

## AEB4325: CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN AGRIBUSINESS MANAGEMENT

FALL 2025. CLASS NUMBER: 22004, 3 CREDITS

T | ONLINE; R | Period 4-5 (10:40AM - 12:35 PM)

### GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Olesya Savchenko  
1183 McCarty A  
[olesya.savchenko@ufl.edu](mailto:olesya.savchenko@ufl.edu)

**Teaching Assistant:** Abhishek Rajan  
TBD  
[a.rajan@ufl.edu](mailto:a.rajan@ufl.edu)

**Classroom**

**Location:** This is a hybrid course: we will meet in [MCCA 2196](#) on Thursdays and the rest of the course is online.

**Office hours:** T 3:00PM – 4:00PM, or by appointment (Instructor)  
W 5:00PM – 6:00PM, or by appointment (TA)

**Undergraduate Advisor:** Michelle Baldwin  
1170A McCarty Hall A  
[agifford1@ufl.edu](mailto:agifford1@ufl.edu) | 352.294.7640 | [Schedule an appointment](#)

**Undergraduate Coordinator:** Dr. Misti Sharp  
1189 McCarty Hall A  
[mistisharp@ufl.edu](mailto:mistisharp@ufl.edu) | 352.294.7632 | [Schedule an appointment](#)

### COMMUNICATION

The best way to get a hold of myself or our TA is by emailing us either to our emails or via Canvas. Include “AEB4325” in the subject line of your email. **Please note that I respond to emails during regular business hours and do not check email on weekends.** Make sure to [enable emails for course announcements](#) and read this syllabus thoroughly. I will post important announcements on Canvas sparingly and will not answer questions by email that are already answered via canvas announcements or the course syllabus.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

*Course catalogue:* A capstone course utilizing economic concepts to address the interaction between the political process that legislates domestic agricultural, environmental and international trade policy, micro- and macro-economic principles, private business decisions taken by firms in response to public policies, and ethical considerations in developing and implementing public policy.

### COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Given active engagement in this course, at the end of this course students will:

1. Understand the key concepts of strategy formulation and competitive analysis.

2. Synthesize knowledge across business functional areas and apply this knowledge to the analysis of real-world contemporary agribusiness management issues.
3. Evaluate how domestic and international policies impact private business decision making.
4. Master the art of informed decision-making, critical-thinking, strategic management, and business analysis.
5. Develop effective written and oral communication skills and ability to work well in a team environment.

## COURSE STRUCTURE & TEACHING APPROACH

This is a hybrid course that combines elements of online and face-to-face instruction. The instructor will post instructional materials and assessments online (e.g., lecture recordings, lecture slides, online quizzes and other assignments), while during our meetings in class we will apply the material learned in lectures by analyzing and discussing agribusiness case studies.

In the classroom I will act as a facilitator, moderator and a lecturer to help you gain understanding of strategic management, identify linkages between strategy and other business functional areas, and apply the concepts of strategic management and competitive advantage to the analysis of real-world business situations using case studies. The face-to-face component of the course is heavily based on students' active engagement in discussions of the material and case analysis. Therefore, active participation is critical for learning.

**Case study method:** Students in this class will be engaged in case study analyses and discussions of selected case studies relevant to policies covered in class. Cases provide a way for students to gain a basis for analysis, problem-solving, and decision-making necessary for successful professional careers. To facilitate learning, case study analysis will be conducted through discussions and written case study memos.

## EXPECTATIONS FOR AEB 4325 STUDENTS

To be successful in this course, a student should:

1. Attend every class.
2. Study online lecture and other course materials posted on Canvas.
3. Complete all assigned readings **prior** to the respective lecture(s) and be prepared to discuss readings in class.
4. Participate in class discussions.
5. Be involved with your team and do your part towards completing team assignments.

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

I welcome students' feedback about the course, including content, assignments, and the style of lectures and discussions. I am committed to making this course a valuable and positive learning experience for each student. I will be collecting your feedback throughout the semester using anonymous surveys. You are also always welcome to talk to me directly.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Required:

- *Strategic Management* (6<sup>th</sup> edition) by Frank Rothaermel.
- **Course packet:** Available for purchase from Harvard Business Publishing. This packet includes policy case studies we will analyze in class. To purchase the packet, you need to first register as a “student” user. This packet contains cases we will be analyzing and discussing in class. The link to the course packet will be provided on Canvas.
- **Canvas:** Additional materials will be posted on Canvas. To access this course on Canvas login in using your Gatorlink username & password via <http://elearning.ufl.edu>.

