

ALS 6031: PROJECT TEAM RESEARCH: BUILDING SKILLS IN AGROBIOLOGY

Agronomy Department – University of Florida
Fall 2023

INSTRUCTORS:

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LOCATION AND TIME

Online via Zoom on Tuesday period 6 (12:50pm-1:40pm) and Thursday periods 6-7 (12:50pm-2:45pm).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Hands-on experience in addressing a real-world problem faced by an agricultural industry partner. Production of a detailed plan, project design, and preliminary data for evaluating and solving the problem. Offered every term.

Course prerequisite: None.

JUSTIFICATION

This course is designed to address the need for broad training in agricultural fields as food production systems become more complex with interdisciplinary challenges. Hands-on experience solving specific problems faced by industry representatives is also critical for employment preparation and competitive standing. This course will emphasize acquiring/refining skills within the following areas: professionalism; project management; working in interdisciplinary teams; effective communication (written and oral) with peers and mentors; tackling complex projects through creative and novel approaches, and formulating, designing, and presenting methodologies to solve problems.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Develop and demonstrate coping skills for managing uncertainty and risk
2. Design a plan of action with a prioritized task list, group member responsibilities, and a detailed timeline with project deadlines
3. Establish a foundation of broadly applicable, effective communication skills
4. Recognize the importance of professionalism and respect for others
5. Develop a sense of personal responsibility that emphasizes standards for quality
6. Identify group success as a personal accomplishment
7. Implement points 1-6 in successful collaboration with an outside organization

CLASS FORMAT

The class will meet twice a week for one 1-hour time period plus one 2-hour time period. Each meeting will be held via video conference. During class, we will cover professional development and team-work content, plus provide live guidance in developing semester research project. As the semester progresses, students are expected to take independent initiative in organizing use of their time within the class period, with progressively less oversight from instructors. Moreover, additional group or sub-group meetings may be added as needed once the project progresses.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Assignment
1	Introduction to course	
Aug. 25	T: Class introductions; Problem Portfolio	
2	Project and Time Management	
Aug. 30	T: Syngenta Q&A	
Sep. 1	R: POA Review & Discussion	POA draft
3	Group Work	
Sep. 6	T: Teamwork Workshop	POA submit in class
Sep. 8	R: TBD	
4	Group work	
Sep. 13	T: POA feedback	
Sep 15	R: TBD	
5	Group work	
Sep. 20	T: TBD	
Sep. 22	R: TBD	
6	Group work	
Sep. 27	T: TBD	
Sep. 29	R: TBD	
7	Group work	
Oct. 4	T: TBD	
Oct. 6	R: TBD	
8	Group work	
Oct. 11	T: TBD	
Oct. 13	R: TBD	
9	Group work	
Oct. 18	T: TBD	
Oct. 20	R: TBD	
10	Group work	
Oct. 25	T: TBD	
Oct. 27	R: TBD	
11	Group work	
Nov. 1	T: TBD	
Nov. 3	R: TBD	
12	Group work	

Nov. 8	T: TBD	
Nov. 10	R: Holiday	
13	Group work	
Nov. 15	T: TBD	
Nov. 17	R: TBD	
14	Group work	
Nov. 22	T: TBD	
Nov. 24	R: No Class - Thanksgiving Holiday	
15	Final Preparations	
Nov. 29	T: TBD	
Dec. 1	R: Final Presentation Practice	
16	Final paper & Presentation	
Dec. 6	T: TBD	Final paper & Present to Syngenta
Dec. 8	R: Reading Day	
17	Feedback	
Dec. 13	Course feedback	

SUGGESTED TEXT

There are no required textbooks for this course. Students will be provided with assigned content prior to each lecture from various sources including journal articles, websites, videos and reports. Suggested resources will be available via CANVAS (E-Learning).

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade will be based, in-class participation-discussions, peer evaluations, the written and oral presentations of the project paper.

CLASS GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Assignment	Percent of final grade
Participation & Peer Evaluations	10%
Plan of action	5%
Students determine	45%
Final Paper & Presentation	40%
Total	100%

GRADING SCALE

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
100-94	A	4.00
<94-90	A-	3.67
<90-87	B+	3.33

<87-84	B+	3.00
<84-80	B-	2.67
<80-77	C+	2.33
<77-74	C	2.00
<74-70	C-	1.67
<70-67	D+	1.33
<67-64	D	1.00
<64-61	D-	0.67
<61	E	0.00

Note: Grade less than C is a failing grade.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Your active participation is critical to your success and the quality of your experience in this course. Class participation will be graded (10% of final grade – Peer evaluations and Participation), therefore, your absence during class will directly impact your participation grade.

CLASS DEMEANOR

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful and collegial to the instructor and to fellow students. Avoid the use of cell phones during class sessions. Diverse opinions held by other students should be respected in discussions, and, if appropriate, elevated. Conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be avoided.

MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FEES

There are no material fees for this course

SOFTWARE

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) and Teams will be available to all UF students free of charge (<https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/software-services/microsoft/>).

It is your responsibility to make sure that your computer has the latest version of all software.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

SYLLABUS CHANGES

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in advance of deadlines.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.” You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>.

SOFTWARE USE

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use, which can be found here: <https://it.ufl.edu/policies/intellectual-property/copyright/>. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

GETTING HELP

For issues with technical difficulties for e-Learning in Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from LSS when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor or TA within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling

services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- *University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, www.counseling.ufl.edu*
 Counseling Services
 Groups and Workshops
 Outreach and Consultation
 Self-Help Library
 Wellness Coaching
- U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/
- Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, www.crc.ufl.edu/next-level
- Student Complaints:
 - Residential Course: https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf

HARASSMENT

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. <http://www.hr.ufl.edu/eeo/sexharassment.htm>

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Faculty, students, administrative and professional staff members, and other employees (hereinafter referred to as 'member(s)' of the university), who intentionally act to impair, interfere with, or obstruct the mission, purposes, order, operations, processes, and functions of the university shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action by university authorities for misconduct, as set forth in the applicable rules of the Board of Regents and the university and state law governing such actions. Be advised that you can and will be dismissed from class if you engage in disruptive behavior. For more information: <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/1008.pdf>

TWELVE-DAY RULE

Students who participate in official athletic or scholastic extracurricular activities are permitted twelve (12) scholastic day absences per semester without penalty. In any case, it is the student's responsibility to maintain satisfactory academic performance and attendance.