

## **Florida Grassland Agroecosystems – AGR 5230 – Spring 2015**

**Dr. L. E. Sollenberger**  
**3111 McCarty Hall B**  
**Phone: 273-3420**  
**Email: lesollen@ufl.edu**

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 9:30 - 12:00 noon

### Class Meeting Times:

Lecture (G001 McCarty D) - Period 2 (8:30 - 9:20) Monday, Wednesday, and Friday  
Lab (2196 McCarty Hall A) - Periods 6-7 (12:50 - 2:45) and Periods 8-9 (3:00 - 4:55) Wednesday

### General Course Objectives (see specific learning objectives for each unit):

1. To know how forage crops contribute to agriculture and the maintenance of environmental quality.
2. To understand the potential and limitations of animal production on rangeland and planted pastures in Florida.
3. To know and be able to identify the principal forage legumes and grasses grown in Florida, their regions of adaptation, and their role in forage-livestock systems.
4. To understand concepts of soil, plant, and animal science necessary for successful establishment, management, and utilization of forages crops in sustainable and environmentally sound production systems.
5. To demonstrate the ability to synthesize course information by preparing land use recommendations and management guidelines for a forage-livestock system at one location in Florida.

### Instructional Approach:

Dr. Sollenberger will present nearly all lectures and laboratories. He will be assisted by Ph.D. candidate Ms. Marta Kohmann (mkohmann@ufl.edu). Dr. Sollenberger will hold office hours after lectures and can be seen by appointment at other times. Students are encouraged to stop by and visit with the instructor about course-related issues or other matters of concern. If you are having problems with the course content, personal problems that are interfering with your success in the course, or need assistance in any way, don't wait until late in the semester to establish contact with the instructor. The sooner we begin to work at the problem, the more likely it is that a satisfactory outcome can be achieved.

Lectures will focus on concepts in soil, plant, and animal sciences. Most management details for particular forage species will be provided in the laboratory portion of the class.

Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture and laboratory sessions. Attendance is critical to mastering course content and is part of the course grade. There will be no make-up

exams or quizzes without authorized justification of your absence from class.

Lecture exams will be given during lecture periods as scheduled in your syllabus. They will emphasize material covered in the preceding one-third of the course, but some material on the final will be comprehensive. Three quizzes will be given in lecture periods as scheduled in the syllabus. They will cover lecture material since the last exam. Two plant identification quizzes are scheduled for laboratory periods, and a comprehensive plant identification final will be given.

### Grading:

There will be a total of 750 points for the class. The first two lecture exams will count 100 points each, and the final will count 130 points. The total point value of the lecture quizzes will be 75 (25 each). The two laboratory plant identification quizzes will contribute 45 points (20 and 25 points for the first and second quizzes, respectively). Laboratory summaries are worth a total of 25 points (five points each for five summaries). These are written summaries based on in-class discussions that will occur at the beginning of each of seven lab sessions (Labs 2-5, and 8-10). Each student may choose which five to submit, but they must be in attendance at the labs for which they submit summaries. Summaries are due before the next lab meeting and should be submitted using Canvas (no more than 1 page, double spaced, 12-point font). The laboratory final will be worth 100 points. The land use and management plan (described on a separate handout) contributes up to 100 points to your grade. **NOTE** that a total of 75 points can be obtained through classroom participation. At 15 lecture or lab sessions (unannounced) throughout the semester, five points will be awarded for your attendance. If the class as a whole has a response rate on course evaluations of 80% or greater, each student will receive a five-point bonus. The instructor reserves the right not to credit attendance for those who are late or are not contributing to the quality of the overall classroom experience (i.e., texting, receiving phone calls, sleeping, and talking with your friends during lecture). **No laptops or tablets are permitted to be used in lecture or lab unless otherwise indicated. Cell phones should be off and not in use during class.**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Points</u>
First exam	100
Second exam	100
Final exam	130
Lecture quizzes	75
Lab ID quizzes	45
Lab summaries	25
Lab final	100
Land Use Plan	100
Participation	<u>75</u>
Total	750

Students attaining the following percentages are guaranteed at least these grades. The actual scale used at the end of the semester is often slightly lower than that shown below.

