Contemporary Rural Issues  
RS 513X  Spring 2011

Instructor:  Bruce Weber  bruce.weber@oregonstate.edu

Course time: This 1 **credit hour** seminar meets weekly.

**Course Catalog Description:** Through structured engagement with guest speakers, class participants examine emerging issues affecting the future of rural America. A specific issue is explored in-depth by considering different perspectives and alternative ways the issue could be resolved or handled. Guest speakers represent various academic disciplines as well as differing political and philosophical orientations.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Measurable Student Learning Outcomes:** Students who successfully complete the course will be able to:

- Describe the complex ways in which a specific issue is affecting the future of rural America
- Identify key policy questions and alternatives relevant to the particular rural issue being examined.
- Critically appraise differing perspectives on this issue,
- Develop arguments to support particular approaches to resolving or handling the issue.

**Evaluation of Student Performance:** Students are expected to be fully engaged in all aspects of the course, including reading, writing, attending and actively participating in all seminar sessions, asking questions, offering reasoned points of view, and listening attentively to others. The final essay examination will evaluate how well students can identify the key policy questions and alternatives, critically appraise perspectives on the issue and offer a well thought out approach to address the issue. Final grades will be determined with equal consideration given to participation (50%) and to the final exam (50%).

**Learning Resources:** Course readings and faculty guest speakers from several disciplines will provide the relevant information about the issues and options. We will draw speakers from across the OSU campus and nationally primarily from such disciplines as sociology, history, economics, planning, anthropology, political science, human development and geography.

**Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities:** "Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 737-4098."

**Link to Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct:** http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm

**Diversity Statement:** The Rural Studies Program strives to create an affirming climate for all students including underrepresented and marginalized individuals and groups. Diversity encompasses differences in age, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, physical or mental ability, religion, socioeconomic background, veteran status, sexual orientation, and marginalized groups. We believe diversity is the synergy, connection, acceptance, and mutual learning fostered by the interaction of different human characteristics.
Religious Holiday Statement: Oregon State University strives to respect all religious practices. If you have religious holidays that are in conflict with any of the requirements of this class, please see me immediately so that we can make alternative arrangements.

Tentative Course Schedule

**Bridging the Rural and Urban Divide: Opportunities and Obstacles**

**Spring 2011**

The Contemporary Rural Issues course in 2011 will build on the foundation of the recently published OSU Press edited book *Toward One Oregon: Rural-Urban Interdependence*. In the course, authors of the book’s chapters will engage students in exploring the opportunities for gain and the obstacles to greater interdependence of rural and urban areas.

**Week of**

**March 28  Rural-Urban Interdependence**

Guest speaker: Michael Hibbard, University of Oregon


**April 4  Rural and Urban Oregon: Different Contexts, Critical Interdependencies**

Guest speaker: Bruce Weber, Oregon State University

Sheila Martin and Bruce Weber. “A Tale of Two Oregons: Common Aspirations, Different Contexts, and Critical Interdependencies in Urban and Rural Oregon” Chapter 2 in Emshoff et al.

**April 11  The History of Urban Development in Oregon**

Guest speaker: Carl Abbott, Portland State University

Reading: Carl Abbott, “From Urban Frontier to Metropolitan Region: Oregon’s Cities from 1870 to 2009” Chapter 3 in Emshoff et al.

**April 18  The Historical Conflict between Town and Country in Oregon**

Guest Speaker: William G. Robbins, Oregon State University (emeritus)


**April 25  Economic Interdependence in Rural and Urban Oregon**

Guest speaker: David Holland, Washington State University (emeritus)
Reading: David Holland, Paul Lewin, Bruce Sorte, and Bruce Weber. “How Economically Interdependent is the Portland Metro Core with its Rural Periphery? A Comparison across Two Decades”. Chapter 5 in Emshoff et al.

**May 2**  
**The Increasing Fiscal Dependence of Rural Oregon on Urban Oregon**

Guest speaker: Joseph Cortright, Impresa, Inc.

Reading: Joseph Cortright. “Analysis of Fiscal Flow in Oregon” Chapter 6 in Emshoff et al.

**May 9**  
**Politics of the Urban-Rural Divide in Oregon**

Guest Speakers: Richard Clucas, Portland State University and Brent Steel, Oregon State University

Reading: Richard A. Clucas, Mark Henkels, and Brent S. Steel “The Politics of One Oregon: Causes and Consequences of the Rural-Urban Divide and Prospects for Overcoming It” Chapter 7 in Emshoff et al.

**May 16**  
**Strengthening Economic Linkages between Rural and Urban Oregon**

Guest speaker: Sheila Martin, Portland State University

Reading: Sheila Martin, “Critical Linkages: Strengthening Clusters in Urban and Rural Oregon” Chapter 8 in Emshoff et al.

**May 23**  
**Reframing our Common Cause in an Interdependent World**

Guest Speaker: Ethan Seltzer, Portland State University

Reading: Ethan Seltzer, Michael Hibbard, and Bruce Weber “Reframing our Common Cause in an Interdependent World” Chapter 9 in Emshoff et al.

**May 30**  
**Bridging the Rural and Urban Divide: Opportunities and Obstacles**

Panel: Beth Emshoff, Ethan Seltzer, Michael Hibbard, Sheila Martin, Brent Steel, Bruce Weber