

**Advanced Agribusiness Management
ABUS 421**

| | |
|--|---|
| Office Hours: | |
| Instructor: Marnie Dalton Office: 108 Plumas Hall | TR 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. R 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. |
| Phone #: 898-4908 or cell 530-228-1269 | Or by appointment |
| e-mail: mdalton@csuchico.edu | mdalton@propacificfresh.com |
| Class times: Lecture (TR 9:30 -10:45 a.m.) | Plumas 329 |

I. Course Objectives

This course is primarily designed to:

1. help you develop an appreciation for the interaction between the finance, human resource, marketing, and operations dimensions of the agribusiness firm;
2. provide a framework for integrating your previous knowledge of accounting, economics, finance, management, and marketing into business decisions;
3. develop your ability to think strategically about business decisions; and
4. build your awareness of critical issues facing managers of agribusiness firms.

This course is also designed to help you develop the abilities that agribusinesses in today's competitive environment expect of college graduates. Employers consistently say that they are looking for employees with the following abilities:

1. Excellent communication skills (both written and oral);
2. Good business problem-solving and critical-thinking skills;
3. Listening skills and a willingness to understand the opinions of others;
4. The ability to work well in teams; and
5. The ability to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

I will treat each of you as a professional and I expect the same from you in return. The expectations in this course are no different than those in the business world; careful, thoughtful preparation and work must be your goal. Approach this course with the same professional attitude expected in your current or future job and we will all enjoy the course this semester.

II. Performance Evaluation Plan

A. Summary of Course Requirements:

| Graded Items | Approximate Percentage of Final Grade |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Simulation Project & Presentation | 40% |
| Midterms (each worth 15%) | 30% |
| Final | 15% |
| Attendance & Participation | <u>15%</u> |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE | 100% |

The instructor reserves the right to revise percentage allocations for graded items. Notification of such revisions will be provided to students either verbally or via WebCT.

B. Letter Grade Conversion Plan:

A student's final letter grade is determined by converting the total number of points accumulated during the semester into a percentage that is based on the total points possible. The final grade will be determined using the following schedule.

| | | | |
|--------------------|----|-------------------|----|
| 93.00 % - 100.00 % | A | 77.00 % - 79.99 % | C+ |
| 90.00 % - 92.99 % | A- | 73.00 % - 76.99 % | C |
| 87.00 % - 89.99 % | B+ | 70.00 % - 72.99 % | C- |
| 83.00 % - 86.99 % | B | 65.00 % - 69.99 % | D+ |
| 80.00 % - 82.99 % | B- | 60.00 % - 64.99 % | D |
| | | 0.00 % - 59.99 % | F |

III. Course Administration

A. Course Organization

This course will use lectures, class discussions, presentations, guest speakers, and group activities to explore strategic management concepts.

B. It is the policy of the agribusiness faculty to not accept late graded items of any type.

C. Excused absence (i.e. jury duty, previous university commitment, etc.) from a graded item requires written notice personally delivered to the instructor well in advance of the scheduled due date. Failure to notify the instructor of an impending absence will result in a score of zero for that item. Notice of an anticipated absence does not guarantee approval by the instructor.

D. Recommended Textbook

Thompson, A.A., J.E. Gamble, A.J. Strickland. *Strategy: Core Concepts, Analytical Tools, and Readings*. 2nd edition. McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2006.

The book for this course is a great resource for information.

E. Examinations

Two midterm examinations will be given throughout the semester and a cumulative final examination will be given during finals week. Midterm examination topic coverage will be non-comprehensive, covering only material since the previous examination. Material covered in lectures, discussions, handouts, presentations, readings, etc. will be fair game for each examination. Examination question format will vary and may consist of the following types of questions: objective (multiple choices, True/False, etc.), subjective (short answer and essay), or problem solving (mathematical and graphical analysis). The final examination format will be similar to the midterm examinations.

Examinations are due when called for by the instructor; points may be deducted for tardy submittals. Accommodations will be made for make-up examinations only for an excused absence (see III C above). The tentative dates for all examinations (including the final) are listed in the table below. The time and date for the final examination will not be changed to accommodate personal situations.

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Midterm #1 | February 26, 2009 |
| Midterm #2 | April 9, 2009 |
| Final Examination | May 21, 2009, 12:00 a.m. to 1:50 p.m. |

F. Simulation Project and Presentation

An important part of the course is a competitive business simulation. The class will be divided into teams with each team assuming responsibility for management of a business; the teams in this class will comprise the entire industry. Each team will collectively make all business decisions relating to finance, marketing, production and operations. Since this is a web-based simulation, you will be challenged to draw upon your knowledge from previous courses to make profitable decisions. Additional details of the simulation will be forthcoming during the semester.

G. Expectations

Your submissions for grade should represent the pride and professionalism you wish to demonstrate as a business person. Neatness, organization, and clarity are essential to good business. Remember that learning and remembering are best accomplished when acquired through one's own efforts rather than the efforts of others.

H. Participation

Much of the learning in this course will occur during class sessions as we debate ideas and strategic alternatives. As such, your ability of express yourself in a coherent fashion to your peers is a skill that will serve you well throughout your career. Since the material is cumulative in nature, you are expected to attend class and participate actively in discussions. Your level of participation will be graded on a scale of 0 to 2 each session.

