Imagine yourself in Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois... 

...where students are putting business and economics into action around the globe and close to home.
The Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics (ACE) in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) puts business skills and knowledge of economics into action.

ACE combines technical knowledge of the food, agribusiness, environmental, and consumer sectors with expertise in management, accounting, marketing, policy, and finance to produce graduates able to analyze, communicate, and make decisions.

In a world with more than seven billion people, a growing population, rising affluence, and limited natural resources, a major in ACE will prepare students for a challenging role in feeding, clothing, and financing the aspirations of hundreds of millions of people in the U.S. and billions of people across the globe.
Admissions guidance

Students admitted to the University of Illinois are high achievers. When applying to ACE:

- The whole application is considered, not just a GPA or a ranking.
- The strength of students’ academic challenges counts as well as grades. Rigorous math classes are highly valued.
- Leadership and volunteer experiences, particularly if sustained over time, are assets.
- The middle 50 percent of ACES students had ACT scores between 25 and 30, and SAT scores with writing from 1800 to 2020 in fall 2011.
- The class rank for the middle 50 percent of admitted students was 82 to 94 percent.
- To apply, go to admissions.illinois.edu.

The College of ACES at the University of Illinois

The University of Illinois is a world leader in research, teaching, and public engagement and is distinguished by the breadth of its programs, broad academic excellence, and internationally renowned faculty.

The College of ACES prepares students to make a difference in the world. Graduates of our college answer complex questions and develop innovative solutions to improve agricultural systems; provide safe, nutritious food supplies; identify clean, renewable energy sources; strengthen families and communities; and protect the environment. The scope of the college has broadened dramatically since its founding in 1867. Its purpose, however, remains focused on advancing scientific knowledge that makes life better, healthier, safer, and more profitable for people in Illinois and around the globe.

A University of Illinois degree is the best investment a student will ever make. The “return on investment,” or the expected salary over 30 years, from the University of Illinois is nearly three times the return from other Illinois universities that offer agriculture and related majors.

Scholarships and financial aid opportunities

Many scholarships are available to ACE students. A single application allows you to be considered for all scholarships. The application period extends from April 15 to June 1 each year. See students.aces.illinois.edu/scholarships for more information and the application.

In addition to scholarship opportunities within the department and college, the University of Illinois Office of Financial Aid awards other financial assistance from federal, state, university, and private resources to help defray education expenses. For more information about financial aid, visit www.osfa.illinois.edu.
ACE offers nine concentrations spanning applied business and public policy fields.

**Business Concentrations**

1. **Agri-Accounting**: Apply accounting principles in the food and agribusiness sectors. Prepare to work in corporate accounting, public accounting, or pursue a graduate degree in accounting.

2. **Agribusiness Markets and Management**: Explore marketing and management strategies through hands-on work in the food and agribusiness sectors and beyond. This concentration provides great contact with industry partners, from small entrepreneurial companies to Fortune 500 global corporations.

3. **Farm Management**: Study finance, risk management, and economics as applied to management of a complex farm enterprise or ownership of rural real estate.

4. **Finance in Agribusiness**: Prepare to meet the capital acquisition and investment needs of large and small agribusiness or financial institutions.

5. **Financial Planning**: Prepare to help individuals and families save, invest, acquire major assets, afford advanced education, and prepare for retirement. Graduates meet the educational requirements to take the Certified Financial Planner™ exam.

6. **Consumer Economics and Finance**: Study economic issues facing consumers and families while gaining preparation for career opportunities with government and public agencies, marketing and sales firms, and financial institutions.

**Policy Concentrations**

7. **Public Policy and Law**: Apply the economics of public policy to the food and consumer sector. Graduates can pursue a law degree or work for a policy development, non-governmental, or governmental organization.

8. **Policy, International Trade and Development**: Focus on international development while gaining valuable preparation for economics or government work in an international setting.

9. **Environmental Economics and Policy**: Study environmental and resource management policies locally, nationally, or internationally.
Hands-on learning is the ACE standard

- Executives and professionals regularly visit our classes.
- Case studies help you apply knowledge to real-world situations.
- Individual and group projects build your competencies.
- Internship opportunities provide you with job experience.
- Computer classes enhance your technical skills.
- Career guidance from expert faculty and staff lands you a job!

