Design and Development of an Online Course for Careers in the Equine Industry

Crystal Elizabeth Smith
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Neal Shambaugh, Ph.D., Chair
Terence C. Ahern, Ph.D.
Deborah A. Boone, Ph.D.
Karen E. Rambo-Hernandez, Ph.D.
Ugur Kale, Ph.D.

Department of Learning Sciences and Human Development
Morgantown, West Virginia
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ABSTRACT

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The equine industry provides 640,000 jobs annually in the United States. Spending by suppliers and employees generates additional jobs for a total employment impact of 1.4 million full time equivalent (FTE) jobs. Overall, the horse industry directly contributes over $39 billion dollars annually to the US economy (American Horse Council, 2005). Students commonly recognize hands-on careers related to owning, training, and breeding horses, or veterinary medicine. However, fewer realize the diverse opportunities as service providers. Students have little experience searching for equine jobs, writing career specific cover letters, resumes and thank you letters, and practicing interview skills. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact an online Careers in the Equine Industry course has on student achievement of learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. Eleven upper-level equine studies undergraduate students from West Virginia University enrolled in the course and participated in the study during 2015. Data sources included discussion board posts, student assessments, survey feedback from horse industry professions, pre-semester and post-semester social cognitive career theory surveys, and student evaluation of instruction. Students reported the course design was logically sequenced, well-paced, maintained their interest, and provided connectedness with other students similar to a face-to-face course. Students were motivated to interact with peers and complete assignments on time. Student confidence related to earning an attractive salary upon graduation and their intention to pursue internships and undergraduate research related to careers in the equine industry increased as a result of the course.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The equine industry provides 640,000 jobs annually in the United States. Spending by suppliers and employees generates additional jobs for a total employment impact of 1.4 million full time equivalent (FTE) jobs. There are horses in every state, and over 4.6 million people are involved in the equine industry as owners, service providers, employers and volunteers. Overall, the horse industry directly contributes over $39 billion dollars annually to the US economy (American Horse Council, 2005). In addition to the employment opportunities stateside, jobs exist in horse populated countries like Australia, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Dubai and Great Britain.

Students commonly recognize hands-on careers related to owning, training, and breeding horses, or veterinary medicine. However, fewer realize the diverse opportunities as service providers. Service providers include feed and animal health jobs, breed and discipline organizations, retail sales and marketing, and others. Jobs in this segment of the industry tend to be more readily available, higher paying, and have better benefits.

Students have little experience searching for equine jobs, writing career specific cover letters, resumes and thank you letters, and practicing interview skills (P. Comerford, personal communication, Sept. 15, 2013). Students surveyed shared the sentiment with one female, senior-level equine studies student stating, “When I was a freshman I had a complete lack of knowledge in regard to the available jobs in the equine industry. I thought you could be a trainer, manage a boarding facility, or be a veterinarian. Throughout the equine minor I gradually learned that there is a much larger variety of jobs available. I think that a course specifically designed to introduce the variety of jobs available would be extremely helpful. I could have learned about
many more potential careers if there was a course available to me during my undergraduate curriculum” (A. Haugan, personal communication, September 19, 2013).

Land-grant institutions with equine studies programs address career competencies in a variety of methods. Case studies conducted during 2013 at West Virginia University (WVU), Penn State (PSU) and Virginia Tech (VT) showed three different methods in use. At all three universities, career opportunities were the focus of one lecture in the introductory horse production class. At WVU, that lecture referenced the American Horse Council economic impact report cited above and focused on the economic statistics. The lecture mentioned career opportunities but did not discuss the jobs in detail, knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) needed, or the application processes involved. Similar time is devoted to the subject at PSU and VT. VT only addresses career competencies in already existing courses (C. Crisman, personal communication, September 17, 2013). PSU also offers a face-to-face careers course during spring semester. The course invites guest speakers from the animal industry to discuss their careers, their KSAs and opportunities/challenges to their field. This course is not equine specific.

Students lack knowledge about available careers and the skills needed to be marketable. They are unaware of how to complete job searches, write appropriate resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters, and lack interview skills. The equine industry is diverse, large, and competitive and in need of qualified applicants. Proof of this gap in career readiness skills was evidenced in academic advising sessions, curriculum reviews, and during a thorough needs assessment conducted at WVU. To address this need, WVU piloted an online off-campus equine specific summer course in 2012, and revised and offered again in 2014 and 2015.
Research Questions

The ability of equine studies undergraduate students to achieve career success is paramount. Current equine studies curriculum does not specifically address career readiness. Little attention is given in established coursework to increasing students’ awareness about the diverse careers available in the equine industry and the KSAs they need to be marketable. This study evaluated the design and development of an online *Careers in the Equine Industry* course for its impact on student achievement of learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. The research questions are:

RQ1: How does the course impact student achievement of learning outcomes?

RQ2: How does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry?

The course was studied using a design and development process which examines the design, implementation, and evaluation of the course over time. The results of the study can be used to inform future iterations of this course and critically evaluate the course for effectiveness in helping the equine studies students develop career readiness skills.

Description of the Chapters

Chapter 2 describes the state of the equine industry including the size, scope, and careers within it. Also discussed, are the changing face of agriculture and the demographics of agricultural undergraduates, more specifically equine studies students. The call for reform in higher education and how existing equine studies programs address career readiness and can meet the challenges of a changing agricultural world are discussed. In addition, all aspects of the design and development of the online *Careers in the Equine Industry* course over three iterations
are discussed. Lastly, the theory used to explain the course impact on achievement of learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry is discussed.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used to analyze the design and development of the online Careers in the Equine Industry course. The sample, data sources, instruments, data analysis plan, and limitations of the study are described.

Chapter 4 reports the findings of how the design of the course impacted student achievement of learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. Results are organized by data sources that inform the research questions. To inform research question one course assessments, including discussion board posts, draft resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters, autobiography, mock interview, and final application packet were analyzed for descriptive statistics. Discussion board posts were also inductively coded for emergent themes. Surveys completed by horse industry professionals in response to students’ final application packet and student evaluation of instruction were also analyzed for descriptive statistics. To inform research question two pre-semester and post-semester SCCT surveys were analyzed for correlations.

Chapter 5 discusses the conclusions drawn from this study. The significance of the study for making design and development decisions in future iterations of this online course are presented. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research and course redesign strategies are addressed.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The State of the Horse Industry

The equine industry is complex, diverse, and global. Over 4.6 million people are involved in the industry as owners, service providers, employers, and volunteers. Horse industry professionals are employed to support the 9.2 million horses in the United States and their various uses. There are horses in every state. The horse industry contributes a large economic impact for the local, state, and the United States economy. The majority of horses are used for recreation, racing and competition. However, horses are also utilized as therapy animals and crowd control (American Horse Council, 2005).

Students commonly recognize hands-on careers related to owning, training and breeding horses or veterinary medicine. However, few realize the diverse opportunities as service providers. Service providers include feed and animal health jobs, breed and discipline organizations, retail sales and marketing, and others. Jobs in this segment of the industry tend to be more readily available, higher paying, and have better benefits. The horse industry accounts for 1.4 million full time equivalent (FTE) jobs and contributes a direct economic impact of $39 billion. If indirect and induced spending are included, the economic impact reaches $102 billion (American Horse Council, 2005). In the state of West Virginia, the horse industry contributes over $509 million in total industry output. West Virginia employs 12,924 professionals in the equine industry. Recreational and racing are the two largest uses of horses in the state (Hughes et al., 2005). Global opportunities also exist in horse populated areas of the world like Australia, Ireland, Japan, United Arab Emirates, and others.
The horse industry is represented by a collection of individuals, businesses, and organizations that must work together across disciplines, physical distances, and cultural difference to improve the health and wellbeing of horses and the sustainability of the horse industry. Professionals must address issues out of their control, such as economic downturns, disease outbreaks, increasing fuel costs and others that threaten the ability of the horse industry to grow and thrive. Because the horse industry is dynamic, participants must be able to react, adapt and plan ahead. Students face a different set of challenges upon graduation than those in years past. Issues that threaten agriculture also threaten the sustainability of the equine industry. Over the last twenty-five years, there has been a reduction in agricultural land as people migrate away from the cities and develop land once used for farming. Fewer acres available for agriculture results in less pasture for horses, fewer acres to grow hay and grain for feed, and less space available for recreational activities. With fewer acres available for horses, facility owners have to manage manure and other nutrients more intensively than in previous years. Rising fuel prices significantly increase the costs associated with producing feed, hauling supplies to farm stores, and traveling with horses to competition. In addition to being good horsemen, horse owners have to be good stewards of land and sound financial managers. Graduates must be prepared to adapt and solve these complex challenges whether they participate in the industry as horse owners or service providers supporting the industry (Splan, Brooks, Porr, & Broyles, 2011).

Recent surveys indicate college graduates are unprepared for employment (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002). Employers note a lack of hands-on horsemanship skills and transferrable life skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem solving (Fischer, 2013). The Kentucky Thoroughbred Farm Managers Club is one organization that has
taken notice. Their aging workforce is made up of men and women that grew up with horses, had advanced handling skills before arriving in Kentucky, and were able to easily transition into the Thoroughbred world. Farm managers today note students lack the hands-on horsemanship skills, communication skills, and teamwork needed to work in the industry. It was out of this need for marketable candidates that they joined forces with other horse racing organizations to support the Kentucky Equine Management Internship (KEMI) program. KEMI is a six-month immersive internship program that trains students in the handing and management skills needed to work on Thoroughbred breeding, training, and sales farms. Not only do students work on farms to develop horsemanship skills, but they participate in weekly meetings focused on building their ability to network, communicate, and work as a team. KEMI has successfully helped train students for careers in farm management, veterinary medicine, animal health sales and others. Many KEMI graduates stay in Kentucky to work on farms, and others are working in support services in the United States or abroad (L. Janecka, personal communication, May 16, 2013).

The National Cutting Horse Association (NCHA) has similar concerns. Owners and trainers of cutting horses noted a lack of qualified applicants to bring into their aging industry. The executive committee for NCHA met at their annual meeting to discuss strategies to recruit and train students to be assistant trainers. Interest in an internship program similar to KEMI was expressed, but has not been acted on to date. Cutting horse facilities are still struggling to find applicants that have the horsemanship skills and transferrable life skills to be valuable. Recruiting and cultivating a workforce with these abilities is important to the sustainability of the horse industry, and the field of agriculture as a whole.
The Changing Face of Agriculture

Over the last century the demographics of students entering the field of agriculture has changed significantly. Only 5% of the United States population live and work on a farm, with only 20% residing in rural areas. Most undergraduate students come from an urban or suburban setting with little or no experience directly related to agriculture (United States Department of Agriculture, 2005). Most people are so distanced from agriculture that they are unfamiliar with how food and other agricultural products are grown and produced. The American Society of Animal Science, a professional organization for animal science faculty, noted a shift from the early days of a male-dominated instructor and student population to a population with more female students, urban students, interest in a wide variety of animals, and greatly diversified career goals (Buchanan, 2008). Fewer students plan on returning to family farms, since many of them do not hail from these types of operations. More are planning to pursue graduate or veterinary education and careers in industry, although they have a lack of understanding about what those jobs entail. The agricultural industry is aging. As “baby boomers” reach retirement age, there are fewer qualified young people looking to fill those roles. Volatile markets, shrinking profit margins, and long hours are pushing many young people towards jobs in sales and marketing of agricultural products and away from production. Animal production is a twenty-four hour a day, seven days a week job. Animals require water, feed, and basic care every day. Hands-on production jobs are lifestyle careers, and not well suited for candidates that desire an eight-hour work day and the ability to leave work at an office. Sales and marketing jobs allow more flexibility.

The agricultural industries are changing as well. Agriculture is a global entity, with complex logistics, operations, and cultural differences. The growing world population is putting
increased pressure on the global food and fuel supply. Additionally, increasing incomes in the developing world are creating a greater demand for animal products. Animals are utilized not only for food, but as sources of recreation and competition. These animals are bred, raised, trained, and marketed for the conformation, movement, and ability. Raising livestock, whether food animals like cattle or competitive animals like horses, require specific skillsets. Universities must adapt and meet the needs of the changing agricultural world and produce the next generation of agriculturists by developing these skillsets (Buchanan, 2008).

As the number of people involved in agriculture decreases, so does the number of undergraduate students with an agricultural background and skillset. The University of Florida conducted a three-year study of introductory animal science students \((n = 788)\). The survey asked questions regarding their experience, background, species and disciplinary interest, and career goals in animal agriculture. The study revealed similar statistics to those noted for agriculture as a whole. Only 4% of students were raised on a farm or ranch where the majority of family income was attributed to production agriculture. Eighty-six percent of students had minimal or no experience with large domestic farm animals. Interestingly, students with agricultural experience expressed interest in management careers while those with little to no experience expressed interest in animal behavior careers or large animal veterinary medicine. Both career paths require the practical application of animal handling and management skills often assumed as general knowledge (Reiling, Marshall, Brendemuhl, McQuagge, & Umphrey, 2003).

Similar demographics are found in equine studies undergraduates. A recent study conducted by the National Association of Equine Affiliated Academics (2013) of incoming freshman equine studies students indicated over 80% \((n = 862)\) were raised in a suburban or urban setting. Half of the students surveyed did not own or lease a horse. The same proportion
have never worked in a hands-on horse related job. Survey data on students in the West Virginia University equine studies program are similar. Students are from suburban backgrounds, and of those students that own horses, the majority of them are boarded at a farm that provides basic care for their horses. Very few students are providing routine daily care for their animals. Students need to fill the gap in horsemanship skills and farm management skills left by their agricultural unfamiliarity in order to be competitive, marketable candidates for careers in the horse industry (Splan, Porr, & Broyles, 2011). Lastly, they need to possess the transferable life skills and career readiness skills required to seek out careers after graduation.

A Call for Reform

For over twenty years, leaders in higher education, business, industry and government agencies have met to discuss the challenges of educating the next generation of agricultural undergraduates. As a result of these discussions, the National Research Council (2009) released a series of recommendations for universities to transform agricultural education for the changing world.

Recommendation 1: Academic institutions offering undergraduate education in agriculture should engage in strategic planning to determine how they can best recruit, retain, and prepare the agriculture graduate of today and tomorrow.

Recommendation two: faculty in colleges of agriculture should work with colleagues throughout the institution to develop and teach joint introductory courses that serve multiple populations. Agriculture faculty should work with colleagues to incorporate agricultural issues across all disciplines.

Recommendation three: Academic institutions should broaden the undergraduate student experience so that it will integrate (1) numerous opportunities to develop a variety of
transferable skills, including communication, teamwork, and management; (2) the opportunity to participate in undergraduate research; (3) the opportunity to participate in outreach and extension; (4) the opportunity to participate in internships and other programs that provide experiences beyond the institution; and (5) exposure to international perspectives, including targeted learning-abroad programs and international perspectives in existing courses.

Recommendation four: Ongoing professional development opportunities should exist for faculty. Universities should support institutional, local, regional, and national activities that will improve faculty members teaching abilities, collaboration, outreach, and research activities.

Recommendation five: Recognition and appreciation of exemplary teaching efforts should be noted. Oftentimes, research activities are regarded as more important in a university setting. However, teaching must be recognized for faculty to put more time and effort into teaching undergraduates well.

Recommendation six: Academic institutions teaching agriculture should enhance connections with each other to support and develop new opportunities and student pathways. In particular, four-year colleges and universities should further develop their connections with community colleges and with 1890 and 1994 land-grant institutions. In addition, four-year institutions should work with other institutions to establish and support joint programs and courses relevant to agriculture and develop pathways for students pursuing agricultural careers.
Recommendation seven: Universities should extend their outreach efforts to include elementary and secondary school students to create opportunities to educate young people about agriculture.