A : 93%	A- : 91	B <sup>+</sup> : 89%	B : 86%	B- : 84	C <sup>+</sup> : 81%
C : 79%	C - : 77%	D <sup>+</sup> : 74%	D : 71	D - : 69%	E : < 69

### **Excused Absences and Make-up Exams/Quizzes:**

Absences will be excused and make-ups scheduled in the case of illness and conflicting academic/professional activities. Except for illness, the instructor should be notified in advance. The instructor reserves the right to require documentation of the reason for the absence.

### **Grades and Grade Points:**

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **Online Course Evaluation Process:**

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

### **Required Handout Packets (Available at The Florida Book Store - 1614 W. University)**

Lecture outlines and handouts (in three volumes, grouped according to material covered in exams)

Laboratory notebook (one volume)

### **Academic Honesty:**

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

### **Use of Library, Personal References, PC Programs, and Electronic Data Bases:**

These items are university property and should be utilized with other users in mind. Never remove, mark, modify nor deface resources that do not belong to you. If you're in the habit of underlining text, do it only on your personal copy. It is inconsiderate, costly to others, and dishonest to use common references otherwise.

### **Software Use:**

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

### **Campus Helping Resources:**

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, [www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/)  
Counseling Services  
Groups and Workshops  
Outreach and Consultation  
Self-Help Library  
Wellness Coaching

Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, [www.crc.ufl.edu/](http://www.crc.ufl.edu/)

### **Services for Students with Disabilities:**

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

AGR 5230 – Florida Grassland Agroecosystems  
Lecture Schedule (Mon., Wed., and Fri., Period 2)

Date	Topic
Jan. 07	Course outline and introduction
Jan. 09	Grassland-livestock ecosystems and ecosystem services
Jan. 12	Contribution of grasslands to agriculture, society, and the environment
Jan. 14	Potential and limitations of Florida grassland-livestock systems
Jan. 16	Forage plant growth and development
<b>Jan. 19</b>	<b>No class - Martin Luther King Day</b>
Jan. 21	Forage plant growth and development (continued)
<b>Jan. 23</b>	<b>Quiz 1; Nitrogen fixation and legume inoculation</b>
Jan. 26	Environmental factors affecting forage production
Jan. 28	Environmental factors affecting forage production (continued)
Jan. 30	Soil characteristics and plant nutrient requirements
Feb. 02	Soil characteristics and plant nutrient requirements (cont.)
Feb. 04	Principles of liming
Feb. 06	Principles of fertilization
Feb. 09	Soil testing to guide pasture fertilization practices
<b>Feb. 11</b>	<b>First lecture exam (Covers lectures 1-11)</b>
Feb. 13	Forage quality and forage testing
Feb. 16	Forage quality and forage testing (continued)
Feb. 18	Florida rangeland: Characteristics and contributions
Feb. 20	Florida rangeland: Management for cattle production
<b>Feb. 23</b>	<b>Quiz 2; Development and distribution of new forages</b>
Feb. 25	Pasture establishment: Site selection and seedbed preparation
Feb. 27	Pasture establishment: Seeding and vegetative planting into prepared seedbeds
<b>Monday, March 3 through Friday, March 7 - Spring Break</b>	
Mar. 09	Pasture establishment: Seeding and vegetative planting into prepared seedbeds
Mar. 11	Pasture establishment: Sod or no-till seeding of grasses and legumes
Mar. 13	Principles of weed control in forage crop systems
Mar. 16	Insect pests and their control in forage crop systems
<b>Mar. 18</b>	<b>Second lecture exam (Covers lectures 12-20)</b>
Mar. 20	Fitting forages to the cow/calf system in North Florida
Mar. 23	Fitting forages to the cow/calf system in South Florida
Mar. 25	Fitting forages to dairy systems in Florida
Mar. 27	Fitting forages to equine systems in Florida
Mar. 30	Fitting forages to equine systems in Florida (cont.)
Apr. 01	Forage-related animal disorders
<b>Apr. 03</b>	<b>Quiz 3; Effects of grazing on forage plants</b>
Apr. 06	Principles of grazing management
Apr. 08	Principles of grazing management (continued)
Apr. 10	Grazing management practices
Apr. 13	Principles of hay production
Apr. 15	Principles of hay production (continued)
Apr. 17	Principles of silage and haylage production
Apr. 20	Principles of silage and haylage production (continued)
Apr. 22	Supplementation of livestock on Florida pastures
<b>Apr. 30</b>	<b>Final Exam: 7:30-9:30 a.m. (Thursday)</b>

