



ANSC 4311
Senior Capstone Course
Spring 2016



Instructor

Christopher M. Estep, PhD
Assistant Professor
Office: 107 RAS
Phone: 432-837-8210
Email: cestep@sulross.edu
Office Hours: T,W,R 8:00am - 10:30am
Or by appointment

Time and Location

TR 8:00am – 9:15am – 130 RAS

Course Description

This course is designed to provide senior animal science students with an opportunity to reflect upon the animal science course of study and synthesize the material learned throughout their coursework and help prepare students to enter the workforce.

Course Objectives

At the completion of the course, the learner will be able to:

1. create a professional résumé,
2. communicate effectively through a professional cover letter,
3. effectively demonstrate interviewing skills,
4. create a research prospectus,
5. appropriately use social media for professional purposes
6. demonstrate effective research skills, and
7. synthesize information from the Animal Science curriculum to solve a research problem.

(ANSC) Program Learning Outcomes:

Student will demonstrate that he/she is able to:

1. Demonstrate the basic skills of interpreting research data gathered in an agricultural context,
2. Apply critical thinking skills to mitigate potential challenges in diverse animal sciences and related agricultural industries,
3. Develop problem solving skills, and
4. Demonstrate the ability to communicate through written, spoken and graphical methods.

Required Texts

Course readings will be assigned by the instructor.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Research Prospectus

Complete a 2-3 page research prospectus that outlines the topic you desire to do your research project over. Your topic needs to be specific and should encompass what you have learned throughout your Animal Science courses. Prospectus should include what problem will be addressed in the project, why the topic is of interest to you, what you hope to find, and a short overview of what information is available.

Research Paper

Complete a 10-12 page research project over the topic you presented in your prospectus. There will

be benchmark assignments associated with this paper due throughout the semester. These benchmarks include an introduction, literature review, conclusions, and recommendations.

Research Presentation

Present the findings of your research to the class in a 15 minute presentation. You will be expected to utilize appropriate visual aids and professional attire is required.

Research Article Summary

Create a one-page summary of one the research articles you are using for your research project and present the findings of the article to the class.

Résumé

Your résumé should be aesthetically appealing and printed; it should include your educational background, previous professional experience, honors and awards, and a list of three professional references. You will need to provide enough copies for each member of the class.

Cover Letter

Search for positions in your area of interest and include a cover letter specific to a job for which you want to apply. (For students going to graduate school, in lieu of a cover letter you will need to write your letter of interest for graduate school)

Mock Interview

Participate in a mock interview. You will need to prepare a list of questions appropriate to the job for which you are interviewing. You will be required to set up a time to come in for your interview. You will be expected to dress and conduct yourself in a professional manner.

Attendance and Participation

A high degree of engagement is expected and will contribute to your learning as an active participant. This includes interacting with the instructor and other students, completing out of class assignments and readings, and being prepared to participate in class discussions. This class is the beginning of your journey to becoming a professional. Evidence of professionalism includes attendance, collegial attitude, participation, and punctuality.

Course Assignments	Points	Due Date
Research Prospectus	100	February 11
Research Paper		
Introduction & Purpose	50	February 25
Literature Review	100	March 22
Conclusions	100	April 7
Recommendations (Final Paper)	100	April 19
Research Presentation	100	TBD
Research Article Summary	100	Before April 12
Résumé	100	By March 10
Cover Letter	100	By March 10
Mock Interview	100	Before May 3
Attendance & Participation	50	

Grading Scale

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = below 60%

Attendance and Make-up Assignments

Students' class attendance and participation are required. Any late work will be assessed with a 10% deduction for each day late. No work will be accepted after 10 days late. No consideration of extending a due date will be considered on the day an assignment is due, students should contact the instructor if they are expecting to be unable to meet a deadline.

Any time instruction is missed, for any reason, it will count as an absence. College approved field trips, and competitive and leadership development events (with prior instructor approval) are considered legitimate and with proper documentation will not be considered an absence. Seeking an extended deadline due to the above mentioned absences should be arranged before missing the course meeting. In case of emergencies, arrangements for completing assignments should be made immediately upon return to campus.

