

## Syllabus for MGT 290-2, Food and Agriculture Industry Immersion

### Course Description

This course introduces students to the many facets of the food and agricultural industry and provides a framework for understanding the complex forces that shape and drive it. Drawing upon the deep expertise of UC Davis as well as connections to industry experts, each session will take a deep dive into a particular issue. Topics to be covered include:

- Historic Perspective of Innovation in the Food Industry & Future Challenges
- Developing innovative food and beverage products for shifting consumer demand
- Innovation in food waste, preservation & upcycling
- Management challenges in a complex international vegetable seed business
- Innovation in the global CPG Industry
- Sustainability in supply chain management for a global food ingredient business
- Building a multi-billion-dollar global berry business
- Product innovation to address global health and environmental issues

Drawing on background readings, speakers' presentations and other media, students will learn about a topic or case study, discuss it in class, tackle a specific problem in small groups of MBA and MS/PhD students, and then present their findings. Students will be given opportunities to develop cross-functional solutions to problems facing the industry.

### Learning Objective

Feeding the world is a critical challenge facing us all as the global population continues to grow, resources remain finite and the environment is vulnerable. Success will require the application of extraordinary leadership and management skills as well as innovative approaches to the food supply system. The objective of this course is to increase the student's practical knowledge of the operations and sustainable practices in the food and agriculture industry and gain hands-on experience in solving industry-specific problems. Introducing students to academic and industry experts will help them develop their effectiveness in this area.

### Course Structure

The course will meet for 5 sessions to be held on five **full day** Fridays starting January 10, 2025, through February 7th, 2025. In person class will be held in Gallagher Hall from 9:15 AM – 4:30 PM each day, with a one-hour networking lunch break (lunch provided). There will be a morning speaker and session, followed by a separate afternoon speaker and session. Students will prepare for each session by reviewing readings and other material related to the topic. During the class meeting time, an industry expert will provide background and context to lead the discussion. At the end of the discussion, students will break up into small groups to tackle a specific industry challenge or opportunity related to the topic and to develop a solution to deal with the issue. Each group will present their recommendation and receive feedback on their proposed solution from the industry expert.

## Student Assignments

Grades are assigned based on participation in each session's discussion, small work group activity, and submission of papers (weekly and final synthesis).

Four (4) Weekly Reflection two-page papers (500-1,000 words) consisting of:

- a. A brief summary of what the speaker(s) discussed.
- b. The managerial problems that were discussed in class.
- c. The different solutions you heard from your classmates.
- d. The solution that appealed to you the most and the reason why it appealed to you.

An 8-10 page final synthesis paper that includes the following:

- a. What are the important lessons you learned from the various speakers? You can categorize the problems discussed by various speakers any way you want to, and explain the types of solutions that were discussed in class for each category of problems. For example, if the problem dealt with supply chains, you should discuss solutions that were presented with respect to supply chains (e.g., usage of technology, supplier contracting processes, building redundancy into the supply system).
- b. Select one speaker who made the most impact on you. What part of the material covered by the speaker affected you? Explain why.
- c. How does this course affect what you do (or plan to do) in the future? Be specific in your response.

## Grading

40% Class Participation (discussion groups, presentations)

30% Four 2-page Papers (one per class day) – see more information below at end of syllabus

30% Final Paper

## Absences/Makeup Work

Students will be able to make up work for **one** excused session (morning or afternoon) absence that is either school related (e.g. school sanctioned field trip) or related to a job search (e.g. interview). The instructor must be notified well in advance of the planned absence. **No other absences will be excused and if the student is absent he/she will receive a zero for all work in that session.** As this class requires in-class participation and the writing assignments are based on discussions which occur in-class, therefore attendance is mandatory.

## Academic Code of Conduct

All students will need to uphold the standard of conduct relating to academic integrity as defined in GSM Code of Academic Conduct, <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/cac.pdf>.

