

# Senior Capstone Experience

A A E 500 Agricultural and Applied Economics

3 Credits - Spring 2023



Time and Location: Tuesdays & Thursdays 4:00-5:15pm - Engineering Hall room 2535

Instructor: Jeremy Beach ([jpbbeach@wisc.edu](mailto:jpbbeach@wisc.edu))

Office: 223 Taylor Hall

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Office hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:00pm and by appointment, 223 Taylor Hall

Course Description: Teaches students how to apply economic theory to economic problems, utilize quantitative techniques in economic analyses, and communicate findings and results of economic analyses. Pre-Reqs: Senior standing and (declared in Agricultural & Applied Economics, B.S. or Agricultural Business Management, B.S.)

## Course Learning Outcomes:

- Understand how to apply economic and agricultural business theories and tools to real world applied economic and agricultural business situations.
- Write a comprehensive consultant report that uses the tools of applied economics and agricultural business to answer project topic questions and clearly communicates the results of analysis and data.
- Provide an oral summary presentation on project topic to project partners and classmates.
- Develop skills in teamwork, effective project management, efficient time management, and oral and written communication.
- Develop life-long learning strategies in applied economics and agricultural business.

Course Credit Hours: This 3-credit class meets for two, 75-minute class periods each week over the spring semester with the expected time investment of 45 hours of work per credit hour. One credit will be earned through the 45 hours of in-person learning during class periods including partner presentations, project team in-class work, project team in-class presentations, class discussions, and guest speakers. The other two credits are earned through students' independent project work (reading, researching, analyzing, writing, practicing, etc.) outside of class periods. The instructor will provide substantive feedback on student's learning outcomes during in-person class periods and outside of class periods.

## Campus Services

Additional campus services to help you succeed at UW-Madison include:

- [University Health Services](#)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising and Career Services](#)
- [Office of the Registrar](#)
- [Office of Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)

## Course Evaluations

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate this course and your learning experience. Student participation is an integral component of this course, and your confidential feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

### Digital Course Evaluation (AEFIS)

UW-Madison uses a digital course evaluation survey tool called [AEFIS](#). For this course, you will receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying you that your course evaluation is available. In the email you will receive a link to log into the course evaluation with your NetID. Evaluations are anonymous. Your participation is an integral component of this course, and your feedback is important to me. I strongly encourage you to participate in the course evaluation.

## Students' Rules, [Rights & Responsibilities](#)

### Diversity & Inclusion Statement

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

### Academic Integrity Statement

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Statement

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([UW-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

## [Academic Calendar & Religious Observances](#)

## Graded Work:

This course, and your work as a part of it, is primarily centered around a group consulting project based on a topic presented by a real-world business, organization, or association. After students have been placed in project groups with their team members, all remaining graded assignments will be based on a sequence of deliverable written reports and oral presentations. Each student team member will receive the same grade for assigned written reports and oral presentations. Written graded assignments, other than *Attendance and Participation* (see Rubric on page 4), will be submitted through the Canvas course website. All oral presentations will be made during designated in-class periods. (Note: Ten percent (10%) of an assignment's grade will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late beyond the due date).

- Project Proposal Report & Presentation (due 2/23): 1–2-page written paper/outline that summarizes the proposed plan and approach to address project topic. Paper and presentation content should include discussion on agreed-upon plan/approach to address project topic, expected sequence of future tasks throughout the semester, potential assignment of tasks to group members, and identification of any potential barriers to completing tasks.
  - Group members will provide an oral summary presentation (*slides not required*) to the class in order to gain feedback.
- Mid-point Project Report & Presentation (due 3/23): 2–4-page written paper/outline that summarizes completed and remaining tasks on project topic. Paper and presentation should expand on original plan/approach, identification of tasks, and timeline addressed in Project Proposal Report. Attention should be devoted to remaining tasks and plan of action including any immediate needs or potential issues that could impact the completion of project topic work.
  - Group members will provide an oral summary presentation (*slides not required*) to the class in order to gain feedback.
- Final Project Presentation (starting 4/25): 15-minute professional presentation by group members that summarizes project topic, completed work throughout the semester, and final recommendations to project partner. Project partners will be invited back to final class periods for final presentations.
- Final Project Paper (due 5/4): 10–20-page comprehensive consultant report (template will be provided) that summarizes project work and recommendations of team members and will serve as final deliverable to project partner.

