary to avoid reducing your points in class participation.
- APSC 4004 (combination of recitation and lecture sections) fulfills one of your Pathways requirements for oral and written discourse. Consequently, this recitation is a writing and discussion intensive class that focuses on current topics and issues in animal health and wellbeing. Assignments include written papers and oral presentations.

Assignments: Each student will deliver:

1. Short oral presentation (10 minutes) based on a student selected topic

2. Short technical critique (pros/cons) or 'Letter to the Editor' of a current event (2-3 pages)
3. Long oral presentation (20 minutes)
4. Long written assignment (term paper) (8 pages).

Specifics of each assignment are described in greater detail below. Additional instructions will be given in class.

Evaluation and Grading

This course (APSC 4004) will be graded on an A – F basis. The grade for recitation will be combined with the grade in the general lecture section of the course. The final grade will be based 70% on this recitation section and 30% on the general lecture section. Grades will be assigned as follows: 94-100% (A), 90-93% (A-), 87-89% (B+), 84-86% (B), 80-83% (B-), 77-79% (C+), 74-76%(C), 70-73% (C-), 67- 69% (D+), 64-66% (D), 60-63% (D-), and ≤ 59% (F).

For this recitation section, the following point system will be used:

Item	Maximum Points	% of Grade
Class Participation*	100	20
Short oral presentation	50	10
Short technical critique	50	10
Long oral presentation	150	30
Long written assignment (Term Paper)	150	30
Total	500 points	100%

*Class Participation: Attendance, Discussion, Evaluations of Peers.

Honor System

The Undergraduate Honor Code pledge that each member of the university community agrees to abide by states:

“As a Hokie, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.”

Students enrolled in this course are responsible for abiding by the Honor Code. A student who has doubts about how the Honor Code applies to any assignment is responsible for obtaining specific guidance from the course instructor before submitting the assignment for evaluation.

Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the University community from the requirements and expectations of the Honor Code.

For additional information about the Honor Code, please visit: <https://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/>
Ignorance of the Honor System does not excuse a violation.

Tentative Schedule

Students should expect the course schedule and organization to evolve during the semester. Although the schedule below is tentative, deadlines are firm.

Date	Topic and/or Event
January 26	Organization; Overview; General Discussion
February 2	Writing and evaluating abstracts and scientific reports Discussion of the topics and issues Deadline to sign-up for short technical critique and long written assignment topics and dates for short oral and long oral presentations
February 9	Short oral presentations (3 students)
February 16	Short oral presentations (3 students)
February 23	Short oral presentations (3 students)
March 2	Short oral presentations (4 students)
March 9	Short oral presentations (3 students) Discussion of key points regarding formal presentations and papers Short technical critique is due at 5 pm (submit to Canvas)
March 16	Long oral presentations (2 students)
March 23	Long oral presentations (2 students)
March 30	Long oral presentations (3 students)
April 6	Spring break
April 13	Long oral presentations (3 students)
April 20	Long oral presentations (3 students)
April 27	Long oral presentations (3 students)
May 4	No class if all formal oral presentations have been completed. If presentations have been missed, make-up day for formal oral presentation. Long written assignment is due at 5 pm (submit to Canvas)

Additional Details on Assignments

1. Class Participation

A class participation grade will be given after each class.

70% = Attending class and staying engaged in the conversations

Up to 30% = Asking intelligent questions and/or contributing to the discussion

This grade will be listed 'quizzes' on Canvas.

2. Short Oral Presentation

This assignment will consist of a short (10 minutes) informal presentation of any current (news article) or controversial event concerned with Animal Sciences. This may either be a scientific paper, or a “popular press” article found in industry magazines, newspapers, or on the internet.

A “current event” is any article published within the past year. Students are advised to use the same topic used to draft the short technical report (see #3), although they may use different topics for each assignment. Choice of the topic is up to the student, but please be aware that you will be graded, in part, on whether the instructors view this topic as relevant and interesting.

This assignment requires that the student summarizes and presents the article chosen, leads questions/discussion, and answers questions posed by the class and instructor.

Students may use visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint slides) or may go without aids. This assignment will be graded on the information provided and accurate nature of your presentation and the extent to which you demonstrate application of the basic elements of critical thinking.

3. Short Technical Critique – due March 9

A short report of a current issue within the focus area is required and will be worth a maximum of 50 points. This assignment should be a technical critique (pros/cons) of a current topic with 2 - 3 double-spaced pages or approximately 650 - 750 words in length, using a standard 12-point font and standard margins. Students are advised to use the same topic used to draft the short technical report (see #2), although they may use different topics for each assignment. It requires your own thoughts on the issue. After choosing your topic, you may compose a letter to the editor, a press-like article, a summary of a major recent discovery, or even address an organization that recently made headlines. This assignment will be graded for its content, grammar, clarity, logic, and evidence of critical thinking.

4. Long Oral Presentation

This assignment will consist of a professional presentation where the choice of topic needs only fall under the large animal agriculture area. The purpose is to practice presentation skills, to synthesize information, and to educate your classmates. If your topic is controversial, your presentation should include information about arguments for both sides, but you may also form your own opinion. The topic for this assignment should be focused, clearly defined, and not overly broad. Students are advised to use the same topic used to draft the long, written assignment (see #5), although they may use different topics for each assignment. The target time for presentation of the chosen topic is 20 min allowing extra time (10 min) for questions and answers, and peer-to-peer discussion. A presentation that is either too long or too short may be judged unacceptable and points will be taken off the overall presentation grade.

Your presentation will be evaluated by all classmates (a combined 25% of your score) and by the instructor (75% of your score). Aspects of your presentation to be evaluated will include preparation for pre-presentation correspondence with instructor if needed, organization (outline, introduction, background information, etc.), speaking style and overall effectiveness of your interpretation of the results and implications, visual aids, demonstrated application of critical

thinking and reasoning, timing, and response to questions posed after the presentation. All class members, except those presenting that day, must participate in evaluating all other members of the class.

5. Long Written Assignment (term paper) – due May 4

The topic will be chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. Students are advised to use the same topic used to draft the long, written assignment (see #4), although they may use different topics for each assignment. The text of the term paper should be ~ 8 double-spaced pages in length, 12-point font, and standard margins. The format to be followed should generally conform in style to that of a scientific journal (e.g., Journal of Animal Science or Journal of Dairy Science). A minimum of eight appropriate references should be cited; with a minimum half of the sources cited being peer-reviewed references.