

Morrisville State College
Introduction to Agriculture Business Management
AGBS 110
Spring 2006

Instructor: Sheila A. Marshman, MBA; PhD in Progress
Phone: 315-684-6106
Office: 104 Marshall Hall
Email: marshmsa@morrisville.edu
Webpage: <http://people.morrisville.edu/~marshmsa/>

Office hours:

Mondays:	3:00 - 5:00 pm
Tuesdays:	9:00 - 11:30 am
Thursdays:	4:00 - 5:00pm

**E-mail also serves as an efficient means of communications

Course description:

This is a dual-credit course with designated high schools to acquaint selected high school students with the basic principles of agricultural business. Students will have the opportunity to gain valuable career planning skills through job shadowing experiences, resume writing and interviews. Students will learn about forms of business organizations, agriculture marketing, sales; consolidated and diversified agriculture business opportunities. Students will also be exposed to the financial management and decision making process of owning and operating an agriculture business.

This is a three credit course.

Course objectives:

The objective of this course is to provide an overview of agriculture businesses, their financial status, the management and marketing of; and the careers associated within the agriculture industry.

Upon completion of this course, the student is expected to demonstrate an understanding of the changes occurring within the agriculture industry, current financial status of the agriculture industry, as well as the career and entrepreneurial opportunities available. Students will complete a resume, cover letter and a minimum of 10 hours of job shadowing work within two agribusinesses, as well as having mapped out a plan to obtain a summer internship or permanent employment within the industry.

Special requirements:

The semester will begin by each student researching two agribusiness firms, obtaining an in-depth knowledge of the management and operations of each business. Students will also identify a position within each business that they would like to learn more about. Each student will make a short (10 minute) presentation about the companies and the opportunities they see within the organization.

Students will then contact the organization by phone or e-mail, following up with a cover letter and resume and then arrange to spend a minimum of four hours job shadowing an employee of each company. Students will then make a second presentation of about fifteen minutes summarizing their experience to the class. Each presentation will include a summary of the financial management and financial status of each business.

The semester will also include numerous field trips to agricultural businesses, small businesses and related production operations. Each class will begin with a discussion of current topics impacting the agribusiness sector.

Grading:

20% Work experience in an agriculture business (10.0% each)
20% Agribusiness presentation
20% Field trip summaries
20% Industry reports
20% Examinations

Attendance: Mandatory

Initial Power Point Presentation will include:

- Company name
- Products offered
- Where located
- Number of employees
- History
- Competition
- Nature of industry
- Financial status of the industry
- Financial status of the business
- Specific position you are interested in
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Qualifications for this position

Texts:

There is no textbook required for this class:

Additional topics to be included: (There is no preferred order for these topics)

Week I:

Introduction to Agriculture Business Management and Agriculture Entrepreneurship

- Opportunities and trends
 - Discuss history of agriculture

- Define commodity products
- Define value added products
- Nature and scope of the current agriculture industry
 - Review 2004 cash receipts of agricultural products
- Consolidation, mergers and acquisitions.
 - Discuss 2000 agriculture census results
 - NYS agricultural trends
 - Technological factors contributing to consolidation.

Learning standards met:

MST 5, CDOS3, SS 4, SS 1

Activities: Research trends and statistical data on the USDA and NY Department of Agriculture's web page.

Week 2

Company/Agribusiness Research

- Resume and cover letter writing
 - Discuss information needed on a resume
 - Pertinent and non-pertinent information
 - Show examples of resumes from previous students
 - Discuss information needed for cover letters
 - Discuss importance and purpose of cover letters
 - Show examples of cover letters from previous students
- Professional etiquette while in the work place
 - Discuss proper language
 - Phone etiquette
 - E-mail and instant message etiquette (meaning do not do this on employer's time)
- Proper and professional dress and attire.
 - Demonstrate professional attire
 - Business casual attire
 - Casual attire

Learning Standards Met:

CDOS 1, ELA 2,4

Activities: Students will draft a resume and cover letter

Week 3:

- How to research companies
 - Demonstrate internet searches
 - Discuss annual reports

- Discuss how to use Microsoft PowerPoint
 - Creating sliding presentations
 - Changing fonts and font sizes
 - Changing slide layout
 - Changing slide backgrounds
- The art or science of public speaking
 - Review public speaking skills
 - Discuss the importance of not reading off PowerPoint slides
 - Importance of looking at your audience

Learning Standards Met:

MST 5; CDOS 1, ELA 1,3

Activities: students will research perspective companies for future job shadowing opportunities, summarize their findings in a 3-5 minute PowerPoint presentation and present to other students and instructor.

Week 4 ---Management

- What is farm/small business management?
 - Define a small business
- What do managers do?
 - Planning
 - Organizing
 - Leading
- How do managers manage?
 - Discuss leadership styles
- What are the characteristics of farm managers and entrepreneurs?

