

**AgEdS 211C Handbook**  
**Early Field-Based Experience (EFE) Program**  
**Agricultural Communication**

<http://www.ageds.iastate.edu/content/field-experiences>

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## INTRODUCTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This document is designed as a guide for the student as well as the site supervisor. It describes the procedures to follow and the course expectations. It includes forms the student is responsible for completing. The student is responsible for ensuring that all relevant forms and assignments are completed and returned to the AgEdS Internship Program Director via Blackboard.

The purpose of the *AgEdS 211C Early Field-based Experience* is to provide you, the student, with an opportunity to **explore a professional setting** in the field of agricultural communication as well as **reflect on your career**. This experience is a chance for you to begin visualizing yourself as a professional agricultural communicator, consider the landscape of career options, and observe and analyze a real-world organization. This job shadow experience is intended to help you develop self-awareness and self-efficacy as a burgeoning professional agricultural communicator, and contribute to your professional socialization.

You are strongly encouraged to think critically and creatively about your professional goals. Take ownership of your Field-based Experience by asking yourself:

- What are the area(s) of agricultural communication you want to explore?
- What interests you about a particular employment site?

You should work with the AgEdS Internship Program Director to choose a site that best captures your interests. You and your site-supervisor should structure your field-based experience to provide the most valuable perspective, participation, and practice in agricultural communication. The assignments required to complete AgEdS 211C include observing and assisting your on-site supervisor in daily activities, as well as written reflections about your experiences.

Upon completing this course, and engaging in a professional job shadow experience, the student will be able to:

1. Observe a professional business environment and reflect on what those observations mean as a learning experience.
2. Participate in experiences that will help in career decision making.
3. Identify the role of the agri-business professional or informal educator in the community and the scope of the agribusiness industry.
4. Identify various tasks that agribusiness personnel perform, the environment in which they perform, and the skills needed to complete their tasks satisfactorily.
5. Practice critical thinking, reflective writing, and other agricultural communication skills in the service of professional socialization in agricultural industry.

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS & OVERVIEW

*AgEdS 211C Early Field-Based Experience* (EFE) is a **prerequisite** to enrolling in any other internship experience in the Department of Agricultural Education and Studies. With this in mind, the primary purpose for completing AgEdS 211C is for you to get the most enriching opportunity to experience a realistic work environment in the area of agricultural communication. You are required to complete 40 hours of observation and participation at an approved site. Job shadow experiences can take various forms: one week at the office, ride-alongs on five sales calls, assistance during a specific event, a tour of several different production tasks, etc. You are encouraged to work with your site supervisor to structure the early field-based experience that will be most valuable for your career goals. **Your job shadow experience must be approved by the AgEdS Department Internship Director prior to beginning your 40 hours.**

Below is an overview of the AgEdS 211C course expectations and structure, delineating expectations as students complete their job shadow experience. Please read this section carefully. Detailed assignment guidelines are on Blackboard.

### ***Scheduling & Logistics***

a. Consult with your AgEdS academic advisor as to when *AGEDS 211C* fits in your overall program of study. Ideally, Agricultural Communication majors should complete AgEdS 211C within the first 2 years of enrollment.

b. Make an appointment with the AgEdS Internship Director prior to beginning your job shadow experience. In this meeting, expect to review the purpose and expectations for this course, brainstorm areas of interest and possible sites, and negotiate the site and structure for your job shadow.

c. You are expected to make contact with the site supervisor where you intend to do your job shadow. Work with this supervisor to determine the best time to get the most effective observational and participative experience. Do not make plans to complete your job shadow hours during your scheduled courses; the Department of Agricultural Education & Studies does not endorse missing classes to complete AgEdS 211C and will not provide excuse letters.

d. You must complete AgEdS 211C during the semester in which you enroll in this course. Incompletes rarely are given, only for extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Internship Supervisor.

### ***Coursework Expectations***

1. Plan to spend 40 hours at your job shadow site. During your time with the organization, take notes for your written assignments.

2. Download the Site Approval Form on Blackboard. This form contains information regarding the location you have selected for your job shadow, contact information for your site supervisor, your personal contact information, the time frame you have negotiated for completing the job shadow, and your signature. Complete and scan this form, uploading it to the appropriate assignment on Bb. Retain the original form for your records.

3. Complete the written assignments (summarized below) for each day of your job shadow and submit all work via Blackboard. No hardcopy submissions will be accepted. Grading and credit information included on page 6 of this handbook.

4. You are expected to complete **5** reflective observations, one for each day, of your job shadow experience. These narratives should include *both* descriptions of the work environment and activities you encounter, *and* reactions to what you are learning through your experiences at your job shadow site. These papers should be written in professional style- they are not personal journal entries- and should emphasize professionalization, career preparedness, and learning related to agricultural communication. Specific prompts and complete guidelines (including length, etc.) can be found on Blackboard.