Recommendation eight: Partnerships with industry stakeholders should be developed to enhance the communication and coordination of the education of agricultural students.

Recommendation nine: Universities conducting reviews of curriculum incorporate the recommendations of this report into their evaluation.

The nine recommendations focused on altering faculty views of teaching, support for educators, and other administrative changes. However, recommendations three, six, and eight align with the approach the WVU Equine Studies program is taking to develop horsemanship skills, transferrable life skills, and career readiness skills to produce marketable candidates for the horse industry. Recommendation three focused on delivering student-centered, authentic learning experiences that promote personal and professional growth. The importance of developing transferrable life skills and the addition of problem-based learning and critical thinking skills to curriculum were central to the discussion (Estepp & Roberts, 2011).

Recommendation six expressed a need for four-year institutions to work with other institutions to establish and support joint programs and courses relevant to agriculture and develop pathways for students pursuing agricultural careers. Lastly, recommendation eight encouraged the development of partnerships with industry stakeholders to enhance the communication and coordination of the education of agricultural students. The design and development of the online Careers in the Equine Industry course provides student-centered learning experience focused on developing transferrable, career readiness skills in a format that can be delivered across institutional boundaries and in collaboration with industry stakeholders.
Course Instructional Design and Development Over Three Iterations

How has the content been taught before? Land-grant institutions with equine studies programs address career competencies in a variety of methods. Case studies conducted in 2013 at West Virginia University (WVU), Penn State (PSU) and Virginia Tech (VT) show three different methods currently in use. At all three universities, career opportunities were the focus of one lecture in the introductory horse production class. At WVU, that lecture referenced the American Horse Council Economic Impact report cited above and focused on the economic statistics. The lecture mentioned career opportunities but did not discuss those jobs in detail, knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed, or the application processes involved. Similar time is devoted to the subject at PSU and VT. VT only addresses career competencies in already existing courses (C. Crisman, personal communication, September 17, 2013). PSU also offers a face-to-face careers class during spring semester. The course invites guest speakers from the animal industry to discuss their careers, their KSAs and opportunities/challenges to their field. This course is not equine specific. WVU piloted an online off-campus summer course in 2012, revised and offered again in 2014, and revised and offered the final iteration in 2015.

Face-to-face courses are limited by the availability of individuals that could travel to campus to serve as guest lecturers. The use of instructional technology allows students to network and learn from professionals across the globe. The courses conducted at WVU utilized Wimba/Collaborate chats to eliminate geographical barriers. Equine guest speakers from Kentucky, Texas, Pennsylvania and Virginia were recruited for the course. The content of the course was not limited by the online setting; it offered instructional opportunities that cannot be accommodated in a face-to-face setting. With online delivery, an additional opportunity exists to open the course to non-WVU students. Students from other institutions could participate on an
Extended Learning Guest Pass. This could benefit colleagues at other institutions that do not have time to develop and implement a similar course (C. Crisman, personal communication, September 17, 2013).

Interviews of junior and senior level equine studies students at WVU conducted as part of a needs assessment revealed characteristics desired in an ideal *Careers in the Equine Industry* instructor. Student comments included knowledgeable of the field, enthusiastic, and actual work experience in the industry. A senior Animal & Nutritional Sciences student commented, “I would expect them to provide timely feedback and have a positive attitude. I would personally prefer someone who has more knowledge on the industry then being strictly academic” (M. Lloyd, personal communication, September 19, 2013). Another equine studies student concurred, “The more active and engaged a professor is in the field that they are teaching about shows through and resonates the most with students. A professor that has hands on knowledge and experience (particularly current or recent) outside of the classroom will be most helpful to mentoring students on the ways to pursue a career in the equine industry” (A. Haugan, personal communication, September 16, 2013). In addition to the desired instructor skills identified by students, the researcher should provide honest, timely, constructive feedback, and display a passionate attitude regarding the importance of employment after graduation.

The 2012 and 2014 WVU courses were conducted in an 8-week format. WVU has since moved to six or twelve week formats for most summer courses. The 2015 offering was expanded to fit the 12-week model. The sequencing and pacing of course activities, synchronous chats, and assessments was spread out over a longer summer session to allow ample time for rich instructor feedback on draft products and revisions by the students. Numerous design elements of the course changed. Content was presented utilizing voice over and equine specific examples of
application materials were utilized. Weekly course discussions and student evaluation of instruction (SEI) questions were related to student achievement of learning outcomes. Finally, mock interviews were recorded so students could reflect on their presentation of self.

**Who were the learners?** Learners in this project were mostly junior and senior level equine studies students. At this stage of their academic career, students have a working knowledge of the horse, including care, feeding, and management. Proficiency in handling and riding will prohibit or allow students to pursue hands-on management careers. If they are lacking this skillset or do not enjoy the hands-on nature of that work, they should focus more on jobs related to support services. Students should be open-minded, critical thinkers that utilize the course to analyze their fitness to work in certain segments of the equine industry and identify gaps in KSAs they need to fill to be marketable.

In the 2012 and 2014 iterations of this course, students had very diverse backgrounds and work experience in the horse industry. Some had valuable work experiences that translated to marketable skills for employment; others lacked work experience related to their field of study. Some students showed consistent engagement in extracurricular opportunities that increased their knowledge and leadership skills in the horse industry; others had none. Even for those students lacking depth of experiences there was value, as part of the process is identifying gaps in KSAs that are needed to be marketable and remedying them before graduation.

The design and development of the 2015 course provided opportunities for rich feedback that lead to significant improvements in application materials by the end of the semester. Students recognized their lack of knowledge regarding resume, cover letter, and thank you letter writing and worked hard to improve these assessment pieces. New to the course in 2015 were recorded mock interviews. Previously, students completed mock interviews and were provided
oral feedback from the instructor immediately following within Skype. During 2015 students received written feedback with accompanying recorded Collaborate video. The goal was for students to see and hear how they came across to potential interviewers as reflected in the written feedback.

Students differed in their level of engagement in discussion boards and synchronous chats. The majority of students provided rich responses and ask thoughtful questions as guided in the rubric. Some required more prompts from the instructor to engage in meaningful discussion. Writing thought provoking prompts on student motivation became especially important since this was the first offering that collected that data.

**What was the instructional context?** On campus, there are a variety of resources available to assist with online course design and development. WVU Academic Innovation assisted with troubleshooting issues that arose during the design and development of the course. WVU Office of Information Technology provided eCampus support related to accessibility. The WVU Career Services Center provided information on writing cover letters, resumes, thank you letters, and interview skills. These references were revised to include discipline specific information for the equine industry.

The greatest resource was the network of equine professionals from across the country that served as guest lecturers during the course. The horse industry is diverse, so having professionals from each segment of the industry allowed the instructor to highlight the scope of the industry. During the pilot project (2012), the instructor tapped an Extension Agent from Virginia Cooperative Extension (government/academic careers), a Marketing Representative from AQHA (breed/discipline careers), a Retail Sales Representative from Ariat International (sales/marketing careers), and a Finance Manager from Three Chimney’s Farm (farm
management careers). Students gained first-hand accounts of the daily work required, the KSAs required to be marketable, the opportunities and challenges faced, and other advice from the equine industry professionals. SEIs administered at the end of the pilot study indicated a positive change in knowledge in these areas at the completion of the course. In 2014, the instructor utilized the same professionals to represent careers in extension, sales, and breed/disciplines, but used a Farm Operations Manager from Flaxman Holdings LLC to represent farm management careers. In the 2015 offering, the instructor changed the farm management representative again and utilized a recent WVU graduate that has found success as a broodmare manager at a large-scale Thoroughbred breeding farm.

The major constraint on the students and instructor is time management. Students and instructors managed the pace and timing of submitting assignments and providing feedback, respectively. Many students provided poor draft versions of their written materials that required significant instructor revision time. Setting clear deadlines helped in the pilot version. Some students also wrote poor discussion board responses. The instructor altered the rubrics for these assignments to reward quality work over simple completion.

eCampus was utilized to deliver the course. The first two offerings only utilized text, photos and web links to present content. Voice-over presentation materials were used during 2015 to provide additional auditory and visual inputs, and incorporate new multimedia.

Collaborate was utilized within eCampus to delivery synchronous chats. Collaborate can be challenging for students without a good high speed connection. The call-in method works well, but students lose the option of typing questions in the chat box. Similarly, presenters lose the ability of advancing their own slides. There is some anxiety for guest lecturers and students in using Collaborate for the first time. A mock Collaborate chat was conducted prior to the
synchronous classes to address any technology issues, practice chat functions, and ease student and speaker concerns.

During the 2015 offering the instructor provided samples of application materials from actual equine studies students at various stages of their careers. Sample resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters were provided from equine studies students from previous semesters with the author’s permission. All identifying information was eliminated before they were shared. The samples provided students with examples of the format, content, and depth required from students at different stages of their academic careers and for various types of jobs. The goal was that this would help students translate the generic guidelines offered by career services into the meaningful content employers in this industry are seeking.

Recorded mock interviews were conducted at the end of the semester to prepare them to apply for the job posting targeted by their application materials. A rubric for the mock interview was developed and used to provide written feedback. Students were able to view their recorded interview in Collaborate and compare their recording to the written feedback in an effort to improve their interview skills.

Lastly, it was imperative that appropriate prompts for student motivation questions were provided. The wrong prompt will result in superficial responses such as “to get a good grade.” The instructor wanted to know how the design of the course impacted student learning and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. The instructor needed thoughtful discussion on these topics to gather the qualitative data needed to describe the experiences of these students.

**What was the instructional sequence?** Throughout the course, students learned about the diverse career opportunities that exist in the equine industry and the KSAs they need to be
marketable in the field. Students developed skills in performing job searches, writing cover letters, resumes, thank you letters, and interviewing. Lastly, students networked with professionals in the field. The full syllabus is included in Appendix A.

**What was the assessment plan?** A variety of assessment pieces were utilized throughout the course to evaluate student learning and intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. All assessments had an accompanying rubric by which students were evaluated. Both formative and summative assessments were utilized to ensure the course met learning and research objectives.

**Formative assessment.** The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. A variety of formative assessments were utilized throughout the course.

The six required discussion board posts paced throughout the semester monitored student learning related to course content and course design. Discussion board prompts were written to engage students in thoughtful discussion with their peers, creating a community of learners. All six discussion board posts gathered qualitative data related to learning objectives. Two of the six discussion board posts gathered qualitative data related to the course design. Student responses provided data to identify issues with clarity of instruction, answer student questions, and gauge student learning. Upon completion of the discussion board posts for that week, data was gathered and inductively coded for emerging themes related to learning of course content and course design. Unclear content or design issues were corrected using another media source or supported with additional readings. Discussion board prompts that yielded limited information were revised and asked again the following week, with subsequent discussion board prompts also being revised. The discussion board rubric is included in Appendix B.
Students participated in four synchronous chats with equine industry professionals throughout the semester. The professionals represented four diverse segments of the equine industry. Students were required to ask at least one thoughtful question of the professionals during the chat. This provided opportunities for students to network with equine industry professionals, and for the instructor to gauge student learning.

The draft versions of students’ resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters also provided opportunities for formative assessment throughout the course. Draft submissions allowed the instructor to evaluate students’ application of course content and provide rich feedback to guide student revisions. The draft resume, draft cover letter, and draft thank you letter rubrics are included as Appendix C, D, and E respectively.

**Summative assessment.** The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. A variety of summative assessments were utilized throughout the course.

The autobiography assessment required students to critically evaluate their own background, educational and work experiences, personality traits, and suitability for careers in the equine industry. Students had to synthesize, self-reflect, and apply what they learned to their own context to complete this assessment. The autobiography rubric is included as Appendix F.

The mock interview assessment required students to research, organize, and orally present themselves to a potential employer. The interview was based on the internship/job posting they selected to produce their written application materials. The instructor served as the potential employer and asked interview questions appropriate for the segment of the industry selected by the student. The mock interview was recorded, so students could review their
performance and compare it to the written feedback they received at completion of the assignment. The mock interview rubric is included as Appendix G.

The final application packet required students to revise draft resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters based on instructor feedback. The goal of the final submission is to be career ready; ready for submission to an actual potential employer and of the appropriate quality to land a job. The final application packet rubric is included as Appendix H.

Finally, SEIs were utilized to assess course design and development. In addition to the standard questions required by the Provost’s Office, the instructor generated open-ended questions to collect student perceptions of the impact the course design and development had on student motivation and overall learning.

Assessment tools. The two design tools were used to assist with assessments included the assignment drop box and rubrics.

The assignment drop box was a newly incorporated design element to the course. Students were instructed to name and submit assignments under a specific nomenclature (i.e. Smith_ResumeDraft). The assignment populated in the instructor’s assignment drop box with a timestamp. The instructor could make revisions to the paper in the assignment drop box, or download, revise, and upload for the student in another format as needed. All grading conducted in the assignment drop box automatically populated in the grade book. This tool placed accountability on the student, and provided ease of grading and providing feedback for the instructor.

Rubrics were utilized to grade discussion board posts and assignments. Students had access to all course rubrics at the beginning of the semester. If they had questions about the assignments, they could ask the instructor for clarification at any time by course email or during
a synchronous chat. Rubrics provided details about the format, content, and depth required to earn maximum point values. Rubrics for each assignment are provided in the appendices.

**What were the design challenges for the instructor?** Time management is a significant challenge to online instruction. A significant amount of time was spent providing feedback. The instructor paid particular attention to pacing of assignments in the design process. For example, the instructor strategically placed the due date for the draft resume before a holiday break since this assignment required significant instructor effort.

**What were the design challenges for the student?** Time management is a significant challenge to the students enrolled in online instruction. The sequencing and pacing of the course require that student adhere to deadlines, keep up with assignments, and participate in all learning activities. It required planning on their part. Deadlines were organized in this course in a consistent fashion. For example, chats were always held on Wednesday evening from 7-8pm. Due dates for all assignments fell on Saturday at midnight. The consistency helped students stay organized and meet deadlines.

Collaborate usability can also be an issue for students without a reliable high speed internet connection. A mock Collaborate chat was scheduled for the entire class the week prior to the synchronous chats with equine industry professionals. This mock chat allowed everyone to test set up and try out the Collaborate functions. If students had a specific issue with Collaborate that could not be addressed, they could use the call in option during the synchronous chats.

New this semester was the inclusion of recorded mock interviews. Students needed a laptop with an enabled webcam to be seen during the mock interview. This function was tested early during the mock Collaborate chat. Students without an enabled webcam were required to purchase one cheaply for the course. Those students living in Morgantown for the summer could
also sign out webcam enabled laptops from the Evansdale Library. The library’s laptops must stay in the building, but students could utilize one of the reading rooms for the mock interview.

**What were the major course redesign elements?** Numerous revisions to the course design were made from the pilot version to this year’s offering. The instructor used a much more critical approach than had been utilized in years past. The instructional model that embodies the design and development approach was the Systems Approach Model for Designing Instruction (Dick, Carey, & Carey, 2005). The Dick and Carey model (see Figure 1) provides a systematic approach to instructional design. It takes learner profiles and instructional environment into consideration, and provides opportunities for formative and summative evaluation to refine course design and development. The instructor conducted a thorough needs assessment, identified learning objectives, designed learning assessments, strategies, and materials based on those learning outcomes, and developed means of conducting formative and summative assessments. The needs assessment drove the rest of the design process. The researcher draws parallels between the value of the needs assessment to that of a literature review. Just as the literature review guided the research, the needs assessment guided the instructional design. Responses to SEIs and interviews of students provided valuable feedback to inform design choices.
Researchers often form mental models that construct meaning for them (Magliaro & Shambaugh, 2006). In the mental model for this study, input from key stakeholders (students, equine faculty, equine industry professionals) was important to needs assessment. Learner profiles and learning environment guided the development of learning objectives, assessments, rubrics, and content delivery. Formative evaluation throughout the course allowed the researcher to continuously revise instruction. And lastly, summative evaluation allowed for the revision of the course for another iteration.

