

Sustainable Ranch Management: A Practice of Science, Art, and Determination.

RCH 4101 Ranch Skills 1
Spring 2024

Instructor:

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Monday and Wednesday 1:30-4:00 WSB 314 and Tuesday and Thursday 1:30-4:00 RAS 101. I am also available at other times by appointment

Course description:

This course covers advanced skills necessary for successful ranch management, including communication, leadership, landscape level planning, long term sustainability planning and implementation of ranch improvements.

Skills for RCH 4101:

1. Observation: You will be expected to make observations and draw conclusions about potential improvements at the SRSU ranch (Alpine and Sierra Blanca) or the O2 lease
2. Planning: You will need to create a plan for the semester and follow through on that plan
3. Budgeting: You will have a \$500 budget for your personal project with the potential to and \$1500 for the contractor project.
4. Purchasing: You will be responsible for making all purchases necessary following SRSU purchasing rules
5. Implementation: You will be expected to finish your project
6. Dependability: You will need to follow through on you word and do what you say you will do and be where you say you will be on time.
7. Time Management: You must make continuous progress on your project. You will lose points for procrastination and poor planning.
8. Communication: You will prepare and present a weekly report comprised of what you accomplished the previous week and what you plan to accomplish in the coming week. You will also need to include if you met the goals that you had set out in the previous report.

Required Text:

None

Equipment:

You will be using SRSU equipment for your projects. You will be expected to follow all instructions and safety rules for equipment use.

Learning objectives:

1. Students will learn how to communicate effectively with a supervisor (Communications Skills and Interpersonal skills)
2. Students will learn the steps of project management and implementation (Functional Areas and Analytical/Critical Thinking)

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3. Students will develop and apply personal skills such as time management as they work on project implementation (Functional Areas).

Student Learning Outcomes for the B.S. in Natural Resource Management

1. Students will be able to identify species of wildland plants and wildlife common to the western United States and describe their natural history.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the elements of an ecosystem.
3. Students will be able to communicate about natural resources and conservation both verbally and in writing.

The Sustainable Ranch Management Program at Sul Ross State University has identified the following student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the program:

1. Students will be able to identify and apply the principal concepts, ideas, skills, and practices in the multiple areas of ranch management. (*Functional Areas*)
2. Students will be able to understand and apply the relevant theories and principles associated with the economics of the ranching industry and use relevant technical information to understand trends and make decisions. (*Economics and Business*)
3. Students will be able to evaluate the natural environment of a ranch or land area and make decisions with an ecosystem approach (*Ecology*)
4. Students will be able to recognize social, legal and ethical principles in ranching and apply them to decision making. (*Social/Legal/Ethical Principles*)
5. Students will be able to employ appropriate quantitative methods, qualitative methods, and physical skills to support daily operations and decisions. (*Technical Skills*)
6. Students will be able to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. (*Communication Skills*)
7. Students will be able to demonstrate analytical and critical-thinking skills in the context of decision making. (*Analytical/Critical-Thinking Skills*)
8. Students will be able to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills, leadership ability, and the ability to work successfully in teams. (*Interpersonal Skills*)

Class Organization:

1. Roll will be taken during each class meeting by participation. The SRSU catalog states "The instructor may, at his discretion, drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class. Non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences."
2. It is Sul Ross State University Policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodations because of physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact the ADA Coordinator for Program Accessibility 837-8203.

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Grades:

Weekly Reports @ 10 pts each	120 points
Project Plan	100 points
Timely progress	40 points
Budgeting and Purchasing	40 points
Final Project Completion and final meeting	200 points

Grade assignment:

<60 = F; 60-69 = D; 70-79 = C; 80-89 = B; 90-100 = A;

Class Projects: You will be completing two projects this semester. A personal project and a contractor project. The project will have several different components and will be focused on developing personal skills.

Personal Project: You must first identify a project that needs to be done that is within your technical skill set or is a technical skill that you can learn and then implement during the semester. The project must be able to be completed with a \$500 budget. No you will not be paid for your labor, your labor is time spent completing the class just like you spend time completing homework for any other class. Once you have identified the project you must complete a project plan with estimated budget and a timeline of activities. The project must take a minimum of 15 hours to complete. You will need to report hours in your weekly reports. Weekly reports will be presented during class each week. You will then start with project implementation. You will have access to SRSU equipment but you will need to purchase supplies. If you need to travel to pick up supplies, you will be reimbursed for travel at the state rate. This must be included as part of your budget. As you continue through the project you can make necessary adjustments to your project plan. Any changes must be reported in your weekly reports. Once your project is completed, the project will be graded based on its value to the program, implementation based on your plan, on time and on budget, and quality of work. This project will be due at midterm.

Contractor Project: You must first identify a project that will be completed by a contractor. The project must be able to be completed with a \$1500 budget. Once you have identified the project you must complete a project plan and get bids from three different people/companies. You will then select and hire the contractor, making sure you work within SRSU guidelines. Weekly reports will be presented during class each week. As you continue through the project you can make necessary adjustments to your project plan. Any changes must be reported in your weekly reports. Once your project is completed, the project will be graded based on its value to the program, implementation based on your plan, on time and on budget, and quality of work. This project will be due at finals.