Use of technology during instruction

This class is part of your journey to becoming a professional, and the use of personal cell phones, iPads, computers, and other electronic devices can distract learning for all individuals and create an unprofessional environment. However, electronic devices can also be powerful tools to be used in the learning process. Therefore, the use of electronic devices for class purposes, such as note-taking and internet searches is allowed. But, remember that you are now a professional and will be required to act accordingly. So, if you choose to use electronic devices in the classroom, do so in a professional manner.

Academic Honesty

On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: **"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."**

As members of a learning community, all should strive to be honest in all endeavors. A fundamental principle is that the whole process of learning and pursuit of knowledge is diminished by cheating, plagiarism and other acts of academic dishonesty. In addition, every dishonest act in the academic environment affects other students adversely, from the skewing of the grading curve to giving unfair advantage for honors or for professional or graduate school admission. Therefore, the university will take severe action against dishonest students. Similarly, measures will be taken against faculty, staff and administrators who practice dishonest or demeaning behavior.

Expectations

The purpose of this class is to help you become a professional in the agricultural and natural resource sciences. The information and skills you learn in this course are designed to help you develop your expertise and professionalism. Therefore, the activities you will be required to complete work toward achieving this goal. In line with this, there are some expectations that I have of you, and conversely, there are some expectations that you should have of me. The expectations for this course are as follows:

I will expect you to:

- Complete all assignments thoroughly, in a timely manner.
- Attend all classes, unless there are extenuating circumstances, which you should inform me of as soon as possible.
- Be on time for all class sessions and activities
- Look at each assignment as an occasion for you to learn, and make the most of every learning opportunity.
- Be honest and submit your own original work.
- Participate in class discussions and activities; this helps you as well as all of your classmates.
- Enjoy this class!

You can expect me to:

- Provide learning opportunities that advance your knowledge and development in agricultural education.
- Be available before and after class, during office hours, and at other times (I have an open door policy) to provide assistance and answer your questions.
- Be fair in my grading and assessment of your work.
- Provide you with timely, constructive feedback on your work.
- Enjoy this class!

About Me

I grew up in Elgin, Texas where I was a member of my high school FFA chapter. I attended Texas A&M University and received my BS degree in Animal Science. Afterwards, I worked for HEB Grocery Company for 2 years as a meat processor and then for Ruffino Meats as a sausage processing manager. My love of FFA and agricultural education led me to pursue my Master's degree in AgEd at Texas A&M. I was a high school ag teacher at Greenwood High School in Midland, Texas for three years. I then went to the University of Florida to work on my PhD in AgEd.

Reasonable Accommodation Statement

It is the SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodations because of physical, mental, or learning disabilities, please contact Grace Petty in Student Services: Ferguson Hall 112, 837-8203.

ANSC 3310 Course Calendar (Subject to change!)

Dates	Topics / Learning Experiences	Readings/ Assignments Due
1/19	Syllabus, Introductions, Expectations, Class Topics, Why a capstone course?	
1/21	Problem-based Learning and becoming a Lifelong Learner	
1/26	Conducting effective research	
1/28	Principles of a literature search	
2/2	Searching for jobs	
2/4	Résumé writing	
2/9	Research day – No Class	
2/11	Résumé writing	Research Prospectus Due
2/16	Writing cover letters	
2/18	The interview process	
2/23	Blank dates = TBD contingent upon student responses to needs assessment	
2/25		Introduction Due
3/1		
3/3		
3/8		
3/10		
3/15-17	Spring Break – No Classes	
3/22		Literature Review Due
3/24		
3/29		
3/31		
4/5		
4/7		Conclusions Due
4/12		
4/14		
4/19		Final Research Paper Due
4/21	Student Presentations	
4/26	Student Presentations	
4/28	Student Presentations	
5/3	Last day of class - Reflection	