

AREC 428: Agribusiness Management

Instructor: Dr. Dawn Thilmany **Class Times:** TR 12:30-1:45
B-325 Clark Building **Location:** 113 Gifford
[Email: thilmany@lamar.colostate.edu](mailto:thilmany@lamar.colostate.edu) 491-7220

Office Hours: W 1-2:30 pm or by appointment

General Overview: This course is designed to integrate skills and competencies from the agricultural economics curriculum into a cohesive decision-making system that includes marketing, financial, operations/production and human resource management. Students completing the course will have a deeper knowledge of these core skills and a sound understanding of how these skills interact and influence one another.

Course Outcomes:

- a. Apply skills and competencies from the agribusiness curriculum into an integrated decision framework applied to a real world business.
- b. Complete an intensive examination of the strategic, financial and market position of an existing agribusiness within the context of a capstone project.
- c. Define an economic opportunity for the existing agribusiness, propose alternatives, assess the feasibility of alternatives with appropriate methods, interpret and communicate results to a broad audience.
- d. Foster professional development by interacting/collaborating with business professionals in defining goals of the capstone project, choosing methods and communicating results.

Course Project: A significant portion of the course asks students to develop an in-depth analysis of an existing agribusiness. This is a team project, and the team must find data to perform necessary strategic, financial, and market analysis of their agribusiness. A written business prospectus will summarize the current status of the business, and teams will propose alternatives for further evaluation that benefit the business. A rigorous quantitative analysis will evaluate alternatives in the feasibility study: this will be presented to peers, owners (when possible) and faculty. A written report, addressing feedback from the presentation, will take the place of a final.

Grading: (100% total, 40% related to project and team work)

- a. Quizzes (2 during semester) 30%
- b. Homework and In-Class Exercises 20%
- c. Project-based prospectus and planning documents 10%
- d. Presentation of Feasibility Analysis 10%
- e. Final Written Report 15%
- f. Peer and Group Evaluations (content quality and contribution) 15%

Academic Integrity: Students must uphold the academic integrity standards as explained in the university's Academic Integrity Policy of the Colorado State University General Catalog {Page 7} and the Student Conduct Code. This class requires a great deal of group work, but students should take responsibility for investing personally in the independent learning and development of project materials. Violations of CSU's academic integrity policies will be handled in accordance with the procedures discussed in the CSU General Catalog.

August 22- Introduction to Agribusiness Management and Planning

Assignments: Recruit Groups

Consider Business and Project Options

August 29-September 5 – Strategic Management

Assignments: EFAS, Mission Statement, IFAS

TOWS and Strategic Positioning

September 12-19 – Financial Management and Production in the Value Chain

Developing Cost of Production and Start-up Resource Budgets

Assignments: Project Financial Analysis or Start-up Proposal

September 26 –Production Costs and Breakeven Analysis

Quiz: Strategy Quiz

October 3 – Developing the Project Prospectus and Presentation

Assignments: Templates online

Last opportunity to change project focus

October 10 – Growing the Firm’s Resource and Capital Budgeting

Assignments: Financial Analysis for Business

October 17 –24- Market Segmentation and Planning

No class October 18th

Assignments: Market Analysis

November 7 – Integrated Marketing

Reading: Marketing Case Study

November 14 –Human Resources

Quiz: Quiz 2

Assignments: Marketing Homework

Thanksgiving Break-November 21-27

November 29-December 6 – Presentations/Evaluation

Assignments: Presentation Evaluations of your Peers

Group Evaluation forms (part of your participation grades)

No Class December 1st, Invitation to Join USDA Beginning Farmer Conference

Business Reports are due by Tuesday, Dec. 16th at 12 noon (the time of the scheduled final).

There will be no Final examination.