### Supplementary:

- *The Case Study Handbook: A Students' Guide* by Ellet William, Harvard Business Review Press, 2018. (Available online through UF library)

## COURSE EVALUATION

- **Feedback/evaluation:** Students will receive feedback on the assignments and grades from the instructor and TA. If at any time you fall behind, let me know as soon as possible when you realize this is happening. Do not wait until the end of the semester as I will not be able to do much to help you at that point.
- **Due dates:** All assignments must be turned in by the indicated due date. I will allow a 15-minute grace period after the deadline after which there will be an automatic **10% deduction**. **No late work will be accepted after the last day of classes.**
- **Re-grade policy:** After any grade is posted, should you believe that your exam/assignment is incorrectly graded or that your grade was posted incorrectly, please contact the instructor within 7 days. To be considered, you must provide (1) the graded work in question and (2) a written explanation of why you are requesting the re-grade. **After 7 days have passed, your posted grade will be assumed to be correct and final.**
- **Course grade components:**

Graded Activity	Activity Type	Points	% of Grade
Contribution to Discussions/Leadership of Case Study Discussions	Individual	120	20%
Case Study Memos	Individual or Team	80	13%
Quizzes/ Homework / In-Class Activities	Individual or Team	80	13%
Exams (2)	Individual	120	20%
Professional Development Plan	Individual	100	17%
Final Group Case Analysis & Presentation	Team	100	17%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>600</b>	<b>100%</b>

- **Grading scale:**

93 – 100%	A	80 – 82.9	B-	66 – 69.9	D+
90 – 92.9	A-	76 – 79.9	C+	63 – 65.9	D
86 – 89.9	B+	73 – 75.9	C	60 – 62.9	D –
83 – 85.9	B	70 – 72.9	C-	≤59.9	E

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & EXPECTATIONS

### Contribution to/Leadership of Case Study Discussions (20%):

→ **Contribution:** The face-to-face component of this course is going to be mostly discussion-based as we apply online lecture material, analyze, and discuss case studies in the classroom. Therefore, thoughtful contribution to class discussions is critical for your success in this course and for creating an active and productive learning environment for all students. The quality of your learning experience in this course will directly depend on your and your classmates' preparation, active participation in discussions and listening to peers. It is only through your contributions during class discussions that you can demonstrate your knowledge of class material and how it applies to the case studies we analyze. What you will gain in this class directly depends on what you put in – not just in terms of preparing for the class (reading and analyzing cases), but also in terms your willingness to listen to and be open to ideas of other students, ability to defend your position with carefully constructed arguments. Because cases analysis uses real business situations that often involve uncertainty, risk and lack of information, it is inevitable that different solutions will be proposed. Respectful discussion of issues or opposing opinions relevant to the case is welcome. This component of your grade will be graded based on your contribution to the learning process. Therefore, I will evaluate both the quantity and quality of your contribution to class discussion.

→ **Leadership:** Students in small groups will be assigned to lead one case study discussion. This implies that in addition to preparing for the case as you would to contribute, you will be responsible for talking about the problem and company analysis, alternatives and recommendations and your team will need to pose questions to the rest of the teammates, i.e. lead the discussion. During these sessions we will have a flipped classroom – your job is to educate your fellow classmates and the instructor on your case.

### Case Study Memos (13%):

Throughout this course, we will analyze a series of business case studies. Each student is expected to prepare 2-page (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font) case study memos on 4 case studies we analyze. Students will be provided with discussion questions that will guide their analysis. Each case will be tailored to the specific material covered in lecture and the textbook to enable students to apply the theory to real world business issues. I will provide general guidance on how to complete case analysis and we will analyze one practice case as a class to ensure that each student understands the case study method and is well-equipped to do the analysis. Students have an option of working on these cases individually or in small groups (no more than 2 students per group).