Applying Gagne’s nine events of instruction to the design of learning activities also proved valuable. The nine events are gaining attention (reception), informing learners of objectives (expectancy), stimulating recall of prior learning (retrieval), presenting the stimulus (selective perception), providing learning guidance (semantic encoding), eliciting performance (responding), providing feedback (reinforcement), assessing performance (retrieval), and enhancing retention and transfer (generalization). Gagne’s nine events of instruction were applied to the design and delivery of course content, assessments, and feedback for each weekly
learning module, and over the course of the entire semester. Scaffolding was particularly important in this design. The design and delivery of course content was sequenced and paced so KSAs were continuously built throughout the semester. Content was delivered in manageable chunks to avoid cognitive overload of the student. And finally, the assessment pieces were submitted, revised, and resubmitted giving students opportunities for guided practice and retention of new KSAs. The nine events of instruction provided a framework for an effective learning process. The events provided a checklist of key elements considered during the design process (Gagne, Briggs, & Wager, 1988).

Overall, the instructional design of this course was more firmly grounded in theory and practice than previous iterations. The 2012 pilot study design was driven by learning activities that could be used to teach specific objectives. The 2014 course offering placed higher emphasis on assessments. The final iteration of the course in 2015 was grounded in learning theory. A thorough needs analysis was conducted. Content was designed and delivered with learner preferences in mind. And assessments were specifically designed to collect data on student achievement of learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry.

**Social Cognitive Career Theory**

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) is a framework that attempts to explain how individuals exercise personal agency for the career development process, and those factors that enhance or negate their agency. The framework looks at the central, dynamic processes through which academic and career interests develop, career-related choices are made, and performance outcomes are achieved. Both academic and career interests are included in the model, as interests and skillsets developed in school ideally translate into career selections. The framework is designed to explain the self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals of young adults about to
enter the job market. It is based on three interlocking models: 1) interest development, 2) choice development, and 3) performance (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). During the literature review process, SCCT emerged as a theory that could be used to explain and predict undergraduate student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry.

The first variable in SCCT, self-efficacy, receives the most attention in social cognitive theory. Bandura’s social cognitive theory refers to self-efficacy as a person’s judgement of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain the desired performance (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy is thought to determine choices in activities and environments that a person will participate in, as well as the effort, persistence, thought patterns, and emotional reactions when presented with obstacles. In fact, self-efficacy has been found to be predictive of academic performance and career-related choice and performance indicators (Betz & Hackett, 1981). Achievement is often thought to be the combination of skills and a strong sense of self-efficacy to deploy one’s resources effectively (Bandura, 1991). Self-efficacy is one’s response to the question, “can I do this?”

The second variable of importance in SCCT is outcome expectations. Outcome expectations are personal beliefs about probable outcomes. In other words, “if I do this, what will happen?” Outcome expectations explain the subjective probability that certain actions will yield particular outcomes and takes into consideration the value one places on those outcomes. In situations where quality of performance guarantees outcomes, self-efficacy is seen as a predominant factor and as a partial determinant of outcome expectations. When outcomes are only loosely tied to quality of performance, outcomes expectations make an independent contribution (Bandura, 1989). This is of note because academic and career environments
sometime produce only weak linkages between quality of performance and outcomes. Additionally, one’s personal beliefs and limitations impact outcomes.

The final variable in SCCT is goals. Goals play an active role in the self-regulation of human behavior. By setting goals, people organize and guide their behavior, sustain it over long periods of time, and increase the likelihood that the desired outcome will be achieved. Academic plans, career plans, aspirations, and choices are all goal mechanisms that motivate behavior. Career goals that are non-specific and lack commitment are daydreams. Career goals that are accompanied by choices, plans, and specific decisions and pursued with commitment are true career goals (Lent et al., 1994).

One of the three interlocking models within SCCT is the Performance Model (Figure 2). This model is often seen as useful in explaining achievement relative to goals that are self-selected. The model is concerned with the level or quality of students’ accomplishments, as well as their commitment to career-related pursuits (Smith, 2002). There is a connection between past performance, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals in determining performance outcomes. The model is concerned with performance goals which refers to the level of attainment one aspires to within a chosen domain (Lent & Brown, 1996). SCCT acknowledges genetic endowment, special abilities, and environmental conditions will influence one’s career decisions. Additionally, learning experiences will guide a person’s career development. Self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and a person’s interest impact goal achievement and all are influenced by the student’s motivation to pursue those goals (Lent et al., 1994). Several studies have provided support for the theory’s ability to predict math and science academic interests, choices, and performance of undergraduate students. However, until now SCCT has not been extended to the study of agricultural, or more specifically, equine studies undergraduates. In the
context of this study, how does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry?

Figure 2. Social Cognitive Career Theory Performance Model
Chapter 3

Method

Research Design

Design and development research was conducted on three iterations (2012, 2014, and 2015) of an online Careers in the Equine Industry course. From the first to the third iteration the instructional design of this course became more firmly grounded in theory and practice than previous iterations. The pilot study design was driven by learning activities that could be used to teach specific objectives, while the 2014 offering placed higher emphasis on assessments. The final iteration of the course was grounded in learning theory, a thorough needs analysis was conducted, and content was designed and delivered with learner preferences in mind.

Assessments were specifically designed to collect data on student achievement of learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. The study focused specifically on the third iteration of AVS 372: Careers in the Equine Industry. This course is offered as a free elective in the Equine Studies minor or Animal & Nutritional Sciences major curriculum at West Virginia University. The course was offered previously in 2012 and 2014, and redesigned and developed to include data collection procedures for the 2015 offering.

The purpose of the design and development study was to evaluate how course design impacts student achievement of learning outcomes and intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. The research questions included: 1) How does the course impact student achievement of learning outcomes? and 2) How does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry? The Careers in the Equine Industry course has four specific learning outcomes: 1) identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry, 2) demonstrate the appropriate job search tools and application processes for careers in the equine
industry, 3) demonstrate professional resume, cover letter and thank you letter writing, and 4) demonstrate positive interview skills. The SCCT performance model was chosen to evaluate research question two because students had already expressed interest in careers in equine studies through enrollment in this optional course and/or enrollment in the equine studies minor. A mixed-methods approach was used to study how the design and development of the course impacted student achievement of course learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry.

Participants

Participants in the study were upper level equine studies undergraduate students in the 2015 Careers in the Equine Industry course. Student demographics in the Careers in the Equine Industry course modeled what has been seen across the WVU and other equine studies programs. Nine of the eleven students were female (82%) with only two male students enrolling in the course. All students were white or European American in descent. Fifty-four percent of the students were Animal & Nutritional Sciences majors, 27% were Agribusiness Management & Rural Development, with only one student coming from another major program of study. Eight of the eleven students (73%) were enrolled in the equine studies minor. Of those enrolled in the equine studies minor, the majority (55%) were taking courses with an emphasis in equine management. The students were all upperclassmen. Eight of the eleven students were seniors (73%) and three students were juniors (27%).

Students in the course should have working knowledge of the horse, including care, feeding, and management. They should be open-minded, critical thinkers that will utilize the course to analyze their fitness to work in certain segments of the equine industry and identify gaps in KSAs they need to fill to be marketable. All students that enrolled in the course had the
opportunity to opt-in to the study at the beginning of the semester. Data collection methods were embedded in the course assessments, discussion boards, and SEIs. Study participants did not have to perform additional work. The only incentive to participate in the research was the opportunity to have final application packets assessed for career readiness by an equine industry professional. The incentive provided participants with specific feedback and comments from potential employers they could use to improve their marketability before graduation. All eleven students enrolled in the course chose to opt-in to the research (see Appendix I). The West Virginia University Institutional Review Board approved this study (see Appendix J).

Data Collection

Data sources included embedded discussion board posts, student assessments, survey feedback from horse industry professionals on cover letters, resumes, and student marketability, a pre- and post-semester SCCT survey assessment, and student evaluation of instruction (SEI).

Discussion boards. The six required discussion board posts paced throughout the semester monitored student learning related to course content and design. Discussion board prompts were written to engage students in thoughtful discussion with their peers, creating a community of learners. All six discussion board posts gathered qualitative data related to learning outcomes. Two of the six discussion board posts gathered qualitative data related to the course design. The discussion board prompts specific to weeks six and nine are included (see Appendix K). Data was coded inductively. The codes emerged broadly and then were categorized into discrete themes related to the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A detailed memo recorded researcher reactions. Qualitative data was also member checked by the participants. Responses provided data to identify issues with clarity of instruction, answer student questions, and gauge student learning. Unclear content or design issues were corrected
using another media source or supported with additional readings. No discussion board prompts were revised or reposted; all clearly elicited responses from the participants.

**Student assessments.** Students participated in four synchronous chats with equine industry professionals throughout the semester. The professionals represented four diverse segments of the equine industry. Students were required to ask at least one thoughtful questions of the professionals during the chat. This provided opportunities for students to network with equine industry professionals, and for the instructor to gauge student learning.

Draft versions of students’ resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters provided opportunities for formative assessment throughout the course. Draft submissions allowed the instructor to evaluate students’ application of course content and provide rich feedback to guide student revisions. Students and the instructor revised and provided additional feedback as many times as needed throughout the semester. Most students received one to three revisions from the instructor to get from the draft to final version of their application materials.

The autobiography assessment required students to critically evaluate their own background, educational and work experiences, personality traits, and suitability for careers in the equine industry. Students had to synthesize, self-reflect, and apply what they had learned to their own context to complete this assessment.

The mock interview assessment required students to research, organize, and orally present themselves to a potential employer. The interview was based on the internship/job posting they selected to produce their written application materials. The instructor served as the potential employer and asked interview questions appropriate for the segment of the industry selected by the student. The mock interview was recorded, so students could review their
performance and compare it to the written feedback they received at completion of the assignment.

The final application packet required students to revise draft resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters based on instructor feedback. The final submission should be career ready; ready for submission to an actual potential employer and of the appropriate quality to land a job.

**Horse Industry Professional survey.** Final versions of students’ resumes and cover letters were reviewed by selected horse industry professionals that are hiring managers in the equine industry. If available, the actual hiring managers for internship and full-time positions were utilized. If they were unavailable, a horse industry professional hiring for similar internships and jobs in the industry was selected. The horse industry professionals received a copy of the students resume and cover letter, and an email link to a Qualtrics® survey asking them to rate how likely the resume or cover letter would be to “get noticed,” “land an interview,” or “land a position” with their company. The survey used a Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The horse industry professionals were asked to provide open-ended comments to help the student improve their resumes, cover letters, or overall marketability before graduation. The horse industry professional survey questions are included (see Appendix L).

**Pre-semester and post-semester SCCT assessments.** At the beginning of the semester students completed an online Qualtrics® survey to assess measures of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals as identified in the performance model of the SCCT framework. Students completed the same survey at the end of the course to compare pre-test and post-test measures related to SCCT. Reliability at post-test was acceptable with Cronbach’s alpha equal to .97 for self-efficacy, .93 for outcome expectations related to the minor, .95 for outcome expectations
related to the course, and .81 for goals. Across all measures the reliability is exemplary (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991). The pre-semester and post-semester SCCT survey is included (see Appendix M).

SEIs. SEIs were utilized to assess course design and development. In addition to the standard questions required by the Provost’s Office, the instructor generated open-ended questions to collect student perceptions of the impact the course design and development had on achievement of learning outcomes. Data was inductively coded and emergent themes were identified related to the research questions. A detailed memo recorded researcher reactions. Qualitative data was member checked by the participants. Data collected from assessments, discussion boards, and SEIs were triangulated.

Plan of Analysis

Research question one is informed by data collected from students and horse industry professionals. To describe the course impact on student achievement of learning outcomes assessment pieces embedded in the course were analyzed in a variety of ways. Discussion board posts from weeks two, three, five, six, eight, and nine were analyzed for descriptive statistics inductively coded for emergent themes. Other student assessments including synchronous chats, draft resumes, cover letter, and thank you letters, autobiography, mock interview, and the final application packet were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Responses from the horse industry professional survey collected in response to students’ final application packets were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Lastly, SEI data collected at the end of the semester from students was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inductively coded for emergent themes.

Social Cognitive Career Theory data sources informed research question two. Pre-semester and post-semester SCCT survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and
composite mean scores were calculated for each construct. A Pearson’s correlation was also conducted to assess relationships among the SCCT constructs at pre-semester, at post-semester, and from pre-to-post semester. Significance was set \textit{a priori} at \( p < .05 \). Table 1 summarizes the data sources and analysis used to inform each research question.

\textbf{Positionality}

My relationship to the research makes me uniquely qualified to assess the course impact on student learning and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry, and also provides areas for potential bias. I serve as both the instructor and researcher. Interviews of junior and senior level equine studies students at WVU revealed characteristics desired in an ideal \textit{Careers in the Equine Industry} instructor. Student comments included knowledgeable of the field, enthusiastic, and actual work experience in the industry. I have worked in a variety of segments of the equine industry; farm management, training, breeding, extension, and higher education. In addition to the desired instructor skills identified by students, I would add providing honest, timely, constructive feedback, and a passionate attitude regarding the importance of employment after graduation. My teaching philosophy extends outside the classroom. The effectiveness of equine studies programs should be evaluated on their ability for graduates to perform successfully in careers in the industry. I possess the characteristics identified and can provide the expertise required to help students achieve the desired learning outcomes. The intimate knowledge I share for the subject matter and my educational experience in instructional design and technology allow me to critically evaluate the impact of the course design on learning outcomes.
My role as instructor and researcher also creates areas for potential bias. Students may have been less likely to report limitations of the course design in discussion board posts. Qualitative data collected utilizing the discussion board posts are not anonymous; some students may have been less likely to give honest feedback. Discussion board posts were evaluated based on quality of response using an established rubric to remedy this concern. I reminded them to...
speak freely and provide specific examples to support their comments. Student evaluation of instruction data is anonymous and I had little concern for the integrity of those responses. As the researcher, I maintained a memo recording my thoughts, process, and codes that drove my analysis of the data. I also allowed students to member check their responses at the mid-semester and end of the semester qualitative data collection points. Quantitative data on overall learning was objectively assessed using rubrics, Likert-type scales, descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, and Pearson’s correlation.

Limitations

Limitations of the study include participant selection, data analysis, and the positionality of the instructor as the researcher. Participants in the study were self-selected. The Careers in the Equine Industry course is an elective course in the equine studies program. Students that enrolled in this course chose to enroll as it is not a required course. It is foreseeable that students that self-selected into the course may already be motivated to pursue the course content and achieve the desired learning outcomes.

The course evolved over three iterations. Each iteration provided feedback that resulted in changes in design of the course. This limited our ability to collect and analyze the same data on all three iterations because the instructional context of the course evolved. Refer to the Literature Review for a detailed description of how the course design and development changed over the three iterations. This study focused on data collected and analyzed on the third iteration only. With a small sample size of eleven, the results of this research are generalizable only to the students in this course.

