

Course Syllabus

[Jump to Today](#)

Syllabus - AGR 5511 - Crop Ecology

Crop Ecology - Campus

AGR 5511 (3 Credits) – Fall 2017

Instructor: John Erickson

Agronomy Department, room 102 Bldg. 345

Phone: 294-3792; Email: jerickson@ufl.edu

Course description: Crop Ecology examines underlying ecological processes in agricultural systems, focusing on interactions between crops and their abiotic and biotic environments. Emphasis will be placed on current challenges and problems in agriculture and how agroecology can help to address these challenges. Course content is intended to encourage student advancement in literacy, numeracy, written and oral communication and independence of thought.

Course objectives: To explain how the abiotic environment affects crop performance and articulate how human management alters these relations; To identify and analyze challenges and problems in agricultural systems and devise ideas and management practices to help solve these problems; To apply crop ecophysiological principles to predict responses of agricultural systems to global change; To discuss and summarize ecological services provided by agricultural systems; To explain and provide representative management practices that can enhance ecological services from agricultural systems. To compare and contrast arguments for sustainable intensification of agriculture as they relate to global food security.

Class Schedule: Meets period 5 and 6 (11:45 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.) on Tuesday and period 5 on Thursday (11:45 a.m. - 12:35 p.m.) in PSF 004

Office Hours: Generally, before or after class is the best time to meet with the instructor, but I can be seen by appointment at other times. I strongly encourage students to meet me if you have any questions or need clarification of course content.

Course Textbook: There is no required textbook for the course. I will, however, refer to the textbooks below throughout the course. Excerpts from these texts and other additional readings from the primary literature for the course will be provided through e-learning.

“The Ecology of Agroecosystems”, J.H. Vandermeer. Jones & Bartlett. 2011.

“Crop Ecology: Productivity and Management in Agricultural Systems”, D.J. Connor, R. S. Loomis and K. G. Cassman. Cambridge University Press. 2011.

“Agroecology. The ecology of sustainable food systems”, S. R. Gliessman. CRC Press. 2007.

Instructional approach: Dr. Erickson will provide nearly all instructional content. If you are having any problems with the course or need assistance, don’t wait until late in the semester to contact the instructor. The sooner we begin to address the problem, the more likely you will achieve a satisfactory outcome.

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 exams will be comprehensive. Exams will be closed book (any necessary formulas/equations will be provided in the exam) and you will be expected to finish within the scheduled period.

Attendance: Student class attendance will be noted. Students are responsible for all material covered in lecture and all assigned materials. Attendance is important for mastering course content and there will be no make-up exams or in-class assignments except for excused absences. Make-up work should be arranged prior to the excused absence if possible (e.g., university-sanctioned events), or immediately upon the student’s return to class for unexpected excused absences (e.g., illness or death in the immediate family).

Grading: There will be a total of 550 points for the class. The three exams will count 100 points each. The total point value of the two assignments (A1 and A2) will be worth 50 points. The total point value of the two literature reflection assignments (LR1 and LR2) will be worth 50 points. You will also be required to write a SARE proposal. Early submission of the abstract and annotated bibliography will be worth 25 points, the final proposal will be worth 100 points, and peer evaluating other proposals will be worth 25 points.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Points</u>
Exam 1	100
Exam 2	100
Exam 3	100
Assignments	50
Literature reflection assignments (2)	50

SARE Proposal Abstract and Bibliography	25
Written SARE proposal	100
Peer Evaluation and Ranking of SARE Proposals	<u>25</u>
Total	550

Assigned work will be graded based on completeness, conciseness, clarity, effort, organization, originality and timeliness. Turning in your work late will result in a 5% reduction in credit per day late.

Students attaining the following percentages are guaranteed at least the following grades:

A 93 - 100%	A- 90 - 92%	B+ 87 - 89%	B 83 - 86%
B- 80 - 82%	C+ 77 - 79	C 73 - 76%	C- 70 - 72%
D+ 67 - 69%	D 63 - 66%	D- 60 - 62%	E <60%

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Online Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluation at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these

assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site..

Academic Honesty

In 1995 the UF student body enacted an honor code and voluntarily committed itself to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. When students enroll at the university, they commit themselves to the standard drafted and enacted by students, which states "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code." On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: **"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."** The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obliged to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

It is assumed all work in this course will be completed independently unless the assignment is defined as a group project, in writing by the instructor.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. 352 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 352 392-1111.
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 352 392-1161.

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support, 352 392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site..
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 352 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site..
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 352 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.