

**Department of Agricultural Business  
Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology**

**Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP)  
Spring 2012**

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**I. Mission Statement**

The Department of Agricultural Business graduates broadly educated and well-trained agribusiness professionals who are prepared for their roles and obligations as principled leaders and good citizens in industry and the community. Through the integration of scholarly research and creative engagement, the department strives to continually review and update its program to ensure its curriculum meets industry needs.

**II. Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

The Department has four goals and five student learning outcomes for the Agricultural Business program. It is recognized that many of the outcomes impact more than one goal. Thus, measurement of individual student learning outcomes will aid in assessing the success of achieving multiple goals within the program.

Program Goals:

- A. Graduates will understand the importance of fundamental economic concepts and quantitative methods as crucial aids to decision making in agribusiness and government.
- B. Graduates will understand and utilize basic business concepts associated with management, marketing, and finance in order to comprehend and effect change in the private and public sectors.
- C. Graduates will develop strong communication skills, both oral and written, for the purpose of conveying the results of business analyses in a clear, persuasive, and informative manner.
- D. Graduates will develop skills necessary for day-to-day business operations and career advancement in a variety of agribusiness and/or government organizations.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- 1. Students will apply statistical and/or quantitative analyses to agribusiness problems and interpret the results.
- 2. Students will integrate fundamental agribusiness principles and analysis techniques to identify benefit-cost decisions at all levels of business activity and make recommendations based on an understanding of policy and the regulatory environment within which agriculture operates.

3. Students will demonstrate communication proficiency orally and/or in writing in relation to the agribusiness industry. They will communicate in a knowledgeable, coherent, and persuasive manner on an array of contemporary agribusiness topics.
4. Students will apply the formal language and concepts of economics while demonstrating appropriate informational and/or technical competencies.
5. Students will participate in experiential internships, extracurricular opportunities, service activities or study-abroad opportunities.

### III. Curriculum Matrix – Student Learning Outcomes and Departmental Courses

Core Courses / Objectives	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
AGBS 1 Intro Ag Econ	I	I	I	I	
AGBS 2 Ag Sector Analysis		I		I	
AGBS 5 Ag Econ & Agribusiness	I	I	I	I	
AGBS 28 Ag Law		I	I	I	
AGBS 31 Farm Accounting	I	I		I	
AGBS 32 Ag Managerial Accounting		I		I	
AGBS 71 Ag Business Statistics	I	I	I	I	
AGBS 76 Agribusiness MicroPC Applications		I	I	I	
AGBS 100 Intermediate Ag Econ	R	R	R	R	
AGBS 110 Farm Management	R	R	R	R	
AGBS 120 Agribusiness Management	R	R	R	A	
AGBS 130 Ag Finance	A	A	R	R	
AGBS 140 International Ag Econ		A	R	R	
AGBS 150 Ag & Food Policy	A	R	R	R	A
AGBS 160 Ag Market Analysis	A	A	R	A	
AGBS 170 Adv Agribusiness Applications	A	R	A	R	A
Elective Courses / Objectives	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
AGBS 80 Undergraduate Research		I	I	I	I
AGBS 117 Ag Labor/Mgmt Relations	R	R	A	R	A
AGBS 122 Ag Coop Management		R	R	R	I
AGBS 124 Food/Fiber Industry Mgmt	R	R	R	R	I
AGBS 131 Ag Capital Markets	A	A		A	
AGBS 136 Farm/Ranch Appraisal	R	R	R	R	
AGBS 151 Natural Resource Econ	A	A	R	A	
AGBS 153 Ag Trade	A	A		R	
AGBS 155 Natural Resource Policy	A	A	A	A	
AGBS 162 Commodity Futures Trading	R	R		R	
AGBS 163 Ag Export Marketing		A	R	A	
AGBS 164 Agribusiness Sales Mgmt		R	R	R	

AGBS 173 Wine Marketing	R	R		A	A
AGBS 180 Undergraduate Research	R	A	R	A	I
AGBS 185T Topics in Ag Business		R	R	R	
AGBS 192 Ag Business Field Studies		R		R	R
AGBS 194 Agribusiness Internship		R	R	A	A

I = Introduced; R = Reinforced; A = Advanced

#### IV. Assessment Measures

Faculty, students, parents, alumni, and employers are stakeholders in the educational process. Their input, both formal and informal, is vital to assessing the effectiveness of the agricultural business program. Thus, a variety of assessment instruments will be utilized by the department in an effort to incorporate this input. The specific instruments utilized will be dictated by suitability and the resources available. Some instruments are appropriate for on-going use while others will be implemented periodically. The department will continually assess student learning outcomes and seek out new assessment instruments for consideration.