## 5230C – Florida Grassland Agroecosystems

### Laboratory Schedule (Wed., Periods 6-7 and 8-9)

Lab Number	Date	Topic
1	Wed., Jan. 07	Forage plant morphology
2	Wed., Jan. 14	Warm-season grasses
3	Wed., Jan. 21	Warm-season grasses and grass weeds
<b>4*</b>	<b>Wed., Jan. 28</b>	<b>ID Quiz 1; Cool-season grasses</b>
5	Wed., Feb. 4	Cool-season legumes
6	Wed., Feb. 11	Forage production systems and equipment used to control pests and to plant and harvest forages (Plant Science Research and Education Unit - Citra)
7	Wed., Feb. 18	Forage Evaluation Laboratory
8	Wed., Feb. 25	Range Grasses (Plant Science Teaching Farm)
<b>Wednesday, Mar. 4</b>		<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
<b>9*</b>	<b>Wed. Mar. 11</b>	<b>ID Quiz 2; Tropical legumes and broadleaf weeds</b>
10	Wed., Mar. 18	Warm-season legumes
<b>11</b>	<b>Wed., Mar. 25</b>	<b>LAB FINAL</b>
12	Wed., Apr. 1	Discussion: Matching forage systems with Florida environments and to meet the requirements of the animal (beef, dairy, or equine)
13	Wed., Apr. 8	Forage management for horses (Horse Teaching Unit)
14	Wed., Apr. 15	Disorders of cattle on pasture and toxic plants (Dr. Rae)
15	Wed., Apr. 22	Discussion: Grazing management principles

**\*Indicates that a cumulative lab quiz will be held at the beginning of the period.**

# Lecture Units and Unit Learning Objectives

## MATERIAL FOR EXAM 1

### Unit 1 - Introduction (Lectures 1 - 4)

1. Learn the definitions of forage terms to provide the needed foundation for understanding course content
2. Be able to describe the major contributions of forages to agriculture, society, and the ecosystem
3. Understand the relative importance of forages in the diets of different classes of livestock
4. Be able to define ecosystem and to identify the key components of a grassland-livestock ecosystem.
5. Understand the most important interactions among the components of a grassland-livestock ecosystem and how management activities affect these interactions.
6. Know how preserving grassland ecosystems will help preserve the environment and contribute to the well being of humans by providing ecosystem services.
7. Be able to describe the general characteristics of the beef, dairy, and equine industries in Florida and the forage systems on which they are based
8. Know the favorable and unfavorable characteristics of Florida's environment (weather, soils, pests, and human population) that influence forage production

