



AREC 428 – Agricultural Business Management Fall 2018

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Office Hours: Wednesday 11 am - 1 pm or by appointment.
Drop-ins (B327 Clark or on Skype) are also welcome!

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Email: Armen.Ghazaryan@colostate.edu
Office Hours: Monday 12-1:45 PM Room B302

Class Meeting time and location

Behavioral Science Building 107; 11:00 AM to 12:15 PM; Tuesday / Thursday and Online (Echo recordings will be available after the class meetings for the students in the Online Section).

Course Description

This course is designed to integrate skills and competencies from the agricultural economics curriculum into a cohesive decision making system that includes marketing, financial, and strategic management. Students completing the course will have a deeper knowledge of these core skills and a sound understanding of how they interact and influence one another.

Course Prerequisites

AREC 305/EA 305 Enterprise Analysis; AREC 310 Agriculture Marketing

Required Textboon

Barnard, Akridge, Dooley, Foltz, and Yeager. Agribusiness Management. 5th Edition. Routledge. New York, NY. 2016 ISBM: 978-1138891937

A physical copy (of an older edition) is available on reserve from the library. Additional reading materials will be provided electronically on the course page on Canvas.

Learning Objectives

Upon the completion of this course, you will have ...

1. ... applied skills and competencies from the agribusiness curriculum into an integrated decision framework that is applied to a real world business;
2. ... examined the strategic, financial and market position of an existing agribusiness firm, from an internal perspective as well as in the context of the market / chain where it operates;
3. ... identified economic opportunity for an existing agribusiness; proposed and assessed the existence and the feasibility of alternatives with appropriate methods;
4. ... interpreted and communicated the results of your analysis to a broad audience;
5. ... improved your critical thinking ability.

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Grades

Grades will be assigned on a 100 points basis, with scores that are divided as follows:

Exams (2, 150 points each)	300
Team Assignments (5*40 points each)	200
Business Prospectus (Written Reports – 2*100 points)	200
Feasibility Analysis (Written Report)	150
<u>Presentations (3*50 points each)</u>	<u>150</u>
Total	1000

Tentatively, final grades will be assigned according to the following scheme: A = 94-100%; A- = 90 – 93%; B+ = 88 – 89%; B = 84-87%; B- = 80–83%; C+ = 78–79%, C = 74-77%; C- = 70-73% D= 60-69%; F = <60%.

Tests (300 points; 2 tests worth 150 points each): The tests will be held in class or available online for the on-line students, in dates as specified in the course calendar. Each exam will last a maximum of 75 minutes. The second test will not be comprehensive; this course will not have a final exam during finals’ week. Each exam will consist of multiple choice questions, short answers, and problems. The exams are designed to be closed book, closed notes: the use of calculators and calculators only will be allowed during these two tests (no cell phones, smartphone, tablets or other devices that can be connected to the internet). Make-up tests will only be given for students who have contacted the instructor before the day of the exam and have a legitimate and verifiable excuse (see “Note on attendance policy” below). Once again: you will be asked to turn off and store your cellular phone before each test – no cell-phone use will be allowed during the tests. If you use your cell phone during a tests you will be asked to leave the room.

Assignments (200 points): There will be 6 TEAM assignments, worth 40 points each (i.e. each assignment will count for 4% of the final grade). The assignment with the lowest grade will be dropped (that is your team will receive grades only for the five assignments with the highest grades). Assignments are due by 11:00 a.m., following the schedule indicated in the course calendar. Note: each assignment is due ONE WEEK after it has been assigned (with the exception of Assignment 3). Some of the questions in each assignment will be closely related to the content of the capstone project. Assignments will be submitted via Canvas. It is every group’s responsibility to: 1) complete the work timely (it is advisable that you do not wait until the last day to start working on the assignments), 2) verify that you have access to the necessary software to complete your work, 3) ensure that you have access to a working internet connection, and 4) use a browser compatible with Canvas. Late assignments will be accepted with a 33% daily penalty. This means that missing the deadline will automatically result in a 33% penalty; submitting the assignment two days late will result in a 66% penalty; assignments submitted later than 48 hours after the deadlines will result in a 0 grade for that assignment. Make up assignments will ONLY be allowed if extenuating circumstances apply: the students/groups must contact the instructor in advance.

Business Prospectus (200 points): Each group will be asked to identify and connect with an agribusiness and analyze thoroughly all its component, including financial situation / strategy; marketing strategy; core competences of the managements / ownership; mission / vision of the

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business; organizational structure; short and long-term goals of the business. The business prospectus will be divided into two parts, the first presenting a general description of the business, its vision, mission, core competencies and its marketing strategy; the second part will focus on analyzing the financial situation of the company, its strategic positioning and planning. Each group will be propose alternatives for further evaluation to improve the business operations and performances in the feasibility analysis / study report (see below). Additional information will be distributed as the class proceeds.

