



Enhanced Farm Enterprise Planning Course

University of Saskatchewan

Objectives for Innovation

Computer-mediated communication to enhance print-based instruction

Intended Audience

Farmers

Results Achieved

Certificate-credit course in multiple formats for learning at a distance
Computer-mediated communication to facilitate collaborative learning strategies essential for the course
More flexible access for students across the province

Partners

Tri-provincial Farm Business Management Group, Agricultural Institute of Management in Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Rural Service Centres

Implementation

November 1996

Additional Benefits

Potentially available to students in other provinces

This program provides an interactive computer-mediated component for Farm Enterprise Planning (Agriculture 30.8) – a print-based certificate-credit course in agricultural economics offered at a distance as part of the Certificate in Agriculture program (CAP). Using FirstClass software as a platform, students communicate with each other and the instructor through group conferencing and private e-mail facilities on the course site.

Students develop a comprehensive master farm enterprise plan, including an outline of a business organization, a human resources plan, a marketing plan, a production plan and a financial plan for the next five years. Students theoretically introduce changes to the farm operation and examine the effects of the changes on production and finances. They document the long-term economic and environmental sustainability of these plans and defend them before an examining body in oral and written form.

Computer-mediated communication enables students to engage in collaborative learning while developing and applying the business plan – a requirement for the course. It also supports one-on-one consultation with the instructor, and the exchange of business plans and spreadsheets. In addition, farmers with similar operations can support one another in developing their personal farm plans.

Computer-mediated communication helps to overcome the problem of inadequate interaction among students and instructors that typically occurs in print-based courses.

Contact

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