5. You are also responsible for having your site supervisor complete a brief evaluation of you, providing you feedback on your participation at the job shadow site. This form is included on page 5 of this handbook, and can also be downloaded on Blackboard. You should discuss your evaluation with your site supervisor and complete the written reflection as assigned. Submit your evaluation and reflection on Blackboard.

### ***Student Responsibilities***

As a student in AgEdS 211C, you begin to assume the role as agribusiness professionals. As such, you are expected to:

- Be on time for your scheduled experience and throughout your scheduled time on site. If you must be absent from your scheduled visit due to illness or other critical reasons, notify your site supervisor.
- Dress professionally and appropriately for the entire period of your job shadow.
- Participate fully at your job shadow site, carrying out responsibilities as they are given to you. These are an opportunity for you to gain valuable experience and learn how to become an effective professional in the agricultural sector.
- Do not tolerate inappropriate behavior from your site supervisor or any other personell at your job shadow site. If you find yourself subjected to any kind of harassment, contact the Department Internship Supervisor immediately. Students will not be penalized if their job shadow has to be interrupted due to inappropriate behavior on the part of someone else. Refer to <http://www.dso.iastate.edu/sexualmisconduct/> for specific actions you can take.
- Be alert and abide by all work site regulations.
- Confidentiality is important. Discussions with other staff, coordinators, customers or clients should always remain confidential.
- Before leaving your work site, express your appreciation to your site supervisor and other individuals who were relevant to your learning experience.

## SITE SUPERVISOR EVALUATION

At the conclusion of your job shadow experience, your site supervisor must complete a brief evaluation of you. It is your responsibility to provide your supervisor with this form, have them complete it and discuss their feedback with you. Along with the form, you must write a brief reflection. Full assignment guidelines are provided on Blackboard.

**AgEdS 211C**  
**Student Evaluation by Site Supervisor**  
**Professional Business Behavior**

Intern's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Site \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of this assessment is to:

- Provide site supervisors a way to evaluate interns' professionalism.
- Allow interns to become more reflective of their business behavior.
- Create an early opportunity for site supervisors and interns to discuss strengths and areas of improvement in order to gauge progress at the end of the internship experience.

**Instructions for Site Supervisor:**

Please rate the intern by placing an "X" in the box that best represents your evaluation of how the student displayed these characteristics during the internship. Please share your ratings with the student intern, documenting areas of strengths and actions that can be taken in areas that need improvement in the space below.

	Excellent	Acceptable	Needs Improvement
Appearance Tidy, neat & clean, well-groomed, dressed suitably for job requirements & work setting			
Skill as presenter Strong speaking voice, few fillers or other distractions, organized, used effective methods & materials			
Manner Showed interest, positive approach to tasks, alert, eager to learn, energetic, appropriate conduct			
Responsibility Took initiative, self-reliant, solved problems, accepted blame if appropriate			
Teamwork Cooperative, helpful, approachable, sociable within business setting, tactful, willing to help out			
Flexibility Adapted to new ideas or changes in plans, looked for alternatives, worked well under pressure			
Administrative duties Exceeded minimum requirements, accurate reports & records w/ few errors, aware of employee hierarchy			
Reliability Few absences, called when unable to come in, punctual in completing tasks, little prompting needed to do assignments			
Job Knowledge Informed about duties, asked questions if unsure, grasped instructions quickly, sought to master all phases of job			
Neatness Orderly work area, took care of property			
Planning & Preparation Assembled materials on time, used time efficiently, asked for help if needed, met deadlines			
Empathy Showed consideration for & interest in others, sensitive to others' feelings			
Response to Supervision Positively accepted & acted on suggestions to improve, follows instructions			
<p><b>Use this space to document areas of strength and needs for improvement.</b></p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <p><b>Improvements and actions to be taken:</b></p>			

## COURSE CREDIT & GRADING

You will be awarded one (1) credit each time you enroll in *AgEdS 211C* and complete the required assignments. *AgEdS 211C* may be repeated in different sites up to three (3) different times, for 1 credit each time.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Early Meeting with AgEdS Internship Director	10
Site Approval Form	15
Reflective Observation Papers (5)	150
Site Supervisor Evaluation and Reflection	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>

Grades in this course are not weighted – all work is assigned a point value, totaling 1000 points. The University grading scale is used in determining final grades:

A= 1000-940 points	C = 760-740
A- = 930-900	C-= 730-700
B+ = 890-870	D+ = 690-670
B= 860-840	D= 660-640
B- = 830-800	D- = 630-600
C+ = 790-770	F= 590 or below