Feasibility study (150 points): This component of the capstone project consists in a rigorous quantitative analysis of the alternatives identified during the development of the business prospectus. While an outline of this analysis should be included as an appendix to the business prospectus, the analysis, its methods and results will be thoroughly illustrated in a separate document which will be discussed in a presentation to the class and an external audience (see below). Additional information will be distributed as the class proceeds. **NOTE:** A draft document outlining the research idea underlying the feasibility study is due on Tuesday, October 16th; the complete feasibility study report is due during final week (see course calendar). Submission of electronic copies of all documents in Canvas is required (both at the intermediate and final stage). Additional information will be provided to you as the class proceeds.

Presentations (150 points – one grade for each group): There will be three presentations; each presentation will be worth 50 points. Two presentations for the business prospectus (one for each part), and a final presentation of the feasibility study which will be presented to the class and to an audience of faculty and industry representatives (See course calendar for the dates of each presentation). Business casual attire is recommended for all presentation, and required for the final presentation. Not all group members will be asked to speak, although all members must attend the presentations. Further information will be provided as the class proceeds.

Peer evaluations: your group scores will depend highly on how each team member contributes to the group's success. In order to deter free riding behavior, we will use a peer evaluation form, where you will be asked to evaluate yourself and each of your teammates, assigning them a score between 1 and 10. Three peer evaluations will occur at different moments to assess the contribution to:

- assignments 1, 2, 3 and part 1 of the business prospectus (and presentation)
- assignments 4, 5, 6 and part 2 of the business prospectus (and presentation)
- Feasibility analysis presentation and report (submitted electronically AFTER the report is submitted).

The average peer evaluation score, rounded in excess to the closest unit, will be used to weight the score of the assignments and project of your team to obtain your individual scores.

- **Example:** assume your group's cumulative grade for assignments 1, 2 and 3 is 100 (out of the 120 points available), and your average peer-review score is 8.3. This score (8.3) will be approximated to 9 resulting in a weight of 0.9 (9/10). Your score is then obtained multiplying 100 (your group's cumulative score) times your peer evaluation's weight (0.9). Your overall score for assignment 1, 2 and 3 will be 90 ($100 \times 0.9 = 90$).

Note: intermediate peer evaluations below 6/10 will result in the individual being **fired** from his/her group and to have to work individually on the remaining assignments and components of the capstone project.

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Library Help: Renae Watson is the librarian supporting this course. Contact her for assistance at renae.watson@colostate.edu / ph. 970-491-5338. See her research guide at libguides.colostate.edu/agriculture. Additionally, the CSU Libraries Help Desk provides both research (ph. 970-491-1841) and technical (ph. 970-491-7276) support. These services are free for all CSU students and can be extremely helpful as you prepare your final project.

Participation Expectations and Classroom Conduct Classroom Etiquette

Active participation in this course is expected. Besides lecturing, other activities will take place during class meetings, which may include short presentations, quizzes, short case studies, class discussions and critical analyses of relevant news and articles. For these activities to be successful, active participation is necessary. Successful students spend a minimum of nine hours per week working on assignments, project development, reviewing materials and meeting with the instructor. Free-riding on the group's efforts will not be tolerated; a peer-evaluation system is in place to ensure that lack of participation in group activities is penalized (see above).

- Please silence your phone and other electronic devices during class.
- Please be quiet while in class. It can be difficult to hear in a large classroom and even quiet talking can be very disruptive to other students who are trying to listen.
- Please do not read newspapers, text, play games, or listen to music during class. It may not impact your learning experience, but it is distracting to others in the room.
- No animals are allowed in the classroom except those defined in the CSU policy regarding SERVICE animals. No emotional support animals are allowed in class. See below more details.

Academic Integrity and Principles of Community.

This course will adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy {Section 1.6} of the Colorado State University General Catalog, the Student Conduct Code, and University Principles of Community.

Academic Integrity Policy This course will adhere to the CSU Academic Integrity [Policies and Guiding Principles](#) as found in the General Catalog and the [Student Conduct Code](#).

- Cheating—includes using unauthorized sources of information and providing or receiving unauthorized assistance on any form of academic work or engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by the faculty member.
- Plagiarism—includes the copying of language, structure, ideas, or thoughts of another, and representing them as one's own without proper acknowledgment.
- Unauthorized Possession or Disposition of Academic Materials—includes the unauthorized selling or purchasing of examinations or other academic work; stealing another student's work; unauthorized entry to or use of material in a computer file; and using information from or possessing exams that an instructor did not authorize for release to students.
- Falsification—includes any untruth, either verbal or written, in one's academic work.
- Facilitation—includes knowingly assisting another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

At a minimum, violations will result in a grading penalty in this course and a report to the Office of [Conflict Resolution and Student Conduct Services](#).