### Unit 2 - Plant Processes (Lectures 5 - 7)

1. Be able to start with a seed or a vegetative plant part of a grass or legume and describe the process of germination and subsequent plant growth
2. Understand photosynthesis in terms of the two phases in the process
3. Know the two major carbon fixation pathways for forage plants
4. Learn the general categories of plants which are  $C_3$ s and  $C_4$ s
5. Understand the major differences between  $C_3$  and  $C_4$  plants (anatomically and physiologically) and how these differences affect plant productivity, nutritive value, and competitiveness
6. Know how plants prioritize energy for growth and storage
7. Understand where nitrogen exists in the environment and why it is in short supply to plants
8. Know the bacteria that can fix atmospheric nitrogen, their relationship with plants, and the process involved in nitrogen fixation
9. Have a general idea of how much nitrogen legumes fix in a year and the factors that affect the amount fixed
10. Know what is meant by inoculation and how it happens
11. Understand how water stress affects forage plant photosynthesis, growth, morphology, and nutritive value
12. Know the effects of temperature on plant growth, chemical composition, and nutritive value
13. Know the effects of light on plant growth and nutritive value

### Unit 3 - Soil Composition, Fertility, and Testing (Lectures 8 - 11)

1. Know the components of soil and what they contribute to plants
2. Understand the factors that influence the ability of a soil to provide and store nutrients
3. Be able to describe Liebig's Law of the Minimum
4. Understand the mechanisms whereby plants take up nutrients from the soil
5. Integrate your understanding of the properties of major nutrients in soils, plant requirements for nutrients, and characteristics of Florida's soils so that you can propose a rational approach to forage fertilization
6. Understand the effect of soil pH on plants
7. Know the factors that affect liming rate
8. Understand the factors that determine if fertilizer is needed, how much, and what type

9. Be able to read a fertilizer label and determine the most economical source of nutrients
10. Know why and how to soil test
11. Know the limitations of soil tests and the possible conflicts of interest of testing labs

## **MATERIAL FOR EXAM 2**

### **Unit 4 - Rumen Processes and Forage Quality (Lecture 12)**

1. Be able to describe the important digestion-related processes that go on in the rumen
2. Understand the differences between equine and ruminant digestive processes in terms of the major location of fermentation and digestion
3. Be able to define forage quality
4. Learn the primary laboratory assays used to estimate forage quality, how they are done, and how the results should be interpreted
5. Understand what factors affect forage quality and the general nature of that effect (positive, negative, none)

### **Unit 5 - Characteristics and Management of Native Rangeland (Lectures 13 - 14)**

1. Know the general characteristics of rangelands?
2. Know the specific range **type** that is most common in Florida?
3. Be able to describe characteristics and uses of different Florida range **sites** that occur within the longleaf-slash pine-wiregrass range **type**.
4. From an ecological perspective, be able to explain why rangeland is dominated by grasses and in some cases by specific grasses (e.g., wiregrass).
5. Florida rangeland traditionally has been used for cattle production, but today it makes many different contributions to society. Be able to describe several of these.
6. Understand how native range (both flatwoods and freshwater marsh **sites**) is used today in beef cattle production systems.
7. Compare and contrast the yield and nutritive value of planted pasture and native grasslands.
8. Compare and contrast the characteristics of Florida pasture and native range and the management options that are practical for the two systems.
9. Understand how palmetto control, burning, supplementation, and grazing are used to improve cattle performance on native range.

### **UNIT 6 - Developing New Pasture Plants and Establishment of Pastures (Lectures 15 - 18)**

1. Be aware of the relatively limited time span during which forage improvement efforts have been underway in warm climates
2. Know whether most forages in use in Florida were introduced from somewhere else, are native, or are native forages improved by breeding.
3. Understand why persistence is a key objective for a forage breeder and how selection for persistence impacts the rate at which new forage cultivars can be developed
4. Know the factors that affect seed quality
5. Know under what environmental conditions seed should be stored and why
6. Be able to explain what the seed certification process is and why it is needed
7. Be able to describe a rational sequence of questions that ranchers should ask themselves before deciding to plant a pasture on a particular site
8. Be able to name primary and secondary tillage implements and describe what they are used to do
9. Understand the characteristics of a well-prepared seedbed
10. Know what factors affect choice of seeding rate and planting depth
11. Be able to describe, compare, and contrast the various planting methods



