Course objectives

The course will use a lecture/discussion format, with a strong focus on in-class discussion of the papers and topics. Lectures/discussions will emphasize the development and illustration of concepts, issues, and research questions in agribusiness, both past and present. The course readings will provide a general framework for class lecture/discussions. Students will be encouraged to participate in class discussions to further their own and fellow students’ understanding of the topics. Attainment of the course objectives will be highly dependent on class attendance, completion of readings, assignments and papers; and student participation.

After taking this course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate analytic models of performance differences between agribusiness firms;
- Critique competing theories in agricultural economics and agribusiness management;
- Apply the resource based view and entrepreneurship orientation to an agricultural setting;
- Read research papers and provide critical reviews;
- Present research papers in a clear and concise manner;

Evaluation

Discussion and participation: Students will be required to read each paper and be prepared for in-class discussion. Class will follow a lecture/discussion format but will more closely resemble a ‘town-hall’ type discussion format. Participation in class is also required during discussion sessions. To this end, each student will be asked to present one or more of the readings throughout the term.

Assignments: Peer Reviews

Before each lecture/discussion that discusses current research, students will have to write a 1-2 page review of one of the selected papers. The ability to critically review what you have read is an important skill that these assignments will help to develop. To guide this process, students are encouraged to follow the guidelines in Amanor-Boadu (2011) and VanTassel et al. (1992) when preparing their reviews.
Presentations:

Students will present at least two discussion papers along with their term papers to the class. The format should be a power point presentation designed as a conference presentation of 15-20 minutes with 10 minutes for questions. Students will have 15-20 minutes to present their work, with 10 minutes for questions following the presentation.

Term paper:

Students should begin writing a case study that explains a current phenomenon in agribusiness using the theories presented and discussed in the class. These papers should be between 5-7 pages (approx. 1500-2000 words). You are encouraged to find the phenomenon you will examine early in the course of the class. You will hand in your paper twice for evaluation. Your paper should include an abstract, introduction and literature review, application to phenomenon, discussion and conclusions.

Final Examination:

The final exam will be comprehensive and will evaluate students’ knowledge of the concepts covered in the class and their application to current issues in agribusiness research. The exam will include short-answer and essay questions and will cover the reading material covered in class.

Student grades will be determined according to the following evaluation instrument.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion/Participation</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments (One page reviews)</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>
**Academic Integrity**

I expect that students will adhere to the academic integrity guidelines of the University of Saskatchewan. Students shall follow these guidelines in all of their academic work – class participation, examinations, assignments, research, and in their non-academic interactions and activities as well. More information on academic integrity can be found here: http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/honesty/academic_misconduct.php.

What this means is that I expect students to perform their own work unless specifically instructed otherwise. Work in groups *is not permitted* unless specifically mentioned by the instructor. Completed assignments and exams are to be the student’s *original* work. Furthermore, in this course, students are encouraged to cite the source when quoting or paraphrasing someone else’s work. If you have any questions on whether a statement requires attribution, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Course Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week in Semester</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Sept 7</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What is Agribusiness Research?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Sept 14</td>
<td>The Nature of the Firm</td>
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<td>Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Sept 21</td>
<td>The Nature of the Firm</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Current research</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Sept 28</td>
<td>Bounded Rationality and Firm Behavior</td>
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<td>Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Oct 5</td>
<td>Bounded Rationality and Firm Behavior</td>
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<td>Current Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>Free Week -- Thanksgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Oct 19</td>
<td>Theory of the Growth of the Firm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Oct 26</td>
<td>Theory of the Growth of the Firm</td>
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<td>Current research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>Resource Based View of the Firm</td>
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<td>Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>Resource Based View of the Firm</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Current Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Nov 23</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Current Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Nov 30</td>
<td>What have we learned?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Readings

1. What is Agribusiness Research?


2. The Nature of the Firm

*Foundation Papers*


*Current Research*


3. Bounded Rationality

*Foundation Papers*


**Current Research**


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**4. Theory of the Growth of the Firm**

**Foundation Papers**


**Current Research**


5. **The Resource Based View**

*Foundation Papers*


*Current Research*


6. Entrepreneurship  
**Foundation Papers**


**Current Research**


