

THE SYLLABUS


A newsletter for Kansas State University Master of Agribusiness students, alumni & friends.



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Jerricka Harrison ('24), Kellen Liebsch ('18), and Rachel Scharplaz ('25) participate in a Real Colors activity during the March 2024 Campus Session.

Alumni Spotlight Kaitlyn O'Neal 2019



by Claire Geiger, MAB Communications Student

For Kaitlyn O'Neal, her passion for agriculture began long before she entered the Master of Agribusiness (MAB) program at K-State.

"I'm a farm kid from South Dakota who knew I belonged in agriculture from a young age," O'Neal said.

After studying agricultural communications and agronomy at Oklahoma State University, O'Neal joined Monsanto's sales trainee program. Over the next 10 months, O'Neal transitioned to a marketing and communications position for Monsanto's wheat seed team where she would stay for the next eight years. However, four years into this position, O'Neal decided it was time to start expanding her responsibilities.

"That's when the K-State MAB program came into my life, and I'm so grateful it did," O'Neal said. "The skills and experience I gained from MAB helped me move upwards and see different parts of the business."

Her MAB thesis topic was suggested by her manager on the Monsanto seed team

"I did an NPV analysis of a different go-to-market strategy

for the wheat seed business I was working on at the time. My manager had been wanting to look into this but didn't have the time to do it himself. Ultimately, it allowed me to understand the current business model better and provide interesting insights to how a future strategy could be successful. Plus, my manager was glad to not do it himself!"

After graduating from the MAB program in 2019, O'Neal

continued to work with Monsanto until 2022, when she transitioned into her current position as a Regional Crop Lead for BASF Nunhems. O'Neal now manages product portfolios in the Americas and Australia/New Zealand for onions, carrots, and processing tomatoes.

"The diversity of these portfolios is vast, and every day I learn something new," O'Neal said. "As someone who thrives on learning new things, this role has been a great challenge for me,

and I know I would've been in over my head without the knowledge I gained through the MAB program."

Through her leadership role at BASF Nunhems, O'Neal has been able to observe some of the broad changes happening

"I did an NPV analysis of a different go-to-market strategy for the wheat seed business I was working on at the time [for my thesis]. My manager had been wanting to look into this but didn't have the time to do it himself. Ultimately, it allowed me to understand the current business model better and provide interesting insights to how a future strategy could be successful."

THESIS DEFENSES



Sam Bormann

Class of 2023

Merck Animal Health Cattle Technology Go-to-Market Strategy



Anastasia Meyer

Class of 2024

150 Years of Kansas & Nebraska Land Values: A Descriptive Analysis



Cortland Worrall

Class of 2023

Surface Water Availability on Corn Production in Weld County, Colorado

Thesis projects can be found at <http://krex.k-state.edu> or by logging into the MAB Community Page on Canvas.

within the produce industry over the past two years.

“Climate change and sustainability may seem overused, but both are real challenges those of us in the industry need to be considering all the time,” O’Neal said. “Retailers and consumers are more invested in sustainability than ever, and we as an ag industry should lean into it. Let’s tell our stories about the great things we are implementing to be more sustainable before someone else tells us how to do it instead.”

For O’Neal, the MAB program provided her with insight and experiences that have allowed her to excel in any agribusiness field.

“The MAB program offered all the same classes an MBA would, but it was tailored to agribusiness,” O’Neal said. “The class examples are tailored for us, the professors understand the intricacies of the businesses we work in, and the classmates are professional peers.”

“The benefits of the MAB program are too numerous to name, but the first few include expanding my knowledge of financials, statistics, and economics; building

connections with other agribusiness professionals, of which I call a few close friends; and last, but certainly not least, improving my expertise of Excel exponentially.”

To those considering applying for the MAB program, O’Neal encourages any agribusiness professional to take the leap.

“The KSU MAB program is made for agribusiness professionals,” O’Neal said. “The knowledge and expertise I walked away with shaped me into the professional I am today.”