##### A. Direct Measures

1. Examinations and Homework – These instruments provide a moderate indicator of basic knowledge, problem solving skills, and written communication skills. Pre- and post-examinations, along with comprehensive examinations in courses may be used as well. Department faculty will review the results, note possible areas of weakness, and suggest improvements in the curriculum.
2. Project Papers – Project papers will be assigned in select upper-division core courses such as the capstone *Advanced Agribusiness Applications*. These papers provide a strong indicator of students' abilities to master many of the student learning outcomes. The papers will be scored using a rubric designed to evaluate essential business competencies, skills, and analytics. The results will be reported to the faculty, along with suggestions for improvement in the course(s) and curriculum.
3. Oral Presentations – Students will present material in various courses and at various intervals within the major, individually and in groups. A presentation scoring rubric will be used to evaluate performance and the results will be reported to the faculty.
4. Systematic Review – Periodic reviews of selected courses specific core competencies and the entire curriculum will be conducted. The results will be discussed by the faculty during retreats and possible revisions will be implemented in subsequent semesters.

##### B. Indirect Measures

1. Senior & Alumni Surveys – A senior exit survey will be implemented each spring semester and an alumni survey will be conducted periodically. These instruments are designed to measure student learning outcomes and the level of satisfaction with the quality of education within the major. Data will be analyzed and tabulated for faculty discussion at subsequent retreats.
2. Industry Focus Group & Student Forum – A focus group of industry stakeholders will be conducted periodically to assess graduates' employability with regard to competencies, skill sets, and analytic abilities. Periodic student forums will be

conducted to elicit feedback regarding teaching, course content, and curriculum structure. The results will be incorporated in periodic curriculum reviews.

3. Internship Evaluations – The Department evaluation form is used by all employers granting internships to agricultural business majors. Data will be tabulated, analyzed, and reported to faculty during subsequent retreats.

## V. Student Learning Outcomes and Potential Assessment Methods

	Exam & Hwk	Papers	Oral Present.	Course Review	Surveys	Focus Group	Internship Evaluations
#1	X	X	X	X	X		
#2	X	X		X	X	X	X
#3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
#5	X	X			X	X	

Outcome 1 – Apply statistics & quantitative methods  
 Outcome 2 – Business fundamentals & policy  
 Outcome 3 – Written & oral communication

Outcome 4 – Informational & technical competencies  
 Outcome 5 – Experiential opportunities

## VI. Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations

The department will collect and analyze data according to the following schedule:

### A. Annually:

1. Course evaluations via examinations, homework, papers, and presentations
2. Senior exit surveys for Fall and Spring graduates
3. Internship evaluations

### B. Periodically:

1. Alumni survey/focus group
2. Industry focus group
3. Student forums
4. Systematic course/curriculum reviews

Year	Assessment Activity
AY 2011-12	Outcome #1 – Examinations Outcome #2 – Homework & project papers Outcome #4 – Examinations
AY 2012-13	Outcome #3 – Presentations & project papers Outcome #1-5 – Alumni survey
AY 2013-14	Outcome #1 – Project papers Outcome #2 – Examinations Outcome #4 – Homework
AY 2014-15	Outcome #3 – Presentations & project papers Outcome #1-5 – Industry focus group

## **VII. Closing the Loop – Summary Evaluation, Curriculum Adjustment, and Reporting**

Skills developed by students at the University must match those required in the employment marketplace. To that end, the department will use various assessment measures to gain perspective from faculty, students, alumni, and industry stakeholders. The data collected from these stakeholders will be used to evaluate the Agricultural Business major by answering three important questions. (1) Have appropriate student learning outcomes been specified for the major and each course? (2) Does students' measured level of mastery of the outcomes prepare them for professional careers? (3) Do more effective instruments to assess attainment of student outcomes exist?

To this end, annual data will be collected, analyzed, and reported in accordance with the implementation schedule outlined in Section VI. Department faculty will review and discuss the findings shortly after report generation. If faculty determine opportunities exist to better serve our students, an action plan will be developed and faculty responsibilities will be assigned. The action plan may suggest revision to any or all of the following: 1) student learning outcomes and their method of assessment; 2) specific course content; and 3) program curriculum. Subsequent annual reports will identify previous actions taken and additional data collected.