

Description of Course Revisions for Chesapeake Project Larisa Cioaca

One of the courses I teach is INAG 203 Agricultural Finance. This course introduces fundamental concepts related to the financial management of an agricultural business. Topics include financial statement analysis, financial planning, the relationship between risk and return, the time value of money, costs associated with borrowed funds, sources of capital, financial markets and intermediaries in agriculture, and personal finance. By the end of the course, students gain financial knowledge and skills necessary for managing a profitable agricultural business.

This document describes how I will incorporate sustainability in the updated course during the Fall 2016 semester. The highlighted text in the enclosed syllabus identifies revisions related to sustainability issues. Specifically, a new learning objective has been added: **Demonstrate an understanding of the Triple Bottom Line accounting framework (people, planet, and profits).**

During this course, students must complete an individual project that requires them to create a case study for an agricultural business of their choosing. The purpose of the case study is to evaluate the current financial position of the agribusiness in order to make evidence-based recommendations to improve its financial position in the future. In the redesigned course, students will learn to go beyond traditional profitability measures by incorporating environmental and social dimensions in their analyses. Included below is the case study outline, which will include a Triple Bottom Line analysis.

1. Title Page
 - Include a title page showing the name of the business you studied and your name.
2. Table of Contents
 - Include a table of contents for your case study.
3. Introduction
 - Include an explanation of the purpose and structure of the case study, noting the major issues you identified and the recommended solutions.
4. Business Overview
 - Include an overview of the agribusiness covering its industry, historical background, products/services, customer segments, and revenue streams.
5. Business Environment
 - Evaluate the external environment of the agribusiness and identify those factors that could impact its performance (e.g., competitive forces, market trends, new regulations).
6. Financial Analysis
 - Include an analysis of the financial position of the agribusiness. Calculate specific measures of liquidity, solvency, profitability, efficiency, and repayment capacity. Compare the results with established benchmarks. Show all your math.
7. Triple Bottom Line Analysis
 - Will the agribusiness be able to meet future needs while incorporating consideration of environmental, economic, and social factors? Include a discussion of *comprehensive* performance that includes not only profits, but also people and the planet (e.g., charitable contributions, greenhouse gas emissions, water usage, etc.).
8. Recommendations

- Discuss the strategies you recommend the agribusiness pursue in order to improve its financial position in the future (e.g., new investments, diversification, de-leveraging, risk management, etc.). Use evidence to support your recommendations.
- If you are recommending new investments, discuss how those investments should be financed, and what implications the financing choices might have in the future.

9. Conclusion

- Include a conclusion for your case study.

10. Appendices

- Include the following financial statements for the agribusiness: 1) balance sheet, 2) income statement, and 3) statement of cash flows or cash flow budget. Indicate whether the business used cash basis accounting or accrual accounting.
- Include additional information about the agribusiness as needed.

The individual project is worth 20% of the students' final grades. The grading rubric will be updated to reflect the new Triple Bottom Line Analysis section. Specifically, students will be evaluated based on the degree to which their case study "presented an insightful and thorough analysis of the financial position of the agribusiness, including consideration of people, profits, and the planet." In addition, students will discuss the lessons learned from their case studies during a class session, giving them an opportunity to share insights regarding the Triple Bottom Line.