



# **SAFE | Sustainable Agriculture & Food Environment**

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

## **Advanced Agriculture & Food Entrepreneurship**

SAFE 5311

Spring 2018 Syllabus

### **Part 1: Course Information**

#### **Instructor Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Danhong Chen
<b>Virtual Office Forum:</b>	Available 24/7 for posting/viewing questions
<b>Online Office Hours:</b>	By Appointment
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:dchen@shsu.edu">dchen@shsu.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	814-876-2341

#### **Course Description**

This course will examine the initiation of new ventures and growth of existing firms in sustainable agriculture and food production through opportunity recognition, innovation, and change. An emphasis will be placed on developing effective entrepreneurial skills and behaviors, and risk management for startups. The preparation of a structured business plan will be required.

#### **Textbook & Course Materials**

##### **Optional Text**

Scarborough, N.M. and J.R. Cornwall. Essentials of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management (8th Edition). Pearson, 2015. ISBN: 9780133849622

##### **Other Recommended Readings**

Recommended readings will be posted throughout the semester on Blackboard™

#### **Course Structure**

This course will be delivered entirely online through the course management system Blackboard™. You will use your SHSU account to login to the course from the Blackboard login page (<http://shsu.blackboard.com>).

In Blackboard, you will access online lessons, course materials, and resources. At designated times throughout the semester, we will participate in a blend of self-paced and group-paced activities using Blackboard and additional internet-based technologies. Activities may consist of chat, blogs, discussion forums, journaling, wikis, and web postings.

## Technical Requirements

You must have access to a personal computer or a computer in which you have administrative rights so that you may install necessary plugins. See the [Technical Requirements](#) website for recommended system and browser requirements.

- Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection is desirable)
- Preferred web browser: **Mozilla Firefox** 10.0 or higher
- An active SHSU Student Username and Password
- Webcam and headset (headphone/microphone combo) – Using headphones will eliminate the echoing effect of the microphone during live chat or recording videos.

## Technical Assistance

The team at SHSU Online provides technical support for Blackboard through a variety of methods.

**Website:** [Technical Support](http://online.shsu.edu/campus/support-desk/) <http://online.shsu.edu/campus/support-desk/>

**Phone:** 936-294-2780 – or – toll free 1-877-759-2232

**Email:** [blackboard@shsu.edu](mailto:blackboard@shsu.edu) or you can chat with a technician while inside your Blackboard course.

Below are some helpful resources if you wish to explore on your own.

- New students should start with the [Online Student Orientation](http://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-studies/orientation.html)  
<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-studies/orientation.html>
- A list of other helpful services can be found on the [Student Resources](http://online.shsu.edu/campus/current-students/) page  
<http://online.shsu.edu/campus/current-students/>
- Blackboard Learn™ provides a variety of video tutorials at [Student Videos](https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Watch_Videos)  
[https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Watch\\_Videos](https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Watch_Videos)

## Part 2: Course Objectives

This primary course objective is to familiarize students with various startup issues such as business idea development, legal forms, franchising, e-commerce, marketing strategies, location choice, financing, and financial projections. Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the basic theory and principles of entrepreneurship and small business development and management
- Conduct sustainable agriculture and food entrepreneurship research related to business planning
- Address managerial, marketing, operations, and financial issues in agribusiness startups
- Identify needs and wants in the market and have a plan for successfully fulfilling them
- Exhibit basic consulting skills by making recommendations related to effective courses of action for entrepreneurial businesses and creating solutions to issues for them

You will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Studying online lectures
- Completing online quizzes
- Writing reports on recorded field trips
- Interviewing a local agribusiness entrepreneur and writing a report
- Making an online sale
- Creating an elevator pitch
- Completing a business plan

## Part 3: Topic Outline/Schedule

**Important Note:** The academic week for this course follows a Thursday through Wednesday outline. Assignments and quizzes are due at the end of each online week or Wednesday midnight (Central Time). Activity and assignment details will be explained in detail within each corresponding learning module.