CSU Honor Pledge Academic integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. Because academic integrity, and the personal and social integrity of which academic integrity is an integral part, is so central to our mission as students, teachers, scholars, and citizens, I will ask that you affirm the CSU Honor Pledge as part

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of completing your work in this course. While you will not be required to affirm the honor pledge, you may be asked to affirm *the following statement at the start of your exams*: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance." Consider reviewing further information on [Academic Integrity](#)

In this course we will also strive to follow and extend Colorado State's **University's Principles of Community**, and welcome spirited discussion, lively debate and pursuit of knowledge in a manner that respects each of us as individuals. The Principles of Community support the Colorado State University mission and vision of access, research, teaching, service and engagement. A collaborative and vibrant community is a foundation for learning, critical inquiry, and discovery. Therefore, each member of the CSU community has a responsibility to uphold these principles when engaging with one another and acting on behalf of the University.

- **Inclusion**: We create and nurture inclusive environments and welcome, value and affirm all members of our community, including their various identities, skills, ideas, talents and contributions.
- **Integrity**: We are accountable for our actions and will act ethically and honestly in all our interactions.
- **Respect**: We honor the inherent dignity of all people within an environment where we are committed to freedom of expression, critical discourse, and the advancement of knowledge.
- **Service**: We are responsible, individually and collectively, to give of our time, talents, and resources to promote the well-being of each other and the development of our local, regional, and global communities.
- **Social Justice**: We have the right to be treated and the responsibility to treat others with fairness and equity, the duty to challenge prejudice, and to uphold the laws, policies and procedures that promote justice in all respects.

Title IX: Sexual Assault, Sexual Violence, Sexual Harassment:

CSU's Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as "Responsible Employees." This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance, and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments. As "Responsible Employees," faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety.

Any student who may be the victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources:

- Emergency Response 911
- Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment (970) 491-1350
- Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency) (970) 491-6425

Please Visit: <http://oeo.colostate.edu/title-ix-sexual-assault> for more information.

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Need Help? Rams Take Care of Rams

Reach out and ask for help if you or someone you know is having a difficult time. Always feel free to come and talk to me; I will always make myself available to help connect you with any resources you need. CSU is a community that cares for you. If you are struggling with drugs or alcohol and/or experiencing depression, anxiety, overwhelming stress or thoughts of hurting yourself or others please know there is help available. Counseling Services has trained professionals who can help. Contact 970-491-6053 or go to <http://health.colostate.edu>. If you are concerned about a friend or peer, tell someone by calling 970-491-1350 (or visit <http://safety.colostate.edu/tell-someone.aspx>) to discuss your concerns with a professional who can discreetly connect the distressed individual with the proper resources.

Service Animals in the Classroom

This course will follow all of the policies regarding service animal access to the classroom. The full university policy may be found here: <http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=747> .

POLICY STATEMENT.

The University will not discriminate against individuals with disabilities who use service dogs, nor, subject to the terms of this Policy, deny those persons access to programs, services and facilities of the University. In addition, only under certain limited conditions as stated in this policy, the University may permit an individual with a documented disability to have an Emotional Support Animal in a University residential facility. Pets are not permitted in any University building, including residence halls, except for the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and other veterinary facilities in accordance with their rules and policies, or when otherwise specially allowed with advance approval from Environmental Health Services for bona fide academic or University business purposes.

Service Dogs: Subject to some limitations, a service dog may accompany an individual with a disability throughout campus, such as in classrooms, recreational facilities and campus residences. It is strongly encouraged, but not required, that a service dog be identifiable to others through a visible signifier (e.g., vest or harness). Individuals with a disability who require a service dog in the classroom should contact Resources for Disabled Students (RDS) for assistance with accommodations.

Emotional Support Animals An emotional support animal (ESA) is one that alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. ESAs are not permitted in university buildings, except in the rare situation where use of an ESA in University housing is approved in advance by the University upon the submission of appropriate documentation, as set forth in this policy. ESAs are not permitted in non-residential buildings such as classrooms, laboratories, business offices, recreational facilities, dining halls, or the Lory Student Center; they are limited to the disabled individual's residence in a University residence hall, apartment, or other housing unit, and permitted only with prior approval.