The scale is described as follows:

0 = absent or behavior detracts from the class.

1 = attends class but does not contribute voluntarily or meaningfully to class discussion.

2 = attends class, contributions are meaningful and indicate preparedness.

You are permitted two excused absences during the semester for whatever reason.

I. Additional Instruction (AI)

Your understanding of this course's material is my primary goal for this class. Please do not hesitate to use my office hours for help with anything related to this course. If I am working with my door open at times other than office hours, feel free to ask for help. You may also e-mail me to set up an appointment for AI. To facilitate my teaching, I request that you do not come for assistance thirty minutes prior to my scheduled teaching times.

J. Academic Rigor

This class will be conducted in a manner that conforms to the University's policy of academic rigor. The CSUC definition of academic rigor for instructors and students can be accessed at <http://em.csuchico.edu/aap/Undergrad/help/ARigor.asp>.

K. Other Information

It is recommended that students make and keep a copy of all assignments submitted to the instructor. In addition, students should regularly monitor WebCT for this course because assignments, additional course readings, grades, etc. will be distributed to them via this medium. Note: CSUC considers e-mail an official method of communication.

Students should feel free to discuss their individual performance with the instructor, whether it is their overall course grade or a score they earned on a single graded item. Professors are human too and occasionally a scoring mistake will be made; if a student has reason to believe a graded item deserves a point value higher than the one earned, bring it to the instructor's attention during scheduled office hours or by special office appointment. Due to privacy issues I will not entertain discussions about a student's grade immediately before, after or during class. I am willing to entertain a confidential discussion about any graded item within one week's time after it is returned to the class. If the student's request is to "re-grade" their work, I may evaluate the entire graded item and the student's total points may go up or down.

There is no formal attendance requirement. However, new material will be presented everyday in this class. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the notes or assignments for that day.

IV. Academic Honesty

Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for the respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards (e.g., cheating and plagiarism) must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions. The university's policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. It is the student's responsibility to know and understand the CSUC Academic Honesty Policy. The university's policy is provided in their catalog as well as via its web site at www.csuchico.edu/gisp/gis/public/gradline/honesty.htm. Ignorance of university policies or of what constitutes academic dishonesty is not an acceptable excuse in this matter. If there is evidence that the student has been involved in any form of academic dishonesty, they will receive an "F" grade for the course, be locked from WebCT, and a report will be provided to Student Judicial Affairs for further action.

V. Disabilities

If a student has a disability that requires special accommodations, the student must contact a counselor at Disability Support Services (www.csuchico.edu/dss/). In addition, the student should let the instructor know as soon as possible so the instructor is aware of, and can provide for, any necessary accommodations.

VI. Expected Student Behavior in the Classroom

- A. All students have the right and privilege to learn in the class, free from harassment and disruption. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated, nor will lewd or foul language.
- B. All class participants are expected to exhibit respectful behavior to other students and the instructor. Students may not read other materials (newspapers, magazines) during class nor should they carry on personal discussions with their peers (via computers or phones) during lectures, presentations, etc. Failure to exhibit such behavior will result in the student being penalized 10 points for every occurrence.
- C. Courtesy and respect dictate students turn off pagers and cell phones during class time. Repeated violations by any student will result in a 10-point penalty per occurrence.
- D. Leave a few seats open next to the door for those who enter late or must leave early.
- E. Keep food or drinks to a minimum in the classroom.
- F. The class follows the standards set in the Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities (EM 96-38) and students are subject to disciplinary action for violation of that code.

ABUS 421 TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

- I. Core Concepts
 - a. Strategy
 - b. Business Model
 - c. Strategic Visions & Business Missions
 - d. Strategic vs. Financial Objectives
 - e. Strategic Intent
 - f. Strategic Plans
 - g. Crafting Strategy
 - h. Executing Strategy
- II. Analytical Tools & Concepts of Industry & Competitive Analysis
 - a. Tailoring Strategy to Fit a Company's Industry Circumstances
 - b. Five-forces Model of Competition
 - c. Globalization & Internet Technology
- III. Company Situational Analysis
 - a. Matching Strategy to Organizational Resources, Competencies, & Competitive Capabilities
 - b. SWOT [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats] Analysis
 - c. Value-Chain Analysis, Benchmarking, & Competitive Strength Assessments
- IV. Global Strategies
 - a. Licensing & Franchising
 - b. Strategic Alliances
 - c. Strategic Issues for Competing Multi-nationally
- V. Diversification Strategies
 - a. Creating and Compounding Competitive Advantage
 - b. Strategic Options to Improve Overall Performance
 - c. Assessing the Strategic Attractiveness of a Diversified Company's Portfolio
- VI. Executing Strategy
 - a. Building Resource Strengths & Organizational Capabilities
 - b. Allocating Ample Resources to Strategy-critical Activities
 - c. Ensuring that Practices and Policies Facilitate Strategy
 - d. Instituting Best Practices & Continuous Improvement
 - e. Installing Information & Operational Systems
 - f. Tying Rewards & Incentives to Achievement
 - g. Shaping the Work Environment & Management to Fit the Strategy
 - h. Exerting Internal Leadership