

ANS 4605, Animal & Products Evaluation – Horse Judging

Spring, 2026

In-Person (class meetings times TBA), 1-credit

Instructor

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Course Description

This course offers advanced training in detailed evaluation of conformation and athletic performance of horses culminating with participation in national intercollegiate horse judging competitions.

Course Learning Objectives

This course will focus on preparing students to correctly evaluate a horse in several disciplines. By the end of the semester, the students should be able to effectively evaluate and truthfully defend their opinion of a horse in each discipline. Successful completion of this course implies the student will be able to:

- 1) Write and deliver oral sets of reasons.
- 2) Score in the 90th percentile in placing classes.
- 3) Make decisions quickly and confidently
- 4) Comfortably speak in front of a group
- 5) Compete successfully at the intercollegiate level.

Textbooks, Learning Materials, and Supply Fees

2026 AQHA Rulebook (provided) and UF Horse Judging Manual (provided). Additional materials will be provided on Canvas.

Class Expectations

Being a member of a judging team can be one of the most valuable experiences of your college career. Instructors at this university and many others consider students who compete on judging teams to be the “elite” of their programs. Professional behavior, language, and appropriate attire is always expected. **To be successful at competitions you will need to practice OUTSIDE of scheduled class time. We will attempt to schedule some weekend workouts as opportunities arise. The instructor and/or the teaching assistants are available to facilitate watching extra videos and/or giving extra sets of reasons. Team trips to local shows and events should be expected.**

Travel

A team consists of 5 members. Most contests allow two teams per school. The top five ranked class members will compete on the first team, followed by the next top five for the second team. Other students may compete as individuals. Each student's opportunity to compete on a traveling team will be based on the following criteria, all to be weighed evenly:

★ Effort ★ Attendance ★ Timeliness ★ Attitude ★ Placing scores ★ Reasons scores ★ Teamwork

Entry fees and travel expenses (minus meals) are paid for by the University, **as budget permits**. Team members are expected to assist with fundraising and outside judging events throughout the year to maintain the necessary budget for travel.

Technical Support

UF Computing Help Desk & Ticket Number: All technical issues require a UF Helpdesk Ticket Number. The UF Helpdesk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/> | 352-392-4357

Grading Policy

Course grading is consistent with [UF grading policies](#).

Course Grading Structure & Grading Scale

The primary parameter utilized to assess grades is attendance. All placing and reasons scores will be recorded throughout the semester, but we mainly grade on completion and overall improvement throughout the course. During the semester, students will meet approximately 27 times. **Students will lose 8 percentage points from their final grade for each unexcused absence. Therefore, students with one unexcused absence may still earn an A, whereas students with five unexcused absences will likely receive an E.** For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see the link above.

Grade	Percentage
A	92-100%
A-	89-91.9%
B+	86-88.9%
B	82-85.9%
B-	79-81.9%
C+	76-78.9%
C	72-75.9%
C-	69-71.9%
D	60-68.9%
S	Less than 60%

Assignment Type	Point Value (out of 100)
Class placing submissions	20 points
Written/oral reason submissions	20 points
Participation/Attendance	60 points

Academic Policies and Resources

Academic policies for this course are consistent with university policies. See <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Campus Health and Wellness Resources

Visit <https://one.ufl.edu/whole-gator/topics> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF. Please contact [UMatterWeCare](#) for additional and immediate support.

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.

Tentative Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1	Review Syllabus; Conformation Lecture; Introduce Halter; write reasons in class
1/19	<i>HOLIDAY – NO CLASS</i>
WEEK 2	Give oral reasons; judge halter class – write reasons
WEEK 3	Western Pleasure Lecture; judge WP class; give reasons; Hunter Under Saddle Lecture
WEEK 4	Give oral reasons; Working Western Rail Lecture; review judging multiple classes
2/7	FSF Youth Horse Judging Contest, Tampa – MANDATORY*
WEEK 5	Give two sets of reasons; Ranch Riding Lecture; write reasons in class
WEEK 6	Give oral reasons; Reining Lecture; judge write reasons in class
WEEK 7	Judge ranch riding and reining; give reasons & introduce Horsemanship/Equitation
2/21 or 2/28	4-H/FFA Reasons Workshop, ANS – MANDATORY**
WEEK 8	Give oral reasons; practice judging multiple classes
WEEK 9	Showmanship Lecture; judge multiple classes; give two sets of reasons
3/16-3/21	<i>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS</i>
WEEK 11	Hunter Hack Lecture; judge HH; give reasons; judge multiple classes
3/28	4-H/FFA State Horse Judging Contest, HTU – MANDATORY FOR SR TEAM (and those not traveling to spring contest)
WEEK 12	Western Trail & Ranch Trail Lectures; review for contest (classes as requested)
4/6-4/10***	Traveling for Spring Contest (contest day TBD)
WEEK 14	Debrief from contest; feedback and reflection
WEEK 15	TBA; Judge classes as requested

*Practice contest in Tampa for 4-H/FFA, come as extra hands and practice

**Primary spring fundraiser for team to help cover travel expenses, mandatory for all students

***Spring contest date is not yet confirmed, will adjust when announced. “Capstone” of spring semester.