My positionality as instructor and researcher also limits the study. A detailed memo was kept when coding and analyzing the data to check for bias. Member checks were conducted by
the students to validate the data collected. Triangulation of data was conducted to validate data, eliminate bias, and increase the credibility of the results.

**Epistemology Summary**

My epistemology is interpretive. My goal was to describe, understand, and interpret how knowledge was generated. A mixed methods design was used to collect and analyze data. Data collected allowed me to interpret how the design of the course impacted achievement of learning outcomes and student motivation. My research was context bound; namely, the context was the online *Careers in the Equine Industry* course. The results of the research will be utilized to improve future iterations of the course and evaluate the course for effectiveness.
Chapter 4

Results

Data was collected and analyzed on the 2015 offering of the Careers in the Equine Industry course to answer two research questions: 1) How does the course impact student achievement of learning outcomes? and 2) How does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry?

The results section is organized by assessment pieces that together will collectively answer the two research questions and will be discussed in chapter five. Discussion boards, student assessments, horse industry professional surveys, and SEI data will answer research question one: how does the course impact student achievement of learning outcomes? Social Cognitive Career Theory data will answer research question two: how does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry?

Participant Summary

The majority of students in the course were white (100%, n = 11), females (81%, n = 9). This is representative of equine studies undergraduate programs as a whole. Participants were upperclassmen; three juniors (27%) and eight seniors (73%) completed the course. Of those students, six (55%) were Animal & Nutritional Sciences majors, three (27%) were Agribusiness Management & Rural Development majors, one (9%) was a multidisciplinary studies major, and one (9%) indicated they were in an “other” major. This also is indicative of the majors represented in our equine studies program. Participants were also asked to indicate whether they were currently enrolled in the equine studies minor. Six (55%) of the students were pursuing the minor with an emphasis in equine management, one (9%) was pursuing the minor with an emphasis in equine science, one (9%) was pursuing the minor with an emphasis in equine
assisted activities and therapies, and three (27%) indicated “other.” It is important to note that students that indicated “other” may be pursuing an unrelated minor or no minor at all. Although participants in the study are indicative of what we see across the equine studies program at West Virginia University and beyond, care should be taken in generalizing these results. Only eleven students were enrolled in the course and participated in the research resulting in a small sample and underpowered statistics. Therefore, the results of this study can only be generalized to the study participants.

Research Question 1 Data Analysis

Discussion boards. Students completed six required discussion board posts throughout the semester. For full credit students needed to respond to the initial post, plus provide two responses to two different classmates’ posts per the rubric provided in eCampus (see Appendix B). Discussion boards were completed during weeks two, three, five, six, eight, and nine. All discussion board posts helped answer research question one: How does the course impact student achievement of learning outcomes?

The week two discussion board asked three critical questions about students’ social media use. Were students aware how companies used social media to screen applicants? What did their social media presence say about them as an applicant? And, what steps might they take to improve their personal brand as a result of the activity? The week two learning activities and discussion board assessment were designed to meet learning objective two, demonstrate the appropriate job search tools and application processes for careers in the equine industry. Eighty-two percent (n = 9) of students earned a 90-100% or A, one student (9%) earned a 50-59% or F, and one student (9%) earned a 40-49% or F on the week two discussion board. The average score was an 8.91/10 with a standard deviation of 2.11. In their discussion board posts, students
commented on their lack of awareness about the screening of social media by potential employers. Students understood it was being conducted, but did not fully appreciate how their Facebook, Twitter, and other social media use could affect them. Students commented that they would “take immediate action” to “clean my page” and “delete inappropriate pictures and tweets.” Students gained an appreciation of how their suitability for a career and image would impact if a company would interview or hire them.

The week three discussion board asked questions about how their personality type impacted their suitability for specific careers. What was their personality type? What did their type indicate about them? What types of careers in the equine industry did they feel they were best suited for? Did that match the results of their Myers-Briggs personality test? The week three learning activities and discussion board assessment were designed to meet learning objective one, identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry. Eighty-two percent ($n = 9$) of students earned a 90-100% or A, one student (9%) earned an 80-89% or B and one student (9%) did not complete the assignment earned a 0-9% or F on the week three discussion board. The average score was an 8.91/10 with a standard deviation of 2.11. Students generally agreed with the results of their personality tests. They had a good understanding of how their personality might influence their suitability for certain careers. One female, junior level, equine studies student commented, “I think this describes me very well. I consider myself to be moderately empathetic to people as well as their animals, which is why I think being a veterinarian is a great career choice for me.” Another male, junior-level equine studies student related his recent job shadow experience to the results of his personality test, “I found the test to be funny because being in the ring working with the judges as a ring steward was really exciting for me . . . This field requires a lot of understanding of detail and being efficient. ‘Get it done and
ship ‘em out’ comes to mind when I read the career choices for my personality type.” Overall, students did a good job reflecting on their personality traits and their perceived fitness for a specific career.

The week five discussion board asked students about their suitability for careers in extension. Did they feel they were well suited for a career in extension? Why or why not? The week five learning activities and discussion board assessment were designed to meet learning objective one, identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry. Seventy-three percent \((n = 8)\) of students earned a 90-100\% or A, two students (18\%) earned a 50-59\% or F, and one student (9\%) did not complete the assignment and earned a 0-9\% or F on the week five discussion board. The average score was an 8.18/10 with a standard deviation of 3.21. At the completion of the assignment students understood that careers in extension required they have a broad background in agriculture, the drive to help people solve problems, and the job combines animals, people, and education. Few students thought they were suitable for a career in extension. They cited reasons such as they were “uninterested in a job covering all aspects of agriculture,” “feared grant writing and soliciting funds,” and were “worried about low pay.” Their understanding of the challenges and limitations to a career in extension was valid. These were points drove home by the presenter.

The week six discussion board asked students about their suitability for careers in sales. Did they feel they were well suited for a careers in sales? Why or why not? The week six learning activities and discussion board assessment were designed to meet learning objective one, identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry. Ninety-one percent \((n = 10)\) of students earned a 90-100\% or A, and one student (9\%) did not complete the assignment and earned a 0-9\% or F on the week six discussion board. The average score was a 9.09/10 with
a standard deviation of 2.87. Some students were interested in a career in sales. They cited that the field seemed “challenging and rewarding” and that they would like “helping the customer find a product they can enjoy.” Those uninterested in the field found travel and balancing work and home life to be “daunting.”

The week six discussion board also asked questions related to impact of the course design on student achievement of learning outcomes. This was an opportunity for formative assessment at the mid-way point in the semester. Students were asked to “reflect back on the format of the course so far. Is there anything about the format and learning activities you’ve engaged in during the course that have been beneficial to exploring your career opportunities?” Students commented consistently about the appropriateness of the sequencing and pacing of the course. Students commented that “the deadlines and assignments are not hard to follow and complete,” “it allows me to work the class into my schedule,” and “the pace has been perfect. I love that there is something due every week but there is a little extra time between bigger assignments. I think my skills are developing each week!” They also spoke positively about the connectedness of the course. A female, senior level student’s comment reflected those of the others in the class, “The format allows me to feel connected to the other students, almost like I’m in a classroom, because of the level of discussion we are required to participate in.” Another female, senior-level equine studies student stated, “I have never taken a course where I got to know my peers as well as this course. It feels like a course on campus.”

The week eight discussion board asked students about their suitability for careers in farm management. Did they feel they were well suited to a hands-on career in farm management? Why or why not? The week eight learning activities and discussion board assessment were designed to meet learning objective one, identify the diverse job opportunities available in the
equine industry. Eighty-two percent ($n = 9$) of students earned a 90-100% or A, one student (9%) earned an 80-89% or B, and one student (9%) earned a 50-59% or F on the week eight discussion board. The average score was a 9.36/10 with a standard deviation of 1.49. The majority of students were interested in careers in farm management due to the “hands-on” nature of the job. It is the career path that offers the most actual hands-on time with horses rather than working in a supporting role. Students noted “organizational and time management” skills as being important. They also recognized that “word of mouth” and “reputation” is the best marketing tool and can also be the biggest detriment to having a career in farm management. Students recognized the need to “set outside of your comfort zone” to advance in this segment of the industry.

The week nine discussion board asked students about their achievement of learning outcomes. How have they improved their personal brand on social media this semester? Did they feel they are portraying a more hirable candidate if someone were to screen them? Would they see that you are a dedicated horse person, are bright and have promise? Have they identified a career path that rises to the top? What are they going to do to set themselves up to land that dream career upon graduation? Looking back on the semester was there anything about the sequence, pacing, and design of the course that helped them progress throughout the weekly lessons, complete assignments, or impacted their overall learning? The week nine learning activities and discussion board assessment were designed to meet learning objectives one, identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry, and two, demonstrate the appropriate job search tools and application processes for careers in the equine industry, respectively. Eighty-two percent ($n = 9$) of students earned a 90-100% or A, one student (9%) earned an 80-89% or B, and one student (9%) earned a 50-59% or F on the week nine discussion board. The average score was a 9.36/10 with a standard deviation of 1.49. All the students in the
course made positive changes to their social media use by the end of the semester. Students comments included, “I cleaned up my Facebook posts,” “updated by profile to show work related experience,” and “began posting articles relevant to a career in the horse industry.” Students also identified career paths that they plan to pursue and ruled out others.

The week nine discussion board also asked questions related to the impact of the course design on student achievement of learning outcomes. This was an opportunity for summative assessment at the conclusion of the course. Most significant to the design and development of the course were student comments regarding the sequence, pacing, and design of the course and how the course impacted student motivation. Students commented, the course “has a flow that made sense,” “consistent deadlines helped me stay on track,” and “I was comfortable with the time allotted for each assignment and the amount of material covered each week.” Students also overwhelmingly liked the ability to revise and resubmit assignments. Student feedback included, “I loved how we were allowed to edit our drafts before and after submission in order to understand our errors and receive maximum points in the course” and “it has really helped me learn how to prepare good application materials.”

**Student assessments.** Students participated in four synchronous chats with equine industry professionals throughout the semester. Students were required to ask at least one thoughtful question of the professionals during the chat. Students that attended the synchronous chat and asked at least one thoughtful question received full credit, student that attended only received half-credit, and students that did not attend received a zero for the assignment. The synchronous chat assessment was designed to meet learning objective one, identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry. Seventy-three percent (n = 8) of students received full credit, 18% (n = 2) of student received partial credit, and one (9%) student received
a zero for the first synchronous chat. One hundred percent \((n = 11)\) of students received full credit on the second synchronous chat. Ninety-one percent \((n = 10)\) of students received full credit and one student \((9\%)\) received half-credit for the third synchronous chat. And 100% \((n = 11)\) of students received full credit on the fourth and final synchronous chat of the semester.

Draft versions of students’ resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters were revised and graded throughout the course. The draft resume, cover letter, and thank you letter assessments were designed to meet learning objective three, demonstrate professional resume, cover letter, and thank you letter writing. Most students completed between one and three revisions between initial submissions of drafts to grading of those products. The majority of students \((n = 8, 82\%)\) earned a 90-100% or A on their draft resumes. Two students \((18\%)\) earned an 80-89% or B. The average score on that assignment was a 48.18/50 with a standard deviation of 3.86. Scores on the draft cover letters and thank you letters were the same. Ninety-one percent \((n = 10)\) of students earned a 90-100% or A on these assignments. One student \((9\%)\) earned a 50-59% or F. The average score on the assignments was a 46.82/50 with a standard deviation of 7.16. This student failed to revise the draft cover letter and resume and did not submit their final application packet at the end of the course.

The autobiography assignment required students critically evaluate their own background, educational and work experiences, personality traits, and suitability for careers in the equine industry. The autobiography assessment was designed to meet learning objective one, identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry. Eighty-two percent \((n = 9)\) of students earned a 90-100% or A on the assignment, one \((9\%)\) earned an 80-89% or B, and one \((9\%)\) earned a 60-69% or an F. The average score on the autobiography assignment was a 92.55/100 with a standard deviation of 9.36.
The mock interview assignment required students research, organize, and orally present themselves to a potential employer. The mock interview assessment was designed to meet learning objective four, demonstrate positive interview skills. All eleven students received a 90-100 or A on this assignment. The average score was a 97.27/100 with a standard deviation of 2.00.

Lastly, the final application packet required students to revise and submit their final resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters based on instructor feedback. The final application packet should have been career ready; ready for submission to an actual potential employer and of appropriate quality to receive a job offer. The final application packet assessment was designed to meet learning objective three, demonstrate professional resume, cover letter, and thank you letter writing. Ninety-one percent (n = 10) of students earned a 90-100% or A, and one student (9%) did not submit the assignment.

**Horse Industry Professional survey.** Final versions of students’ resumes and cover letters were reviewed by horse industry professionals in the segment of the industry related to their application materials. The horse industry professional survey was collected to assess a portion of learning outcome three, demonstrate professional resume and cover letter writing. Horse industry professionals completed an online Qualtrics® survey and rated the resumes and cover letters respective ability to get noticed, yield an interview, and land an internship or job with their company. The survey used a Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). It is important to note that one student did not turn in their final application packet on time, and missed the opportunity to have their materials reviewed by a horse industry professional. Therefore, the sample size for the Qualtrics® survey is ten.
Horse industry professionals indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that six (60%) of the resumes would get noticed if they came across their desk. They were unsure about three (30%) of the resumes and disagreed in one case (10%) that the resumes would get noticed. They indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that five (50%) of the resumes would yield an interview with their company and that they were unsure about the other half of the resumes reviewed. Similar results were found for the resumes’ ability to land an internship/job with their company (see Table 3). Results were similar for cover letters. Horse industry professionals indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that eight (80%) of the cover letters would get noticed if they came across their desk. They were unsure about one (10%) and disagreed in one case (10%) that the cover letters would get noticed. They indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that six (60%) of the cover letters would yield an interview with their company. They were unsure if four (40%) of the cover letters would yield an interview with their company. Lastly, they indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that four (40%) of the cover letters would land an internship/job with their company. They were unsure about five (50%) and disagreed in one case (10%) that the cover letters would land an internship/job with their company (see Table 2).
Table 2

*Feedback on Resumes and Cover Letters from Horse Industry Professionals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This resume would get noticed if it came across your desk</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This resume would yield an interview with your business, company, or organization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This resume would land an internship/job with your business, company, or organization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This cover letter would get noticed if it came across your desk</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This cover letter would yield an interview with your business, company, or organization</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This cover letter would land an internship</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students also benefited from the comments horse industry professionals provided on their application materials. Comments included specific formatting and content suggestions for their resumes and cover letters. Comments were extremely positive and mostly included suggestions for key words and phrases that would best highlight an applicant’s abilities, and reminders to use targeted educational and work experiences for specific job postings. Feedback from a horse
industry professional abroad suggested stateside applicants include their country code and time difference along with their telephone number. The bulk of the feedback was related to the skillsets the candidates possessed, or lacked and needed to gain before applying for the position. Students received copies of the feedback at the conclusion of the study and were appreciative of the level of feedback provided by the horse industry professionals. Most of the students made immediate improvements to their application materials and began planning ways to improve their skillsets.