## Assignments & Course Grades:

- Attendance and Participation ..... 15%
- Project Proposal Report ..... 5%
  - Presentation ..... 5%
- Mid-point Project Report ..... 10%
  - Presentation ..... 10%
- Final Project Paper ..... 30%
- Final Project Presentation ..... 25%

### Grading:

The course is based on a maximum of 1,000 points and the total number of points earned in all assignments, and *Attendance and Participation*, will be added together for a final course grade based on the following:

A	93-100
AB	88-92
B	83-87
BC	78-82
C	70-77
D	60-69
F	59 and below

### Attendance and Participation Rubric:

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary	Total
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>0-19 points</b>	<b>20-29 points</b>	<b>30-49 points</b>	<b>50 points</b>	<b>/50</b>
	4 or more absences	3 absences	2 absences	Attended all class sessions or at most 1 absence	
<b>Participation</b>	<b>0-19 points</b>	<b>20-49 points</b>	<b>50-79 points</b>	<b>80-100 points</b>	<b>/100</b>
	Student does not initiate contribution & needs instructor to solicit input. Does not listen to others; does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion, etc.	Student initiates contribution at least in half of the class sessions. Student is often inattentive and occasionally makes disruptive comments while others are speaking.	Student initiates contribution often and is mostly attentive when others present ideas. Provides mostly insightful and constructive comments relevant to the discussion or speaker	Student initiates contributions during most if not all class sessions. Student listens attentively to other's comments, including speakers, and builds off remarks by contributing to the dialogue.	
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>/150</b>

### Team Member Evaluations:

All student team members will be given two opportunities to provide a formal evaluation of their own performance as well as their team member's performance. The first opportunity will coincide with the Mid-point Project Paper, roughly halfway through the semester, while the second opportunity will coincide with the Final Project Paper at the end of the semester.

While these evaluations are not graded, their on-time completion and submission will be required and used as part of instructor's determination of an individual student's *Participation* grade. The instructor will hold the information collected in the evaluations confidential, but reserves the right to act on it as they deem appropriate.

Besides the two formal evaluation opportunities, students are encouraged to be in communication with instructor on an ongoing basis regarding any team member's performance and its potential impact on the success of the other team members and project work.

## Course Schedule:

<b>Class Period</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
Tuesday, January 24	<b>No Class</b>	
Thursday, January 26	Introduction to AAE 500	
Tuesday, January 31	<b>Project Partner Presentations</b>	
Thursday, February 2	<b>Project Partner Presentations</b>	<b>Student Interest Assessment Survey</b>
Tuesday, February 7	<b>Project Partner Presentations</b>	
Thursday, February 9	<b>Project Partner Presentations</b>	
Tuesday, February 14	In-class group project work	<b>Project Preference Survey due 2/12</b>
Thursday, February 16	In-class group project work	
Tuesday, February 21	In-class group project work	
Thursday, February 23	<b>Project Proposal Report Presentations</b>	<b>Project Proposal Report due</b>
Tuesday, February 28	<b>Project Proposal Report Presentations</b>	
Thursday, March 2	In-class group project work	
Tuesday, March 7	In-class group project work	
Thursday, March 9	In-class group project work	
Tuesday, March 14	<b>No Class - Spring Break</b>	
Thursday, March 16	<b>No Class - Spring Break</b>	
Tuesday, March 21	In-class group project work	
Thursday, March 23	<b>Mid-point Project Report Presentations</b>	<b>Mid-point Project Report due</b>
Tuesday, March 28	<b>Mid-point Project Report Presentations</b>	
Thursday, March 30	In-class group project work	
Tuesday, April 4	In-class group project work	
Thursday, April 6	In-class group project work	
Tuesday, April 11	In-class group project work	
Thursday, April 13	In-class group project work	
Tuesday, April 18	In-class group project work	
Thursday, April 20	In-class group project work	
Tuesday, April 25	<b>Final Project Presentations</b>	
Thursday, April 27	<b>Final Project Presentations</b>	
Tuesday, May 2	<b>Final Project Presentations</b>	
Thursday, May 4	<b>Final Project Presentations</b>	<b>Final Project Paper due</b>