Learning Standards Met:

CDOS 3a,b; ELA 1,2

Activity: Interview/job shadow an agricultural manager; identify management styles and write a one page paper.

Week 5 – Record keeping

- Why keep records?
 - Discuss importance of knowing how much money you make, spend and save
- What records are important to keep and for how long?
 - Pay stubs
 - Receipts
 - IRS tax forms- government
 - Interest forms
 - W-2 and W-4
- Introduction to farm record keeping and personal financial record keeping programs

- Budgeting
- Demonstrate how to balance a checking account
- Demonstrate how to use computer software Quicken/Ag Check
 - Chart of accounts
- Discuss the Time Value of Money and compound interest
- Discuss use of credit and debit cards and how to keep records of their usage

Learning Standards Met:

SS 4; SS 5; MST 3 and 5; ELA 1,2 and 3; CDOS

Activities: Ask students to track their income and expenses for one week; report back to the class both verbally and in writing; keep SAE records FFA projects.

Week 6: Agricultural Economics

- What is the stock market?
 - Discuss how companies obtain financing
 - Introduce the Dow Jones Industrial Average
 - Discuss the history of the DJIA
- Agriculture and consumers credit sources
 - ATM cards/debit cards and credit cards (also in week 5)
 1. Credit scores
 2. Accounts Payable – Vendor credit
 3. Late fees
 4. Interest rates APR
 - Introduce the Farm Credit Lending System
 1. Obtaining credit
 - Balance sheets
 - Commercial Banking
 - Introduce the FSA – Farm Service Agency
 1. Gov. policy

Learning standards Met:

SS 4; SS 1; SS 5; ELA 2,3 and 4; CDOS

Activities: Ask students to track an agricultural stock for 1 week; report back to the class verbally and in writing

Week 7: Marketing of Agricultural Products

- Risk Management and the futures market
 - Discuss various types of risk in agriculture
 - Introduce the Chicago Board of Trade
 - Define sellers on the board

- Define buyers on the board
- Define a bull market
- Define a bear market

- Contracts for commodity products
 - Discuss forward contracting
 - Define Options
 - Define Margins

Learning Standards met:

- SS 4 and SS 5

Activities: Ask students to track corn futures for one week and explain price fluctuation in a one page paper.; ag marketing CDE

Week 8: Marketing of Agricultural Products

- Fruit and Vegetable marketing
 - Discuss how vegetables are marketed in the Northeast
 - Apple Industry
 - International trade
 - Roadside stands, farm markets and collaborative distribution
 - Trends in Food consumption
- Define price, promotion, product, place (distribution)

Learning standards met:

TA 1; HPEHE 1; ELA; CDOS

Activities: Ask students to create a marketing campaign for an area agriculture business.

Week 9: Emerging and Niche Opportunities in Agriculture

- Entrepreneurship
 - Rural development opportunities
- Genetics
 - Livestock
- Agricultural tourism
 - Discuss types of agriculture tourism opportunities
 - Petting Zoos
 - U-pick operations
- Swine and beef industry
- Discuss the changing landscape of rural America
 - Demographic trends- www.census.gov
 - Geographic trends

Learning standards met:

SS2, SS 4; CDOS; ELA

Activities: Have students visit U.S. Census web cite and research population and demographic trends in their communities. Compare and contrast various counties throughout the United States.

Week 10: Agriculture Sales

- Customer relations
 - Customer service
 - Customer complaints
- Advertising/marketing
- Understanding customer needs/wants
- Understanding customer profiles

Learning Standards Met

Activities: Ag sales CDE

Week 11: Opportunities for expansion and consolidation in agriculture

- Commercial dairy, crop and equine operations
 - Career opportunities in production agriculture
 - Human resources
 - Organizational structures
 - Review history of the equine industry
 - Current equine population
 - Review history of the dairy industry
 - Current size and scope of the dairy industry

- Review trends in land prices

Learning Standards Met

SS 4

Activity: Field trip to commercial dairy or large production/commodity farm business

Week 12: Developing one's management skills

- Leadership
 - Define leadership

DRAFT COPY

DRAFT COPY

DRAFT COPY

- Discuss leadership qualities
- Listening skills
 - Discuss importance of good listening skills
 - Understanding other's perspectives and opinions
- Team building skills
 - What are teams?
 - Why are some teams successful?
 - What makes a successful team?

Learning Standards Met:

SS 3; ELA

Activities: Using marshmallows and spaghetti have student break-up into groups and build bridges over chairs.

Week 13: Students need a total of 8 hours for job shadowing

Week 14: Public speaking and presentation skills

Week 15: Student presentations wrap up and class discussion

This course syllabus is subject to change at the Professor's discretion