AGRON/ECON 496: TRAVEL COURSE
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, BUSINESS, AND TRADE IN AUSTRALIA

COURSE ADMINISTRATION

Term: Spring 2011
Classes: W 5:10-6:30 in 2026 Agronomy Hall

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Departments: Agronomy  Economics
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Course Description:
The focus of this travel study program is to examine agricultural production, business, and trade in Australia from a comparative point of view with the United States. The course also discusses the history and culture of Australia. The course consists of class lectures and discussions, projects, and visits to farms and agribusinesses in Australia.

Course Objectives:
The course objective is to equip students with the knowledge and necessary skills to understand, interpret, and analyze issues pertinent to the relative advantages and disadvantages of the U.S. and Australia for producing, transporting, processing, marketing, and consuming major agricultural commodities, and their role in the global market. Specific course objectives are to:

- Help students become familiar with the history, culture, geography, soils, agriculture, and economy of Australia.
- Assist students in understanding the nature of competition in the world market for agricultural products.
- Observe and participate first-hand in activities that focus on production, commercialization, processing and marketing of agricultural products in Australia.
- Study the ecological variability of Australia and how it contributes to agriculture and the economy.
- Learn about trade agreements that Australia is signatory to, and their impact on the country.
- Understand the relative advantages/disadvantages of agribusinesses in Australia and the U.S.

Learning Outcomes:
At the end of the program, students will:

- Be equipped with the knowledge and necessary skills to understand, interpret, and analyze issues pertinent to carrying out successful business between the U.S. and Australia.
- Know about agricultural production methods in Australia, as well as processing, marketing, and risk management of Australia’s major agricultural commodities.
- Have a better understanding of trade agreements that Australia is signatory to.
- Be more aware of any similarities and differences between the U.S. and Australia's culture and society, and the role they play in business and trade.

Grading:
The final grade for the class will be calculated using the following weights:

A. Pre-trip fact sheet and oral summary  15%
B. Positive contribution and participation  20%
C. Trip report (due 4/27/11)  50%
D. Post-trip fact sheet and oral summary  15%

A detailed description of the graded areas is provided in a separate handout.
Class Assignments and Individual Participation:
Students are required to attend all class meetings and be active learners. They are expected to take notes, ask questions, and contribute to the class discussions. One excused absence will be allowed before points will be deducted under “positive contribution and participation.” Individual participation involves not only in-class participation, but also professional behavior during the trip.
In preparation for every class meeting (except for the 1/12, 3/9, and 4/27 meetings), students are required to find and read an informative article or media clipping related to Australia and the week’s topic to be covered in class. After reading the article, prior to coming to class, students must type 2-3 questions to ask the speaker or other comments to add to the topics of discussion. In the case of pre-/post-trip presentations (i.e., on 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, and 4/20), prior to class students must read an article or media clip and type 2-3 questions or comments for one of the topics covered (if you are one of the presenters, you must choose a topic covered by somebody else). You must place your name on your questions, attach the article, and turn them in at the end of each class period (handwritten questions/comments will not be accepted).

Coursework:
The tentative schedule of classes is the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 12</td>
<td>Introduction and background information. Information for international travelers (presentation by guest speaker Jodi Cornell). Assignment of dates for individual presentations by students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 19</td>
<td>General information about Australia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>Agricultural production in Australia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2</td>
<td>Australia’s general economy and Australia’s agricultural economic sector.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Pre-trip presentations by students. Safety information for international travelers (presentation by guest speaker Jodi Cornell).</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 16</td>
<td>Pre-trip presentations by students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 23</td>
<td>Pre-trip presentations by students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2</td>
<td>Pre-trip presentations by students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>Final preparation for trip.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 10-20</td>
<td>Trip to Australia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>No formal meeting, consultations for student projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>Post-trip presentations by students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Post-trip presentations by students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 13</td>
<td>Post-trip presentations by students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>Post-trip presentations by students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>Final meeting. Trip Report due.</td>
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Additional Information:
- News and other relevant course materials (e.g., syllabus, assignments, presentation topics and schedules, itinerary, project grades, etc.) will be posted on WebCT and on the course webpage (http://www.econ.iastate.edu/classes/econ496/lence/spring2011/). This should be the primary source of course information.
- Successful completion of the course fulfills the international/multi-cultural requirement for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.
- If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Student Disability Resources (SDR) office for information on appropriate policies and procedures. SDR is located on the main floor of the Student Services Building, Room 1076; their phone is 515-294-7220.