

COURSE SYLLABUS

AGEC 691

GRADUATE RESEARCH HOURS - DUDENSING

Summer 2015, AGLS 321, Time TBA

Course description and prerequisites. Graduate students will be introduced to the principles and practices of research and academic writing and will begin work on a thesis, professional paper or dissertation. Students will meet with the instructor for one hour weekly to discuss research and writing methods and to review the student's progress on his/her research paper. No prerequisites are required but AGECE 607 and AGECE 621 are recommended.

Learning outcomes. Students will implement a systematic research process and begin writing a graduate level research paper to fulfill requirements of their graduate degree in agricultural economics or agribusiness. Ideally, they will be ready to defend their proposal in late summer or early fall. As part of these endeavors, they will

- formulate a research question and hypothesis
- undertake an investigation of the research question using appropriate economic and statistical tools
- evaluate the relevance and credibility of information sources
- write in a clear, concise, academic style
- differentiate between their original work and source material
- think critically what their results may mean for society
- accept, evaluate, and respond to feedback on written work.

Instructor information

Rebekka Dudensing, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor & Extension Economist - Community Economic Development

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

600 John Kimbrough Blvd., AGLS 321

TAMU 2124 | College Station, TX 77843-2124

Tel. 979.845.1719

rmdudensing@tamu.edu

<http://ruralcommunities.tamu.edu>

Office hours by appointment.

Course resource materials. There is no text for this course. Students will refer to information from POWER Writing Support Services at Texas A&M University (<http://power.tamu.edu/>) and the OWL Lab at Purdue University (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/658/01/>). The instructor will provide electronic copies and links to supplemental material on research practices and writing tips throughout the course. These documents and links will be emailed or posted on the course website:

<http://agrillife.org/agecoext/programs/community-programs/rural-communities/agec-291691-research-resources/>, also accessible from the <http://ruralcommunities.tamu.edu> website. Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the university thesis and dissertation requirements (<http://ogaps.tamu.edu/Buttons/Resources-for-Degree-Completion#0-ThesisandDissertationRequirementsandInformation>). Each student will also select and read materials related to his/her specific research project.

Grading policies. Course grades are pass/fail and reflect students' effort and progress toward fulfilling his/her paper requirement.

Attendance and make-up policies. Preparation and attendance at scheduled meetings are paramount to success in a research course. Current drafts of papers are expected 24 hours prior to the scheduled course meeting for that week. Dr. Dudensing's Extension responsibilities will occasionally necessitate finding an alternate meeting time. She extends the same courtesy to students, as fellow professionals. Please email rmddudensing@tamu.edu as soon as possible when you have a conflict to reschedule a meeting time. Diligent effort between meetings is crucial to success; however, a lack of preparation is not reason to cancel a meeting but rather indicates an immediate need to meet to get back on track. Following two unexcused absences or suspiciously canceled meetings, Dr. Dudensing and the student will meet to discuss communication issues and sign a memorandum documenting future expectations. Continued unexcused absences may result in a failing grade.

Course topics, calendar of activities, major assignment dates. See the assignments table under grading policies for assignments and approximate dates. Course topics for weekly one-hour meetings are outlined below. Most time is reserved for discussing the research topic and progress with the student. Specific topics and deadlines are listed below.

Assignments* and Topics	Week of:
Components of the research proposal. Forming a research question. Asking critical questions: Why? How? Really? Drafting an outline. Setting a research plan.	June 2
Research plan due. Research outline due. <i>Outline of paper's major sections with one-sentence explanations, as described in class meetings and the provided template.</i> Research question, hypothesis, and goals workshop. Finding, evaluating, and citing information sources.	June 8
10 academic citations due. Draft research question, hypothesis, and goals due. AGEC 691 Commitment Form due. Feedback on research question, hypothesis, and goals. Literature review workshop. Discussion of data collection.	June 15
Literature review draft due. 10 additional academic citations due. Feedback on literature review. Writing the methods chapter.	June 22
5 additional academic citations due. Submit current draft of paper. Working session to address student concerns, troubleshoot, review drafts of specific components, etc.	June 29

Methods draft due. Writing the rest of the introduction.	July 6
Introduction draft due. Critically evaluating your work: What is missing? What will make the paper stronger?	July 13
“Draft 2” of the full proposal paper incorporating feedback due. Workshop on polishing the paper. Discussion of data collection – Round 2.	July 20
<i>No meeting. Work on final draft of paper.</i>	July 27
“Final” draft of proposal due. Planning for the proposal defense. Implementing your methods.	Aug 3

***Assignments are due 24 hours prior to the scheduled course meeting for that week.**

Professional Development Opportunities

Students are strongly encouraged but not required to submit their work to Texas A&M’s Student Research Week (<http://srw.tamu.edu/>) and similar professional development opportunities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit <http://disability.tamu.edu>.

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

For more information refer to the Aggie Honor Code website link <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu>. A writing-intensive research course generates concern about potential plagiarism (as defined in Section 20.1.2.3.5 of the Honor System Rules -

<http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/RulesAndProcedures/HonorSystemRules.aspx#definitions>). In short

“The appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit” (Honor System Rules, accessed May 12, 2015) will not be tolerated.

Appropriate citation of materials is an early topic of the course. Software such as TurnItIn may be used to check written work for originality.