**SEIs.** Students completed an online SEI at the end of the semester to provide feedback on the course, instruction, and overall learning. Students rated the course design and implementation on a five point Likert-type scale from 1 (rarely) to 5 (always). Respondents indicated the course format, pace, and connectivity was always appropriate (100%, n = 7). Students indicated the course frequently or always kept their interest (100%, n = 7). Comments related to course design included “the class was organized and easy to follow; there was appropriate time in between assignments” and “the ability to resubmit assignments so that I could improve was fantastic.” Lastly, students rated the effectiveness of instruction, course rating, and overall learning on a five point Likert-type scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Comments related to instruction included “the coursework was just right for the credit hours and was presented in an easy to understand rubric” and “I was able to maintain interest in the course throughout the entire semester despite it being an online course.” One comment in particular captured the sentiment shared by many in regards to the course value, “I would recommend this to anyone in the Davis College, even if they aren't in the equine minor or interested in working in the equine industry, simply because it gets you ready for the job search after college.” On all constructs, students rated the instruction, course, and overall learning as excellent (100%, n = 7) (see Appendix N).
Research Question 2 Data Analysis

Pre-semester and post-semester SCCT survey results informed research question two: How does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry?

Relationships among and between composite mean scores from pre-semester to post-semester for SCCT constructs self-efficacy, outcome expectations related to the minor, outcome expectations related to the course, and goals were evaluated.

**Pre-semester and post-semester SCCT assessments.** At the beginning of the semester students completed an online Qualtrics® survey to assess measures of self-efficacy, outcome expectations related to the minor and to the course, and goals as identified in the performance model of the SCCT framework. The same survey was completed at the end of the semester (see Appendix M). Distribution of students’ responses on these measures were calculated and composite mean scores were calculated to compare pre-semester and post-semester results. One student dropped the course the first week of summer class, therefore the pre-semester \( n = 12 \) and the post-semester \( n = 11 \).

To evaluate self-efficacy students rated their confidence to complete and excel in equine studies courses and the equine studies minor on a scale from 1 (no confidence at all) to 5 (complete confidence). Pre-semester the majority of the students had strong or complete confidence they would complete the rest of your course requirements in the equine studies minor with a B or better (75%, \( n = 9 \)), excel in your equine studies minor over this current semester (75%, \( n = 9 \)), excel in your equine studies minor over the next two semesters (75%, \( n = 9 \)), and complete the upper level course requirements in the minor with a B or better (75%, \( n = 9 \)). Twenty-five percent of the time (\( n = 3 \)) students had moderate confidence in their abilities with the exception of the question about their performance the current semester. On that particular
item one student (8%) had little confidence and the remaining two students (17%) had moderate confidence. Post-semester 91% (n = 10) of the students had strong or complete confidence in their abilities on these same constructs. Only one student (9%) had moderate confidence on these constructs (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Pre-Semester and Post-Semester Self-Efficacy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Confidence At All</th>
<th>Little Confidence</th>
<th>Moderate Confidence</th>
<th>Strong Confidence</th>
<th>Complete Confidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Semester: How much confidence do you have in your ability to …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete the rest of course requirements for equine studies minor with grades of B or better</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excel in equine studies minor over this current semester</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excel in equine studies minor over the next two semesters</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete upper level required courses in equine studies minor with an overall G.P.A. of B or better</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (continued)

*Pre-Semester and Post-Semester Self-Efficacy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Confidence At All</th>
<th>Little Confidence</th>
<th>Moderate Confidence</th>
<th>Strong Confidence</th>
<th>Complete Confidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Semester: How much confidence do you have in your ability to …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete the rest of course requirements for equine studies minor with grades of B or better</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excel in equine studies minor over this current semester</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excel in equine studies minor over the next two semesters</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete the upper level required courses in equine studies minor with an overall G.P.A. of B or better</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To evaluate outcome expectations students rated their level of agreement with statements related to the equine studies minor on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Results related to outcomes expectations were not as linear as self-efficacy. Pre-semester the majority of the students believed that graduating with the equine studies minor would allow them to receive a good job offer (83%, $n = 10$) while two students were unsure (17%). Only five students (42%, $n = 5$) agreed or strongly agreed graduating with the minor would allow them to earn an attractive salary offer, five (42%) were unsure, and two students (17%) disagreed. Ten
students (84%) agreed or strongly agreed graduating with the minor would allow them to get respect from other people, one (8%) was unsure, and one (8%) disagreed. The majority of students (83%, \( n = 11 \)) agreed or strongly agreed graduating with the minor would allow them to do work that they find satisfying while only one (8%) student was unsure. Lastly, ten (83%) of the students agreed or strongly agreed that graduating with the minor would allow them to do exciting work while one (8%) student was unsure. Post-semester the students shifted their level of agreement slightly on these constructs. The majority of students (82%, \( n = 9 \)) agreed or strongly agreed that graduating with the minor would allow them to receive a good job offer and two (12%) students were unsure. Sixty-three percent (\( n = 7 \)) agreed or strongly agreed that graduating with the minor would allow them to earn an attractive salary and four (37%) students were unsure. Ninety-one percent (\( n = 10 \)) agreed or strongly agreed that graduating with the minor would allow them to get respect from other people while one (9%) student was unsure. The same results were found related to their agreement that graduating with the minor would allow them to do work they find satisfying and to do exciting work (see Table 4).
Table 4

**Pre-Semester and Post-Semester Outcome Expectations for the Minor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Semester: Graduating with a minor in equine studies will likely allow me to …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receive a good job offer</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>2 16.67</td>
<td>8 66.67</td>
<td>2 16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earn an attractive salary</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>2 16.67</td>
<td>5 41.67</td>
<td>4 33.33</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get respect from other people</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>9 75.00</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do work that I would find satisfying</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>5 41.67</td>
<td>6 50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do exciting work</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>2 16.67</td>
<td>4 33.33</td>
<td>6 50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Semester: Graduating with a minor in equine studies will likely allow me to …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receive a good job offer</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>2 18.18</td>
<td>4 36.36</td>
<td>5 45.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earn an attractive salary</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>4 36.36</td>
<td>5 45.45</td>
<td>2 18.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get respect from other people</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 9.09</td>
<td>5 45.45</td>
<td>5 45.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do work that I would find satisfying</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 9.09</td>
<td>3 27.27</td>
<td>7 63.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do exciting work</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 9.09</td>
<td>4 36.36</td>
<td>6 54.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To evaluate outcome expectations, students rated their level of agreement with statements related to the *Careers in the Equine Industry* course on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Pre-semester all students agreed or strongly agreed that if they work harder in the *Careers in the Equine Industry* (course) they would receive a better grade. The majority of students also agreed that if they worked harder in the course they would do better in future equine classes (83%, $n = 11$) while two (17%) students were unsure. Ninety-two percent of
students \((n = 11)\) agreed or strongly agreed if they participated in the course they would earn a better grade, if they participated in the course they would understand the material better, if I attend the course I will do better on assignments, and if I complete my homework assignments I will do better on assessments. One \((8\%)\) student was unsure on these constructs. Only two pre-semester constructs showed division among the students. Fifty-eight percent \((n = 7)\) of students agreed or strongly agreed that if they studied with their classmates they would earn a better grade while five \((42\%)\) students were unsure. Lastly, only 67\% \((n = 8)\) of students agreed or strongly agreed that if they studied with their classmates they would understand the material better while four \((33\%)\) students were unsure. Students responded similarly at post-test. Ninety-one percent of students \((n = 10)\) agreed of strongly agreed that that if they worked harder in the course they would do better in future equine classes, if they participated in the course they would earn a better grade, if they participated in the course they would understand the material better, if I attend the course I will do better on assignments, and if I complete my homework assignments I will do better on assessments. One \((9\%)\) student was unsure on all constructs. Similarly, seventy-two percent \((n = 8)\) of students agreed or strongly agreed that if they studied with their classmates they would earn a better grade and that if they studied with their classmates they would understand the material better. Three \((27\%)\) were unsure on both constructs (see Table 5).
### Table 5

**Pre-Semester and Post-Semester Outcome Expectations for the Course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Semester: If I …</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>work harder I will earn better grades</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>4 33.33</td>
<td>8 66.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work harder I will do better in future equine classes</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>2 16.67</td>
<td>3 25.00</td>
<td>7 58.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participate in class I will earn a better grade</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>3 25.00</td>
<td>8 66.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participate in class I will understand the material better</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>10 83.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>study with classmates, I will earn a better grade</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>5 41.67</td>
<td>5 41.67</td>
<td>2 16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>study with classmates, I will understand the material better</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>4 33.33</td>
<td>5 41.67</td>
<td>3 25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attend class I do better on assignments</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>4 33.33</td>
<td>7 58.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete my homework assignments, I will do better on the assessments</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>0 0.00</td>
<td>1 8.33</td>
<td>2 16.67</td>
<td>9 75.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 (continued)

*Pre-Semester and Post-Semester Outcome Expectations for the Course*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work harder, I will earn better grades</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work harder in Careers in class I will do better in future equine classes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in class, I will earn a better grade</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in class, I will understand the material better</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study with classmates, I will earn a better grade</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study with classmates, I will understand the material better</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend class I do better on assignments</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete my homework assignments I will do better on the assessments</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To evaluate goals students rated their level of agreement with statements related to completing the equine studies program on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The majority of students agreed or strongly agreed that they intended to minor in the equine field (83%, n = 10), they planned to remain enrolled in the equine studies minor over the next semester (83%, n = 10), they think earning an equine studies minor is a realistic goal (92%, n = 11), and they are fully committed to getting their equine minor (83%, n = 10). Only 50% (n = 6) of students agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for internships in the equine industry, 33% (n = 4) were unsure, and 17% (n = 2) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, 50% (n = 6) of students agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for undergraduate research opportunities with equine professors, 25% (n = 3) were unsure, and 25% (n = 3) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The majority of students disagreed or strongly disagreed they were considering switching to another minor (92%, n = 11) and one student was unsure (8%). Post-semester results were similar for the first four constructs. Eighty-two percent of students (n = 9) agreed or strongly agreed that they intended to minor in the equine field, they planned to remain enrolled in the equine studies minor over the next semester, they think earning an equine studies minor is a realistic goal, and they are fully committed to getting their equine minor. The students’ intent to look for equine internships increased from pre-test to post-test. At the completion of the course, 73% (n = 8) of students agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for internships in the equine industry and three (27%) students were unsure. Similarly, 64% (n = 7) agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for undergraduate research opportunities with equine professors and four (36%) students were unsure. Lastly, 91% (n = 10) of students disagreed or strongly disagreed they were considering switching to another minor and one (9%) student was unsure (see Table 6).
Table 6

*Pre-Semester and Post-Semester Goals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Semester: I ...</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intend to minor in the equine field</td>
<td>N 0 %</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 2</td>
<td>N 8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plan to remain enrolled in the equine studies minor over the next semester</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 0 %</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 2</td>
<td>N 8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think that earning an equine studies minor is a realistic goal for me</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 0 %</td>
<td>N 0 %</td>
<td>N 3</td>
<td>N 8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>am fully committed to getting my equine studies minor</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 0 %</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 2</td>
<td>N 8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plan to look for internships in the equine industry</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 4 %</td>
<td>N 2</td>
<td>N 4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plan to look for undergraduate research opportunities with equine professors</td>
<td>N 2 %</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 3 %</td>
<td>N 3</td>
<td>N 3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>am considering switching to another minor</td>
<td>N 8 %</td>
<td>N 3 %</td>
<td>N 1 %</td>
<td>N 0</td>
<td>N 0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 (continued)

*Pre-Semester and Post-Semester Goals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Semester: I ...</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intend to minor in the equine field</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>2  18.18</td>
<td>7  63.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plan to remain enrolled in the equine studies minor over the next semester</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>2  18.18</td>
<td>7  63.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think that earning an equine studies minor is a realistic goal for me</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>2  18.18</td>
<td>7  63.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am fully committed to getting my equine studies minor</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>2  18.18</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>2  18.18</td>
<td>7  63.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I plan to look for internships in the equine industry</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>3  27.27</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>7  63.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I plan to look for undergraduate research opportunities with equine professors</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>4  36.36</td>
<td>4  36.36</td>
<td>3  27.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am considering switching to another minor</td>
<td>7  63.64</td>
<td>3  27.27</td>
<td>1  9.09</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
<td>0  0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Composite mean scores were calculated for self-efficacy pre-semester and post-semester, outcome expectations related to the minor pre-semester and post-semester, outcome expectations related to the class pre-semester and post-semester, and goals pre-semester and post-semester. The composite mean score for self-efficacy pre-semester was 4.33 (SD = .88, n = 12) and post-semester was 4.54 (SD = .65, n = 11). The composite mean score for outcome expectations related to the minor pre-semester was 3.98 (SD = .58, n = 12) and post-semester was 4.29 (SD = .63, n = 11). The composite mean score for outcome expectations related to the course pre-semester was 4.40 (SD = .535, n = 12) and post-semester was 4.53 (SD = .620, n = 11). The composite mean score for goals pre-semester was 3.69 (SD = .88, n = 12) and post-semester was 3.81 (SD = .75, n = 11) (see Table 7). Reliability was exemplary with Cronbach’s alpha equal to .96 for self-efficacy, .89 for outcome expectations related to the minor, .93 for outcome expectations related to the course, and .84 for goals (Robinson et al., 1991).

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composite Mean Scores for SCCT Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre Self Efficacy</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Self Efficacy</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Outcome Expectations Related to Minor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Outcome Expectations Related to Minor</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Outcome Expectations Related to Class</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Outcome Expectations Related to Class</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Goals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Goals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p ≤ .05
Relationships among SCCT constructs self-efficacy, outcome expectations related to the minor, outcome expectations related to the course, and goals were evaluated at pre-semester and post-semester. Pearson’s correlation was computed to assess the relationship among variables. Pre-semester there was a substantial, positive correlation between self-efficacy and outcome expectations related to the minor, $r = .66, n = 12, p = .02$. Pre-semester there was also a substantial, positive correlation between outcome expectations related to the course and goals, $r = .61, n = 12, p = .03$. Pre-semester there were no other significant relationships. Post-semester there were a variety of statistically significant relationships among SCCT constructs. Post-semester there was a substantial, positive correlation between self-efficacy and outcome expectations related to the course, $r = .63, n = 11, p = .03$. Post-semester there was a very strong, positive correlation between outcome expectations related to the minor and outcome expectations related to the course, $r = .73, n = 11, p = .01$. Post-semester there was a very strong, positive correlation between outcome expectations related to the minor and goals, $r = .83, n = 11, p = .00$. Lastly, there was a very strong, positive correlation between outcome expectations related to the course and goals, $r = .713, n = 11, p = .01$ (Davis, 1971) (see Table 8).

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.63*</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Expectations Related to the Minor</td>
<td>.66*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.73*</td>
<td>.83*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Expectations Related to the Course</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.71*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.61*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Correlations post-semester are presented above the diagonal ($n = 11$), and correlations pre-semester are presented below the diagonal ($n = 12$). *$p \leq .05$
Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter summarizes the findings addressing the two research questions: 1) how does the course impact student achievement of learning outcomes, and 2) how does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry? The study findings will be organized by research questions. Suggestions for practice, limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research will also be discussed within the context of the course.

Overview of the Study

Design and development research was conducted on three iterations of an online *Careers in the Equine Industry* course. From the first to the third iteration, the instructional design of the course became more firmly grounded in theory and practice. The pilot study design was driven by learning activities that were used to teach specific objectives. The 2014 offering placed higher emphasis on assessments. The final iteration of the course was grounded in learning theory. A thorough needs analysis was conducted. Content was designed and delivered with learner preferences in mind. Assessments were specifically designed to collect data on student achievement of learning outcomes and student motivation. The findings are focused on data collected during the third iteration of *AVS 372: Careers in the Equine Industry*. This course is offered as a free elective in the equine studies minor or Animal & Nutritional Sciences major curriculum at West Virginia University.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate how the course design impacted student achievement of learning outcomes and student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry. A mixed-methods approach was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data from students and horse industry professionals to inform the research questions. Discussion board posts,
student assessments, horse industry professional surveys, and SEI data were analyzed for descriptive statistics to answer research question one. Discussion board posts were also inductively coded for emergent themes to answer research question one. Pre-semester and post-semester SCCT surveys were analyzed for descriptive statistics and Pearson’s correlation to answer research question two.