## LIST OF SPEAKERS FOR WINTER 2025 FOOD & AG IMMERSION COURSE

- **Justin Siegal**, Associate Professor (UCD) & Entrepreneur
- **Harold Schmitz**, March Fund, Former Chief Scientific Officer, Mars, Inc.
- **David Warter**, VP of Winemaking and Distillation, Gallo Winery
- **Matthew Weeks**, Senior Manager, Co-manufacturing and Sourcing, Gallo Winery
- **Brant Scott, VP & Controller**, Gallo Winery
- **Edward (Ned) Spang**, Associate Professor UC Davis, Food Science & Technology & Director, Robert Mondavi Institute
- **Dan Kurzrock**, Co-Founder and Chief Grain Officer, UpCycled Foods Inc.
- **Sandor Nagy**, Chief Operating Officer, Driscoll's of the Americas (DOTA)
- **Ali Wing**, Chief Executive Officer, Oobli
- **Brijesh Krishnaswamy**, President and Global Head of Spices, olam food ingredients (ofi)
- **James Brusca**, Global Vice President, R&D, HM.CLAUSE
- **Vincent Asiago**, Director R&D Portfolio and Innovation, HM.CLAUSE
- **Melissa Massotti**, HR Director, HM.CLAUSE
- **Nancy Quan**, Chief Technology Officer, Coca Cola
- **Kathryn Cook**, CEO, NuCicir (UCD spinoff)
- **Gregory Belt**, CEO, InnovoPro
- **Larry Liu**, CEO Weee!
- **Ying Chen**, Founding Member and Head of Data, Weee!

### WEEKLY REFLECTION GUIDELINES

**ALL SUBMISSIONS SHOULD HAVE YOUR NAME, ASSIGNMENT TITLE, AND DATE AT THE TOP**

**ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE ON THE WEDNESDAY (AT MIDNIGHT PST) FOLLOWING PRIOR WEEK'S FRIDAY IMMERSION.**

There will be four (4) short written "Weekly Reflection" assignments due during the quarter. The papers, which are expected to be between 500 and 1000 words, will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on what you learned from the previous week's speaker and case challenge and will be scored up to 10 points each (see grading criteria below). These papers must be your original work, and must recognize all quoted materials and cite all sources used in their preparation. Your submission will be checked for plagiarism and I expect it all to be original material, none generated by use AI.

The assignment is designed to prove to me that you engaged thoughtfully in the case challenge immersion. If done well, each assignment should prove to be a useful "journal entry" that you can look back on long after your time during the course. The paper should include:

- a. A brief summary of what the speaker discussed.
- b. The managerial problem that was discussed in class.
- c. The different solutions you heard from your classmates.
- d. The solution that appealed to you the most and the reason why it appealed to you.

It should briefly summarize the case challenge you and your team faced, describe your response to the case challenge, including both the relevant data you identified and your analysis of the situation. Be sure

to take a clear stand or opinion on the case challenge and provide ideas or facts from pre-assigned material, if available, and your research during the class, to support that stand (using appropriate citations). Also, if useful, contrast your team's approach to other groups.

**Do not simply repeat items from the readings or stated by the speaker, but do not ignore them altogether.**

As a graduate student at UC Davis, you will be expected to employ self-editing skills to produce a professional writing style. As a reminder, those skills involved the following:

- Concise expression
- Strong paragraphs, with good topical sentences
- Logical flow
- Shorter sentences, with mixed lengths
- Direct, fast-moving sentences
- Necessary jargon only

Those skills should be in evidence in your writing for this class. While you will not receive line editing, and may or may not receive comment about your writing, it will be a factor in the grading.

### **Scoring Rubric**

I will score the assignments as follows:

10 points if you:

- (1) clearly state your position,
- (2) support it with ideas and facts from the readings, and
- (3) write with clarity and concision.

8 points if you give me two of three

6 points if you give me one out of three

0 points if you fail to turn it in on time.

### **Submission**

Assignments will be submitted electronically, via the course site on Canvas. **You will be penalized 2 points for a late submission.**