

Career Development for AAE & ABM Majors

A A E 267 Agricultural and Applied Economics

1 Credit - Fall 2025



Time and Location: Mondays 9:55am – 10:45am, In-person in Taylor Hall room 103

Instructor: Jeremy Beach (jpbbeach@wisc.edu)

Office: 223 Taylor Hall

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Office hours: By appointment

Course Description: Career and professional development geared toward the field of agricultural and applied economics or agricultural business management. Topics include resumes, cover letters, interviewing skills, internship and job applications, writing, career exploration, and networking. Panelists include faculty, alumni, and employers.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Develop professional skills that will lead to success in future endeavors, including preparing a resume, writing a cover letter, building a professional network, finding an internship, having a successful interview, and maximizing the job or internship experience
- Apply principles of the career development process to create short- and long-term personal career goals and implement a plan to evaluate progress toward them
- Use campus resources to help search and apply for internships and jobs
- Create professional relationships with fellow students, department alumni, potential employers, and AAE and ABM faculty and staff

Course Credit Hours: This class meets for one, 50-minute class period each week over the fall semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities such as formal professional documents, reflection papers, application materials, meeting with campus resources, and development skill practice for about 2 hours out of the classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work. The instructor or guest speakers will teach learning activities during in-person class periods that center on course learning outcomes. The instructor will provide substantive feedback on student's learning outcomes during in-person class periods and outside of class periods.

Teaching & Learning Data Transparency Statement

The privacy and security of faculty, staff and students' personal information is a top priority for UW-Madison. The university carefully evaluates and vets all campus-supported digital tools used to support teaching and learning, to help support success through [learning analytics](#), and to enable proctoring capabilities. View the university's full [teaching and learning data transparency statement](#).

Privacy of Student Records & the Use of Audio Recorded Lectures Statement

See more information about [privacy of student records and the usage of audio-recorded lectures](#).

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class.

Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

How to Succeed in This Course

Grades in this course will be based on student attendance & participation during in-person class periods, and graded assignments (see page 3 for more information). 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](#)

Assignments & Course Grades:

- Attendance and Participation 10%
- Career Fair Reflection Paper 10%
- Food/Ag Connector Reflection Paper 10%
- Guest Speaker Reflection Papers:
 - 3 guest speakers @ 5% each 15%
- Informational Interview Report 25%
- 80,000 Hours Book Report 20%
- CALS Career Services Meeting Summary . . 10%

Grading:

The course is based on a maximum of 100 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

Graded Work:

All graded assignments, other than *Attendance and Participation* (see Rubric below), will be submitted through the Canvas course website. One point will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late beyond the due date.

- **Needs Assessment:** Written assessment allowing students to provide information and feedback to the instructor on current interests, syllabus content, additional course topics, and supplemental guest speakers.
- **Reflection Papers:** Written reflective summary allowing students to provide feedback on an experiential event (Career Fair & Food/Ag Connector) or Guest Speaker Presentation.
- **CALS Career Services Meeting Summary:** 1-2 page written reflective summary following meeting with CALS Career Services office including topics discussed, goals moving forward, and feedback on conversation.
- **Informational Interview Report:** 2-4 page written summary of informational interview conducted by student with selected organization or business.
 - <https://successworks.wisc.edu/2017/04/04/a-step-by-step-guide-for-your-first-informational-interview/>
 - <https://acsss.wisc.edu/informational-interviewing/>
 - <https://pdc.wisc.edu/blog/tips-for-a-successful-informational-interview>
- **80,000 Hours Book Report:** 2-4-page written summary of the book *80,000 Hours: Find a Fulfilling Career That Does Good* by Benjamin Todd (available as a PDF on the Canvas course page)

Attendance and Participation Rubric

Criteria	Unsatisfactory	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary	Total
Attendance	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	/5
	4 or more absences	3 absences	2 absences	Attended all class sessions or at most 1 absence	
In-class Participation	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	/5
	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.	
				TOTAL	/10