Participants in the study were upper level undergraduate students enrolled in the *Careers in the Equine Industry* course. The majority of students were also enrolled in the equine studies minor. All students in the course had the opportunity to opt-in to the study at the beginning of the semester. All data collected from the students was embedded within course discussion boards, assessments, and SEIs. Study participants did not have to perform additional work to participate in the research. The only incentive offered to students was the opportunity to have their final application packets assessed for career readiness by an equine industry professional. The incentive provided participants with specific feedback and comments from potential employers that they could use to improve their application materials and overall marketability before graduation. All twelve students that enrolled in the course chose to opt-in to the research. One student did not complete all required assignments and SEIs.

**Summary of Findings**

**Research question 1.** How does the course impact student achievement of learning outcomes? The four learning outcomes for *Careers in the Equine Industry* are to: 1) identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry, 2) demonstrate the appropriate job search tools and application processes for careers in the equine industry, 3) demonstrate professional resume, cover letter and thank you letter writing, and 4) demonstrate positive interview skills. Research question one was answered utilizing discussion boards, student
assessments, horse industry professional surveys, and SEI data (see Table 9).

Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Design Elements Designed to Evaluate Achievement of Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Course Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Identify diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry. | course content  
synchronous chats  
discussion board weeks 3, 5, 6, 8, 9  
autobiography  
SEIs |
| 2. Demonstrate appropriate job search tools and application processes for careers in the equine industry. | course content  
discussion board weeks 2, 9  
SEIs |
| 3. Demonstrate professional resume, cover letter, and thank you letter writing. | course content  
draft resume  
draft cover letter  
draft thank you letter  
final application packet  
horse industry professional surveys  
SEIs |
| 4. Demonstrate positive interview skills. | course content  
mock interview  
SEIs |

**Discussion boards.** Students completed six required discussion board posts throughout the semester. Students gained insight into how employers screen social media use and identified immediate action steps they needed to take to “clean up their page” and “delete inappropriate pictures and Tweets.” At the completion of the course students had taken action. Students commented they “cleaned up Facebook posts” and “began posting articles relevant to a career in the horse industry.” In response to Collaborate sessions with horse industry professionals
representing different segments of the horse industry they identified opportunities, challenges, and skillsets they needed to be marketable. Students most notably identified why they would and would not consider themselves suitable for careers in specific sectors of the equine industry. At the completion of the course, students identified segments of the industry they were interested in pursuing and improved their personal brand on social media to increase their marketability. These two actionable steps reflect achievement of learning outcomes one and two, respectively.

During week six, student comments highlighted the appropriateness of the sequence and pace of the course. Students indicated the timing and consistency of deadlines was helpful. Deadlines for learning activities and assessments were consistently Wednesday and Saturday evenings. Students indicated this helped them work the class work into their work schedule. They also spoke positively about the connectedness of the course. The design of the course helped them feel connected to other students as if they were in a classroom. A female, senior-level equine studies student stated, “I have never taken a course where I got to know my peers as well as I did in this course. It feels like a course on campus.”

Similar comments were made about the impact the design had on student achievement of learning outcomes during the week nine discussion board. Students again commented on the sequence, pace, and design of the course. Students indicated the flow of the course was logical, the consistency of deadlines helped them stay on track, and they were comfortable with the time allotted for assignments. The course design helped students participate in synchronous chats, discussion boards, and complete assignments on time (see Table 10).
Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Design</th>
<th>Course Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion board week six</td>
<td>logical sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pace appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consistent deadlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>time between deadlines appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>felt connected to other students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>felt like a face-to-face course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion board week nine</td>
<td>logical sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pace appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>consistent deadlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>time between deadlines appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>felt motivated to participate in chats and discussion boards with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>felt motivated to complete assignments on time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student assessments.** A variety of assessments were embedded in the course and used to evaluate student achievement of learning outcomes. Important findings will be discussed as they relate to specific learning outcomes.

**Synchronous chats.** Students participated in four synchronous chats with equine industry professionals throughout the semester. The overwhelming majority of students received full credit for these assignments. Students synthesized the information presented by selected horse industry professionals and reflected on their suitability for careers in that sector of the equine industry. Students used this information to complete four or the six discussion boards and achieved learning objective one.

**Autobiography.** The autobiography assignment required students to critically evaluate their background, educational and work experiences, personality traits, and suitability for careers
in the equine industry. The majority of students earned an A on this assignment and were able to self-reflect and identify their suitability for different sectors of the equine industry. Students successfully completed the autobiography assignment and achieved learning outcome one.

*Draft resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters.* Draft versions of students’ resumes, cover letters, and thank you letters were revised and graded throughout the course. Most students completed between one and three revisions between initial submissions of drafts to grading of the products. The majority of students took advantage of multiple revision opportunities and earned an A on the assignments. One student failed to submit revisions to her draft cover letter and thank you letter and earned an F on those assessments. Students positively commented on this specific design element. They appreciated the opportunity to understand their errors and make changes to their draft materials. Students agreed that revising and resubmitting assignments aided in their learning of how to prepare career ready application materials. Students successfully prepared application materials and achieved learning outcome three.

*Mock interview.* The mock interview assignment required students complete a recorded online interview with the instructor on the internship or job posting utilized for their application packet. Students had to prepare and present themselves as if it was a real interview. The instructor asked interview questions appropriate for that sector of the equine industry and students were required to respond. All eleven students received an A on this assignment. Students successfully completion of the mock interview assessment and achieved of learning outcome four.

*Final application packet.* At the completion of the course students were required to submit a final career-ready application packet with a resume, cover letter, and thank you letter for an internship or job posting they searched and selected. One student failed to submit the final
application packet, but all others earned an A on the assessment. All but one student successfully completed the final application packet assignment and achieved learning outcomes three.

**Horse Industry Professional survey.** Final versions of students’ resumes and cover letters were reviewed by horse industry professionals representing the segment of the industry students were interested in. Horse industry professionals rated the majority of students’ resumes as career-ready. Slightly weaker results were indicated for students’ cover letters. The horse industry professionals provided comments targeted at improving the students’ application materials or marketability. A few comments included formatting and content suggestions for the resumes and cover letters. The bulk of the feedback was related to the skillsets the candidates possessed, or lacked and needed to gain before applying for the position. Students received copies of the feedback at the conclusion of the study. Most of the students made immediate improvements to their application materials and began planning ways to improve their skillsets. Feedback from the horse industry professionals informed achievement of learning objective three.

**SEIs.** Students completed an online SEI at the end of the semester to provide feedback on the course, instruction, and overall learning. Students indicated the course format, pace, and connectivity was always appropriate. Students indicated the course frequently or always kept their interest. Comments related to course design included “the class was organized and easy to follow; there was appropriate time in between assignments” and “the ability to resubmit assignments so that I could improve was fantastic”. Students indicated “the coursework was just right for the credit hours and was presented in an easy to understand rubric.” One comment in particular highlights the impact course design had on student achievement of learning outcomes, “I was able to maintain interest in the course throughout the entire semester despite it being an
online course.” In regards to the overall value of the course a student stated, “I would recommend this class to anyone in the Davis College, even if they aren't in the equine minor or interested in working in the equine industry, simply because it gets you ready for the job search after college.” Students rated the effectiveness of instruction, course rating, and overall learning as excellent.

**Research question 2.** How does the course impact student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry? Research question two was answered using pre-semester and post-semester SCCT surveys.

**Pre-semester and post-semester SCCT assessments.** At the beginning of the semester students completed an online Qualtrics® survey to assess measures of self-efficacy, outcome expectations related to the minor and to the course, and goals as identified in the performance model of the SCCT framework. The same survey was completed at the end of the semester. Distribution of student responses on these measures and composite mean scores were calculated to correlate pre-semester and post-semester results.

**Self-efficacy.** To evaluate self-efficacy students rated their confidence to complete and excel in equine studies courses and the equine studies minor on a scale from 1 (no confidence at all) to 5 (complete confidence). Pre-semester the majority of the students had strong or complete confidence they would complete the rest of your course requirements in the equine studies minor with a B or better, excel in your equine studies minor over this current semester, excel in your equine studies minor over the next two semesters, and complete the upper level course requirements in the minor with a B or better. Post-semester the majority of the students had strong or complete confidence in their abilities on these same constructs. One student lacked confidence on these constructs.
Outcome Expectations for the Minor. To evaluate outcome expectations students rated their level of agreement with statements related to the equine studies minor on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Results related to outcomes expectations were not as linear as self-efficacy. Pre-semester the majority of the students believed that graduating with the equine studies minor would allow them to receive a good job offer, to get respect from other people, do work they find satisfying, and do exciting work. The construct that garnered less agreement was related to salary. Post-semester the level of agreement on these constructs stayed the same or increased. Interestingly for salary, pre-semester only five students (42%, \( n = 5 \)) agreed or strongly agreed graduating with the minor would allow them to earn an attractive salary offer, five (42%) were unsure, and two students (17%) disagreed. Post-semester 63% percent (\( n = 7 \)) agreed or strongly agreed that graduating with the minor would allow them to earn an attractive salary and four (37%) students were unsure. Students learned about salary potential during course content and synchronous chats resulting in an altered view on salary potential of careers in the equine industry.

Outcome expectations for course. To evaluate outcome expectations, students rated their level of agreement with statements related to the Careers in the Equine Industry course on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Pre-semester the majority of students agreed or strongly agreed if they worked harder in the course they would do better in future equine classes, if they participated in the course they would earn a better grade, if they participated in the course they would understand the material better, if I attend the course I will do better on assignments, and if I complete my homework assignments I will do better on assessments. Only two pre-semester constructs showed division among the students. Fifty-eight percent (\( n = 7 \)) of students agreed or strongly agreed that if they studied with their classmates
they would earn a better grade while five (42%) students were unsure. Lastly, only 67% \((n = 8)\) of students agreed or strongly agreed that if they studied with their classmates they would understand the material better while four (33%) students were unsure. The division of student responses is not surprising to me. The design of this course is not one that fosters group work or study so their inability to see that connection is appropriate. Students responded similarly at post-test on all constructs.

**Goals.** To evaluate goals students rated their level of agreement with statements related to completing the equine studies program on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The majority of students agreed or strongly agreed that they intended to minor in the equine field, they planned to remain enrolled in the equine studies minor over the next semester, they think earning an equine studies minor is a realistic goal, and they are fully committed to getting their equine minor. Fifty percent \((n = 6)\) of students agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for internships in the equine industry, 33% \((n = 4)\) were unsure, and 17% \((n = 2)\) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Similarly, 50% \((n = 6)\) of students agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for undergraduate research opportunities with equine professors, 25% \((n = 3)\) were unsure, and 25% \((n = 3)\) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The majority of students disagreed or strongly disagreed they were considering switching to another minor \((n = 11, 92\%)\) and one student was unsure \((8\%)\). Post-semester results were similar for the first four constructs. The students’ intent to look for equine internships increased from pre-test to post-test. At the completion of the course, 73% \((n = 8)\) of students agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for internships in the equine industry and three \((27\%)\) students were unsure. Similarly, 64% \((n = 7)\) agreed or strongly agreed they planned to look for undergraduate research opportunities with equine professors and four \((36\%)\) students were unsure. This positive change related to these two
goals constructs indicate a possible change in motivation and a change in perception of the importance of internships and undergraduate research from pre-test to post-test. Student remained committed to the equine studies minor at post-test as well.

*Fitness of the SCCT model.* Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) models the processes students use to select and persist in a major or career (Lent et al., 1994). SCCT is comprised of the interest model, choice model, and performance model. The performance model is focused on how performance goals predict achievement levels. In the performance model, self-efficacy is hypothesized to have a direct effect on student goals and be mediated by outcome expectations. Relationships among SCCT constructs self-efficacy, outcome expectations related to the minor, outcome expectations related to the course, and goals were calculated pre-semester and post-semester. Pearson’s correlation was calculated to assess the strength of the relationship among variables. Pre-semester there was a substantial, positive relationship between self-efficacy and outcome expectations related to the minor, \( r = .66, n = 12, p = .02 \). Pre-semester there was also a substantial, positive relationship between outcome expectations related to the course and goals, \( r = .61, n = 12, p = .03 \) (Davis, 1971). These pre-semester relationships are likely due to students self-selecting into the course and the minor. Students that want to pursue careers in the equine industry (self-efficacy) self-select into the minor (outcome expectations related to the minor). Students that self-select into this course (outcome expectations related to the course) are already motivated to improve their career readiness skills (goals).

Relationships among constructs post-semester were also calculated and yielded many statistically significant correlations among variables. Post-semester there was a substantial, positive relationship between self-efficacy and outcome expectations related to the course, \( r = .63, n = 11, p = .03 \). Post-semester there was a very strong, positive correlation between outcome
expectations related to the minor and outcome expectations related to the course, $r = .73$, $n = 11$, $p = .01$. Post-semester there was a very strong, positive correlation between outcome expectations related to the minor and goals, $r = .83$, $n = 11$, $p = .00$. Lastly, there was a very strong, positive correlation between outcome expectations related to the course and goals, $r = .713$, $n = 11$, $p = .01$ (Davis, 1971). Post-semester students formed very strong and substantial, positive relationships between SCCT constructs self-efficacy and outcome expectations for the course, outcome expectations for the course and minor, outcome expectations for the minor and goals, and outcome expectations for the course and goals. The performance model states that self-efficacy and goal attainment are related and mediated by outcome expectations. The sample size was not large enough to do mediation analysis, however the trends indicated post-semester from students in the Careers in the Equine Industry course are consistent with the mediations hypothesized in the Performance SCCT Model. Figure 3 explains the relationships observed among constructs post-semester.

![Figure 3. Post-Semester Relationships Among SCCT Constructs](image)

**Suggestions for Practice**

Over the last century the demographics of students entering the field of agriculture has changed significantly. The same demographics are found in equine studies undergraduates at West Virginia University and around the United States. Faculty and students agree that students
lack experience searching for jobs, preparing application materials, and interviewing for internships and careers in their field. The *Careers in the Equine Industry* course provided a student-centered learning experience focused on developing transferrable, career readiness skills in a format that can be delivered across institutional boundaries and in collaboration with industry stakeholders.

**Course Design.** The *Careers in the Equine Industry* course evolved over three iterations (2012, 2014, and 2015) however the 2015 offering is the focus of this study. A number of design elements changed. The sequencing and pacing of course activities, synchronous chats, and assessments was spread out over a longer summer session to allow ample time for rich instructor feedback on draft products and revisions by the students. Course content was presented with voice over by the instructor. Equine specific examples of resumes and cover letters at early, mid, late academic career and career-ready stages were presented as examples. Lastly, recorded mock interviews were conducted to improve interview skills.

Throughout the study students were given opportunities to provide feedback on the design of the *Careers in the Equine Industry* course. Rich student feedback was collected throughout the semester from a variety of data sources. Students thought the volume and depth of information was appropriate for the credit hours. Student feedback on sequence and pace was positive. Students were not overwhelmed by the content. They appreciated the consistent Wednesday and Saturday due dates. And most importantly, they felt the design of the course allowed them to truly learn and develop their career readiness skills.