**Quizzes, Homework, In-Class Activities (13%):**

Quizzes and homework assignments will be posted and submitted online. Quizzes will test students' basic understanding of the material and will be announced ahead of time and will draw on the material presented in online lectures and textbook. Homework and in-class application activities will require students to apply the material to a specific business challenge and will be typically completed in small groups in the classroom.

**Exams (20%):**

There will be two exams in this course that will test students' understanding of course material covered in online lectures and textbook. Exams will include multiple choice and short-answer questions, which will require students to demonstrate how to apply business concepts to a real business challenge. Exams will take place in the classroom.

**Professional Development Plan (17%):**

Students will read a book that focuses on enhancing personal and professional skills, then use its insights to develop a personal career plan. The plan will outline long-term career goals, the steps students intend to take after graduation, and the skills, experiences, and professional networks needed to achieve them. As part of this process, students will evaluate at least two career advancement options, backed by labor market data, industry trends, and a gap analysis of their current skills and experiences. The final plan should also outline specific actions, such as further education, certifications, leadership development, networking, and strategic positioning, etc., to achieve their desired career trajectory. In their reflection, students will discuss how the book influenced their thinking about career growth and leadership, and identify specific actions they can take to strengthen their readiness for the job market.

**Final Group Case Analysis & Presentation (17%):**

This is a comprehensive case analysis assignment that will be prepared in groups and presented at the end of the course. Unlike the brief case assignments that are shorter, the final group case analysis should be 3-5 pages long (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font) not including tables, graphs, and references included in the appendix. This case analysis will require students to synthesize and apply the knowledge and concepts of business strategy and competitive advantage learned throughout the entire semester. This case will be assigned early in the semester to ensure that students have sufficient time to analyze it and prepare it for presentation. While completing this assignment, students will assume the role of business consultants presenting their analysis to the board of directors. Therefore, the written portion of this assignment must look professional, be original and written using proper English grammar and formal language. You will be graded based on the comprehensiveness of your analysis, but points will be deducted if a report is not well formatted, looks sloppy or has grammatical errors. Each group will also present their analysis in a 20-minute presentation. Presentations should communicate the key points of the analysis and must be professional, clear and to the point.

**Peer evaluation of group members:** Each group is encouraged to develop and set clear guidelines for their groups. At the end of the semester, each group member will have an opportunity to evaluate other members of the group based on their contributions toward the completion of the final group case study analysis and presentation. The goal of these evaluations is to assist the instructor in determining an individual student's contribution to the case analyses and group discussion. These evaluations will be confidential. Only aggregate numbers will be discussed with students.

**Note: Any and all items presented on this syllabus are subject to change. Any changes and additional announcements will be communicated through canvas and in class as the semester progresses. By enrolling in this class, you agree to the terms outlined in this syllabus.**

**\*\*\*Detailed course schedule is provided to students on Canvas \*\*\***

### **COURSE & UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

This syllabus is a contract between the students and the instructor. Each student can be assured that I will hold everyone to the same standards and policies. This course adheres to all UF Academic Policies: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>

### **COURSE/EMAIL NETIQUETTE**

This course will you a blend of face-to-face and online instruction. Please remember that online classroom is in fact a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with the instructor and your peers. When communicative online you should always:

- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof.; Unless specifically invited, don't refer to your instructor by first name.
- Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards).
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you."
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING.
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or 😊.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's).
- Do not send confidential information via e-mail.

### **LAUREN'S PROMISE: I will listen and believe you if someone is threatening you.**

Lauren McCluskey, a 21-year old honors student athlete, was murdered on October 22, 2018, by a man she briefly dated on the University of Utah Campus. We must all take actions to ensure this never happens again. Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be excused or tolerated at the University of Florida.

If you are experiencing sexual assault, relationship violence, or stalking, you can take the following actions:

- If you are in immediate danger, call 911.
- Report it to me, and I will connect you to resources.
- Seek confidential sources of support and help:
  - [UFPD Office of Victim Services](#): 51 Museum Road, 352-392-5648
  - [Sexual Assault Recovery Services \(SARS\)](#): Infirmary Building, 352-392-1161
  - Alachua County Rape Crisis Center (confidential): 352-264-6760