Additional Course Activities: Additional career development course activities, while not officially assigned or graded, will be encouraged for all students in order to assist with their individual career and professional development. Specific activities will be suggested by the instructor to individual students after completion of a needs assessment and an individual consultation meeting with the instructor. Feedback will be provided by instructor outside of class periods and by other students during in-class partner review and small group discussions. Additional activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Prepare and refine resume and cover letter template
- Write and practice elevator speech
- Document and practice responses to common interview questions
- Explore and meet with campus resources such as CALS Career Services, the Writing Center, and the Career Exploration Center
- Create a profile in Handshake or LinkedIn
- Attend on-campus networking opportunities
- Attend a current professor's office hours
- Search and apply for internships/jobs

Course Schedule:

September 8th

- Introductions
- Course & Syllabus review
- Canvas course website review
- Resumes, Cover letters, Career Fair Prep
- **ASSIGNMENT: Needs Assessment**
 - (Due Friday, September 12th at 4:00 pm)

September 15th

- GUEST SPEAKER: Kristina Vack – Director, CALS Career Services
 - <https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/undergraduate-students/career-services/> & <https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/undergraduate-students/career-services/advising/>
 - Introduction to CALS Career Services, resume/cover letter advice, Introduction to Handshake
- **ASSIGNMENT: Guest Speaker Reflection Paper #1**
 - (Due Friday, September 19th at 4:00pm)

September 22nd

- GUEST SPEAKER: Michaela Thaw – AAE Undergraduate Student Advisor
- Elevator pitch practice
- **EVENT: Attend the in-person Career & Internship Fair** <https://careerfair.wisc.edu/>
 - Thursday, September 25th 4:00-7:30pm at the Kohl Center
- **ASSIGNMENT: Career Fair Reflection Paper**
 - (Due Friday, September 26th at 4:00 pm)

September 29th

- GUEST SPEAKER: Tracy Niesen Breunig, Director of Human Resources, Culver's Franchising
 - <https://www.culvers.com/franchise>
 - Opportunities at Culver's and advice from an HR perspective on resumes, cover letters, interviewing, etc.
- **ASSIGNMENT: Guest Speaker Reflection Paper #2**
 - (Due Friday, October 3rd at 4:00pm)

October 6th

- GUEST SPEAKER: Alyssa Swanke – Student Internship Presentation
- Mock Interview Practice

October 13th

- GUEST SPEAKERS: Student Internship Presentations
 - Emily Sydow
 - Claire Esselman
 - Mali Draxler
- **EVENT: Attend the Food and Agricultural Connector**
 - Thursday, October 16th 3:00-7:00pm in the Discovery Building
 - <https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/undergraduate/current-students/career-services/career-events/>
- **ASSIGNMENT: Food/Ag Connector Event Reflection Paper**
 - (Due Friday, October 17th at 4:00pm)

October 20th – NO CLASS

October 27th

- GUEST SPEAKER: Claire Peters – Career Advisor - UW Career Exploration Center
 - <https://cec.ccas.wisc.edu/> & <https://cec.ccas.wisc.edu/staff/peters-claire/>
 - Skills, values, and interests; Skills/competencies employers are seeking; Tips for thinking about and exploring careers
- **ASSIGNMENT: Guest Speaker Reflection Paper #3**
 - **(Due Friday, October 31st at 4:00pm)**

November 3rd

- **Faculty Panel #1**
 - Jeff Hadacheck
 - Andrew Stevens

November 10th

- **Faculty Panel #2**
 - Courtney Berner
 - Eleanor Wiseman
 - Jing Yi

November 17th

- **ABM/AAE Alumni Panel #1**
 - Nelson May
 - Morgan Knilans

November 24th

- **ABM/AAE Alumni Panel #2**
 - Cole Hicken
 - Nate Mach

December 1st

- **ASSIGNMENT: Informational Interview Report**
 - **(Due in Canvas on December 1st by 10:00am)**
 - In-class student summaries on Informational Interview

December 8th

- **ASSIGNMENT: 80,000 Hours Book Report**
 - **(Due in Canvas on December 8th by 10:00am)**
 - In-class student summaries on Informational Interview and 80,000 Hours Book Report
- **ASSIGNMENT: CALS Career Services Meeting Summary**
 - **(Due in Canvas on December 8th by 10:00am)**