Delivering content by a variety of media sources and providing multiple opportunities for feedback helped students achieve learning outcomes. Content was presented in voiced over presentations, synchronous chats, and supplemental readings. Students were given immediate
feedback on written assignments and allowed to revise and resubmit as many times as necessary. Mock interviews were recorded so students could critically evaluate their own work. Feedback on resumes and cover letters was solicited from potential employers so they could critically evaluate their own skillsets and make necessary improvements as they approach graduation.

Another emergent theme identified by the students was the level of connectedness they felt as a result of the course design. In previous iterations of the course instructor-student connectedness was strong. However, in this offering students felt connected to other students. They cited synchronous chats and discussion boards as the specific design elements that contributed to this feeling of student-student connectedness. Students commented that the class felt like a course on campus and they truly got to know their peers. Specific course design elements that are suggested for practice are to present materials using multiple media sources, maintain consistent deadlines, sequence content using Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction, pace content and assessments with time for synthesis, revisions, and resubmission, and provide feedback from multiple sources.

**Curriculum Design.** The *Careers in the Equine Industry* course was successful in achieving desired learning outcomes in equine studies undergraduate students. As a result of the course students made strong, substantial relationships between self-efficacy and outcome expectations for the course. They also made very strong, substantial relationships and between outcome expectations for the minor and the course, outcome expectations for the minor and goals, and outcome expectations for the course and goals. These trends indicated a connection between the value students placed on the minor and the course in their intention to pursue careers in the equine industry.
The course evolved into a student-centered online course grounded in learning theory. The course used Gagne’s nine events of instruction to deliver content, and provided opportunities for feedback. Students rated the course as excellent on SEIs and provided testament to the impact the course had on their development of career readiness skills. Advising students on career opportunities and assisting with the development of application materials takes a significant amount of faculty time and effort. Students also benefited from networking with industry professionals and receiving specific recommendations on how to improve their marketability for internships and careers. A curriculum design suggestion for practice is to make the Careers in the Equine Industry course required for the equine studies minor.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study focus on participant selection, data analysis, and the positionality of me as the researcher. The Careers in the Equine Industry course is an elective in the equine studies program. Students that enrolled in this course chose to enroll; it is not a required course. Students that self-selected into the course may possess a high degree of self-efficacy, are motivated to pursue the course content, and achieve the desired learning outcomes. Additionally, the instructional design of the course and the data sources changed over the three iterations. Data was collected and analyzed only on the third iteration. A small class size of eleven during the third iteration limited the generalizability of these results. My positionality as instructor and researcher also limits the study. A detailed memo was kept when coding and analyzing the data to check for bias. Member checks were conducted by the students to validate the data collected throughout the course. Lastly, triangulation of data was conducted to validate data, eliminate bias, and increase the credibility of the results.
Suggestions for Future Research

The Careers in the Equine Industry course has gone through substantial design and development changes since its inception. This research focused on the course impact on student achievement of learning outcomes and student motivation. Participants in this study were self-selected equine studies undergraduates that elected to take the course to improve their career readiness skills. They were also West Virginia University (WVU) students. These students possessed a high degree of self-efficacy and may have been uniquely motivated by the content, regardless of the design and development decisions made in the course. They could have also been biased by my role as instructor and researcher. Ultimately, I would like to deliver this course to equine studies undergraduates at other land grant institutions and evaluate whether results were similar across all institutions. The same comparison could be made between WVU students that took the course as a free elective and students taking the course as a minor requirement.

In future iterations of the course, student identifiers could be used to better evaluate the impact of the course on changes in SCCT constructs from pre-semester to post-semester. Had identifiers been included during data collection a paired samples t-test could have been used to evaluate changes in students’ self-efficacy, outcome expectations for the minor, outcome expectations for the course, and goals. This may have revealed additional information regarding the impact of the course on student intention to pursue careers in the equine industry and the usefulness of the SCCT theory as a model to predict equine studies undergraduate performance.

In future iterations of the course, it is suggested that more diverse sample cover letters and thank you letters are added to represent the more obscure sectors of the equine industry. This semester feedback from horse industry professionals was solicited and collected after the
semester was complete. In future iterations it is suggested that this networking tool be embedded in the course. Instead of the instructor identifying horse industry professionals that matched student interests, students could identify a professional and ask them to mentor them throughout the semester. This would provide students with the opportunity to develop networking skills and take the responsibility off the instructor.

The literature could benefit from a longitudinal study of these participants to determine how the course has impacted their ability to apply, interview, and receive a job offer after graduation. Students could be surveyed at the completion of the course, 6 months after graduation, and 3 years after graduation to evaluate how their career readiness skills have transferred to a career in the equine industry. The survey could identify potential barriers to success not previously addressed in the course. Feedback of this nature would be beneficial to make course design and development decisions, update equine studies curriculum, and address opportunities and barriers to equine studies program success.

This dissertation is a design and development research study because it documented the design and development of an instructional model across several iterations of a college level Careers in the Equine Industry course. The results of this research provide practical suggestions for course design that can be adapted and utilized by other equine studies programs to develop similar online coursework.
References


Appendices

Appendix A: 2015 Course Syllabus

A&VS 372: Careers in the Equine Industry
Online Off-Campus Summer Course (3 credits)

Online
Summer 2015 (12 weeks, May 18th – August 7th)

Instructor: Ms. Crystal Smith, M.Agr., PAS
G020 Ag Sci Bldg

http://horses.wvu.edu

Required readings are in eCampus under Course Content.

Email Communication should be sent to Crystal.Smith@mail.wvu.edu.

Office Hours: Available by appointment; email to request a time.

Course Content

Course provides an in-depth understanding of the careers available in the equine industry including sales, consulting, management, research, extension, and more. Students will learn how to complete internship and job searches in this diverse field, how to write effective cover letters, resumes and thank you letters, practice interview skills, and prepare them to enter the job market.

Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you need to know and do:</th>
<th>How this knowledge and performance is assessed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify the diverse job opportunities available in the equine industry</td>
<td>Online Activities, Discussion Board Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrate the appropriate job search tools and application processes for careers in the equine industry</td>
<td>Online Activities, Discussion Board Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Demonstrate professional resume, cover letter and thank you letter writing</td>
<td>Online Activities, Draft Resume, Cover Letter, and Thank You Letter, Final Application/Interview Packet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Demonstrate positive interview skills</td>
<td>Online Activities, Mock Interview</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Required Hardware/Software

Students are required to have a computer capable of accessing an online course delivered in eCampus. Students should have a laptop with webcam and microphone for video chats and conferencing via Collaborate.

Attendance and Assignments

Since the class is 100% online based, students can access and work on this course at will. Most work will be completed asynchronously with the EXCEPTION of six synchronous sessions in Collaborate on Wednesday evenings from 7-8pm EST and by appointment. Excused absences are provided for University activities and with prior approval by the instructor. Authorized absences do not excuse the student from any course work.

All assignments are due on the date specified in the syllabus, unless noted otherwise by the instructor. Five points will be taken off an assignment grade for each day it is late. Assignments 5 days or more late, will not be graded and will earn a grade of 0. All assignments will be returned to the student within one week from the due date. Rubrics for all assignments are posted in eCampus.

Communication with Instructor

The best way to reach me is by email at Crystal.Smith@mail.wvu.edu. Feel free to make an appointment if needed to discuss materials or assignments in more detail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Letter Grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autobiography</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Live Collaborate Chats</td>
<td>80-89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Responses</td>
<td>70-79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume Draft</td>
<td>60-69.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover Letter Draft</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank You Letter Draft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Application/Interview Packet</td>
<td>1 @ 100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mock Interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points Possible = 550 points

Autobiography (1 @ 100 points)
You will write an autobiography in first person discussing your background including coursework and other educational experiences, work experience and any other information that led you to your goal of pursuing a career in the equine industry. Discuss the results of your Myers-Briggs personality test and how that may influence the types of careers you plan to
pursue. Give three examples of careers in the industry that you feel you are well-suited for. 2-4 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. See rubric in eCampus.

**Participation in Live Collaborate Chats (4 @ 10 points)**
As a student in this course you are required to participate in the Live Collaborate Chats with guest speakers so you can interact, ask questions and get the most out of their presentations. Chats are Wednesday nights from 7-8pm EST at specified times throughout the semester. You’ll receive 10 points for logging on and asking at least one thoughtful question of the speaker.

**Discussion Board Response (6 @ 10 points)**
As a student in this course you are required to participate and respond to questions that are posted during the week. This is a vital part of the course. Your posts to the discussion board should emulate that of a discussion in a traditional classroom setting, so quality of response is more important than quantity. You will be prompted to engage in discussion board posts 6 times throughout the semester and are expected to respond with relevant/thoughtful material. For full credit you need to respond to the initial post, plus provide two responses to two different classmates’ posts. See rubric in eCampus.

**Resume Draft (1 @ 50 points)**
You will prepare a targeted resume specific to an internship/job opportunity you are interested in applying for. This draft should be your best effort. 1 page, single-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. The assignment should be named and uploaded in eCampus Assignments as LastName_ResumeDraft. See rubric in eCampus.

**Cover Letter Draft (1 @ 50 points)**
You will prepare a cover letter specific to an internship/job opportunity you are interested in applying for. This draft should be your best effort. 1 page, single-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. The assignment should be named and uploaded in eCampus Assignments as LastName_CLDraft. See rubric in eCampus.

**Thank You Letter Draft (1 @ 50 points)**
You will prepare a thank you letter specific to an internship/job opportunity you are interested in applying for, as if you have just completed the interview. This draft should be your best effort. 1 page, single-spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. This assignment should be named and uploaded in eCampus Assignments as LastName_TYLDraft. See rubric in eCampus.

**Final Application/Interview Packet (1 @ 100 points)**
You will receive feedback on the draft resume, cover letters and thank you letters from the instructor and should review, revise and finalize for submission. This packet should be ready for the eyes of any selection committee or interview panel. You will select an internship/job opportunity you actually plan to apply for and will have a completed packet by the end of their course. Your job posting must be approved by the instructor by Saturday during week 4; send an email with a link to the job posting by that Saturday at midnight. Same format as previous component assignments. This assignment should be named and uploaded in eCampus Assignments as LastName_ApplicationPacket. See rubric in eCampus.
Mock Interview (1 @ 100 points)
You will participate in a mock interview with the instructor via Collaborate. Scheduling of Mock Interviews will be conducted via Doodle Poll on a first come, first serve basis. You should come prepared for your mock interview. Business professional attire is required. You will answer a variety of interview questions specific to the internship/job opportunity you are applying for and have an opportunity to ask thoughtful questions of the potential employer. Mock interviews will be recorded, so you can review your interview transcript with the written feedback you will receive from the instructor. See rubric in eCampus.

West Virginia University Academic Integrity

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at http://studentlife.wvu.edu/studentconductcode.html.

Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Social Justice Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion.

If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (304-293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see http://diversity.sandbox.wvu.edu/ddei.
Course Schedule

Week 1  Intro to Course, Myers-Briggs Personality Test
             United States Horse Industry – Size, Scope, Career Opportunities
          **Opt-In Survey Due by Saturday May 23rd at midnight**

Week 2  Brand Yourself! Career Appropriate Social Media Presence
          **Discussion Board Response Due by Saturday May 30th at Midnight**

Week 3  Job Search Tips for the Equine Industry
          **Autobiography Due in eCampus by Saturday June 6th at Midnight**
          **Discussion Board Response Due by Saturday June 6th at Midnight**

Week 4  Resume, Cover Letter, Thank You Letter Writing, and Interview Tips
          **Mock Collaborate Chat with Instructor Wednesday June 10th at 7pm EST**
          **Internship/Job Posting Approved by Saturday June 13th at Midnight**

Week 5  Teaching, Extension, Research and Government Careers (Carrie Swanson, VCE)
          **Collaborate with Guest Speaker Wednesday June 17th at 7pm EST**
          **Discussion Board Response Due by Saturday June 20th at Midnight**

Week 6  Nutrition, Pharmaceutical and Retail Sales Careers (Kasey Mowery, Ariat)
          **Collaborate with Guest Speaker Wednesday June 24th at 7pm EST**
          **Discussion Board Response Due by Saturday June 27th at Midnight**
          **Draft Resume Due by Saturday June 27th at Midnight**

Week 7  No Class, Enjoy the 4th of July Holiday!

Week 8  Equine Management Careers (Khristian Rosier, Roland Farms)
          **Collaborate with Guest Speaker Wednesday July 8th at 7pm EST**
          **Discussion Board Response Due by Saturday July 11th at Midnight**
          **Draft Cover Letter Due by Saturday July 11th at Midnight**

Week 9  Breed and Discipline Organization Careers (Kalyn Sanders, APHA)
          **Collaborate with Guest Speaker Wednesday July 15th at 7pm EST**
          **Discussion Board Response Due by Saturday July 18th at Midnight**
          **Draft Thank You Letter Due by Saturday July 18th at Midnight**

Week 10  **Mock Interviews via Collaborate by Appointment**

Week 11  **Final Application/Interview Packet Due by Saturday at Midnight**

Week 12  Course Wrap Up!
          **Complete Course SEIs via email by Saturday at Midnight**
# Appendix B: Discussion Board Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Excellent, 8-10 pts.</th>
<th>Good, 5-7 pts.</th>
<th>Basic, 3-5 pts.</th>
<th>Below Expectations, &lt;3 pts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Rich in content; full of thought, insight and analysis</td>
<td>Contains substantial information; thought, insight and analysis has clearly taken place</td>
<td>Generally competent, yet information is thin and commonplace</td>
<td>Rudimentary and superficial, displaying no analysis or insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections</td>
<td>Clear connection to previous or current content and to real-life situations</td>
<td>Contains new connections that lack depth or detail</td>
<td>Limited, if any, connections or vague generalities</td>
<td>No connections are made or off topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniqueness</td>
<td>New ideas and new connections made with depth and detail</td>
<td>Contains new ideas that lack depth or detail</td>
<td>Few, if any, new ideas; rehashes or summarizes other postings</td>
<td>No new ideas or “I agree or disagree with . . . “ statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>All required postings appear early and throughout the discussion</td>
<td>All required postings with some not in time for others to respond</td>
<td>All required postings with most at the last minute without allowing time for others to respond</td>
<td>Some or all required postings missed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stylistics</td>
<td>Few grammatical or stylistic errors</td>
<td>Several grammatical or stylistic errors</td>
<td>Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors that interfere with the readability of the content</td>
<td>Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors that make understanding nearly impossible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix C: Draft Resume Rubric

Student Completing Assignment: ___________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Criteria:</th>
<th>Grading Criteria:</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Format of Assignment</td>
<td>Did the student write a 1 page, single-spaced targeted resume?</td>
<td></td>
<td>5, YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student name and upload the resume in the assignment dropbox as</td>
<td></td>
<td>0, NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LastName_ResumeDraft?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Did the student give a clear, concise objective related to a specific internship or job posting?</td>
<td>5, YES</td>
<td>0, NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Experience</td>
<td>Did the student clearly state their educational background and experience that is applicable to the posting?</td>
<td>15-20,</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student write concise, action statements in correct tense?</td>
<td>10-14, Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student list these in a logical order?</td>
<td>5-10, Fair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;5, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td>Did the student clearly state their work experience that is applicable to the posting?</td>
<td>15-20,</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student write concise, action statements in correct tense?</td>
<td>10-14, Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student list these in a logical order?</td>
<td>5-10, Fair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;5, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Points Earned out of 50: __________
## Appendix D: Draft Cover Letter Rubric

