

AAE 320: FARMING SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT: Fall 2019

Dr. Paul D. Mitchell
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Office Hours
By Appointment

Class: MWF 9:55 – 10:45 in 2317 Engineering Hall

This 3 credit course meets for three 50-minute class period each week over the semester with the expectation that students will work on course activities for about 2 hours out of classroom for every class period. The syllabus includes additional information about meeting times and expectations for student work.

Departmental Contacts

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Course Homepage: <https://aae.wisc.edu/pdmitchell/aae-320/>

Materials will be posted throughout the semester, including lecture notes, papers, spreadsheets, problem sets, exams, and answer keys. I will use the class web page from previous years as the “backbone” and leave materials posted from the previous year so students can see the larger picture of where the class is going. As the semester progresses, I regularly will update the class page to post the material we will be currently be using, providing a ***** **Not Updated Below This Point** ***** so students can see where the page is up-to-date and what is left from the previous year.

Text

No textbook is required, but several good farm management texts exist. If interested in a text to keep for reference, I suggest looking at several and choosing the one that best fits your style. The “classic” farm management text is:

Farm Management, 8th ed. R.D. Kay, W.M. Edwards, and P.A. Duffy. Dubuque, IA: McGraw Hill. 2015.

I will make various materials available in class and/or on the course homepage. I expect students to use/read these, which may include paying costs for printing materials freely available on the internet. Many useful farm management materials are available on the internet for free.

Course Objective

This course’s objective is for students to understand basic economic principles and their application to the management of agricultural production systems and to gain an appreciation of the complexity of U.S. farming.

Course Content

See course outline on last page

Course Grade

Grades will be calculated based on the following weights

In-Class Exams (2 x 25% each):	50%
Comprehensive Final Exam:	25%
Problem Sets (about 8 during semester)	20%
Class Participation	5%

Grading will be as follows:

≥ 93	A
$88 \leq$ and < 93	AB
$83 \leq$ and < 88	B
$78 \leq$ and < 83	BC
$70 \leq$ and < 78	C
$60 \leq$ and < 70	D
< 60	F

Curving of grades will be unnecessary.

Exams

There will be two in-class exams and a comprehensive final. I will announce these exams at least 1 week in advance (but likely earlier than this).

Best Guess: Oct. 11th and Nov. 15th, but these dates may change.

Exam questions will be developed from class lectures, materials posted on the class homepage and discussed in class, and the problem sets. Previous exams and keys will be available on the course homepage to aid your studies. Questions will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer problems, plus a few mathematical problems. Expect questions to challenge your understanding and use of managerial concepts and tools. Graded exams will be returned as quickly as possible.

Final Exam: December 14 (Saturday), 7:45 AM – 9:45 AM

Please schedule end of the semester travel plans accordingly.

Academic Calendar and Religious Observances

See: <https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/#religious-observances>

Final Comment

Occasionally it becomes necessary to change the grading scheme, topics covered, or other course details. I reserve the right to do so, but I will always discuss such changes with students during lecture.

Rules, Rights, and Responsibilities

See: <https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#rulesrightsandresponsibilitiestext>

Academic Integrity

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>

Accommodations of Students with Disabilities

McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus 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 (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA." <http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php>

- ***Please communicate with me early if you have special needs so that I can accommodate your needs in order to enhance your learning experience.***
- ***Please communicate with me beforehand if you have a conflict with returning a class assignment on time or taking an examination at the scheduled time.***

Diversity and Inclusion

Institutional statement on diversity

"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." <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

Outline of Topics Covered in AAE 320

I. Introduction

1. Course Overview
2. Wisconsin Agriculture

II. Production Economics

1. Partial Budgeting
2. Single Input Production Economics
3. Multiple Input Production Economics
4. Cost Economics
5. Special Topics

EXAM #1

(ABOUT OCTOBER 11TH)

III. Farm Finance

1. Financial Analysis: Balance Sheets
2. Financial Analysis: Income Statement

III. Taxes, Business Arrangements and Farm Transfer

1. Overview of Taxes on Farms
2. Tax Considerations for Farm Transfer
3. Beginning Business Arrangements
4. Business Arrangement Alternatives

EXAM #2

(ABOUT NOVEMBER 15TH)

IV. U.S. Farm Policy and Programs

1. Commodity Support Programs
2. Crop Insurance and Disaster Assistance

FINAL EXAM

(DECEMBER 14, 7:45 AM – 9:45 AM)

Let's Talk About It: Possible Topics

Instead of a traditional lecture, for some classes I will assemble a variety of materials to read/watch/listen to before class on an issue in agriculture. The goal is to examine the issue from different perspectives to understand the conflict and to assess the evidence.

- Agriculture, Nutrients and Water Quality
- Dairy Farming in Wisconsin and Farm Size
- Beginning Farmers
- Agriculture and Rural Poverty
- Pesticides and Pollinators
- Agricultural Sustainability
- Impacts of Technological Change in Agriculture

If you have an idea for a topic/issue, please share and I will consider it. A key factor will be the potential to assemble a variety of materials.