

# Growing Agriculture Student's Professionalism through Experiential Learning

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## INTRODUCTION

Critical career skills are needed in agriculture programs (Crawford & Fink, 2020).

**A student-facilitated professional development seminar to reinforce critical career skills, improve student professionalism, and ensure career readiness** was implemented into an ACOM & AGLE course.

Research Priority 3: Sufficient Scientific and Professional Workforce That Addresses the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Roberts, et al., 2020).

## RESULTS TO DATE

Students worked with peers, grew professional networks, practiced interpersonal skills, & strengthened organizational skills.

*I love this class and I think everyone at the university should have to take this class. It helped me go to the next level professionally. I learned great skills, not ones just to help me pass the class. Very real-world. I have enjoyed this tremendously.*

*During the semester, I improved my professional development, public speaking, writing and leadership skills and professionalism.*

Academic program benefitted from relationships with alumni and supporters.

## FUTURE PLANS

This experiential activity will be integrated into future course offerings with face-to-face & video conferencing seminars.

Topic options updated based on current employer expectations data.

## ADVICE TO OTHERS

Be prepared to support students through the question sessions or appoint a student discussion facilitator.

Teach video conferencing etiquette prior to seminars.

Zoom Meeting HOW IT WORKS — □ ×

View

Two-person teams were tasked with identifying, scheduling, & hosting a seminar speaker to present on a professional topic.

Seminars were in-person or via video conferencing.

Student-facilitated seminars provided practical experience for students following Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning (Kolb, 1984).

1. Instructor facilitated first seminar about professional topics.
2. Students engaged in the concrete experience facilitating seminars.
3. Students reflected on concepts previously covered about professional networking and interpersonal communications.
4. After each seminar, students blogged about their experiences.

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## COSTS/ RESOURCES NEEDED

Minimal costs were incurred.

Stipends & travel expenses

Quality camera, microphone, & video conferencing account

References available upon request.