Student Completing Assignment: ___________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Criteria:</th>
<th>Grading Criteria:</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Format of Assignment | Did the student write a 1 page, single-spaced cover letter?  
Did the student name and upload the cover letter in the assignment dropbox as LastName_CLDraft?                                                                 |               | 5, YES 0, NO    |
| Professionalism      | Did the student state their interest in this posting in a clear, concise manner?  
Did the student present themselves professionally?  
Did the student thank the committee, company, etc. for reviewing their application in their closing?                                                         | 5, YES 0, NO  |                 |
| Educational Experience| Did the student clearly state their educational background and experience that is applicable to the posting?  
Did the student write concise, action statements?  
Did the student use proper grammar, spelling and tense?                                                                                       | 15-20, Excellent  
10-14, Good  
5-10, Fair  
<5, Poor |                 |
| Work Experience       | Did the student clearly state their work experience that is applicable to the posting?  
Did the student write concise, action statements?  
Did the student use proper grammar, spelling and tense?                                                                                       | 15-20, Excellent  
10-14, Good  
5-10, Fair  
<5, Poor |                 |
| Total Score           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 50            |                 |
| Comments              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |               |                 |

Points Earned out of 50: ___________
## Appendix E: Draft Thank You Letter Rubric

Student Completing Assignment: _______________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Criteria:</th>
<th>Grading Criteria:</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Format of Assignment</td>
<td>Did the student write a 1 page, single-spaced thank you letter?</td>
<td>5, YES</td>
<td>0, NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student name and upload the thank you letter in the assignment dropbox as LastName_TYLDraft?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td>Did the student thank the committee, company, etc. for their opportunity to interview?</td>
<td>5, YES</td>
<td>0, NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student present themselves professionally?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restate Qualifications</td>
<td>Did the student clearly restate the background and qualifications they feel would be an asset to the company, organization, etc.?</td>
<td>30-40, Excellent</td>
<td>20-29, Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did the student use proper grammar, spelling and tense?</td>
<td>10-19, Good</td>
<td>10-19, Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;10, Poor</td>
<td>&lt;10, Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Points Earned out of 50: ____________
Appendix F: Autobiography Rubric

Student Completing Assignment: ___________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Criteria:</th>
<th>Grading Criteria:</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Format of Assignment</td>
<td>Did the student write a 2-4 page, double spaced paper and hit on EACH aspect required in the syllabus? Did the student name and upload in the assignment dropbox as LastName_Autobiography?</td>
<td></td>
<td>20, YES 0, NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background and Experience</td>
<td>Did the student describe in the first person . . . 1) their background including coursework and other educational experiences, work experience and any other information that led them to their goal of pursuing a career in the horse industry?</td>
<td></td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality Test Impact</td>
<td>Did the student discuss . . . 1) the results of your Myers-Briggs personality test and how that may influence the types of careers they plan to pursue?</td>
<td></td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of Learning</td>
<td>Did the student give three examples of careers in the industry that they might be well-suited for and explain why?</td>
<td></td>
<td>25-30, Excellent 20-24, Good 15-19, Fair &lt;15, Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Points Earned out of 100: ___________
### Appendix G: Mock Interview Rubric

Student Completing Assignment: ____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Criteria:</th>
<th>Grading Criteria:</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professionalism</strong></td>
<td>Did the student dress in business professional attire? Did the student present themselves professionally?</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interest in Posting</strong></td>
<td>Did the student state their interest in the position clearly, concisely and with confidence? Did the student use proper grammar in conveying their thoughts? Did the student maintain good eye contact, tone and volume?</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background and Qualifications</strong></td>
<td>Did the student state their background and qualifications in the position clearly, concisely and with confidence? Did the student use proper grammar in conveying their thoughts? Did the student maintain good eye contact, tone and volume?</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questions</strong></td>
<td>Did the student ask thoughtful questions clearly, concisely and with confidence? Did the student use proper grammar in conveying their thoughts? Did the student maintain good eye contact, tone and volume?</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Score | 100 |
| Comments |  |

Points Earned out of 100: ___________
Appendix H: Final Application Packet Rubric

Student Completing Assignment: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Criteria:</th>
<th>Grading Criteria:</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Format of Assignment</td>
<td>Did the student present a final version of the previous resume, cover letter and thank you letters submitted? Did the student name and upload in the assignment dropbox as LastName_ApplicationPacket?</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resume</td>
<td>Did the student take the feedback and revisions given on their draft assignment and make all necessary changes noted? Did they present a high-quality resume that has proper . . . 1) Format 2) Content 3) Grammar</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover Letter</td>
<td>Did the student take the feedback and revisions given on their draft assignment and make all necessary changes noted? Did they present a high-quality cover letter that has proper . . . 1) Format 2) Content 3) Grammar</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank You Letter</td>
<td>Did the student take the feedback and revisions given on their draft assignment and make all necessary changes noted? Did they present a high-quality thank you letter that has proper . . . 4) Format 5) Content 6) Grammar</td>
<td>20-25, Excellent 15-19, Good 10-14, Fair &lt;10, Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Points Earned out of 50: ___________
Appendix I: Opt-In Letter

West Virginia University
Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences

May 12th, 2015

Dear AVS 372, Careers in the Equine Industry Students:

The goal of the equine studies program at West Virginia University is to produce candidates with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to be marketable in the diverse, competitive equine industry. I am inviting you to participate in a study as a part of this course to investigate whether the design and development of the online Careers in the Equine Industry course impacts student motivation and learning outcomes.

My name is Crystal Smith. I am a Teaching Assistant Professor in equine studies at West Virginia University. Under the direction of one of my advisors, Dr. Deborah A. Boone, I am conducting a research study to understand how the design and development of the online Careers in the Equine Industry course impacts achievement of specific career readiness learning outcomes and student motivation. The results of this study will be used to prepare a dissertation to partially fulfill the requirements for a Doctorate of Education degree in Instructional Design & Technology. West Virginia University’s Institutional Review Boards acknowledgment of this research is on file.

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. All data collection methods will be embedded in the eCampus course shell, and will not require any additional work if you choose to participate in the study. Students should indicate their intent to opt-in by completing the opt-in survey found in the week one course content folder in eCampus. Students that opt-in to the study will have the opportunity to have their final application materials (resumes and cover letters) reviewed by a potential employer representing the segment of the horse industry they wish to enter. The potential employer will assess the application materials and provide feedback you can use to make improvements before entering the job market. There is no penalty if you choose not to participate in the study. You may opt out of the study at any time. Data for the study will be coded with numbers making it difficult to track your individual responses. Data will not be analyzed until after the semester has concluded and final grades submitted. Data will be analyzed in the fall after the close of the term, so no students will be adversely impacted by their responses.

Thank you for your assistance. We sincerely appreciate your time.

Sincerely,
Crystal Smith
Doctoral Student

Deborah A. Boone, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Appendix J: IRB Approval Letter

Acknowledgement Letter Exempt Initial Protocol Review

Action Date: 05/15/2015
To: Deborah Boone
From: WVU Office of Research Integrity and Compliance
Expiration Date: 05/14/2018
Subject: Acknowledgement Letter Exempt Initial Protocol Review
Protocol Number: 1505677880
Title: Design and Development Research of an online Careers in the Equine Industry course

The above-referenced study was reviewed by the West Virginia University Institutional Review Board IRB and was granted exemption in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101.

- This research study was granted an exemption because the Research involves educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior and (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects responses outside the research could not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects financial standing, employability, or reputation [45 CFR 46.101(2)]. All exemptions are only good for three years. If this research extends more than three years beyond the approved date, then the researcher will have to request another exemption. The following documents have been acknowledged for use in this study and are available in the WVU+kc system:

Documents reviewed and/or approved as part of this submission:

Careers in the Equine Industry Discussion Board Prompts.pdf: 2015-05-11-04:00
Documents for use in this study have been acknowledged and are available in the WVUkc system in the Notes and Attachments section of your protocol.

The Office of Research Integrity and Compliance is here to provide assistance to you from the initial submission of an IRB protocol and all subsequent activity. Please feel free to contact us by phone at 304.293.7073 with any question you may have. Thank you.

WVU Office of Research Integrity and Compliance

Date: 05/15/2015

Afton Wagner
IRB Administrator
Appendix K: Discussion Board Posts Specific to Course Design and Development

Week 6: Reflect back on the format of the course so far. Is there anything about the format and learning activities you've engaged in during the course that have been beneficial to exploring your career opportunities?

Week 9: Looking back on the semester was there anything about the sequence, pacing, and design of the course that helped you progress throughout the weekly lessons, complete assignments, or impacted your overall learning?
Appendix L: Horse Industry Professional Survey

**Instructions:** Please review the attached application materials (resumes and cover letters). After review, please assess the application materials for career readiness using the scale below and provide comments you feel will help the students improve their application materials.

**Application Materials**

*Instructions:* Using the scale below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. This resume would get noticed if it came across your desk.
2. This resume yield an interview with your business, company, or organization.
3. This resume land a job with your business, company, or organization.
4. This cover letter would get noticed if it came across your desk.
5. This cover letter would yield an interview with your business, company, or organization.
6. This cover letter would land a job with your business, company, or organization.

*Instructions:* Please include comments for the student on how they can improve the format or content of the application materials, or their depth of experience in the comments section below.

Comments:
Appendix M: Pre-Semester and Post-Semester SCCT Survey

Careers in the Equine Industry Pre- and Post-Semester Survey

Background questions

1. Please list your WVUID number: ________
2. What is your year in School? (year)
   a. Freshman
   b. Sophomore
   c. Junior
   d. Senior
   e. Other: ____________
3. Please indicate your race or ethnic group (race)
   a. Black or African American
   b. Hispanic American
   c. White or European American
   d. Asian/Pacific Islander
   e. Native American
   f. Other: ____________
4. Please indicate your sex (sex)
   a. Male
   b. Female
5. Please identify your major (major)
   a. Animal & Nutritional Sciences
   b. Agribusiness Management & Rural Development
   c. Multidisciplinary Studies
   d. Other: ________
6. Please identify your minor (minor)
   a. Equine Studies – emphasis in equine management
   b. Equine Studies – emphasis in equine science
   c. Equine Studies – emphasis in equine assisted activities and therapies
   d. Other: ________
Self efficacy (SE)

Part I. Instructions: The following is a list of major steps along the way to completing an equine studies minor. Please indicate how much confidence you have in your ability to complete each of these steps in relation to the minor that you are most likely to pursue. Use the 1 to 5 scale below to indicate your degree of confidence.

No Confidence Little Moderate Strong Complete
At all Confidence Confidence Confidence Confidence Confidence
1 2 3 4 5

How much confidence do you have in your ability to:
1. Complete the rest of your course requirements for your equine studies minor with grades of B or better.
2. Excel in your equine studies minor over this current semester.
3. Excel in your equine studies minor over the next two semesters.
4. Complete the upper level required courses in your equine studies minor with an overall grade point average of B or better.

Outcome expectations (OE)

Part II. Instructions: Using the scale below, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Unsure Agree Strongly Agree
1 2 3 4 5

These items relate to getting a minor in equine studies.
Graduating with a minor in equine studies will likely allow me to:
1. ... receive a good job offer
2. ... earn an attractive salary
3. ... get respect from other people
4. ... do work that I would find satisfying
5. ... do exciting work

These items relate to your current Careers in the Equine Industry class:
6. If I work harder in Careers in the Equine Industry, I will earn better grades.
7. If I work harder in Careers in the Equine Industry, I will do better in future equine classes.
8. If I participate in Careers in the Equine Industry, I will earn a better grade.
9. If I participate in Careers in the Equine Industry, I will understand the material better.
10. If I study for Careers in the Equine Industry with classmates, I will earn a better grade.
11. If I study for Careers in the Equine Industry with classmates, I will understand the material better.
12. If I attend Careers in the Equine Industry, I do better on assignments.
13. If I complete my homework assignments in Careers in the Equine Industry, I will do better on the assessments.
**Goals (G)**

**Part III.** Instructions: Using the scale below, indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Goals (goal)**

1. I intend to minor in the equine field. (G1-13)
2. I plan to remain enrolled in the equine studies minor over the next semester.
3. I think that earning an equine studies minor is a realistic goal for me.
4. I am fully committed to getting my equine studies minor.
5. I plan to look for internships in the equine industry.
6. I plan to look for undergraduate research opportunities with equine professors.
7. I am considering switching to another minor.
Appendix N: 2015 SEI Results

### WVU eSEI Survey Results Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Text</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisf</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Col. %</th>
<th>Norm(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor was prompt and organized.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor was prepared and organized for each class session.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests and/or assignments were fair.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading was fair.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor provided useful feedback regarding performance.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor maintained a high level of energy throughout the course.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor was available outside of class, during office hours or by appointment, to discuss course-related matters.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor was concerned with whether or not the students learned the material.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from the instructor outside of class was readily available.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work required was the amount of credit was assigned.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor dealt fairly and honestly with students.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor was conscientious.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The online course kept my interest.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even though we were not physically together in a traditional classroom, I still felt like I was part of a group in the online course.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The format and pace of the course were well organized and led to learning.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pace of the course was appropriate for the content covered.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WVU eSEI Survey Results Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Text</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisf</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Col. %</th>
<th>Norm(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The clarity of the syllabus in describing the course content, requirements, and evaluation techniques was.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s adherence to the syllabus was.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The clarity of the instruction whether written or spoken.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructions were clear and comprehensive in explaining the material.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WVU eSEI Survey Results Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Text</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Satisf</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Col. %</th>
<th>Norm(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The effectiveness of instruction in the course was.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality of materials, content, organization of the course content, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>59.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, my learning in this course was.</td>
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Instructor: Crystal Smith  
Email: crystal.smith@wvu.edu  
Term: 2015S

WVU eSEI: SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

CRN: 12477  
Course(s): AEL/372 section 721  
# of responses: 7

Expand on the above items on which you rated your instructor EXCELLENT, and/or comment on other valuable aspects of the course and instructor.

The class exceeded my expectations and I really enjoyed it. Crystal is a great instructor!

Loved how we were given the ability to resubmit our drafts based on evaluations. Loved how the course still ran like an in-class lecture (containing power points, discussion posts, collaborative chats, etc)

Crystal was always available for questions or help and was flexible with student schedules so they could participate in assignments. The coursework was just right for the credit hours and was presented in an easy to understand format.

Crystal was a great instructor. She is organized, efficient, and thorough. I wish I had had more teachers like her throughout my time here at WVU. You can tell she genuinely cares for her job and what she is doing here. I really enjoyed the course and thought it was an excellent class to take as a standing senior Animal and Nutritional Sciences major.

The ability to resubmit assignments so that I could improve was fantastic. I was able to maintain interest in the course throughout the entire semester despite it being an online course. Overall, it was very informative and I am glad I took the course. I feel better prepared for a future career in the equine industry.

The class was organized and easy to follow. There was appropriate time in between assignments but also smaller assignments to supplement downtime. Instructor helped to specialize to each student and provide ample feedback.

Crystal has been a big help in making sure that we know what is expected on our resumes. I think everyone should take this course.

Expand on the above items on which you gave your instructor a relatively LOW rating, and/or comment on the problem areas with the course or instructor. Be specific; suggest ways in which the course or instructor may be improved.

none

N/A

I did not rate anything low. I did not find any problem areas with the course or instructor.

Note

- If you have any other comments related to the usefulness of this course in your academic career, please comment here.

Here is more free information based on various careers (vet, vet tech, sales, manager, etc)

Awesome course, I would recommend this to anyone in the Davis College, even if they aren’t in the equine minor or interested in working in the equine industry simply because it gets you ready for the job search after college.

No additional comments.