Canvas Email System Utilization

Using the University's systems or networks for personal gain; for example, by selling access to your eID or to university systems or networks, or by performing work for profit with university

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resources (e.g. selling your notes or promoting a personal agenda) in a manner not authorized by the University is strictly forbidden within the CSU Code of Conduct and also CSU's policy for Acceptable Use for Computing and Networking Resources. All cases of this type of code violation will be reported to the Office of Conflict Resolution and Case Management and dealt with following CSU legal counsel guidance.

Reasonable Accommodations for students with disability or chronic health conditions

Students who will need accommodations in this class due to a disability or chronic health condition, should discuss their individual needs with the instructor. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation, a verifying accommodation letter from [Resources for Disabled Students](#) is required before any accommodation is provided

Other Resources:

Mental Health Need Help? CSU is a community that cares for you. If you are struggling with drugs or alcohol and/or experiencing depression, anxiety, overwhelming stress or thoughts of hurting yourself or others please know there is help available. Counseling Services has trained professionals who can help. Contact 970.491.6053 or go to <http://health.colostate.edu>. If you are concerned about a friend or peer, tell someone at by calling 970.491.1350 to discuss your concerns with a professional who can discreetly connect the distressed individual with the proper resources (<http://supportandsafety.colostate.edu/tellsomeone>). Rams take care of Rams. Reach out and ask for help if you or someone you know is having a difficult time.

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Course Schedule / Schedule of Activities

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Activities/ Deadlines</i>
Aug. 21 Tue	Intro to AREC428 Module I: Agribusiness and Management; Legal forms & organizational structures - Project Intro	BADFY Ch 1, 2, 4 & 16	
Aug. 23, Thurs			
Aug. 28, Tue		Handouts / AR	Assignment 1 Groups list due
Aug. 30, Thurs	Module II: Supply Chain Management	BADFY Ch 15	
Sept. 4, Tue	Module III: Vision & Mission Statements, Core competencies	AR	Assignment 1 due
Sept. 6, Thurs.	Module IV: Strategic Marketing / Market Segmentation & Marketing Mix	BADFY Ch 6,	Assignment 2
Sept. 11, Tue.			
Sept. 13, Thurs	Module V: Marketing Tools NO CLASS ON 9/18 – Work on Assignment 3	BADFY Ch 8 AR	Assignment 2 due Assignment 3
Sept. 18, Tue			
Sept. 20, Thurs			
Sept. 25, Tue	Review & Discussion / Group Study time / Q & A		Assignment 3 due
Sept. 27, Thurs	Exam I (for ONLINE Sept-26th-Oct 1st)		
Oct. 2, Tue	Presentations 1 (round1)		
Oct. 4, Thurs	Presentations 1 (round2) - Peer Evaluations 1 - Exams Back		Prospectus Part 1 due
Oct. 9, Tue	Module VI: How to Perform a Feasibility Analysis; Feasibility Analysis Introduction – Partial Budgeting; Review of Financial Statements	BADFY Ch 9 Handout/ AR	Feedback Capstone Project Reports
Oct. 11, Thurs			Assignment 4
Oct. 16, Tue	Module VII: Ratios, Benchmarking, and Volume Cost Analysis	BADFY Ch 11 & 12	Feasibility Analysis Idea due
Oct. 18, Thurs			Assignment 4 due
Oct. 23, Tue	Module VIII: Capital Budgeting and Investment analysis	BADFY Ch.10 & 13	Assignment 5
Oct. 25, Thurs			
Oct. 30, Tue	Module IX: SWOT Analysis; Strategic Positioning HR management and Leadership Styles	BADFY Ch 6, 17; AR	Assignment 5 due Assignment 6
Nov. 1, Thurs			
Nov. 6, Tue	Review session –Study time - Q/A		Assignment 6 due
Nov. 8, Thurs	Exam II (for ONLINE Nov 7th - Nov 12th)		
Nov. 13, Tue	Presentations 2 (round1)		
Nov. 15, Thurs	Presentations 2 (round2) - Peer Evaluations 2 – Exam II Back		Prospectus Part 2 due
Nov. 20, Tue	<i>Thanksgiving break</i>		
Nov. 22, Thurs			
Nov. 27, Tue	Feedback on Capstone Project's Reports and Feasibility Analysis		
Nov. 29, Thurs	Group-work / Teacher's feedback and work on Feasibility analysis		
Dec. 4, Tue	Feasibility Analysis Presentations (round 1)		
Dec. 6, Thurs	Feasibility Analysis Presentations (round 2)		
Feasibility Analysis Reports Due December 13th at 11:00 am Third peer evaluations to be submitted electronically on December 13th (before 11:59 pm)			

BADFY: Barnard, Akridge, Dooley, Foltz, and Yeager. Agribusiness Management. 5th Edition.

AR: Additional Readings – See class notes / slides for complete list of readings and sources.