12. Know the important steps in the processes of growing and planting vegetative planting material
13. Be able to discuss why these steps are important in terms of plant biology
14. Know the differences between sod seeding and seeding into a prepared seedbed
15. Learn what forages are sod seeded in Florida and when seeding occurs
16. Be able to discuss management practices for sod-seeded pastures that will minimize competition to the developing seedling and maximize likelihood of success

### **Unit 7 - Pest Management on Florida Pastures (Lectures 19 - 20)**

1. Understand what a weed is and the impact that weeds have on forage-animal systems
2. Understand the role that people play in the spread of weeds and how to avoid this spread
3. Be able to describe the weed control methods that are used in pastures and hay fields
4. Learn the most important weed species in Florida pastures and hay fields and how they can be controlled
5. Learn the most important insect and related pests and the manner in which they affect forages
6. Describe strategies for controlling these pests or for minimizing the damage that they cause

## **MATERIAL FOR EXAM 3**

### **Unit 8 - Forage-Livestock Systems (Lectures 21 - 25)**

1. Develop an understanding of climate, soil fertility, and soil drainage characteristics throughout the state of Florida.
2. Be able to match forage species to environmental characteristics, to seasons of the year when the forages grow, and to the requirements of different classes of livestock in beef, dairy and equine systems
3. Know the size of the beef, dairy, and equine industries in Florida and the extent to which they contribute to the state's economy
4. Understand how and why intensively grazed pastures fit into beef, dairy, and equine enterprises
5. Be able to describe why forages have become more important on Florida dairies during the past five years.
6. Understand the relative importance of imported hay, Florida-produced hay, and pasture for horses in Florida
7. Be able to give examples of poisonous plant disorders, seasonal or conditional disorders, and species-related disorders that can occur with forage-fed livestock.
8. For the disorders grass tetany, bloat, nitrate toxicity, and prussic acid toxicity, be able to describe the category of plants typically involved and the relationship of the disorder to the growing environment and/or forage management practices.
9. For tall fescue and leucaena, understand the disorders that are specific to these forages, their causative agent, and how the disorder can be avoided.

### **Unit 9 - Effects of Animals on Pastures and Grazing Management (Lectures 26 - 28)**

1. Know how defoliation affects regrowth and longevity of pasture plants.
2. Be aware of the importance of treading on pasture productivity, especially of legumes
3. Be able to discuss the degree to which plant nutrients are removed from pastures in animal products, the degree to which they are returned to the pasture in animal waste, and the factors affecting distribution of nutrients from animal wastes
4. Know pasture management practices that can enhance the efficiency of utilization of nutrients from animal wastes

5. Learn how grazing management is defined and be able to discuss the most important grazing management decisions
6. Know how and why plant growth habit and plant type (grass vs. legume) affect tolerance of grazing
7. Be able to discuss continuous and rotational grazing in terms of what they are, their advantages and disadvantages, and when and for which forages they should be used

#### **Unit 10 - Forage Conservation and Supplementation of Forage Diets (Lectures 29 - 31)**

1. Know how hay, silage, and haylage are preserved and their typical moisture concentration
2. Be able to compare the size of dry matter and nutrient losses for hay, silage, and haylage, and know when these losses are most likely to occur
3. Know the implements that are used in hay-making operations and be able to describe the purpose for which they are used
4. Be able to explain the potential benefits and potential problems associated with ammoniation of hay
5. Know why ammoniation is particularly attractive for hay produced in Florida
6. Know the stages in the ensiling process
7. Be able to describe the primary silage storage structures and their advantages and disadvantages
8. Know the characteristics of high quality, well preserved hay and silage
9. Be able to define supplementation and know several supplement feeds used in Florida
10. Be able to define associative effects and to explain the different types of associative effects
11. Be able to give examples of practical supplementation systems in Florida