### Weekly Outline:

**Week 01 (Jan 18 – Jan 24):** [Course Introduction](#)

Due: student profile

**Week 02 (Jan 25 – Jan 31): The Foundations of Entrepreneurship**

Due: N/A

**Week 03 (Feb 1 – Feb 7): Ethics and Social Responsibility: Doing the Right Thing**

Due: startup ideas

**Week 04 (Feb 8 – Feb 14): Idea Protection, Assessment, and Feasibility Analysis**

Due: business logo

**Week 05 (Feb 15 – Feb 21): Crafting a Business Plan & Building a Solid Strategic Plan**

Due: quiz 1

**Week 06 (Feb 22 – Feb 28): Forms of Business Ownership & Buying an Existing Business**

Due: report on recorded field trip 1

**Week 07 (March 1 – March 7): Franchising and the Entrepreneur**

Due: report on recorded field trip 2

**Week 08 (March 8 – March 14): Building a Powerful Bootstrap Marketing Plan**

Due: N/A

**SPRING BREAK****Week 09 (March 22 – March 28): E-Commerce and the Entrepreneur**

Due: quiz 2 &amp; start-up website

**Week 10 (March 29 – April 4): Pricing and Credit Strategies**

Due: online sales post

**Week 11 (April 5 – April 11): Creating a Successful Financial Plan**

Due: N/A

**Week 12 (April 12 – April 18): Managing Cash Flow**

Due: N/A

**Week 13 (April 19 – April 25): Sources of Financing: Equity and Debt**

Due: report of interviewing a local agribusiness entrepreneur

**Week 14 (April 26 – May 2): Choosing the Right Location and Layout**

Due: quiz 3

**Week 15 (May 3 – May 9): Elevator Pitch and Business Plan**

Due: Elevator pitch and business plan

## Part 4: Grading Policy

### Graded Course Activities

Grades will be determined upon the total of all items outlines below.

Points	Item Description
30	Online Quizzes (3 @ 10 points each)
10	Report on recorded field trips (2 @ 5 points each)
10	Report on interviewing a local agribusiness entrepreneur
5	Online sales post
10	Business website
5	Elevator Pitch
30	Business Plan
<b>100</b>	<b>Total Grade</b>

Students need to complete online quizzes, reports, and a sales post individually. Quizzes may consist of true/false and multiple-choice questions based on lectures. Each of the three reports should contain at least one full page typed in 12 point font with single space and 1-inch margins.

The business website, elevator pitch, and business plan are done as a group. Students will be grouped into teams of 5 to 6 students. Each student in a group should pick a major role in the agribusiness startup as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Operating Officer (COO), Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), or Chief Human Resource Officer (CHRO). CEO will be responsible for coordinating activities and giving the elevator pitch. CMO will be responsible for creating the business website. Each student should complete a designated section in the business plan.

### Late Work Policy

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines. There will be no make-up assignments, quizzes, or other course materials accepted beyond the due date without instructor approval and advanced notification.

### Viewing Grades in Blackboard

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the Blackboard Grade Center. Your instructor will update the online grades each time a grading session has been complete—typically 7 days following the completion of an activity. Click on the My Grades link in the left navigation pane to view your points.

## Letter Grade Assignment

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Performance Level
A	90-100%	Excellent Work
B	80-89%	Acceptable Work
C	70-79%	Passing, but insufficient Work
F	0-69%	Failing Work

\*Note: Letter grade of D is not used to evaluate graduate performance.

## Part 5: Course Policies

### Attendance

Regular and punctual class attendance is expected of each student at Sam Houston State University. This course will consist of both synchronous (scheduled) and asynchronous activities. Synchronous activities are outlined in the course schedule. Please make it a habit to visit the course home page periodically throughout the week to check for announcements. Timely entry into online meeting spaces will be expected during those scheduled times.

### Participate

Students are expected to participate in all activities as listed on the course calendar, especially online discussion. Online discussion is a vital component to the course and is necessary to meet learning objectives. As such, a portion of the overall course grade will be derived from your engagement in the course discussions.

### Build Rapport

You will find that your overall success in distance education courses can come from building a strong rapport with your classmates and instructor. This starts with demonstrating netiquette (online etiquette) by respecting others' opinions, perspectives, and values through all the course communication.

### Code of Conduct

As a member of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our university live by principles that require all members to be conscientious, respectful, and honest. Students should also understand that honest conduct reaches far beyond just academic honesty.

## Completing Assignments

**All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Blackboard unless otherwise instructed.** Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline or special permission must be requested in advanced from the instructor before the due date.

All discussion assignment must be completed by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will affect the student's grade.

## Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is the student's responsibility to understand when he/she may need to consider unrolling from a course. Refer to the SHSU Course Schedule for dates and deadlines concerning registration.

## Required Policies at SHSU

The following are mandatory policies and procedures practiced by Sam Houston State University and can also be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>.

## Academic Dishonesty

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Accusations of academic dishonesty, proceedings, and subsequent disciplinary actions are addressed in The Texas State University System, Board of Regents policy on [Academic Honesty, Chapter VI, Subsection 5.3, "Academic Honesty"](#) and in the University's [Academic Policy Statement 810213](#).

## Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examination, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for the purpose. Section 51.911(a)(2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20..." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University Policy 861001 provide the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled

class in order to observe a religious holy day shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed. This policy is fully addressed in [Academic Policy Statement 861001](#).

## Students with Disabilities Policy

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) office located in the Lee Drain North Annex and can be contacted by phone at 936-294-3412 (Voice), 936-294-3786 (TDD), or via email at [disability@shsu.edu](mailto:disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. This policy is fully addressed in [Academic Policy Statement 811006](#).

## Visitors in the Classroom

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar Office.