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O’Neal (top right) and the MAB Class of 2019

Economic Issues in the Global Animal Health Industry enrolling for Spring 2025

Kansas State University's award-winning Master of Agribusiness program is offering an online course examining of the economics of the animal health and companion animal industry: AGEC 780, Economic Issues in the Global Animal Health Industry. The three-credit, graduate course provides an interactive study of the economics and business challenges and opportunities confronting the animal health and companion animal industry.

"Economic Issues in the Global Animal Health Industry provides students with a fresh and innovative perspective on the animal health industry from a global and a systems perspective. It conceives of the industry to encompass all decision-makers influencing animal health outcomes – manufacturers, pharmacists and compounders, distributors and retailers, regulators, veterinarians, and animal owners," Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu, Professor of Agribusiness Economics and Management, and the course instructor, said.

These issues are important because of the increasing trade in animal and livestock products and the sanitary and health risks they present, the changing regulatory environments as incomes increase around the world, and the increasing number of companies operating in multiple countries under multiple regulatory regimes.

"It is a unique course that comprehensively discusses the economic implications of the social, environmental, regulatory and competition issues confronting the animal health industry. Students get the opportunity to explore the relationships across these issues and leverage them to identify effective responses and discover ways to transform challenges into business opportunities," Amanor-Boadu said.

Guest lectures from professionals in the animal health industry

will provide first-hand perspective and insight into current issues and regulations. Students who complete the course will be able to:

1. Identify and classify the current and emerging issues facing the global animal health industry using economics as the analytical framework;
2. Develop the capacity to move from the subjective to the objective regardless of the issue by focusing on their objectives that make the issues important; and
3. Construct effective strategies from the analyses' results for the purpose of increasing and sustaining the animal health industry's performance.

The course is offered from January-April. It is open to anyone interested in the animal health sector. A bachelor's degree and at least two years of professional experience are required. Students should plan to spend an average of five to seven hours per week on the class. This includes lectures, readings, online recitations and homework. To enroll, contact the MAB office at mab@ksu.edu or 785-532-4495.



Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu

Belmont Estate damaged by Hurricane Beryl

On July 1st, Hurricane Beryl swept across the island of Grenada, leaving widespread destruction in its wake. Belmont Estate (belmontestategrenada.com), a cornerstone of Grenada's agricultural heritage, was significantly impacted by the hurricane. The winds and torrential rains inflicted substantial damage not only to the primary estate but also to their cocoa and nutmeg fields.



"Beryl devastated both the agricultural landscape and the structural integrity of key buildings, including farm infrastructure such as the cocoa drying houses, nurseries, and greenhouses. While our core facilities remained largely intact,

the hurricane wreaked havoc on the estate's vital farming components, resulting in long-term challenges for recovery and productivity," Managing Director and MAB Alumna Shadel Nyack Compton ('07) said.

Under Nyack Compton's leadership Belmont Estate has become one of the top agritourism businesses in the Caribbean. They offer a range of products and services, including organic and fair-trade certified produce, chocolate factory, tours, a restaurant, a goat dairy producing goat's cheese, animals, and a plant nursery.

As Nyack Compton and her staff work through this challenging time, they are committed to restoring the farm, but need help. They have a restoration plan that includes options such as adopting a field, adopting a tree, and purchasing equipment. If you are interested in learning more about or assisting with the Belmont Estate restoration project, please contact Nyack Compton at snbelmontestate@gmail.com.

Students and Alumni

Matt McKamey ('05) was recently awarded the Honorary American FFA Degree at the 97th National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, IN. The nomination came from his volunteer work with the Montana FFA, including the Montana FFA Alumni Leadership Camp for the past 33 years, with the most recent several years as the camp director. The annual camp is a premier high school leadership development experience, primarily for 9th and 10th grade Montana FFA members. Since 2006, he has also served as a co-facilitator for the Montana FFA State Officer Nominating Committee, facilitating the Nominating Committee in their selection of the Montana FFA State Officer team. He is currently the Market President for Opportunity Bank of Montana in Great Falls, MT. Along with his, Cindy, he also operates a wheat farming enterprise in central Montana.