ACE’s flexibility works to your advantage

The core of common classes in ACE introduces you to economic theory, finance, marketing, quantitative methods, and laws and policies important to the consumer, agribusiness and food industries.

Our program is flexible. As an ACE major, you may complement required courses with classes outside the concentration, from other programs, at the University, and through study abroad.

Coursework in ACE is supplemented by field trips, credit-generating internship opportunities and study-abroad experiences, national student competitions, and hundreds of student organizations. Students are also encouraged to get involved in ACE-specific organizations such as the Financial Planning Club, the National Agri-Marketing Association student chapter, and the ACE Club.

An ACE major gives you flexibility in the job market as well. You can work for a Fortune 500 company, but you are also recruited by local banks, international firms, and non-governmental organizations.
Experience economics and business in the real world

ACE emphasizes learning through experiences in local, national, and international programs that bring the concepts learned in the classroom to life.

International Business Immersion Program: This semester-long class studies the food value chain in a specific part of the world. Then students go there on a two-week immersion trip to see food supply chains firsthand. Students must interview to participate in the program. Our students have traveled to Brazil, Europe, and China. For more information, visit www.ibip.illinois.edu.

Sustainability in Sierra Leone: Students not only visit businesses and non-governmental organizations in the West African country of Sierra Leone, but they also complete a service project during their two-week study-abroad program over winter break. In addition, students participate in a joint workshop with Njala University, a university in Sierra Leone.

Policy Development and Leadership in Washington, D.C.: Students hear from leaders framing state and national policy in the food, consumer, and agribusiness sectors through this on-campus class. Afterwards they travel to Washington, D.C., where they are exposed to the policy-making process and see leadership in action.
ACE graduate George Witchek

George Witchek’s participation in an experiential learning class not only changed his life, but also took him around the globe and ultimately helped him land a job with a multinational food company.

Witchek interned for Changzhou Match-Well Electrical Products in Changzhou, China. After returning he took ACE 436, the International Business Immersion Program (IBIP). During this semester-long class, Witchek studied the food supply chain in China. Then he spent 10 days in the country looking at the Chinese consumer and farmer along with multinational companies’ challenges in China, and he did business research on the country’s dairy industry.

“Most of the homes in this area were made of four slabs,” Witchek said. “They only ate meat once a month because that is all they could afford. You know people live like this around the world, but you never see them. It made quite an impact on me.”

Following his IBIP experience, Witchek left for a summer internship in China with ACES alum Bo Zhang (pictured above). Witchek had met Zhang when he was on campus to receive the U of I International Alumni Award.

Witchek plans someday to create a company to play a role in the world’s food industry. The opportunities ACE gave him to study and work in China transformed his perspective on how the world’s people live.

“I learned from that experience how great we have it,” he said. “I’m fascinated with the prospect of feeding others around the globe.”

Find a job with ACE

Seventy-five percent of ACE graduates find a job or attend graduate school in agricultural economics, business, accounting, law, policy or public affairs. ACE has a proven tradition of turning out leaders in Illinois, the Midwest, the nation, and the world.

ACE emphasizes career skills

- Technical skills for consumer and food operations
- People skills to work effectively with others in industry
- Communication skills to listen, write, and speak successfully
- Decision-making skills for a global marketplace

ACE prepares students for exciting careers in finance, commodity marketing, business management, and policy development in the environmental, food, agribusiness and consumer sectors.

* ACES Senior Survey (ACES Career Services) with 3-year summary data from 2007-2008 through 2009-2010. All data returned within 6 months of completing BS degree. Response Rate = 88% of ACE grads.
Imagine yourself in ACE, and set up a visit today!

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Like us on Facebook: ace@illinois

Top 5 reasons you should choose ACE

1. Award-winning faculty who are leaders in their field teach your classes and work with you one-on-one.

2. 75% of graduates have jobs or are accepted to professional or graduate school by the time of graduation or shortly thereafter.

3. You receive personal attention and career direction from college leadership within an exciting BigTen campus atmosphere.

4. Career opportunities abound close to home, around the U.S., and abroad.

5. A first-rate experiential learning program encourages students to immerse themselves in exciting hands-on opportunities in Chicago, the nation’s capital and on other continents.