Ryan Dunn ('07) was promoted to Global Commercial Development Portfolio Lead for Petcare Biologicals and Equine at Zoetis.

Young Jung ('07) shared his son, Jay, turned 18 this year and joined the U.S. Air Force. He completed basic training in July followed by technical training. Jay is now serving as Airman First Class in Abilene, Texas.

Sarah Velasquez ('07) took a job at K-State in April as the Communications Consultant for the Johnson Cancer Research Center and Research Assistant Professor for Psychology.

Edward Stephenson ('08) is now working as an Operations Supervisor with Scoular - Goodland Crush.

Meng Tee ('09) is starting a new position as General Manager at Sunshine Horticulture.

Grant Good ('13) married Dava Ray on October 19.

Nathan Perry ('13) and wife, Lauren, welcomed their third baby. Maggie Elizabeth was born in April. Maggie joins Wyatt (5) and Caroline (3).

Lydia (Mtchotsa) Russell ('13) is now a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) and has been promoted to Engineer at Hazen and Sawyer.

Curtis Cretin ('15) started a new job at Pioneer (Corteva) back in May in Johnston, Iowa. His new role is the Agronomy Innovation Marketing

Specialist and he will be working primarily with the Pioneer Agronomy group in marketing Granular Insights, which is their Agronomic software program.

Lindsey Ahlen ('16) has moved back to her family's farm in Eudora, Kansas after working in Sydney, Australia for a rice company and then for the State of California as a Climate Action Fellow. She also recently married Benjamin Duffin on October 5.

Kayla Lichty ('18) and her husband, John, welcomed their fourth child, Huxley Johnathan on March 5.

Ashley (Howlett) Bliss ('20) was selected as a member of the LeadNY Class 20.

Emily (Warriner) Garwood ('20) started a new position as Associate Director of Corporate Engagement at Kansas State University. She and her husband, Michael, recently became foster parents.

Sarah (Niederee) Franklin ('22) started a new role at ADM as a Product Manager, Industrial Starches.

Jon LaPorte ('22) was appointed to serve on the USDA Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. It's a two-year term appointment that started in August.

Stephen Locke ('24) and his wife, Katie, welcomed their daughter, Eleanor.

SAVE THE DATE

November 6

MAB at K-State Professional and Graduate School Fair in Manhattan, KS

November 7

MAB at Chicago Section IFT in Chicago, IL

November 8

MAB at AFA in Kansas City, MO

November 8

Defense ballot and final copy of thesis due to be Fall '24 graduate

November 21

MAB at K-State Swine Day in Manhattan, KS

December 1

Spring MAB/Ag Econ scholarship applications due

December 8

MAB at KFB Annual Meeting in Manhattan, KS

December 13

Fall Commencement at Bramlage Coliseum

January 5-9, 2025

MAB Campus Session in Manhattan, KS

January 11, 2025

MAB at KFB YF&R Conference in Manhattan, KS

January 13-17, 2025

MAB Thesis Session in Manhattan, KS

January 26-29, 2025

MAB at VMX Expo in Orlando, FL

February 4-6, 2025

MAB at NCBA in San Antonio, TX

February 11-13, 2025

MAB at World Ag Expo in Tulare, CA

February 22-25, 2025

MAB at GEAPS in Kansas City, MO

March 2-4, 2025

MAB at Commodity Classic in Denver, CO

March 3, 2025

Last day to complete Graduation Application in KSIS for name to

appear in commencement program

March 7, 2025

MAB at K-State Cattlemen's Day in Manhattan, KS

March 22, 2025

MAB at MANRRS in Chicago, IL

March 24-29, 2025

Manhattan Cohort Campus Session at K-State

April 11, 2025

Examination ballot and final copy of thesis due to be Spring '25 graduate

May 16, 2025

Spring Commencement at Bramlage Coliseum in Manhattan, KS